

# ***Society of St. Vincent de Paul***

## ***Election Process for a Conference President***

### **Term of Service**

The Conference is directed by a President elected through a process that culminates in a secret ballot for a three-year (one year for youth conferences) term (beginning on October 1<sup>st</sup>), which may be renewed once. Two key factors to remember here is that the term of office can only be renewed once and the term begins on October 1<sup>st</sup> of a particular year. For adult Conferences, this means the President can serve a maximum of six consecutive years (two for Youth Conferences).

The term begins on October 1<sup>st</sup> and ends on September 30<sup>th</sup> three years later. There is no automatic renewal of a President's term. There must be an election. A retiring President who has just served two consecutive terms is not eligible for re-election as President until a further period of three years has elapsed.

### **Nominating Committee**

On or about July 1<sup>st</sup> of the year when the President's term ends, the President convenes a nominating committee to prepare for the upcoming election. The duty of the Committee will be to initiate and conclude the election process. The Committee Chairperson will report the status of the election at all subsequent Conference Meetings. During the month of July, the Committee members will actively solicit nominations for the office of President. Those who are nominated must accept the nomination or have their names withdrawn; therefore, the Nominating Committee must ensure that the nominees understand the role and responsibilities of the office they are being asked to serve.

Only Full (Active) members of the Society may be Officers. Full (Active) status is given to members who are Catholic, attend Conference/Council meetings regularly, are actively involved in the life of the Conference/Council (decision making and works), are not members of ordained clergy, and receive no salary or remuneration (except for approved reimbursable expenses) from the Society at any level. It is the responsibility of the Nominating Committee to ensure that all candidates qualify. It is also the responsibility of the Nominating Committee to seek at least two candidates.

### **Know the Candidates**

On or about August 1<sup>st</sup>, the Committee Chairperson will reveal to the Conference those members who are candidates. It is during the Conference meetings in the month of August that the candidates will be allowed to present their qualifications and plans to the members of the Conference. Campaigning is not allowed within the Society of St. Vincent de Paul. Once the candidates have been named, accepted and have presented their qualifications and plans for the Conference, the committee should ensure that Conference members understand the role and responsibilities of the President. It is then left to the Holy Spirit to move the members and help them discern the person to vote for.

### **The Election**

On or about September 1<sup>st</sup>, the election will take place. This is done in the form of a secret written ballot. A process for breaking a tie must be established before the vote occurs. The Chairperson of the Nominating Committee will present the candidates, distribute the ballots, and collect the filled in ballots. Members of the committee will then count the ballots and report to

the Committee Chairperson the results of the election. The Committee Chairperson will then reveal the name of the person elected to the office of President. At no time will the ballot count be revealed to the members or the candidates.

If there are more than two candidates, the candidate who receives more than 50% of the total ballots cast (taking into account quorums defined in bylaws) becomes the President-Elect. If none of the candidates receives this simple majority, the Committee Chairperson will announce the two candidates with the most votes. There will then be a runoff election held immediately with those two candidates' names.

There are times when only a single candidate comes forward. When this occurs, the election process must still be followed. There must still be a secret ballot. There are members who may choose to not vote for the single candidate. The secret ballot allows for that anonymity. The secret ballot should be made in such a way that the person voting may vote in favor of the individual (YES) or withhold their support for the candidate (NO). A "yes" or "no" vote must be cast. Only the votes cast are counted. If the single candidate does not receive a simple majority of approval, then the Nominating Committee must find other candidates.

### **Post-Election Responsibilities**

The newly elected President will take office on October 1<sup>st</sup>. This gives the President-Elect approximately one month to appoint the other officers (Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer) and Spiritual Advisor who will make up the Conference board beginning October 1<sup>st</sup>. As is true with the President, all officers must be Full (Active) members of the Society. The President-Elect will also have to begin thinking about selection of committee chairs for various active committees. The outgoing President must ensure that the Pastor and Parish Council are informed of the upcoming change in Officers.

After a Conference President has been elected, the name of that person shall be submitted to the District Council President. Thereupon that person shall be enrolled as a member of the District Council and installed at the next District Council Meeting. Notification must then be sent to the National Office to ensure the Conference database is properly updated.

For serious reasons, and in accordance with The Rule, an election can be annulled.

### **Installation**

It is highly recommended that the Conference hold a special installation ceremony on October 1<sup>st</sup> (or the first meeting in October) for the new President and slate of officers. There is available through the National Office a publication titled *Vincentian Celebrations: Rituals and Ceremonies* from which you can obtain an appropriate installation ceremony.

**Extraordinary Circumstances**

Should the President resign, become permanently incapacitated, be removed from office or die during the term of office, then the Vice President of the Conference shall act as President until the election of a new President. Upon the vacancy of the office of President prior to the completion of the term of office, all other officers remain in office until a new President takes office. Upon the vacancy of the office of President prior to the completion of the term of office, the Vice-president shall within ten days from receipt of the notice of the vacancy of the office of President initiate the election process. The election is then held within 3 months. The newly elected President's term of office begins on the date of election to that position and installation occurs on October 1<sup>st</sup> following the election. Irrespective of the months involved, the portion of year one in office is counted as the first year; with the remaining 2 years of a three-year term of office beginning October 1<sup>st</sup> of that year.

*On the following pages are sample forms the Nominating Committee may want to use for an autobiography and platform from the nominees.*

# NOMINEE'S AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL STATEMENT

Complete all of the following autobiographical items. To be valid, every question must be answered. If more space is needed, use reverse side and indicate on this front page additional material has been written on the back.

## PLEASE PRINT OR TYPE

- 1) Full name: \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) Home address: \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) Telephone number (include area code): \_\_\_\_\_
- 4) Email: \_\_\_\_\_
- 5) Date of birth: month/date/year: \_\_\_\_\_
- 6) Marital status: single ☐ married ☐ divorced ☐ widowed ☐
- 7) Spouse's name (if living): \_\_\_\_\_
- 8) Names and ages of children: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 9) Education (check the highest level of schooling and enter years of schooling at that level):  
High School \_\_\_\_\_ College \_\_\_\_\_ Graduate College \_\_\_\_\_  
Indicate colleges or universities attended and degrees earned: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 10) Profession or occupation: \_\_\_\_\_
- 11) *Your experience as a member of the Society*  
Date of admission to active membership: \_\_\_\_\_  
List offices and positions held in the Society and years served in these capacities. Also list any important and unusual assignments carried out by you as an SVdP member:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 12) List other significant achievements or involvement in civic, cultural, community service, and church activities: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

*Signature of Nominee:* \_\_\_\_\_ *Date:* \_\_\_\_\_

# NOMINEE'S PLATFORM STATEMENT

The SVdP President serves for three years. This demands, on the part of the successful candidate, a major sharing of his/her available time and talents. On the part of the Society, a Presidential election involves the conferring of substantial authority to the chosen leader and implies confidence in his/her character and capabilities.

Before making such a choice, therefore, members ask you to set forth briefly what might be called a "Platform Statement". It must include:

- 1) Your views about the most urgent needs of our Society at this time;
- 2) The SVdP goals or objectives you would hope to achieve during your three-year term as President;
- 3) Some indication about how you would expect to reach these goals;
- 4) Any other "Platform" comments or observations that you consider to be important in relation to the growth and future of the Society.

Your "Platform Statement" may not exceed one side only of an 8 ½ by 11 typewritten page, single-spaced, with a half inch margin on all four sides.

**Please use the reverse side for your "Platform Statement".**

**BEGIN** by entering your signature: \_\_\_\_\_