



*Charity is the cement which binds communities to God and persons to one another ... - St. Vincent de Paul*

**Society of St. Vincent de Paul Mission Statement**

*Inspired by Gospel values, the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, a Catholic lay organization, leads women and men to join together to grow spiritually by offering person-to-person service to those who are needy and suffering in the tradition of its founder, Blessed Frédéric Ozanam, and patron, St. Vincent de Paul.*

*As a reflection of the whole family of God, members, who are known as Vincentians, are drawn from every ethnic and cultural background, age group, and economic level. Vincentians are united in an international society of charity by their spirit of poverty, humility and sharing, which is nourished by prayer and reflection, mutually supportive gatherings and adherence to a basic Rule.*

*Organized locally, Vincentians witness God’s love by embracing all works of charity and justice. The Society collaborates with other people of good will in relieving need and addressing its causes, making no distinction in those served because, in them, Vincentians see the face of Christ.*

**Be an adult member of the Catholic Faith**

ACTIVE (Required)     ASSOCIATE (Optional)

**Accept Vincentian Spirituality**

ACTIVE (Required)     ASSOCIATE (Required)

What is Vincentian spirituality? Those who seek to live their lives and their faith in the spirit of St Vincent de Paul are known as Vincentians. Central to Vincentian spirituality is:

- To see Christ in the poor and marginalized.
- To be one with the poor.
- To serve with humility, authenticity, and without judgment.
- To give of one’s self, rather than the simple provision of material assistance.

Vincentian’s see their work as a continuation of Christ’s own work.

**Become familiar with the Vincentian “Rule”**

ACTIVE (Required)     ASSOCIATE (Required)

The Society is an international organization. The Rule sets out basic principles and core beliefs, as well as operational directives.

**Become a member of the Vincentian Society**

ACTIVE (Required)     ASSOCIATE (Required)

The Society recognizes that the level of involvement members can commit to will vary depending on personal circumstances such as work and family commitments. For this reason, the Society holds three forms of membership:

- **Active (full) members** are those who participate regularly in prayer life, attends regular conference meetings, and participates in charitable activities through personal contact with the poor of the Vincentian Conference or Council. An Active (Full) Member accepts the Rule of the Society and belongs to a Catholic Church.
- **Associate members** are committed to living the Society mission and serving those in need by offering assistance to outreach projects held throughout the year. Associate members do not attend conference meetings and may or may not be of the Catholic faith. The Conference is expected to keep associate members informed of the conference activities.
- **Contributing members** offer In-Kind or financial donations to a conference, Council Program or special work.

Normally, Active membership implies Conference affiliation. Once a person expresses interest in active membership, the process begins:

- The name is submitted to the Conference President
- The President provides information about the person to the Conference for approval.
- Once approved, the person is welcomed as a member at the next Conference meeting.
- A period of training and discernment begins. A mentor may be assigned to the person.

All members are called to annually renew their promise of service to the members and to the poor, thereby deepening the spiritual dimension of their vocation.

### Attend Conference Meetings

ACTIVE (Required)     ASSOCIATE (“The Statutes” make it optional, but our Council says they do not attend)

The St Joan of Arc Conference meets on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Mondays of the month at 5:30 pm in the school.

### Become familiar with the Forms used within the Conference

ACTIVE

There are several forms that are used to document home visits, vouchers, tracking service time, and more. Officers need to keep track of the information, so members’ timely completion helps their responsibilities.

### Attend the Ozinam Orientation

ACTIVE (Required)

The Orientation provides an historical context to the work of the Society. The topics include: 1. Introduction, 2. The Story of SVdP, 3. The Gift of Vincentian Spirituality, 4. Conference Life, 5, Council Life, 6. Understanding Poverty, 7. About Home Visits. Registration is at 8:15 at the Waukesha office, and the day ends at 1:00 pm. Lunch is included.

