



Conference News and Notes
for Wednesday, December 1, 2021
Sent to all Vincentians & Staff

Vincentian Reflection for The Second Sunday of Advent
December 5, 2021

Gospel: (Luke 3:1-6) The word of God was spoken to John in the desert. He went about the entire region of the Jordan proclaiming a baptism of repentance which led to the forgiveness of sins, as is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet: “A herald’s voice in the desert, crying, ‘Make ready the way of the Lord, clear him a straight path. Every valley shall be filled and every mountain and hill shall be leveled. The windings shall be made straight and the rough ways smooth, and all mankind shall see the salvation of God.”

Reflection: John the Baptist urges us to “Prepare the way of the Lord.” Our culture tells us to prepare for the birth of a Baby, an event that evokes wonderful feelings of warmth and happiness. But John’s message of “repentance for the forgiveness of sins” suggests that we must examine our lives in light of the salvation we seek. It is difficult to orient our lives, anticipation, and preparation with balance and vision toward a glorious Christ who is yet to come. It is far easier to prepare for a Jesus who is a sweet, innocent Baby. The gospel challenges us to take the real events of our everyday lives - all the suffering and pain, all the anxiety and hopelessness, all the joy and peace - and see them as means to recognize the presence of Christ to us. This is what Advent is all about - recognizing the presence of Christ in our lives as salvation already come. (*Living Liturgy*, p. 10)

Vincentian Meditation: God speaks to us in all sorts of ways: through Scriptures, through his Church, but also through all the events, great and small, that happen to us. Since most of our lives are made up of very ordinary tasks which we must do each day, it is in these especially that the voice of the Lord is to be heard. We make the mistake so often of expecting God to speak to us through some great event or happening when, in fact, all the time He is speaking to us in all the small events of each day. Sometimes in life we don’t know what to do. God leads us even when our path changes radically, ends abruptly, or is surrounded in darkness. By sitting patiently and trustingly in prayer, we gradually see or feel His presence and guidance. It is also true that God often uses the people and the happenings in our daily life to teach us and lead us on the way we should go. Advent tells us to be attentive, to listen in patience and peace.

**How has Advent been a time of recognizing and finding the presence of Christ in
your life?
Are we listening now?**

Formation & Training Opportunities

We are hiring for the new, full-time position of Formation and Service Learning Director. This position will be responsible for advancing St. Vincent de Paul’s mission through the development and facilitation of formation and training content and events for Vincentians, staff, retreatants, and volunteers as well as offering strategic oversight of the Service Learning program, made up of the Ozanam Center for Service Learning and the

Vincentian Volunteers of Cincinnati programs. The Formation and Service Learning Director values and models Vincentian spirituality, friendship and service and acts as a spiritual animator for the District Council. Learn more at <https://www.svdpcincinnati.org/about-us/employment-opportunities/> .

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Advent Art Prayer

Please join your fellow Vincentians and SVDP staff for a special session on “Advent Art Prayer”.

The time leading up to Christmas can be busy and stressful. Join us from **noon-1pm on Wednesday, December 15, in the Neyer Outreach Center’s Community Room** to set aside time to connect with God and with one another through prayer and art. **RSVP to Ozanam@SVDPCincinnati.org** .

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Our Formation Committee is reviewing 2021 activity and your feedback as we refine a relevant, compelling schedule of 2022 offerings which we expect to release in December.



PLEASE JOIN US FOR
OUR ANNUAL SVDP
**CHRISTMAS
MEETING**

Tuesday 12/7/2021 5:30pm - 8:30pm
St. Bartholomew
9375 Winton Rd. Cincinnati OH, 45231

Please bring
cash or check
for raffle
tickets and
more!

Free to attend!
We need your RSVP by
Tuesday 11/30/21 to manage
capacity and accommodations
MKelly@SVDPCincinnati.org
or call 513-562-8841 ext. 014



Please consider this your personal invitation to join us **this coming Tuesday evening** for our traditional Conferences Christmas Meeting. Our theme is **United in Hope**. Our intention is to highlight **joy** in our Vincentian blend of faith, friendship, & service. Our evening will include:

- Social hour with beverages
- Catered dinner
- Raffle
- Brief program of featured speakers
- Advent Reflection
- Shared activity
- *Silent Night*

You are welcome to bring your spouse. When not eating or drinking, masks will be required as we remain committed to your health and well-being.

