OPENING PRAYER

L: In the name of the Father…
ALL: Amen
L: Come, Holy Spirit, live within our lives.
ALL: And strengthen us by your love.
L: Send forth your spirit and new life will be created.
ALL: And the whole face of the earth will be renewed. **Our Father prayer…**
L: Let us reflect on the words of Our Lord Jesus Christ, recalling His unity and presence among us: "Where two or three are gathered together in My Name, there am I in the midst of them."

Short Silence – Light Candle

continued…

Opening Prayer continued…

ALL: Lord Jesus, deepen our Vincentian spirit of friendship during this meeting, make us responsive to the Christian calling to seek and find the forgotten, the suffering or the deprived so that we may bring them Your Love. Help us to be generous with our time, our possessions and ourselves in this mission of charity. Perfect in us Your love and teach us to share more fully in the Eucharistic Sacrifice offered for all. **Hail Mary prayer…**

L: St. Vincent de Paul, St. Louise de Marillac.
ALL: Pray for us.
L: Blessed Frederic Ozanam, Blessed Rosalie Rendu.
ALL: Pray for us.
L: All Holy and Blessed members of the Vincentian Family.
ALL: Pray for us.

(There is NO SIGN OF THE CROSS at the end of the Opening Prayer, because the entire meeting is a prayer.)

3

Society of St. Vincent de Paul Georgia

MISSION STATEMENT

Respecting the DIGNITY of each person, St. Vincent de Paul Georgia brings hope and help to those in need so they may find stability and move toward self-sufficiency.

4

Society of St. Vincent de Paul Georgia

VISION

The vision of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul Georgia is to change the face of charity by offering hope and help to those we serve *through the guidance of the Holy Spirit*.

5

What Is in This Formation?

- Highlights of the 2021 Spiritual Advisor Handbook *(download to your computer from national website and read, then attend the virtual national spiritual advisor formation)*
- Breakout Sessions with Fellow Vincentians
- Spiritual Advisor Resources
  - SVdP-Georgia Spiritual Advisor Resources (*contents emailed to you)*
  - References to the national Website, www.svdpusa.org *(download resources, or order items for sale from this website)*

6

2021 Spiritual Advisor Handbook
Table of Contents (*abbreviated*)

- The Spiritual Advisor in the Society
  - Our heritage
  - Founders
  - Vincentian Spirituality
  - Role and Responsibilities of the Spiritual Advisor
- The Spiritual Advisor at Conference Level and Council Level
  - Vincentian Reflections
  - Serving in Hope Series
  - Apostolic Reflection
  - Discernment
- Spiritual Advisor Resources
- Vincentian Prayers
- Spiritual Advisor Commissioning

7

SVdP-*National* Formation – Spiritual Advisor

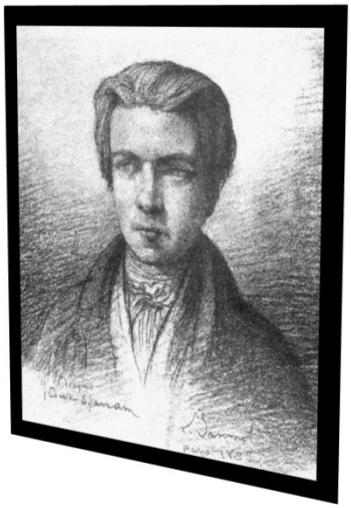
- The St. Vincent de Paul *national office* provides annual (and possibly semi-annual) formation, and it is for -
  - New Spiritual Advisors
  - Experienced Spiritual Advisors
  - Presidents and Vice Presidents
- Virtual
  - National virtual formation is thorough and comprehensive.
- Spiritual Advisors and Presidents need to attend to -
  - Learn more about what this role is truly about.
  - Learn more about the resources that are available.

8

The primary purpose of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul –

TO INCREASE THE HOLINESS OF ITS MEMBERS

(Manual, section 2.5)



(*Frederic Ozanam*)

9

Formation for Spiritual Advisors – Serving the "Suffering Christ"

The *most important truth* of Vincentian spirituality is that Jesus is present in the poor.
Why do we say that? Answer: We are all divine creations of God.