## Consider serving in a Conference Leadership Position

ACTIVE

- **President** – This position is selected by active members in a secret ballot. The term of office is three years, and renewable for one consecutive term. (A person who has served two consecutive terms may serve again after a minimum three year period.)
  - Our current Conference president is Lynn Morrison. Her term of office began 10/1/17.
- **Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer** – These positions are appointed by the president. These appointments terminate when a new president is elected. The new president may choose to reappoint those serving in these roles. These positions may not be held by relatives of the president. Because these are appointed roles, there is no provision for succession training. At the president's discretion, an informal preparation of a successor is possible, but this has no impact on the election process for selecting an actual new president. It is always good practice to train others in doing any of the three appointed roles, so that there is continuity should a role become vacant.
- The vice-president exercises all the functions of the president when the president is absent. The secretary keeps records of the conference, and records meeting minutes and publishes them. The treasurer is responsible for conference funds, and is guided by specific practices detailed in the Council. Currently serving in these roles are:
  - Vice-President – Joe Strazishar
  - Secretary – Joanne Platke
  - Treasurer – Gene Maurer
- **Spiritual Advisor** – Conferences must have a spiritual advisor. This can be a priest, a deacon, or anyone who has been trained as a spiritual advisor.
  - The current advisor is Kathie Leemon.

## Serve as a Home Visitor

ACTIVE

The Home Visit is the basic, most fundamental activity of St. Vincent de Paul. Its purpose is to build a helping relationship by offering support, prayer and hope to people in need. Assistance may include emergency rent, utilities, food, clothing, household goods, referral services and programming to help navigate a path to financial stability. The person-to-person caring visit is what sets us apart from other helping agencies. A standard procedure is that home visits are always conducted by two members, and held in the patron's home whenever possible. The Council offers periodic in-depth Home Visitor training.

## Consider serving in an SJOA Conference Service Role

ACTIVE       ASSOCIATE

Our conference participates in several activities in addition to home visits. Currently this is a list of those activities, along with the members overseeing the task. In many cases, successful activities are dependent on others' service to carry out the task.

- Call Contact for our Conference. Receive the calls for assistance from church and assign members.

- Susan Tiefenthaler
- Summer Lunch Program. Arrange our team to provide lunch in summer.
  - Jerry Leif
- Waukesha Resource Directory. Keep the data updated and members informed.
  - Jerry Leif
- Ad hoc coordinator. Get people to help for small projects as needed.
  - Deb Rydlewicz
- Sunshine and communications. Send cards out to members when appropriate.
  - Deb Rydlewicz, Myrna Neubert
- School Supplies. Annual project before the new school year.
  - Kathie Leemon
- Create and maintain document to guide new members.
  - Joe Strazishar
- New Member Drive. Plan ways to recruit and welcome new members.
  - Paul Laszkiewicz
- Data entry into Council's Electronic Voucher system.
  - Joe Strazishar, Gene Maurer, Lynn Morrison
- Bulletin and Website Announcements and Contents. Prepare short articles for publication.
  - Mary Merz
- Keep Pastor updated on SVdP. Meet with Fr Mike monthly to keep him up to date.
  - Mary Merz
- Hope Center. Schedule and arrange our four dates per year to serve the evening meals.
  - Gene Maurer
- Coming Together to Get Ahead (CTGA) liaison.
  - Carol Maurer
- CTGA meal preparers. Arrange our meals for CTGA.
  - Deb Rydlewicz
- Voice of the Poor
  - Jerry Leif
- Jail Ministry
  - Paul Laszkiewicz
- Thanksgiving Plans
  - Susan Tiefenthaler, et al
- Christmas Plans. Arrange gifts to patrons. Oversee the Advent Giving Tree opportunity.
  - Kathie Leemon , Susan Tiefenthaler, Carol Maurer, et al
- Mentor new conference members
  - As assigned

## Keep up with communications from the Council

ACTIVE       ASSOCIATE

We are part of the Waukesha SVdP Council. 25 parishes are listed as having Conferences, including our Cluster partner of St Catherine of Alexandria.

- **Council Website** -- Bookmark their website: <http://stvincentwaukeshacounty.org>. A special members only section can be accessed with the commonly shared ID = svdp and the password = vincent.

- **“Reminders” Emails** -- Sign up to be on the Council email list to receive the monthly “Reminders”. This contains a summary of announcements and other information valuable to our ministry. Past “Reminders” can also be found on the website.
- **Resources** – Go to the “Get Help” menu tab on the website for a variety of resource lists: parish directory, food pantries, community resources, and seasonal resources.

