



**Conference News and Notes**  
**for Wednesday, December 27, 2023**  
 Shared with all Vincentians & Staff to invite, inspire, inform, & unite



***Vincentian Reflection for the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph***  
***Sunday, December 31, 2023***

**Gospel: (Luke 2:22-40)** The child's father and mother were amazed at what was said about him; and Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother, "Behold, this child is destined for the fall and rise of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be contradicted - and you yourself a sword will pierce - so that the thoughts of many may be revealed."... When they had fulfilled all the prescriptions of the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favor of God was upon him.

**Reflection:** All the wonderful gifts of grace bestowed on the Holy Family did not preserve this family from hardship and suffering. These simple parents surely had their own apprehensions - "you yourself a sword shall pierce". Yet they responded faithfully and obediently. This is the interface of our own modern families and the Holy Family: as they did, we too all face challenges in responding to God faithfully and obediently. The holiness of a family is not dependent upon perfection or an easy road. Whether we are a traditional family or a single parent, whether we have biological or adopted or foster children or no children, whether we live in an expensive home or a subsidized rental unit makes no difference for living as a holy family. What makes the difference is believing and trusting in God, responding to both hardships and God's wonderful gifts of grace in fidelity and obedience. Trust in God's ways. You, too, are a holy family. (*Living Liturgy*, p.28)

**Words of Frederic:** "...A new blessing has come to me, the greatest joy, probably, it is possible to experience here below! **I am a father!**... Ah! What a moment that was when I heard the first cry of my child; when I beheld that little creature, but that immortal creature, which God has confided to me, who brought me so many delights and so many duties... We have called her Marie, which is her mother's name, as well as that of the powerful protectress to whose intercession we attribute this happy birth...How could I dare teach her lessons that I did not practice? Could God have found a kinder way of instructing me, of correcting me, and setting my feet on the road to heaven?" (Ramson, *Praying with Frederic*, p.70-71)

**How has "God found the kindest way of instructing you, correcting you and setting your feet on the road to heaven" in your own "holy family", as was Frederic's**

experience?

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**Vincentian Reflection for the  
Solemnity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God  
Monday, January 1, 2024**

**Gospel: (Luke 2:16-21)** The shepherds went in haste to Bethlehem and found Mary and Joseph, and the infant lying in a manger. When they saw this, they made known the message that had been told them about this child. All who heard it were amazed by what had been told them by the shepherds. And Mary kept all these things, reflecting on them in her heart. Then the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, just as it had been told to them. When eight days were completed for his circumcision, he was named Jesus, the name given him by the angel before he was conceived in the womb.

**Reflection:** Often New Year's resolutions are about such things as losing weight, trying to stop smoking, cleaning up our language, etc. The readings for this festival honoring Mary might challenge us and our resolution-making in another direction. Perhaps this year we might resolve to take time each day to see and hear what God is revealing to us in the ordinary things of our lives: in the grateful smile of a child, in the gift of a compliment, in the unexpected call or visit of a friend. Also, we might resolve to spend more time, as Mary did, pondering and reflecting in our hearts God's mystery of salvation. We might set aside a special time each day to pray and then stick to it. (*Living Liturgy*, p.30)

**Vincentian Meditation:** Mary is the ideal disciple, the model listener. She hears God's word and acts on it. In Luke's first two chapters, Mary is evangelized by Gabriel, by Elizabeth, by the shepherds, by Simeon, by Anna, and by Jesus himself. All of them proclaim the good news of God's presence and sing in praise of God's goodness. Luke tells us that Mary kept all these things in her heart, turning them over and over again. Mary is indeed the "Listening Disciple", and this is the core of New Testament spirituality: all disciples, like Mary, are called to listen to the word of God attentively and act on it. Let us ask from Mary the grace to be a listener, "to listen to the word of God and act on it". (Maloney, *Go! On the Missionary Spirituality of St. Vincent de Paul*, p.110-111)

**What New Year's resolution(s) are you, personally, making this year?  
What New year's resolution(s) are you making, as a Conference, this year?**

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***Your Formation and Training Opportunities & Tips - Plus Events!***

## Monthly Mass

Each month, we will be offering a monthly Mass at the NOC and all are welcome to attend. The time and day each month will vary according to our presider's availability and special days of importance to our Vincentian tradition.

An RSVP requested to Chris Kelley at [Formation@SVDPCincinnati.org](mailto:Formation@SVDPCincinnati.org).



