



2017 NATIONAL ASSEMBLY AUGUST 30 – SEPTEMBER 2, 2017

TAMPA MARRIOTT WATERSIDE
TAMPA, FLORIDA

Meeting Highlights

Wednesday, August 30

VINCENTIAN FORMATION DAY (9:00 A.M. – 4:00 P.M.) – *Ray Sickinger*

Vincentian formation can be accomplished only through the collaboration of the president, spiritual advisor and formators. Therefore, it is important for Council and Conference presidents, spiritual advisors, formators and Conference support personnel to attend the Vincentian Formation Day.

NATIONAL STORES MEETING (9:00 A.M. – 4:00 P.M.) – *Ray Dupont*

DISASTER TRAINING - \$25 (9:00 A.M. – 4:00 P.M.) – *Liz Disco-Shearer*

LUNCH

WELCOME RECEPTION WITH NATIONAL ASSEMBLY SPONSORS (6:00 P.M. – 8:00 P.M.)

Enjoy time with your fellow Vincentians, while visiting our Sponsor Tables and enjoying some wonderful flavors from Tampa, including a Pasta Station, Quesadillas, Salad Bar, Spring Rolls lots of more! Best of all; don't forget dessert, Bananas Foster!

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Thursday, August 31

BREAKFAST & PRESIDENT'S WELCOME ADDRESS (8:00 A.M. – 10:00 A.M.)

KEYNOTE PRESENTATION – “THE VINCENTIAN WAY – 400 YEARS OF VINCENTIAN CHARISM...THE YEAR OF WELCOMING THE STRANGER” - *Fr. Robert Maloney, C.M.*

DAILY MASS & LUNCH

NATIONAL COMMITTEE MEETINGS (1:30 P.M. – 3:30 P.M.)

WORKSHOP BLOCK #1 (1:30 P.M. – 2:30 P.M.)

Accessing Governance-in-a-Box – Mike Syslo

Our National website contains hundreds of files of valuable information related to the important topic of governance. This workshop is intended to help you understand what is there and how to navigate through the material. You are not expected to know everything that is there; but, based on your role in the Society, there are certain governance topics that you should be aware of and , at least, know where to find more when the need is there.

Increasing Membership: Sharing with Energy of the Heart - Jeanne Harper

In order in to increase membership:

- a. Participants will personally encounter a variety of creative methods to effectively witness and share your love of “*our little Society*” so that others will WANT to join in your work of “*living out the Gospel message...by encountering the suffering Christ in those we serve*”!
- b. The workshop will create awareness moments so that a personal realization can occur that **your own** hope, joy and peace can successfully be utilized to spread the Good News and inspire others to follow! “*Seeing the miraculous in the details of everyday life...*” Gary Eckstein, Community Care Resources, Inc. v4, p5

“Sanctification, Solidarity, and Service: The Lay Spirituality of Antoine Frederic Ozanam”-

Ray Sickinger (Interactive workshop using both Powerpoint and discussion)

- * Participants will become acquainted with Ozanam’s ideas about the Lay Apostolate
- * Participants will understand how Ozanam’s lay spirituality powerfully impacted the Society of St. Vincent de Paul

WORKSHOP BLOCK #2 (2:30 P.M. – 3:30 P.M.)

Eyes to the Blind & Feet to the Lame - Project Empower & Systemic Change for Individuals with Disabilities - Tai Prohaska

1. Understand the genesis of the Project Empower program, its biblical base, evolution and how Vincentians can use it to support systemic change.
2. Understand the factors that contribute to disabilities being a cause and consequence of poverty and unemployment.
3. Be able to identify and assist individuals who are **and** who are not eligible for Social Security Disability Insurance benefits and return to work assistance.

