

Prayer for Systemic Change





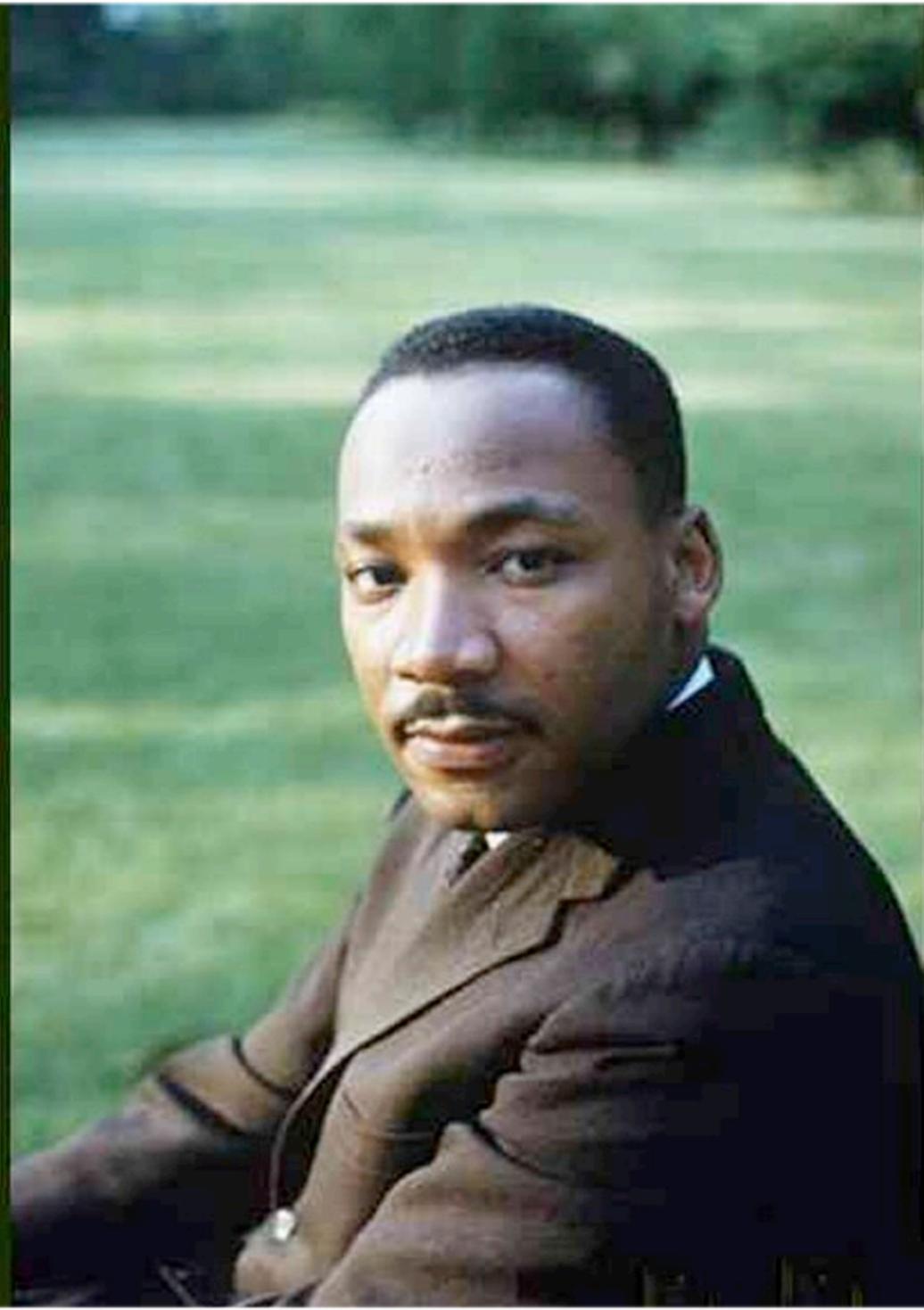


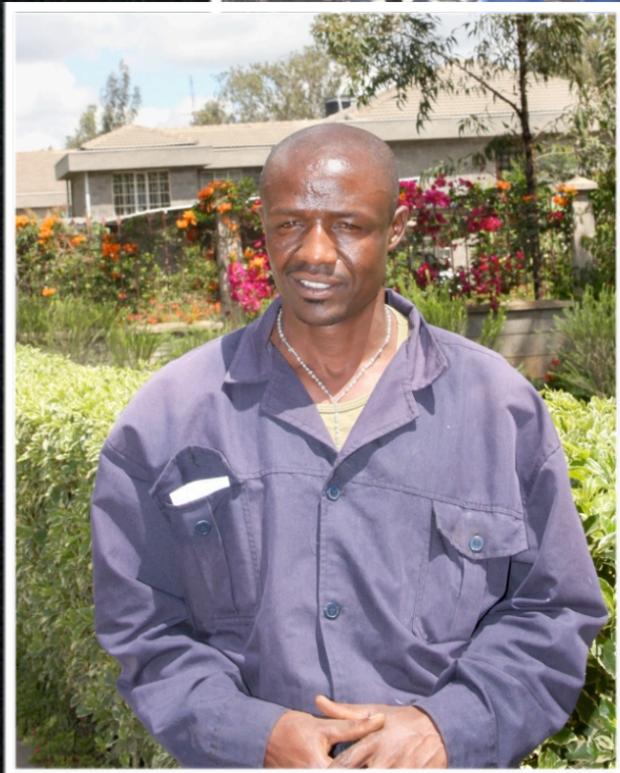






" Injustice
anywhere
is a
threat
to justice
everywhere "





Brothers and Sisters to All



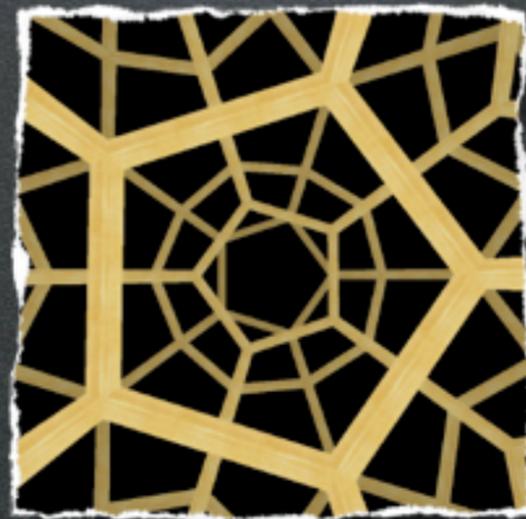


Human Rights



What Is a System?

“A system is an entity that maintains its existence and functions as a whole through the interaction of its parts.”



Gertrude Foley, SC

“In a spider’s web what happens on one part of the web affects every other part.

The same is true of a living system, whether it be an ant colony, a forest, or a city. Like a spider’s web, a living system is so intricately woven that no part exists in isolation. Like a web, a living system is both purposeful and beautiful.”

Linda Booth Sweeney, Ed.D.

**To understand systemic change is
to understand that everything is
connected to everything else.**



They do not understand systemic change!



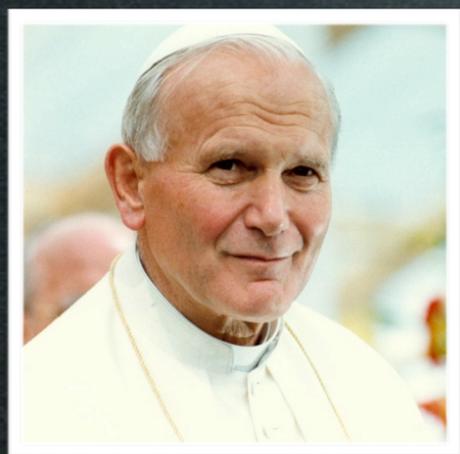
World Realities

- Disparity between rich and poor
- Environmental degradation
- Catastrophic natural disasters
- Disregard for human life
- Ethnic, racial, and religious intolerance
- Ethnic genocide
- Widespread unemployment

- Lack of affordable housing
- Lack of access to educational opportunities
- Lack of available healthcare
- Sweatshops
- Global systems of economic injustice
- Military conflicts

Into this world we are called...





“Social thinking and social practice inspired by the Gospel must always be marked by a special sensitivity towards those who are most in distress, those who are extremely poor, those suffering from all the physical, mental and moral ills that afflict humanity, including hunger, neglect, unemployment and despair...”

