



The Society Scoop | Feb 2024 | Issue 2



The Society Scoop

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

Where's Your Heart?

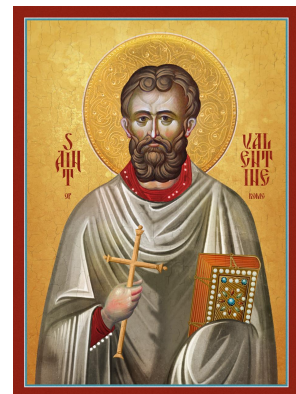
by Fr. Dan Thiess, Council Spiritual Advisor

Is St. Valentine's Day a Catholic Holiday too?

Yes it is!

Not only is it a Catholic holiday, but this year it is also **ASH WEDNESDAY** and the beginning of **LENT**.

While Valentine's Day may have been taken over by more commercial interests, it is rooted in the Catholic Feast of St. Valentine.



"Valentine was an early bishop of the Church, serving in Terni, Italy, in the 3rd century," Henning wrote. "He was arrested and brought to Rome and martyred in 269AD. The association of Saint Valentine with courtly love appears to have arisen in the Middle Ages on account of his signing a letter to one of his converts 'from your Valentine.'"

Lent comes early this year.

Ash Wednesday is February 14. It is also St. Valentine's Day, a day devoted to showering love and affection on those closest to us.

Saint Teresa of Calcutta called Lent “the time for greater love.”

These 40 days are a season to draw nearer to God and to one another. It is a time to deepen one’s faith as we prepare for the joyous celebration of Christ’s Resurrection at Easter.

Throughout the ages, the Church has suggested three practices to help us clear a pathway to that greater love to which we are called:

prayer, **fasting**, and **almsgiving**.

- We **pray** especially for forgiveness of our sins, the sins of those we love and for our sinful world.
- The hunger that accompanies **fasting** helps us be aware of the daily hunger and suffering that so many in the world experience.
- **Almsgiving is the way we can help others in need, our neighbors.**

Mardi Gras is the 13th of February, and as is the tradition here in St. Louis and New Orleans, people celebrate Mardi Gras.

I ask us all to consider a little lagniappe. “A little something extra” this Lenten season.

Maybe the extra “lagniappe” is for a neighbor or stranger in need.

Maybe a family member or friend? A little something extra to consider.

Most importantly please pray. Say a prayer for the neighbor, family member, friend or stranger. Say a little prayer for yourself as well.

This Lent:

“Laissez Les Bon Temps Rouler”

“Let the good times roll”

Program Updates & Resources

Programs - General Info

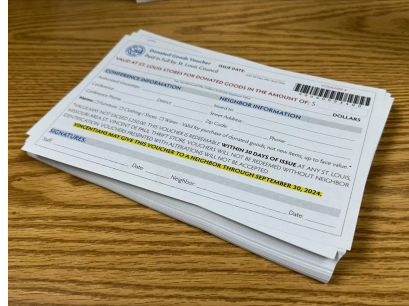
- All program guidelines can be found at:
[SVdP St. Louis Program Handbook](#)
- **The Council requires the Neighbor to sign a Release of Confidential Information.**

Voucher Best Practices

- Please make certain to **spell out the name of your Conference and District on each voucher** you give to your Neighbor. This

allows the stores to track redeemed vouchers appropriately and gives Council the ability to report back to each Conference on redeemed vouchers.

- Donated Goods Vouchers can be used for donated clothing, housewares, and furniture. **While each voucher has a maximum value of \$250, you may also use them for smaller amounts if needed.** During the first quarter of the fiscal year, we have used very little of \$1 million that has been allotted to help Conferences serve their Neighbors. Please use the vouchers as needed and please let your District President know if you need more Donated Good Vouchers. We have plenty!



Register for our February 13 Voucher Webinar

Transportation Programs



The Car Purchase and Car Repairs Programs are now available *outside* of St. Louis City and County.

