



NEWSLETTER OF THE DIOCESEAN COUNCIL OF OWENSBORO SOCIETY OF ST. VINCENT de PAUL

June 2020

NANCY'S NOOK

(Nancy Harris, Diocesan President)



Greetings, fellow Vincentians! I pray this finds you well and safe. Well...what a year 2020 has been, so far - murder hornets, locust invasions, natural disasters, and cicadas! Then there's the COVID-19 pandemic and all it entails. Whew! And that's just the first six months! We're experiencing a myriad of emotions. We're tired, anxious, angry and afraid. However, we know that God is with us. He encourages Christians to "Fear Not" 365 times in the Bible. I would venture to guess one of the most recognizable and encouraging is Psalm 23:4 - "Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me." As Vincentians, we continue to help those in need in spite of the pandemic and any fear we might have. That's what we do! I am grateful for everything you do and I'm proud to be a Vincentian. One of the casualties of the situation has been the canceling of our 2020 "Power of the Purse" fundraiser. It was a prayerfully considered decision. It will be back next year! At this time, a virtual fundraiser is being considered. Although we're apart we're still together. The Diocesan Council is working behind the scenes with many partners like United Way and Catholic Charities to provide service to our neighbors in need during this pandemic. In the meantime, if any conference needs assistance, please reach out to your council president. If necessary, they will reach out to the Diocesan Council. We'll all get through this together! May God's peace be with you all.

UPCOMING DATES TO REMEMBER



Since we're abiding by our Governor's directives on limiting gatherings of people, no meetings are scheduled. So I thought I would include the Feast Days that we, as Vincentians, should acknowledge in some way. It could be a special sale day in your store or just an acknowledgment during your prayer time as a group. If you need more information about these individuals or special days, please visit our National website at SVdPUSA.org.

June
September 9
September 27
November 28
January 4
February 7
April (last Sunday)
May 9

Sacred Heart of Jesus (second Sunday after Pentecost)
Blessed Frederick Ozanam
St. Vincent de Paul
St. Catherine Laboure
St. Elizabeth Seton
Blessed Rosalee Rendu
Ozanam Sunday (both Frederick and Vincent had birthdays in April)
St. Louise de Marillac

PRAYERFULNESS

Nancy Harris opened our Strategic Planning Meeting with a special prayer for the time period. So many asked for a copy, I thought we'd include it in our newsletter for everyone to read, "Prayer For A Pandemic".

**May we who are merely inconvenienced, remember those whose lives are at stake.
May we who have no risk factors remember those most vulnerable.
May we who have the luxury of working from home
remember those who must choose between preserving their health or making their rent.
May we who have the flexibility to care for our children when their schools close
remember those who have no options.
May we who have to cancel our trips remember those who have no safe place to go.
May we who are losing our margin money in the tumult of the economic market
remember those who have no margin at all.
May we who settle in for a quarantine at home remember those who have no home.
As fear grips our country, let us choose love.
During this time when we cannot physically wrap our arms around each other,
let us yet find ways to be the loving embrace of God to our neighbors. Amen**

POWER OF THE PURSE FUNDRAISER

As stated in Nancy's Nook, this event has been postponed but will pick up again during our next fiscal year. The first event raised \$25,000 and benefits all conferences so let's do our part and participate where possible. We'll share more information about the virtual event as it becomes available. Thanks!



RICHARD REFLECTIONS **(Richard Remp-Morris, CEO)**



Happy Summer Vincentians! I pray you are safe and well. 2020 has certainly given us all some very unique challenges. On a positive note, in February, District Presidents and Diocesan Officers gathered in Madisonville to lay the foundation of a 3-year Strategic Plan. I want to give a special thank you to Conference President John Clark for providing the meeting space as well as food and refreshments. Also, a very special thank you goes to Christ the King's Pastor, Father Carl McCarthy for leading us in prayer and spirituality throughout the day. We had a wonderful day of fellowship while discussing our SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) here in western Kentucky.