You will always want to seek out the structural reasons which foster or cause the different forms of poverty in the world... so that you can apply the proper remedy.

John Paul II

Charity and Justice



Charity...Social Service

- Scripture: Good Samaritan Story
- Private, individual acts
- Responds to immediate needs
- Provides direct service
- Requires repeated actions
- Directed at the effects of injustice: symptoms

e.g. homeless shelters, food pantries, clothing drives

Justice...Social Change

- Scripture: Exodus Story
- Public, collective actions
- Responds to long-term need
- Promotes social change in institutions
- Resolves structural injustice
- Directed at the root causes of social injustice

e.g. legislative advocacy, community organizing

Charity

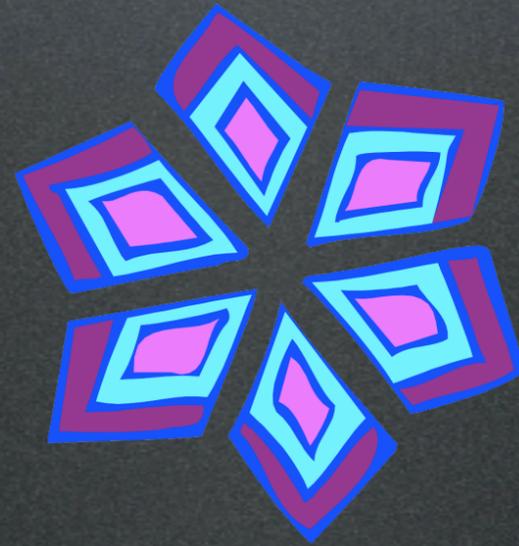
- Giving a hungry person some bread
- Helping specific victims of war
- Well-to-do-people appeasing the poor by giving money

Justice

- Trying to change the system so that nobody has excess bread while some have none
- Trying to change the things that lead to war
- Asking why one can be rich when so many are poor.

Ronald Rolheiser, OHM

Theologians, scientists,
organizational theorists recognize
the impossibility of separateness in
a world that is intrinsically
connected.



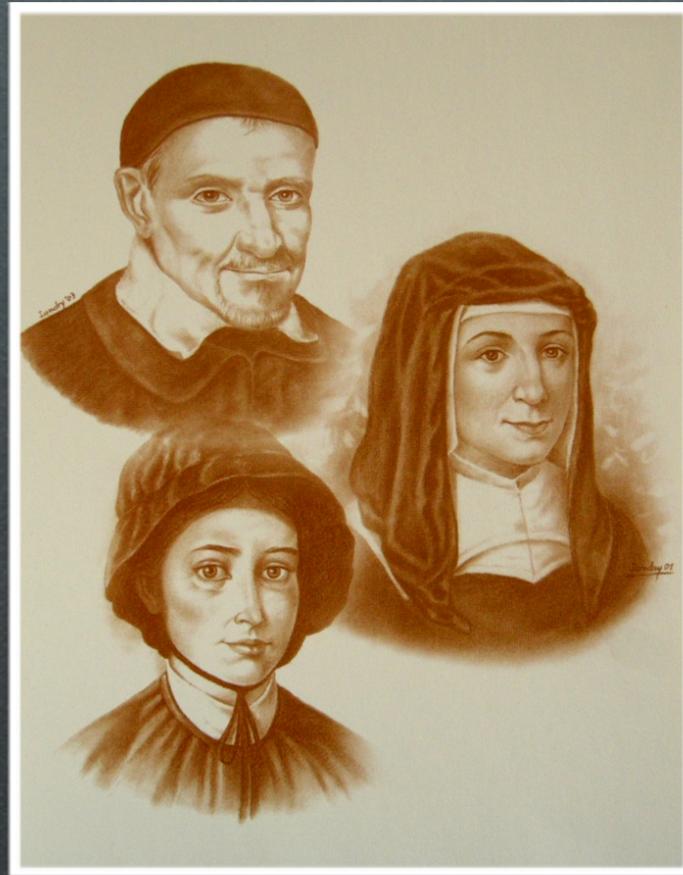
“All the important problems we face are systemic problems: the survival of the planet’s ecology, world peace, the elimination of hunger and disease, the education of youth, and social justice... Over the past several decades the systemic nature of these complex problems has gradually entered the public’s consciousness. Complex problems are systemic; systemic problems are everywhere, systemic problems are messy problems.”

Larry Hutchins

Moving from Hand-out to Hand-up



Systemic Change Is Possible



Systemic change as we know it is a contemporary concept. It was unknown in St. Vincent's time. However, Vincent himself expressed many related ideas. He urged the members of the Family to love the poor.

- ❖ spiritually and corporally
- ❖ affectively and effectively
- ❖ by word and work



He encouraged his followers to examine various elements in people's lives to see what their most important needs were: nourishment, health care, education, work, spiritual care, etc. Today we are conscious that people living in poverty live within a social system where some or many of these elements are lacking, a system that, if changed, can help a person emerge from poverty.

What Would Vincent Do



Vincent offers these guidelines:

- Those living in poverty have priority
- We must do the will of God
- We need to globalize charity in order to humanize globalization



The heritage of...

Vincent,

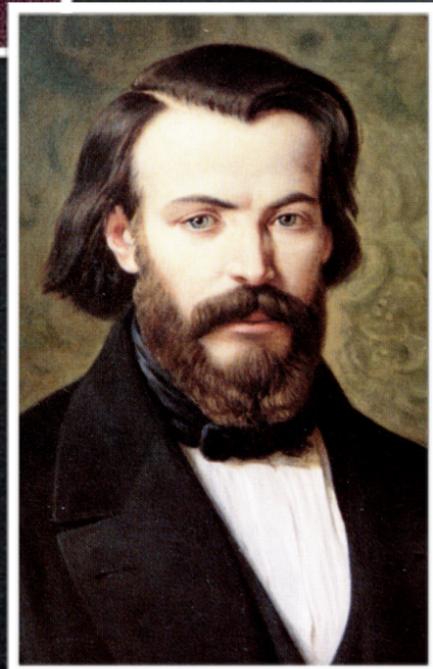
Louise,

Elizabeth,

Rosalie, and

Frederic

in the 21st century...