Guidelines are available in the Online Program Handbook:

Car Purchase Program

Car Repair Program

Pharmacy Program

The prescription assistance program is no longer being funded by the Council Office.

Do not provide prescription forms to your Neighbors.

Please refer Neighbors to RX Outreach:
[Rx Outreach - Affordable Medication - Low Cost Prescriptions](#)



Schnucks Disaster Relief Vouchers

In 2020, the Council provided Schnucks Disaster Relief Vouchers to help our Neighbors during the height of the pandemic.



Since the pandemic has passed, these vouchers should no longer be distributed.

Please return any unused vouchers to:

SVdP, Attn: Disaster, 1310 Papin Street, St. Louis MO 63103.

Lenten Preparation

As Catholics, Lent allows us to prepare for Christ's resurrection on Easter. How might we as Vincentians within our Conferences use these 40 days to prepare collectively?

Consider the following:

- Host a prayer hour for our Neighbors in Need and for the elimination of barriers that keep our Neighbors in poverty.
- Say yes! Help a mother in need through our Pregnancy Care Partnership. Step outside of your comfort zone. Join us on Zoom for more information:

Tuesday, February 21 from 1-2 PM.

[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89215371248?](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89215371248?pwd=dFFMZkMxbTEyOFdHZkVjQVR1WUplUT09)

[pwd=dFFMZkMxbTEyOFdHZkVjQVR1WUplUT09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89215371248?pwd=dFFMZkMxbTEyOFdHZkVjQVR1WUplUT09)

Meeting ID: 892 1537 1248

Passcode: 874686

- Tour the Cathedral Basilica and pay special attention to the mural that pays tribute to the Society of St. Vincent de Paul.
- Invite a friend to join you at your next Conference meeting.
- **Do a Home Visit!**

Registration Open! - 2024 Spring Assembly



Register for Spring Assembly!
"Vincentian Hearts Ablaze:
Igniting Hope and Joy"

Saturday, April 27
8 AM – Noon



Mass Celebrant & Homilist:
Archbishop Mitchell T. Rozanski



Keynote Address:
John Foppe, Executive Director

Join us for a morning of prayer, fellowship, and inspiration! This annual event will draw hundreds of Vincentians from across our Archdiocese.

- Location: **SLU High School**
- Two table discussions
- Friendship & Spirituality
- Sharing great ideas to take back to your conference!

REGISTER NOW!

Resources: Free Tax Preparation for Our Neighbors



Fincen New Ruling - Beneficial Ownership Information of Bank Accounts



Network (FinCEN) has instituted new regulations that could affect you.

Effective January 1, 2024, many companies in the United States must report information about their “beneficial owners” of bank accounts - the individuals who ultimately own or control a company - to the Financial Crimes Enforcement

Network (FinCEN), a bureau of the U.S. Department of the Treasury.

Should you get inquiries for beneficial ownership information (BOI) from your bank, please contact the Acting Director of Finance and Accounting, Jason Coleman, at jasonc@svdpstl.org.

Fiscal Year 23 Annual Report

Usage and engagement statistics for SVdP St. Louis Council Programs and Formation Events. Look at statistics for the whole council, or each district separately.



2023
AT A GLANCE
Usage and Engagement Statistics for SVdP St. Louis
Council Programs and Formation Events

[Click to View Full Report](#)

Upcoming SVdP Events At A Glance

Register for Formation and Training Events

Feb 13 | 10:00 am - 11:00 am

[Council Programs Webinar - Thrift Store Vouchers](#)

Feb 21 | 1:00 pm - 2:00 pm

[Pregnancy Care Partnership Zoom](#)

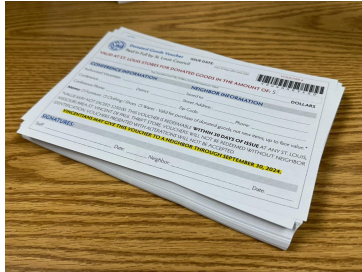
Feb 27 | 6:00 pm - 8:30 pm

[Home Visit 101 Workshop at Our Lady of Lourdes, University City](#)

Mar 5 | 3:00 pm - 4:00 pm

Apr 10 | 9:30 am - 12:00 pm
[Home Visit 101 Workshop at St. Vincent de Paul , Perryville](#)

2/13 - Council Programs Webinar - Vouchers



Join Council and Store staff for an update on the new Bed, Donated Goods, and Delivery Vouchers that were created in support of Vincentian ministry to serve our Neighbors in need.