## Weekly Rosary

Join us for a weekly Rosary in the NOC Chapel, near the Front Desk, each Friday at Noon as we pray for our neighbors, fellow Vincentians, staff and volunteers, and the needs of our communities.

Rosaries and a guide are available on-site, no previous experience is needed, no RSVP necessary.

## Prayer Partners

Join together with a fellow Vincentian, volunteer or staff member on a regular basis over a few weeks to pray, or simply talk, about what is going on in life at the moment. Prayer partners are paired up randomly each quarter (every three months) and encouraged to meet as often as both feel comfortable. Meeting with your prayer partner can occur virtually, or in-person and is not necessarily at the NOC.

See the JotForm for more details.



**Contact** For more information on any of these opportunities or to signup, please contact Chris Kelley at any of the means below, or use the respective JotForm.

📞 513-345-1767

✉️ [Formation@SVDPCincinnati.org](mailto:Formation@SVDPCincinnati.org)

Pray without Ceasing. – 1 Thes. 5:17

**New Prayer Opportunities starting!** As part of our commitment to grow in holiness together, we are starting up a couple of new opportunities for you to engage with others in prayer. We invite you to join with fellow Vincentians, volunteers, staff and others **each Friday in the chapel at the NOC for a weekly rosary at noon** as we pray for your needs, the needs of our neighbors, and the needs of our wider community.

**Additionally, next Wednesday, 1/3/2024, @ 4pm, we are holding our monthly Mass in the chapel within our Neyer Outreach Center (NOC),** and you (as well as guests) are invited to share in our giving thanks to the Lord for the many gifts He gives us! This first Mass of the year will be in recognition of the **Feast of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton**, foundress of the Sisters of Charity and who brought the Vincentian gift to the USA. To signup please reach out to Chris Kelley or use our JotForm:

<https://form.jotform.com/233456518510151> .

We kindly ask that you RSVP so we can ensure proper seating and enough hosts; attendees are encouraged to arrive prior to 4pm for easier access to the Chapel.

**Vincentian Prayer Partners are starting up in January!** Do you find yourself wanting to get to know other Vincentians in an easy way? Do you enjoy listening and supporting fellow Vincentians or those around you? Would you like to get to know your wider Council Support staff or other volunteers? Then we encourage you to sign up as part of our Prayer Partner effort which is officially returning this January! Wondering what to expect?

Partners are randomly determined roughly every 12 weeks and partners will be paired together so they may pray for each other, or even meet and get to know each other. There is no cost, and the time commitment is what you decide and work out with your partner, most are short 15-minute check-ins once a week. For the most detailed information, follow this link to our JotForm <https://form.jotform.com/230935076123048> or reach out to Chris Kelley. If you cannot signup online for any reason, simply contact Chris and he will add you to the rotation for the quarter. **Please register before this coming Saturday, 12/30, to be included in the next rotation.**

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Join us on Saturday, 1/20, 9am to 11am for

## The Spirituality of the Home Visit Workshop

HOSTED AT CHURCH OF THE NATIVITY  
5935 PANDORA AVE, CINCINNATI, 45213

Have you wondered how to introduce prayer into your meetings with neighbors? Are you seeking the face of Christ and desiring more clarity? Join with fellow Vincentians as we dive deeper into the spiritual side of the Home Visit to give you practical insights and tools on becoming more confident in these personal moments of encounter.

For more info or to signup, goto our JotForm (<https://form.jotform.com/232224094272147>) or email to [Formation@SVDPCincinnati.org](mailto:Formation@SVDPCincinnati.org)

**Spirituality of the Home Visit Workshop** – Do you want to feel more comfortable or grow more deeply in your own prayer life? Do you want to become closer as a Vincentian team during visits, or at Conference meetings? Perhaps even have tools and guidance on bringing prayer into the home visit? We invite you to join us for our upcoming **Spirituality of the Home Visit** workshop, our newest workshop being offered on **Saturday, 1/20/2024, at the Church of the Nativity** (5935 Pandora Ave, Pleasant Ridge), **9-11am**. Doors will open for checking in at 8:40am. We will reflect and explore these topics throughout the morning, so you go home energized and with the tools you need to connect with our neighbors more deeply, and with fellow Vincentians. To sign up for this workshop, please register through this link <https://form.jotform.com/232224094272147> or by contacting Chris Kelley. This workshop was rescheduled from October.

