



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

Conference Presidents, please forward to your conference members.

SSVDP Calendar

Upcoming Events

[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

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

42 days without a default

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

Friday, April 1, 2016

Gestures of Fraternity and Peace

Pope Francis celebrated the Missa in coena Domini on Holy Thursday evening last week, at the CARA Welcome and Hospitality Centre operated by the Auxilium cooperative, where, in a demonstration of fraternity, he washed and kissed the feet of refugees during the Mass.



The CARA Welcome and Hospitality Centre currently provides temporary lodging and services to nearly 900 asylum seekers from 25 different countries.

On the heels of the horrific events that occurred recently in Belgium,

in his homily on March 24, Pope Francis renewed his condemnation of those who sow discord for gain, trading in arms and selling tools of bloodshed for profit. Reminding us of the power of peace, the Holy Father spoke of concrete actions – expressions of solidarity and peaceful communications among people of different religion and cultural traditions – that bring us together as brothers and sisters, sending a meaningful message to a weary world in dire need of cross-cultural understanding.



Our Society

Pope Francis Quote

Archived Documents
[Vincintian 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!](#)



Like us on Facebook 

Follow us on  twitter

"If we open ourselves up to welcome God's mercy for ourselves, in turn we become capable of forgiveness."

- @Pontifex, March 30

General Assembly - The Big Reveal Gets Closer!

We are so excited that General Assembly at the Vincintian Family Center and Thrift Store (901 W. Braker Lane) is nearly here! It will be held on **Saturday, April 9, 2016**.

We will begin the day at 8:00 with registration, small group tours, fellowship and a breakfast reception with coffee and tacos. The actual meeting will begin at 9:00 am and conclude at 2:30 PM. Breakfast and lunch (generously provided by future VFC tenant, 2-N-1 Salad Bar & Grill) are included during the event. **All Vincintians, both active and associate, are invited to join us for this great opportunity for fellowship, networking and see the new facility (VFC).**

Initial confirmation emails have been sent out. If you did not receive a confirmation email, then your registration is not confirmed. Please go to our [website and register](#). We really need this information to make sure we have enough food and materials ready for the day.

Parking will be available at the VFC. We have a limited number of reserved spaces available for those with limited mobility; please note on your registration form if you will require any of these spaces. We also encourage you to carpool with fellow volunteers.

As a reminder, the expectation is for all Conference Presidents to attend and have as many of the Conference officers attend as well. If a Conference President cannot attend, the expectation is that the President will assign a Conference officer or member to represent the Conference at the event. There is so much great information to share with you all along with fellowship, we don't want any Conference to feel left out, so please make every effort to attend and have your Conference well represented. Again, General Assembly is open to **ALL** Vincintians. There are no limits to the number of Vincintians from your Conference who can attend. The online form allows for the addition of 5 guests; these guest spots are intended to register volunteers who do not have email addresses.

This year's agenda includes a moving spiritual reflection and community time, staff and volunteer presentations, Society updates, question and answer sessions, and group discussion. In addition, Angela Gimbert (Systemic Change Coordinator) will lead the quarterly Systemic Change session for Systemic Change representatives and all conference presidents - conveniently scheduled in tandem with General Assembly. Please review the full [agenda here](#).

If you plan to attend, please RSVP by April 6, 2016.

Choices by Joleen Boyer Diocesan Board President

Life is about the choices we make: whom we marry, decisions we make in our family life, our career choice, where we live, how we take care of our spiritual, emotional, and physical bodies. Think about how many choices you make every day. Some are good, some not so good. Some are easy; some are challenging.

We are all blessed to belong to a ministry that serves with love, compassion, gentleness and cordiality. Because we do see Christ in his poor, I know each of you makes the choice to approach each visit with humility as His servant. We should always remember, if we had been the one to make the choices *our neighbors* did, we too might find ourselves in the same situation. I have a good friend who always reminds me, "But for the grace of God, there go I".

How many choices are we faced with when serving those less fortunate than we are? How challenging is it to see the face of Christ in those we serve? For most of us, it is an easy choice. But sometimes we struggle to answer, "Why don't they just get a job?" Instead, we should remind ourselves to think about the choices *the person in need* has to make. They may be struggling with "Do I pay the electric bill today or the water bill? Do I call St. Vincent de Paul for assistance with rent or get another payday loan to avoid eviction? Do I refill my prescription or wait until next month?"

When the situation is a matter of want vs. need, survival or getting by, what choice would you make? My guess is that your choice would be to do *whatever it takes* to take care of your family first.

In the words of Blessed Rosalie Rendu, "Be kind and love, for love is your first gift to the poor. They will appreciate your kindness and your love more than all else you bring them." Becoming a Vincentian comes with making choices, stretching out to help others, often going above and beyond to make the best choice for that particular family situation. As you go through your decision process, remember that no one cares how much you know, until they know how much you care.

New Vincentian Family Center Manager

We are so excited to welcome Paula Pompa to the Diocesan Council Staff as our new VFC Manager! Paula will be responsible for the efficient, effective coordination and management of the office and service aspects of the new facility.

Paula brings over twelve years' experience in Business Administration and business management to the Diocesan Council team. Throughout her career, she has assisted adults and children who are blind, visually impaired, or have multiple disabilities with goods and services through State of Texas programs.

In addition to her professional expertise, Paula is a member of the St. Margaret Mary Conference in Cedar Park.

Paula is enthusiastic about her new role with the Society, remarking, "I am excited to become part of the team and continue to grow together spiritually in the opening of the Vincentian Family Center. I am honored and feel so blessed to help continue the mission of our founder blessed Frederic Ozanam and patron, St. Vincent de Paul."

Welcome aboard, Paula!

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!

Diocesan Council Staff - Phone: 512-251-6995

PO Box 9070, Austin Texas 78766

Office Hours M-TH 9:00 - 4:00 and F 9:00 - 2:00 ---
see calendar above for office holiday closings.

Stacy Ehrlich Executive Director stacy@ssvdp.org
Roz Gutierrez Conference Support Director roz@ssvdp.org
Katie Conyers Assistant Director of Development katie@ssvdp.org
Midge Beard Executive Office Manager midge@ssvdp.org
Paul Kleypas Store Director **512-442-5652**
svdpstoreaustin@sbcglobal.net

Prayer Requests: pray@ssvdp.org

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