[Register Now](#)

2/21 - Pregnancy Care Partnership Zoom



Working with a pregnant neighbor?

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

[Pregnancy Care: Every 3rd Wednesday, 1 – 2 p.m.](#)

This partnership helps support pregnant women during and after their pregnancy.

SVdP is seeking Conferences willing to provide support and friendship to these women and their children.

For more information, contact Julie Komanetsky at juliek@svdpstl.org.

[Get Link for Zoom](#)

2/27 & 4/10 - Home Visit 101 Workshops

February 27 | 6:00 - 8:30 PM

Our Lady of Lourdes
University City, MO

Please eat dinner before. Desserts and beverages will be provided.

April 10 | 9:30am - Noon

St. Vincent de Paul
Perryville, MO

A light breakfast will be provided.

3/5 - Vincentian Wisdom Series: What if Jesus Really is Our Neighbor?

Are you struggling with how to approach home visits? Do you find it challenging to see Christ in your neighbor, or even in yourself?

You are not alone.

Home visits can be daunting, but with the guidance of the Rule and Vincentian Tradition, you can find the strength and wisdom you need to navigate these difficult situations.

Join us on March 5th for an enlightening session where we will delve into the Vincentian Tradition and draw on our collective wisdom to explore practical ways to approach home visits with love, compassion, and understanding.

Register now to deepen your faith and connect with like-minded individuals who share your passion for serving others!



[Register for March 5th](#)

Servware Instructional Sessions - Mon. & Thur.



Have questions about ServWare? Do you want to know more about best practices, key features, useful reports, and much more?

The council office is now offering a new bi-weekly, open-forum style Zoom meeting to discuss all things ServWare. These meetings are open to all Vincentians, and the topics of discussion will be directed by you, the ServWare user.

In an effort to accommodate as many people as possible, we will initially offer two weekly opportunities to join:

Monday evenings at 6:30PM:

[February 5 @ 6:30](#)

[February 12 @ 6:30](#)

Thursday afternoons at 3:30PM:

[February 8 @ 3:30](#)

[February 15 @ 3:30](#)

[February 19 @ 6:30](#)

[February 22 @ 3:30](#)

[February 26 @ 6:30](#)

[February 29 @ 3:30](#)

SVdP News

Ascension Conference - Morning of Reflection

THE ASCENSION CONFERENCE OF ST. VINCENT DE PAUL
INVITES PARISHIONERS & GUESTS TO

a Morning of Reflection

Featuring Robert Ernst, PhD.
"Racism in our Society,
A Catholic Perspective"

FEB | 10TH | 2024

Mass 8:00am in the Main Church
Social with light refreshments in the Multi-
Purpose Room immediately following Mass
Presentation and Discussion: 9:00am
Session will end at noon.

The Ascension Conference of St. Vincent de Paul invites parishioners and guests to:

A Morning of Reflection

Featuring Robert Ernst, PhD.
"Racism in our Society, A Catholic Perspective"

February 10, 2024 | 8am - noon

Mass at 8am in the Main Church followed by social with light refreshments in the multi-purpose room.

Presentation with discussion from 9am - noon.

John Foppe On Temporary Medical Leave

John Foppe undergoes surgery today to replace a faulty piece from his previous surgery two years ago.

While he is temporarily away, Julie Komanetsky, Director of Vincentian Services, will serve as the SVdP Interim Lead, and Directors will operationally report to her.



Please keep John in your prayers while he heals from the surgery. He looks forward to seeing everyone at the Spring Assembly in April when he will deliver the keynote speech!

