



The Top Hat

The Vincentian Voice of
The Society of St. Vincent de Paul

Archdiocesan Council of New Orleans

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OZANAM INN GEARS UP FOR ITS CENTURY GALA!

On November 18th, Ozanam Inn will hold its annual Century Club Gala, taking place at the historic Omni Royal Orleans hotel in the French Quarter. The event gets started with a patron party at 6pm, followed by the Dinner Gala, which begins at 6:45pm.

Ticket price is \$100.00 each.

The 2011 Honorary Chair couple is Dr. and Mrs. Jack Andonie.

Jazz Vocalist **Banu Gibson and the New Orleans Hot Jazz Band** will provide the evening's entertainment and WWL-TV's **Jonathan Myers** will serve as the evening's MC.

For ticket information, contact 504-250-01301 or visit
www.ozanaminn.org

Thrift Store Celebrates Two Years Back in Jefferson

THE TOP HAT....

Is a publication for the Society of St. Vincent de Paul and it's designed to inform its communities of past, present and future services and events.

The Society of St. Vincent de Paul is a Catholic lay organization that offers service to the needy in the tradition of its founder, Blessed Frederic Ozanam and its patron, St. Vincent de Paul.

What: OPEN HOUSE

When: Saturday, November 12, 2011

Come Help us CELEBRATE:

Time: 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM

Where: East Jefferson Thrift Store

Address: 430 Maine Street (corner of Maine & Jefferson Hwy just East of Causeway on Jefferson Hwy)

Who: All Are Welcome

Enjoy: Refreshments

Enter to Win a Thanksgiving Basket-Valued at \$75.00

Take a Tour: see how items are received, sorted & set up for sale, meet with the staff & talk to them about the store management.

From the National Council- National Vehicle Donation Program update

While the recession seems to have taken a toll on most nonprofits' car donation programs, one charitable organization is running counter to that trend: the National Council of the U.S. Society of St. Vincent de Paul (SVdP). Donations of cars, trucks and other vehicles in the last six months to the organization's National Vehicle Donation Program have increased by more than 20 percent.

"When we kicked off our program in the fall of 2010, we didn't know what to expect," said Roger Playwin, SVdP's national executive director. "The recession was still ongoing and there were a lot of other nonprofit organizations operating vehicle donation programs. At the same time, we built some distinct advantages into our program for our SVdP locations and the donors. First and foremost, the donated vehicle, or the money generated when it's auctioned, is linked directly to donors' zip codes. To borrow a phrase from a popular tourism ad, what you donate in your community stays in your community."

In addition to double-digit increases, SVdP's vehicle donation program has been experiencing gross numbers that are above the current industry average, and the program's managers are hoping for an even bigger increase in the last quarter of the year, historically a time when many people donate a used vehicle to lighten their tax burden. Playwin said he's pleased about the increase, but he's more excited about what the funds do for the people served by the Society, whose mission is to help those in need and living in poverty.

"The average car donated to the program generates more than \$600 in net proceeds," said Playwin. "For the people we serve, that can mean a month's rent for a family, more than two years of prescription medicine for someone, or nutrition for an infant for four months."

SVdP also is a member of One Car One Difference, a national public awareness program created by Insurance Auto Auctions' Donation Division to support more than 100 participating charities nationwide.

For more information about SVdP's vehicle donation program or to donate, log on to: www.svdpusacars.com, or call (800) 322-8284.

New Vice Presidents in Mid-West and North Central regions

Barbara Slaven, a legal administrative assistant at the Fraser Styker law firm in Omaha, has been named vice president for the Midwest region of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul (SVdP), which encompasses Missouri, southern Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Nebraska, Colorado and Wyoming.

Slaven has been a member of SVdP's Conference at St. Bernadette Catholic Church since 1989, and serves on the board of directors for the SVdP thrift stores in Omaha. She also has served as a member of the organization's National

Voice of the Poor Committee, which advocates policies that will help to transition people out of poverty. In addition, Slaven prepares and serves monthly dinners with fellow SVdP members at the Stephen Center homeless shelter.

