



Society of
ST. VINCENT DE PAUL
SACRAMENTO
DIOCESAN COUNCIL

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

OCT 2025



WELCOME NEW PRESIDENT - SONJA CRAIGHTON



The Council welcomed a new president this October: Sonja Craighton!

A dedicated Vincentian since 2010, Sonja has contributed her time and talents in many different roles, reflecting her deep commitment to serving others. She was the vice president & then president of the Our Lady of Grace conference in West Sacramento & was a home visit team leader for 7 years. For the past 6 years she has been the Yolo/Metro District President, in that time of guiding conferences she also was able to help establish new conference locations & bring back old conferences.

In 2021, she partnered with the Yolo Food Bank for "Feeding America Program" receiving food from local grocery stores to distribute to conferences and more. In 2022, she was active in the creation & implementation of the Ozanam Orientations; establishing the Council Formation teams & joining West Region as traveling formator.

Outside of SVdP, Sonja has served her community to address homelessness, food insecurity & providing resources for school-aged children. Her civic engagement includes being active in the Yolo County Homeless & Poverty Action Coalition, Yolo County's Children's Alliance & the City of West Sacramento Room Key program—where she helps to feed 100 people per week.

"I will lead with enthusiasm & passion for our organization, inspiring others to join our cause & contribute their talents & dedication," says Sonja. "I truly appreciate the mentoring received over the past 6 years which has allowed me to grow as a leader & taken on many roles to prepare me for this position."

Sonja's main goals in her new role include ensuring diversity of finances for continued financial stability, seeking to provide more essential items & services to the homeless & those without conferences & continuing to expand the Transitions to Permanent Housing Solutions program at the Council level to serve the latter.

On supporting the growth of Vincentians, Sonja said, "we must prioritize the growth of our Vincentian community in both numbers & spirituality. This involves defining our vision, mission & core values, ensuring that everyone understands their roles & responsibilities. As Vincentians, our vocation is an ongoing process of growing & developing in the tradition, charism, & spirituality of SVdP, being shaped through the Holy Spirit, for our work."

A BLESSED LIFE IN CHRIST

FR. MICHAEL KIERNAN, COUNCIL SPIRITUAL ADVISOR



Dear Brothers and Sisters,

How beautiful is the life we live as Vincentians! However, it is not always easy day to day as we encounter so many disturbing situations which try our faith, patience and commitment.

As in all things the great example for us is Christ. A true Christian, whether eating or drinking, will strive to imitate Jesus. He or she will be sober and moderate, aware of other people's needs and more concerned with spiritual nourishment than material things.

As Christians, we are called to expect difficulties for we know that Jesus himself did not even have a place to rest his head as Scripture says. One must learn how to endure adversity and even false witness as the Lord himself did, leaving vindication to God.

We are to bear insults as Jesus did when his face was spat upon, slapped and reviled in many terrible ways. As true Christians we must be ready to expect spiritual challenges as Jesus did when betrayed by one of his disciples, denied by another and abandoned by all around him.

The good Christian must be willing to patiently deal with persecution, sickness and death itself like our Lord Jesus Christ who when cruelly flogged, crowned with thorns and pierced by nails gave his soul peacefully to his Heavenly Father!

God bless us all in the ministry of service we do in St. Vincent de Paul. May each day be a blessing for us as we follow our motto 'Increase In Christ'.

“So whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do everything for the glory of God.”
1 Corinthians 10:31

IN MEMORIAM: Deacon Rich Koppes: A beloved and selfless member of our Society. Thank you for helping our Society by your hard works, generosity & guidance. Our prayers are with you & your family.



SOUTH SACRAMENTO/ ELK GROVE

DISTRICT

St. Peter/All Hallows - St. Anthony
Good Shepherd - Holy Spirit
Immaculate Conception
St. Charles - St. Joseph

BACK TO SCHOOL DRIVE

MILDRID WONG, PRESIDENT, ST. JOSEPH

Our Back to School and Personal Hygiene Supplies Drive for Mustard Seed School in August was very successful. The generous donations and support from both St Joseph Church and Mission Church SVDP parishioners allowed us to serve students at Mustard Seed, David Reese & Prairie Elementary Schools, along with our CFF program and Elk Grove Food Bank families with school age students.



