



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

Conference Presidents, please forward to your conference members.

### SSVDP Calendar

#### Upcoming Events

4/29 - 5/4 - Move and Open at VFC - limited phone and email access

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

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

5/14 New Vincentian Family Center - Family Fun Day and Community Celebration

### Predatory Loan Conversion Program

#### The Numbers

**\$50,136.90** in loans converted

**74** high interest loans converted

**22** closed loans

**7** incentives paid

**329%** APR for loans converted

**2.25%** APR for PLCP loans

**85.3%** repayment rate

**8** day without a default

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

**Friday, April 29, 2016**



### LAST CALL FOR VFC BLESSING CEREMONY REGISTRATION!

Blessing of the Vincentian Family Center  
Tuesday, May 10, 2016 from 1:00 pm - 3:00 pm.

[REGISTER HERE](#)

Doors open at 1:00 pm, for small group tours of the facility.  
**Blessing will take place at 2:00 pm.**

All guests need to [RSVP](#) by **Monday, May 2.**

We are encouraging everyone to bring friends, family, and guests.  
**Remember: all names must appear on the guest list to attend.**  
If you aren't sure if you have registered, please try to register with your "regular" email - the system will let you know if you are already on the list.

### Our Society

#### Pope Francis Quote

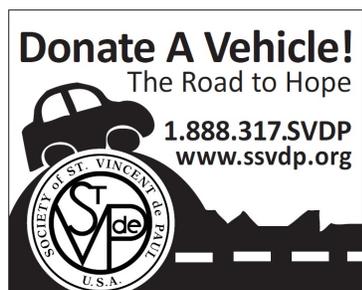
"This is important: to get to know people, listen, expand the circle of ideas. The world is crisscrossed by roads that come closer together and move apart, but the important thing is that they lead towards the Good."

- Pope Francis

**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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## Austin Diocesan Council Extension and Revitalization

The Austin Diocesan Council of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul currently has 41 conferences representing 49 parishes. The Diocese of Austin has 127 faith communities so we are now covering 39% of the potential parish communities. We have adopted an aggressive growth plan with a goal of adding 5 parishes over the next 2 years - and adding a total of 14 conferences through 2020.

A committee is being formed consisting of at least one person from each District area, the Conference Support Director, and the Diocesan Council Extension Committee Chair. This committee of a minimum of five people will be responsible for recruiting and developing the new conferences. Another group will be responsible for the Revitalization of Existing Conferences.

The revitalization of existing Conferences effort has already begun in the form of initiating an Invitation to Serve at many parishes, adopting Systemic Change best practices, and with outreach to many of the Offices of the Diocese of Austin.

After visiting with Bishop Vasquez in January for our Annual report to the Diocese, Bishop Joe encouraged us to reach out to other parishes and groups in the Diocese. To date, we have met with the Superintendent of Catholic Schools, the Secretariat of Spirituality and Formation which includes the Evangelization, Catechetical and Family Services, Cedar Brake Retreat Center, and Youth, Young Adult and Campus Ministries. We have also met with the Director of Hispanic Ministries and the Director of Life, Charity and Justice. Upcoming meetings will be held with the Director of Black Catholics and the Director of Pro Life. In a few weeks we will also be making a brief presentation to the Presbyterial Council.

If you are feeling called to be a part of the effort to revitalize and expand our outreach to the Diocese of Austin, please contact Roz Gutierrez [roz@ssvdp.org](mailto:roz@ssvdp.org) at the Diocesan Council Office or Ray DuPont - Diocesan Council Extension Chair.

## United Way Austin for Greater Austin

UWATX Releases 2015 Community Needs & Trends Report Each year. They analyze every 2-1-1 call the Navigation Center received and compile the data into a Community Needs & Trends Report. This report allows them to see what the biggest needs are in our communities and to share the information with other stakeholders to better serve residents.

The Navigation Center answers calls from residents in need of health and human services, ranging from shelter, food, clothing, childcare, health insurance and much more. In 2015, the Navigation Center answered 261,504 calls from people in need of help who did not know where else to turn.

Usually the top need each year is for food stamps/SNAP; however,

that changed in 2015. [Click here](#) to see what the biggest needs in our communities are now and learn who in our community is calling 2-1-1.

## **Kudos to Our Collaborating Partners: Ascendant Award Honoree - Yvette Ruiz**

On May 6th, Yvette Ruiz of Emerge 2011, and one of our Accelerator Team Members, will receive the Ascendant Award. The Ascendant Award is earned by a recent Leadership Austin graduate (five years or less) that has demonstrated community leadership in a manner that exhibits the honoree's commitment to the core values of Leadership Austin.

Yvette may live 300 miles away from the small South Texas town where she grew up, but her home is never far from her heart. In fact, it is this anchor to her childhood community that gives Ruiz perspective in her growing career, which now focuses on supporting underserved communities. [Read her interview.](#)

## **In Case You Missed It**

### **Voice of the Poor Update**

What do you know?

What do you know about poverty? Are you currently or have you ever lived in poverty? Blessed Frederic Ozanam tells us that only when we have seen first-hand the issues that people are facing daily can we begin to propose serious measures to end poverty. We Vincentians are members of the communities we serve. That means that some of us need to look no further than our own life or that of our sister, cousin, or friend to know poverty. For most Vincentians, that knowledge comes from our home visits. For Vincentians, "The Poor" are not a nameless "Them", but specific faces and families.

Frederic said, *"When we have accomplished this ministry, not for months, but over long years; when we have thus studied the poor at home, at school, at the hospital, not only in one city but in several, and also in the country, in whatever condition God placed him, then we can start to know the formidable problem of misery, then we are entitled to propose serious measures..."*. Our Vincentian model of service places us in a unique position to speak up for our family and friends who are living with the misery of poverty.

The Voice of the Poor (VOP) Committee would like to learn from what you know. From your work, what are the issues that people in Central Texas are experiencing today? We want to be effective, so we seek direction from you on where to focus our efforts.

I hope you attended the General Assembly earlier this month at the new Vincentian Family Center. I love those events because I get re-energized by being around so many good, good people. If you

were there, you had a chance to tell us the top areas of need that you have seen. We will use your input to develop a survey that will be sent to conferences. It is important to identify the top one to three issues on which to devote our energies over the next year. Please start thinking about the primary issues that friends in your conference are experiencing that may be pulling them into poverty or preventing them from rising out of poverty.

The work of the VOP Committee is advocacy. That just means that, with your help, we will speak up and speak out on these issues on behalf of the friends we serve. We will speak to decision makers, we will collaborate with other organizations, and we will do this in partnership with you.

Peace be with you,  
Andy Vasquez, Chair  
VOP Committee, Diocesan Council of Austin

**Diocesan Council Staff - Phone: 512-251-6995**

**NEW:** PO Box 81511, Austin Texas 78708-1511

**Stacy Ehrlich** Executive Director [stacy@ssvdp.org](mailto:stacy@ssvdp.org)  
**Roz Gutierrez** Conference Support Director [roz@ssvdp.org](mailto:roz@ssvdp.org)  
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Prayer Requests: [pray@ssvdp.org](mailto:pray@ssvdp.org)

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