



## Conference News and Notes for Friday, May 7, 2021

Sent to all Vincentians & Staff

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### *Vincentian Reflection for the Feast of Louise de Marillac, May 9, 2021*

**Gospel: (Matthew 25: 31-46)** The King will say to those on his right hand, "Come, you whom my Father has blessed, take for your heritage the kingdom prepared for you since the foundation of the world. For I was hungry, and you gave me food; I was thirsty and you gave me drink; I was a stranger and you made me welcome; naked and you clothed me, sick and you visited me...I tell you solemnly, in so far as you did this to one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did it to me."

**Reflection:** Louise de Marillac, (1591-1660), married Antoine LeGras and they had a son whom they named Michel, but at the age of 34 she became a widow. Vincent de Paul became her spiritual director and under his guidance she began caring for the poor and visiting the Confraternities of Charity. Vincent and Louise co-founded the Company of the Daughters of Charity, and dedicated them to serve the poor with humility, simplicity and charity. Louise was beatified in 1920 and canonized in 1934. In 1960, Pope John XXIII proclaimed Louise the patron saint of all Christian social workers.

**Vincentian Meditation:** Louise de Marillac said: "Above all, be very gentle and courteous toward your poor. You know that they are our masters and that we must love them tenderly and respect them deeply. It is not enough for these maxims to be in our minds; we must bear witness to them by our gentle and charitable care." (Gibson and Kneaves, *Praying with Louise*, p.72)

**In what ways do you see your Conference serving the poor today in the spirit of Louise: in gentleness... loving them tenderly and respecting them deeply?**

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St. Louise de Marillac, at one with her beloved neighbors

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### *Our Resource Spotlight Sessions*

We hosted our first Resource Spotlight via Zoom on Tuesday, 4/27, featuring New Life Furniture Bank (NLFB). You can access a recording of the presentation at your convenience at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ui7EemEN6v4>.

**This kicked off an envisioned series of monthly Resource Spotlights** in which we expect to deepen our awareness of available tools to better engage and serve our neighbors.

**Our next Resource Spotlight via Zoom is Monday, 5/24/2021, 1-2pm, and will feature our Council's Social Services team** addressing the range of engagement, assistance, and resources they extend. Link to this Zoom meeting:

<https://zoom.us/j/98797991809?pwd=NnBMaW5iRWFvdENLYUtRaWpVM09kdz09>

Meeting ID: 987 9799 1809

Passcode: 179221

We would love to have each of our Conferences participate. Please join us!

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## *Welcome Alec Jewell, our Volunteer Manager*

This dapper young gentleman joins us with SVDP zeal honed & experience gained in England. It was there in his homeland that he met Mary, a young Cincinnati doing mission work in Birmingham, England. Well, Mary & Alec are now newlyweds with 7 months of marital bliss...residing in our Queen City...and eagerly expecting their first child later this summer. Besides his passion for faith-lived & family, Alec enjoys football (soccer, as we know it), Formula 1 racing, mountain climbing, cycling, and rugby. Oh, and fish & chips, deep-fried (not breaded) as prepared back home. We'll most certainly expand that diet to include Cincinnati-style chili, LaRosa's, and Graeter's.

Alec shares a favorite quote, (unofficially) attributed to St Vincent,

"Sometimes you must leave God in the chapel to meet Him at the door".

Amen, Alec.

Vincenians, we hope you will soon avail yourself to Alec's gift of infectious positivity.

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## *Opportunity - Ozanam Center Program Coordinator*

Our Ozanam Center for Service Learning is hiring for a Program Coordinator, a full-time Tuesday through Saturday position. The Ozanam Center Program Coordinator is responsible for supporting the development and implementation of programming for the Ozanam Center for Service Learning and overseeing the works and development of Youth Conferences. Work weeks will vary seasonally and will include night/weekend work. Resumes and cover letters can be sent to Mo Kelly at [MKelly@SVDPCincinnati.org](mailto:MKelly@SVDPCincinnati.org). Visit <https://www.svdpcincinnati.org/about-us/employment-opportunities/> to view the job posting.

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## *Emergency Broadband Benefit Available*

Beginning this Wednesday, 5/12/2021, eligible Hamilton County residents can enroll to receive a monthly discount off the cost of broadband service from an approved provider. The Emergency Broadband Benefit will provide **a discount of up to \$50 per month** towards broadband service for eligible households. Eligible households can enroll through an approved provider or by visiting <https://getemergencybroadband.org>.