Communication Across Barriers: "If Not Me, Then Who? A Mythbusting Approach to Poverty Awareness" - a Donna Beegle Program - John Berry & Jayne Stewart

In the words of Dr. Donna Beegle, author of *See Poverty... Be the Difference*, “Poverty is a moving target... it’s complex... there’s lots of life experiences of poverty...” In *If Not Me, Then Who?*, a new poverty awareness training produced by Dr. Beegle for the Society, Vincentians participate in an interactive journey through the myths and realities of families struggling to survive, and develop the resources and shared understanding of poverty so that we can be the thought leaders in our communities. In this workshop, participants will

experience this exciting and unique program from some of the Society's most experienced trainers, and learn how to implement it in their own Conferences!

The Grace of Inclusion - Encountering Jesus in the Other - *Dr. Fidelis Teresa D'Cunha*

To focus on building a Culture of Inclusion in Conferences with the purpose of extending diversity in membership and encouraging diverse leadership. This workshop will be an interactive discussion on how to build a culture of inclusion that supports and integrates a growing diverse membership. The presentation will focus on providing resources to encourage minorities take on leadership roles within the Society while addressing diversity challenges. Included are case studies and best practices on how to successfully incorporate culture change in order to realize our Cultural belief of *One Society*.

REGIONAL MEETINGS (4:00 P.M. – 6:00 P.M.)

DINNER ON YOUR OWN

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Friday, September 1

RETREAT: "SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP - THE QUEST FOR INTEGRITY"

– *Dr. Leonard Doohan*

Dr. Leonard Doohan's morning presentation will deal with **The Qualities, Values, and Challenges of Spiritual Leadership**. This presentation will include reflections on the vision and values of a spiritual leader and the major components of spiritual leadership. It will further consider some significant consequences of spiritual leadership and some immediate goals that we can each set ourselves on the path to spiritual leadership. If time allows we will look at what an organization led by a spiritual leader looks like.

DAILY MASS & LUNCH

INVITATION FOR RENEWAL ALUMNI (1:30 P.M. – 4:00 P.M.) – *Dr. Leonard Doohan*

Dr. Leonard Doohan is professor emeritus at Gonzaga University, Spokane, Washington, where he was a professor of religious studies for 30 years and dean of the graduate school for thirteen years. He is author of 15 books and many articles, has given workshops internationally, and also organizes local and regional conferences on the topics of leadership in business, healthcare, nonprofit organizations, and ministry.

NEIGHBORHOODS OF HOPE PROGRAM (1:30 P.M. – 4:00 P.M.) – *Jack Murphy*

WORKSHOP BLOCK #3 (1:30 P.M. – 2:30 P.M.)

Laudato Si' and the Society - How Vincentians Can Make A Difference - *VOP Committee*

Climate change has a particularly devastating impact on the poor and vulnerable in ways that are sometimes surprising. Become aware of those impacts in this workshop and learn about ways Vincentians can make a difference, drawing inspiration and examples from Pope Francis's encyclical, *Laudato Si'* and other sources and Vincentian experiences.

Past, Present and Future of Latinos in the Society of St. Vincent de Paul - *Victor Vera, Guadalupe Sosa Valencia*

To discuss the involvement and participation of Latinos in the U.S. Society of St. Vincent de Paul. We will present ideas on how to invite within the Latino communities, which also increases the number of people serviced by conferences.

Most Successful Prisoner to Citizen Programming in America - Mykal Tairu

Provide step by step action plan for building a service conference dealing with the problem of prison recidivism, where nearly 60% of the poor are re-incarcerated within three years.

Share the practical structure of St. Peter Claver Prison Ministry, so it can be replicated within other St. Vincent de Paul Councils and Conferences.

WORKSHOP BLOCK #4 (3:00 P.M. – 4:00 P.M.)

Building a State-Based Advocacy Network - VOP Committee

It is becoming increasingly clear that Voice of the Poor advocacy at the state and local level will be ever more important in the years ahead as the federal government seems to be stepping back from social service programs and funding and shifting more and more of those responsibilities to state governments and municipalities. So how do we react as Vincentians who see these issues up close and personal daily? Learn more about the Voice of the Poor initiative to develop state-based advocacy networks and response strategies, and how you can be involved and effective in helping our friends in need.

