



Happy Autumn, Vincentians!

Another Fall season is upon us. The weather forecasters have been predicting a cold and snowy winter, which will certainly impact those we serve. How do we prepare for such a time? While *The Rule* cautions against "reserving" funds, we certainly have to find frugal ways of helping those in need.

Exactly who is defined as "those in need" seems to keep changing for many of our conferences. At times, the chronic poor, those who regularly cannot find a way to survive without some type of external support, have been some of our more common customers. Yet, in the past 18 months, more and more folks found themselves *unemployed* or *underemployed*. While some parishes have embarked on a Joseph Ministry to help parishioners find jobs or connect them with networks where jobs might be on the horizon, others rely heavily on state and local resources for assistance. At the end of this newsletter, you'll find some links to some social services that might be able to help.

Funds are tight yet the needs keep coming in. If you find your conference in a dire need for funds, please contact Carey Roberts to see if another conference may be able to help. For those who may have extra funds, don't forget that Twinning within our Council is a good way to serve as well.

Keep up the good work!

A word from our President, Dom Visco

Dear Fellow Vincentians,

You will be receiving our annual appeal letter shortly. As you know, your donations help us to continue to support Guiding Star Ministries, our home for pregnant women. In addition, your donations help us to continue to employ 39 people and to run two thrift stores that assist the needy by supplying clothing, furniture and housewares. I am asking you to be as generous as you can so that we can continue these good works.

I would also like to encourage you to contact us to schedule the Vincentian training session for your conference. We are willing to come to your Parish to hold this training. It takes about 3 hours and is intended for all new members and is also a good refresher for long-time members. We spend most of the time discussing and sharing "best practices" for home visits.

As you prepare your families and your homes for the Fall and Winter seasons, please remember that we need your donations. You can check our [web site](#) for collection locations and donation sites.

Also, keep in mind our Vincentian retreat scheduled for Saturday, November 14th. There is still time to sign up.

God Bless you and thank you for all that you do to help the poor.

- Dom Visco

News from Executive Director, Carey Roberts

501(c)(3) Not-for-Profit Tax Status¹

Recently, all SVDP Councils in the United States were advised by our National Office in St. Louis that our current tax-exemption status, recognized for many years under the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, would be ending and that we would need to either secure our own recognition or join in the National Group Ruling. Our Council has chosen to secure its own tax-exempt status with the IRS and we are currently in the process of doing so.

What do our conferences need to do? As long as your conference is currently using Central Council's tax identification number on your conference's bank accounts and you are filing your annual reports on time with us, there is nothing you need to do! If you are using your parish's tax id number, or another number, it is important that you update them with Central Council's tax id number **immediately**. If you don't know whose number you are using, just call your bank and ask them for the number. Then, call me to confirm. If it needs to be changed, it is a simple process and I will walk you through it.

Also important is that your conference files its annual report with Central Council *by November 30, 2009*. The information you provide is included in the IRS 990 tax return for the Society in Philadelphia. The Society is required to report all monies transacted to the IRS and your timely reporting will help us accomplish this important task!

As always, if you have any questions, please call me, Carey Roberts, at (215) 288-9540 x101

Friends of the Poor Walk

On September 26th, the members of the conferences of Our Lady Help of Christians, Our Lady of Mt. Carmel, Holy Spirit, St. Maria Goretti, St. Luke and St. Anselm participated in Friends of the Poor Walks that raised a total of \$8,603! Every dollar raised will be spent serving the needy of their communities. We are planning a larger walk next year, so start thinking about getting your conference involved. It's an easy way to raise needed funds for your conference!



¹ *Exempt Purposes - Internal Revenue Code Section 501(c)(3)*

The exempt purposes set forth in section 501(c)(3) are charitable, religious, educational, scientific, literary, testing for public safety, fostering national or international amateur sports competition, and preventing cruelty to children or animals. The term charitable is used in its generally accepted legal sense and includes relief of the poor, the distressed, or the underprivileged; advancement of religion; advancement of education or science; erecting or maintaining public buildings, monuments, or works; lessening the burdens of government; lessening neighborhood tensions; eliminating prejudice and discrimination; defending human and civil rights secured by law; and combating community deterioration and juvenile delinquency.