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Chris Kelley, our Formation and Service Learning Director, can be reached at 513.345.1767 or [ckelley@svdpcincinnati.org](mailto:ckelley@svdpcincinnati.org).

### **Employment Opportunity - Ozanam Center Program Manager**

Your Vincentian Services team is seeking a passionate, motivated, and talented Catholic individual as the Ozanam Center Program Manager, leading the Center in its next great chapter. The Ozanam Center for Service Learning was founded by our District Council as the dynamic hub for Vincentian formation within the greater Cincinnati area. The Ozanam Center seeks to guide adults and young people, as well as professional and community groups, through the reflective methods of service learning as they explore social concerns/needs within the greater Cincinnati community, with special awareness of the impact of poverty dynamics in communities. The Program Manager engages with a variety of professional and community partners, schools, universities, and other groups as they

develop high quality workshops and immersive retreat experiences rooted in Catholic Social Teaching, and which reflect our Vincentian tradition of faith, fellowship, and service. Local travel throughout Hamilton County, and potentially nearby counties, is required. Work weeks vary seasonally and includes some night/weekend work. Please click on this tab to view the job description:

## Job Description

To apply, please submit a cover letter and resume to Christopher Kelley, Formation and Service Learning Director: [Formation@SVDPCincinnati.org](mailto:Formation@SVDPCincinnati.org) .

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### ***Our Conferences Shopped Angel Toys for Their/Our Neighbors***

**Twenty Conferences** representing **13 Families of Parishes** visited our NOC, over the period Monday, 12/11, to Saturday, 12/23, to shop for families within their respective neighborhoods. You/we made Christmas morning brighter for **294 children** in **100 families** in this way. We thank you for these efforts in so generously sharing your time and care. We are also grateful to the multitude of donors, volunteers, and staff who contributed gifts and logistical support to create this opportunity for engagement in our community. We know that many of our Conferences participated in Christmas gift programs within their respective parishes and families. May these gifts be joyfully embraced as Christ's blessings of love and hope.

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### ***Please Note Remaining Holiday Adjustments to Our District Council's Schedule***

With thanks for your patience and flexibility, we share the following reminder...and we encourage you to help us inform your/our neighbors:

**Your Bank St support services (Neyer Outreach Center & Liz Carter Center, including our CHRC)**

- Closed this Friday, 12/29 (New Year's Eve observed)
- Open for normal Saturday operations on 12/30
- Closed on New Year's Day (Monday, 1/1/2024); reopening on Tuesday, 1/2/2024

**Your/our network of Thrift Stores will maintain normal hours of operation throughout the New year's holiday weekend, including New Year's Eve & Day.**

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### ***Sharing the Impact of Your Vocation and Work!***

Work is now underway on our 2023 Cincinnati District Council Annual Report! Each year, this publication works to highlight our collective accomplishments, thank donors for their support, build trust with our partners, and inspire readers through the mission of the Society.

And each year, storytelling is a crucial element of this report. That's where you come in! We strive to share stories that demonstrate the transformative work of our Society, in a manner that's collaborative and respectful. Please consider the following and take some time to reflect as we head into a fresh, new year.

- 2023 was a year of rising to the challenge to meet the needs of the community. What did this look like through the lens of your unique role at SVDP?
- Reflecting on the year, what mission moments stand out to you? These can be anything, but often they are small but powerful examples of how this organization is making an impact.

For those interested in sharing their responses, or with stories they'd like to share, please reach out to Kristen Gallagher, Senior Marketing & Communications Manager, by email at [kgallagher@svdpcincinnati.org](mailto:kgallagher@svdpcincinnati.org) , or by phone at 513.562.8853.

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## *Safeguarding Training for our Vincentians*

### **2024 Opportunities**

We have two upcoming virtual Safeguarding sessions scheduled in January 2024. If you have not yet fulfilled this requirement, please sign up now!

- This **Wednesday 1/3/24, 6:00pm – 7:30pm**, join here: [Click here to join the meeting](#)
- **Tuesday 1/16/24, 6:00pm – 7:30pm**, join here: [Click here to join the meeting](#)

To register, click on [this link](#). If you plan to watch this session with other Vincentians or as a Conference, one person can complete the form and indicate others who will attend the session with them in the notes section. Please contact our Safeguarding team at 513.853.1014 or [Safeguarding@SVDPCincinnati.org](mailto:Safeguarding@SVDPCincinnati.org) with any questions.

