



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

Conference Presidents, please forward to your conference members.

SSVDP Calendar

Upcoming Events

3/24 Office Skeleton Staff -
Holy Thursday

**3/25 Office and Store Closed
- Good Friday**

3/26 Office Skeleton Staff -
Easter Monday

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

4/18 Council Board Meeting

**[5/10 Blessing of the
Vincentian Family Center](#)**

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

5/14 New Vincentian Family
Center Carnival and
Community Celebration

Friday, March 18, 2016

Next Week

The Diocesan Council of Austin will not publish its weekly e-news on Friday, March 25 in observance of Good Friday. Our office and the St. Vincent de Paul Store will both be closed.

The e-news will resume on Friday, April 1.

VFC and Thrift Store Update

Our move to the Vincentian Family Center and Thrift Store is almost upon us! Many of you had the opportunity to check out the VFC and Thrift Store at our January mid-construction tour, but we have made enormous progress over the last month and a half, with frames becoming walls, empty spaces becoming rooms, and sketches and plans becoming reality. While we hope you will be able to check out the facility in person at General Assembly, we wanted to offer a sneak peek at what's happening!

Predatory Loan Conversion Program

The Numbers

\$47,986.72 in loans converted

74 high interest loans converted

20 closed loans

7 incentives paid

329% APR for loans converted

2.25% APR for PLCP loans

86.4% repayment rate

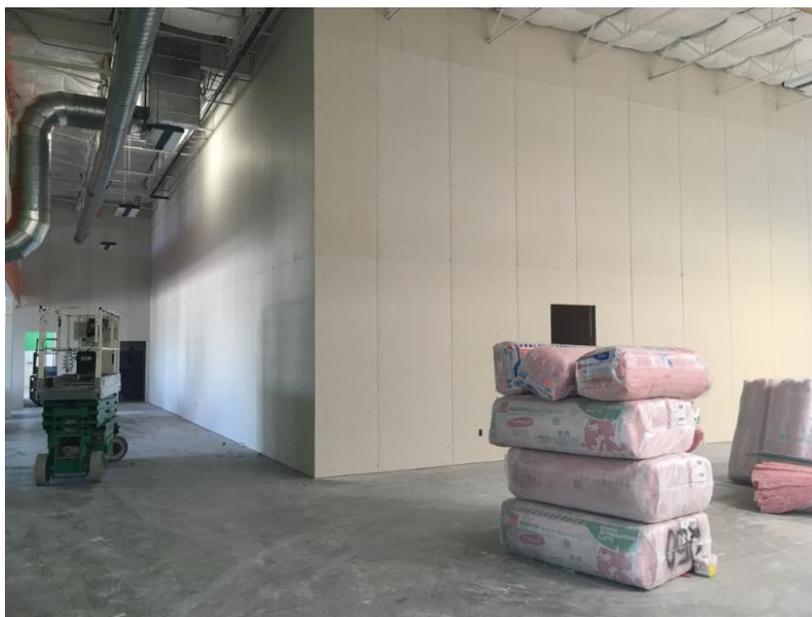
28 days without a default

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

Archived Documents
[Vincetian 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!](#)



Diocesan-wide Day of Spiritual Retreat

On behalf of the Society and the Office of Life, Charity, and Justice, we want to extend a heartfelt thank you to all our Vincentians who participated in the Diocesan-wide Day of Spiritual Retreat. While as Vincentians we are called to grow in our spiritual lives through service to the poor, we also greatly benefit from interacting with other ministries and taking advantage of offerings from the Diocese. We are deeply grateful for our large, spiritually engaged corps of volunteers.

Our Society

Pope Francis Quote

"God has caressed us with his mercy. Let us bring God's tender caress to others, to those who are in need." - @Pontifex, March 9

General Assembly Agenda

General Assembly will be held on April 9, 2016 at the Vincentian Family Center and Thrift Store from **9:00 - 2:30 pm**. All Vincentians, both active and associate, are invited to join us for this great opportunity for fellowship and networking.

The expectation is for all Conference Presidents to be present, and the hope is that officers and members will come to represent their conferences in fellowship and celebration.

