



Frederic's e-Gazette

an e-newsletter from

THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF THE U.S.
SOCIETY OF ST. VINCENT DE PAUL



April 4, 2024



John Berry
National President

Challenges of a Vincentian

It has been six months since I assumed the office of National President of the Society. The time has flown by, and it is hard to believe that it has been that long (although to be honest, sometimes it feels like it has been six years!). I have been truly blessed to meet so many of you and I am looking forward to meeting many more of you as we enter the 2024 Regional Meeting 'season' and I get out to many of the meetings.

Since I had been on the Board of Directors for six years when Ralph Middlecamp was President, I was aware of what to expect as National President. But I must say that I have been saddened and disturbed by the number of situations that the Board, the Staff, and I have had to deal with in just six short

months about individuals, Conferences, and Councils that have needed intervention or disciplinary actions.

As I reflect on these situations, many still ongoing, it has become obvious to me that they almost always stem from root cause failures in one or more of three areas: money, spirituality, or governance. In one case it is usually too much – money. And in the other two it is usually not enough – spirituality and governance...

[Read More](#)

Peace and God's Blessings,
John

UPCOMING WEBINARS & EVENTS

Saturday, April 6 • 10 AM CENTRAL

- [Vicentinos Hispano/Latinos P y R / Spanish Q&A Session](#)

Tuesday, April 16 • 10 AM CENTRAL

- [Financial Literacy / Microloans Affinity Group](#)

Tuesday, April 16 • 2 PM CENTRAL

- [Housing \(Brick & Mortar\) Affinity Group](#)

Friday, April 19 • 10 AM CENTRAL

- [Reentry/Prison Ministry Affinity Group](#)

Friday, April 19 • 2 PM CENTRAL

- [Workforce Development / Back2Work Affinity Group](#)

Wednesday, April 24 • 6:30 PM CENTRAL

- [Webinar: Servant Leadership & Our Vocation](#) This workshop focuses on the core spirituality of Servant Leadership in the model given to us by Christ and exemplified by Frédéric and Vincent. You'll learn how deeply embedded servant leadership is in our traditions, and the many opportunities for all of us to seek out, and to serve as leaders.

To view the complete calendar, [click here](#).

GIVING MATTERS

A Spirituality of Fundraising

By Jamie Cappetta, President at USC Caruso Catholic Center

Henri Nouwen writes, "When we give ourselves to planting and nurturing love here on earth, our efforts will reach beyond our own chronological existence." Click here to learn about the spiritual practices of fundraising for your local Conference or Council. [Click here to learn more.](#)

INTERNATIONAL UPDATES

*Pam Matambanadzo,
International Territorial Vice President – America 1*

We have been receiving calls seeking some guidance on the situation in Haiti. Vincentians want to know if they can send funds to help. It is difficult to answer this without first giving some background to fully understand the magnitude of the reality on the ground. [Keep Reading](#)

VISION SVdP UPDATES

VisionSVdP is a synodal listening process that will take place over two years. We ask that you use this prayer at all Vincentian meetings to help guide our conversations.

[The VisionSVdP Prayer](#)

[Oración de la VisiónSVdP](#)

Come, Holy Spirit, open our eyes, our hearts, and our imaginations to Your inspiration as we embark on our VisionSVdP journey and seek to discern the Father's holy will for the Society of St. Vincent de Paul and how it will adapt to a changing world.

Come, Holy Spirit, transform our doubts, ignite our zeal. Help us discern new and innovative ways to bring more people into the joy of service in the Society of St. Vincent de Paul.

Come, Holy Spirit, grant us the simplicity to share honestly with each other, the humility to serve a mission greater than ourselves, and the gentleness to listen to each other without judgment.

Amen

Ven, Espíritu Santo, abre nuestros ojos, nuestros corazones y nuestra imaginación a Tu inspiración Divina mientras nos embarcamos en nuestro viaje hacia la VisiónSVdP y lograr discernir en la santa voluntad del Padre, en cómo se adaptará la Sociedad de San Vicente de Paúl a un mundo cambiante.

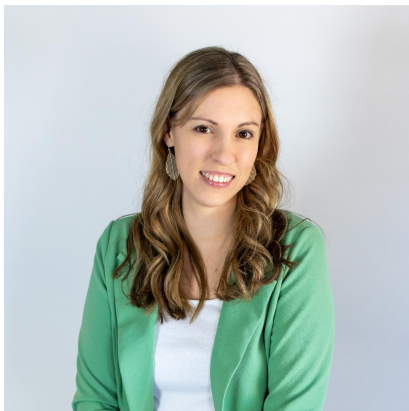
Ven, Espíritu Santo, transforma nuestras dudas, ilumina nuestro fervor. Ayúdanos a discernir con formas nuevas e innovadoras de llevar a más personas a la alegría del servicio en la Sociedad de San Vicente de Paúl.

Ven, Espíritu Santo, concédenos la sencillez de compartir honestamente los unos con los otros; la humildad para servir a una misión más grande que nosotros mismos; y la gracia de escucharnos unos a otros sin juzgarnos.