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### ***Smoke No More in 2024 (repeated as every breath is a blessing)***

With January comes New Year's resolutions, making this an ideal time to discuss quitting smoking with our neighbors, our friends, our family, ourselves! While smoking costs on average nearly \$2,000 per year, research also shows that every cigarette someone smokes reduces their life by 11 minutes. You can save lives and resources by referring those you care about who smoke to our Charitable Pharmacy. The Charitable Pharmacy is accepting new participants in its expanded tobacco cessation program. This program includes:

- FREE nicotine replacement therapy (patches, gum or lozenges) or Chantix
- Weekly text reminders
- Biweekly phone calls
- Monthly face-to-face counseling

To enroll, an aspiring quitter can come to either location of the Charitable Pharmacy to meet with a pharmacist. They do not need to be certified for other Pharmacy services to participate; this program is open to all who are serious about quitting tobacco products. The next time you discuss budget with our neighbors, try asking the question, "Would you like to smoke no more in 2024?" We can help!

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### ***More News from & for Our Conferences, including Beacons of Light Progress***

**We pray you are enjoying some well-earned quiet** - Making time - taking time - to prayerfully reflect upon progress made and opportunities seized in 2023 is healthy. Have you grown closer to God? Are you embracing Christ in your neighbors, your fellow Conference members, your family, your self? What matter most to you in 2024, this year ahead? With God's strength and guidance, your reach is astounding. What are your aspirations for yourself, your family, your Conference, your Family of Parishes, your neighbors and community? And how can we - your Vincentian Services team - provide you with lift to make these aspirations reality? We encourage - exhort! - you to invest a Conference and/or Family of Conferences gathering on **what matters most**. God is great. You are awesome. God bless!

**Inviting Family-Wide Support of your Conferences** - Many Families of Parishes have made progress in linking bulletins and other communications to reinforce the unity within their Family. Here are opportunities for you to nurture this unity while enhancing how you engage parishioners throughout your Family: Have you connected with other Conferences to better understand how they communicate to create positive awareness and to invite broader participation in our Vincentian vocation & ministry? Some of our Conferences have recognized that there are varying donation-attracting practices within their Family. One Conference in the Family may be utilizing "5th Sunday" collection envelopes (yielding 4 collections per year) while another Conference has monthly envelopes. Or one Conference may be making in-person collections after weekend Masses. Similarly, one

Conference may have established automated EFT donation capability through their parish. Seize the day! **This *Beacons of Light* initiative offers a natural opportunity to engage your pastor and Family lay leadership to adopt a Family-wide, standardized SVDP Conference(s) donation practice that enhances your/our visibility and prospective harvest...while increasing your visibility and growing your capability to attract new Vincentians.**

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Members of your Cincinnati District Council's Vincentian Services team - Alec, Chris, Olivia, & Tom - eagerly welcome your invitation to join your Conference or the Conferences in your Family for a meeting, event, or retreat.

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**SVDP National's *Frederic's e-Gazette***. If you are not receiving this weekly email publication, this means you need to be added or updated in National's members database. If you'd like to subscribe to the e-Gazette, email [mboyer@svdpusa.org](mailto:mboyer@svdpusa.org) . If you previously removed your email address from National's system or designated "Do Not Mail," your email address cannot be re-added by the National Council office. Sign up to resume receiving the e-Gazette at <http://bit.ly/1GKXYJ6> . An added benefit: Tim Williams at National is authoring and sharing contemplations with Vincentians in this database.

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### ***CMS Insight***

A number of support questions arise which are easily addressed by viewing the training videos on our CMS Support Page. These training videos and your Conference CMS Administrator should be your first options for answering questions. Following this path can improve the turnaround on any questions you might have. Of course, if you cannot find the answer you need, support is available from John Wessel, our Resource Analyst. Your Vincentian Services team may also be able to help out.

- **Beginning a New Quarter** - This Sunday, 12/31, marks the conclusion of the first quarter of our 2024 fiscal year, and we will begin our second quarter on Monday, 1/1/2024. You are encouraged to review your current open cases to close all that you can, and to wrap up your 2023 holidays CMS recordkeeping for a fresh start to the new quarter.

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As always, feel free to call or email John Wessel - 513.562.1823 or [jwessel@svdpcincinnati.org](mailto:jwessel@svdpcincinnati.org) - at any time if you have any questions, suggestions, or desire a walkthrough training session.

