



The Society Scoop | Oct. 2024 | Issue 10



1310 Papin St., St. Louis, MO 63103 | <https://svdpstlouis.org>

A Message From Father Dan Thies, C.M.

SVdP St. Louis Spiritual Advisor



The Harvest Is Great, But The Laborers Are Few: Soybeans

A couple of weeks ago, I went to Chicago to visit some family. On the drive, I couldn't help but notice the abundance of corn and other crops in the fields along the beautiful drive on northbound 55.

I began to think that in a matter of weeks the farmers are going to be out in their combines day and night harvesting the crops and fields that has been nurtured and grown by God.

When I first entered the seminary in Perryville, Missouri, we were told that in the days ahead we would be "walking the beans." Being from Chicago, I had really never lived on a farm or been around one. I was used to pavement, not prairies.

Sure enough, about the third day I was told that after class, we as a group, would be walking the beans. Lord, what does this entail?

Read More from Father
Dan

A Message from John Foppe

SVdP St. Louis Executive Director



Dear Vincentian Friends,

This past year has truly felt like "the perfect storm," bringing cash flow challenges to the Council. A significant bequest was depleted faster than expected as we focused on serving the poor, and changes in the thrift industry, combined with rising inflation, wage increases, and staff turnover, compounded the situation.

However, we've weathered the storm. Thanks to the generosity of our donors, we surpassed our FY24 fundraising goal, raising more than \$3 million. The SVdP Board approved the FY25 budget on September 26, ensuring continued resources for those in need.

Updates:

- The FY25 budget will prioritize essentials like beds and donated goods. A new grant model will begin in early 2025, supporting Conferences with limited resources.
- The Voice for the Poor Committee is considering expanding the credit empowerment program, and has applied for outside grants to do so.
- A new Committee for Vincentian Vocation and Vitality will focus on nurturing our Vincentian spirituality.
- We continue to support parish realignments through "All Things New."
- SVdP USA is rolling out "Vision SVdP," with National President John Berry encouraging all to participate in Listening Sessions.
- Our Council is planning the Spring Assembly for April 26, 2025—save the date!
- In FY24, we hosted 32 formation and training events and provided support to Conferences in need.
- Our Council includes over 3,000 Vincentians. **We are one mission with many hands.**

Moving Forward:

- Our accounting team is nearly complete, and financials are being delivered.
- We are optimizing resources in our stores to increase revenue. For example, expanding our clothing section in Creve Coeur has already boosted sales.
- Our fundraising goal for next year is to raise again nearly \$3 million.
- Outside auditors have recommended improvements to Conference Accounting, and we will provide updates soon.
- All Vincentians must comply with the Archdiocese's "Safeguarding God's Children" requirements. Visit www.preventandprotectstl.org to ensure your records are up to date.
- ServWare has proven beneficial for Conference and Neighbor reporting, and we encourage all Conferences to use it.

Although this year has been challenging, we have made progress, and things are turning around. Throughout our 180-year history, we've faced tough times and emerged stronger. Our pillars of spirituality, friendship, and service remain our foundation. With your dedication to the mission, we will continue to make a meaningful impact in the lives of those we serve.

As Isaiah 25:4 reminds us, "You have been a refuge for the poor, a refuge for the needy in their distress, a shelter from the storm." Thank you for everything you do. You are the heart and soul of SVdP, and I am deeply grateful for your dedication and support.

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Thank you,

John

Being Neighborly

When shortening the term "Neighbors in Need", we kindly ask everyone to refer to those we serve as "Neighbors" rather than using the abbreviation "NINs."

While we understand the desire for brevity, the abbreviation can unintentionally come across as derogatory, which we want to avoid. By using "Neighbors," we not only maintain respect and dignity for those we serve, but also keep our language consistent with our mission. Thank you for helping us foster a more inclusive and positive environment.



We Are One Mission, Many Hands



At the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, we are united by a single mission: to seek and serve all in need so that people are inspired to grow closer to Christ.

