



DIOCESAN COUNCIL OF AUSTIN SOCIETY OF ST. VINCENT DE PAUL, INC.

Conference Presidents, please forward to your conference members.

SSVDP Calendar

Upcoming Events

2/15 Council Office Closed
for President's Day;
Board Meeting at 6:00 p.m.

[3/5 Ozanam Orientation -
Santa Cruz, Buda](#)

[3/8-9 Amplify Austin - SoCo
Bon Voyage](#)

3/12 Diocesan-wide Day of
Spiritual Retreat hosted by
Office of Life, Charity &
Justice (TBD Austin)

[3/19 Spiritual Advisor
Training \(Council Office,
ATX\)](#)

[4/9 General Assembly \(VFC\)](#)

[5/14 Ozanam Orientation - St
Theresa Conference](#)

Friday, February 12, 2016

Pope Francis Celebrates Ash Wednesday

Pope Francis celebrated Ash Wednesday Mass in St. Peter's Basilica alongside the Missionaries of Mercy. In his homily, Pope Francis said that Lent is the perfect time to let go of selfish and indifferent attitudes, returning to God with the help of prayer, penance and acts of charity.

"Lent is a beneficial time of pruning from falsity, from worldliness, from indifference: to not think that everything is ok if I am ok; to understand that what counts is not approval, the pursuit of success or consensus, but purity of heart and life." Lent is a time to rediscover one's Christian identity, "which is love that serves, not selfishness that uses."



Join Us for a Going Away Party at SoCo!

Predatory Loan Conversion Program

The Numbers

\$46,626.72 in loans converted

72 high interest loans converted

18 closed loans

7 incentives paid

333% APR for loans converted

2.25% APR for PLCP loans

86.4% repayment rate

14 days without a default

[Link to secure "how to" page - now with client forms in Spanish.](#)

Disaster Response

Donate now!

To make a gift, please visit our [website](#) and select "disaster relief fund" from the drop-down menu.

Your gift will help families impacted by the Memorial Day Floods, Hidden Pines Fire and Halloween 2015 Floods.

Systemic Change

Question of the Month

This week's question came about recently during a casual conversation among a group of

On **March 9 from 9:30 am - 12:00 pm**, please join us at the St. Vincent de Paul Thrift Store for breakfast tacos, coffee, mimosas, and a great going away sale during Amplify Austin! This annual day of online giving supports local nonprofits, and this year, we hope you'll make a gift to help us launch our Vincentian Family Center. Diocesan Council staff members will be available at the store to help you make your gift.

We're also taking this opportunity to say goodbye to our longtime home on South Congress, and we're kicking it off with **30% off** all items in the store. Shoppers will also receive coupons for the new thrift store, and donors to SVDP and other local nonprofits through the Amplify portal will receive an additional 10% off coupon to use at the new store. Come celebrate with us as we begin an exciting new chapter at the Vincentian Family Center! You can RSVP [here](#).

Don't think you can come on the 9th? You can still schedule your Amplify gift to the Society now through March 9 at the [Amplify website](#). Scheduled gifts also qualify for a new store coupon (sent in late March via email).

We're Hiring a Vincentian Family Center Manager!

Expected Hire Date: on or before March 30, 2016

Start Date: April 6, 2016

Accepting Applications through March 14, 2016

The VFC Manager is responsible for the efficient and effective coordination and management of the office and service aspects of the Center. Coordination includes scheduling, property management of offices, shared spaces, and food pantry. This position is a front-line greeter to those we serve and our volunteers, employees and contractors, and collaborative partners. This work will be done through multiple organizational systems and processes, effective communication, strategic alignment of best practices and goals, and overall support of volunteer and professional leadership within a collaborative and spiritual framework.

Applications may be sent to info@ssvdp.org. For more information and the full job description, please check out our [website](#).

Vincentians: "Why are we (the Austin Council) talking about implementing Systemic Change?"

The term "Systemic Change" as it relates to SVdP has been a major thrust of the Society for years now. Since her election in 2011, President of the National Council of the United States, Society of St. Vincent de Paul, Shelia Gilbert, has been intent on shining a spotlight on this movement.

From Shelia's biography on the National website (ssvdpusa.org):

Sheila is a strong advocate for "systemic change" - working closely with those living in poverty to better understand and address the root causes of their condition, collaborating with other organizations to develop innovative ways to reduce or eliminate poverty, and to advocate for long-term change at the local, state and national levels."

On the "About Us" page of the website the following references to Systemic Change can be found:

"...The Society recognizes that it must assume, also, a role of advocacy for those who are defenseless or voiceless."

AND

"...The list of services of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul in the United States is endless. No work of charity is

Our Society

Pope Francis Quote

"We must restore hope to young people, help the old, be open to the future, spread love. Be poor among the poor. We need to include the excluded and preach peace.