The National Council on Nonprofits offers this about the process; "A strategic planning process identifies strategies that will best enable a nonprofit to advance its mission. Ideally, as staff and board engage in the process, they become committed to measurable goals, approve priorities for implementation, and also commit to revisiting the organization's strategies on an ongoing basis as the organization's internal and external environments change. Many nonprofits start the process by identifying the nonprofit's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats, in what is commonly called a "SWOT" analysis. Looking at external as well as internal factors (such as your own nonprofit's staff capacity to accomplish its goals) is important."

Utilizing the well-defined Strategic Plan of SVDP National Council, we've focused our initial discussions within five key areas:

- Expand and Strengthen our Network of Friends**
- Encourage and Support Vincentians on their Spiritual Journey**
- Advocate for and Work towards a More Just World**
- Promote Deeper and Meaningful Relationships with Those We Serve**
- Develop, Improve, and Expand Services**

We have much work to do! District Presidents will update local Conferences on our strategic planning progress. In the meantime, keep safe and healthy. Let's continue to hold each other in prayer! Thank you for your loving Vincentian Vocation. Have a wonderful summer. Remember, you make a difference for our Neighbors in Need. God bless you!

MEET YOUR DISTRICT PRESIDENTS

From left to right: Suzanne Warren, Western District President; Jim Dale, Southeast District President; Bob Durbin, Northeast District President; and Faye May, Central District President.

Please pray for these Vincentians who have agreed to be in a position of leadership within our organization, which requires a lot of time, learning, listening, traveling, and sharing. Their love of and dedication to the St. Vincent de Paul Society is to be respected and appreciated.



CENTRAL DISTRICT NEWS

During the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019 the St. Stephen Conference completed the following actions: 670 Vincentian volunteer hours were worked in the parish office; 772 miles were driven by our volunteers while assisting 1,940 needy individuals. They issued gasoline vouchers in the amount of \$3,020 in increments of approximately \$25 each. They gave out 1,425 bus passes worth \$1 each. And from their food pantry they gave away an estimated \$8,900 in food, diapers and toilet articles.

In addition they provided rent assistance, utility bill assistance, temporary shelter in motels, prescription drug assistance, travel assistance and various other forms of assistance, all totaling slightly over \$62,000.

They also sent needy clients to their St. Vincent de Paul Store for clothing, shoes, housewares, books, bedding and furniture. The value of those items exceeds \$30,000 which we partially paid for. The store donates what the client cannot pay for up to a reasonable amount depending on family size.

Harry Bellew, Vice President of the Diocesan Executive Board and a member of the St. Stephen Conference, states, "We can only do these things because of the generosity of the St. Stephen parishioners. We are proud to be doing God's work on their behalf and with the generous giving of money, food, and donations to the SVdP Store that they share with us."

WESTERN DISTRICT NEWS

As did other conferences in our district, the [Paducah Conference's](#) store and Helpline shut down on March 19. Food they had received from other than the local PADD office was donated to Paducah Cooperative Ministry

which was able to continue on through all the Pandemic. Some of their volunteers worked with their local Community Kitchen which serves free meals to those in need. According to Suzanne Warren, Conference President, "Abiding by our Governor's instruction, we opened safely and sanitized on May 25. The store is very busy, but we haven't had a lot of people come in to the Helpline as yet. It's picking up though. We are very appreciative of Richard Remp-Morris, our Diocesan Executive Director, who told us about the Payroll Protection Program. We applied and received \$9,800 to be used mainly for payroll expenses and utilities. We'll use the money that would have been used for those expenses to help those in need. Another grant he obtained is from the Fifth Third Bank in the amount of \$25,000 to be shared throughout western Kentucky. I understand that 4 of our district's 7 stores also received money from PPP. Some of the local conferences received money from the Greenriver Area District Development that totaled \$30,000.

This is one of the reasons it's wonderful that we have a permanent staff member on the Diocesan level who is knowledgeable, has beneficial connections within and beyond our district, and is always looking out for every conference's well being. Thank you, Richard!"

The Paducah Conference has purchased a unique item, it's called a fogger. You use a special liquid solution in the device and when you "spray" it over merchandise it sanitizes and sterilizes in, under, and around the clothing, furniture, and/or merchandise. The device is in such demand, it's on backorder and may not be received until late July, but the board members and store manager have seen it in operation and decided it was worth the cost, not only during the Pandemic, but on into the future. Many schools in the area have purchased them. You can find out more from Supply Solutions in Paducah; they also have face masks, hand sanitizers, disinfectant wipes and laser thermometers .You can check it out on line at wesupplysolutions.com.