Please note that our capacity is capped at 175 guests. RSVPs are required. We must

close the RSVP window @ the sooner of reaching 175 or noon this Friday, 12/3. RSVP now by contacting Mo Kelly as indicated above or via this SignUp Genius link:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/4090a48a5a928a0fa7-cincinnati3>

We'll follow-up with additional information.

And, yes, this event is free...so please support our raffle and a surprise SVDP Christmas gift purchase opportunity.

Special thanks to our St Bartholomew Conference for hosting.

Please join your fellow Vincentians as our Advent anticipation builds to Christmas!

Fall Weather is Here - It's Coats Season!



Winter Coat Distributions

We scheduled 3 distribution events; 1 down, 2 to go. We distributed over 800 coats @ Elder High School on Saturday, 11/20, as volunteers and neighbors connected.

Still ahead:

- **This Saturday, 12/4/2021, 9am-noon @ Central Parkway YMCA (1105 Elm St)**
- **Next Wednesday, 12/8/2021, 5pm-8pm @ Clippard Family YMCA (8920 Cheviot Rd)**

No pre-registration or voucher is required; open to all residents of Hamilton County. Alternatively, beginning on Monday, 12/13/2021, neighbors may come to our Neyer Outreach Center (NOC, 1146 Bank St) and request a coat; they will be given a voucher which they can redeem for a coat at any of our SVDP thrift stores.

Eligibility information:

Neighbors must bring their photo ID and an ID for all household members who will be receiving a coat (even if they're not present). Limit of one coat per person.

Winter Coat Drives & Donations

Your Conference is invited to join us in collecting coats for our annual coat drive! This year's drive runs now through January 30, and you are welcome to facilitate your drive anytime within that time frame. Together with your help, we hope to provide 2,000 coats to our neighbors in need this season.

To schedule a coat barrel drop-off, please [click here](#) and follow the prompts – being sure to indicate your delivery address and how many barrels you are requesting. If there isn't a timeframe listed that works with your availability/schedule, please reach out to Renee Berlon at rberlon@SVDPCincinnati.org so alternative arrangements can be made. You are also welcomed and encouraged to use your own containers for collection – large bins and boxes work well.

Once you are ready for a pick-up, you may use the same link to schedule.

More information about this year's drive (including some responses to general FAQs) can be found here: [SVDPCincinnati.org/coats](https://www.signupgenius.com/go/4090a48a5a928a0fa7-cincinnati3) .

Thanks for your help in keeping our neighbors warm this winter!

Our Conferences' Opportunity to Shop Angel Toys for Your Neighbors

We are hosting 3 Angel Toy events in our NOC during December for neighbors selected from among our 2021 Holiday Programs applicants. The last of these 3 events is Monday

evening, 12/13.

As in prior years, we are offering our Conferences the opportunity to shop the remaining toys & gifts for your neighbors. We have reserved Tuesday, 12/14, & Wednesday, 12/15, exclusively for our Conferences. Your Conference can reserve a 1 hour shopping window, 9am - 7pm, for up to 4 Vincentians, by contacting Tom Roberts at

troberts@svdpcincinnati.org or 513.345.4910. **Hurry - appointments are filling fast!**

Please understand that this is subject to availability of toys, gifts, and time slots. Once you are confirmed, you will be provided with an extremely brief info sheet which must be completed for each family for which you shop.

If your Conference is interested in collecting toys for our Angel Toy Program, please reach out to Mo Kelly at angeltoy@svdpcincinnati.org for more information. We ask that toys be brand new, unwrapped, and in the \$20-\$25 range. Toys can be dropped off at our NOC during normal business hours or we can arrange for a pick-up. Angel Toy serves families with children ages 0-17, so any items are welcome, but we are often in greatest need of gifts for teenagers. We can provide you with a list of suggested donations, but creativity is also welcomed! We ask that gifts be received by this coming Wednesday, 12/8.

Thanks for joining in spreading more joy to our neighbors in need this Christmas season.

More Volunteer Opportunities

Our Holiday Programs

Volunteer opportunities are still available for certain events. Please click on this link to explore:

<https://www.svdpcincinnati.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/SVDP-Holiday-Programs-Vol-Opportunities.pdf>

You can also learn more about our broad range of volunteer opportunities by contacting Alec Jewell, Volunteer Manager, at ajewell@svdpcincinnati.org.