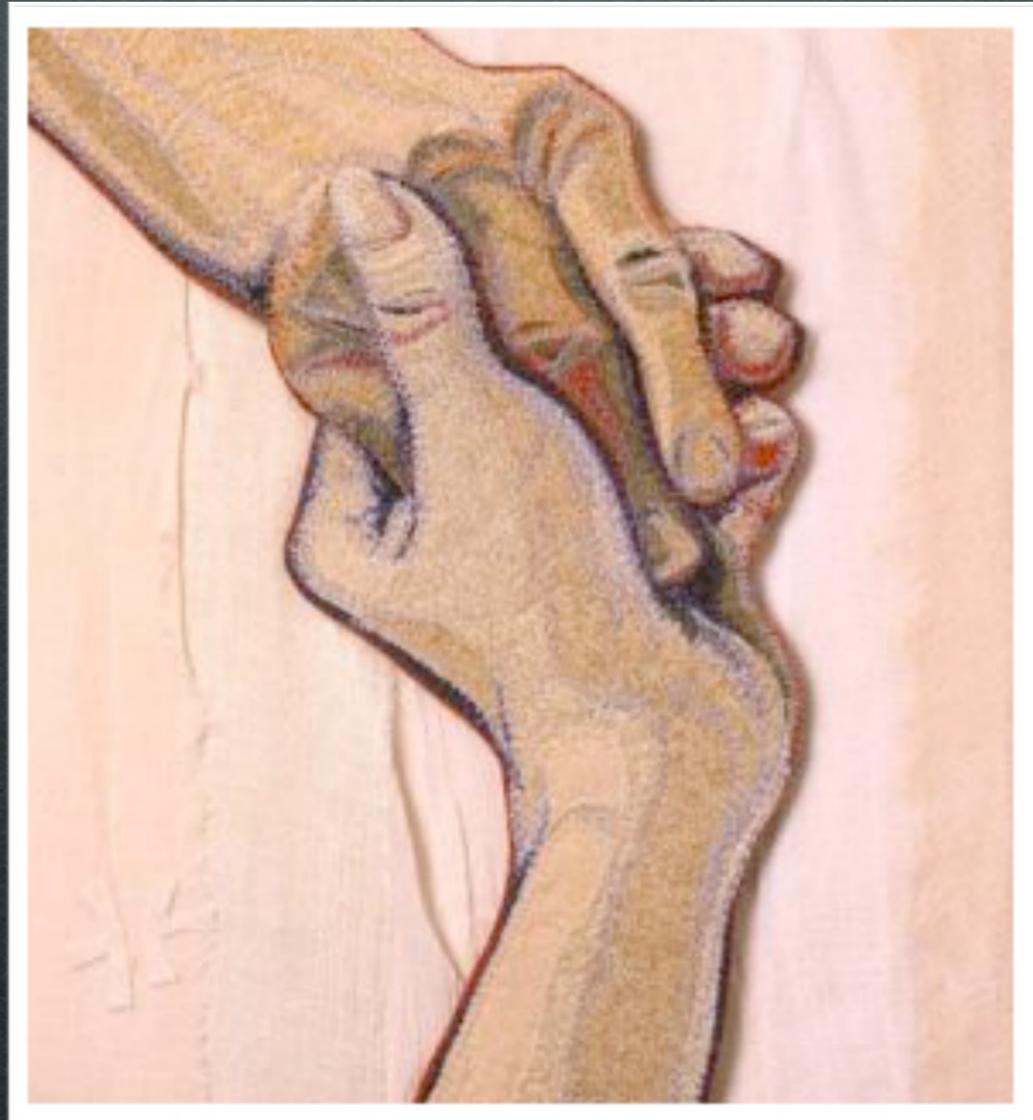




Every person is sacred because s/he is created in the image and likeness of God.



Systemic change responds promptly to human needs while respecting the individual's right to determine his/her own



Systemic Change Initiatives...



1. Involve those living in poverty themselves, including the young and women – at all stages: the identification of needs, planning, implementation, evaluation and revision.



2. Have a holistic vision – addressing a series of basic human needs: individual and social, spiritual and physical, especially needs like jobs, health care, housing, education, and spiritual growth.



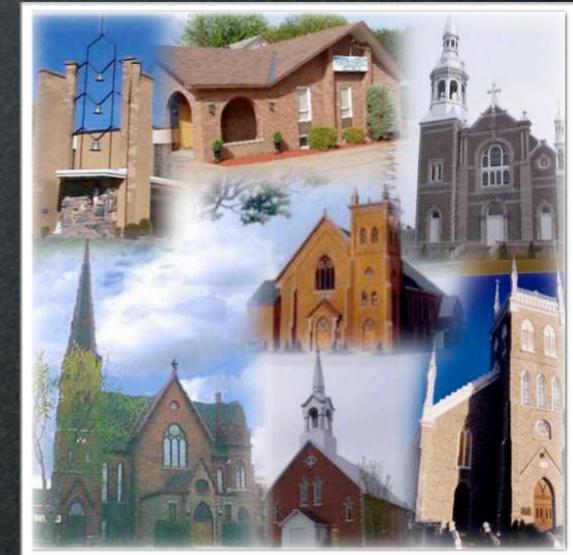
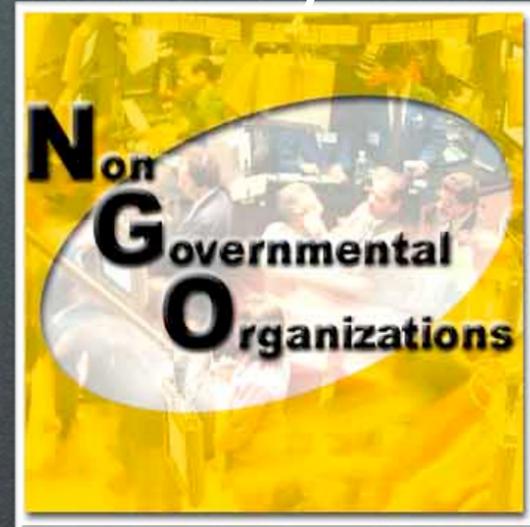
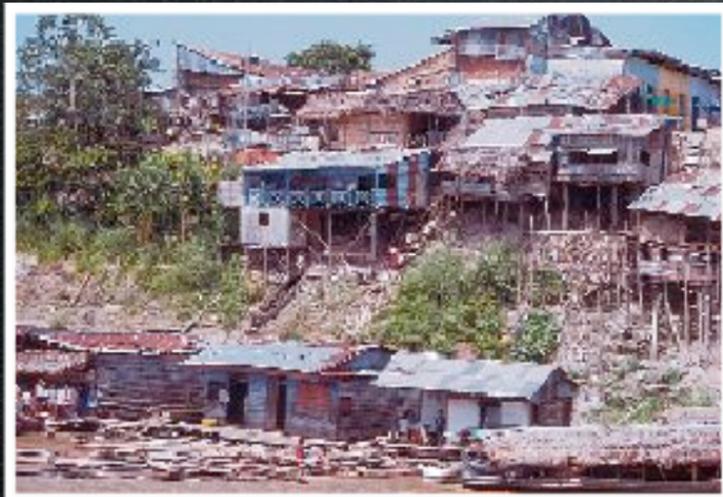
3. Place particular emphasis on self-help and self-sustaining programs that have a special view toward addressing the root causes of poverty. Systemic change projects must have the human and economic resources necessary to guarantee that they will last.



4. Foster transparency – inviting participation in preparing budgets and in commenting on financial reports, while promoting good money management and maintaining careful controls over the use of assets.



5. Construct a shared vision with diverse stakeholders: poor communities, interested individuals, donors, churches, governments, NGOs, the private sector, unions, the media.



The goal of systemic change in the Vincentian Family is to create a more just world order.

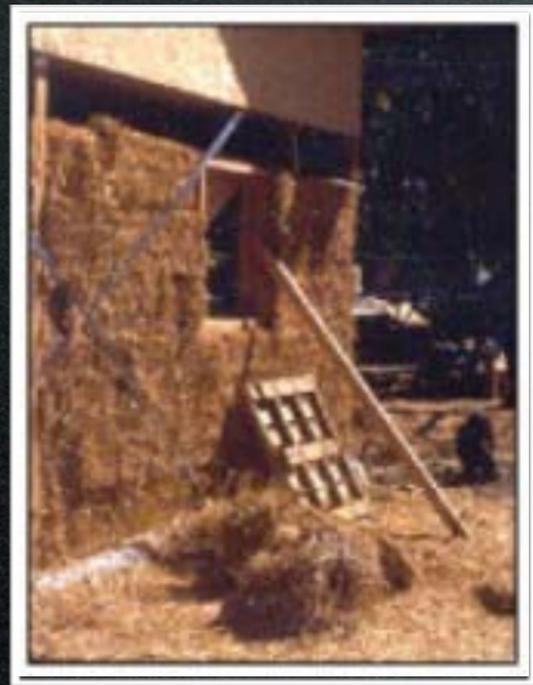




“Systemic change’ is a concept that is at once both universal and uniquely Vincentian. It is related to advocacy and the Vincentian approach to working with persons living in poverty, which is never a quick fix, but rather is creative, practical and sustainable...”

AIC Training Booklet n. 12

Tierra Madre Sustainable Community: “An option for the economically poor and for the earth”



Best Practices in Poverty Eradication

The Tierra Madre Community

Sunland Park, New Mexico

- Affordable housing
- Leadership development
- Preservation of land for long-term housing
- Intercultural sharing
- Furthering appropriate technology and affordability in low-income areas
- Model of what is possible in other areas











Systemic change aims at radical transformation in the lives of the excluded.



The Salt and Light Program

Arkansas

“The Salt and Light Ministry is rooted in the need for systemic change in the Catholic Church throughout Arkansas...Using a grass-roots approach, parish based ministry programs organized at the local parish level enable parishioners to become active in addressing the needs of their communities and provide the catalyst for statewide activity...”

Disaster after disaster















Collaboration is a hallmark of systemic change and is evidenced in Arkansas as the Arkansas Rice Depot, Arkansas Foodbank Network, Americorps, Catholic Charities, A Baptist Fellowship, the Congregation of the Mission, the Daughters of Charity, the Ladies of Charity, the St. Vincent de Paul Society















The Salt and Light systemic change approach provides formation in theological reflection, social analysis, systems planning, and program design in a pastoral cycle context to parishes so that they can develop and sustain ministries in their local parish communities.











Systemic Change in works among those living in poverty aims beyond providing food, clothing and shelter to alleviate immediate needs and enables people themselves to engage in the identification of the root causes of their poverty and to create strategies to change those structures which keep them in poverty. This also requires changing attitudes that have caused the problem.

