

Communications & Fund Raising Notes from Council Small Group

Sessions 7-25-15

In attendance group #1:

- Mary Ann Curran, Blessed Sacrament (Facilitator)
- Bill Haines, St. Louise
- Louise, Assumption
- Phyllis, St. Joseph's Issaquah
- Ron Kusu, Holy Family Auburn
- Andre de Klaver, St. James
- Joan Kirkland, Blessed Sacrament
- Dave Sherwood

How do you currently raise funds?

- Publish detailed reports monthly in the bulletin—include how much spent, what kind of assistance provided, sometimes stories of those helped. We're upfront about the challenges.
- We do similar reporting in bulletin monthly—pastor talks about SVdP often—we collect money as parishioners are leaving church. We also publish personal stories.
- Important to tell stories—even if we feel the visits are routine, they are not routine to parishioners and they seem to be effective.
- We're part of the 'Outreach Ministry,' 40% of the funds collected for this combination of ministries is our share. We also get grant money from the city, local casino. People are very generous, but it ebbs and flows. Personal appeals work best
- Biggest resource time is Christmas. We also get weekly food donations. We use envelopes. 45% of the money we receive is done electronically.
- We get funds from grants from Muckleshoot Casino tribe in Auburn and our thrift store sales, which have been down considerably this year.

- We operate in the red every month, but a large bequest that we received helps fill the gaps—although we struggle getting money from this because of differing philosophies about how these funds should be used.
- The Stuff the Truck events really help raise visibility.
- We don't get up in the pulpit often enough.
- We twin with St. Vincent de Paul.
- About 1/3 of donations come from personal contributions—we don't get regular times in the parish where we can collect donations except for 1 time per month we take collections as people are leaving church.
- Recommend getting our trucks to come regularly to accept donations. There is nowhere to donate around here, so Goodwill sets up a truck nearby and gets all the donations.
- Don't believe in Charlie Albert Challenge—unrealistic and demotivating. Louise felt the same way. Mary Ann suggested this challenge was more about the idea of no boundaries between parishes—that we are all in this together and should be helping one another. Andre responded well to her interpretation.
- Our conference gets the 5th Sunday contributions, so this is about 3-4 times per year. We can raise 4-5K during these weekends. Donation truck in the parking lot really helps to raise our visibility.
- **Louise:** Pastor is favorable to us and our new president is well-spoken, so this has helped us recruit many new members. It is still a struggle to get younger folks because of work/family commitments, but some are doing this.
- **Andre:** Our annual volunteer fair often draws in new members. Our regular monthly reporting is also helpful at recruiting new members—it often draws people in once they hear what we are doing. Stephanie is also very helpful with her pulpit pitches—she is really good at this.
- **Bill Haines:** St. Louise recruitment is going well—we also have volunteer fairs and often draw new members from other existing ministries in the church.

Recommendations on Conference Fund Raising Ideas

Tell parish what we expect and need; we do terrible job of making parish aware of what we do.

- You need to get in the parish's face. It does not happen automatically
- Regular communication:
 - o What they've done, money spent, people helped
 - o Steal models from other conferences like monthly inserts Sunday prior to SVdP collection including a specific client story or story of assistance.
 - o Share personal story!!! They are powerful.
 - o Announcements at Mass
- Clergy and staff support essential
- Need to deal with electronic debits for parish because those families do not use envelopes (SVDP uses envelopes)
- Some conferences are greedy and afraid to share
- Push Vincentians to remember SVDP in their wills

Recommendations on Conference Membership

- St. John's: lacking in new members. Need to develop better recruiting.
- St. Ben's: make sure you engage volunteers immediately. Meetings are boring for newbies. Take them on a home visit for the actual experience.
- Call people to go on a home visit
- St. Mary's: our members come to the meeting regularly, but not always available for home visits.
- CK has 24 active members on a rotation every 6 weeks.
 - o Pulpit talk was significant in recruiting new members
- Going out every 6 weeks might be too much of a gap. Do Vincentians stay engaged?
- St. Paul's: Vincentians willing to go on home visits but not meetings.
 - o Dorothy is taking random parishioners on calls to get them acquainted with SVdP.
 - o Have changed the meeting time to accommodate more people.
 - o Previous meeting time was unreasonable for working people, more accessible now.

Fund Raising Recommendations

St. Benedicts: Pass quarterly envelope, has large bequest, there's never a pitch from the pulpit.

Holy Spirit: Pass envelope once a month, and has a basket where parishioners can drop donations.