Where we are Now, Where we can go - MCD Milestones - Pam Hudson, Althea Graham, Margarita Galindo & Cathy Garcia

As we celebrate the 10 year anniversary of SVDP diversity initiative, the National MCD Committee thought it would be great to update our Vincentian members on the diversity milestones and events accomplished over the years.

Join us at the national assembly in Tampa to hear chronologically, the accomplishments made thus far, since 2006! We've made great strides.

Spirituality/Bullying: “Fraternal correction in the spirit of Blessed Frederic Ozanam”

- John Heithaus

This workshop is intended to explore the question of “bullying” within our Society (Vincentian to Vincentian, Vincentian to our neighbors in need), and how to address that issue in the spirit of Blessed Frederic Ozanam. It is predicated on a commitment to the Essential Elements of the Society (Spirituality, Friendship, Service) while simultaneously recognizing that Vincentians are imperfect human beings who will, at times, need fraternal re-orientation to those Elements. Providing fraternal correction when Vincentians act in ways inconsistent with the Elements is a sensitive, often difficult, but essential act. This workshop presumes that there are many different experiences, and multiple ways to approach the subject, based on individual experiences, personalities, and skills. The workshop will be very interactive, drawing on the experiences of the participants. It will consist of four elements: Creating a common framework and language, surfacing experiences and prevalence of bullying, identifying some of the risks and challenges of addressing it, and Vincentian-based approaches to fraternal correction.

INTERNATIONAL YOUTH VIDEO CONFERENCE

HOST CITY EVENT – YACHT STARSHIP DINNER CRUISE

Relax and enjoy a beautiful Sunset Cruise on Tampa Bay aboard the Yacht StarShip.

The 2 1/2 hour dining cruise will feature a Top Round of Beef Carving Station, Premium Cold Salad Station, Gulf Shrimp & Scallop Past Station and European Pastries and Petit Fours.

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Saturday, September 2

GENERAL SESSION: "RACIAL INJUSTICE – A BLACK LEADER'S PERSPECTIVE ON IMPACT ON POVERTY" – *Ralph McCloud*

NATIONAL BUSINESS MEETING (9:45 A.M. – 2:30 P.M.)

WORKSHOP BLOCK #5 (9:45 A.M. – 10:45 A.M.)

How and Why we Must Tell Our Story - *Joe Griffin*

The purpose of this workshop is to stress the importance of telling people who we are and what we do. First and foremost is to increase Conference member's frame of reference as it pertains to the SVdP. We have more than 800,000 members, we need to change our mind set.

Time will be given to tell your story and how you've "sold" the SVdP to others. Emphasize the importance of the Conferences, exchange ideas, share special works that you do.

Accepting Help from People in Poverty - *Sonia Holycross, Phil DeVol, Aha! Process*

People in poverty can transition from being clients to becoming partners in our mission. This session *introduces you to Sonia Holycross who made the journey from being a client, to becoming a peer, to taking leadership roles in her community and becoming a national Bridges Out of Poverty presenter for aha! Process.* This can happen in your community too just as it is across the U.S. Speakers will include Philip DeVol the author of *Getting Ahead in Just-Gettin'-By World* and Sonia Holycross who graduated from *Getting Ahead* is now running programs in her city. "Getting Ahead gave me the tools to step away from the daily crisis and plan for a stable tomorrow."

- * Recognize the range of factors that create barriers and instability for people in poverty
- * Use the Getting Ahead model in your community to move individuals to self-sufficiency
- * Understand the larger frame of economic class to better support the clients you serve

Breaking the Cycle of Debt Via an SVdP Payday Loan Program - *Matt Pogor, Jerry Mitchell*

This a workshop on breaking the cycle of debt of our Vincentian friends through implementation of a payday/auto title loan conversion program. The workshop will address how this program can lead to systemic change among our friends. Our presenters will outline the need for the program, how it can be implemented, and the critical role that Vincentians play in the success of the program. Participants will leave the workshop with an easy-to-follow blue print for executing a similar program within their Councils.

