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The Top Hat

The Vincentian Voice of
The Society of St. Vincent de Paul
Archdiocesan Council of New Orleans

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January/February 2017

Adult Learning Center celebrates Ten Years of Service

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On January 19th, Vincentians, staff members, board members and former students gathered at Augie's Restaurant to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the Sr. Lory Schaff Adult Learning Center. The event was hosted by Sr. Bonita Sniegowski. Sr. Lory started the school in early 2007, with one student. As attendance grew, Sr. Kathleen Bahlinger joined Sr. Lory the following year.

To date, nearly 600 individuals have been instructed since its inception and nearly 60 student have received high school equivalency diplomas.



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.

Sr. Bonita presented a power point presentation on the history of the ALC and the programs offered. Each volunteer was given a gift of appreciation. Members of both Sr. Lory and Sr. Kathleen's families were on hand to celebrate the anniversary.

Sr. Lory passed away in 2012, after a long battle with non-Hodgkin's lymphoma.

We lost Sr. Kathleen suddenly in 2013. Their legacy and dedication to social justice and education will continue to help and inspire residents in our community.

We congratulate Sr. Bonita, and her staff and wish them much success in the decades to come.

From the President

Where were you and what were you doing on February 7, 2017? Did you call loved ones to check on them, watch TV as BREAKING NEWS was being reported, or were you praying for those affected by the tornados that devastated so many people? Are you counting your blessings today because you were not affected by the devastation?

Our society is a tier 3 responder in the event of a disaster such as this one in our area. What this means is, the **Red Cross, Salvation Army, Catholic Charities**, etc. are first responders because they have manpower and funding to respond immediately. Our responsibility is to be available for the long term for those effected after the first responders are gone.

New Orleans East is an unusual situation because we do not have any conferences in the area to respond to the needs of those effected. **We as a SVdP Society must respond to the needs of the poor effected by such a disaster.** Your Archdiocesan Council needs help with ideas and funding in order to help the tornado victims. Send any ideas or funding directly to the Archdiocesan Council Office so we can formulate a plan and begin our response.

As stated at the Annual Meeting, it is imperative that we form disaster teams in our archdiocese **ASAP.** We need to be ready when the next disaster hits. The next one could be tomorrow, next week, next month, next year. Who can predict when the next one will hit, but like the scout motto, we must be prepared.

Thank you in advance for your ideas in how we can help those in New Orleans East and for providing the funding needed to carry them out.

Together In Christ
Alan Demma



St. Margaret Mary Hosts 2017 Annual Meeting

On January 29th, after worshipping at the 10:15 Mass at St. Margaret Mary Church in Slidell, Vincentians gathered in the fellowship hall for the annual meeting of the SVdP Archdiocesan Council. 75 individuals were in attendance.

This was the first annual meeting for the newly elected president, Alan Demma. Attendees were welcomed by Demma, and Executive Director Deacon Rudy Rayfield and Sr. Teresa Daly conducted a re-commissioning of leadership ceremony.



Along with the financial updates, and recaps (including distribution of the Annual Report) The 2017 Vision for the Society was shared.

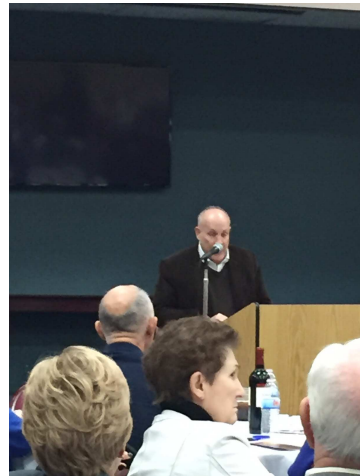
Donnie Messenger, of Our Lady of the Lake conference presented the north shore’s systemic change pilot program (Stepping Stones) and Angela Wattler detailed the responsibilities of the SVdP Disaster Relief program and the role of committee representatives in each district and conference.



Tom Costanza and Ronnie Moore discussed the collaborative relationship between SVdP and Catholic Charities; in regard to the Cornerstone Builders/ re-entry program.

Formation Director, Sr. Teresa Daly facilitated discussion of the question—*How can your Archdiocesan Board help your Conference serve the poor?*

Brian Harris and Greg Joubert; representing the Young Adults spoke on the involvement of this enthusiastic group during the past year, and offered their services and assistance to conferences for future activities. And events.



From the National Office

The SVdP television special "**Our Faith in Action**" **Today's Society of St. Vincent de Paul**" is now available online for all Councils and Conferences to use to help tell our story.

The half-hour program shows Society of St. Vincent de Paul members on their spiritual growth journey through service to people in need. This special shows Vincentians on a home visit with a family in need, helping the homeless in a downtown shelter and working with returning citizens through prison ministry.

Footage was shot at the Community Pharmacy in Gentilly, as well as from a local home visit.



This program provides an excellent overview of who we are and what we do.

To watch the video from Vimeo, go to: <https://vimeo.com/195329687>

-You can download a copy of the program directly from Vimeo.

-or-watch on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pPWp8Hvloss>



Let the Countdown Begin!

2017 GiveNOLA Day is May 2nd!

Details SOON

Save-the-DATE

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Publications



AND NOTES...

SAVE-THE-DATES:

Upcoming Ozanam Orientations:

Friday, March 24 from 9:00-2:00 at St. Angela Merici
and
Saturday, from 8:40-3:00

April 1 at Mary Queen of Peace in Mandeville

For details, contact Sr. Teresa Daly: Teresa.Daly@doc.org

From the Central Office

Office Days at the Pharmacy

District leadership, conference leadership, special works and
other group leaders:

Please take advantage of meeting times with both our Executive Director and Council President, in the efforts to provide assistance, counsel, better communicate information and alleviate meeting conflicts.

Deacon Rudy Rayfield and Alan Demma will be available between the hours of 1 and 4 pm on select Mondays and Wednesday every month. A schedule has been set until May, but is subject to change, depending upon effectiveness.

To view the list of meeting dates, please contact the central office at 504-940-5031, ext. 10 of svdpps@bellsouth.net

You can also contact Deacon Rudy at 504-650-1779 and Alan Demma at (504) 352-0533



**SAVE the
DATE!**

The Annual
Jazzin' on the
River Fundraising
Gala will be held
on
July 8, 2017



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