SVDP Apparel & Specialty Items

Just in time for the holiday season, we're excited to announce that the SVDP Apparel Site is now up and running. Have fun exploring all the SVDP clothing options that come in both women and men sizes and in a variety of colors. There's also a "Specialty Items" section with hats, scarves, totes, and insulated tumblers. Ordered items can be delivered to your home for an additional delivery charge, or picked up for free at U Sports (7751 Five Mile Rd, Cincinnati, OH 45230).

Visit this SVDP Apparel Site at <https://svdpcincinnati.itemorder.com/>. Happy shopping!

Archdiocese of Cincinnati Beacons of Light Initiative

We encourage you to stay current on *Beacons of Light* developments at BeaconsAOC.org. Our Archdiocese has now committed to release the revised Families of Parishes configuration this Sunday, 12/5.

COVID Vaccine & Booster Available now in Our Charitable Pharmacy

Our Charitable Pharmacy is now able to provide J&J COVID vaccine - as initial treatment or as a booster - for Ohio residents. In accordance with the FDA and CDC guidelines, a second dose of J&J COVID vaccine is recommended for those who received the first J&J dose over two months ago. The J&J vaccine can also be used as a booster for those who received the Pfizer or Moderna vaccine over six months ago and are age 65 or older or work/live in a high-risk environment. Vincentians and neighbors alike can utilize either location of our Charitable Pharmacy for vaccination without an appointment. Please be sure to bring your vaccination card with you so the pharmacist can add documentation of the booster.

Our Resource Spotlights Shine

We will return with our Resource Spotlight #9 in January 2022.

Suggestions for future Resource Spotlights? Please forward to Conferences Manager

Margaret Rahn at mrahn@svdpcincinnati.org or 513.345.4983.

Info at your fingertips: You can access recordings of our previous Resource Spotlights on our website's Members page. Just click on the "Learn More" tab under Member Support and Forms, password: member .

Our CMS Movement Accelerates...

CMS training videos are located on the svdpcincinnati.org website, accessed via the Members tab, or just use this link:

<https://www.svdpcincinnati.org/cms-support-page/>

If prompted for a password, use the word "member", all lower case and without the quotation marks.

CMS help sessions are available in our NOC Education Center or by virtual connection.

Please contact John Wessel, your Resource Analyst, at Jwessel@svdpcincinnati.org or 513.562.1823 to schedule a **CMS** help session, which can be done in small group setting or individual.

More Resources for our Conferences and Neighbors

Conference Assistance Fund (CAF)

We extended \$53,118 in CAF assistance in October.

November activity through early Tuesday, 11/30:

- You've submitted 137 fresh applications
- We've approved 146 applications & you've withdrawn 1 application
- We have 39 applications in process toward approval

Please note that this current pace of application submissions & approvals exceeds our budgetary provisions of \$60,000 per month. We encourage you to fully consider our neighbor's situation and other resources which could be deployed as you discern a request for CAF assistance.

Margaret Rahn & our 13 wonderful volunteers are intently processing and approving applications. We are interviewing candidates in our active search for a full-time Conferences Support Coordinator to augment our team.

Our volunteers are a vital blessing. Considering volunteering on site at our Neyer Outreach Center to help us process CAF applications and to join in other forms of support of Conferences work? You can learn more by contacting Tom at

troberts@svdpcincinnati.org , Margaret at mrahn@svdpcincinnati.org , or Alec Jewell, Volunteer Manager, at ajewell@svdpcincinnati.org .

Rahe Beds Fund & Program

Neighbors now take their bed vouchers to the Clothing and Home Resource Center in our Liz Carter Center to be redeemed. Please make sure your neighbors are aware of this change. We expect to extend our full monthly provision of Rahe Beds assistance in December. *Please submit your Conference's requests (up to 5) by this Monday, 12/6.* You can contact Gabby with any questions at rahebedfund@svdpcincinnati.org .

Our SVDP Thrift Stores' leadership has advised that our supply chain has sufficiently stabilized to once again offer your Conference the opportunity to purchase (the same Rahe) beds for neighbors outside the Rahe Beds Program. For more info or to purchase, contact Dave Chidlow, Stores Retail Resource Manager, at dchidlow@svdpcincinnati.org or 513.853.1002.

