



The VOICE

Columbus Diocese

The Society of St. Vincent de Paul Newsletter

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President's Message Warren Wright



*Come, Holy Spirit,
Live within our
lives.*

Greetings to everyone as we celebrate Pentecost, the feast where we are sent forth to share God's love with all of our brothers and sisters. May our

ministry through the Society of St Vincent de Paul continue to reflect this so that our friends in need are empowered to live more fully human lives.

I recently returned from the Midyear Meeting of the National Council and have three important happenings to report.

The National Council approved the changing of the Mission Statement of the Society. It is now: ***A network of friends, inspired by Gospel values, growing in holiness and building a more just world through relationships with and service to people in need.***

Changes to The Rule were discussed and approved by the National Council. *The changes will not be final until approval by the Council General International.* Key changes that will appear in the rule are the appearance of the seven cultural beliefs developed during the cultural transformation process under previous National President Sheila Gilbert: ***One Society, Spiritual Growth, Servant Leadership, Today's Society (Embracing New and Diverse People and Ideas), Embrace Accountability, Inclusive Planning, and Advocate for Justice.*** Also,

reading of a section of The Rule at each conference meeting was approved as a meeting agenda item. This will help us to better know and live Our Rule.

Lastly, the National Council approved the Society's ***first position paper on Environmental Stewardship and Ecological Conversion.*** The principles in the paper are based largely on Pope Francis' 2016 Encyclical *Laudato Si*. The paper was developed in conjunction with our fellow Vincentians in Canada and Mexico and has been approved by their National Councils as well. Key points of the paper: ***The poor are the persons most directly impacted by environmental degradation and the impacts of climate change AND Care for the Poor and Care for the Earth are intimately connected, each requiring our attention.*** To read National Council Resolution 156 and the paper in its entirety, go to

<http://www.svdpusa.org/members/Programs-Tools/Programs/Voice-of-the-Poor/Position-Papers>

Many Blessings,

Warren

God never spares His servants from trial because He does not wish to spare them the merit and glory", Frederic Ozanam

Mark Your Calendar

Saturday September 29, 2018 Friends of the Poor Walk at the St. Frances de Sales HS and track. 10 AM

Sunday, August 19, Day of Recollection, 9AM – 3PM, Martin de Porres Center, Ohio Dominican University, Andrea Pannell is the facilitator.

2018 Friends of Poor Walk

The Society of St. Vincent de Paul in Columbus is pleased to announce that the 2018 FRIENDS OF THE POOR WALK will be held on September 29, at 10:00 AM at St. Francis de Sales High School, 4212 Karl Road Columbus, OH 43224. Registration starts at 9:00 AM. The Guest Speaker will be Rachel Muha. She heads the Brian Muha Foundation and the Run the Race Club, which makes life better for inner city children.

This unique walk raises needed funds for the poor--all proceeds from the walk go back to each walker's local St. Vincent De Paul Conference to serve the needy in their community.

To register online or to donate, go to <http://www.fopwalk.org> Registration and pledge forms are available from conference Walk contact people. For questions, contact Jim Williams, willia8@columbus.rr.com

Home Visitor Training, March 17

On Saturday, March 17, 66 Vincentians, representing 20 conferences, participated in Home Visitor Training at St. Margaret of Cortona Church on Hague Ave in West Columbus. The training was facilitated by Sunnie Lain, Director of Member Services for the Dayton District Council. This training provided us an opportunity to spend more time understanding why the home visit is so central to everything we do as Vincentians. Beyond what we've learned in the Ozanam Training, Ms. Lain's presentation helped us focus on our spiritual growth so that the people we visit become our neighbors/friends rather than our clients. Our home visits tend to become a vetting process to determine whether a household should receive a service when we see our neighbors as clients. *How do we focus on our own spiritual growth so that we can be Christ to those we encounter?*

Mrs. Lain shared the wisdom she has gained from her Vincentian experience. Regardless of the courtesy and respect we might

show those we visit, the initial time we spend together is often perceived as a transaction between unequals. Those we visit often feel they have to say what we want to hear so that we award them the service they seek. Undoubtedly, this is a very tense time for our neighbors.

Transforming home visiting from a transaction between unequals to a personal relationship between equal human beings is a difficult challenge. After all, there is a need to determine whether a household should receive a service. This challenge is especially difficult in Mrs. Lain's Dayton Diocese. Sometimes, a team would have seven or eight home visits in a high-rise in a single day! That does not leave time for those visited to "really tell their story." Nonetheless, we must work at it. Vincentian charity is not simply providing social services, but "building a more just world through relationships with and service to people in need." It was good preparation for using the new Serving in Hope Module VII on The Vincentian Home Visit which was released at the recent 2018 Midyear Meeting.