Amén

You will be hearing much about VisionSVdP over the next two plus years; this is one of the most important and impactful things we have undertaken as a Society in the last 25 years. And it will take the commitment, dedication, and full participation of every Vincentian at every level of the Society to make sure that the work we do will enable us to adapt to a changing world and ensure that our work and our relevance in supporting His people in need and growing in our own holiness and spirituality will continue for generations to come. [Click to read more.](#)

NATIONAL COUNCIL UPDATES



Welcome Kristen Blacksher!

Kristen Blacksher is a Missouri State University alumna, St. Louis native, wife of 14 years, and proud mom to two young sons. She is the new Digital Communications Manager for the National Council of the US Society of St. Vincent de Paul.

Kristen is an experienced creative professional with a background in nonprofit marketing and communications. She's previously worked with the Daughters of Charity and the Sisters of Charity Federation, Habitat for Humanity, Bishop Ward Catholic High School and several other nonprofit groups. Most recently, she was a wedding photographer at the Lake of the Ozarks in Central Missouri for 6 years. Now that her family has

moved back to the St. Louis area, she is thrilled to be back in nonprofit communication and serve the great people of SVdP.

Kristen looks forward to bringing the E-Gazette to you every week and helping provide articles and reflections that further your Vincentian charism and faith. Don't be surprised to find her with a camera in hand, interviewing Vincentians to tell the story of their faith in action!



ADAPT
to a changing world

2024 National Assembly

Call for Presentations! Have a workshop or best practice that you'd like to share with the Society at their upcoming Phoenix National Assembly? We'd like to hear from you, review the [Guide to Submitting a Workshop](#) or [complete the online form here](#).

Vicentinos Hispano/Latinos P y R

El Comité de Renovación y Entrega de Formación los invita a participar en una sesión de Preguntas y Repuestas en Zoom. Esta reunión se llevará a cabo el día 6 de marzo a las 10:00 AM tiempo central. [Por favor regístrense](#). ¡Allí nos vemos!

The Formation Renewal and Delivery Committee invites everyone to a Spanish Q & A session on Zoom. The meeting will be on Saturday April 6, 2024 at 10:00 AM Central. [Please register](#). See you there!

National Council Seeks New Chief Executive Officer

With Dave Barringer's retirement at the end of this fiscal year, the National Council seeks a CEO with the management experience, cultural sensitivity, and spiritual grounding to be the leader our extraordinary mission deserves. [Click here](#) for full job description and application information.

National Council Job Openings

It's a busy time at the National Council office, with several open positions now posted. We're seeking qualified candidates for the following roles:

- Accounting Associate
- Executive Administrative Associate
- Director of Program and Strategic Development

Complete job descriptions and application information are available [on our website](#).

DISASTER SERVICES UPDATES

In Tragedy, Homes Represent Hope

In March of 2023, devastating tornadoes hit the town of Rolling Fork, MS. In the wake of a natural disaster, families living in poverty are often the most impacted, with fewer resources to rely upon.

According to Elizabeth Disco-Shearer, CEO of SVdP USA Disaster Services Corporation (DSC), disasters often hit hardest those who are already marginalized, rural, or low-income. In the aftermath, renters are particularly vulnerable, facing a scarcity of affordable housing options.

Collaborative efforts made by the DSC aim to address these vulnerabilities head-on, ensuring that no one is left behind in the recovery process. Shearer and Regional Program Manager Cathy Garcia joined forces with local Vincentians leaders Carrie Johnson-Robinson, Tommy Jordon, and Donovan Guilbeau to assess the impactful work being carried out by the SVdP District Council of Jackson, in partnership with DSC's local staff and Rolling Fork Rising... [Read more](#)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q: Do all new programs of a Conference have to be approved by the Council, or can a Conference Board approve new programs, without the approval of Council? I ask this question because in the Governance: Council and Board handbook it reads, "No program should be allowed to start without Board approval. This includes both those started by Vincentians and those started by employees."

A: For most Conferences (those using Bylaws document 1), the Board of Directors of the Council (if no formal Board of Directors exists, then the Council itself) is the governing body and should give formal approval of new programs within the Council. The term "Board" is sometimes used informally among Conference members to refer to the slate of officers. Conferences generally do not have Boards. The handbook does not use the word that way. The handbook refers formally to the Board of Directors.

For some Conferences that are separately incorporated (those using Bylaws document 2 or document 10), the Conference is the governing body and does not require Council approval for its programs. The bylaws define the governance responsibilities.

Q: Are employees of St. Vincent Thrift Stores allowed to be voting members at the local Conference?

A: Thrift store employees are not allowed to vote at Conference meetings unless the store employee is also an active member of the Conference. They are not to vote on issues that may affect their jobs.

To view this week's Q&A, including the Spanish Translation, [click here](#). Find the full [Q&A Index](#) here, and visit the [SVdP Thrift Store website](#) for stores-related Q&As.