Congratulations to St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Conference!

This newly formed Conference, now united with the former St. Robert Bellarmine Conference, is not only thriving but also embodying the true spirit of service to the poor through the Society of St.

Vincent de Paul.

A recent promotion and enthusiastic encouragement for participation at the Parish resulted in an overwhelming response! **128 parishioners expressing interest** and will attend an upcoming informational SVdP meeting next week.



We pray for an abundance of God's blessings on a vibrant Conference standing strong on our three pillars of Spirituality, Friendship and Service.

Record Participation in Rise and Shine for Heat



Over 323 Volunteers have signed up to participate in Rise and Shine for Heat on February 9!

That's the highest registration in over five years! Thanks to everyone who signed up, and look forward to seeing you this Friday!

John Foppe visits the Unhoused with Mother Teresa's Missionaries of Charity Ministry



John Foppe visits the Unhoused with Mother Teresa's Missionaries of Charity Ministry

In the middle of the January cold snap, John Foppe, accompanied by his daughter Faith and SVdP's Director of Vincentian Formation and Services Julie Komanetsky, joined Mother Teresa's Missionaries of Charity Street Ministry to visit the unhoused.

The Sisters who reside in St. Louis often visit the poorest of the poor homeless camps distributing food, blankets, clothing and prayer.

One of the men the group visited with said "Out here, I feel close to God. When I really need something, it just shows up."

After walking inside one of the plighted areas, Faith Foppe commented: “Dad, I think I was just on sacred ground. I can feel God here.”



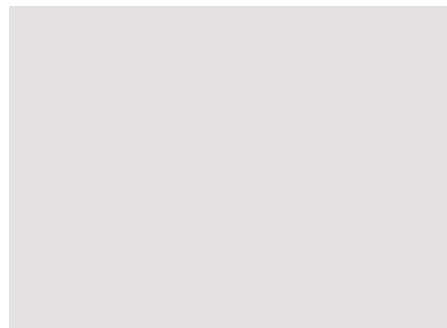
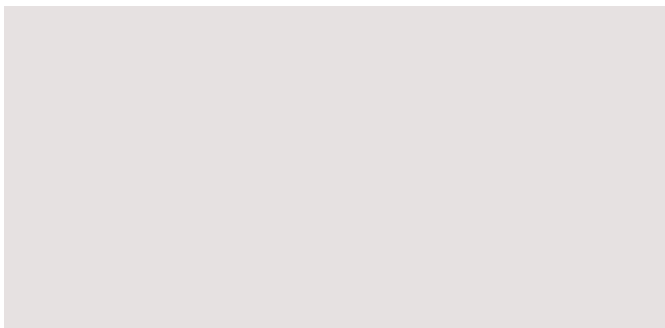
Help is On The Way to Honduras

Since November, the organization **Friends of Honduras** has been preparing a shipment of humanitarian goods (clothing, cookware, tools) to support two SVdP conferences in the villages of Guanacaste and Aguacate, Intibucá, Honduras.

SVdP of St. Louis was asked for help to coordinate a dock-high truck for the transportation of six wrapped pallets to be picked up in St. Louis and delivered to Scott Air Force Base.



The goods will be shipped through the Denton Program via military cargo planes to Honduras. The Denton Program allows private U.S. citizens and organizations to use space available on U.S. military cargo planes to transport humanitarian goods to countries in need.





Thank you Randal Wiggs, Albert Pletz, Rob Vickers and Mike Goering for making this happen!



Above: SVdP conference members visiting a family in the village of Aguacate, where this cargo will be distributed.

John Foppe Interviewed by Covenant Radio



John Foppe spoke with Adam Wright about SVdP, helping the poor and the importance of our Thrift Store donations.

The interview starts at the 4:50 mark.

[Click here to listen](#)

Julie Komanetsky Interviewed by St. Louis Review

Thank you to Julie Komanetsky for her interview with Jennifer Brinker in the *St. Louis Review*.



Julie's contributions to the *St. Louis Review* article helped to highlight our support of Neighbors and get us visibility in the Catholic community.