Youth Workshop "Circle The World" - *Sr. Teresa Daly, D.C.*

During this workshop we will explore the energy and spirit of Frederic Ozanam and others as they desired to CIRCLE THE WORLD WITH CHARITY.

We will also discuss how we can live that spirit in our day and time and how we may be able to pass it on to others.

This will be an interactive workshop with discussion and activity as well as some input. COME AND PARTICIPATE...

Systemic Change Story on Criminal Justice Advocacy - *Mykal Tairu*

The Vincentian Reentry Organizing Project (VROP) is a partnership between USCCB's Catholic Campaign for Human Development and the National Society of St. Vincent de Paul. The goal for the project is to shift our criminal justice system to focus on building strong communities, advancing restorative justice and promoting the human development of each person. We are striving to build transformative relationships that create better understanding and compel each of us to act. We are going beyond recidivism reduction and promote the common good. Since the VROP's establishment, Vincentians across the state of Florida have been engaged in Criminal Justice reform work. This workshop will highlight three initiatives lead by VROP: Ban the Box Initiative, Florida Rights Restoration Petitions Initiative, Catholic Days at the Capitol.

Governance - "Dealing With Our Stakeholders - There's a Lot at Stake" - *Tom Fahl & Joe Riley*

Did you ever think about the number of people who are looking over our shoulders and making judgments about us as an organization? Or the number of people to whom we have responsibilities, who have a stake in what we do and with whom we need to deal? This workshop will discuss the different groups Vincentians must deal with and the vital importance of being effectively responsive to them, their interests and their desires. Audience comments will be invited.

WORKSHOP BLOCK #6 (11:00 A.M. – 12:00 P.M.)

Developing an action plan to attract new conferences - *Patrick Hanafee*

Participants will develop a step-by-step action plan to identify, approach, enlist, and mentor new Conferences. Workshop will assist participants in identifying specific steps in a logical sequence to ensure a thoughtful and effective strategy to increase the number of Conferences.

Getting Ahead in a Just Gettin' by World - *Philip DeVol, Aba! Process*

This workshop answers important questions about the effectiveness of *Getting Ahead in a Just-Gettin-By World*. Getting Ahead graduates tell powerful and inspiring stories but does it really work? What changes are made? What are the metrics? Are people getting out of poverty?

This workshop examines studies done by professors at Indiana University and the University of Notre Dame as well as reports from Getting Ahead sites that use Charity Tracker.

How National Partnerships Can Work for You - *Karen Lanter*

Participants will understand the National Partnership Program, its purpose, the benefits, individual partnership opportunities and features and how to access them. Attendees will provide feedback about their needs and desires for the partnership initiative.

"The Hula & Systemic Change...The Two Step!" - *Arnold Simonse*

The Hula is a beautiful Hawaiian dance form with which we are all familiar. At the very start of the hula, it is necessary for the dancer to take **two steps** to begin the classic smooth movements that follow. This presentation will take that imagery of those **two steps** to point out the importance for the Vincentian who is aiding their needy neighbor to do so in **two steps**.

The **first step** is the one that is a traditional Vincentian charism, i.e. the direct aid given to those in need. The **second step** which is heavily encouraged by our ministry is the inclusion of some sort of systemic change aspect...the second step.

Systemic change is often seen as working to change society or the community environment for those in need. This is true, but we need to remember that working for the systemic change of the individual is also a goal of our ministry.