10

The Spiritual Advisor Promotes the Mission - *How do we do this?*

- ❑ Encourage Home Visits (during a pandemic, the case worker decides if the meeting will be by phone, virtual, or in-person visit).
- ❑ Build a faith community rooted in prayer, reflection, and service.
- ❑ Encourage Vincentians to see the face of Christ in those we serve, helping them to deepen their faith.
- ❑ Facilitate opening and closing prayers at meetings. Facilitate spiritual reflection and discussion.
- ❑ Facilitate the use of special prayers, sessions, and Masses (retreats, formation, commissioning services, for example).

11

The role of the Spiritual Advisor is *manifested* in the following ways:

1. Attend the annual SVdP-Georgia Spiritual Advisor Formation, in-person or virtually. Inform the SVdP-Georgia Sr. Director of Vincentian Support of completion. (jmaxwell@svdpgeorgia.org)
2. Attend virtual SVdP-National Spiritual Advisor Formation.
3. Attend conference meetings regularly and remain for the entire meeting. Facilitate opening and closing prayers. Prepare and facilitate spiritual reflections during meetings, including the discussions.
4. Provide inspiration, guidance, and challenge.
5. Help develop the spiritual life of members.
6. Utilize the Society spiritual formation resources.

(continued next page) *12*

The role of the Spiritual Advisor is *manifested* in the following ways: *(continued)*

7. Promote the works of the Society by suggesting resource material that may be used to deepen fellow Vincentian faith.
8. Manifest love for those who are poor and participate in direct service.
9. Remind members of their Vincentian vocation of growing in holiness
10. Encourage Vincentian friendship among members
11. Grow together in their knowledge of Vincentian spirituality
12. Strive to learn more about St. Vincent de Paul, St. Louise de Marillac, Blessed Frederic Ozanam, and Blessed Rosalie Rendu

13

What are the ideal characteristics of Spiritual Advisors?

1. Individuals with ongoing experiences with God, who have a strong prayer life, and can witness to their own spiritual growth.
2. Balanced persons, and approachable.
3. Persons capable of being a spiritual companion, mentor, and friend.
4. Persons committed to the Rule, mission and ministry of the Society.
5. Non-judgmental but prepared to share Vincentian values.
6. Exemplifies Vincentian virtues: humility, simplicity, gentleness, selflessness, and zeal.
7. Persons who can foster friendship in conference and with those served.
8. Persons who can deal with tension and ambiguity.
9. Someone who has a commitment to the value of the laity in the church.
10. Someone with good listening and communication skills.
11. Someone who has the ability to lead prayer and facilitate sharing.
12. Someone able to recognize and encourage others' gifts in the Vincentian mission.

14

Spiritual Advisors will have Knowledge and Commitment to…

- Jesus & the Gospels
- Vincentian spirituality
- SVdP Rule & Manual, Spiritual Advisor Handbook, mission & ministry
- Personal witness in their own spiritual life
- Catholic Social Teachings
- Value of lay ministry in the church
- Active service to neighbors/clients in need
- Understands "poverty"
- Leading prayer and sharing
- Praying with clients/neighbors

15

Assist Vincentians with Development of Spiritual Life

1. Imitate lives of the Founders
2. Love God "in the strength of our arms & the sweat of our brow"
3. See Christ in the Poor
4. Be led by the Spirit, then trust in God's Providence.
5. Live our Virtues–Simplicity, Humility, Zeal, Gentleness, and Selflessness

St. Vincent de Paul

16

Assist Vincentians to reach deeper faith awareness of their ---

1. Participation in the mystery of the Church.
2. Need for openness to other Vincentians.
3. Vocation to serve and minister to others and each other as Vincentians.
4. Identification with the poor.

17

What else helps our fellow Vincentians grow in their Vincentian spirituality?

1. Attend Vincentian gatherings (retreats, etc.) dealing with spirituality whenever possible.
2. Learn about Vincentian resources on spiritual development (reflections, contemplations, books, movies).
3. Actively pursue your own spiritual growth in the Vincentian vocation.
4. As spiritual advisors, maintain ongoing communication with the president and pastor, as needed.

18

Meetings and Other Vincentian Interactions

1. As the spiritual advisor, strive to maintain, with the president, that ALL meetings AND Vincentian interactions are conducted in a spirit of Vincentian friendship.
2. If differences arise, add a sense of calm if that is possible, listening to one another, and attempting to resolve differences.
3. Vincentians can "agree to disagree."
4. Keep the focus on loving those who are poor, as Christ did (be kind, gentle, and non-judgmental, for example).
5. Encourage fellow Vincentians to be open to the Holy Spirit, for new or revised approaches to case management, and all other matters of business.