Mrs. Lain offered few guidelines for humanizing the home visit. Simply being aware of the need to transform the transactional relationship into a personal relationship is the first step. One specific suggestion she did offer was doing follow-up home visits with people we have already helped "just to talk things over" and see how they are doing. Participants practiced personalizing a home visit in role-playing exercises.

Our deeper look at home visits continues with the new Serving in Hope Module VII *Our Vincentian Home Visit* that was released at the recent 2018 Midyear Meeting. We are providing all conferences with a copy of the module and the accompanying DVD so that all conferences can use them to pray, reflect and act as we bring Jesus' love to those we visit.

Jail and Prison Ministry Conference April 28

At St. Elizabeth Church on Saturday, April 28, Vincentians and others were informed

about the opportunities and duties of Catholics to alleviate the problems of those imprisoned, those returning from prison, their families and, on occasion, victims of the crimes for which people were imprisoned. The conference was organized by the diocesan Office of Social Concerns and the Vincentian Ohio Action Network (VOAN) with support from the Catholic Foundation, the Diocese of Columbus, and the Society of St. Vincent de Paul. Facilitating collaboration of several prison ministries is a work of the Columbus Diocese new prison ministry ARCH (Accompanying Returning Citizens with Hope.) Jerry Freewalt of the Office of Social Concerns and Wendy Tarr ARCH program director put together an extraordinarily informative and interesting conference. Here are some highlights.

An inmate once asked Ron Zeilinger, the conference keynote speaker, why Catholics did not provide inmates with bible study and religious education material the way Protestants do. This led Ron to develop the Catholic Dismas education programs and sacramental preparation for incarcerated people. Find out more about this teaching ministry at

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

Restorative justice is restoring or even improving the human relations that existed before the commission of a crime. For instance, a few years ago, Dr. Johannes Christian, a speaker on the Restorative Justice panel, was driving back to Columbus when a teenage boy dropped a rock off a highway overpass. The rock smashed through Dr. Christian's windshield into his face crushing nearly every bone in his face along with blinding him for life. After many surgeries, his face is somewhat repaired, he speaks well, and his soul is improved. The boy was arrested, convicted and spent time in prison. Dr. Christian has met with him, expressed his forgiveness to the now young man and helps guide him. Prior to the crime the relation of Dr. Christian to the boy was the typical indifference relation of those who never met. Now they have a mutually enriching personal relationship. Another speaker on Restorative Justice panel spoke of restoring herself in the community after being a victim of human trafficking.

Excellent box lunches were prepared by Freedom a la Cart which is a catering service operated by recovering victims of human trafficking.

After lunch there were short presentations of the work of several in prison ministries along with post release ministries. Chris Shamro of St. John Neumann spoke on LEAF. Rose Hamilton told of her chaplain service in Franklin Medical Center. Bob Williams, Ohio Volunteer Coordinator for Kairos updated us on this in prison retreat ministry. Patty Yoder reminded us on the Horizon Prison ministry founded by Chuck Colson. Adriana Johnson, St. Stephen the Martyr, spoke of the important Catholic Latino Prison Ministry. Wendy Tarr sketched ARCH's work on re-entry ministry while Rich King told of EMBARK which connects meets with participants while they are incarcerated to develop a reentry plan.

A special guest speaker was Gary Mohr Director of Ohio Department of Rehabilitation & Correction. It was so satisfying to hear a high-level official speak with such clarity on alleviating the problems of mass incarceration.

A "google search" on the names of these ministries gives a wealth of information on what is being done and how you can help.

2018 Top Hat Mass and Dinner

Saturday, May 5, marked the celebration of our annual Top Hat Mass and dinner. There were 15 conferences represented with 70 people attending, including the guests from ARCH, and Getting Ahead. The celebration began with Mass for the 6th Sunday of Easter in the chapel of St. Charles Preparatory. The celebrant, Fr. Charlie Cotton, concluded his homily by challenging us to ask someone who knows us well how we show the love of God.

After Mass the guests walked over to Cavello Hall for a dinner prepared by LA Catering. L.A. Catering is a division of LifeCare Alliance. All profits from L.A. Catering are invested back into our community through LifeCare Alliance programs and services to support older adults, medically challenged and

disabled individuals in Central Ohio. Doug Schrage of St. Elizabeth was the 2018 top Hat Awardee. Read Doug's nomination at: http://www.vincentianvoice.org/top_hat_nominations/schrage.pdf

After dinner, people who had profited from Vincentian systemic change efforts: ARCH Prison ministry, *Getting Ahead in a Just Gettin' By World* and microloan programs told us their stories. Diocesan Council president Warren Wright introduced a change in the Vincentian mission statement which was printed on the program and all participants read aloud. See end of this newsletter for current and new statements.

