

*A. P. Chanam*

# V E T E R A M O N I M E N T A

March, 2021 | A monthly newsletter of Tools, Resources and Activities for Vincentians in Contra Costa County

## Calendar

### **Board of Directors Meeting**

Tuesday, 3/16

9:30 AM - 11:30 AM on Zoom

### **Feast of St. Patrick**

Wednesday, 3/17

All Day

### **District Council Meeting**

Saturday, 3/20

9:30 AM - 11:30 AM on Zoom

### **Good Friday**

Friday, 4/02

All Day

### **Easter Sunday**

Sunday, 4/04

All Day

### **1st Tuesdays with Vincentian Leaders**

Tuesday 4/06

6:00 PM - 8:00 PM on Zoom

Zoom links to trainings, meetings and orientations will be provided on the final page of this Newsletter.

## Bob Liles' Corner

### The District Council Needs Board Members!

We need more board members at the District Council!

The District Council Board helps oversee and guide the activities of the District Council, and has a huge impact in the lives we touch as Vincentians in Contra Costa County. By joining the board, you can help continue feeding and clothing our neighbors in need by being involved in deciding how grants should be granted to Conferences, deciding how our thrift stores (which help fund our Vincentian activities) should operate, and you can even help expand the aid we are able to offer our neighbors in the county. Recently, the Board decided to partner with Dentists on Wheels, and soon the District Council offices will feature a 3-chair dental clinic that will provide free dental care to our neighbors.

The Board meets on the 2nd or 3rd Tuesday of each month from 9:30 AM – 11:30 AM at the Family Resource Center in Pittsburg in normal times, but has been meeting over Zoom during the pandemic.

Please pray on this decision. The Board is a critical element to the work we do as Vincentians, and the Board needs your help! If you have the time and want to join, please email me at: [president@svdp-cc.org](mailto:president@svdp-cc.org) and you can always join us for a few Zoom meetings before making a decision!

### District Council Meeting Frequency

I am inviting Conference Presidents to share their opinions with me regarding the frequency of district council meetings. As we continue publishing this monthly newsletter, and inviting (though feel free to submit things uninvited) Vincentians to share their stories, advice, tips and heartfelt moments from their Conferences, I believe we can reduce the frequency of the District Council Meetings from bi-monthly to quarterly. This change would mean, since our budget is approved in September, our meetings would be held in March, June, September and December, and special meetings could be held in accordance with our by-laws.



# Annual Reports by Bob Liles

Starting in April, I am proposing a new system for how we handle auditing annual reports. Currently, the job of auditing the reports currently rests entirely on a single Vincentian's shoulders. I'm proposing a new system where a Conference will send their Annual Report to another Conference to be audited. If errors are found, the report will be sent back to the original Conference for correction, and once corrected the reports will be sent on to Stephen Krank.

I am also proposing that Conferences be responsible for entering their own Annual Reports into the National database. Right now our system relies entirely on Bill Hurley to audit reports, and Steve Krank to enter them into the database – this is a lot of work for 2 people! I think entering the Annual Report information into the National database is something each Conference can and should handle themselves. It only takes a few minutes. If your conference does not have access to the National database, Steve can help you get access.

For Conferences with a food pantry, we would like to see them start filling out the Annual Special Works Report – many of the numbers for this report can be lifted directly from the Annual Report. I will be sending out more details and instructions regarding these changes in April.

## Monsieur Vincent by Bob Liles

Recommended by Father John Rybolt, the speaker who led the discussion of “Who is St. Vincent de Paul?” at February's 1st Tuesday, Monsieur Vincent is a film that looks at the life of St. Vincent de Paul and how he came to revolutionize the way the world viewed charity.

Just shy of 2 hours, the film shows St. Vincent de Paul's struggle against French aristocracy and their attitudes against charity as he attempts to help the poor who were being ravaged at the time by the Black Plague sweeping across Europe.

Winner of the 1947 Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film, and one of the Vatican's “45 Great Films,” Monsieur Vincent is a great look at how our Vincentian mission came to be, and is available for rent on Netflix, Amazon, Youtube, and Apple Movies.



# Sign Up For SVdP National's Newsletter!

The St. Vincent de Paul National organization puts out a weekly newsletter, that is a great resource for Vincentians to receive interesting advice on running and belonging to a topic, great topics about the history and spirituality around being a Vincentian, and for Vincentians to learn about wonderful ways their brothers and sisters living the Vincentian Mission are able to impact lives around the country!