Each of us, with our unique talents and passions, plays a vital role in fulfilling this purpose. Whether it's through visiting with and helping those in need, to serving in a Society leadership role or on the Board, or supporting Vincentians while working in the Council office, or donating to fund the mission, we all contribute. **We are one mission, many hands.**

In our work at SVdP, we can live this out by supporting and appreciating the whole mission and how it works together. We can seek opportunities to collaborate, offering special talents and skills, and always keeping the mission at the heart of what you do.

In your life, extend kindness and service to those around you, ensure the spirit of charity reaches beyond the organization and into everyday interactions.

Live the mission. **Together.**
Because together, we can make a difference.

FY25 District Presidents

We are thrilled to introduce and celebrate our FY25 District Presidents, dedicated leaders who embody the spirit of service and compassion central to the Society of St. Vincent de Paul. Their commitment to serving those in need and guiding our local conferences is inspiring. As we embark on a new fiscal year, we are excited to witness the positive impact they will undoubtedly make in our communities.





continuing the legacy of service and hope that defines our mission.

We thank them for their continued dedicated service to the Society

Bill Cornwell, Northwest District President
Mary Murphy, Festus District President
Mike Carasone, Gravois District President
Melynie Blackshear, Mid Central District President
John Stephan, North Central District President
Jeanette M. Aubuchon, North District President
David Little, South District President
Clay Whitener, Southeast District President
R.B. Clark III, South Central District President
Rene' Lorio, Southwest District President
Ruth Klenke, West District President

Vision SVdP



What is Vision SVdP?

Vision SVdP is a conversation about our future .

..

What are we doing right? . . What might we be doing better? . .

What's enriching your spiritual life as a Vincentian? . . What's

stressing your spiritual life as a Vincentian?

National President John Berry is asking all Vincentians to hold Listening Sessions to allow everyone to voice their ideas about ***How can the Society of St. Vincent de Paul adapt to a changing world?***

Here is the link to Archbishop Bellisario's 3 1/2 minute video introduction to the Vision Listening Sessions: <https://ssvpusa.org/vision-svdP-resources>.

[Read More About Your Conference's Participation](#)

Safeguarding Requirements for Vincentians

If you completed the Protecting God's Children program for your parish, the CYC, or your school 10, 15, or even 20 years ago—thank you! This program, which began in 2003, has since expanded to cover all vulnerable individuals. In 2020, the Archdiocese added two new components: Mandated Reporting and the Code of Ethical Conduct.

All three components are now required for Active and Associate Vincentians, and it's important that everyone stays compliant.

You can easily check your records and schedule any necessary training by visiting the Prevent & Protect website: <https://www.preventandprotectstl.org/>. Use the same Username and Password from your Protecting God's Children account or create a new one if needed. When registering for the first time, use the password: [stlprotect](#).

Once logged in, scroll down to the "MY TRAINING" box. Click "Completed" to find the dates when you finished each part of the required training and print your certificates. If you need to complete a component, click "Due." The sessions are short and can be done online from the comfort of your home.

One Mission, Many Hands Conference Spotlight - St. Ann in Normandy



Saint Ann Conference in Normandy

The Vincentians of St. Ann's Conference in Normandy recently stepped up to support a family of five in desperate need. After surviving an abusive relationship and a devastating house fire that destroyed all their belongings, the family spent five difficult months seeking shelter with relatives, friends, and even living in their car. When they finally saved enough for a deposit and monthly rent on a house within the St. Ann Conference area, they found themselves in a home large enough for their needs but lacking essential furniture, appliances, and air conditioning.

With temperatures soaring into the 90s, St. Ann's Vincentians immediately secured a window AC unit through the Council to bring some relief. They also provided vouchers for furniture and clothing, and the conference purchased and delivered a stove and refrigerator to make the home more livable. When the family needed beds, St. Ann's reached out to the Disaster Relief Committee, which generously provided five beds for the children and parents.

In a follow-up visit, St Ann's Vincentians were heartened to see the family beginning to regain a sense of normalcy. With most of their immediate needs met, the family was well on their way to recovery, with only a washer and dryer remaining to be purchased.

Thanks to the dedication of the St. Ann Conference, this family has been able to rebuild their lives with dignity and hope.

This is a great example of the Society working together as one. We are one mission, many hands!

Please share a story from your Conference with us. Email Gena Bast at genab@svdpstl.org.