Module VII in the Vincentian "Serving in Hope" series, The Vincentian Home Visit, was distributed after the dinner. The Module guides us to reflect on the Home Visit in the context of Vincentian spirituality.

Conference Reports

The St. Francis of Assisi SVdP Conference is supporting the Women Affirming Women Program by asking parishioners for donations for the boutique. We are collecting purses, scarves, belts, makeup, perfume, jewelry. The participants go shopping at the boutique as part of their vacation retreat.

Charity and Systemic Change in Delaware County

There was so much to report in the Winter 2018 issue of the VOICE about Vincentian works in various counties that we had to include a report from Delaware County in this issue.

The mainstay of our efforts continues to be Assistance Intake and Prison Ministry.

Assistance Intake spans Delaware County as well as Franklin, Licking, Fairfield, Perry, Marion, Knox and Morrow to name a few. This support in the form of twinning and referrals has enabled more individuals and families to receive timely assistance in their time of need. This is not restricted to Catholic conferences alone. An example is the Big Walnut Ministerial Association (BWMA). The BWMA is made up

of the churches in the Big Walnut School System. These churches have the same assistance intake support issues as do SVdP. In fact, they routinely refer individuals/families to SVdP for help as well as direction. In a number of cases, we have provided support either by assistance or referrals to other organizations in the counties where the individuals/families reside.

Prison Ministry continues to be an integral part of our outreach to serve the spiritual and religious needs of inmates. This service is provided through the jail chaplains and volunteers ministering in correctional facilities to inmates who receive Bibles, Rosaries, newsletters, prayer cards and other Catholic religious materials. Current locations include Delaware County Jail (men's & women's) and Marion. Volunteers are needed and those interested should contact Jack Bryant at jbrant140@yahoo.com. Other ministries to alleviate the effects of mass incarceration are as follows.

SVdP Reentry Ministry: St. Vincent dePaul and Delaware Community of Grace are working together to form Reentry Programs supporting local restored citizens to transition home. We offer in-reach navigation to those in jail preparing a way to relationships, life skills, self-counseling and employment. We offer outreach navigation to returning citizens reconnecting in society. The ministry also provides clothing, facilitation to addiction treatment, links to housing, support and basic employment. Those interested to donate or volunteer should contact shama@verizon.net.

LEAF Ministry: The ministry Listening, Encouraging and Assisting Families of the incarcerated provides a safe welcoming community without judgement. All are welcome regardless of faith affiliation. The meetings and website offer resources and answers to address the difficulties experienced. Through personal contact and a network of existing resources, direction is provided to people, agencies and organizations that can offer assistance. For more information contact: cnell1962@gmail.com or shama@verizon.net

ARCH: Accompanying Returning Citizens with Hope is sponsored by the Vincentian Ohio Action Network and the Diocese of Columbus. The ARCH Ministry aims to transform lives by ministering to returning citizens (formerly incarcerated). The ministry assists returning citizens and offers a range of resources for ministry support. For more information contact wtarr@svdpcolumbus.org or shama@verizon.net

Additional Programs being initiated are:

Delaware County Micro-Loan Program:

Delaware County SVdP's and CME Bank are offering microloans. Qualified clients are able to rebuild financial credit and have mentorship through the life of the loan. Those interested in a microloan or mentor contact delcosvdpmicroloan@gmail.com.

Delaware County Homeless Project:

The mission is to develop transitional men's housing for Delaware County providing safe shelter, support and advocacy. Residents will find employment, improve educational skills, address mental health, substance abuse issues and permanent housing. For more information contact rossi645@msn.com shama@verizon.net or cnell1962@gmail.com.

John Kutys, St. John Neumann, Sunbury

Microloan Program

Deb Zabloudil reports that The Columbus SVdP Microloan Program continues to grow thanks to the enthusiastic support of all our Vincentians and our generous anonymous donor. We are expanding into our 6th county (Knox County) and hope to be making our first loans by fall. We have 2 other counties interested in starting the program, also.

First – let me **recap** what's been happening so far:

We have made 19 loans as of May 7.