Trending on the Advocacy Front - Issues Affecting the Poor and Marginalized - VOP Committee

Join Voice of the Poor Leaders for a discussion of the latest in federal legislation and policy impacting the poor and marginalized – both the challenges and the opportunities. We'll pick the latest trending on the advocacy front from topics like preserving health care for the poor; immigration reform and sanctuary protections; predatory lending; economic dignity for the poor; criminal justice reform; the impact of pollution on the poor; racial injustice; homelessness prevention; criminal justice reform; and the social safety net and tax policy. Understand the issues a bit better and learn how you can help bring about meaningful change for the better.

Basic Fundraising Principles for Conference Members - Steve Martinez, Nathan Martin

Attendees will learn, What is required before they start to ask for donations from the community. The important aspects of writing a donor centered thank you letter. Will be exposed to a high level of the donor research data from Penelope Burke. The basic concepts of writing a grant request/proposal. How to apply to the Friends of the Poor Grant Program-a complete review of the application. The benefits and basic requirements of hosting a Friend of the Poor Walk/Run event. How the SVdPUSA National Vehicle Donation Program can raise funds for their Conference-Council. The basic requirements and access to the complete guide book for marketing and success. Be exposed to the successful outcomes of the National Council's Digital Platform.

OFF-SITE TOUR OPTIONS: \$10 (11:00 A.M. – 4:00 P.M.)

Center of Hope & South Pinellas Thrift Store Tour

This tour will visit SVdP South Pinellas' Center of Hope and Thrift Store operation in St. Petersburg. Since 2000, the Center of Hope has become St. Petersburg's ground zero for the homeless population. The center houses the CARE Center – which provides food, shelter and shower services to more than 200 street homeless daily. The 87-room former hospital includes the largest Veterans Administration Grant & Per Diem program and 21 units of shelter for homeless families. The newly renovated Thrift Store averages 200 daily visitors. Lunch will be included.

Ozanam Village Tour

This tour will visit SVdP Upper Pinellas District Thrift Store & South Pinellas' Ozanam Village. Ozanam Village is a brand new 30 unit permanent supportive housing complex located in New Port Richey, Florida. This inaugural phase is part of a 90 unit, \$ 15,000,000 development project the South Pinellas has underway. Lunch will be included.

LUNCH

WORKSHOP BLOCK #7 (1:30 P.M. – 2:30 P.M.)

Bridging the Divides: How Bridges communities rise above the bitter divisiveness of our times - Philip DeVol, Aha! Process

This workshop will show how local Bridges initiatives bring people together in healthy respectful ways. We know of the many things that divide us a people, but working on poverty using Bridges concepts and tools is a way to bring us together. The key constructs that make this possible will be illustrated through the words of Bridges leaders who were interviewed on this topic.

Bridges work began without any thought or intention of bridging more than the economic divide. Now that we know its possible to bridge other divides we can, by intention, help rebuild trusting relationships in our communities.

Immigration: “Welcome the Stranger: Know Their Rights and Our Moral Obligation”

- *Bertha De Alegria*

** please note that this workshop will be presented bilingually in English & Spanish.

God told Moses, “When an alien resides with you in your land, you shall not oppress the Alien.....you shall love the alien as yourself, for you too were once aliens in the land of Egypt.: (Leviticus 19:33-34)

As Vincentians, we are the voice and the hope of the needy – regardless of their legal status in our country. Immigrants are not excluded or abandoned by the National Council of the US SVdP, US Conference of Catholic Bishops, nor by Pope Francis. They all call us to set aside politics and allow the principles of our faith to guide us. As Vincentians, what can we do if the current laws contradict the core values of our faith and the social teaching of our church? Do we judge immigrants, or do we answer the call to action? ***Like Moses, we are called not to oppress, but to “love the alien as yourself, for you too were once aliens in the land of Egypt.”*** This workshop on immigration will help you learn about resources to share with your conferences/parishes. Where can undocumented immigrants or their children get legal advice? If they get detained/deported, what happens to their U.S. born children? How can they protect their interests (bank accounts, homes, cars, etc.)? We will learn what they should and should not say if authorities detain them. This will not make you a legal expert; however, it will provide you with the resources necessary to guide you and those work with undocumented immigrants or their children. You will also learn about other organizations within and outside the Catholic Church that are assisting immigrants. We will also provide you with forms that can be used while assisting these families.

