

Society of St. Vincent de Paul Models for Adult Conferences

All Conferences have to fulfill the same basics required of Conferences. These are specified in the document “Minimum Requirements for Existing Traditional Conferences.” Included in those minimum requirements are:

1. Meeting weekly or, at least, twice monthly;
2. A full slate of officers and a Spiritual Advisor;
3. Annual Reporting;
4. Annual Audit;
5. Fulfilling Tax Exemption requirements, where necessary; and
6. Direct Service to those in need.

Regardless of the Conference structure, compliance with the Rule and Bylaws of the Society must be a priority.

Conference Models:

1. **Single Parish Conference:** This is the traditional setting for the Conference. The Conference is based in a parish and generally handles calls within its parish boundaries, sometimes responding to requests from outside its parish boundaries. The parish provides funding, new members, and a place for meeting and activities.
2. **Multiple Parish Conference (non-merger):** This is similar to the traditional setting in #1. The Conference is based in a parish, covers an area that includes one or more additional parishes, receives funding from each of the parishes it covers, draws members from those parishes, and a place for activities. The parish which serves as a base for the Conference usually provides the meeting place for the Conference, but this is not a requirement.
3. **Parish with Multiple Conferences (non-merger):** This situation can be caused by many reasons, but generally is a result of an excessive number of members or a multi-cultural/language base in the parish. For example, the parish may have both an English-speaking Conference and a Spanish-speaking Conference. Both Conferences get their funding and members from the same parish. Each Conference meets separately and has its own set of guidelines. Each Conference is represented in the District Council by its President.
4. **Parish with Single Conference and Single Worship Site (Merged Parishes):** This is the result of a single parish being formed as a merger of two or more parishes. The result of this merger is a single parish and a single worship site with the other worship site(s) being closed. This also may be the result of merging two or more Conferences. The result of this is a single Conference with a larger area of coverage, but similar in structure to #1.
5. **Parish with Single Conference and Multiple Worship Sites (Merged Parishes):** This is the result of a single parish being formed as a merger of two or more parishes. The result of this merger is a single parish and multiple worship sites with, at least, one other worship site remaining open. This also may be the result of merging two or more

Conferences. The result of this is a single Conference with a larger area of coverage, but similar in structure to #2. The Conference receives funding from each of the worship sites it covers, draws members from those worship sites, and a place for activities. In this case, the single Conference may allocate a portion of its members to cover other areas, possibly even having a Vice President responsible for the other areas.

6. **Parish with Multiple Conferences (Merged Parishes):** This is the result of a single parish being formed as a merger of two or more parishes. The result of this merger is a single parish and either a single or multiple worship site(s). This also may be the result of merging of Conferences. This situation can be caused by many reasons, but generally is a result of an excessive number of members or a multi-cultural/language base in the parish. It may also be the result of two or more Conferences not being willing to merge. For example, like #3 above, the parish may have both an English-speaking Conference and a Spanish-speaking Conference. Both Conferences get their funding and members from the same parish. Each Conference meets separately and has its own set of guidelines. Each Conference is represented in the District Council by its President. In this case, each Conference may have a limited area of coverage.
7. **Special Works Conference:** This Conference may or may not be parish-based. The members are drawn together for the purpose of fulfilling a specific ministry only. This typically does not include doing home visits. It is more likely that their purpose is to simply operate a store or other special work. An example is a Conference based in a parish whose only work is to provide for the operation of a thrift store. Another example is a ministry located in a Council Office that provides direct assistance to homeless people; the members are drawn from all over the diocese; they meet regularly and operate the ministry. Funding and members for a Special Works Conference may be drawn from multiple sources.
8. **Single Non-Parish-based Conference:** This is similar in setting to the traditional Conference in its operations. The Conference is NOT based in a parish and generally handles calls within designated boundaries, sometimes responding to requests from outside its boundaries. The Conference provides for its own fund-raising activities, solicits new members from the community, and provides a place for meeting and activities. This type of Conference may be the result of a parish Conference being asked to leave the parish. Another possibility is a Conference started by a District Council in an area of great need where there is no parish for a base.

The above are examples of situations that already exist. Again, as stated in the first paragraph, all Conferences are expected to fulfill the same basic requirements.