Jeanne Harper, a local retired psychotherapist, has been named vice president for the north central region of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul (SVdP). The Society's north central region encompasses Wisconsin, Upper Peninsula of Michigan, northern Illinois, Minnesota, North Dakota and South Dakota-more than 500

conferences. Harper received her Masters degree in pastoral studies (ministry extension) from Loyola University here in New Orleans.

"Based on the latest statistics, we know that poverty is a reality throughout our region, but it's important to remember that we're talking about our neighbors, not numbers," said Harper. "As Vincentians, our home visits with those living in poverty have made us keenly aware of the needs of the people we serve." She and her husband, David, who have been active members of the organization since 2000.

Conference News
-From Yvonne Morise

IT'S CHRISTMAS BASKET TIME AGAIN!

The Society of St. Vincent de Paul has been invited again this year to share in the annual distribution of Christmas Baskets by the Academy of Sacred Heart families. We are privileged to be included in their generosity. All District Presidents have been given the information and will gather the names of their conferences requesting to be included in this project. A list from each District President with conference providing the information requested will be gathered and sent to Yvonne Morise and Deacon Rudy Rayfield.

It is very important in order to have this run smoothly to include the **name of conference, contact name, cell phone # and number of baskets requested.**

The distribution is on December 16th and begins at 11:30 am and ends at 12:30 pm. NO baskets will be distributed after 1:00 pm. The basket groups are prepared ahead of time by the Academy of Sacred Heart so all is set on the day of distribution. The Carondelet St. entrance to the school near the new gym off of St. Charles Ave. is the location. This is behind the main building at 4521 St. Charles Ave

Please make certain your vehicle is large enough to handle the baskets you requested. Deacon Rudy Rayfield and Ray Rayfield will be there to assist and guide all as they arrive.

If more information or if you have any questions, call Yvonne Morise at
 504-835-9932 or (cell) 504-382-4030.

St. Vincent de Paul Turns to Television
-by Art Riley

Television commercials were recently produced by the Council and are airing on WVUE Fox 8 TV. The spots are intended to inform the public of the services provided by the Society of St. Vincent de Paul in the New Orleans area.

Three of the four spots promote the thrift stores, the pharmacy and the learning center. A fourth spot supports the work of the conferences and "spokesperson talent" is provided by Archbishop Gregory Aymond. All four spots close with a request for financial support for these good works.

The SVdP Central offices will issue commercial airing times via e-mail to all SVdP District and Conference Presidents, Board of Directors, and membership.

The commercials were scripted and directed by Art Riley of the St. Jane de Chantal Conference in Abita Springs. Art also serves on the Board of Directors of Ozanam Inn.

Conference News (cont'd) SVdP Welcomes new District President

Letatia Bright Ducksworth, a former Corpus Christi Conference President, has been appointed as Downtown District President.

Ducksworth was a member of the advisory board of the office of Black Catholics Ministry Diocese of Ft. Worth, TX and served as a member of the Black Catholic secretariat archdiocese of Cincinnati, OH. Special thanks to outgoing President **Monica Alicino** for her dedication, enthusiasm and hard work.

“Yours must be a work of love, of kindness, you must give your time, your talents, yourselves.

We must do what is agreeable to God. We must do what Our Lord Jesus Christ did when preaching the Gospel. Let us go to the poor Let us learn of Him”.

-Frederic Ozanam

Want to give THANKS? Here's How...

The holidays are a time to gather with family and give thanks for what you have. And it is traditional for each family member to say something they are thankful for on Thanksgiving. Not sure what to say or how to say it? Here are a few suggestions on how to give thanks at Thanksgiving.

Be thankful for the food you're eating. One of the most common things that people say they are thankful for at Thanksgiving is the meal. And why wouldn't they? Thanksgiving meals are more like feasts that someone you love has put a lot of time, effort and money into. Show that you're thankful both for the nourishment and the effort put into the meal by giving thanks for your Thanksgiving meal.