- Pope Francis

Lenten Prayer for First Sunday of Lent

Lord of mercy and forgiveness,
At times, we are tempted to forget
the feelings of desperation and pain of those we serve.
By your grace and mercy,
May we deny our own desire for
power, wealth and judgement
May we serve those you bring to us with
love and compassion.
We ask this through Christ our Lord,
Amen

Systemic Change Update

This is an exciting time to be a Vincentian in Austin. We are experiencing growth in our membership and in our physical plant. At the same time, the number of people living in poverty and the number of people who must seek assistance to survive also continues to grow.

In order to combat poverty, the Society of St. Vincent de Paul at the International and National levels is asking us to return to our roots; roots that began under the ministry of St. Vincent de Paul and spread with the founding of The Society of St. Vincent de Paul under the direction of Frederic Ozanam and Roalie Rendu.

"You must not be content with tiding the poor over the poverty

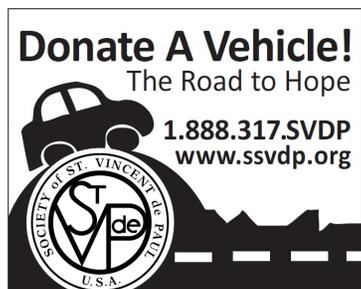
foreign to the Society. To quote our patron, St. Vincent de Paul: 'Charity is infinitely inventive'."

Archived Documents
[Vincentian documents](#)
[Spiritual Reflections](#)

Links

[Bulletin Announcements](#)
[Ethics & Integrity in Ministry](#)

[Donate your vehicle to our Vehicle Donation Program - the proceeds from the sale of your vehicle will stay right here in our diocese!](#)



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crisis; you must study their condition and the injustices which brought about such poverty, with the aim of long term improvement." Frederic Ozanam.

"The money or assistance in-kind that we give to those who are poor will not last long. We must aspire to a more complete and longer lasting benefit: study their abilities...and help them get work to help them out of their difficulties." Sister Rosalie Rendu
 In 2007, at a Vincentian Family Gathering in San Francisco, Patricia P. de Nava, a member of the Vincentian Commission for Promoting Systemic Change spoke of Mission Oriented Strategies:

- Consider poverty not as the inevitable result of circumstances, but as the product of unjust situations that can be changed, focusing on actions that will break the circle of poverty,
- Design projects, creative strategies, policies and guidelines that flow from our Christian and Vincentian values and mission,
- Evangelize and enculturate Christian and Vincentian values and charisma, by maintaining a profound respect for the local culture.

De Nava also cautions that, "Immediate assistance to the poor and Systemic Change projects are not either/or options but both/and imperatives."

With our focus on Systemic Change we in the Austin Council are striving to do both - offer immediate assistance and change the conditions that brought about the situation.

We encourage you to share you stories of Systemic Change. Please send them to Roz (roz@ssvdp.org) or Midge (midge@ssvdp.org).

REMINDER: Ozanam Orientation - March 5th

Our next Ozanam Orientation will take place at Santa Cruz in Buda on March 5, 2015 from **9:00 am - 2:00 pm**. This session is *required* for new Vincentians and recommended for current Vincentians looking for a refresher. Breakfast and lunch are provided.

Please [register](#) soon if you plan to attend.

Questions? Contact [Midge](#).

The next Ozanam is scheduled May 14, at St Theresa Conference (see sidebar for signup links)

Reminder: General Assembly is April 9! Mark your Calendars!

Please [RSVP](#) by April 6, 2016.

Our 2016 General Assembly will take place at the new Vincentian Family Center on **April 9, 2016** from 9:30 am - 2:00 pm! All Vincentians, both active and associate, are invited to join us. General Assembly promises to be a great opportunity for fellowship and networking.

We are asking that all suggestions for the agenda be submitted to [Stacy Ehrlich](#) by end of business on February 20, so Vincentians still have a week to get items on the agenda! The agenda will be published in the e-News on March 19 so that everyone will have ample opportunity to review.

We hope to see you there!

In Case You Missed It

Vincentian Family Center Move Date

The overall vision for the new Vincentian Family Center is coming into sharper focus for *everyone* as we draw nearer to our move date of early April 2016! We're hoping to have *all* aspects of the Vincentian Family Center up and running within the first three months. We're looking forward to serving as a collaborative hub, providing diverse resources to the local community. Through the new center, and the already amazing efforts of Vincentian volunteers, we will continue to pursue our collective goal of Systemic Change throughout Central Texas for neighbors in need.

Look for more news to come regarding our grand opening

celebration! We'll keep you posted!

Diocesan Council Staff - Phone: 512-251-6995

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Office Hours M-TH 9:00 - 4:00 and F 9:00 - 2:00 ---

see calendar above for office holiday closings.

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Prayer Requests: pray@ssvdp.org