(working definition for North America)

Advocacy (LCUSA)

- Giving the person the opportunity to tell her story to us, helping us understand her situation
- Structuring services so that they protect human dignity
- Educating ourselves and others about the challenges facing the least, the lost and the left out in society
- Gathering data that can be used by policy makers
- Using our votes and our voices in the public square to help people living in poverty to achieve basic social, economic and political rights
- Convening policy makers, legislators, and people living in poverty to enable and empower poor people to participate and to build better communities

Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility (ICCR)



- 275 faith-based institutional investors, associates and affiliates that have a trillion dollars under investment
- View corporate responsibility as a way of addressing justice issues at a systemic level
- Press companies to be socially and environmentally responsible

The Triple Bottom Line

- Proper return on investment
- Social accountability of corporations
- Environmentally sound practices

ICCR Headlines

- How Much Water Do You Really Use? ICCR Supports New Water Conservation Tool
- **ICCR** Investors Support Senate Efforts to Eliminate Child and Forced Labor in Agriculture
- Coca-Cola Releases HIV/AIDS Report in Response to **ICCR** Resolution
- **ICCR** Investors Open Campaign to Press Drug Companies to Disclose Political Spending
- **ICCR** Investors File Record Number of Global Warming Resolutions with U.S. Companies
- **ICCR** Receives International Award for Focus on “Triple Bottom Line”

ICCR in the News

- Investors File a Record 95 Climate Change Resolutions: A 40% Increase Over 2009 Proxy Season – Ecoaid – March 4, 2010
- Coalition Wants Exec Salary Info from Health Companies –The Business Review – December 1, 2009
- Faith Based Investors Target Members of US Chamber of Commerce –Huffington Post – November 10, 2009
- Investor Group to Chamber: Don't Kill Health Care Reform Market Watch – November 10, 2010
- ICCR Takes Lead in Shareholder Advocacy Filings – Investment Management Institute – November 1, 2009

The Maritime Project

To do advocacy for women and children, especially in the areas of housing and social assistance, and to foster collaboration and growth in unity among the four congregations.



- Involves four member congregations of the SC Federation in Canada
- A collaborative effort in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick
- Designed to influence the Provincial Poverty Reduction Plans of these two provinces
- Contacted Premier of each province, attended information meetings and were vocal about the needs of those living in poverty
- Focused and consistent advocacy resulted in heating subsidies being widely publicized and

Networking

- Nova Scotia and New Brunswick: Make Poverty History
 - Session at Tatamagouche
 - Public rallies: St. John and Moncton
- Community Action on Homelessness
- Norwood Housing Association
- Supportive Housing for Young Mothers

New Brunswick Groups

- Justice and Solidarity Committee of the Moncton dioceses
- Common Front for Social Justice
- Saint John Non Profit Housing Inc.
- Vibrant Communities and Business Community Anti-Poverty Initiative

Systemic Change begins with:

- Defining a need
- Building awareness
- Enlisting and empowering an organized, multi-faceted response

Ladies of Charity – USA



“In the Vincentian Tradition, relationship with people in poverty is our first and primary goal. We need to see with their eyes. We must view the world from the vantage point of the people we seek to help. We must enter the struggles, feel their pain, and understand the barricades that hinder their full participation in the community...

“We must work with poor persons, allowing them to articulate their needs, concerns and potential solutions. We must work with them, as they are the primary stakeholders in order to advance toward a more just society.”

“Thrift Store” transitioned from serving “walk-ins” to a collaborative endeavor with over 20 agencies who provide case management. The clients are now referred as part of a personal development plan.

- In Albany, NY, several members of the Ladies of Charity serve on a lay advisory board which supports Assisi in Albany, the Franciscan mission in Center City, Albany. As their first project, they have opened a job placement office to serve unemployed members of the community. They hope to expand the programs in collaboration with Catholic Charities in the areas of child care partnerships and health issues.
- In St. Louis MO, two parish associations support “Let’s Start,” an organization dedicated to assisting women in transition from prison life to society and to supporting their families. It is coordinated by women who have been through the criminal justice system with direction from St. Jackie Tobin, SSND. They offer a variety of services and are committed to community education and advocacy. In addition to the volunteer/event support and financial support offered by the Associations, several Ladies have served on the Board of Directors.



Each Association is called to celebrate the 350th anniversary giving honor to St. Vincent de Paul and St. Louise de Marillac by deepening the spirituality of our Vincentian charism and by

engaging individually and collectively in concrete actions that will advance justice for women locally and/or globally. For example:

- Lead an exploration of the issues of poor women in your community with other members of the Vincentian family.
- Encourage “Alternative Christmas Giving.” Instead of gifts for family and friends, donate appropriate amounts to a selected “Women’s Project.”
- Host a special fundraising event to support the AIC Madagascar Twinning Project of LCUSA.
- Become involved in the Vincentian Family’s pilot project in microfinance combined with educational programs and social services based in Haiti. More information in early 2010.
- Become a part of the Vincentian Family’s US legislative advocacy network. Go to <http://aic.ladiesofcharity.us/> and click on “Advocacy” to learn more.

To Serve Rather Than Be Served

LCUSA
National Service Center
13663 Rider Trail North
Earth City, MO 63045-1512
(314) 344-1184
Email: LCSTLOUIS@aol.com
<http://aic.ladiesofcharity.us>

Charity Justice & Women
FROM POVERTY TO EMPOWERMENT
FROM EMPOWERMENT TO SYSTEMIC CHANGE

LADIES OF CHARITY USA
Celebrate 350 Years

Charity - Mission
**VINCENT DE PAUL
LOUISE DE MARILLAC**
350th anniversary

St. Vincent and St. Louise art. by Bruno Meunier O'Vincentian Center for Church and Society, used with permission. More and Child photos from "Season of Hope" Center for Hope, St. Louis, MO. Organization and web graphics: Alice McGee photos by John Carlskiel, photographer.

Let's Start – LCUSA

St. Louis

- An organization dedicated to assisting women in transition from prison life to society and supporting their families
- Offers a variety of services dependent on the needs of participants
- Committed to community education and advocacy