"Every conference within our archdiocese determines how it can best serve those in need, and I've found that Vincentians are very caring and very resourceful when it comes to meeting the needs of their neighbors,' Komanetsky said." ...

[Read the Full Article](#)

John Foppe is appointed to the Association of the Miraculous Medal Board of Directors



John Foppe has been appointed to the Board of Directors of the Association of the Miraculous Medal. John was chosen for his extensive experience and commitment to charitable work and his passion for fostering spiritual growth.

In his role on the Board, John will contribute to furthering the mission of bringing Jesus Christ to the world through devotion to Mary, Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal.

This appointment expands SVdP's connection and partnership with the Vincentian Congregation of the Mission. Congratulations, John!

Donation Bin Monitoring Change



The Society of St. Vincent de Paul of St. Louis has reevaluated and removed its donation bin electronic monitoring system due to inconsistent monitoring signal issues and as a significant cost-saving measure.

The SVdP trucks team has recently doubled truck capacity on our three largest routes which will more efficiently service the donation bins.

We thank you and your donation bin participating parishes. The donation bins play a crucial role in supplying our Thrift stores with items to serve and raise

funds that help our Neighbors in Need.

If you have any questions or need a donation bin emptied, please call our support team at 314-881-6006.

North District Golf Tournament

Save the Date: Friday June 14, 2024

St. Vincent de Paul North District 11th Annual Golf Tournament

Florissant Golf Club
50 Country Club Lane
Florissant, MO 63033

Proceeds to benefits St. Vincent de Paul North District Charitable Aid to Neighbors in Need.

Watch for more details to come!

Save the Date: Friday June 14th 2024
St. Vincent dePaul North District 11th
Annual Golf Tournament

Florissant Golf Club: 50 Country Club
Lane, Florissant MO 63033

Shotgun Start: 4 Person Scramble

Proceeds to benefit St. Vincent dePaul
North District Charitable Aid to
Neighbors In Need

Watch for additional details to follow!



Vincentian Meditation

Reflecting on Cheerful Charity

by Timothy Massey, Direct Assistance Specialist



This reflection is taken from the 21st edition of the **MANUAL**, Published in 1958.

It is from a Circular-letter of M. Gossin, *President-General* published 1st November 1847.

The language is elaborate, but that can lead to deeper insight...

"HOLDING OF MEETINGS.—Most of the Conferences, thank God, are free both from sadness and constraint. Indeed, cheerfulness is by no means absent, while gentle and amicable cordiality generally prevails.

But we have heard of certain Conferences lacking this spirit, where constraint, coldness and sometimes even weariness prevail.

No Conference, however, offends against propriety or charity because laughter is allowed amongst its members. Sometimes even, laughter is excellent: ..."

Read the Full
Meditation!

Mission Moment

Carrying Care and Compassion at SVdP

by Jan Falcon, Store Manager, St. Charles Thrift Store



On a recent visit to the bank to make our deposit, the teller waiting on me asked if we accepted furniture donations. I told her we did. "Well," she asked, "do you accept other things like kitchen goods?" I told her we did and I asked if she had ever been in our building, to which she said "no".

I suggested she come in and browse and see all we had to offer and it would give her an idea of the items we accepted since everything except the beds and a little bedding were donated goods. I explained that the money we raise goes to helping those in need.

With that, the tears began to flow as she explained that she had recently lost her mother and was at a loss about what to do with all of her things. She immediately said that she would begin to bring items to us, and she was sure her mother would be so pleased for her items to be put to use like that.

It was obvious to me that she was struggling with the loss. I offered my condolences and offered any help I could give to her.

Helping someone in need at St. Vincentde Paul goes much deeper than assisting with a voucher or a bed. Reassuring her that the donation she would make was going to be useful to another helped her to cope with the loss.

All Things New

To support Conferences, the Council has prepared a thorough compilation of Conference Merger Materials, which is available online to all Vincentians.

Click the link below to access the resources.

