



Society of  
**ST. VINCENT DE PAUL**  
**SACRAMENTO**  
DIOCESAN COUNCIL

# St. Vincent de Paul Sacramento Diocesan Council

## Serving in Hope and Mercy

*Celebrating*  
**65** YEARS OF  
VINCENTIAN  
service

## Monday Morning Memo



This week's adventure involved a trip to Costco looking for yes, toilet paper. After 3 plus weeks of facing empty shelves at the local grocery store and Target, we decided to take advantage of Costco's early opening for seniors Tuesday through Thursday. Arriving a little after 7:00 AM for the 8:00 AM opening we faced an already long line. Almost everyone wore masks and gloves and stood ready with their carts in front of them creating a perfect social distancing space.

We were blessed with a beautiful sunny day so there was nothing to complain about as far as the wait was concerned. Checking email and texting with friends and family kept us busy. It was a strange atmosphere if you really started to think about what we were all doing there. As we got close to the entrance waiting our turn to enter the store, we watched those who were done shopping exit and all carts were almost exactly the same – toilet paper, water, and paper towels.



Although not comparable in the scope of what we are now dealing with, it brought to mind the gas crisis of the 1970's. For those of you who remember, our lives were centered on the amount of gas in our



tanks. We sat for hours in our cars in lines that wound around blocks just waiting to fill-up – if we were lucky. Just like the empty shelves we now see in the stores, we often faced gas stations with no gas.

We were living in San Francisco at the time and I remember clearly waiting on 19<sup>th</sup> Avenue with no cellphone or iPad. Imagine that! We did not have any imposed restrictions on what we could do, but our lives did revolve around how much gasoline was in our tank. Would

we have enough to get to work, school, doctor's appointments or the store? During those days, we had self-imposed restrictions, ensuring we could travel where we absolutely needed to go until the next fill-up.

The only similarity I can draw from then and now is we are all in this together. We endured that crisis and we will recover from this disaster, hopefully better prepared and more knowledgeable should we ever face something of this magnitude again.



As we begin Holy Week, we enter into it as never before. It has always been a week when we have spent many hours in church as we lead up to Jesus' crucifixion on Good Friday and His glorious resurrection on Easter Sunday. For most of us the inability to be in our church surrounded by our faith community and clergy, is surreal. Even with the ability to live-stream or watch the mass on TV there is nothing like walking into church, dipping fingers into holy water, kneeling in a pew and praying in a place that allows us to connect so personally with God.

Although I will miss the solemnity and beauty of Holy Week in church, I know Christ is alive and among us. "I am with you always, to the end of the age." ~ Matthew 28:20

***Have a blessed Holy Week and thanks for all you do,***

***Judy***

## WHAT ARE OUR CONFERENCES DOING?



The Sacramento Diocesan Council is comprised of 53 conferences. Many of our members are over the age of 60. Despite that fact, it is no surprise that they continue to serve the poor in their communities. The need now is more critical than ever. I have heard from many conference presidents and they each report they continue to serve, but in a modified manner respecting the health and safety guidelines necessary during this pandemic. Home Visits are conducted over the phone. Some food pantries have started delivering food to those requesting it and others have changed their procedures so everyone remains safe and with minimal direct contact with others.

Vincetians do not stop providing assistance to those coming to us for help, rather they find new and different ways to do it. Some conferences report their calls are down, others are seeing an increase in calls for some type of aid. Some like St. Peters/All Hallows who used to provide food vouchers to a local grocery store discovered that store had closed. They decided to provide gift cards instead. Other conferences are partnering with local agencies or organizations to make sure those needing food are getting it. Holy Spirit in Sacramento served 150 homeless individuals bag lunches in front of the Cathedral. St. John Vianney in Rancho Cordova continues to operate their food locker Mon-Wed-Fri taking extra precautions to protect volunteers and people seeking food.

St. Dominic's Conference in Benicia was even able to deliver some Easter Baskets, donated each year by a woman who assembles the baskets for children 10 years and under. A few members were able to deliver these baskets with food boxes and grocery gift certificates to about 30 families. Families without children received gift certificates in the mail.

You are all truly inspirational in your devotion to serving the needy and continuing to follow in the footsteps of our patron St. Vincent de Paul and founder Blessed Frederic Ozanam. Thank you all for your service and commitment to keeping your conferences active during what is a very difficult time.

# WHAT IS A VOAD?

A VOAD is a **Volunteer Organization Active in Disasters**. According to the National VOAD website it is an "association of organizations that mitigate and alleviate the impact of disasters, provides a forum promoting cooperation, communication, coordination and collaboration; and fosters more effective delivery of services to communities affected by disaster." The Society of St. Vincent de Paul is a member of the NVOAD and Elizabeth Disco-Shearer CEO of Disaster Services Corp. for SVdP serves as its treasurer.



At time when it is so important to know what services are available to those seeking help, it is a good idea to seek out your city or county VOAD or COAD (Community Organizations Active in Disasters). Member organizations include the Red Cross, Salvation Army, many churches and local agencies and non-profits like SVdP who all work together to provide assistance during a disaster.

As we are an official NVOAD member please see this **special letter from FEMA** that allows SVDP Volunteers to travel to food pantries and to provide essential services. Vincentians need to notify their local COADs, VOADs, Emergency Managers and local authorities that they are providing services to their community under COVID-19.

NVOAD highly recommends that volunteers wear clothing that displays their organization's logo and have the logo displayed on their car window. Please have this letter available to all your members who continue to volunteer. If you have an office or food pantry copies should be posted there as well.



***John 12:13 ~ So they took branches of palm trees and went out to meet him, crying out, "Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, even the King of Israel!"***

*"A network of friends, inspired by Gospel values, growing in holiness and building a more just world through personal relationships with and service to people in need."  
~ Mission Statement*

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