



Purpose: The mission of the Voice of the Poor Committee is to break the cycle of poverty by inspiring Vincentians to be effective servants of the poor and voices for just policies and systems. We put our mission into action by supporting policies that will help our neighbors in need and proactively opposing policies that will make life harder for them.

Foundation: Our foundation is in Catholic Social Teaching, which compels us to put the needs of the poor and vulnerable first, and in the example of our founder, Blessed Frédéric Ozanam.

In the picture to the right, we see not only Frédéric making a home visit, but a line of people behind him who are all bringing what they can to help. Like Frédéric, we want to mobilize the community to remove the obstacles that are keeping our neighbors in poverty.

Priorities: The Voice of the Poor Committee-St. Louis Council has set the following priorities for 2019:

1. Support Incentives for Affordable Housing
2. Support Expansion of Medicaid Benefits
3. Support a State Policy on the Regulation of Lending Practices
4. Support Tax Policies that Help Lift Families out of Poverty



Frédéric Ozanam, in his academic robes, performing a home visit. Painting by Gary Schumer. Courtesy of the Association of the Miraculous Medal, Perryville, Missouri

Subcommittees: The Voice of the Poor Committee-St. Louis Council has Education and Advocacy Subcommittees.

- **The Education Subcommittee** seeks to raise awareness of the Voice of the Poor mission, Catholic Social Teaching, the legislative process, and poverty, first among Vincentians and by extension among all parishioners. Look for a Voice of the Poor section in the monthly Council newsletter with talking points for discussion at conference meetings, as well as Voice of the Poor bulletin announcements which will be sent to conference presidents and secretaries. The Subcommittee is also exploring the possibility of workshops and presentations. (Contact: Dianne Marshak, dianne.marshak@gmail.com)
- **The Advocacy Subcommittee** investigates proposed legislation at the state and federal level and works with the Education Subcommittee to mobilize Vincentians in support of or opposition to the legislation. (Contact: Jim Wilson, grizzie2@aol.com)

Voter Voice: All Vincentians are urged to sign up for Voter Voice to receive alerts.

- **For Federal Level alerts:** Sign up for SVDP's Voter Voice at <https://votervoicenet/SVDPUSA/home>
- **For State Level alerts:** Sign up for Missouri Catholic Conference's Voter Voice at <https://mocatolic.org/take-action/missouri-catholic-advocacy-network-mocan>

When you receive an alert, a canned email message will be provided for the given policy issue; however, it is much more impactful if you personalize the subject line and message.

Position Papers: Read more about the Society's position on social issues at <https://www.svdpusa.org/members/Programs-Tools/Programs/Voice-of-the-Poor/Position-Papers>

Poverty Awareness Training: Dr. Donna Beegle's Poverty Awareness Training for Vincentians is available at www.svdpusa.org/cab.