PROVIDING FOOD SECURITY



Every first Thursday of the month our Vincentians prepare over 1,200 senior distribution boxes consisting of nonperishable canned foods and vegetables at the Elk Grove Food Bank (EGFB). They serve an average of 100-150 families on a daily basis.

But it doesn't end there, on every 3rd Friday of every month our Vincentians serve lunches at Loaves and Fishes, feeding an average of 250-300 guests.

HOLY SPIRIT'S BUNDLE SUNDAY

DOT O'CONNOR

Was reported as a huge success!!



JOIN OUR
QUARTERLY
NEWSLETTER
[HERE.](#)

SOUTH SACRAMENTO/ ELK GROVE

DISTRICT

St. Peter/All Hallows - St. Anthony
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DEACON RICH KOPPES - A MODEL OF VINCENTIAN IDEALS

MAUREEN SERGENT, PRESIDENT, ST. ANTHONY

Richard Koppes, a founding & active member of the St. Anthony's SVDP conference, passed away on September 9, 2025. Rich lived a faith filled life dedicated to service & those he loved.

Rich was the driving force behind establishing a SVDP conference at St. Anthony's. Where Rich saw a need, he would look for a way to meet that need. His life was truly an example of Vincentian service.

In addition to SVDP, Rich was involved in numerous other ministries dedicated to serving the poor, the marginalized, and those in crisis. Rich made faith the center of his life through his service as a deacon at St. Anthony Parish for 40 years.

Rich and his beloved wife, Connie, were involved in countless ministries that served the greater Sacramento area including Family Promise, the Sacramento Life Center, the Exodus Project, Christ the King Retreat Center, South Sacramento Interfaith Partnership, & many more. Rich had a deeply generous heart. Together they had a passionate devotion to each other and their family, immediate, extended, parish and broader community.

Much of Rich's ministry was focused on building and nurturing relationships with others through listening & one on one support. His hobby was helping people. It is hard to convey the impact that Rich & Connie have had to those in need in our community.

In addition to his life of service, Rich was also an incredibly influential attorney. He was widely regarded as a pioneer of corporate governance. He was involved in numerous professional organizations, served on several boards, & taught at Stanford as well. The National Law Journal named him as one of the country's 100 most influential lawyers. He received this honor as well as many other lifetime achievement awards throughout his career. Rich will be missed by so many.

PLACER/YUBA/ SUTTER/BUTTE

DISTRICT

St. Joseph Lincoln - Roseville - Sacred Heart
St. Joseph Marysville - St. Teresa
St. Isidore - Our Divine Savior

BRINGING AWARENESS AND APPRECIATION

ROXANNE CANFIELD, OUR DIVINE SAVIOR



Chico conference completed their Friends of the Poor Walk ® on Saturday, Sept. 20th in Bidwell Park. It was a lovely morning to share with our generous friends of the poor, walking and appreciating God's beautiful creation all around us.

SHREDDING FOR A CAUSE



The Chico conference held its second Shred Event on June 14 in the Our Divine Savior church parking lot. Thanks to Access, it was a very successful and efficient event appreciated by the many participants who emptied their storage units, closets and garages to benefit our service to the poor in Chico.

CHANGING OF THE GUARD

Outgoing president Roxane Canfield passes the torch to incoming President Suzanne Roden of Our Divine Savior parish.



YOLO/METRO

DISTRICT

Cathedral - Our Lady of Lourdes - St. Francis
St. Mary/Sacred Heart - Holy Cross
Divine Mercy - St. Anthony - Our Lady of Grace
St. James - St. Martin de Porres
Our Lady of Guadalupe

FRIENDS OF THE POOR COME TOGETHER

YOLO/METRO DISTRICT CONFERENCES



The community gathered for a good cause at the Yolo-Metro District's Friends of the Poor Walk® hosted by St. James Conference. Festivities kicked off on Friday, September 26th with a reception and live auction, followed the next day by the walk.

Proceeds from the event will go toward helping with short-term emergency needs, such as utilities, rent and food for Davis neighbors in need.