From one of our SVdP St. Louis Thrift Shoppers:

"I was at the Lemay Thrift Store on a chilly, rainy day. There was a woman checking out in front of me. She walked with a walker that was loaded up with bags—it appeared they held all of her worldly possessions, and she was unhoused. She stepped up to the cashier with only one item—a St. Louis Blues winter hat. The cashier very kindly told her there would be no charge and said, 'We all need to be warm on a chilly day.'

The woman was grateful and sat on the bench in the front of the store. She proudly put on her new hat and proclaimed how great it felt. Her pants were torn and the store manager quickly offered to find her another pair of pants."

District Meetings

- **North**, Saturday, October 12, Blessed Teresa of Calcutta, 8:00 am Mass.
- **Northwest**, Wednesday, October 16, Sacred Heart, Troy, KC Hall 6:30 pm.
- **Gravois**, Wednesday, October 23, St. Simon 6:00 pm.
- **North Central**, Thursday, October 24, Our Lady of Lourdes, 6:00 pm.
- **Festus**, Saturday, October 26, St. Joseph, Imperial, 8:00 am Mass.
- **West**, Sunday, October 27, Immaculate Conception, Union 1:00 pm.
- **South**, Saturday, November 2, Immaculate Heart of Mary, 8:00 am Mass
- **Mid Central**, Wednesday, November 6, Annunziata, 6:15 pm
- **Southeast**, Thursday, November 21, Immaculate Conception, Park Hills, 6:00 pm.

Updates

Hello, Vincentians!

As we are about to complete FY24 and to begin FY25, I wanted to provide a few Council updates I believe you'll find useful:

1. On September 26, your SVdP Board of Directors met for the last FY24 meeting. Most notably, the FY25 budget was passed which puts your Council on a plan to achieve success in the coming year.
2. This new FY25 budget allows for SVdP to switch to a grants model for Conferences in need of financial help to support Neighbors. These grants will be available in early 2025. The Executive Committee and the Program Committee will finalize the process, but the grants should:
 - a. Require less Conference paperwork.
 - b. Allow those closest to the need to determine the best way to help, as our Rule indicates.
 - c. Create a more equitable fund distribution to Conferences with few resources.
 - d. Manage expectations about the support Council can provide and can help Conferences budget appropriately.
3. As we close out this fiscal year, the Council will provide a limited supply of bed and donated goods vouchers to Districts before the end of October. There are no delivery vouchers, but Conferences can elect to pay for Neighbor delivery if needed.
4. Spring Assembly is scheduled for April 26, 2025. Please save the date.
5. All Things New mergers continue. During FY24 the Council submitted Conference closure



5. All things new merge continue. During FY 21, the Council submitted Conference closure paperwork to SVdP National for 24 former Conferences.

6. Our auditors have made suggestions for our Conference Activity Reports. These will be reviewed by SVdP's Finance Committee and District Presidents. Stay tuned for more information which will be sent to all Conference Presidents and Treasurers.

7. Please update your membership list and officer list in ServWare. This greatly helps record keeping.

8. We are changing the sales floor of some SVdP thrift stores to increase their profitability and to best support our mission. For example, the Christy Store is a "Buy-by-pound" Thrift Outlet and the Creve Coeur Store has an expanded clothing department.

a. And going forward, SVdP will be more selective about donations to the stores to ensure they are quality items that provide our Neighbors and customers the best possible and dignified shopping experience.

Please call me with any questions,

Julie Komanetsky

This letter is a repeat of the letter emailed September 27

Reminder: Conference Audits

In reviewing financial procedures across the St. Louis Council, it has come to our attention that we do not have a standard policy for conducting conference audits. The section titled "**Accountability**" in the **Rule**, and specifically **Statute 27**, state that audits are a part of maintaining fiscal integrity at all levels of the Society and that Council Presidents should require audits of conference's finances under their purview as deemed appropriate. This phrase deemed appropriate has caused much confusion and interpretation across the community. Therefore, we are establishing a policy floor for the conduct of audits.

Within the St. Louis Council, audits will be required if there is a change of Presidents, a change of Treasurers or a lapse of one year since the last audit. Audits should be recorded on the enclosed form (Worksheet and Verification Form) and made part of the permanent Conference files as well as forwarding a copy to the applicable District President.

