



BOARD RESOLUTION CONFERENCE AND COUNCIL SPENDING

At the Thursday, July 27, 2023, meeting of Board of Directors of the Society of St. Vincent De Paul Archdiocesan Council of St. Louis the following recommendation was proposed and approved.

WHEREAS, At the Thursday June 29, 2023, Board Designated Funds (BDF) Task Force meeting, the Task Force proposed revising policy for Conference and Council spending, and

RESOLVED to establish policy for Conference and Council spending as follows:

BACKGROUND: Jesus said to him, *"If you wish to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to [the] poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me."* [Mt 19: 21]

We do what we do for the person of Jesus who is, in truth, the flesh-and-blood neighbor in need standing before us. However, we cannot do this well if, like the rich young man in the Gospel, we see our material gifts as the only things we can offer. The Rule tells us that "Vincentians should never forget that giving love, talents, and time is more important than giving money." [3.14] We begin to accept that when we recognize that everything is in His hands, and we are only His poor instruments. This level of trust in Divine Providence can most easily be summed up in Frederic's daily prayer: "O God, I will what You will, when You will, in whatever way You will, because You will.

Unfortunately, our material possessions – and in particular, our tendency to focus on financial strength – often mislead us into placing too much emphasis on what we can do in terms of material help, to the detriment of our presence, our prayers, and our love.

WHEREAS, SVDP currently has 43 donation bins at various locations throughout the Archdiocese. These bins are opportunities for Conferences, Parishes, and Community Partners to generate cash while helping neighbors in need and the thrift stores, and

WHEREAS, there is a question of whether Conferences/District Councils should draw funds from the Archdiocesan Council when they have sufficient funds within their District Council to care for their neighbors in need, and

WHEREAS, both Scripture and the Rule guide us in answering this question:

- *Brothers and Sisters: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each must do as already determined, without sadness or compulsion. For God loves a cheerful giver. Moreover, God is able to make every grace abundant for you, so that in all things, always having all you need, you may have an abundance for every good work. Cor 9:6-10*

- Manual Chapter 2 p 26: The society has held from the beginning that the funds donated to the Conferences belong to the poor.
- Rule I.3.14: The Society's funds must be handled with the utmost care, prudence and generosity. Money must not be hoarded. Decisions regarding the use of money and property are to be made after reflection in the light of the Gospel and Vincentian principles.
- Manual 2.1 para 4: Donations to Conferences are meant to address today's needs (Rule: Part III, Statute 24). It is wrong for a Conference to seek financial security by building up a large balance for the needs of the future. Conference balances generally should not exceed what they expect to spend during an average quarter. Surplus funds should be shared generously with more needy Conferences or the special works of the District Council.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of the St. Louis Archdiocesan Council of the Society of St. Vincent De Paul approves the following guidelines regarding conference spending:

1. The Society of St Vincent de Paul is to spend the money made available by donors or by Conference fundraising to take care of the poor;
2. Members of the Society and staff rely on the providence of God to provide what they need;
3. We will never have enough money to care for all the needs of all the poor;
4. Conferences and Councils are to avoid "saving money for a rainy day" – a guideline is that Conferences are expected to have no more than 1 quarter's worth of cash on hand;
5. Conferences should always seek a way to "yes". When unable to get to "yes" based on their own resources they can seek funding (twinning) from their District President.

AND FURTHERMORE, WHEREAS, there is a question about the role of the Archdiocesan Council and the District Council in funding Conference activities, and

WHEREAS, both Scripture and the Rule guide us in answering this question:

- *He scatters abroad, he gives to the poor; his righteousness endures forever. The one who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed and increase the harvest of your righteousness. Cor 9:6-10*
- Rule 3.9: Subsidiarity and Freedom of Action: The Society embraces the Principle of Subsidiarity as its basic standard of operation. Decisions are made as close as possible to the area of activity to ensure that the local environment and circumstances are taken into consideration.
- Statute 16: The Catechism of the Catholic Church defines the principle of subsidiarity: "A community of a higher order should not interfere in the life of a community of a lower order, depriving the latter of its functions, but rather should support it in case of need and help to co-ordinate its activity with the activities of the rest of society, always with a view to the common good. (CCC 1883)
- Rule Part III Statute 24: The authority to manage the Society's assets remains exclusively with Councils that may delegate this authority in accordance with the Rule and Statutes of the Society. Faithful to the spirit of non-accumulation of wealth the next higher Council may determine annually the percentage of the funds of each Council or Conference within their area that may be made available to them. The next higher Council will work with the Conference or Council to determine an appropriate reserve for unanticipated events and direct the allocation of funds which exceed the anticipated demands, which may not be hoarded as a capital sum, to the service of the poor in their own area or abroad in the poorest areas of the world.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of the St. Louis Archdiocesan Council of the Society of St. Vincent De Paul approves the following guidelines regarding Archdiocesan Council use of donated funds.

The Board of Directors approves allocation of reserves to various budgets to support the efforts of the Archdiocesan Council to help those District Councils with Conferences who are unable, on their own, to care for the poor who come to their door. Bearing in mind the role of Subsidiarity, the guidelines for how this money is used is proposed as follows:

1. Conferences have a prime responsibility to raise money, make decisions about what can be done to care for the poor, and spend this money to care for the poor.
2. The Archdiocesan Council also raises money from its Development efforts and Program incomes.
3. All money raised is an asset of the Society for use to help the poor.
4. If a Conference has insufficient resources to adequately help the poor it should first seek help through the local District President. Conferences should refer to the Twinning Policy for twinning procedures.
5. Rule Part III Statute 24 gives the District Council the Authority to manage the Society's Assets within its District Conferences.
6. The Archdiocesan Council primarily provides governance, reporting, tax preparation, guidance, formation, and support to the Conferences through the District Councils.
7. Both the District Council and the Archdiocesan Council support, but do not supplant, the work and funding of the Conferences.



Board Secretary

Date: July 27, 2023