



# SOCIETY NEWS

THE SOCIETY OF ST. VINCENT DE PAUL  
DENVER METRO COUNCIL

November 2021

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COMMUNITY FIRST  
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COLORADO  
GI❤ES  
DAY



December 7, 2021

[ColoradoGivesDay.org](http://ColoradoGivesDay.org)

Colorado Gives Day is an annual statewide movement to celebrate and increase philanthropy in Colorado through online giving. Donations are accepted through [ColoradoGives.org](http://ColoradoGives.org). Please enter "St. Vincent de Paul Society" under "name" or "key word." Thank you for your support!

## From Our Executive Director



Greetings Fellow Vincentians, Loyal Donors and Friends of the Society!

I hope you enjoyed your Thanksgiving as much as I enjoyed mine. What a privilege it is to serve you and to serve beside you.

We finished our 2020-21 fiscal year with a bang! On September 25 we held our 14th Annual Friends of the Poor Walk. It was a gorgeous Colorado fall morning, and about 45 Vincentians and their families came out to support the event. Nativity of Our Lord Parish/Conference provided a beautiful venue. Please check out our website ([www.svdpenden.org](http://www.svdpenden.org)) to see some of the pictures taken (Thank you Victor Coriano!) during the walk and at the burrito breakfast that followed. Thanks to the kindness of our donors, we were able to match the generous \$7,500 anonymous gift.

I wanted to make you aware of a new financial opportunity we are implementing this coming fiscal year—the **Vehicle Repair Program**. The mission of the program is “to make available to our Conferences a monetary resource from which they may draw, to reimburse/subsidize their funds used to assist our neighbors-in-need (NIN) with repairing their motor vehicles.” This plan will allow our conferences the chance to apply to the Denver Metro office for reimbursement of one-half the cost of the repair, up to \$750. After much discussion with our Conference Presidents and their volunteers, it was decided this program would be most advantageous to our NIN and our Conferences.

On a side note, please do what you can to support our **Colorado Gives Day event on Tuesday, December 7**. This is one of our largest fund raisers of the year. Please see the information on the front of this newsletter.

Finally, have a very blessed and Merry Christmas and the happiest of new years in 2022!

Steve Loftis

## Conference Notes



On October 31 we held our first ever hybrid Ozanam Orientation Training, with 28 Vincentians attending in person at Mullen High School and 35 attending via Zoom. Ozanam formators Father Francis Krautter, Jennifer Otey, Chuck Openlander, Mary Grace McGauley and

Elaine Murphy led attendees in prayer and offered presentations on the mission, history and identity of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, with special attention to the challenges facing our neighbors in need and the role of the home visit in addressing those challenges as we see the image of Christ in those we serve. The Ozanam Orientation gatherings offer a way for Vincentians, both new members and established members, to heighten their appreciation of the Vincentian goals of spirituality, friendship, and service—the hallmarks of our mission.

If you are interested in learning more about attending an Ozanam Orientation training or perhaps becoming a presenter at a training, the Ozanam training team would love to hear from you. Just go to our website at [svdpden.org](http://svdpden.org) and click on the “Contact Us” tab to leave us a message.



**St. Gianna Molla Parish Conference** became official on April 28, the feast day of St. Gianna Beretta Molla. The new conference is the 27th in the Denver

Metro Council. St. Gianna is on the map shown on our website, thanks to Carolyn Leubbers. The Conference president is Matt Lewis, David LaCount is Vice President, Jan Mooneyham is Treasurer, Liliana Wynne is Secretary and Cheryl Lemay is Spiritual Advisor.



*Amazon donates a portion of your shopping payment to the charity of your choice. Just look for the St. Vincent de Paul Society, Particular Council of Denver. When you choose us, you will be helping your neighbors in need at no extra cost to you!*



Members of Nativity of Our Lord Parish in Broomfield participated in the Friends of the Poor Walk last September. Thanks to their supporters and an anonymous donor, they were able to reach their goal and earned a \$7,500 matching donation.



[www.EnergyOutreach.org](http://www.EnergyOutreach.org)

**EOC (Energy Outreach Colorado) -** Through a grant from Energy Outreach Colorado we were able to support 440 individuals/families with \$220,000 in utility assistance for an average of \$500 each.

\* \* \*

**Ozanam Housing Fund -** We were able to support 644 adults and 525 children with over \$125,000 in rental assistance.

\* \* \*

**ARC Thrift Store Gift Cards -** We provided over \$10,000 in gift cards, assisting 113 adults and 96 children.

\* \* \*

**Fresh Start Loan Program -** From its inception, we have provided 11 loans totaling over \$13,000. There has been only one default.