19

Desired Vincentian Spirituality Outcomes of the Conference

1. We can see the link between service and holiness.
2. We can see conference members as a faith community.
3. We can see each moment as an opportunity for holiness.
4. We can see the face of Christ in everyone we serve.
5. We can see that our ministry is no longer just a business transaction; instead, we can see growth of spiritual friendship (1) between Vincentians, and (2) between the Vincentians and their clients/neighbors.

20

Models for Spiritual Advisors

1. They were animators
2. Offered recommendations
3. Attended meetings
4. Offered assistance
5. Encouraged creativity
6. Successful plans originated through sacred scripture.
7. Personally enriched by those who shared their mission.

21

What are some of the obstacles to finding a Spiritual Advisor?

1. Title of spiritual advisor may seem intimidating.
2. Person may be unclear about the role.
3. May feel inadequate for the role, or feel unworthy.
4. Meeting structure cuts off the spiritual reflection, not allowing adequate time for thought and discussion.
5. Members might be reluctant to discuss their thoughts and feelings.

22

Questions for Reflection – 15 mins.

1. How has the role of spiritual advisor been carried out in your conference up to this point?

???

2. What new knowledge of the role of spiritual advisor have you gained so far in today's presentation?

23

Appointment of Conference Spiritual Advisor

1. Conference president, in consultation with the pastor, appoints the conference spiritual advisor (and an associate as needed).
2. Conference holds a commissioning service.
3. Register conference spiritual advisor through the SVdP-Georgia Sr. Director of Vincentian Support (Jennifer Maxwell).
4. Lapel pins may be purchased at the national web site, and used during the commissioning.

24

Providing Support to Spiritual Advisors

The conference needs to:

1. Budget time at the conference meetings for prayer & spiritual reflection (15-30 minutes,15-minute minimum).
2. Provide funds for resources.
3. Provide books on the Vincentian founders and spirituality.

25

Providing Support to Spiritual Advisors – *continued*

4. Ensure that spiritual advisors are included in service to the needy, who address spiritual needs of the poor, and encouraging Vincentians to pray with *willing* clients.
5. Express appreciation for the spiritual advisor's contribution.
6. Keep spiritual advisor in the loop of difficult cases, service issues, and friendship challenges, seeking their advice.

26

RESOURCES

SVDP-National Office Resources – www.svdpusa.org

- Vincentian Spiritual Reflections & Contemplations
- Serving in Hope
- Rule & Manual
- Vincentian Celebrations
- Vincentian Discernment
- Vincentian Formation
- Home Visitation

Other Tools

- Young Vincentian Activities and Resource Guide
- Voice of the Poor
- Books, Videos & Music, Vincentian Website

27

How to Lead Vincentian Reflections (15-30 minutes)

(download from www.svdpusa.org)

1. Provide a copy of the Sunday/Feast Day reflection for each member.
2. Each section read aloud by different people, or all read by the Spiritual Advisor, who makes this decision.
3. Quiet reflection (at least one minute)
4. Optional sharing
5. Closing prayer of the reflection, and prayed together.

28

EXAMPLE-SPIRITUAL REFLECTION (HANDOUT FOR FORMATION)

FOURTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME
January 31, 2021

Gospel: (Mark 1:21-28)
Jesus entered the synagogue on the Sabbath and began to teach. The people were spellbound by his teaching because he taught with authority and not like the scribes. There appeared in the synagogue *a man with an unclean spirit* that shrieked: "What do you want of us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are—the Holy One of God!" Jesus rebuked him sharply: "*Be quiet! Come out of the man!"* At that the unclean spirit convulsed the man violently and with a loud shriek came out of him. All who looked were amazed. They began to ask one another: "What does this mean? A completely new teaching in a spirit of authority! He gives orders to unclean spirits and they obey him!" From that point on, his reputation spread throughout the surrounding region of Galilee.