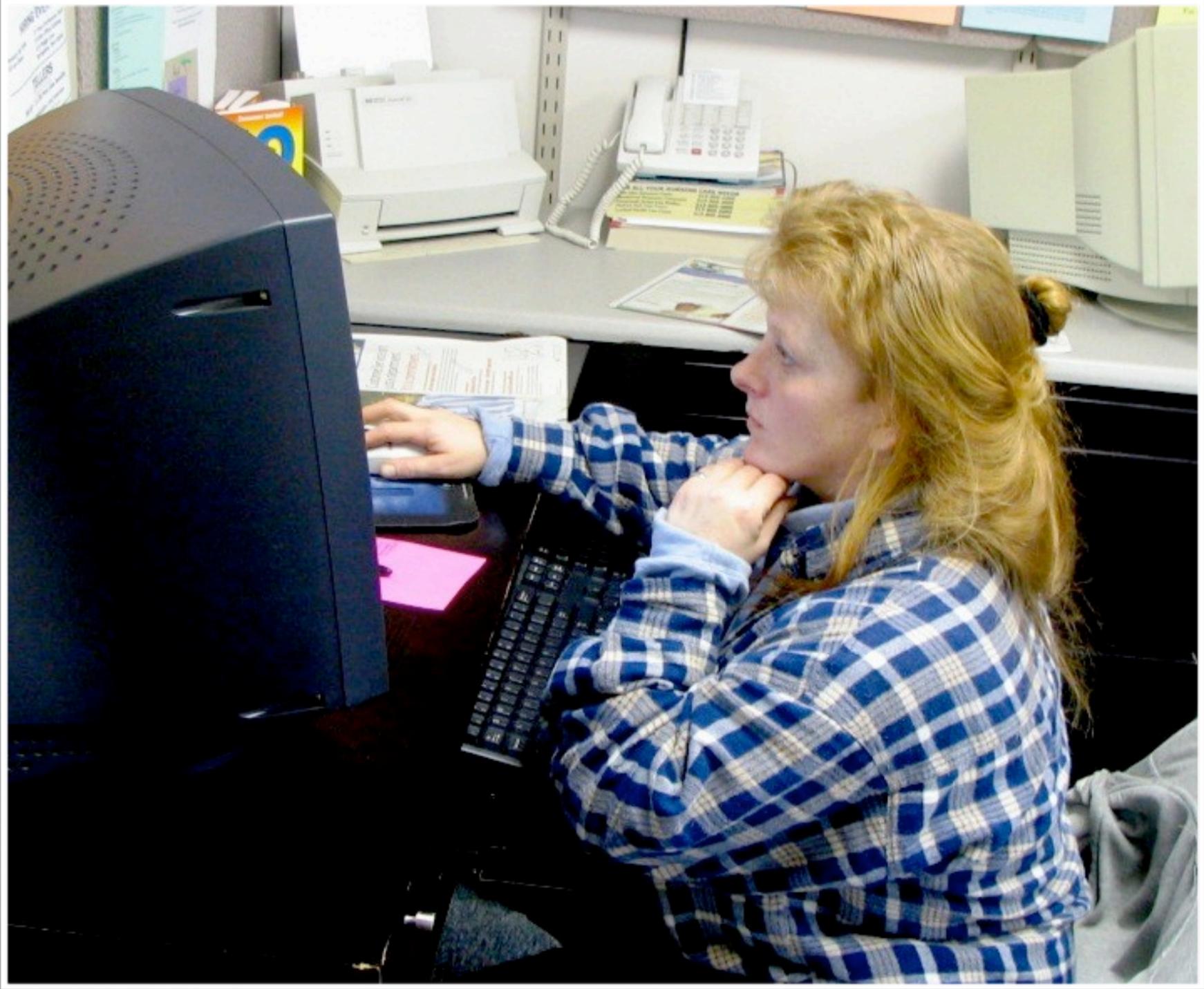
Women's Connection

Cincinnati, Ohio

- A neighborhood center committed to strengthening families
- Focuses on providing support for change by educating, empowering, and enriching women, children and families
- Connects women and families to community resources, provides educational and personal growth programs specific to the needs of the community

Programs / Events

- Teen Opportunity Fairs/Adult Employment Fairs
- Dress for Success consultations
- Resume writing
- Employment connections
- Information and referral services
- Sewing/quilting classes
- AA support group
- Domestic Violence survivors group
- Hispanic outreach/ESOL classes
- Parenting skills
- Teen Moms support group
- Collaboration with over 50 agencies















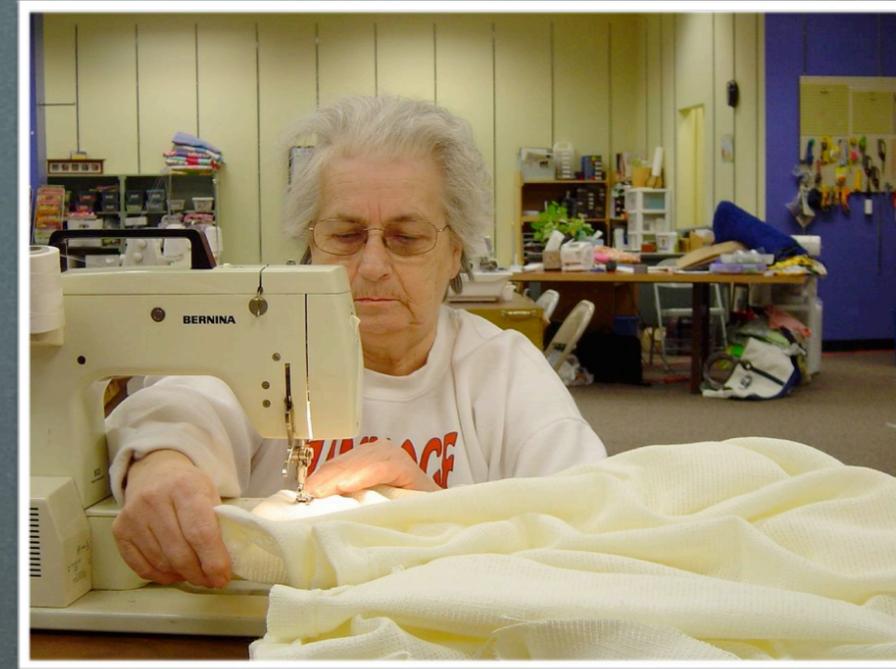
Cincinnati
COOKS!
"Feeding the soul of the City"

**Free 10-week
Food Service
Job Training Program**

**A Project of
The FreeStore/FoodBank's Rosenthal
Community Kitchen Program**



**Cincinnati
COOKS!**
A 10-week job training program
for the FoodBank's residents.
The program teaches food safety and
management skills, basic skills, kitchen
math, and customer service and communication
skills. The program
is open to all residents of
the FoodBank's service area.
For more information, contact
Cincinnati COOKS!
at 513-251-1111 or
www.cincinnati-cooks.org





Maura Clarke-Ita Ford Center

Brooklyn, New York

The mission of the Maura Clarke-Ita Ford Center is to equip women with the skills they need to live and work in their new homeland, through education, economic development, and community change in the Bushwick section of Brooklyn.

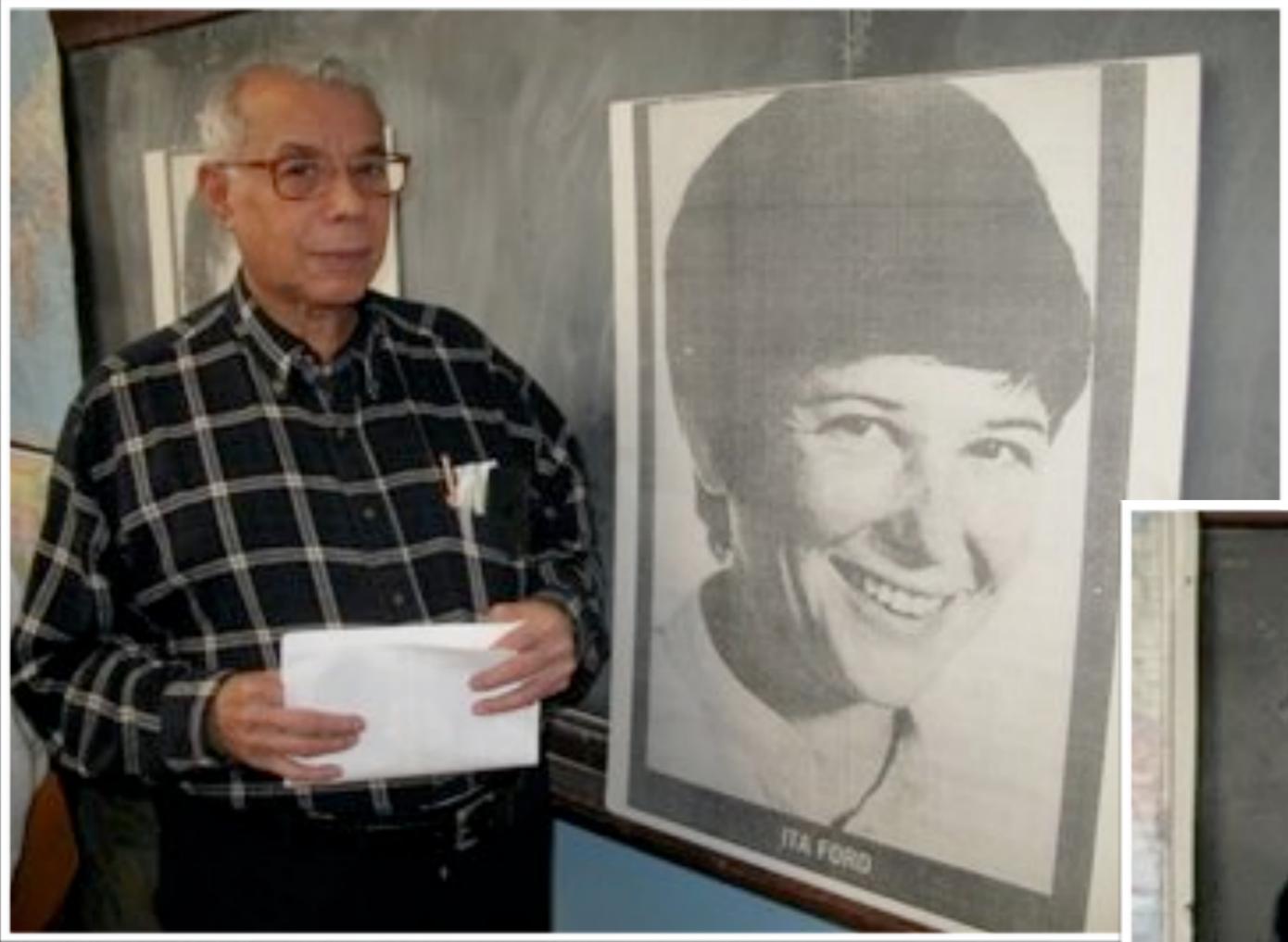


Programs

- Sewing Co-op
- Welfare to work training
- Leadership skills development
- Business skills development
- GED preparation
- ESL
- Computer and citizenship courses
- Advocacy skills/community organizing
- Collaboration with other service organizations
- Social enterprise in crafting which supports work training and business incubation

“Never do for others what they can do for themselves.”