Thank you to all who helped make this a fundraising success!

A BED OF HIS OWN

VIRGINIA LOEFFLER, PRESIDENT, ST. MARY/SACRED HEART

Recently we served a mother and her two children who just transitioned from being homeless to living in an apartment. With the help of family and friends, donations were given to furnish the apartment. But, what was missing were beds for the children. The three were sleeping in one bed.

The mother called us & requested two twin beds and the SVdP mattress program came through & delivered them. The 10yr old daughter was elated but the mother was not sure about her 3yr old son -- you see, this is his first bed without having to share.

Our conference is proud to be able to offer mattresses utilizing the SVdP Thrift Store mattress program for those we serve.

Lastly, we are having Bundle Sunday the weekend of Oct. 25/26, Saturday 4-6:30pm & Sunday 7:30am-12:30pm. Please bring gently used clothing, household items & furniture to St Mary church parking lot located at 1333 58th & M St. Unfortunately, we cannot take computers, monitors, printers, or other electronic equipment, beds, or large appliances.

COMMUNITY SERVICE EVENT & FREE HOT LUNCHES

SONJA CRAINTON, OUR LADY OF GRACE

Our Lady Of Grace SVdP members & community at the Yolo Food Bank, made 350 bags of food for those in need. They also have been continuing to give out free hot lunch's on the 3rd Saturday of every month.



SACRAMENTO EAST

DISTRICT

Divine Savior - St. Mel - St. Lawrence
Our Lady of the Assumption- St. Ignatius
Presentation - St. John the Baptist
Holy Trinity - St. John Vianney
St. Katherine Drexel - St. John the Evangelist

RAISING AWARENESS

TERRIN HENDERSON, PRESIDENT, ST. JOHN THE EVANGELIST



Eighty people attended St John the Evangelist SVDP's screening of "Americans With No Address" on August 21. The award-winning documentary aims to humanize the crisis of homelessness & the fentanyl epidemic, which disproportionately affects those that are unhoused. Following the film there was a panel question & answer session. The CEO of the film production company, the CEO of The Gathering Inn of Sacramento & Placer counties as well as 2 board members of Carmichael HART participated.

HOLY TRINITY PREVENTS AN EVICTION

PAUL DASCHKA, PRESIDENT, HOLY TRINITY

Twenty-eight home visits were performed in the district over the last few months. We also partnered with Housing El Dorado to prevent an eviction and twinned with St. John Vianney Conference on an important case. Additionally, we had a very successful recruitment effort & 2nd collection at the Sunday/Vigil Masses at Holy Trinity Parish Sept. 27-28 in concert with the Feast Day of St. Vincent de Paul.

NEW CONFERENCE PRESIDENT & SHRED DAY

MARYLEE JOHNSON, PRESIDENT, OUR LADY OF THE ASSUMPTION

We have a new president & board starting October 1st. Leo Winternitz will be our new President! We also had our Shred Day on Saturday, October 18th from 8:30 until 12.

COLLABORATING FOR SUCCESS

FRANK LANZA, PRESIDENT, DIVINE SAVIOR

Despite having limited resources for unhoused neighbors, Divine Savior conference was able to coordinate with Orangevale – Fair Oaks Homeless Assistance Resource Team (HART) for some positive results. Among them: housing for homeless neighbors, help obtaining IDs and other government program documents, etc. We are grateful for the cooperative spirit of HART to serve our unhoused neighbors!

Starting in October conference office hours will change from Thursday afternoons to Wednesday mornings. This helps the conference better coordinate with HART, which operates hot showers and referral services on Thursdays.

ST. IGNATIUS BUILDS COMMUNITY & HOPE

HILARY BARBOZA, ST. IGNATIUS

At the St. Ignatius Loyola Parish Fall Festival, Vincentians engaged with parishioners by sharing information about our SVdP ministry & Vincentian values. They presented various case scenarios & explained how each situation would typically be handled. Parishioners were also invited to offer their own solutions & write a hopeful message on a card to be shared with neighbors served by an interconnected parish ministry.

Help Us Help Others by Joining Us!