## From Our Board President

We are not through the pandemic and the situation is fluid. As I write this note to you, a surge in Covid-19 and the Delta variant has thrown a monkey wrench into the progress made in getting through the pandemic.

Whatever happens, Vincentians will continue to serve our neighbors-in-need (NIN). Vincentians have switched from home visits to phone calls in order to help others.

While health protocols will be followed, Vincentians are anxious to return to our traditional in-person relationships with NIN and with each other.

Recently, *some* Vincentians have resumed in-person meetings and a few are making home visits again. A growing number of in-person meetings are taking place, such as the ongoing deanery group meetings among conferences, the Friends of the Poor Walk, the annual business meeting and the Ozanam Orientation earlier this fall.

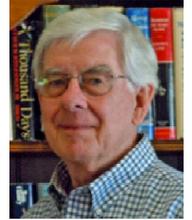
It has been a challenge "to see Christ in the poor and the poor in Christ," as described in the Rule. A home visit helps to make this key aspect of St. Vincent's spirituality real. The Manual reminds us that "From the Society's beginning, the central and most basic activity of Conferences has been the visitation of the needy in their homes. This is the clearest symbol of our Vincentian charism which dictates the highest respect for the dignity of the poor. In that family setting, Vincentians are asked to listen, offer humble advice, and render assistance." The opportunity to return to home visits brings us so much closer to those in need.

Covid-19 caused a precipitous decline in employment, particularly in the restaurant, bar, entertainment and travel businesses. Over 36% of the job losses were in these segments of total employment. Business closings and reduced hours made paying bills difficult for many families. Initially, some of us expected a surge of requests to SSVdP conferences for rent and utility assistance earlier this year but that did not materialize. A variety of federal and state relief programs, such as supplemental unemployment insurance and flat amounts to families based on the number of children, provided funds to meet expenses. As a result, some conferences had ample funds but the number of requests fell.

As the government programs expire, we are very likely to experience a significant increase in the number of requests, as well as the size of the requests. October statistics suggest a resurgence in requests for assistance may be underway.

This is our opportunity to reach out to those in trouble, listen, understand, help and go about following in the footsteps of St. Vincent de Paul and Frederic Ozanam.

Patrick L. Hanafee



Turn your **HEAP** Into *Help!*

The Society of St. Vincent de Paul has a quick and easy way to turn your unwanted car or boat into cash to help those in need.

Go to [svdpUSAcars.com](http://svdpUSAcars.com) or call **1-800-322-8284**

Your donation qualifies as a tax deduction.

Society of St. Vincent de Paul

**Colorado Springs District Council -** The new Colorado Springs District Council has been approved by the IRS as a 501(c)3 and has been assigned their own EIN number. The new council currently supports eight conferences, the Holy Apostles Conferences being the latest to join. Steve Sisa is presently serving as the Board President. We will miss our Vincentian brothers and sisters from our southern conferences, but we know they will continue to serve their neighbors in need with love and respect.

## Your Donations at Work

Your generous donations to St. Vincent de Paul aid us in helping those in need within our communities. Here are two examples from the last year that demonstrate the impact your donation has.

One of our SVdP conferences was able to assist a family of five who lost their husband/father to cancer just two months after his diagnosis. In order to care for her husband after the diagnosis, this young mother was forced to take a leave of absence from her job. Facing mounting bills for rent, utilities, food and daily expenses, she had no choice but to return to work only a few weeks after having lost her husband. St. Vincent de Paul conferences were able to collaborate through our Twinning program to aid this family in regaining some stability.

Another conference assisted a Veteran who had lost his home. Despite working hard to establish himself in a new home, he was in need of assistance with a deposit. The SVdP conference, coupled with the support of the Ozanam Housing Fund, was able to assist him with the deposit, as well as grant him ARC gift cards to partially furnish his new home.

These are but two examples of the families who reach out to our conferences on a daily basis. They are good and honest neighbors who are faced with bad or difficult life events. They simply need a little assistance and they can be lifted over life's obstacles and regain control. St. Vincent de Paul Conferences are not able to help our neighbors without your support. Please consider donating to St. Vincent de Paul- Metro Council this Colorado Gives Day on December 7, 2021.

## 2021 Top Hat Award



Each year the Denver Metro Council presents the "Top Hat" award to one of the Vincentians who has been nominated by their peers. The qualifications for this award are simple. You must be a Vincentian and you must exemplify the spirit of our founder, Blessed Federic Ozanam. This year was no different. We had many worthy Vincentians nominated, but only one can be selected as the Top Hat award winner. This picture shows Steve Loftis, Executive Director, presenting the Top Hat to Joe Gamarano.