- o 14 in Licking County
- o 3 in Franklin County
- o 1 loan in Ross County
- o 1 loan in Fairfield County

- o Delaware is reviewing their first loan possibilities
- Licking County has had 3 borrowers pay back their loans. Across the board, borrowers who pay back their loans are seeing an increase in their credit scores (for example – Our first borrower started with a 0 credit score. When she paid off the loan, it was 560. She took out a second loan from us in September 2017 and as of mid-April, her score was 617!
- We've sponsored 2 Community Forums on Predatory Lending to educate our communities in August 2016 (Licking County) and November 2017 (Ross County). We'll host our third on June 14 (combined Franklin and Delaware Counties) at St. Paul's in Westerville. More information will come soon.
- We've had some excellent publicity which is helping us grow including an editorial in the Columbus Dispatch: <http://www.dispatch.com/opinion/20180404/editorial-microloans-offer-needy-better-alternative>

Current Need: we do have one very important current need. We need conferences and/or individuals who can help us with initial home visits when we get requests for home visits in zip codes served by small conferences who are unable to do home visits. If you are welcome to help, please let me know (Deb Zabloudil, debzabloudil@gmail.com).

If we are to continue to be successful, we need to take time to look at our organizational structure, our training and our funding to make sure we are on firm footing so that we can continue to grow. Our County Boards will be working on improvements this summer and I want to share some of our hopes with you.

Financial Mentor Training: We have trained about 86 people who could step in as mentors today. If we pair our mentors, that would mean we could service 43 loans across all our counties. That's not a bad place to be, but we have some important work to do. Our training

this first year has been basic. As we've grown, we've made some great changes to the program thanks to John Murphy from St. Edward's in Granville. He has completely revamped our training from the first 2 that I offered last summer.

But now we need more thorough initial training based on what we are learning. We also need more time to do it. As our loans extend past the first couple months, we need additional, ongoing training, to prepare our mentors for those times when payments are late and/or missed and for those times when our borrowers successfully complete their loans. To that end, a small committee will convene this summer to expand and improve our mentor training. We'll keep you informed about this and the plan is to have the new training offered this fall.

If you are interested in being trained as a mentor this summer, be sure to let me know. I will put you on the mailing list for future trainings. Our next training is scheduled for Saturday, June 30 from 9:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. at St. Francis de Sales in Newark. Watch for more information soon.

Our County Boards and Diocesan Microloan Board are also going to meet to examine intentionally-planned and carefully-led ways to grow the program so we can positively impact more lives. This could mean partnerships with carefully chosen agencies in our communities and more outreach to the people we already serve through our local conferences. It will also mean expanding the types of loans we are willing to fund, including paying off payday loans and loaning money for security deposits. Be sure to watch for more information about these changes and how you can help us grow.

If you haven't had a presentation about the loan program at your local office, be sure to contact me, Deb Zabloudil at debzabloudil@gmail.com. I'll be happy to come out to your conference, make a presentation and answer questions.

Sketch of ARCH Goals

This issue contains many references to ARCH. It is useful to read Wendy Tarr's sketch of an overview of this network of programs.

At ARCH, we are working on a number of fronts:

Accompaniment - ARCH links participants with agencies so they can offer accompaniment. These include linkages to programs that go inside (i.e.: Kindway, Kairos, Lifebuilders), as well as programs that happen in the reentry space locally (e.g. First Step Friday, Alvis House, etc.)

Family Support – ARCH offers training and support for parish leaders interested in building a peer support group for families who have incarcerated loved ones. We are working to launch this in a few parishes,

Business Network – ARCH helps educate, provide resources, and equip business leaders interested in learning more about how to offer employment opportunities to returning citizens. Bob Gorman rbrtgorman@gmail.com; and Bill Sparks wbsparks@me.com are the point people

Direct Needs – ARCH assists parishes interested in organizing outreach projects like collecting goods to address the tangible needs of people returning home from prison or jail. There is a fund under VOAN for ARCH so we can assist people.

Education – ARCH helps parishes better understand re-entry and returning citizens by providing speakers who can share stories and information about the ARCH ministry. They can speak to any bible study, small group, retreat etc.

Advocacy- We are linking anyone who wants to collect signatures for the **Safe and Healthy Ohio Ballot Initiative** to help reduce the prison population and increase treatment resources in the community with training and the ability to collect signatures.

DIOCESAN COUNCIL

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- Diocesan Council VP: Deb Zabloudil
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- VOICE & Website: Charles Kielkopf
- 2018 Friends of the Poor Walk: Jim Williams
- Publicity: Dianne Keller-Smith
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Send news items and articles for The VOICE to Charles Kielkopf kielkopf.1@osu.edu or to the Diocesan office.

It is important to reflect on the change in our mission statement.

The current mission statement reads:

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 Frederic Ozanam, and patron, St. Vincent de Paul.

The new mission statement announces that we are:

A network of friends, inspired by Gospel values, growing in holiness and building a more just world through personal relationships with and service to persons in need.