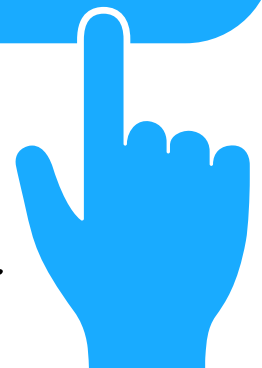
We need volunteers! Opportunities include:

- Joining a local parish conference & participating in their activities. Including spirituality, food pantries, home visits, holiday programs & much more.
- Volunteering at the Thrift Store. Help with the many store activities; including sorting donations, hanging clothes, & helping customers.
- Becoming a mentor to returning citizens from jail through our Exodus Project in the Sacramento Area/County or Solano County.

Or **DONATE!**

DONATE

click here!



GRATITUDE AND GATHERING AT ST. JOSEPH

GAYLA RICKS, PRESIDENT, ST. JOSEPHS

With rising temperatures this summer came rising requests for help with utility bills for St. Joseph Conference in Redding. The conference is especially thankful to continued financial support from parishes as we seek to make the best use of funds received.

The conference continues meeting twice monthly, planning for fundraisers, discussing grant applications and working to bring St. Anne and Sacred Heart into the St. Joseph Conference. This is a work in progress, and the conference prays for guidance as we move to include the South County in the conference. It all comes down to finding the right people who are committed to bringing this to fruition and seeking God's will.

On Friday, September 26, the conference gathered to celebrate Mass in honor of the Feast Day of St. Vincent de Paul. It is so nice to gather as a group, not for a meeting, not for business, not for anything other than to be together as friends and worship and be thankful for St. Vincent and the work he started so long ago.

"If there are any among us who think they are in the mission to evangelize the poor people but not to alleviate their sufferings, to take of their spiritual needs but not their temporal ones, I reply that we have to help them and have them assisted in every way, by us and by others.."

ST. VINCENT DE PAUL

Give Back With a Real Estate Donation

Estates, land, houses, vacation cottages, farms, rental property buildings, commercial real estate, and more.



DONATE YOUR LAND

To get started call: 844-277-HOME or givingproperty.org/svdp-sacramento

MANY THANKS FOR ST. DOMINIC CONFERENCE

MICHAEL MUNN, PRESIDENT, ST. DOMINIC CONFERENCE

Community members have expressed thanks to St. Dominic Conference for their assistance and caring ways:

This unsolicited note came from a Benicia neighbor whose electricity had been turned off for 6 days because he had a large past due balance. He works full time and his wife works too, but they got behind. His wife and two young children were distraught and he had no means to resolve the issue. St. Vincent de Paul teamed up with Families in Transition to get his power turned back on along with a new PG&E monthly payment plan.

“Dear St. Vincent de Paul and the Families in Transition Team,
In the darkest and most difficult moment of my life, your support and assistance brought me warmth and gratitude beyond words. Your generosity and kindness not only helped restore the electricity in my home but also acted as a beam of light guiding me forward. Your kindness is beyond words — and I carry it like a mountain in my heart.”

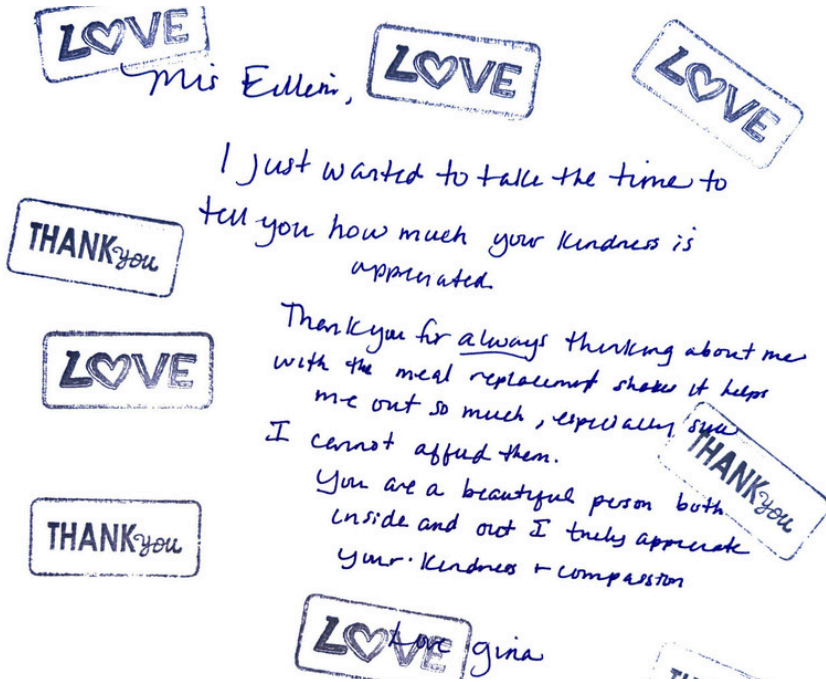
Another note stated:

“Thank you for calling and checking in on us. I really appreciate that and am grateful we are doing good. Yes, my daughter is still doing good. She is in school, even for the summer. So that is a blessing. We did get another car. The car payment is a little bit steep, more than we expected, but the last two months we have been making it happen and everything is going fine. We have essentially caught up on most of our bills. We have made a lot of payment arrangements with different companies. We are almost back on track.

I just wanted to let you know I appreciate you checking in on us and we really appreciate your help with food and help with the PG&E and utility bills. That was a great blessing for us and helped us get back on track like we needed to be. So again, thank you guys and all the other people in the organization, even the nice ladies that came out to the house. Thank you so much again and have a good day! All right, bye, bye.”

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

A NOTE FROM A NEIGHBOR HELPED & TOTAL JULY & AUG. ASSISTANCE GIVEN



July & August Assistance Delivered:

- Financial Assistance: Rent \$20,596 Utilities (PG&E and Water) \$8,636
- Groceries (we deliver M-F) \$3,168
- Grocery Deliveries: 140 Families helping 436 people
- Home Visits: 34 Personal Home Visit Encounters helping 88 people

7TH ANNUAL FRIENDS OF THE POOR® WALK



Thank you to the Benicia community and our wonderful sponsors for another successful Friends of the Poor Walk® to prevent homelessness in Benicia. The fundraiser was a major success with over 100 people of all ages gathered at the City Park Gazebo. The Friends of the Poor Walk® generated \$62,351 thanks to our wonderful sponsors, registered walkers, donors and an anonymous benefactor.

ADVOCATING FOR THE POOR

WENDY ROSS, PRESIDENT, ST. JOSEPHS RIO VISTA



Participants in the annual St. Vincent de Paul Friends of the Poor Walk® marched from St. Joseph Church to the Helen Madere Bridge and back. Picket signs carried at the annual St. Vincent de Paul fundraiser, said “PREVENT HOMELESSNESS,” “FEED THE POWER,” and “KEEP THE LIGHTS ON.” They picketed hunger, homelessness, and electricity shut-offs. Preventing those issues are some of the ways the St. Joseph Conference supports the needy in the Rio Vista area.

Contributions received thus far are greatly appreciated and 100% will be distributed to help the poor in Rio Vista, Isleton, and the Delta Loop. Those still interested in making a difference by making a donation, please mail checks payable to SVDP-Friends Of The Poor, to SVDP, P.O. Box 412, Rio Vista, CA 94571.

Requests for assistance may be made on the hotline (707) 374-3426.

For more information please contact; Wendy Ross, President (509) 961-3198
daveandwendyross@gmail.com



Butte & Tehama

SVdP Case Managers & Volunteers providing short & long term emergency relief to households in Butte & Tehama Counties affected by fires.

SMALL BUT MIGHTY, SVDP BRINGS HELP TO PARK FIRE SURVIVORS

Since beginning case management services in mid-March, \$96,915 in direct funding has been accessed for Park Fire Survivors in Butte and Tehama counties.

This has been a severely underfunded disaster, and only one case manager is available to help survivors. However, with commitment and diligence they have helped 18 families recover from this disaster.

Some of the assistance received includes:

- Move-in assistance (first-month's rent and deposit.)
- Tools and supplies for rebuilding.
- Travel trailer to live in.
- Replacement of tools for work.
- Furniture and appliance replacement.