Newest Member of the Board

It is our pleasure to introduce to you the newest member of the Board, Angela Powers. Angela has agreed to serve as Secretary to the Board, replacing Alicia Blessington, who retired from the position at the end of September. Angela was commissioned at the Board Meeting on October 21, 2009. She brings three years of experience as a Vincentian and her credentials as President of the Resurrection of Our Lord Conference, Castor Ave and Vista Street, Philadelphia. Angela related that her conference has about six active members, but she gets "lots of helpers" for holiday collections and activities.

But the life of a Vincentian is not all that Angela brings to her parish. She also serves Resurrection Parish as an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion, as an Usher, and as a member of the Serra Club, which dedicates itself to promoting and preserving vocations to the priesthood. Angela also serves on the Board of Advisors for NORC-Philadelphia. NORC stands for "Naturally Occurring Retirement Community," an "aging in place" option of independent living for seniors. Volunteers help seniors remain in their own homes while providing assistance with some services that they might expect in a retirement community. Angela has used NORC to refer several parishioners, who are now receiving NORC volunteer services. NORC was originally established in 2001 as an initiative of United Jewish Communities. It came to Philadelphia approximately three years ago as a cooperative effort of the United Jewish Communities, Catholic Human Services and the United Way of Southeastern PA.

While we welcome Angela with open arms and offer her our support, we owe a serious debt of gratitude to Alicia Blessington for the many years of service (and many note-taking sessions) she afforded the Council Board as its Secretary. THANK YOU, ALICIA!



Something to think about

After feeling especially drained one day recently following a tragic event, I picked up a book written by Father William Bausch, formerly of the Trenton NJ Diocese, in which he describes the spiritual formation process using images from the well-known children's classic *The Wizard of Oz*. I happened to turn to the passage below that morning and realized how appropriate it was for me (and perhaps for some of you also) . . .

The Well

If you want an image that is useful for describing the necessity for replenishing ourselves, it is that of a well with buckets around it. Our soul – our deep source – is the well. We fill our buckets from that well and then pour out to others what is needed from our buckets. In order to protect that source, we have to be sure that we give from the buckets and not from the well itself; and that when those buckets are empty, there is a time for replenishing, a time to refill before we give again.

Unfortunately, the frantic pace of our lives often requires that we begin to give not just from the buckets around the well but from the well itself. Some of us, I'm afraid, are squeezing the last few drops of liquid from the moss at the bottom. Soul work requires that we give ourselves adequate time for replenishment:

time to deepen and integrate, time to come back to the center of our lives. That is why meditation is a powerful way to provide our souls with adequate solitude and silence. In meditation, you can most easily access your authority and power. Merton was right when he wrote: "It is in deep solitude and silence that I find the gentleness with which I can love my brothers and sisters."

I hope this reflection has provoked you to find some time for soul-searching. If your soul is out of kilter, if your body is tired, if your spirit is depressed, ask yourself the Wizard's questions:

- 1. At what point in my life did I stop singing?*
- 2. When did I stop dancing?*
- 3. When did I stop being enchanted with stories?*
- 4. When did I stop being comfortable with silence?*

William J Bausch, *The Yellow Brick Road: A Storyteller's Approach to the Spiritual Journey*, Twenty-third Publications, Mystic CT 06355, Fourth Printing 2005, "The Wizard," pages 103-104

Allow music, quiet time, meditation, or some other method for blocking distractions to provide a means for you to replenish your soul, to fill you up, so that you can give freely again to those who need your love and compassion. Let the phrase "Tell me your story" become part of your vocabulary. Our ultimate goal is to be responsive to those we serve, but we also need to have that love and compassion begin with those closest to us.