We continue to depend on you, our Vincentians, to let us know what is going on in your parishes and how we can better support you!



ALL THINGS NEW
STEADFAST IN FAITH • FORWARD IN HOPE

[Access Conference Merger Resources](#)

From the Voice of the Poor

Expansion of the Child Tax Credit

Congressman Jason Smith (R-MO-8), who represents much of the Southern Vicariate of the Archdiocese of St. Louis, spearheaded a bipartisan tax relief bill that contains an expanded Child Tax Credit provision.

H.R. 7024, the "Tax Relief for American Families and Workers Act of 2024," would improve the Child Tax Credit for about 80% of families with low incomes who now do not receive the full credit and lift an estimated 400,000 children above the poverty line.

On January 31, the bill overwhelmingly passed the House by a vote of 357-70. The bill now moves to the Senate.

Please [contact Senator Hawley](#) and [contact Senator Schmitt](#) and urge them to support H.R. 7024 and the expanded Child Tax Credit.

Contact Sen.
Hawley

Contact Sen.
Schmitt

Benefits Cliff Legislation

Last year, the Missouri General Assembly passed legislation, subject to appropriation, that would allow recipients of public benefits to continue receiving benefits at a reduced rate if they receive a raise or a promotion, rather than being cut off altogether.

In his proposed budget, Governor Parson included \$39M to implement this legislation by funding changes to the state computer program used to administer the TANF and SNAP programs. To fully implement the program, the proposed \$39M, along with additional state revenue, would have to be appropriated to fund the reduced benefits for the 10,000+ estimated recipients that would be impacted.

The MO Department of Social Services has also requested a waiver to allow federal funds to be used for this purpose. As the legislative session proceeds, please look for action alerts to contact your legislators to include benefits cliff funding in the budget.

Credit Empowerment Program

Last month our fourth Neighbor, who we'll call Jake, joined the Credit Empowerment program. Jake is an employed father of two young children whose income exceeds his expenses, once his high-interest loan payment was

replaced by a low-interest payment.

Seventeen months ago, Jake took out a \$5,370 loan from TitleMax, but his expected total payments to TitleMax were an astronomical \$28,715 over the course of four years. TitleMax was charging Jake \$19.41 in interest daily. The payoff amount to get out of the loan was \$6,166. Jake's TitleMax loan was converted to a \$3,000 Midwest BankCentre loan (our program maximum) at 6.43% interest, with the Assumption - O'Fallon Conference twinning to raise the remaining \$3,166.

Jake is now paying a total of \$155 in interest over the course of his Midwest BankCentre loan, compared to the \$23,345 in interest that TitleMax was charging.

Please keep the Credit Empowerment program in mind as you meet with Neighbors and remember to ask if they have loans from payday, car title, or other high-cost lenders. Contact credit@svdpstl.org for more information.

Housing Choice Vouchers

The St. Louis Housing Authority has a lot of Housing Choice (Section 8) vouchers but not enough landlords who will accept them. The Voice of the Poor Committee has been working with the Housing Authority, St. Patrick Center, and the Metro Housing Collective to identify ways to better attract and train landlords on the voucher process. More to follow.

Tax Time

Just a reminder that the St. Louis Tax Assistance Program offers no cost tax return preparation for families with incomes up to \$64,000. Neighbors can schedule an appointment at stlouistap.org.

Reminder... Rosary Every Wednesday Night



Join us --
SVdP St. Louis
Rosary 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 Sick:

Marty Bligh, Holy Name of Jesus

Chris Fernandez, Seven Holy Founders

Bruce Gallion, Our Lady Queen of Peace

Judi Webb, Council Office

John Foppe, Council Office



Prayers for the Deceased:

Our Lady Of Providence conference lost two of its members last month.

Keith Conboy, Conference secretary, and father of 5, died Jan 14. He was just 54.

[Obituary](#)

Ken Kolb died Jan 22. He was 93 and still an active member! Ken served close to 4 decades! [Obituary](#)

Both are greatly missed!



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

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