In September, \$12,000 in funding was accessed that will allow one survivor to build a tiny home on his property, where he raises rabbits and grows his own food. This survivor has a long history of living off the land and has even homesteaded in Alaska. He has been living in a tent on the property, after running out of money for a rental in town. The funding will not only give him a warm place to sleep at night, it will also allow him to take on a project he can take pride in, as this person has spoken at length about being able to build anything, anywhere.

In July, \$17,000 was accessed to purchase a trailer for a survivor to live in, replacing one that had mold and other issues that made it non-livable. The survivor said living in the conditions he had been living in had been affecting his mental health and his relationships. He had not been able to have his toddler daughter stay with him since the fire and was eager to have her back for more quality time.



LISTOS
SVdP disaster
preparedness program



LISTOS PREPARES THE COMMUNITY

The Listos team had 1,708 engagements between July & September. That means life-saving disaster preparedness information has been given to 1,708 people in Sacramento, Amador, Placer and El Dorado Counties.

The team began rolling out a community block party initiative that aims to help neighbors get to know each other so they can help each other when disasters strike. They hosted events at senior living communities in Placer County, El Dorado Hills, and Sacramento.

On September 19th, the Listos team hosted its first resource fair in the SVDP thrift store parking lot. There were 11 organizations in attendance, with information on resources for seniors and people with disabilities, along with low-cost car repair and weatherization programs, and more. Participants won prizes such as emergency preparedness backpacks with hand-crank radios, first aid kits and a power bank, and fire blankets to put out small fires.

Listos is a California Office of Emergency Services program that utilizes grants to community partners to reach vulnerable populations, such as seniors, people with disabilities and non-English speakers, with disaster preparedness information. SVdP has been a Listos Partner since June 2023.





St. Vincent de Paul Council of Sacramento uses the Thrift Store to employ our community & help fund our charitable programs. Whether you're shopping, volunteering or donating you're helping.

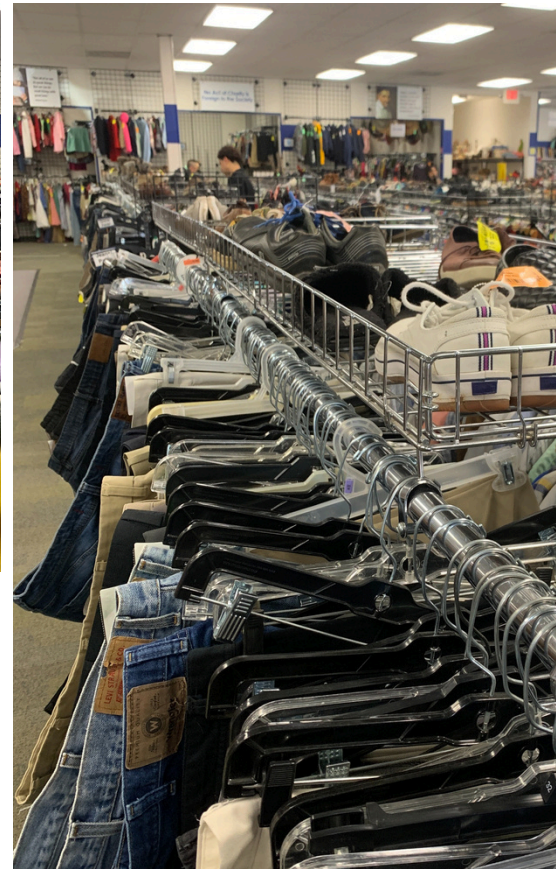
2275 Watt Ave., Sac. 916-972-1212 | 10am - 6pm

THRIFT STORE UPGRADES & IN THE NEWS

Have you been in? There are so many new changes, thanks to generous donors & a grant! Among the improvements: the front of the store is expanding with more aisles, offering additional space for men's and women's adult clothing. The linens area has been expanded and moved closer to the furniture section for a more cohesive and convenient shopping experience. We have also updated the way our pants are displayed! See some of the upgrades in the pictures below, but everything is better in person, so come on out!

To contribute to the Thrift Store Renovation Fundraiser visit:
<https://www.svdp-sacramento.org/renovate> or [click here](#).