Cudos to the [Mayfield Conference](#) who finished up their fish fry right at the beginning of the Pandemic restrictions using all precautions recommended by the Governor; and they remained open to help their neighbors in need for all but a few weeks. Their flow of people has slowed down, but I'm sure it will pick up soon.

John Clark, [Madisonville Conference](#) President, reports that they will reopen July 6. He talked with Norma Cox, Manager of the Paducah store, and she shared with him the process she went through to sanitize the store, how to set up a procedures for entrance and checking out purchases, and where to buy the necessary supplies.

PAGE TURNERS

We're adding a new section of the newsletter where you can share with the rest of us something of interest that you've just read. It can be a book, a magazine article, or maybe you want to expound on a particular chapter or verse of the bible. I'll start. (*Submitted by Suzanne Warren, Paducah Conference*)

I recently read a book entitled "Abraham" by Bruce Feiler which brought something to mind that I had not thought about. The subtitle is , "A Journey to the Heart of Three Faiths". I will admit I don't know a lot about the Muslim or Jewish faiths, but I never considered that all three religions believe in Abraham and his part in the Old Testament. I got some insight into how each religion, including Christians, look at Abraham and how that relates to their religious beliefs. I learned a new word too, one I can't always pronounce, monotheistic; meaning religions that worship one god only. The book shared Mr. Feiler's travels to various parts of the world and his conversations with very knowledgeable individuals who are leaders in their religion. It was an easy read and I learned so much..

There is not a nihil obstat or imprimature listed in the front of the book and while Mr. Feiler is Jewish, I never felt that he was trying to sway me in that direction. He just stated the facts. Abraham is the most written about person in history and Mr. Feiler includes in the book an extensive bibliography of other readings about this great person.

On page 201, he mentions the Catholic Church's Second Vatican Council of 1962 which stated, "The new doctrine praises Jews as the people most dear to God because they received his covenant first. It hailed Muslims as those who profess to hold the faith of Abraham and together with us adore the one, merciful God."

THIS ISSUE'S TOPIC

In each issue we want to have a topic to which anyone may respond. No one responded to the last topic so I submitted a different topic to the district presidents to share with their conferences. That topic is: How does your SVdP Conference relate to its sponsor parish(es) and vice versa. I have the following response from our Diocesan First Vice President, Harry Bellew, a member of the St. Stephen Cathedral parish in Owensboro.

"Our SVdP works out of the same office as our permanent parish staff, therefore, we interact with them four days a week, three hours a day, so there's a lot of interaction there and a lot of camaraderie. They show appreciation for us and we certainly appreciate them. We receive financial donations from the community, but Father Jerry will give us funds when our donations are down and the demands are high."

"They also work with us in sponsoring a parish-wide event on the feast day of St. Vincent de Paul. It's always a nice gathering starting with noon Mass and then we go to the church basement for a luncheon afterwards, all furnished by the parish for the benefit of our volunteers. It's an acknowledgement that we really appreciate. Also, Father Jerry often promotes our organization and our efforts to help our neighbors from the pulpit every chance he gets. He's always very thankful to all of us personally anytime he sees us, because he knows the value in what we are doing and shows appreciation of the time we give the organization and our efforts to make life a little better for those in need."

That was excellent, Harry. Thank you for sharing this information with us. The topic for the next newsletter is the following:

**HOW DO YOU BRING IN NEW VINCENTIANS/VOLUNTEERS TO YOUR CONFERENCE? OR,
HOW DO YOU MAINTAIN THE SPIRIT AND VITALITY OF YOUR CURRENT VOLUNTEERS**

Please send your responses to me at suzrwarren@gmail.com or feel free to call me directly at (270) 210-4748...you say it and I'll type it. Thank you.

**THE DEADLINE TO SUBMIT ARTICLES FOR THE NEXT ISSUE IS
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 1, 2020**

**PLEASE PRINT THIS NEWSLETTER
AND SHARE WITH ALL YOUR
VINCENTIANS AND VOLUNTEERS!**