John asks that when emailing or calling him for CMS Support, that you please be sure to include your contact info (phone #), name of your Conference, specific CMS case that you are asking about or the details of the specific situation, including screen shots where necessary.

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

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

**We collectively extended \$74,037 of CAF assistance to 172 neighbor households in November.** We suspended accepting November applications on Tuesday, 11/14, as our budget provisions were fully allocated to applications already in-house.

**Our District Council has budgeted \$75,000 per month in CAF provisions for this fiscal year.**

**Our December activity (through today, since re-opening to applications on Monday, 12/4):**

- We received **172** applications
- We've approved **160** applications, with **3** withdrawn and **5** declined
- We have **4** applications still in process

**We asked that Conferences cease submitting CAFs on Friday, 12/15, as applications in-house fully allocate our December funding provisions.**

You can check on the status of CAF applications you've submitted in December by going to the Members pages of our SVDP-Cincinnati website, click on Resources for Serving Neighbors, and then click on CAF Application Status, or use this link:

<https://app.powerbi.com/view?>

[r=eyJrJljoitNjQyZDg5NmMtNWQ1ZC00OTAyLWlwYmUtZTA2NGMwZmZmNmZiliwidCI6ImY2NWUwODUxLTYxM2Q0tNDEzNS05ZTE2LTUwOWFkYThjMDY2YiJ9](#) .

This resource is reserved for Vincentian members only; access to this resource can not be shared with neighbors, landlords, etc, under any circumstances.

**Our updated and enhanced CAF model will be implemented on 1/1/2024. For those Conferences which applied for funds for the 3 remaining quarters of fiscal year 2024, you should have received an email notification of your allocation amount. The initial funding checks will be sent to participating Conferences next week (the first week of January).** Documents on our evolved CAF model can still be found in the Members area of our website [here](#) . If you have any questions or concerns as we transition into this new phase of CAF, please let us know - we are eager to be as open and transparent as we can be. We appreciate all the time, energy, patience, and understanding that you have provided the CAF team through the past, especially in this last year. We're hopeful that these new changes will be fruitful for your Conference and your neighbors.

Please contact Alec Jewell, 513.345.4983 or [ajewell@svdpcincinnati.org](mailto:ajewell@svdpcincinnati.org) , or Tom Roberts, 513.345.4910 or [troberts@svdpcincinnati.org](mailto:troberts@svdpcincinnati.org) , for info about how **your Conference can twin to our CAF**.

We continue to encourage you to guide our neighbors to other publicly- & privately-funded resources available within our community...and to nurture relationships that extend well beyond immediate basic needs (material) assistance to provide lasting impact. Budgeting can be an eye-opening exercise that leads to changes to create a sustainable, livable new monthly model. How will our neighbor pay their rent, utilities, and other bills in the months to come?

### **Emergency Rental Assistance (ERA2)**

We have received **58** applications: **32** have been approved, **5** have been withdrawn, **8** have been declined, and we have **13** applications in process. Our acceptance of applications and referrals began again on Monday, 12/4.

**Please note: It would be most helpful for applications/referrals to include the neighbor's and landlord's email address.** This is a time saver to benefit all involved.

If submitting an ERA application for Duke assistance, we've been informed that if your/neighbor lets Duke know that they've applied for ERA assistance, Duke will extend a shutoff for 1 month. No proof is necessary.

You are welcome to contact [era@svdpcincinnati.org](mailto:era@svdpcincinnati.org) with questions and concerns. Please also feel free to reach out to any member of your/our Vincentian Services team.

### **Rahe Beds Fund Program Update - Great News to Share - Please See Below!**

Based upon FY2024 budget provisions and current pricing on our beds purchases, we accepted up to 5 bed requests per Conference for December.

**Note: We currently have cribs and pack & plays available. Please use the Rahe contact info below to learn more.**

**Repeating the great news: We will be able to extend up to six (6) Rahe Beds per Conference for the months of January and February, 2024!**

**Your January applications must be submitted by next Friday, 1/5/2024.**

Reminder:

Once you have submitted a beds request and had it approved by the Rahe Fund Coordinator, the neighbor (or their proxy) will be able to go directly to our Clothing and Home Resource Center (CHRC, 1st floor of our Liz Carter Center, 1125 Bank St, 45214) and show their photo ID to pick up their bed(s). Please remind neighbors picking up beds that they should go to the CHRC (from Bank St, enter through our gated garden to the side door of the Liz Carter Center) to pick up their bed and sign their bed waiver; they should not go to the rear dock until they have completed this step.