Josephine's Place

Elizabeth, New Jersey

- A storefront drop-in space to empower women
- A place for women to come and meet other women
- A place to relax, pray, learn new skills, talk about what concerns them or discuss their problems
- Provides a space that is reflective of the needs of women as they themselves have expressed them

Programs

“Programs and activities are designed by the desires and needs of the women of Josephine’s Place.”

- Resource center for networking to agencies
- Support groups for mothers of autistic children
- Parenting skills
- Health education
- Support groups for victims of domestic violence
- English classes/Citizenship classes
- Sewing/Knitting/Quilting
- Tai Chi Chiah and Yoga
- Basic computer skills
- Prayer





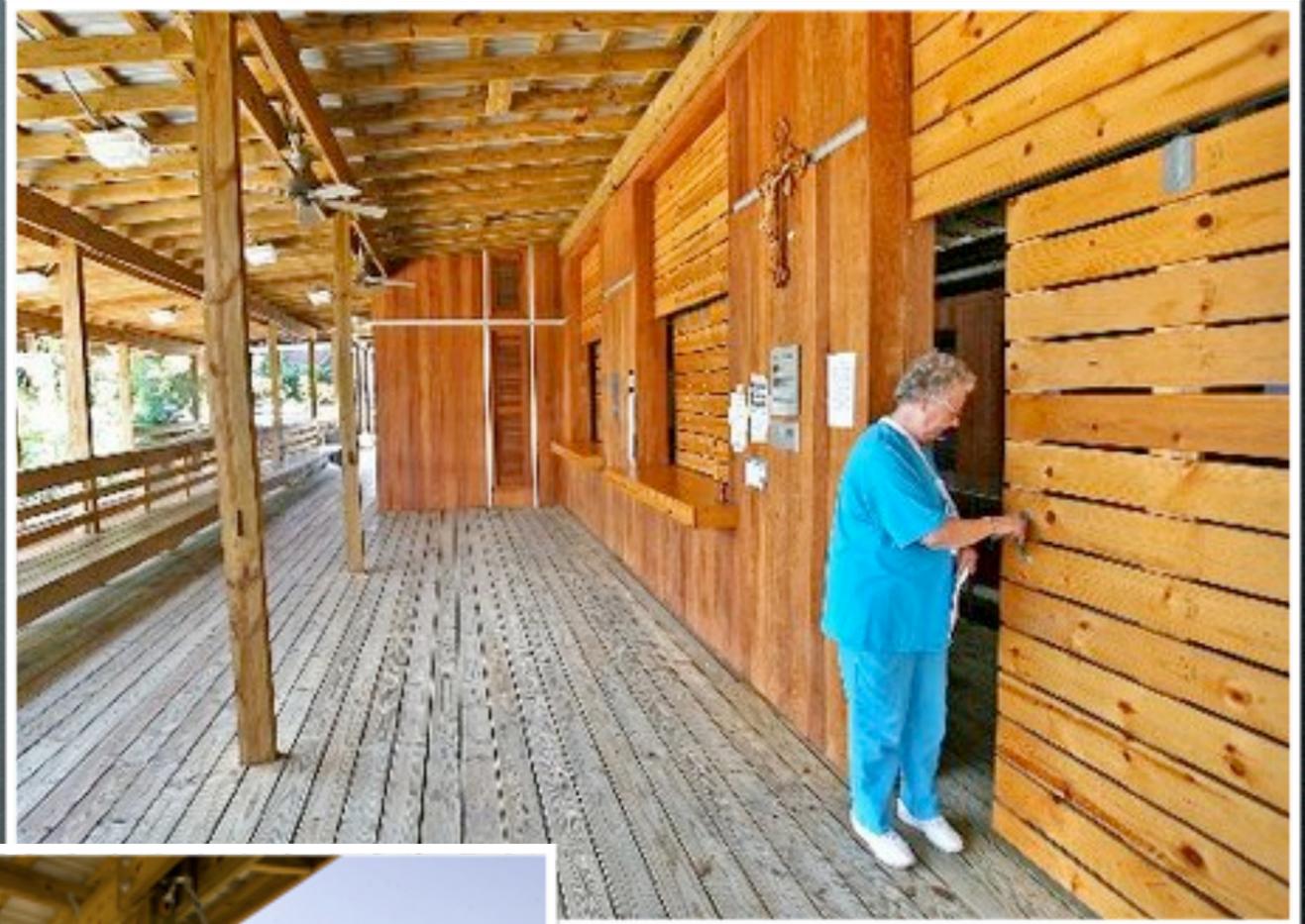


The Rebuild Center

New Orleans, Louisiana

The purpose of the Rebuild Center is to provide a setting, resources and opportunities for collaboration among Catholic and other faith-based organizations in the City of New Orleans. The center will work with needy and displaced residents to rebuild their lives and repopulate the neighborhood.

“We will be a **CENTER OF HOPE** for this community.”



Family Advancement Ministries

Macon, Georgia

Family Advancement Ministries (FAM) Is a Catholic, diocesan, social service organization that, in partnership with the community at-large, nurtures a reverence for life by responding to the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of families with the goal of moving families toward independence and self-sufficiency.

Moving from direct service to systemic change...

Programs

- Parenting skills
- Child safety
- Doctor Dad
- Nurturing father
- Personal finance/budgeting
- Nutrition
- Energy reduction
- CPR
- Advocacy





The Society of St. Vincent de Paul

“I was hungry and you gave me food”



The Society gives immediate help but also seeks mid-term and long-term

- Concerned not only with alleviating need but also with identifying the unjust structures that cause it
- Committed to identifying the root causes of poverty and to contributing to their elimination
- In all its charitable actions there should be a search for justice

St. Vincent de Paul Society

Belleville, Illinois

Voice of the Poor Committee is committed to being a vocal advocate for the poor. In recent months the committee has been active in many areas including:

- launching two intense legislative letter writing campaigns to address the issue of increasing utility costs
- advocating against Pay Day and Title Loans –a flier was developed and is being distributed for the purpose of education
- attempting to help those caught in the mortgage crisis with information and referrals for intervention

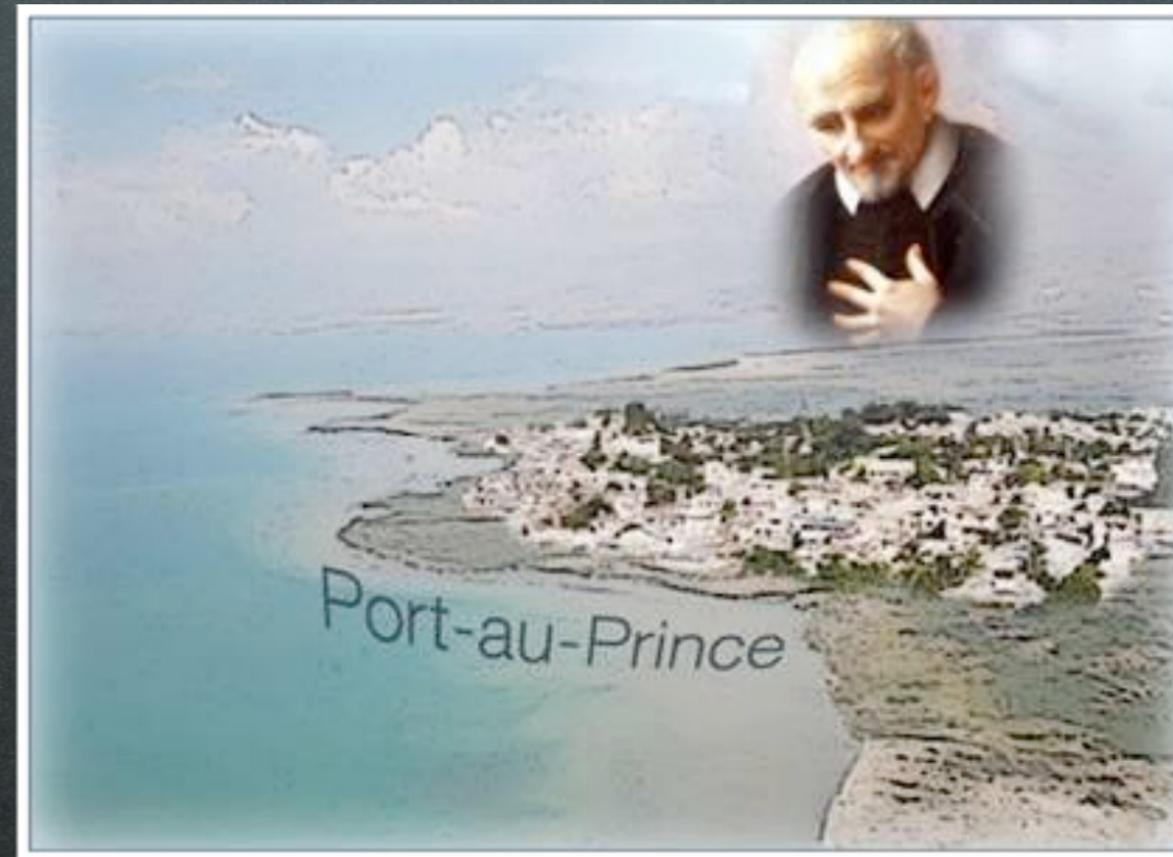
Microcredit Lending:

An alternative to payday loans for the working poor
Belleville, Illinois

“Payday loans prey upon people who are at their lowest point and feel trapped.”

- A loan program that charges 3% interest
- Offers flexible repayment schedule
- Provides finance education
- Budgeting classes
- Mentors for borrowers so they can learn new habits

Vincentian Family Micro-finance Project in Haiti



The 350th Anniversary of the Deaths of Vincent and Louise
de Marillac

The Millennium Development Goals



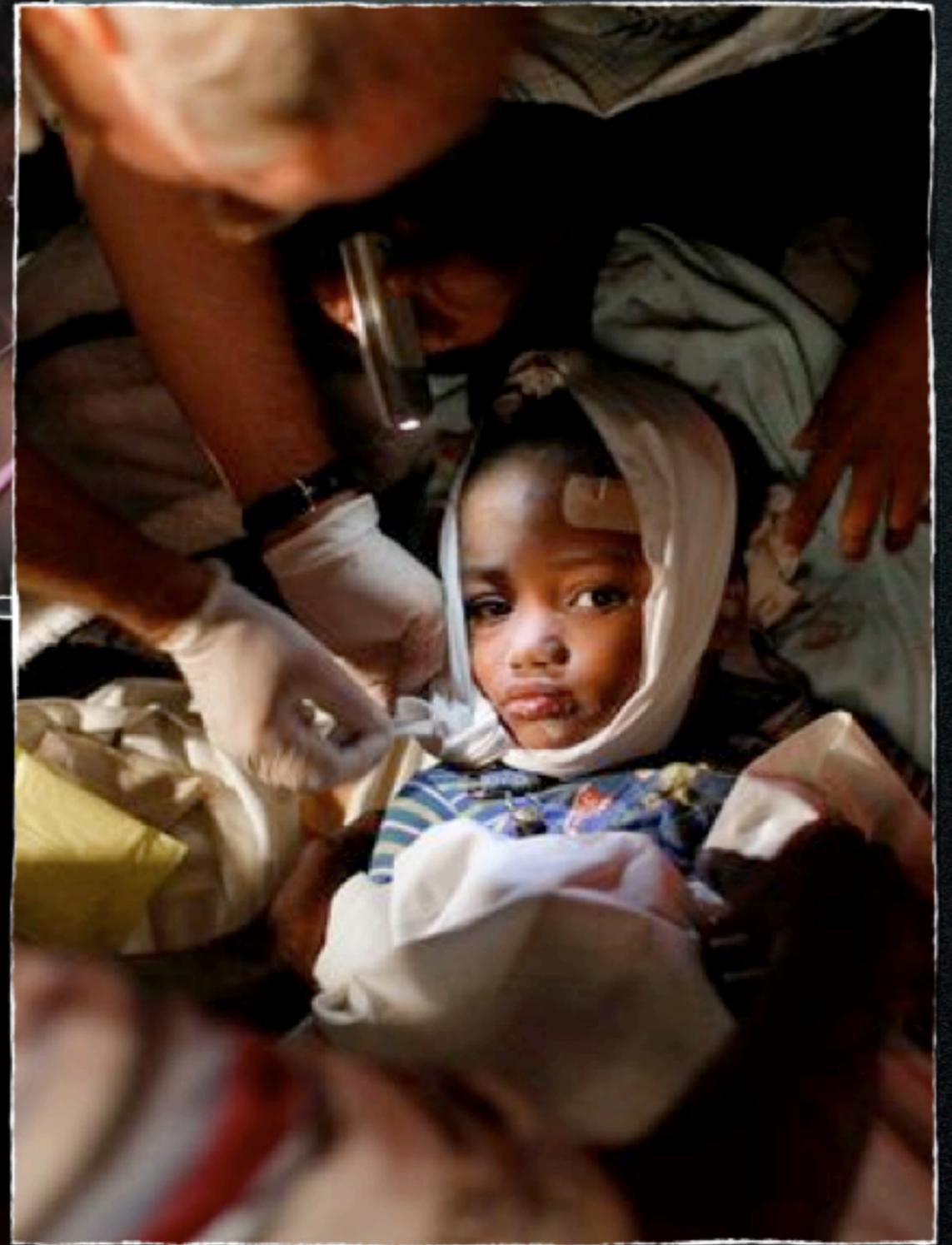
MDGs

- Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
- Achieve universal primary education
- Promote gender equality and empower women
- Reduce child mortality
- Improve maternal health
- Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases
- Ensure environmental sustainability
- Develop global partnerships for development

Goals of the International Leaders of the Vincentian Family

- To establish a pilot micro-finance project in Haiti
- To foster the participation of the Family from throughout the world
- To encourage the active engagement of the Family in Haiti
- To design a project that could serve as a model for use in other regions of the world

“Building new lives out of fragility.”





Systemic Change Goals for the Project

1. To help the poorest of the poor, involving them at each stage of the project, beginning from the initial discernment of needs and continuing until the completion of the project.



2. To develop a program of integral human formation (human, spiritual, professional, academic)



3. To evaluate and continue to refine the project with the members of the Vincentian Family in Haiti and with all of the partners.



4.To link with governments, foundations and other agencies, locally and internationally.

5.To create an infrastructure that can engage in advocacy for the poor.

www.zafen.org

Zafèn

Creole for "It's our business"

- Offers the opportunity to lend or contribute to sustainable economic development projects in Haiti
- Provides support to micro, small and medium-sized enterprises
- Will create new jobs, and improve the lives of those living in some of the poorest conditions in the world
- Enables peer to project relationships
- Allows you to track your loans, watch them return, then re-lend or withdraw all on-line