St. Vincent de Paul: Monthly collection w/envelope \$2.5K to \$4k collection range. No pulpit pitch; no basket allowed; has gotten \$3K from night of Columbus, they're supposed to get rid of all their cash by fiscal year end, you need to apply

Immaculate: Has a box with SVdP logo in a corner

St Louise: Has benefited from bequests, Church has a Svc. Concession(?)Comm. Group and they apportion part of their fundraising to SVdP,

Has a website people can make donations through this, pass regular envelopes at some masses, has a designated Christmas collection; Vincentians stand around with baskets etc.

St Joseph: Once a month collection, mentioned in pulpit, Vincentians stand around with collection baskets (feels there's underline competition perception by administrators) but has opportunity to tell of Vincentian work at the pulpit

Membership Recruitment Recommendations

St Louise: Church has a sign-up roster of different ministries, (Youth, Nurses, etc.) SVdP is one of them & people can choose. The problem is retention.

Vincentians routinely visit with the different ministries and partner up on work.

Holy Spirit: RCIA membership (?)

St. Benedict: Church has a "Ministry Fair" once a year; it is broadcasted at the pulpit, lots of prospects that day, then no show for meetings! It requires a lot of interaction and cultivation, have 20 people volunteering and use their talents in different areas, some do home visits some don't.

St Joseph: Recruiting happens through church

St. Vincent de Paul: Should target retirees.

Communications Recommendations

"...No input, run out of time!!!"

Overall Impressions

1. There was a strong spirit of communication and interest in twinning and sharing resources in this group.
2. There was agreement that the SVdP work is substantial and we can serve without borders, even encouraging parishioners who live in one area and go to church in another area to remember to help out conferences in the area where they live.

Fund Raising Recommendations

1. Ask for Funds in Pulpit Pitches---use the pitches to showcase stories and results of SVdP work.
2. Reach out to Interfaith/Ecumenical Groups in your neighborhoods and explain work, cases and stories and ask for funds.
3. Secure pastor and parish staff support and fund raising will be easier.

Membership Recruitment Recommendations

1. Create different kinds of jobs for younger potential conference members.
2. Always be present at Ministry Fairs.
3. Make personal invitations to specific people you want in your conference.
4. Sponsor a Vincentian Potluck Dinner and invite people to come and learn about SVdP.
5. Recruit people just completing RCIA.

Communications Ideas

1. Email SVdP stories to Pastor and staff so they can see the emotion associated with the work.
2. Visit all parish ministries and groups and explain and review SVdP and its work.
3. Bulletin inserts thanking parishioners for support.
4. Quarterly updates on SVdP work in bulletins.

Recommendations on Conference Fundraising Ideas

1. Analysis of how current fundraising ideas are working
2. Need help from pastor to do pulpit pitch
3. Helping hands packets that Vincentians sell after mass (include bus ticket, and gift cards) John McDermott said their conference sold 800 in last 2 months
4. Ask for businesses to donate who advertise in back of church bulletins
5. Grants
6. Partner with other agencies
7. Food Drive
8. Bring gifts of food to altar
9. Matching Funds
10. Newsletter
11. Do Christmas baskets; Giving Trees – (often result in cash donations)

(Note: Many of these ideas will also help with recruitment)

Recommendations on Conference Membership Recruitment Ideas

1. Offer membership to people who want to be Vincentians that don't involve home visits.
2. Can do clerical, fundraising, IT jobs. If a person expresses an interest, make sure that they are involved.
3. Get acquainted with Vincentians – coffee and dessert, wine and cheese. Tom or Stephanie
4. Can come to these events to help with recruitment.

Communications Ideas

1. Good Secretary
2. Electronic Documentation
3. Calendar of Communication Activities
4. Use Electronic SVDP Documentation System

Fundraising Recommendations

1. Pulpit announcement at the end of mass
2. Basket collection
3. Donations from Vincentians
4. Twinning with wealthier conferences
5. Adequate Funding Grant
6. Set amount from the parish monthly
7. Thanksgiving collection
8. Maundy Thursday collection
9. Find outside fundraising opportunities – for example, See's Candy fundraiser
10. Special donations from parishioners
11. Outside grants, small city grants

Membership Recruitment Recommendations

1. Set up display in back of church
2. Too many Vincentians – might be able to twin by sharing volunteers where needed
3. Ministry fair
4. One-on-one recruitment
5. Use name tag, "Ask Me" button
6. Pulpit pitch
7. Ask Vincentians to each recruit one new member and act as a mentor

Communications Recommendations

1. Weekly column in bulletin – "Your SVdP Society in Action"
2. Spoken word is more effective
3. Tell a story