Who conducts the audit? At the Conference level, the audit may be conducted by:

- Two or more members of the conference who are not currently holding office.
- Two or more disinterested individuals who are members of the parish
- Two or more Vincentians from another Conference

The conference audit should be conducted in accordance with the **Worksheet for Conference Audits**. The completed **Audit Verification Form** should be forwarded to the District President and to Steve Rupp at steve@svdpstl.org

Worksheet for Conference
Audits

Audit Verification
Form



The Credit Empowerment program is a Vincentian-run program that will:

1. Convert a Neighbor's high-interest loan(s) totaling \$3,000 or less to a Credit Empowerment loan at Midwest BankCentre with a rate of approximately 7%.
2. Provide financial mentoring periodically during the term of the Credit Empowerment loan.

To be eligible, a Neighbor must have monthly income that exceeds monthly expenses, once the low-interest payment replaces the high-interest.

Two Neighbor Stories:

- "Amanda" was injured in a car accident and temporarily unable to work. She took out a \$1,200 loan from an online tribal lender. She was expected to pay back \$6,428 over the course of 10 months. That's \$5,228 in interest on a \$1,200 loan. **By converting to a Credit Empowerment loan, Amanda's interest dropped from \$5,228 to \$43.**
- "Jake" took out a \$5,370 loan from a national car title lender. He was expected to pay back \$28,715 over the course of 4 years. That's \$23,345 in interest on a \$5,370 loan. Jake's loan was converted to a \$3,000 Credit Empowerment loan, with his Conference paying the balance over \$3,000. **Jake is paying a total of \$155 in interest on his Credit Empowerment loan, compared to \$23,345 on his title loan.**

What Can You Do?

- The most important first step is to ask the Neighbor on the home visit: *"Do you have any high-interest loans? Because we have a program that might be able to help."*
- If the Neighbor appears to be a candidate, the Conference completes a brief [online intake form](#) and walks through the [list of documents](#) that the Neighbor must bring to the Credit Empowerment budgeting meeting.
- Two Credit Empowerment Team members—Vincentians with financial backgrounds—meet with the Neighbor to prepare a budget and determine ability to repay a Credit Empowerment loan.
- If eligible, the Credit Empowerment Team members accompany the Neighbor through the loan conversion at Midwest BankCentre and hold three financial mentoring sessions with the Neighbor.

To Get Started

- Contact credit@svdpstl.org or call Mary Kreienkamp at 314.852.2305.
- See the [Credit Empowerment Program Handbook](#) on the St. Louis Council website for more info.



We Vincentians strive to embody a set of virtues that reflect the spirit of St. Vincent de Paul and his profound commitment to serving others. These virtues serve as guiding principles in our mission of charity and social justice.

Simplicity

St. Vincent often said that simplicity was his favorite virtue. Simplicity is expressing ourselves honestly, with frankness, integrity, and genuineness. It is, as St. Vincent put it, “saying things simply, without duplicity or subtlety, being straightforward, with no evasion or subterfuge.”

Humility

St. Augustine once called humility “the foundation of all the other virtues.” With humility, Vincentians accept the truth about our frailties, gifts talents and charism, yet know that all that God gives us is for others and that we can achieve nothing of eternal value without His grace. St. Louise de Marillac suggested that “humility is the knowledge of truth.”

Gentleness

Our gentleness is expressed through a friendly assurance and invincible goodwill, which mean kindness, sweetness, and patience in our relationship with others. St. Vincent reminds us that this must be both interior and exterior; in other words, we don’t simply act patient and kind, we must truly be patient and kind!