Appreciate the company you're with. Chances are there is no one you'd rather spend the holidays with than those you love. Surely, you're thankful that you're not spending this Thanksgiving alone. Instead, you've got the company of your closest friends and family to make this holiday seem warm and comforting. Even though they may give you grief sometimes, your family and friend are what make you feel like you have a place in this world. Don't forget to show your love and appreciation for those closest to you by giving thanks for them.

Consider the experiences you've had this year and the knowledge you've gained. If you want to be unique with what you give thanks for this Thanksgiving, think of the year gone past. What experiences have you been through? Have you overcome adversity? Have you triumphed? Have you learned things that you're grateful for? Think about everything that you've been through since last Thanksgiving and give thanks for the knowledge you've gained and each special moment or experience you've had.

Give thanks for the health of yourself and your family. Nothing is more important than the health of you and those around you. Even if you've had a tough year in terms of your health this year, if you're still breathing, you should be thankful. Think of all the people who are suffering more than you. Think of those who didn't make it through the year because of health problems. In fact, think of those close to you that you may have lost in the past year. Thanksgiving is a time to reflect on what has been given to you over the past year as much as it is a time to appreciate what hasn't been taken away.

Be thankful for the luxuries you've been afforded, and think of the less fortunate. Finally, consider the true spirit of Thanksgiving and think of those who have less than you. Consider the poor, the needy, or those who have struggled financially in these difficult times. Then think of all that you still have and all that you can still give to others. Give thanks for your life, your health, your loved ones and your luxuries. Make sure to pass some of your generous spirit on to those less fortunate than you this Thanksgiving by donating your time or money to the needy - it's the best way to show you're thankful for the life you have this holiday season.

-source: [About.com](https://www.about.com)

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*Letter from the Spiritual Director of The Society of
St. Vincent de Paul*

Dear fellow Vincentians,

November is the month that we remember our deceased. It is also the month when we celebrate Thanksgiving Day in the USA. As we remember those who have gone before us, family members, friends, fellow Vincentians, we can take this time of year to give thanks to God for the support these deceased people have been to us on our journey. Perhaps it was one or more of them who have directed us to become Vincentians and to reach out in service to others, while seeking to deepen our own spiritual lives.

I would also suspect that being a Vincentian and seeking to help those who are in need is one of the ways that we are showing our gratitude to God for the gifts that we have received in our lifetimes. As the saying goes, but for the grace of God there go I; we might be in the predicament that many of our people are in these days.

Thanksgiving is a good time for us to see if we can do even more to thank God for the ways that we have been blessed. On Thanksgiving Day itself some places offer a special meal for those in need. **Ozanam Inn**, the wonderful special work of the Society, feeds the needy every day. You might consider phoning the Inn at 504-523-1184 and offering to help out with a meal on Thanksgiving Day or some other day. **The Rebuild Center at St. Joseph Church**, just off Tulane and Claiborne, is offering a special meal the Friday after Thanksgiving. You can phone 504-273-5573, ext. 116 and offer to help with that meal or any other weekday when they serve meals. Of course, you can also phone the Society and offer to help at one of our stores almost any day of the week.

November is also the month for the **Ozanam Inn Gala** at the Omni Royal Hotel on November 18. If you would like to enjoy a relaxing evening with many other Vincentians and support the wonderful ministry of the Inn, phone the number above and make reservations.

St. Paul in his letter to the Colossians reminds us to "always be thankful." Certainly St. Vincent and Blessed Frederic Ozanam showed their gratitude through their dedication to those in need. May we always be thankful and act accordingly.

Have a blessed month of November and **be thankful every day.**

Fr. Louie Arceneaux, C.M.

**Have you seen the
SVdP on TV?**



Beginning in October, WVUE-Fox 8 will be airing commercials highlighting our Special Works:

Pharmacy:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eciiliWoeQ4>

Adult Learning Center:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xkp39QDhtcw>

Thrift Stores:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nycX3wCTXRk>



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