During General Assembly, we will discuss systemic change, conference best practices, and Society progress and plans moving forward. Please review the full agenda [here](#).

More details to come in the April 1 edition of the e-news!

If you plan to attend, please [RSVP](#) by April 6, 2016.

How Long is Too Long?

Each and every day Vincentians work hard to strike the delicate balance between giving a person a fish and teaching a person to fish. Is one way better than the other? Do we only subscribe to helping everyone a particular way? How much is too much help? How do we ensure that we are being the best stewards of the funds and resources entrusted to us?

The actions of the St. William Conference speak to the understanding that there is no single one right way. Just as each of us has a story to tell that is unique to us, so do the people we are called to serve.

The Conference has been working with a mom and her family living in Round Rock since early 2010. The mom is a well-educated professional with a doctoral degree, teaching credentials, social work skills and accreditation and good employment experience. But the circumstances of life can have an immediate impact on one's life and will take its toll on anyone.

She suffered a traumatic turn in her life in 2009 when her husband committed suicide and was found dead by her daughter. Shortly after her husband's passing in 2010 the mom discovered she had a debilitating disease that causes inflammation, pain, and stiffness, mainly in the spinal joints. The mother of three, one adult child is physically disabled and lives on her own; another is married and lives out of town; the youngest is a senior in high school; she will be graduating in May of 2016 as Senior Class Valedictorian.

Between 2010 and 2016, the Conference financially assisted the mom through home visits, spiritual guidance and prayer over 15 times with food, utilities, budgeting, job changes, homelessness, Section 8 housing, food stamps, predatory loan conversions,

abusive relationships and a debilitating illness. Yet with all the home visits and barriers the mom encountered, the Conference members celebrate the successes of the family with hope and joy. Even though there are times that the Conference could not "financially" assist her and her family, she was not abandoned. Visits continued and the team that worked with her periodically visited to make sure that hope lived on.

The Conference, especially her home visit team often remark to each other, "But for the grace of God, there go I." We are called as Vincentians to meet the needs of those we serve. And sometimes that assistance requires us to stretch beyond all pre-conceived assumptions, policies, and procedures. How do you as a Conference have a mission-focused conversation about how much is possible for an individual?

In Case You Missed It

SAVE THE DATE - May 10th Blessing of the Vincentian Family Center

We are honored to announce that on **Tuesday, May 10, 2016 from 1:00 pm - 3:00 pm**, the Most Reverend Joe S. Vasquez, Bishop of the Diocese of Austin, and the Most Reverend Daniel Garcia, Auxiliary Bishop, will bless the new Vincentian Family Center.

Doors will open at 1:00 pm, and Society staff and leadership will lead small group tours of the facility. The blessing of the facility will take place at 2:00 pm.

All guests will need to **RSVP** by **Monday, May 2**. We invite you to bring friends, family, and guests, but **all names must appear on the guest list to attend.**

More details are still to come!

Amplify Austin Update

Amplify Austin was a success! The annual day of online giving provided a phenomenal opportunity for the Society to celebrate our past on South Congress and our future in North Austin. Over 24 hours, the Society received 42 donations for a total of \$5,985 to support the Vincentian Family Center and Thrift Store. We extend a heartfelt thank you to all our donors and to everyone who joined us for the party at the Thrift Store! We shared breakfast and fellowship with volunteers, staff, and a number of the thrift store's regular customers, including long-time shopper Laura and one of her seven daughters, Grace (*pictured above, left and right*).

Laura and Grace have been shopping at the St. Vincent de Paul thrift store for more than thirty years. Grace, now 40, recalled her embarrassment at having to wear thrift store clothes while her classmates had new designer and name brand fashions. Only later

did Grace realize that as a single mother, her mother was simply doing the best she could. That included shopping at the thrift store. As she shared memories of her hundreds of trips to St. Vinney's, Grace was moved to tears.

Laura and Grace are still devoted customers. While she may have been embarrassed in her youth, Grace now finds herself treasure hunting at the store. Laura called in sick to work to make the Bon Voyage party, as she wanted to personally thank the store employees. Both of them promise to come to our new North Austin store when it opens in May.

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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

Physical Address of New Vincentian Family Center:
901 W. Braker Austin, TX 78758