The thrift store was also recently featured in a news article by the Sacramento Bee, highlighting its works, you can read the article by clicking [here](#).



VOICE FOR THE POOR

HOMELESS CONNECT EVENT

DOT O'CONNOR, VOICE FOR THE POOR

The Homeless Connect Event aimed to provide immediate support and connect individuals experiencing homelessness with essential resources and long-term assistance programs. The event took place on Saturday, August 9th, at Sacramento State, where 48 food gift cards were distributed: 15 for Taco Bell, 15 for McDonald's, and 18 for Subway. The requested information was collected from all but two of the individuals assisted.

Brian Powers shared details about the Transition to Permanent Housing Solutions Program (TPHS), which offers rental assistance and case management to help individuals secure stable housing. Additionally, all participants received information about the Diocesan Helpline, which provides referrals to social services, and the Thrift Store, which offers affordable goods.



VOICE FOR THE POOR CONTINUED...

UNITING FOR CHANGE

DOT O'CONNOR, VOICE FOR THE POOR



The Society of St. Vincent de Paul, alongside the California Catholic Conference and Catholic Charities of Sacramento, hosted nonprofit meetings in July and September to identify service gaps for people experiencing homelessness.



Representatives from the Department of Health Services, Sacramento Sheriff's Office, and United Way shared resources available to nonprofits supporting homeless communities.



MISSION: Exodus Project is committed to providing support, comprehensive services, and hope to individuals transitioning from incarceration back into the shared community.

REMEMBERING RICH KOPPES

Rich Koppes was an integral part of Exodus Project since its inception seven years ago. Rich was on the original planning committee that formed to create a re-entry program in the diocese. He went on to be on the Exodus Project Advisory Council for many years. Rich was also a mentor, working one-on-one with a number of men coming home from incarceration. Rich and Connie Koppes' generosity has been instrumental in Exodus Project's growth and success. However, more than all he did, was who he was: a kind, humble, genuine human being. Exodus Project joins the rest of St. Vincent de Paul in mourning Rich's passing. May his memory be a blessing.

We will be remembering long-time supporter and mentor Rich Koppes at our Fall Fundraiser.

JOIN US AT OUR FALL FUNDRAISER

BISHOP JAIME SOTO & RABBI SETH CASTLEMAN
INVITE YOU TO THE

EXODUS PROJECT FALL FUNDRAISER



MONDAY **27** OCTOBER
2025

6:00 PM - 8:30 PM

St. Anthony Parish
660 Florin Road, Sacramento, CA 95831

\$50 per person | \$15 for returned citizens
Sponsor a table of 8 for \$300



REGISTER HERE

All proceeds will help reduce recidivism rates & provide mentoring and other resources to people re-entering the community.

We will be honoring Superior Court Judge Larry Brown for his long-time dedication to our clients and the community. Judge Brown was instrumental in establishing Sacramento's Mental Health Court in 2013 and continues to serve on the bench in the collaborative courts.

We will also be honoring Rita Spillane for her many years of dedicated service, support, and generosity towards Exodus Project. Rita was instrumental in the initial planning of Exodus Project & currently serves as the co-chair of the Exodus Project Advisory Council.

SACRAMENTO DIOCESAN COUNCIL NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

Many of our Vincentians headed out to Kentucky to participate in St. Vincent de Paul's National Assembly.



OZANAM ORIENTATION

Training for Vincentians at Holy Spirit Parish hosted by South Sacramento-Elk Grove District President Jim Sobolewski.



DAY OF SPIRITUALITY

This retreat helped us enter into our spirituality as Catholics which is the source of what we do as Vincentians. To know Him so we can share Him. Thank you to all who helped make it happen especially Bishop Rey, Fr. Kiernan & Rita Spillane



SAVE THE DATE



Society of
ST. VINCENT DE PAUL
SACRAMENTO
DIOCESAN COUNCIL

*20th Annual
Benefit For The Poor*

Illuminating
HOPE

*Inspiring Compassion,
Community & Change*

Friday, April 17th, 2026 | 5:30pm

Dinner | Guest Speaker | Auction

Hyatt Regency Sacramento



**JOIN US NEXT YEAR AT
OUR NEW LOCATION!**