

ST. VINCENT DE PAUL NEWS

Issue 1 | January, 2024

St. Thomas Aquinas Conference



Contemplation: The Wages of Love

Unlike that of humans, God's judgment, we are taught, is equal to His mercy. This is one reason that we refrain from judging the neighbors we serve; our judgments, sometimes harsh, can cloud our vision, and limit our charity. Mercy, on the other hand, is indispensable to charity.

St. Thomas Aquinas went so far as to say that the "sum total of the Christian religion consists in mercy" in our actions. It is an outward expression of our internal love of God. In other words, mercy unites us externally with the neighbor just as charity unites us internally with God. [[Summa, II:II:30:4](#)]

What, then, is mercy? The Latin word for mercy, *miserericordia*, literally means a miserable heart, which captures the emotional and passionate nature of mercy. When we see the suffering of another and we are moved to sadness ourselves – we can't help it. We are all connected. Vincent went so far as to say that "to see our brother suffering without weeping with him, without being sick with him [is] to be lacking in charity; it's being a caricature of a Christian; it's inhuman..." [[CCD XII:222](#)] Mercy, again, is indispensable to charity.

Recall, also, that Jesus calls us to mercy, not to judgment. To those who criticized Him for associating with tax collectors and sinners, he replied "[I desire mercy, not sacrifice.](#)" He warned us that we would be [judged in the same manner](#) by which we judge others.

The English word mercy has its root in the Latin *mercēs*, meaning wages, which perhaps suggests new way to understand mercy – and a new way to practice it. Wages, after all, are what is owed to another, and to give to another what he is owed is an act not of charity but of justice.

This is exactly what Vincent taught, praying that God would "[soften] our hearts toward the wretched creatures" so that we might realize "that in helping them we are doing an act of justice and not of mercy." [[CCD VII:115](#)]

The wages of sin is death, but because God's judgment is equal to His mercy, the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. He grants us the grace of His unlimited mercy, like all His gifts, only so that we might share it. If this is so, then it is through sharing God's mercy that we also share His justice. The wages of sin, in other words, may be death, but the wages of love is mercy.

Contemplate: Do I sometimes let my human judgment cloud the grace of God's mercy?

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St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Church Parish Office

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SVDP Office Hours of Operation: Monday–Friday 10:00 a.m.—1:00 p.m.

FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Happy New Year! I hope everyone had a blessed Advent and Christmas Season. As we look forward, Lent will be here in another month!

Our Advisory Board met on January 6th to begin planning activities for 2024. We will be contacting other charitable organizations in the community and inviting them to speak at one of our general meetings. This gives us an opportunity to learn what they are currently providing in way of services. Since our Conference assists with rent and utilities, we can get an update about other resources available to our friends and neighbors and pass that information on to them. I will let you know in advance when speakers are scheduled.

Several SVdP members are due to complete their Virtus training (Abuse Awareness Training for Adults) in 2024. All active and associate members must renew their certificate every 5 years. New members must complete this training as soon as possible upon joining. This is a requirement for both the Archdiocese of Santa Fe and the SVdP Archdiocesan Council. It is offered online and instructions can be found on our website at svdpsta.org. We will be notifying members due for this training over the next few weeks.

This year we are planning to have a Commitment Ceremony on September 9th which is the Feast Day of our Founder, Blessed Frederic Ozanam. All members are invited to attend 6pm Mass together and participate in the Commitment Ceremony when Mass is over. This is a time to commit ourselves as members of St. Vincent de Paul to our mission of spiritual growth, promoting a community of faith and friends among our members, and giving service to the poor in a spirit of justice and charity. A reminder and additional details to follow as we get closer to this date. Please mark your calendars and join us.

All my best wishes for a Blessed Lenten Season!

Candace



SVDP CALENDAR JANUARY—JUNE 2024

January 4 @ 7:00—General Meeting
January 6 @ 10:00—Board Planning Meeting
January 13 @ 10:00—Home Visitor Meeting
January 24 @ 7:00—Advisory Board Meeting
January 27 @ 10:00—Post Thanksgiving Meeting
February 1 @ 7:00—General Meeting
February 28 @ 7:00—Advisory Board Meeting
March 7 @ 7:00—General Meeting

March 20 @ 7:00—Advisory Board Meeting
April 4 @ 7:00—General Meeting
April 24 @ 7:00—Advisory Board Meeting
May 2 @ 7:00—General Meeting
May 29 @ 7:00—Advisory Board Meeting
June 6 @ 7:00—General Meeting
June 26 @ 7:00—Advisory Board Meeting



WE WANT TO EXTEND A WARM WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS!

**Richard Bell
Allen Caballero
Gerri Candelaria
Heather Carriedo
Henrietta Gallegos
Jessica George**

**Betty Perea
Clara Polanco
Judy Sanchez
Felicie Truscio
Mark Wansa
Brandy Zuniga**

TREASURER'S REPORT OCTOBER 1ST—DECEMBER 31ST 2023

During the period from October 1 to December 31, 2023, our Conference assisted 112 families providing \$25,969.00 for utilities and \$14,345.00 for rents. We also assisted 38 walk-ins providing them with gift cards and food bags.

This information is provided to you by our Treasurer, Paul LaPierre. This is a quarterly summary. For more detailed information, you may contact Paul at the office by calling (505) 892-0526.

THANKSGIVING DISTRIBUTION 2023

We served 3,361 in our community!

WOW! What a fantastic distribution event we had! Here are our final counts from collection days and distribution day:

- 784 turkeys
- 745 pies
- 16 hams
- 1,300 grocery only gift cards distributed
- \$19,142 in monetary donations



A very special thank you to all our wonderful volunteers that made this event possible: St. Thomas Aquinas, St. John Vianney, and Incarnation SVdP Conferences. Our Life Teen, Boy Scout Troop No: 1919, The Knights of Columbus and the Men's ACTS group.

Thank you Msgr. Raun, Deacon Leyba and Deacon Tynan for your complete support.