Reflection:
From that point on, they remembered, and told the story, and his reputation spread throughout the surrounding region of Galilee. "Remember" is a word that is often on our lips when we pray, and when we speak to our friends. Sometimes we also feel ourselves to be better people when we *remember* the goodness of others to us - their generosity, their unselfishness, their tenderness, their thoughtfulness. This word "remember" is important, for Jesus has *also* done great things for us. (Living Liturgy, p.42)

Vincentian Meditation:
The little word, *remember*, is at the heart of our greatest prayer, the Mass. The Mass is the great prayer in which, along with Jesus, we ask God the Father to *remember* the life, sufferings, death and resurrection of His only Son. Christians gather together and offer Mass, renewing again and again the great act of *remembering*, while at the same time making present again the offering that Jesus made of Himself on the cross. In doing so, we are bringing down upon the entire world, whether we know it or not, an uncountable number of graces, favors and blessings. Every day we hear some frightening things about the cruelty and wickedness of this world. What would the world be like if it did not have the Sacrifice of the Mass? Always remember that there is no grace, no joy, no good thing in this world that has not come to us through Jesus Christ. (McCullen, Deep Down Things, p.587-588)

Discussion: (*Share your thoughts on the readings after a moment of silence)*
Remember and share some stories of the great things that Jesus has done for you.

Closing Prayer:
Christ, healer of hearts,
-teach us compassion for others.
Christ, maker of peace,
-help us bring peace to all people.
Christ, the light of life,
-show us the path of life. Amen

29

A Word about **Stillness**

Psalm 46:10 - "Be **Still** and Know That I Am God."

Part of our role as spiritual advisors is to spiritually motivate our fellow Vincentians.

Facilitate the spiritual reflection, giving our own thoughts first. Then we invite everyone to share.

THEN (WE) BECOME QUIET, CREATING A **STILLNESS.** Even if it is uncomfortable, it is important to give the Vincentians time to think about what the reflection is about, and how the Holy Spirit may be stirring their hearts, minds, and voices. It takes time for this to happen.

30

Serving in Hope – What is this?

1. A SVdP ***formation*** program to move us from our heads to our hearts.
2. It's purpose is to ***root*** us in Vincentian Spirituality.
3. Six 20-minute sessions in each module.

31

Serving in Hope Modules

I. Vocation
II. Spirituality
III. Heritage
IV. Mission
V. Rule
VI. Conference Life
VII. Our Vincentian Home Visit

32

??? Reflection & Sharing – 15 minutes ???

1. If you have used Vincentian reflections *or* Serving in Hope in your conference:
   - What worked well?
   - What were the difficulties?
   - What suggestions would you offer others?
2. If you have not used the Vincentian reflections or Serving in Hope modules, what are you using during the spiritual reflection time of your meetings?
   - As *Vincentian* spiritual advisors, we infuse the *Vincentian* way into our spiritual reflections, using Vincentian resources.

33

Rule & Manual

1. Study the Rule and Manual.
2. The spiritual advisor should study the parts of the Rule & Manual that pertain to their role, especially parts that deal with heritage, vocation, the poor, & spirituality (Rule: pages 6-13; 16-17; Manual: Chapter 1-4).
3. Consider reflecting upon parts of the Rule and Manual together, during conference meetings, and lead a discussion on it.
4. Ideally, the spiritual advisor and president decide together what will be offered at Vincentian meetings, based upon the agenda and timing of the meetings.

34

The Rule

Part 3, Statute 4 of the Rule:

- The commissioning of *new* members should take place at an appropriate time & occasion.
- *All* members shall *annually renew* their promise of service.
- Commissioning & renewal may be done at Mass, coordinated with the pastor.

Statute 9 of the Rule: Conferences may celebrate Mass together on six Vincentian feast days. (note: A conference may also celebrate a Mass together for members and families, for deceased Vincentians, and to pray for the poor.)

35

Vincentian Feast Days

January 4: St. Elizabeth Ann Seton

February 7: Blessed Rosalie Rendu

May 9: St. Louise de Marillac

September 9: Blessed Frederic Ozanam

September 27: St. Vincent de Paul

November 28: St. Catherine Laboure

36

Commissioning and Liturgies (Rituals)

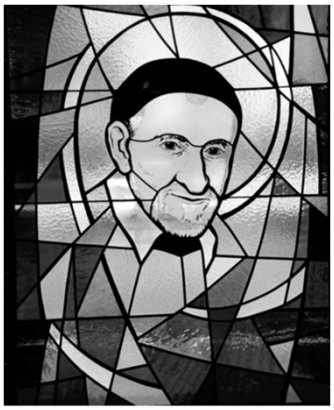
Commissioning Information: Included in the 2021 Spiritual Advisor Handbook and SVdP Georgia Spiritual Advisor Resources.

Liturgies for Feast Days and Other Reasons: Included in the 2021 Spiritual Advisor Handbook and SVdP Georgia Spiritual Advisor Resources.

Note: Presidents commission spiritual advisors; spiritual advisors commission presidents; presidents commission all others.