Submit your questions to Pam Hudson Johnson at phudson@svdpusa.org

POVERTY PROGRAMS UPDATES

Systemic Change 2024 Grant Program

Systemic Change is a core value of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul. Systemic Change works to remove the conditions that hold poverty in place. The ideal Systemic Change program uses Vincentian knowledge, and validation from people in need, to design programs that have wide scale and sustained impact on a community.

The National Council will make one-year grants of up to \$20,000 to support Systemic Change projects at Councils or Conferences. Find the grant application form, criteria, timeline, and [more details on our website here](#). Completed forms are due on Friday, June 14. All are encouraged to apply. However, winners of the 2023 Systemic Change Grants are not eligible to apply in 2024.

Poverty Programs Affinity Group Kick-Off Meetings

National committees have been realigned to foster greater communications and remove barriers that discourage program effectiveness. Some committees, like Voice of the Poor, have a new name – Voice for the Poor.

Many task forces have now become Affinity Groups. These new groups will carry on many of the functions of their prior task forces, like encouraging program growth and developing best practices and programmatic excellence.

Affinity groups increase participation to a wider audience of Councils and Conferences, not limiting it to those serving on the task force. If your Council or Conference has one of the following programs, is thinking about starting a program, or you just want to learn more about a subject area, please join us for the following kick-off meetings:

- [Financial Literacy / Microloans](#) – April 16 | 11am EST
- [Housing \(Brick & Mortar\)](#) – April 16 | 3pm EST
- [Reentry/Prison Ministry](#) – April 19 | 11am EST
- [Workforce Development / Back2Work](#) – April 19 | 3pm EST
- Getting Ahead – Join the next Practitioner Call May 20th – Link coming soon

If you are not able to attend, please register and we will send out the recording within a week. This helps us to determine future interest.

Getting Ahead Webinar Training Spring/Summer 2024

Conferences and Councils across the country are running *Getting Ahead in a Just-Getting-By World*, a comprehensive program that empowers individuals to build their own personal plans for economic security and create Systemic Change. The online Facilitator Training Webinars will equip you with all the knowledge and resources to start a Getting Ahead program in your area or get involved with an existing program.

Training will consist of two sessions, running three hours each, on Wednesday, May 1 and 8 from 10:30AM – 1:30PM Central. Registration will close Tuesday, April 23 at 12:00 PM CENTRAL. Reading and session expectations will be emailed once your registration is approved. [Register Here](#)

Getting Ahead in a Just-Gettin'-By World is a licensed work of aha! Process, Inc. The National Council of the U.S., Society of St. Vincent de Paul is a licensed provider of facilitator training for the Getting Ahead program.

Questions Regarding Poverty Programs?

Contact Steve Uram, National Director of Poverty Programs
(314) 576-3993 ext. 207
suram@svdpusa.org

GOVERNANCE UPDATES

2024 Conference Hard Copy Report Forms Now Available

2024 Conference annual and quarterly hard copy report forms in both English and Spanish are now available on the national website. [Click here.](#)

Am I A Vincentian?

This week we offer a personal perspective on an important question which is asked frequently: “How do you get the Conferences and the members to comply with the Rule? [Click here for thoughts on this question](#) from Mike Syslo, member and past Chair of the National Governance Committee.

Questions Regarding Governance and Membership Services?

Contact Pam Hudson Johnson, National Director of Governance & Membership Services
(314) 576-3993 ext. 214
phudson@svdpusa.org

FORMATION AND SPIRITUALITY UPDATES

Formation Video Library

- [Fred Talks — Spirituality & Heritage in small doses](#)
- [Servant Leadership — Recorded Workshops](#)
- [Spirituality & Formation](#)
- [Vincentian Heritage & History](#)

Formation Resources Quick Reference

- [Reflections](#) for Conference meetings
- [Contemplations](#) for individuals
- [Resources](#) for Formation Teams and for Members
- [Materials Store](#) to purchase books

Questions Regarding Spirituality and Formation?

Contact Tim Williams, National Vincentian Formation Director
(314) 576-3993 ext. 207
twilliams@svdpusa.org

STORES CORNER

3 Ways to Build a Dream Team and Keep Rockstar Employees

*By Brooke Trick-Senior, Director of Retail Operations
North Central Region – District Council of Madison*

Hiring and retention are hurdles for many organizations as we navigate this modern work environment. Businesses are becoming more creative in how they hire and retain employees. Employees' views and expectations of the work environment are shifting. Burnout and dissatisfaction at work are high. As employers, we need to change course to a more people-centric work culture.

Here are three ways to keep your employees engaged, increase morale and improve loyalty while adding to your bottom line.... [Read More](#)

If you have a topic that you would like addressed in a future Stores Corner article, please e-mail [Jeff Beamguard](#), Director of Stores Support.

VINCENTIAN PRAYER LIST

Are you or another Vincentian in need of prayers from fellow SVdP members? Send the prayer intention to Pam Hudson Johnson at phudson@svdpusa.org and we will add the name to the [Vincentian Prayer List](#). Thank you and God Bless.

SOME VINCENTIANS AREN'T GETTING THE E-GAZETTE!

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