Selflessness

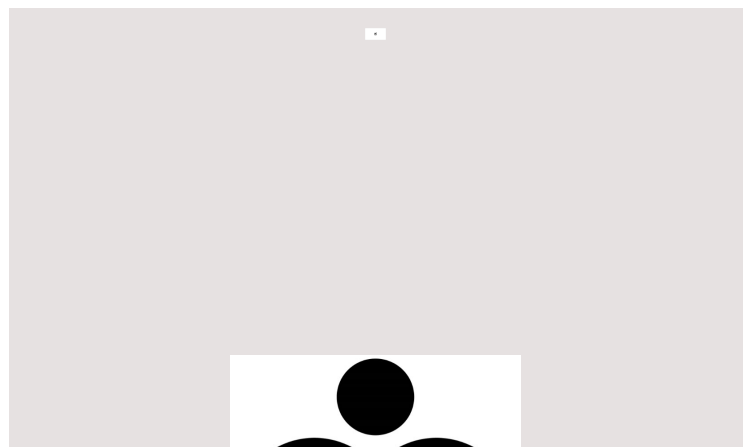
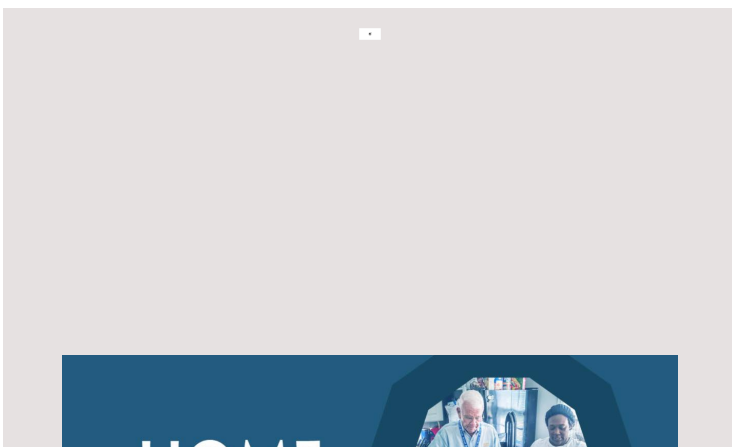
Dying to our ego with a life of self-sacrifice; members share their time, their possessions, their talents and themselves in a spirit of generosity.

Zeal

Zeal, which St. Vincent once described as “the soul of all the virtues,” is a passion for the full flourishing and eternal happiness of every person. We must be careful not to ever separate our zeal from our love of the neighbor, lest it become scolding, or what Bl. Frederic called “the proud pharisaism of an indiscreet zeal.”

<https://members.ssvpusa.org/our-spirituality/the-vincentian-virtues/>

Upcoming Formation Opportunities



HOME VISITS WORKSHOP



Tues., Oct. 22 Home Visit Workshop at Immaculate Heart of Mary in New Melle 6 - 8:30 p.m.

"From the Society's beginning, the central and most basic activity of Conferences has been the visitation of the needy in their homes.

This is the clearest symbol of our Vincentian charism, which dictates the highest respect for the dignity of the poor." (Manual, 2.1)

[Click Here To Register](#)



Wed., Oct. 16 Pregnancy Care Partnership on Zoom 1 - 2:00 p.m.

Working with a pregnant neighbor?

Join us on the third Wednesday of each month to learn more about the Pregnancy Care Partnership.

[Click Here To Get Zoom Link](#)



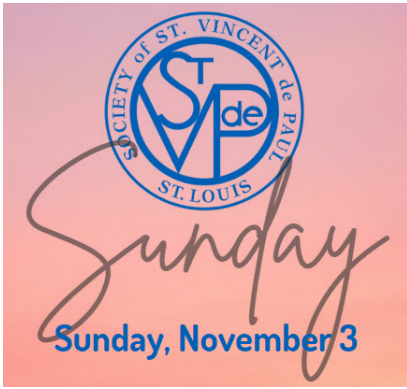
Tues., Oct. 29 Reflect, Plan, And Inspire: Elevating The Friends Of The Poor Walk 1 - 2:00 p.m.

Calling all Walk Coordinators and Vincentians. Thank you for making the Friends of the Poor Walk a huge success! Your dedication truly shines.

Now, let's build on that success! Join us for a Zoom meeting to discuss how we can expand the Walk and inspire even more participation next year. Whether you coordinated a Walk or are considering it for the future, this is a great opportunity to share ideas, lessons learned, and strategies to make a bigger impact.

Let's come together to make next year's Walk even more impactful!

[Click Here to Register](#)



St. Vincent de Paul Sunday is a great opportunity to:

- Let people in your parish know about the Society of St. Vincent de Paul.
- Encourage parishioners to get involved and join.
- Raise money for your Conference.