37

? ? ? Questions to Contemplate ? ? ?



1. Are you facing any obstacles in carrying out your role as spiritual advisors?
2. What will you try to change or improve when you return home?
3. What new insights did you receive today?

38

As a reminder…

The primary reason to give you this formation today was not only to share what we know about the role of the spiritual advisor, but also to share the highlights of the ***virtual, national, Spiritual Advisor formation, and the new handbook****.*

We ask that new and experienced Spiritual Advisors attend the national virtual formation. Presidents and Vice-Presidents are strongly encouraged to attend.

*****New information and resources are always available in the national spiritual advisor formation documentation at their website.****

39

Virtual National Spiritual Advisor Formation – **(watch for announcements from the national office)**

IMPORTANT: Be sure to register for the virtual national spiritual advisor formation when they offer it as it will go into greater detail on many areas, including:

- Vincentian Spirituality
- Vincentian Discernment
- Home Visits
- Learning How to Facilitate a Group & Group Dynamics
- Negotiate through Personality Differences

…and many more topics…

40

- *Now we will spend some time on the list of resources that were previously emailed to you by the SVdP-Georgia staff.*
- ****A full list of resources is in Part IV of the new 2021 Spiritual Advisor Handbook.****
- *Please go to the Table of Contents of this collection of documents at this time.*

41

Most Used Spiritual Advisor Resources

Table of Contents

1. Opening and Closing Prayers
2. Vincentian Spiritual Reflections for the Current Year
3. Sample of St. Vincent de Paul Contemplations (may be used for spiritual reflection during Vincentian meetings)
4. Commissioning and Renewal Ceremonies, Funeral Services, Prayer Services, Vincentian Celebrations (under Vincentian Celebrations – Rituals and Ceremonies)
5. Liturgies
6. The Rule and Manual books (if not already issued to you during Ozanam training)

42

Table of Contents – *continued*

7. Other Resources found at the national Website or Other Websites
8. St. Vincent de Paul Prayer Person Instructions (an example)
9. Spiritual Advisor – Additional Information document based upon one person's experience (an example only)
10. Vincentian Retreat Checklist (found on the SVdP-Georgia web site)
11. Vincentian Stations of The Cross
12. List of St. Vincent de Paul-Georgia Contacts for Spirituality Committee and Staff Support; and, how to request hard copies of resources.

Table of Contents – *continued*

*****NOTES*****

The new 2021 Spiritual Advisor Handbook can be found at the national website: www.svdpusa.org.

Please download the 2021 handbook to your hard drive and become familiar with it. The 2021 handbook may also be printed, then set up in an index-tabbed binder, for quick and easy reference.

The spiritual advisor is likely the only person in your conference who knows what resources are available to help your conference strive to become more holy through Vincentian spirituality.

Closing Information

- The contact list for the spirituality committee is in your Spiritual Advisor Resources Table of Contents that were sent to you.
- Ensure that you attend the virtual national spiritual advisor formation.
- Pray, meditate, and reflect on the areas that need improvement in your conference. Share your ideas with your conference president. Once in agreement with your president, implement your ideas, and then be patient. Change doesn't normally happen quickly.
- A formation survey will be sent to you from SVdP-Georgia staff.
- THANK YOU FOR ATTENDING! ☺
- Closing Prayer for today (next slides)

45

Closing Prayer

L: Father, grant that we who are nourished by the Body and Blood of Christ in the Holy Eucharist may realize the depths of our needs, respond more spontaneously to the suffering of others, and come to love you more deeply by service to our neighbor.

ALL: Grant us also the wisdom and strength to persevere when disappointed or distressed. May we never claim that the fruitfulness of our apostolate springs from ourselves alone. United in prayer and action, may we become a visible sign of Christ and may we give witness of His boundless Love which reaches out to all and draws them to love one another in Him.

L: We thank you, Lord, for the many blessings which we receive from those whom we visit. Help us to love and respect them, to understand their deeper needs, and to share their burdens and joys as true friends in Christ.

46

Closing Prayer – *continued*

ALL: Lord, it is through your inspiration that so many people are generous in providing us with the resources to serve those in need. Bless and protect our benefactors who sacrifice and share so that our hands will be filled with gifts.

L: That the cause for the Canonization of Frederic Ozanam, who excelled in the virtue of Christian love, be advanced.

ALL: Lord, hear us.

L: In the Name of the Father…

ALL: Amen

47