**Our CHRC is open 9am-5pm Monday-Friday and 9am-1pm on Saturday.**

Dana Walker, our CHRC Manager, can be reached through the Rahe Fund email address [rahebedfund@svdpcincinnati.org](mailto:rahebedfund@svdpcincinnati.org) or by phone at 513.706.5822 (this is the CHRC phone number).

### **Re-Entry Program**

Our Cincinnati District Council's Re-Entry Program is based in our NOC as a resource for your Conference members and your/our neighbors and families whose lives have been impacted by the criminal justice system. You can learn more about the services offered by going to our website's Members page, clicking on Resources for Serving Neighbors, and then Re-Entry. Jackie Cales, our Re-Entry Program Manager, can be reached at



### **Housing Choice Vouchers**

Please refer to the blurb in our October 25, 2023, edition of Conference News and Notes or the Members page of our website for context on requests/recommendations for Housing Choice Vouchers. Marnay Love, reached via email to [mlove@svdpcincinnati.org](mailto:mlove@svdpcincinnati.org), is our Social Services Advocate administering our Cincinnati District Council's role in this program.

### **Metro Bus Passes (Everybody Rides Metro)**

Neighbors residing within a Conference footprint are not eligible to come down to the NOC for bus passes, unless they are coming down for another service to which they are eligible at this site (example: pantry food assistance).

Your Conference has access to Metro single-day bus passes to be extended to neighbors for use for any of 3 defined purposes:

1. Commute to/from new employment
2. Commute to/from our Bank St services hub or other community social services
3. Commute to/from medical appointments

Please understand that these passes are sourced through the Everybody Rides Metro program and our Council is required to comply with the above-referenced usages and submit reports of passes distributed. Please also understand that your Conference will need to record bus passes extended in CMS for the neighbors receiving this assistance. Our Bus Pass Guidelines sheet for Conferences is available to you on the Members pages of our website.

If your Conference wants to learn more about this program or request passes, please contact Alec Jewell, Vincentian Support Manager, at [ajewell@svdpcincinnati.org](mailto:ajewell@svdpcincinnati.org) or 513.345.4983.

### **Birth Certificates**

Neighbors residing within a Conference footprint are not eligible to come down to the NOC for birth certificates. Your Conference has access to request Birth Certificates for neighbors within your footprint, to be extended for any of these 3 defined purposes:

1. Employment
2. School Enrollment
3. Housing Placement

Conferences should only complete requests for the neighbor's own birth certificate and/or a minor of whom they have custody, and requests can only be completed for neighbors born in Ohio. SVDP can extend up to 2 birth certificates per household per lifetime. Our Birth Certificate Guidelines sheet will be available to Conferences on the Members pages of our website.

If your Conference would like to submit a request for a birth certificate, please complete the form found here: <https://form.jotform.com/232633979750063>.

### ***Haircuts from the Heart* in our NOC**

This is a free haircut program, courtesy of **our partner Franciscan Ministries**. **Stylist Margarita is in our NOC almost every Monday, 9am-noon**. Neighbors are accepted on a walk-in basis, and should sign in at our NOC reception desk upon arrival. **Haircuts will not be available on New Year's Day (Monday, 1/1/2024), as our NOC will be closed.**

### ***Cooking Improv* with La Soupe**

**Our partner La Soupe** teams with our Catino Choice Pantry to present monthly Cooking Improv demonstrations in the Teaching Kitchen at our NOC. Instructors from La Soupe and volunteers engage participants on basic cooking principles and how to use what you have to create delicious, nutritious meals. All recipes are based off ingredients found daily in our Catino Choice Pantry. Neighbors are encouraged to sample the delicious dishes and discuss preparation and ingredients with our staff, volunteers, and resident La Soupe instructor, Chef Mona!

These sessions are held on the first Wednesday of each month - which means **our next event is next Wednesday, 1/3/2024, 11am-1pm!** No pre-registration is required.

Feel free to share this information with your neighbors.

### **Education Center Within Our Neyer Outreach Center**

Our NOC Education Center is available for our neighbors and Vincentians to use during our operating hours: Monday - Friday, 8am - 4pm, and Saturday, 8am - noon.