Now is a good time to speak with your Pastor to plan parish activities to celebrate the work of the Society and familiarize parishioners with the work of your Conference.

These activities may include:

- A pulpit talk
- A special collection after mass
- A donut/coffee gathering to speak to fellow parishioners about the Society, etc.
-

Pilgrimage to France and St. Vincent de Paul Heritage Tour

March 24 - April 3, 2025

With Spiritual Leader, Father Matthew O'Toole

The tour features:

Shrines of St. Vincent de Paul, Bl. Frederic Ozanam and St. Catherine Laboure
Sainte-Chapelle
Restored Notre Dame Cathedral
Shrine of the Miraculous Medal
Basilica of Sacre Coeur
Mont Saint-Michel
Lisieux and the Little Flower
Winery Tour
Our Lady of Montligeon
Normandy Beaches
Pointe du Hoc
Chartres Cathedral
Palace of Versailles
Paris and Seine River Cruise with Dinner



[Click Here To Learn More](#)

Volunteer Grant Writer Needed

Do you have Grant Writing Experience?

The Council Office is looking for a volunteer grant specialist to assist with formulating and researching grant requests.

4-8 hour shifts available

Interested?

Contact: John Fitzpatrick (johnc@svdpstl.org) or John McCall (johnm@svdpstl.org)

Friends of the Poor Walk Photos

The Friends of the Poor Walk 2024 was a huge success! It was a beautiful day filled with fun, Vincentian spirit, and generosity. Thank you to all the SVdP Walkers and supporters who came out to help make a difference in the lives of those in need!

This year's results:

- 11 Walk Sites
- 37 Conferences
- 1,144 Walkers
- \$138,727 raised



immacolata



North District



St. Monica



St. Anthony Padua, High Ridge



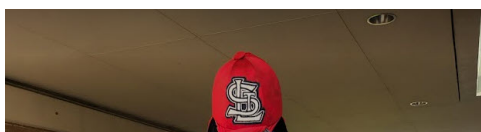
St. Clement/St. Elizabeth Mother of John the Baptist



St. Clement/St. Elizabeth Mother of John the Baptist



Northwest District





Northwest District



St. Clement/St. Elizabeth Mother of John the Baptist



St. Paul Students created art for the Walk!



Queen of All Saints



Queen of All Saints Video



North District



Northwest District



Queen of All Saints

Hope & Healing: Facing the Challenge of Suicide

HOPE & HEALING

FACING THE CHALLENGE OF SUICIDE

PREVENTION & ACCOMPANIMENT
6:30-8:00PM

OCT 17: ST. PAUL, FENTON
15 FOREST KNOLL DR,
FENTON, MO 63026

Join us for an expert panel discussion
on suicide prevention, lethal means safety,
therapeutic accompaniment & end-of-life moral issues,
including church teaching on suicide



KYLE DOOLEY



ZANE MAUS
SAINT LOUIS COUNSELING



FR. PETER FONSECA

Registration for "Hope and
Healing" Workshops and Mass



HOPE & HEALING
9:00-11:30AM

MEMORIAL MASS 9AM
HEALING PROGRAM TO FOLLOW

NOV 16: OUR LADY, FESTUS
1550 ST MARYS LANE, FESTUS MO 63028



Southern Vicariate of the
ARCHDIOCESE OF ST. LOUIS



For more information, please contact Jennifer Meehan
(314) 363-6945 or jmeehan@archstl.org

Reminder... Rosary Every Wednesday Night



Join us --
SVdP St. Louis
Rosary Wednesday



Meeting Wednesday
8 PM via Zoom

[Click Here to Join](#)

Meeting ID: 989 8066 7271
Passcode: Vincent
or dial in: (312) 626-6799

Please Keep in Your Prayers

Please Pray for the Deceased:

John Mosher, Cathedral Basilica



To add a name to the list, please contact Steve Rupp at stever@svdpstl.org or (314) 881-6018.

Click the icons below to follow us on social media and stay up-to-date with what's happening at SVdP!



Society of St. Vincent de Paul--St. Louis | 1310 Papin Street | St. Louis, MO 63103 US

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