



Conference News and Notes
for Wednesday, November 24, 2021
Sent to all Vincentians & Staff

Vincentian Reflection for The First Sunday of Advent
November 28, 2021

Gospel: (Luke 21:25-28, 34-36) Jesus said to his disciples: “ *There will be signs in the sun, the moon and the stars. On the earth, nations will be in anguish, distraught at the roaring of the sea and the waves. Men will die of fright in anticipation of what is coming upon the earth. The powers in the heavens will be shaken. After that, men will see the Son of Man coming on a cloud with great power and glory. When these things begin to happen, stand up straight and raise your heads, for your ransom is near at hand. Be on guard... The great day will suddenly close in on you like a trap. The day I speak of will come upon all who dwell on the face of the earth, so be on the watch. Pray constantly for the strength to escape whatever is in prospect, and to stand secure before the Son of Man.*”

Reflection: This time of year is filled with anticipation and waiting! The important questions for us are, “What do we anticipate?” and “How do we await?” Stores are filled with Christmas things. Lights and decorations have sprung up. Christmas music on the radio is another harbinger of the day for which we wait. Our work of preparation is busied with card-sending, party-planning and attending, and gift-shopping. The First Sunday of Advent, the Church’s New Year, ushers in a different way of waiting, of heightened anticipation. We Christians don’t wait for a what, but for a Whom. And that changes the character of our waiting! If the followers of Christ are vigilant and have lives “blameless in holiness,” then when Christ comes they can “stand erect” without fear but with joyful anticipation of their redemption. This is the Whom and what of our waiting! (*Living Liturgy*, p. 2)

Vincentian Meditation: Waiting in joyful anticipation...if we are to rejoice in the grace of God, we must have eyes that see and ears that hear. That in turn demands a reflecting heart, the sort of heart which Our Lady had and with which, she “pondered all things in her heart.” Our Lady has a marvelous capacity for wonder. There can be no wonder in our lives without silence. We are called to the service of the poor, but our service must come from a heart which resembles that of Our Lady who knew how to be silent, who knew how to wonder, who knew how to marvel at the grace of God, without which we can do nothing. (McCullen, *Deep Down Things*, p. 56)

How will you await Christmas in joyful anticipation, silence and wonder this Advent?

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 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 we need your RSVP by this coming Tuesday, 11/30, to reserve space & catering provisions. We encourage you to rsvp as soon as possible 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've scheduled 3 distribution events; 1 down, 2 to go. We distributed over 800 coats @ Elder High School this past Saturday, 11/20, as volunteers and neighbors connected.

Still ahead:

- Saturday, 12/4/2021, 9am-noon @ Central Parkway YMCA (1105 Elm St)
- 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.svdpcincinnati.org/coats) .

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 Wednesday, December 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 abundant. 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.

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 on 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.

City of Cincinnati Enacts "Pay to Stay" Ordinance

On Wednesday, 11/10, Cincinnati City Council voted 9-0 in favor of the "Pay to Stay" ordinance. Many came together to get this compromise legislation passed unanimously. **Under this new ordinance, tenants can tender all rent and fees owed, or present a guarantee of payment, such as a voucher, letter, or approval form from a social service agency or non-profit (such as your Conference), up to the time of the eviction hearing, and they would have an affirmative defense to the eviction.** While this ordinance only covers property located in the City of Cincinnati, there is hope that the court will exercise its equitable jurisdiction in cases outside of the city and deny evictions for nonpayment of rent where the landlord can be made whole. We are told there is currently more than \$40 million remaining in rental assistance from the CARES Act and other funds available to help distressed tenants stay in their homes and to satisfy the rightful claims of landlords.

Neighbors facing eviction actions for delinquent rent will be eager to secure documentation of approved rent assistance when the landlord is awaiting your/our check. We will forward a letter template to your Conference President which you could use to document such approved assistance. This template will also be available on the Member Support and Forms page of our website.

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.

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!

More Resources for our Conferences and Neighbors

Conference Assistance Fund (CAF)

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

November activity through Monday, 11/22:

- You've submitted 108 fresh applications
- We've approved 129 applications & you've withdrawn 1 application
- We have 28 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 Monday, 12/6. You can contact Gabby with any questions at rahebedfund@svdpcincinnati.org.

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 will have heard from us by this Tuesday, 11/30. 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.

Sweet Cheeks Diaper Bank

We offer assistance with diapers and other infant hygiene and care items. This service is made possible through our partnership with Sweet Cheeks Diaper Bank; we've been partners since 2017. If you are serving a neighbor with a child who is under age four or who is experiencing developmental delays, please contact SVDP's Social Services Coordinator, Brandie Ellery, at 513.345.1765 to begin the enrollment process. Your call will be returned within 24 hours.

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 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.

Haircuts from the Heart

This ministry, an extension of our community partner Franciscan Ministries, is to offer free haircuts here on a walk-in basis one afternoon each month. **As of this date, Haircuts from the Heart has once again suspended operations.** We will provide more info when received.

Federal Child Tax Credit

The [Child Tax Credit Eligibility Assistant](#) allows families to answer a series of questions to quickly determine whether they qualify for the advance credit.

The [Child Tax Credit Update Portal](#) allows families to verify their eligibility for the payments and if they choose to, unenroll, or opt out from receiving the monthly payments so they can receive a lump sum when they file their tax return next year.

Wishing You a Happy, Safe, & Blessed Thanksgiving

On this, the 400th anniversary of the Pilgrims' first thanksgiving harvest feast in what would become the country of our home, we remember their courage as they journeyed in search of religious freedom, and we too give thanks to our generous God for His abundance and our opportunity to share it.

How do we hunger today?

Call to Prayer

Lord, as we await the fulfillment of your promise,
give us a heart that knows how to be silent.
You come as a visible sign of love,
give us a heart that knows how to wonder.
Strengthen us by your grace,
give us a heart that lives in joyful anticipation.
Amen.

STAY CONNECTED