### **Language Service Available to our Conferences**

A growing number of our Conferences are experiencing increased interactions with Latino members of our community...and are struggling to effectively communicate with neighbors who are most fluent or exclusively fluent in Spanish. We have contracted a dedicated language service to help you engage these neighbors in a welcoming, affirming manner. Any Conference member can download the "LanguageLine InSight" app on your smartphone, tablet, or computer at <https://insight.languageline.com/> . You simply need to use the Authentication Code **6NN692GLS2** the first time you login **and provide your Conference name to the operator**. **Through this app you will have access to over 40 different languages, including Spanish, via an interpreter. (We're hearing from Conferences engaging neighbors whose primary language is other than English or Spanish.)** You will have the option of either audio or visual (for those needing sign language); we strongly encourage using visual only when you must. **Please be efficient in your utilization as our Council pays by the minute for this service; and visual is nearly twice as expensive as audio. When you access the service, you will be asked for your name and department, you simply need to state your name, then "St Vincent de Paul Cincinnati Conferences", then your Conference name.** Be sure to only call through the app; you cannot use this service through a regular phone call. Our Charitable Pharmacy, Social Services, and some Conferences are leveraging this tool to better engage our Latino neighbors.

If you have any questions or are having trouble accessing the service, please reach out to Alec or Olivia of your Vincentian Services team.

**If your Conference is among those engaging more neighbors preferring or needing to communicate in Spanish, please consider this an opportunity to seek the addition of Spanish-speaking members. This could enhance your responsive communication and expand your Conference's perspective.**

### **Greater Cincinnati Water Works (GCWW)**

GCWW offers a flexible payment plan to eligible neighbors through their PromisePay Portal. GCWW customers can visit [GCWW.promise-pay.com](http://GCWW.promise-pay.com) for details about the program and how to enroll. Renters not residing in Cincinnati city limits but living in Hamilton County can visit <https://erap.hcjfs.org/> for utility assistance. If you need additional materials or information, please contact GCWW at [GCWWCares@gcww.cincinnati-oh.gov](mailto:GCWWCares@gcww.cincinnati-oh.gov) .

### **Duke Energy**

You can find a 1-page summary of Duke's assistance resources on our website [here](#) . You can find additional current info by going to the Duke Energy website, clicking on the Financial Help tab, and then clicking on Ohio.

Duke encourages us to follow our standard steps for processing pledges on customer accounts. 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 available Monday through Friday, 7:30am - 5:30pm.

Should our neighbor / their customer not meet Duke's qualifications for assistance, please refer them to Duke's customer care organization at 800.544.6900 (Monday - Friday, 7am - 7pm) where they may find assistance through a flexible installment plan.

### **Hamilton County COVID Assistance**

Our neighbors & you can still find info and resources at <https://513relief.org> . This site also includes info on the bus offering mobile 513relief assistance and support at <https://513relief.org/bus/> .

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

The Vision Clinic operates **by appointment** on CEIF's communicated schedule, based upon their team's availability; Thursdays are the most consistent. **This Vision Clinic's remaining December open date is tomorrow (Thursday, 12/28), 8:30am-3pm, out 11:30am-12:30pm for lunch.**

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.

We thank you for your readership and we welcome your feedback to Tom Roberts at 513.345.4910 or [troberts@svdpcincinnati.org](mailto:troberts@svdpcincinnati.org).

**We are eager for your content, including pictures, to make this weekly connection all the more relevant and empowering for you!**

**If a Cincinnati District Council Vincentian you know - or you - are not directly receiving our *Conference News and Notes* via email each Wednesday morning, please email Tom (at the email address above) with your name, Conference, and preferred email address to be added to our Constant Contact distribution list.**

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### *Our Mission*

A network of neighbors, inspired by Gospel values, growing in holiness and building a more just world through personal relationships with and service to people in need.

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### *Our Call to Prayer*

**With hopeful hearts we pray:**

**May our own “holy families” gather at the table of peace,  
to celebrate God’s creative love in the human family.**

**May the family of the Church gather at the table of the Eucharist,  
to celebrate our unity in the body and blood of Jesus.**

**May the Vincentian Family gather at the table of the poor,  
to celebrate the presence of Christ among the lost and broken.**

**Amen.**

STAY CONNECTED



St. Vincent de Paul - Cincinnati | 1125 Bank Street, Cincinnati, OH 45214

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