The Spiritual Advisor's Role in Helping to Keep Spirituality Front & Center - *Rita St. Pierre*

This workshop will address the importance of the spiritual advisor to Vincentians at all levels of the Society. Through the presentation of slides, reference to the Rule, stories and a Q&A period, the presenter will attempt to refocus spiritual advisors on their role and responsibilities in keeping spirituality at the forefront of all that occurs within the Society.

Throughout the Society at all levels obstacles frequently detract Vincentians from their spiritual growth and development. This workshop will address some of these and offer suggestions on how the spiritual advisor can help Vincentians return to and stay on the Vincentian spiritual pathway.

Finally, the workshop will remind spiritual advisors that our vocation as Vincentians is lived out in all areas of our lives and not only in prayer and reflection during meetings. The presenter will offer specific examples of how our spirituality ideally is always “front and center.”

Managing Conflicts in Conference Meetings - *Gayle Westfabl, with Roger Playwin & Ned Delmore*

Conference meetings are intended to be “mutually fulfilling” gatherings where members joyfully share their experiences, grow in faith and make plans to serve others. Sometimes, however, members do not always agree on how to go about these activities and the meetings are far from mutually fulfilling. Managing meeting conflict is almost never at the top of any Conference president’s list of favorite undertakings, but it doesn’t need to be a negative experience. In fact, sometimes it can be healthy and help your Conference grow. In this workshop we will share a few tips to better prevent and manage conflict with your Conference meetings.

WORKSHOP BLOCK #8 (3:00 P.M. – 4:00 P.M.)

“Recruiting and Retaining Members” - *Sunnie Lain*

Participants will understand how to implement a process for recruiting and admitting new Conference members, and learn why doing so is vital to the Conference’s success.

Participants will gain new tools to retain, energize, and engage existing members by utilizing the three Essential Elements of the Society

“Systemic Change in Action: Homework Help in a Hotel Setting” - *Lynda Coppola*

Presenter intends to share how the book “Bridges out of Poverty” inspired our Conference to start a systemic change outreach. We, as a group, came out of our comfort zone from the more traditional outreach of emergency assistance, food, Walk for the Poor, etc. The journey took us through embracing an ecumenical approach and “letting go and letting God” as well as helping the community understand the world from the perspective of those in needs.

"Executing the Mission that No One Should Go Hungry" - *Jayci Peters*

The presentation will include the history of food banks and early involvement of SVdP; coverage of the food insecure population; and role of the food bank. Information on the size of the insecure food population. The national network of food banks and their role in the community. Government projected funding of food for the needy; i.e. SNAP, TEFAP, EFSP or other programs and utilization of these programs. Food bank product procurement. Direction of food banks i.e. trend to fresh product availability and what adjustments may be required of food pantries in the future. Systemic change as it relates to the food pantry recipient. Establishing a connection with a food bank as a partner agency.

"Who is our Neighbor?" - *James Davis*

- Reflect on the parable of the Good Samaritan
- Discuss the way the parable inspires our Vincentian Ministry
- Identify the ways the Lawyer, Priest, Levite and Samaritan are present on your Vincentian journey.

James Davis, spiritual advisor for the Diocese of Austin Texas Council will lead a reflection on the Parable of the Good Samaritan, one of the essential grounding scriptures for the Society of St. Vincent de Paul. Participants will identify the various characters in the parable and find their modern reflection in our personal lives and in the larger community.

Getting Ahead Panel Discussion - Tom Mulloy

VIGIL MASS & COMMISSIONING CEREMONY – *Bishop Frederick Campbell*

RECEPTION & CLOSING DINNER BANQUET – *Farewell to current President, Sheila Gilbert & Welcoming new President, Ralph Middlecamp*