Per the FCC's website, <https://www.fcc.gov/broadbandbenefit>, the following are eligibility requirements (if a member of household meets one of the criteria):

- Has an income that is at or below 135% of the [Federal Poverty Guidelines](#) or participates in certain assistance programs, such as SNAP, Medicaid, or [Lifeline](#);
  - Approved to receive benefits under the free and reduced-price school lunch program or the school breakfast program, including through the USDA Community Eligibility Provision in the 2019/2020 or 2020/2021 school year;
  - Received a Federal Pell Grant during the current award year;
  - Experienced a substantial loss of income due to job loss or furlough since February 29, 2020, and the household had a total income in 2020 at or below \$99,000 for single filers and \$198,000 for joint filers; or
  - Meets the eligibility criteria for a participating provider's existing low-income or COVID-19 program.
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## *Living this Vincentian Vocation in our COVID Progression*

We're excited to hear some Conferences re-assembling for in-person meetings - some socially-distanced indoors, some outdoors. Likewise, some Conferences are exploring how to safely engage in home visits. We encourage each Conference and member to decide what is best based upon their respective reality...and to integrate health safeguards for Vincenians and neighbors alike.

Your Bank St - based Conferences Support Team members (thankfully vaccinated) would love the opportunity to join your Conference meeting (in-person or virtual) when you are ready to welcome a guest. We are here for you...we would love to be there with you!

## *Annual Conference Presidents Meeting*

Conference Presidents, please reserve on your calendar:

**Saturday, 6/19/2021, 9am - noon.**

We aspire to assemble in-person, pending further COVID developments.

More info to come in the weeks ahead.

Thanks!

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### *Income Tax Filing Deadline was Extended...and is Now Quickly Approaching*

The IRS extended the federal income tax filing deadline for individuals for the 2020 tax year from 4/15/2021 to Monday, 5/17/2021 (1 week from this coming Monday). The IRS extended the deadline to provide relief to taxpayers facing challenges as a result of the pandemic.

The state of Ohio extended its 2020 tax year filing deadline to Monday, 5/17/2021, as well. As neighbors may now be feeling the imminent filing deadline...or motivated to file to access their recently legislated federal assistance, please note that a free tax return preparation resource is cited below.

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### *More Resources for our Conferences and Neighbors*

#### **Cincinnati Eye Institute Foundation Vision Clinic in our Neyer Outreach Center**

Great news! This extremely popular resource for our neighbors has successfully returned after a COVID-responsive hiatus. The Vision Clinic re-opened in March and will operate **by appointment only** 9am - 2pm on alternate Thursdays; our next operating date is 5/20. To schedule an appointment, or to inquire for additional info, please call 513.207.6140.

#### **Conference Assistance Fund ("CAF")**

We received 100 CAF applications in April. As of today, 96 of these applications have been approved; 2 were deemed ineligible at this point in time; and the submitting Vincentian and our Conferences Support team are collaborating to complete processing on the final 2. The 96 approved applications result in just under \$41,000 in assistance extended.

We've received approximately 15 new CAF applications in this first week of May.

For comparable perspective:

We received and processed 156 CAF applications and extended \$80,362 of assistance in March. This completed our most active CAF quarter ever: we extended assistance of \$249,498 for the 3 months ended 3/31/2021, compared to \$157,616 in the previous quarter ended 12/31/2020 and \$69,528 for the year-earlier quarter ended 3/31/2020. 30+ Cincinnati Council Conferences submitted over 970 applications and accessed \$407,114 in CAF assistance for their/our neighbors in the 6 months ended 3/31/2021. CAF assistance was often utilized in tandem with direct assistance extended by the respective Conferences...and was sometimes augmented by assistance from other publicly-funded programs.

Hannah & Margaret greatly appreciate the efforts invested by our Vincentians to submit complete, descriptive, and accurate CAF applications. And many thanks to our Finance team for expediting the disbursement of approved assistance.

#### **Publicly Funded Resources Available through SVDP Social Services - Process Update**

Our Social Services team continues to administer the City of Cincinnati's Eviction Prevention Initiative (EPI) for qualifying residents of the city as well as Temporary Aid for Needy Families (TANF) for qualifying Hamilton County residents.

#### **Guidance from our Social Services team:**

To access an SVDP Social Services program, please coach neighbors to call the SVDP Help Line, **513-421-0602**. After they leave a message, a staff member or volunteer will return their call. This call back begins the process of assessing eligibility. Assistance will

be extended if eligibility criteria are met and if funds are available. Please do not give false hope as there is no guarantee of assistance.

We have put a new process in place so that Vincentians can check on EPI or TANF cases when a neighbor has not been able to connect with our staff or when a case seems to have been delayed.

**We do encourage you to continue to first ask neighbors to call our staff themselves, as it is important for them to have ownership of this process;** however, if this has not been effective and if you have a question, please follow the process below:

- Email Mary Reid at [mreid@svdpcincinnati.org](mailto:mreid@svdpcincinnati.org). Please be as thorough as you can in your email, including the neighbor's name, address including ZIP, their need, and which program they have applied for
- Please cc Margaret Rahn on your email
- Mary will check the status of the case and will email you within 48 hours, cc'ing Margaret Rahn

Watch for more details about these assistance programs and how we administer these resources most productively and impactfully.