If you or another member of your Conference is not receiving the E-Gazette, email [jwitzel@svdpusa.org](mailto:jwitzel@svdpusa.org). You can check out the most recent issue at: <https://svdpusa.org/members/Membership/Publications>

**SAVE THE DATES MAY 17 - 21, 2021**

**The Society of St. Vincent de Paul 2021 Western Region Meeting**

## **TO SEEK AND FIND THE FORGOTTEN**

Meetings and Workshops will be held in a virtual format from 4:00 PM-6:00 PM each day. Monday, May 17, 2021, the Western Region Formation Team will host a special 90-Minute.

Introduction to the Society of St. Vincent de Paul from 10:00 AM to 12:00 noon Pacific Time. This will be offered in both English and Spanish.

## Volunteer Opportunities

There are many volunteer opportunities available to make a difference and help our mission at SVdP. We need your help at the Conferences (even those outside of your own parish), to provide Servant Leadership for the District Council, to help with housing and homelessness in the time of COVID-19 or to join the Board of the SVdP District Council of Contra Costa County. Just visit: <https://www.svdpc.org/volunteer> to learn more about these fulfilling opportunities.



# First Tuesdays Schedule for 2021

All presentations 6 PM - 8 PM

The Ladies of Charity

Sister Paule Freeburg, D.C.

Spiritual Advisor - Western Region

Society of St. Vincent de Paul

National Spirituality Committee - Ladies of Charity

Presentation: April, 6 2021

Congregation of the Mission

Fr. Thomas McKenna, C.M.

Presentation: June, 1 2021

## Upcoming Topics (In Order)

August - Daughters of Charity & Blessed Rosalee Rendu

October - Blessed Frederic Ozanam

December - The Society Comes to America  
(Founding Documents)

February, 2022 - St. Elizabeth Ann Seton



# Ladies of Charity

## of the United States of America

A Member of the International Association of Charities

*To Serve Rather Than Be Served*

Founded by St. Vincent de Paul, patron of all charity, the Ladies of Charity responded to the needs of the poor in 17th century France. Together with St. Louise de Marillac, they went quietly about their tasks, seeking no recognition, satisfied with the knowledge that they were serving Christ in the person of the poor.

The Ladies of Charity, since their origin, have possessed the charism of their founder, daily prayer and personal service to the poor. That same Vincentian spirit characterizes the Association today. It asks the personal gift of self, time, devotion, sacrifices, and perseverance in the effort to bring dignity to each person and to respond with compassion to every human misery.

## Tuesdays with St. Vincent de Paul

The Origin of the Ladies of Charity

1st Tuesday in April (4/6/21) from 6:00 – 8:00 PM

Sr. Paule Freeburg, D.C., Spiritual Director for the Western Region, National Society of St. Vincent de Paul, will guide us in our exploration of the birth of the Vincentian Family - The Origin of the Confraternities or the Associations of Charity. The Vincentian Family is a group of charities that share a common Vincentian heritage to serve the poor and marginalized. The Ladies of Charity is one of the earliest members of the Vincentian Family.

## Sister Paule Freeburg, D.C.

### Presenter Bio

Sister Paule Freeburg has an extensive background with the religious education of both children and adults. Though not raised Catholic, she became one during her undergraduate years.

A few years later, she took her new faith one step further by becoming a nun, joining the Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul. She was inspired while watching a community of sisters in Santa Barbara work with developmentally disabled children. "I saw in them a profound respect for the dignity of human beings," she said. She took her vows in 1971 and then went to Gonzaga University to earn a master's in theology.



**On the first Tuesday, April 6, 2021 from 6:00 PM – 8:00 PM Sr. Paule Freeburg D.C. will introduce us to the oldest Women's Catholic Charity on the planet, The Ladies of Charity. This first arm of the Vincentian Family was the catalyst for the formation of The Rule by St. Vincent de Paul.**

# Preparing for April's 'First Tuesday'

by Steve Krank

Our March Focus of our First Tuesdays with St. Vincent de Paul will be the Ladies of Charity, founded in 1617 by St. Vincent de Paul and St. Louise de Marillac. The Ladies of Charity is an organization of Catholic lay women volunteers that helped change the way the world viewed charity and the less fortunate.

Sr. Paule Freeburg will host the Guest Presentation April 6, 2021 from 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM.

St. Vincent de Paul was a parish priest at Chatillon-les-Dombes in 1617. When he first arrived, he found the church largely deserted, and the citizens of the town huddling in their homes for fear of the Black Plague.

On a special Feast Day he was approached by a female parishioner who told him that a local family was in dire need of help.

