



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
(TBD)

Friday, February 5, 2016



Vincentian Family Center Update

The open house and tour was a rousing success! Over 300 volunteers and friends got their first look at the facility and learned more about our vision for this dynamic new space. During the tour, we led visitors through our warehouse, conference rooms, partner

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

7 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.

Archived Documents

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

Links

[Bulletin Announcements](#)

office spaces, retail thrift store area, executive offices, and coffee shop/deli area. For those who were unable to join us, we've included some more details about what the VFC has to offer our community:

Our warehouse is already well-equipped, with an existing electric dock-high lift and an existing baler. We will receive bulk goods and large deliveries and ship out bulk recycling through the delivery bay, which is also one of three potential staging areas for the mobile thrift store trucks. Receiving and processing will take place in an adjacent hallway, with climate control doors separating the processing space from the remainder of the warehouse. There is also ample space upstairs to store seasonal items. This space is approximately eight times larger than the storage room at the current South Congress location, and the new thrift store itself is a much larger space as well.

The VFC also features a large conference room, computer lab, a food pantry, intake and reception area, prayer room, and two smaller conference rooms. All services provided here, both by the Society and nonprofit and government partners, are intended to supplement the Society's home visits and conference services. The new facility will not supplant the good work done by our conferences. In the first 90 days of operation, we hope to have all aspects of the Vincentian Family Center up and running, including nonprofit partners who will office at the facility.

Through our partnership with a restaurateur, the VFC will also have a great location for low-cost, nutritious meals for breakfast, lunch, and dinner six days each week. In addition, the cooking and prep area and will serve as a demonstration kitchen for nutrition and cooking classes. The restaurant space will included a computer counter and booths to allow for some fixed seating. The space will be able to seat up to 35- 40 guests at one time. The Grill will provide a catering option for meetings scheduled at the VFC and some voucher meals for neighbors.

Our biggest news: **we plan to move to the Vincentian Family Center in April 2016!** We are thrilled to introduce this incredible new resource to the community. Be on the lookout for an announcement about our grand opening celebration.

Help us Bid Farewell to SoCo!

[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!](#)



Like us on Facebook 

Follow us on  twitter

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 through the Amplify portal will receive an additional % 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 schedule your Amplify gift to the Society now through March 9 at <https://amplifyatx.ilivehereigivehere.org/>. Scheduled gifts also qualify for a new store coupon.

Our Society

Pope Francis Quote

"Our efforts must aim at restoring hope, righting wrongs, maintaining commitments, and thus promoting the well-being of individuals and of peoples."

- Address to Congress, September 24, 2015

Ozanam Orientation - Santa Cruz, Buda

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. During the Orientation, we will discuss the Rule, home visits, and Vincentian spirituality. Breakfast and lunch are provided. Please [register](#) if you plan to attend.

Please direct any Ozanam questions to [Midge](#). Next Ozanam is in mid-May.

Save the Date: General Assembly is April 9!

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 for this once a year community gathering and business meeting. General Assembly promises to be an interactive, dynamic session and is a great opportunity for fellowship and networking with the entire Vincentian family.

We ask that all suggestions for the agenda be submitted to [Stacy Ehrlich](#) by end of business on **February 20, 2016**. The agenda will be published in the e-News on March 19 so that everyone will have ample opportunity to review.

Please [RSVP](#) by **April 6, 2016**. We hope to see you there!

Reflection from Our Executive Director

About a week ago, staff ordered Vietnamese take out from a place just walking distance from our office. While the food was authentic and delicious, the inclusion of a Chinese fortune cookie was definitely American-ized. The fortune read: **If at first you DO succeed... try something harder.** That little slip of paper sits on my office desk, next to Austinite Roy Spence's *The Amazing Faith of Texas*. One of my favorite pages is Sister Angela from the Monastery of St. Clare in Brenham where she and others raise miniature horses. **"God is the boss and I'm just an employee. He puts hurdles in my way every day, and I've got to respond as best I can - but when it's all said and done, He's the one in control, and I don't have to lie awake worrying about things. I just do my job and turn the rest over to Him. Makes life so much easier."**

Taking a long time coming, community vision of a Vincentian Family Center has definitely been a challenge — much more difficult than I ever imagined. Worrying, praying, planning, brainstorming solutions, finding ways around unexpected issues, compromising to stay in budget, communicating with and educating various stakeholder groups, trusting professionals, relying on others, building community are just a few of my daily tasks over the last 12 months.

Taking my cue from Sister Angela – praying, listening and doing my part, then trusting God to do the rest – has been the key to navigating this adventure. And the thrill of seeing over 300 guests on Sunday at our mid-construction tour let me know that God is truly in control – it made it all worth it. Your smiling faces, words of awe and encouragement, and the sheer joy exuding from so many was intoxicating.

We just received our official City of Austin construction permit this week. Now we are literally within 10-12 weeks of realizing our dream of a dynamic, collaborative space for the Council to serve those in need through a variety of programs and services, not to mention a HUGE thrift store.

MISSION: The Vincentian Family Center allows the Society of SVdP to creatively serve those in need, giving dignity and hope through material goods and education.

Every one of the staff and Society members do God's work, each and every day, as we serve our neighbors in need and as we grow spiritually together. Thank you all for being on this journey. And in closing, let's remember the tenets of our work:

"We are called to find Christ in them, to lend our voice to their causes, but also to be their friends, to listen to them, to speak for them and to embrace the mysterious wisdom which God wishes to share with us through them." - Pope Francis, The Joy of The Gospel



Great turnout from Austin South at our VFC open house and tour!

In Case You Missed It

News from National...

In this week's e-gazette from the National office, our fearless leader, Dave Barrienger, wrote a great article (below) about aligning values throughout every layer of the Society. Several of us from Central Texas participated in this process and are excited about the prospects of the future.

Over the next few weeks we will report elsewhere through the E-Gazette the Key Beliefs and Key Results developed by the National Council Board with input from nearly 200 Society leaders from around the country. We will integrate these beliefs and results within our existing mission and vision, and align them with our current national strategic plan. This plan, by the way, will be the focus of much of our collective efforts during its upcoming final two years.

If all of this gives you a headache and you are thinking, "Just leave me alone and let me do my home visits!" I hear you. Yet we have nearly 100,000 Vincentians, in 4,400 Conferences that could each go in their own direction - and there are many possible good ones - in attempts to serve the poor. And they

may do so with varying degrees of spirituality, with or without systemic change program elements, and with or without proper governance, legal and Rule alignments. If this happens, we are no longer a Society; we instead become a collection of independent parish groups using a common name. But if we think and act together as one true Society, based on common beliefs and a common set of goals, we can achieve so much more!

To see the whole article, click [HERE](#)

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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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