### **Fans & Air Conditioners Distributions**

Fan & AC distributions began this past Monday, 5/3/2021, at the Neyer Outreach Center. Neighbors interested in receiving a fan can simply call 513-562-8850 *on the day that they plan to pick up their fan*. Neighbors are eligible if they live in Hamilton County and did not receive a fan from SVDP last year. Neighbors interested in receiving an air conditioner must fill out a request at [www.svdpcincinnati.org/AC](http://www.svdpcincinnati.org/AC). Neighbors are eligible to receive an AC if they live in Hamilton County; are 65 years old or older or have a medical need for an AC; and haven't received an AC from us in the last four years (2017-2020). Please note that neighbors may receive one fan or one AC per household, but not both. Complete details on the program were sent out to Conference Presidents on April 20. Any questions can be directed to [summerrelief@svdpcincinnati.org](mailto:summerrelief@svdpcincinnati.org).

### **Rahe Beds Fund & Program**

We extended vouchers for **168 beds in March & 155 in April**. We intend to extend our **full monthly target of 180 beds in May**. Initial May requests were reviewed on Wednesday, 5/5/2021. As a result, 110 of the 180 bed vouchers have been committed. Each Conference may initially submit up to 5 bed requests each month. If the initial requests do not fully extend out target (as has been the case in March, April, and now in May), we reach back out to those Conferences who submitted their full 5 requests to complete the target of 180 beds. **The message here: we want to distribute 180 Rahe beds each month. Beds are available!**

As a reminder, please be sure you are submitting accurate, complete mailing addresses for each neighbor (including apartment numbers and zip codes), as vouchers are sent via traditional mail.

Please contact [rahebedfund@svdpcincinnati.org](mailto:rahebedfund@svdpcincinnati.org) if you have any questions about our program and process.

### **Hamilton County CARES Act Assistance**

As you are undoubtedly aware, the latest wave of federally-funded COVID assistance extends well beyond stimulus checks. If you encounter a neighbor who has experienced financial hardship due to COVID, please refer them to <https://513relief.org/housing-utility-relief/>. There is an array of resources available through this website.

Hamilton County Job and Family Services (HCJFS or JFS) is administering stimulus funds for Hamilton County and Community Action Agency (CAA) is administering for the City of Cincinnati.

### **Metro Bus Tickets - Everybody Rides Metro Program**

The Human Services Chamber of Hamilton County (we are an active member) championed the revival of this Everybody Rides Metro program which had been inactive since 2017. This program enables us to be reimbursed for half of the face value of Metro bus passes which are extended to neighbors for specific transportation use. We are happy to share this resource with the neighbors you serve. **If you are serving a neighbor who needs bus tickets for employment, medical services, and social services including food assistance, please encourage them to call our general help line, 513-421-0602.** As a reminder, all Hamilton County residents are eligible for short-term assistance with

this need through our Neyer Outreach Center, subject to our qualification policies. Our team members will handle the documentation requirements for assistance we extend.

### **CDC COVID-19 Eviction Moratorium**

While the CDC did extend the eviction moratorium to 6/30/2021, the Hamilton County Municipal Court, following a 6th District Court ruling, decided that the CDC moratorium on evictions for failure to pay rent no longer applies in our county. The net result is that, at least for now, the CDC eviction moratorium does not protect Hamilton County tenants who are delinquent on rent obligations. You can share the following resources with impacted neighbors facing issues with their landlord and possible eviction:

- The Hamilton County website [513Relief.org Delivers COVID-19 Relief Options - Hamilton County \(hamiltoncountyohio.gov\)](https://www.hamiltoncountyohio.gov)
- the Municipal Court Legal Help Center [Help Center for Hamilton County Municipal Court \(cincyhelpcenter.org\)](https://www.cincyhelpcenter.org)
- Housing Opportunities Made Equal (HOME) 513.721.4663

You may also find more info at this State of Ohio site link:

<https://www.ohiolegalhelp.org/topic/covid-19-renter-protections>

### **Free Tax Prep Services Still Available**

Many of our neighbors may be entitled to an income tax refund for the 2020 calendar year. These funds could be a critical resource as COVID continues to disrupt economic activity and employment. The various forms of COVID-response public assistance extended during 2020 have resulted in special corresponding income tax treatment. Good news: Free Tax Prep, an initiative of United Way of Greater Cincinnati, provides free income tax preparation and filing services, funded by the IRS and powered by volunteers. Vincentians, staff, and neighbors can find more important info, including supporting documentation required and how to access service at sites across the Greater Cincinnati region, at [uwgc.org/community-impact/free-tax-prep](https://www.uwgc.org/community-impact/free-tax-prep), or call United Way at 2-1-1 for assistance.



### ***Happy Mother's Day!***

We join together to thank our Moms for all they have so generously shared with us. May they feel a special unity with Blessed Mary this Sunday and throughout the year ahead.

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### ***Call to Prayer***

**Compassionate Christ, Louise ministered to the needs of your people, give us courage to walk in her footsteps.**

**You inspired Louise with a great love for the poor and the abandoned, grant us the grace to serve with the same spirit of love.**

**You inspired Louise with compassion for the destitute and sorrowful, may we love them tenderly and respect them deeply.**

**May the Vincentian Family continue to grow throughout the world, so that the poor will know God's love in a tangible way.**

**Amen.**