The entire family had fallen gravely ill, leaving no one capable of caring for anyone else. St. Vincent de Paul delivered a sermon in which he spoke of the great need of the family, and about how desperate their situation was. History records that St. Vincent de Paul's sermon elicited a great, spontaneous out-pouring of charity that soon saw the family overwhelmed by gifts of food and visits from their neighbors seeking to help. When St. Vincent de Paul saw this great out-pouring of charity, he believed this spontaneous out-pouring of charity could be turned into something more permanent, that could help far more families in need. A few days later, on August 23, Vincent called a meeting of the women of the area and suggested that they band together to carry out this good work. They agreed to form an association in which each would take her turn in serving the poor corporally and spiritually. Thus was the founding of the first of the Confraternities of Charity.

The seeds that were planted at Chatillon-les Dombes flourished and the spirit of charity St. Vincent de Paul cultivated began to spread. To maintain the spirit of charity and unity among them, St. Vincent chose Louise de Marillac, his devoted charity partner, to visit the various new charity associations to help them organize effectively, and to help nurture what we would know as the Vincentian spirit.

On March 11, 1934, Pope Pius XI canonized Louise and proposed her as a model for the Ladies of Charity.

Throughout the world, the Ladies of Charity are known as members of the AIC (International Associations of Charity). In the United States this group is popularly known as the Ladies of Charity USA.



# Soliciting Our Neighbors' Stories

The neighbors in need you help, and their stories, are the most important resource St. Vincent de Paul has in raising funds from donors. These stories are the most powerful tool in making sure we can continue helping our neighbors in need. We need your help! Every neighbor you help is a potential story that could touch hearts across Contra Costa County.

Below you will find a simple script that you as a Vincentian can use when interacting with neighbors we help, and hopefully they will be willing to share their story with St. Vincent de Paul and the rest of the county.

**YOUR STORY is an important part of supporting the mission of St. Vincent de Paul.**

At St. Vincent de Paul, we are dedicated to helping our neighbors in Contra Costa County in times of crisis. We are working to end poverty one person, one family, one community at a time. To do so we rely on the compassion of our volunteers and donors.

By telling your story, you help us gain even more support! Our supporters care about the impact they have on our community, and want to see how we are helping our neighbors. By sharing your story, you can help us help even more of our neighbors across Contra Costa County.

Will you help us by sharing your story? Please contact Brian Boyle at [b.boyle@svdp-cc.org](mailto:b.boyle@svdp-cc.org) or by calling 925-439-5060.

We need information including, (Information can be changed to protect anonymity):

- Client Name:
- Conference Name:
- Vincentian Contact info (name/phone/email):
- How client was assisted (Brief sentence overview):

## Volunteer Recruitment at Parishes

**Conference Presidents:** Below you will see a sample of a volunteer recruitment message that was sent to the Our Lady Queen of the World parish for publication in their Sunday bulletin. If seeking volunteers from your local Sunday bulletin is something you would be interested in, please contact Barb Hunt at [b.hunt@svdp-cc.org](mailto:b.hunt@svdp-cc.org) to discuss how we can personalize this message to your parish.

### **DO YOU HAVE A FEW HOURS PER MONTH TO HELP OUR MOST VULNERABLE NEIGHBORS?**

St. Vincent de Paul's Conference at Our Lady Queen of the World is seeking interested Volunteers.

Here at Our Lady Queen of the World, the SVdP Conference helps neighbors in need who call our parish for help. We assist our neighbors by providing food, rental assistance, furniture, clothing, referral to other services and more. Some of the volunteer assistance can be provided to our neighbors in need virtually, such as returning calls for assistance and connecting people in need to resources. This is the most fulfilling volunteer work you will ever experience! Consider joining the SVdP team at Our Lady Queen of the World by contacting SVdP Conference President Esther Tilton, [SVDPOLQW@gmail.com](mailto:SVDPOLQW@gmail.com)

“What God asks of us in particular is to have great care to serve the poor.”

St. Vincent de Paul

# Links

First Tuesdays with St. Vincent de Paul

Interchange and Presentation with Sister Paule Freeburg, D.C.

Time: April 6, 2021 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM Pacific Time (US and Canada)

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83218451763>

Drop Box:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/yfj70vzjy3bj5ky/AADDxY9E5ywnpl0DarZEVMrTa>

St. Vincent de Paul of Contra Costa County:

<https://www.svdp-cc.org>

National Site for Vincentians:

<https://www.svdpusa.org/members/>

St. Vincent de Paul of Contra Costa County Youtube Page:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCMKjgpCZOYqdmXRF0kn0tUg>