## Take advantage of programs offered by the Council

ACTIVE       ASSOCIATE

The Waukesha Council offers programs designed to help members grow in their ministry by participation in the educational offerings.

- **Quarterly Meetings** -- Membership Quarterly Meetings are held in the Council Office, 818 W. Sunset Drive in Waukesha on the last Monday of each quarter, from 6:30pm to 8:00pm. All members are encouraged to attend to hear updates on Council programs, finances, and Stores. Minutes and handouts from Quarterly Meetings will be posted in the Member Login area within one week following the meeting.
- **Trainings**
  - **Achieving the Mission** -- Examines the aspects of the helping relationship.
  - **Home Visit Training** -- An in depth look at home visit expectations, the process, tools, and how conferences administer this ministry.
  - **New President Training**
  - **Secretary & Treasurer Workshop**
  - **Ozanam Orientation** -- All members must attend this training to become an active member of a **conference**.
  - **Taking a New Look at Poverty Seminar** – An economic lens for supporting personal and community change.
  - **Safeguarding all of God's Family** - Presented by the Milwaukee Archdiocese

## Learn about the many community services offered by the Council

ACTIVE       ASSOCIATE

The Waukesha Council has an impressive array of services. Members can grow in their ministry and assist in services offered to the community.

- **Thrift Stores** – SVdP’s most visible presence in the community are its two stores open to the public. They are located in Oconomowoc and Waukesha.
- **Coming Together to Get Ahead** – CTGA’s initiatives seek to reduce poverty. The program guides individuals to financially self-sustaining lifestyles. It also seeks to garner support for community-wide efforts to remove barriers that burden individuals' efforts to move from poverty. Seminars, workshops and mentoring are the tools used to create this change.
- **Jail Ministry** -- For more than twenty-five years the St. Dismas Jail Ministry has been meeting the spiritual and physical needs of the men and women of the Waukesha County Jail and

Huber facility. While one-on-one jail visits are central to the ministry, St Dismas Jail Ministry members provide numerous other services.

- **Back-to-School Program** -- The St. Vincent de Paul Back-to-School Program helps struggling families get their children off to a good school start.
- **Monday Meal Program** -- St. Vincent Waukesha County partners with the Hope Center (with financial support and staffing) to serve a nutritious hot meal Monday evenings to the homeless, indigent and needy men, women and children in the City of Waukesha. The meal is served to approximately 60 guests at the Hope Center, located at 502 N. East Avenue, Waukesha.
- **SVdP Sundays** -- Donating to SVdP made easy! SVdP Sundays are designed to offer a convenient way for parishioners, neighbors and friends to donate items to our Thrift Stores right at their parish location. The SVdP truck is positioned in the church parking lot for an entire weekend. Donors may drive right up to it to donate and volunteers will help you unload your items. SVdP Sundays are held annually.
- **SVdP Summer Lunch Program** – This provides a bag lunch and beverage to school age children and their parents Monday through Friday during the entire school summer vacation. The program is offered at Saratogan Park, located on the grounds of the Saratoga Campus – Waukesha Stem Academy. This site was chosen to accommodate the largest group of children in the city of Waukesha that utilize the School District of Waukesha’s Free and Reduced Breakfast and Lunch Programs while school is in session. SVdP partners with the City of Waukesha Park, Recreation and Forestry Department.
- **Waukesha Food Pantry Home Delivery** -- St. Vincent de Paul partners with the Waukesha Food Pantry and St. William Catholic Church to deliver food once a month to approximately 45 shut-ins in Waukesha County. This is a great service to those who need assistance but have no way of getting to the Food Pantry. The Waukesha Food Pantry qualifies recipients, St. William Church volunteers packages the food, and St. Vincent de Paul members provide delivery services.
- **Voucher Program** -- St. Vincent de Paul Thrift Stores provide an avenue for members to send people they are assisting to choose, free of charge, items in need such as clothing, household items and furniture. During a Home Visit the immediate needs are determined, a dollar value of those items the Conference will support is established, and a voucher is offered to the party in need. The Voucher form is obtained through this referral process and also serves as a communication to Thrift Store staff.