www.zafen.org

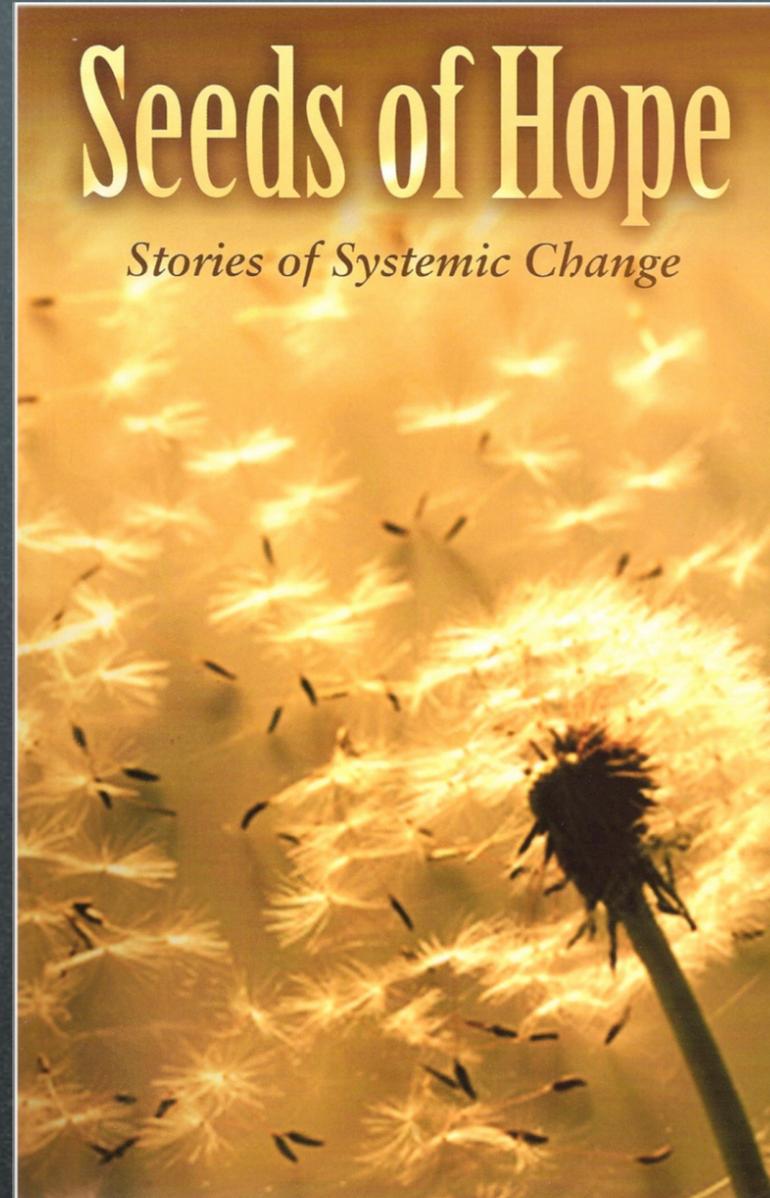
Continental Systemic Change Workshops

- Mexico
- Brazil
- Cameroon
- Thailand



To Come: USA and Europe

Learn more about systemic change in:



available from www.svdpusa.org

Remember

Go to the people:
live with them, learn from them,
start with what they know,
build with what they have.

But of the best leaders
when the job is done,
the task accomplished,
the people will say:
“We have done it ourselves.”

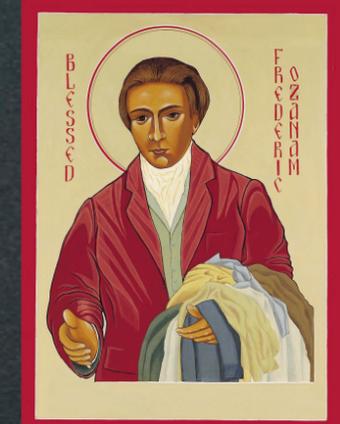
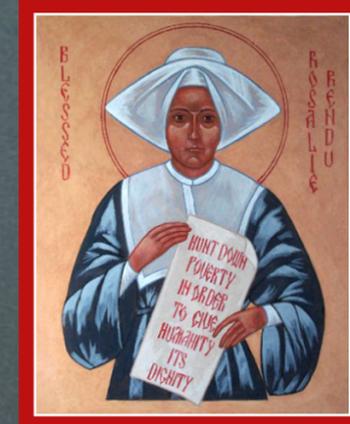
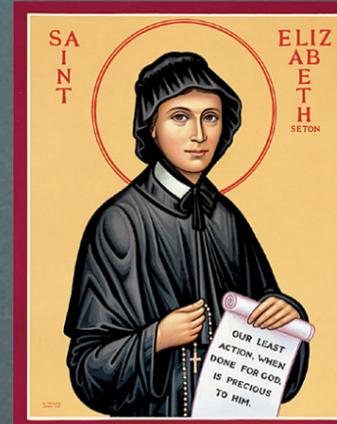
Lao Tzu

“Do not be afraid of new beginnings. Be creative. Be inventive. Organize new works of love in the service of the poor. You who have energy; who have enthusiasm; who want to do something of value for the future; be inventive, launch out; do not wait.”

Frederic Ozanam

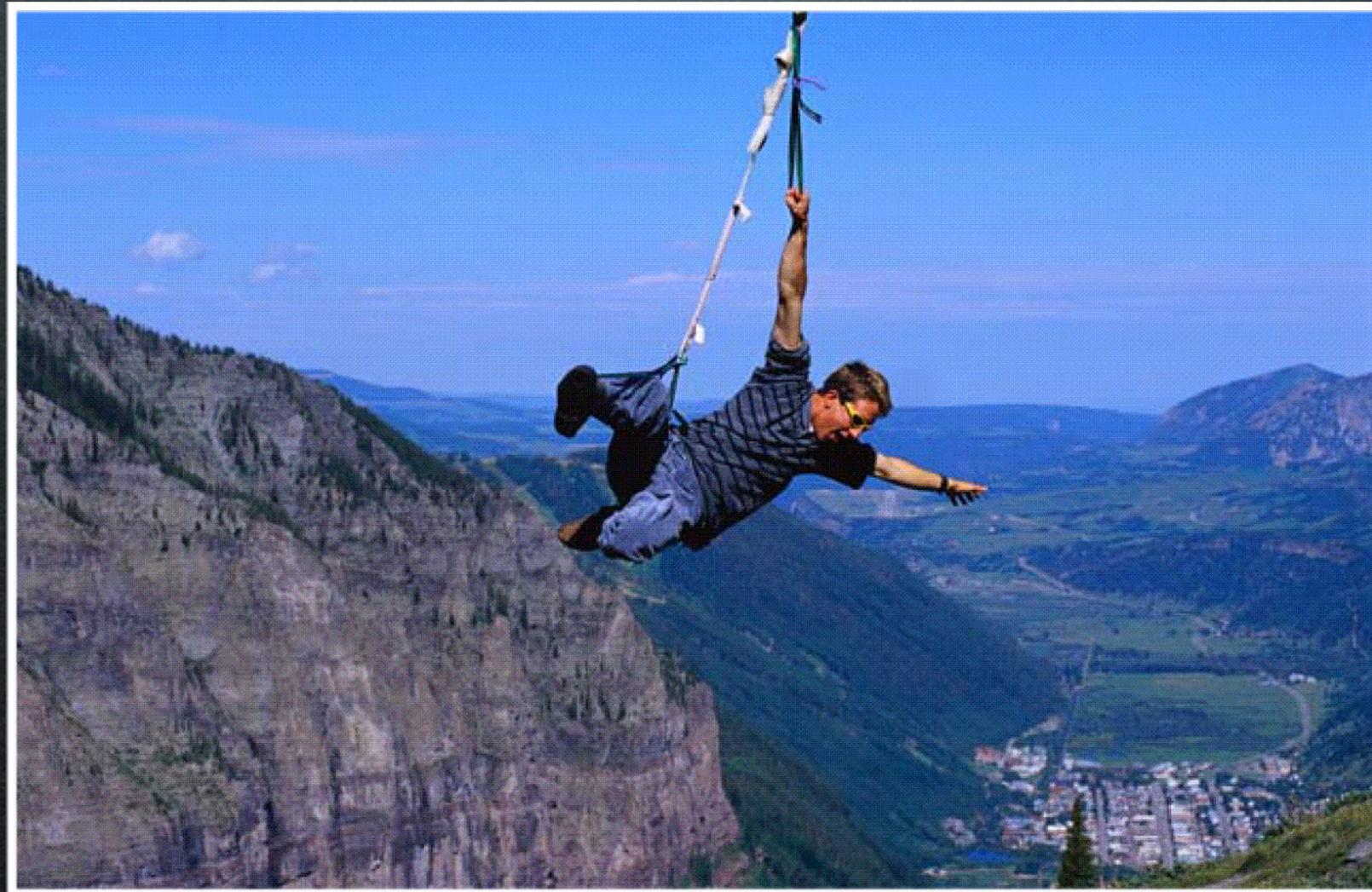
How does our tradition as Vincentians, sons and daughters of Vincent, Louise, Elizabeth, Rosalie and Frederic prepare us to engage in systemic change?

- They were change agents during the time in which they lived.
- They had a vision of what was possible and were unflinching in their efforts to transform the lives of those in need.
- They had the courage of their convictions and the capacity to mobilize people and resources.
- They developed leadership skills among their followers and empowered others to act.



- They inspired those who followed with dedication and vision.
- They developed understanding, commitment and energy for attending to the vision.
- They listened to others and sought their ideas and advice.
- They provided the tools needed to perform the mission.
- They gave us enduring models of servant leadership.

**We are called to live on the
margins of possibility...**



Where does God call us today?

What borders are we being called to cross?

What frontiers do we need to move beyond?



God is calling. How will we respond?