We still have a limited number of pack 'n' plays available for neighbors with children too young for beds (under age two). These do not count against the limit of two Rahe beds per household per lifetime. If you have a neighbor who is in need of a pack 'n' play, please contact Gabby. Please note that these are available while supplies last, so please wait until you have confirmation from Gabby before telling the neighbor we'll be able to assist them. If we have pack 'n' plays available, Gabby will make arrangements with either you or

the neighbor to pick up the item from the NOC.

Education Center Within Our Neyer Outreach Center

Our NOC Education Center is available for neighbors to use during our operating hours: Monday - Friday, 8am - 4pm, and Saturday, 8am - noon. If neighbors need a little help with the technology, we have a volunteer available on Wednesdays, 11am - 2pm. If you're a Vincentian with computer knowledge you'd like to share, please reach out to Alec Jewell, Volunteer Manager, at ajewell@svdpcincinnati.org.

Holiday Programs

Our applications for holiday programs are closed. We received applications from over 2,100 families. If a neighbor has already been selected for one of our programs, they have now heard from us. If more program slots become available, we will continue to select and notify eligible applicants. Conference members with questions about holiday programs can contact Erin Nowak at enowak@svdpcincinnati.org or 513.562.8857. Neighbors who need to update any of their information can email holidays@svdpcincinnati.org or leave a message with our help line, 513.421.0602.

City of Cincinnati's Eviction Prevention Initiative (EPI)

We have extended our collaboration on this initiative and we are actively accepting and processing applications for this assistance from eligible City of Cincinnati residents in Conference footprints.

Temporary Aid for Needy Families (TANF)

Our Social Services team is once again extending assistance with rent and utilities through the TANF (Temporary Aid for Needy Families) program. This program, through at least June 2022, will pay for up to four months' rent for neighbors who meet the following criteria:

- Hamilton County residents
- US citizen or qualified non-citizen
- Has custody of at least one minor child and/or at least six months pregnant
- At risk of homelessness
- Have a household income that is below 200% of the Federal Poverty Level (currently \$53,000/year for a family of four)

If you are serving a neighbor who meets these criteria, please encourage them to call our Help Line at 513.421.0602 and leave a message. A member of our Social Services team will return their call as soon as possible.

Greater Cincinnati Water Works (GCWW)

GCWW has partnered with Promise Network, Inc (PromisePay) to provide an easy way to set up payment plans for past due charges.

For answers to Frequently Asked Questions, [click here](#).

If you need additional materials or information, please contact GCWW at GCWWCares@gcww.cincinnati-oh.gov.

Duke Energy

For questions on accounts or pledges for neighbors requesting utility assistance, please contact Duke Energy's Centralized Agency Team at 800.241.3194. Advocates are currently available Monday through Friday, 7:30am - 5:30pm.

Seasonal developments:

- The Winter Reconnect Order went into effect on 10/18 and runs through 4/15/2022
- The HEAP Winter Crisis Program began on 11/1/2021
- Find more info at energyhelp.ohio.gov

City of Cincinnati and Hamilton County COVID Assistance

There is still a huge sum of COVID federal economic recovery & relief emergency funding available in our area. If you encounter a neighbor who has experienced financial hardship due to COVID, please refer them to <https://513relief.org>.

Tip: The Hamilton County 513 Relief Bus (the Hamilton County Equity and Resources Mobile Tech Bus) travels throughout Hamilton County to bring resources directly to those who need it most. Google 513 relief bus to find a schedule of dates, destinations & times.

Cincinnati Eye Institute Foundation Vision Clinic in our Neyer Outreach Center

The Vision Clinic operates **by appointment** on certain Thursdays as designated by CEIF. December dates are tomorrow (12/2) & 12/9, 8:30am - 3pm. A limited number of walk-in

exams can also be accommodated. To schedule an appointment, or to inquire for additional info, please call 513.207.6140.

Call to Prayer

Come Lord Jesus, give us the grace to trust in your loving presence and guidance.

Come Lord Jesus, give us the grace to “Make ready the way of the Lord.”

As we eagerly await your coming, come to all people especially the poor and the forgotten.

Amen.

STAY CONNECTED

