

DOING GOOD!!

An E-Publication of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, Diocese of Cleveland



DOING GOOD

is sent monthly.

To join our Doing Good mailing list, view past issues, or to learn more about SVDP, visit us at svdpcle.org.

Correspond with us via email at doing-good@svdpcle.org.

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Give Hope

Donate a car
Give hope to those in need

Donate old vehicles to SVDP by calling 1-800-322-8284 or by visiting svdpusa.com.

All donations stay local.



2015 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

SVDP FIRST "FRIDAY" CLUB PRESENTATION

November 5th, Noon
City Club of Cleveland
11:30 a.m. Lunch ticket \$20.
Call City Club 440 390-0172 for reservations.

OZANAM ORIENTATION

Saturday, November 14th
9:00am-3:30pm
Sacred Heart of Jesus - South Euclid
St. Ladislav - Westlake

NATIONAL POVERTY EXPERT DISCUSSES UNDERSTANDING POVERTY IN AMERICA

(in partnership with SVDP)
Friday, December 4th, Noon
City Club of Cleveland
[Click here for more info.](#)

BOARD MEETING

Monday December 7, Noon
Our Lady of Hope
300 Center Rd., Bedford
All Vincentians welcome.



HOW CONFERENCES DIE, PART 2

In the April DOING GOOD, I wrote about Conferences that never recruit new Vincentians. In these Conferences, the current Vincentians age to the point that they no longer can do home visits, and the Conference eventually withers and dies along with them.

But there is another way Conferences die, and it has to do with a **lack of leadership**.

People don't join the Society just to socialize at meetings. They are attracted to our organization because they are good-hearted men and women who have a genuine desire to help others. Unfortunately, some Conferences are overburdened with more home visits and people in need of help than they can serve. Sadly, some Vincentians in these Conferences tend to "burn out" and simply quit.

We've even highlighted some of these Conferences in prior issues and have asked the support of other Conferences, but with very limited success.

At the same time, there is an increasing number of Conferences located in more affluent neighborhoods with few people in need. These Conferences may receive only one or two calls a month for help. Ironically, many of these Conferences have 10 or more members. Once again, these kind-hearted Vincentians who joined for the specific purpose of helping others have quickly become disillusioned with nothing to do and leave. As a result, all that remains is a Conference President with no Vincentians. The President then handles the few calls for help, becomes bored, ages, and the Conference dies.

This doesn't have to happen, and it **should not** happen.

I'm happy to report that some Conferences located in communities with little poverty have been able to moti-

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DIRECTOR'S CORNER

John Litten, Executive Director

Join Us Friday, December 4th to Conclude our 150th Anniversary Festivities!

I must say I have enjoyed this year. For as exhausting as I know it has been for many of you and our staff, it has all been in the name of those we serve, making the service you provide sustainable, and helping the public know of the work that you do. I thank you for giving of yourselves, your talent & treasure, and your patience!

I hope that you can join us one more time (this year anyway). It was in September, 2014 at the SVDP National Assembly in Atlanta that I heard a talk that changed the way I thought about people living in poverty. My first thought was to find a way to bring that talk to Cleveland.

So on Friday, December 4th, we are commemorating our 150th Anniversary for the social services community and the public at large, by doing what we can to help educate Northeast Ohio about the plight of today's poor, how we can better understand their struggle, and how we can make a difference. To do so, we are excited to be bringing in **Donna Beegle, PhD**, a nationally-known speaker on poverty issues from the perspective of someone who has lived in poverty for much of her life. She couldn't even read a magazine at the age of 27. **Donna's family was helped by the St. Vincent de Paul Society when she was young.** She does a very nice job of illustrating the hidden struggles of the generationally poor. She will be speaking at the **City Club of Cleveland's weekly Friday Forum on Friday, December 4th.** I will have the honor of introducing her, and saying a little bit about what we do as a Society.

For more information, visit <https://www.cityclub.org/events/breaking-poverty-barriers> and if you want to attend, be sure to use the Vincentian special code, **DIOCESECLE15** (all caps) when ordering tickets. This will reduce the price to \$28. The event also includes lunch.

It is also worth mentioning that the forum will be aired live on radio (90.3 WCPN), and recorded for broadcast on WVIZ/PBS.

Again, we hope to see you there! I also encourage you to attend one of the Ozanam Orientations we are holding on November 14th. This is both a wonderful refresher and/or primer for both experienced and novice Vincentians.

Our Thoughts Lift to Heaven...

With trees barren of leave and a chill in the air, we approach the end of the liturgical year. The readings at Mass emphasize the coming of Christ and His final judgment. In this month of November dedicated to the Holy Souls, we may remember with sadness our loved ones who have gone before



us, missing their presence in our lives. Blessed Frederic Ozanam, the holy founder of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, talked often with his family and friends who had preceded him in death. He wrote, "As the number of our friends beyond the grave increase with it, and death breaks, one after another, the bonds of friendship that bind us to earth, our thoughts and conversation will be more and more in Heaven." The older we get, the more our focus becomes upon Heaven and the desire to join our loved ones there. We remember in a special way this month all of the Vincentians who have gone before us. May their legacy of good work inspire us as well.