In Joe's nominating document he was described as "... a man of great humility, compassion, and a quintessential Vincentian spirit of service." Joe is one of the founding members of the Light of the World St. Vincent de Paul Conference. Prior to the establishment of the conference, Joe served as the social concerns coordinator for the parish, where he established a food pantry, a weekend backpack food program for students, and provided a "listening ear." As the first president of the Light of the World SVdP Conference, Joe's persistent message to all the volunteers was: "If neighbors in need ask, they are deserving of our help as children of God and humans with inherent dignity."

Congratulations to Joe Gamarano, the 2021 Top Hat award winner!

*"Teach us to give  
and not count the cost."  
St. Ignatius of Loyola*





## WHAT IS VOICE OF THE POOR (VOP)?

Simply put, VOP is the advocacy arm of the Society devoted to changing larger structures (laws, government programs, educational policies) to keep people from becoming poor in the first place. It is closely linked with systemic change which goes beyond addressing the immediate needs of poverty. Instead, it is about partnering with the poor to identify the root causes of their poverty and removing the barriers that keep people impoverished. It is following Christ's call for justice.

## WHO IS THE VOICE OF THE POOR?

We all are "voices," but every conference should be represented at the monthly Voice of the Poor meetings. It is vital for the success of our advocacy that VOP hear from members from every conference. To this end, we will continue to meet on zoom to overcome travel difficulties, as well as covid restrictions, during our meetings which take place at 4:30 pm on the second Wednesday of each month. Conference presidents should please send the names of their representatives to [corky-treacy@comcast.net](mailto:corky-treacy@comcast.net) or [sallykwolfe@gmail.com](mailto:sallykwolfe@gmail.com).

## MORE ABOUT VOP

The Denver VOP was organized in Spring 2018 and adopted the following mission statement: In-

spired by Vincentian Values, the Colorado Voice of the Poor identifies *systemic issues* critical to those living in poverty. We partner with social service organizations to advocate for a society in which all human beings have equal opportunity to lead fulfilling lives. In keeping with this goal and national guidelines, VOP collaborates with other organizations and resources. The Colorado VOP works with the office of the Colorado Catholic Conference and meets regularly with Together Colorado, a state-wide community of faith leaders.

This year the National VOP adopted Racism, Housing and Employment as its main concerns. Information on these and other issues can be found in its series of national webinars. These issues affect the people we serve in Colorado and the Denver Metro area. Representation from every conference is important if we are to creatively and successfully identify the people most impacted and find solutions for them.

Visit [www.members.ssvpusa.org](http://www.members.ssvpusa.org) for more information and click on "Special Works" to find out how vital the work of Voice of the Poor (VOP) is to the work of the Society and your conference. We especially recommend that you listen to the message from Jack Murphy, National VOP Chair, to learn more about VOP's vital programs.

## National Assembly

At the National Assembly held in Houston Texas this past August, the National Council passed Resolution 189 which establishes the adoption of a Safeguarding Policy in each local SVdP Council. The purpose of the Safeguarding Policy is to create, in accord with local Diocesan and government guidelines, policies for the protection of everyone to be served by the Society, as well as for its members and others serving on behalf of the Society.

For all who are sick or suffering, may God give them courage and consolation. For the deceased members, the deceased poor, and our deceased benefactors, may God grant them eternal rest.

**JoAnn Phillips**, Conference president at Presentation, who passed away in February 2021.

**Jack Rae**, Vincentian at Our Lady of Loreto and a SSVdP "Top Hat" award winner. Jack passed away in February 2021.





**Society of St. Vincent de Paul  
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***"You are rewarded not according to your work or your time but according to the measure of your love."***

**St. Catherine of Sienna**

***"For it is in giving that we receive."***

**St. Francis of Assisi**

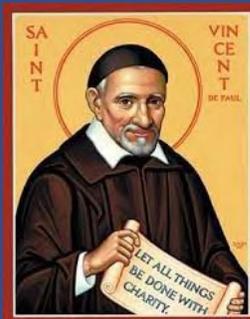


**Where There's  
a Will...  
There's a WAY  
for you to help  
those in need.**

Consider a Legacy Gift to  
The Society of St. Vincent de Paul  
through our fund at The Catholic Foundation.  
Contact Jean Finegan at **303-867-0613**  
or go to **CatholicFoundation.com** to find out how  
you can plan your Legacy gift to help those in need.



**Society of St. Vincent de Paul**



***"Charity is certainly greater than any rule. Moreover all rules must lead to charity."***

**St. Vincent de Paul**