Peace, Larry Huber

Calendar of Events

- October 31 - *Postmark Deadline for early Retreat Registration (\$30)*
- November 6 - *Postmark Registration Deadline for Retreat (\$32)*
- November 14 - *Retreat at Immaculata, PA*
- November 18 - *Board Meeting, Our Lady of Consolation Parish Center, Chestnut Hill*
- December 5 - *Spiritual Advisor Formation, St Maria Goretti Parish, Hatfield, details will be sent to conferences*
- December 8 - *Solemnity: Immaculate Conception, Patroness of the Society*

Board Members

- Dom Visco, *President*
- Carey G. Roberts, *Executive Director*
- Angela Powers, *Secretary*
- Jim Blaney, *Treasurer*
- Sister Patricia Evanick, *Spiritual Advisor*
- John Donohue, *Extensions*
- Kathy Emery, *Catholic Social Services Liaison*
- Dom Bucciarelli, *Formation Committee, Ozanam Orientation, NE Philadelphia District President*
- Jim Kurimay, *Chester County District President*
- Jack Kearney, *Delaware County District President*
- Doris Duncheskie, *Montgomery County District Co-President*
- Jerry Hagarty, *Montgomery County District Co-President*
- Ron Mandel, *NW Philadelphia District President*
- Larry Huber, *Marketing Committee*

Philadelphia Council Staff

- Executive Director, Mrs. Carey Roberts
215-288-9540 x101
- Assistant, Mrs. Diana Cosme
215-288-9540 x110
- Operations Manager, Ms. Theresa Cipriano
215-288-9540 x102
- Council President, Mr. Dom Visco
- Warehouse & Store
901 E. Luzerne St
Phila., PA 19124
- Thrift Store
6247 Frankford Av
Phila., PA 19135
- Web Site: www.svdphila.org

Closing

May the holidays be a time of blessing and peace for each of you and your families.

St Vincent de Paul, *pray for us.*

Blessed Frederic Ozanam, *pray for us.*

St Louise de Marillac, *pray for us.*

Immaculate Heart of Mary, *pray for us.*

Some online resources

Vincentian

Worldwide Vincentian Family:

<http://famvin.org/en/>

Vincentian Formation:

<http://vinformation.famvin.org/>

National SVDP Web Site

<http://www.svdpusa.org/>

Eastern Region SVDP Web Site

<http://www.svdper.org/>

Houston SVDP

<http://www.svdper.org/>

Boston SVDP

<http://www.svdpboston.com/>

Columbus SVDP (Ohio)

<http://www.vincentianvoice.org/>

Church-related organizations

Joseph's People

<http://www.josephspeople.org/>

Operation Rice Bowl

<http://orb.crs.org/>

Angel Food Ministries

<http://www.angelfoodministries.com/>

Other services/information

Info Link (*for Montgomery County Services*)

<http://www.infolinkpa.org/>

Fair Housing Rights (*Southeastern Pennsylvania*)

<http://fairhousingrights.org/>

Pennsylvania "Here to Help"

<http://www.heretohelp.pa.gov/>

JEVs Human Services

<http://www.jevshumanservices.org/>

Cradles to Crayons

<http://www.cradlestocrayons.org/>

FreeCycle.org

<http://www.freecycle.org/>

PA Non-Profit Senior Services (*Montgomery County*)

<http://www.panpha.org/montgomerycounty.html>

DPW Service Programs (*Dept of Public Welfare Svcs*)

<http://www.dpw.state.pa.us/servicesprograms/>

PUC Energy-Assistance Program

http://www.puc.state.pa.us/general/consumer_ed/energy_asst_progs.aspx

COMPASS (*Comm of PA Access to Social Services*)

<https://www.humanservices.state.pa.us/compass/>

Help with Meds

<http://www.needymeds.com/>

PA Department of Labor & Industry

(*Unemployment Compensation Services*)

<http://www.dli.state.pa.us/>