Yours in Christ,



Father Doug Brown
Spiritual Advisor

Let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven"

MATTHEW 5.16

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vate their Vincentians to find ways to reach out & identify people who need their help.

In fact, there are some Conference Presidents who actually require their Vincentians to find a charitable cause to help. Some of these projects have included: organizing a small fund raiser for a needy Conference; collecting children's books for Head Start schools in poor neighborhoods; organizing food drives and working at one of the OZANAM Food Pantries; collecting baby clothes, cribs, bottles and diapers for charities that help needy mothers; holding a summer picnic for shut-ins and nursing home residents, and coordinating a yearly collection of small appliances for clients of transitional housing programs.

I even know of a Conference that started a food pantry in a member's garage. It eventually grew into its permanent commercial location and today serves the entire area.

If you need to find charitable work for your Vincentians, have a brainstorming session, and I bet you'll find a number of great ideas.

Be a true servant leader. We're in the business of helping others. That's why we're Vincentians. If you're bored with lack of calls for local help, reach out to create worthy programs. We're told that approximately 26 percent of the people in our Diocesan service area are below the Federal Poverty level. The poor and disabled are out there in very large numbers. Use your creativity in finding new ways to serve the poor.

If your Conference is dying, **save it today**.
 Our Officers and staff are here to help when you need it.
 Please give us a call!

SEND US SOME PICTURES

We all like to see pictures of friends, neighbors and family.
 How about pictures of Vincentians?

DOING GOOD would like to publish photos of our Vincentian families. Please **email us photos** from District meetings, your Conference meetings, your Officers, at special occasions, church picnics, food collections, workers at Ozanam Pantries, etc. If you mention the names of the people in the pics, we will add them in the caption below. We would like to see one photo from each Conference at least once a year.

Video Now Available to Promote Our Society



A new video promoting our Cleveland Council was unveiled at our 150th Anniversary Gala in September. Entitled "We Are the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, Diocese of Cleveland," the video is approximately seven minutes long and highlights the Society, its Vincentians and the many good works that we do for our less fortunate brethren.

To the best of my knowledge, this is the first promotional video for our Cleveland Council. It received a lot of positive feedback at the Gala, and is now available on our website for viewing and downloading. You may want to show it at your next Conference meeting or even share it with other organizations at your church. [Simply click here to view video.](#) Copy the link and download it to your computer or iPad to present at your next meeting.

NEW TREASURER STILL NEEDED

If you have someone in your Conference that might like to find out more about this position, please send his/her contact information to Bob at 440.243.0510 or email him at bob-reuter@svdpcle.org.

SVDP DISTRICT MEETINGS All Former SVDP Conferences welcome to attend.

	DATE/ TIME	PLACE	SPEAKER	DISTRICT PRESIDENT
Akron	TBA	TBA	TBA	Mike Zorena Akron@svdpcle.org
Lake/ Geauga	TBA	TBA	TBA	Marilyne Brandoni Geauga@svdpcle.org
East Cuyahoga	Nov. 19th 6:00 pm	St. Aloysius Parish	N/A	John Patton EastDistrict@svdpcle.org
Lorain County	Nov. 12th 7:00 pm	St. Peter	N/A	Jim Watling LorainDistrict@svdpcle.org
West Cuyahoga	Dec. 1st 7:30 pm	Blessed Trinity	N/A	Jim Beesley WestDistrict@svdpcle.org

BLANK SUNDAY ENVELOPES

If you still have Blanket Sunday envelopes from this year's drive, please send them to Natalie at our Central Office. She would like to record data from them for her giving data bank. If you need your envelopes returned for your records, we'll be happy to do so.

This applies only to the new envelopes that were created this year. If you still have any of the old Blanket Sunday envelopes, please destroy them. The new envelopes have a small amount of data on the right side that informs donors about some of the good things we do with their gift. The old envelopes don't have this information.

John Patton elected President East Cuyahoga District

John Patton is one of three new District Presidents elected at the September 2015 Board Meeting. He succeeds Mike Birkovich, whose term has expired as Vice President of the Cuyahoga East District.



John grew up in Fairview Park where he was a member of St. Angela Merici Parish. He attended St. Ignatius High School and subsequently graduated from the University of Dayton with a degree in Business Marketing. After graduating from college, he worked in Columbus for four years and then moved back to Cleveland. He has worked for the past 25 years in medical device sales and management. The work consists mainly of marketing orthopedic and cardiac implants such as total joints, pacemakers and other surgical implants.

John is married to his wife, Mary, and they have a 12-year-old daughter, Jackie. They are parishioners of Gesu Parish where they've been active for more than 17 years. In the summer, John and his family enjoy boating and vacationing on Lake Erie in Marblehead. In the winter they enjoy skiing.

John became a Vincentian in 2005 when he joined the Gesu Conference. His Conference consists of eight active Vincentians and six Associate Members. Like all Vincentian Officers, John is elected for a term of three years which may be extended to a maximum of six years.