

Vincentian Collaboration

Tips and practical examples



from an article by Jack Murphy,
Society of St. Vincent de Paul USA
Voice of the Poor



If we truly collaborate to eliminate poverty in our communities...

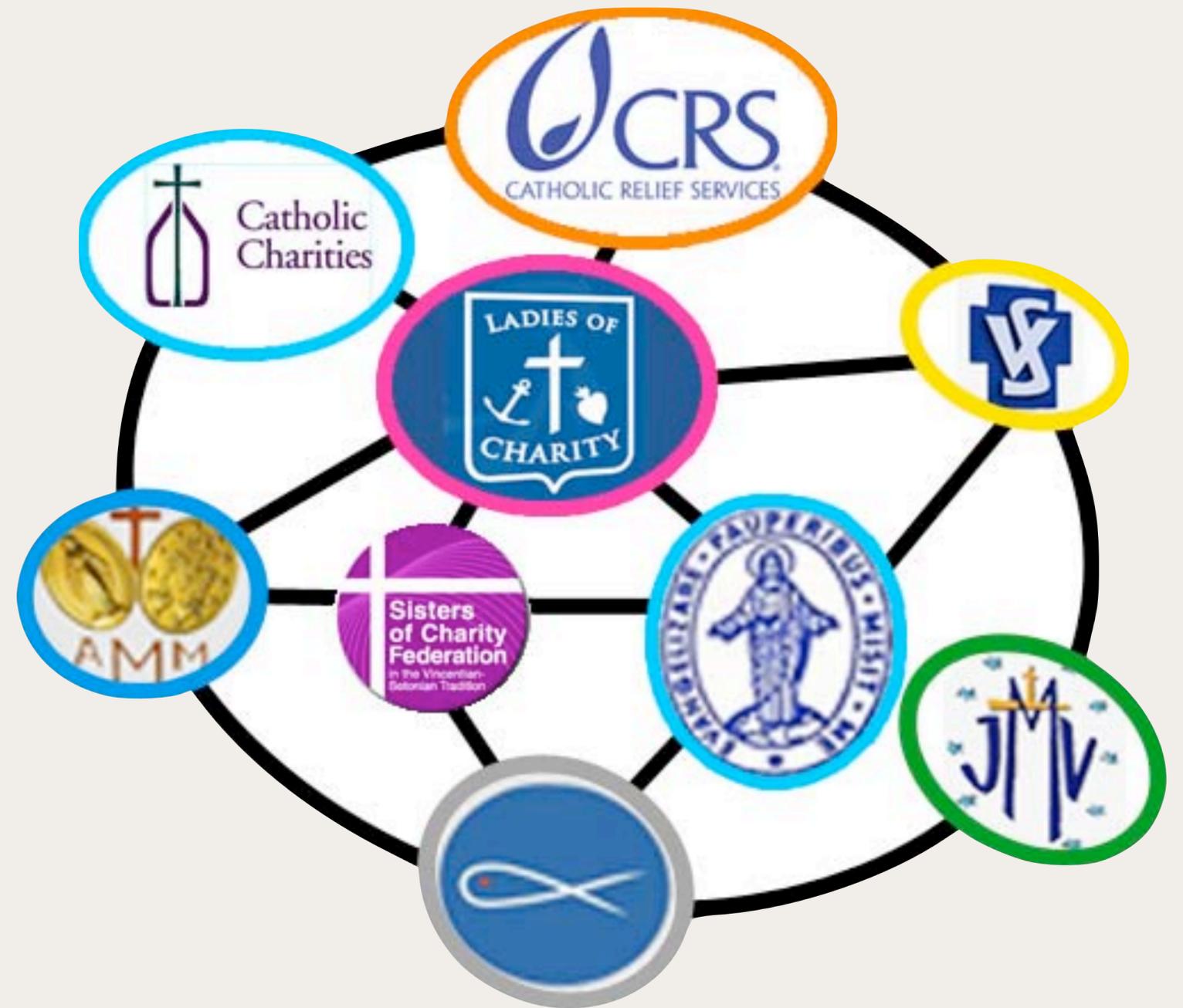
...with others we will accomplish much more than we could have ever dreamed possible on our own.



You may be wondering:

How do I get started?

What are some practical ways I can begin to collaborate?



In this presentation:

- ✓ **Tips**
- ✓ **Examples**
- ✓ **Guidelines**
- ✓ **Reflection Questions**



Tip 1: Know your weaknesses; fill gaps through collaboration

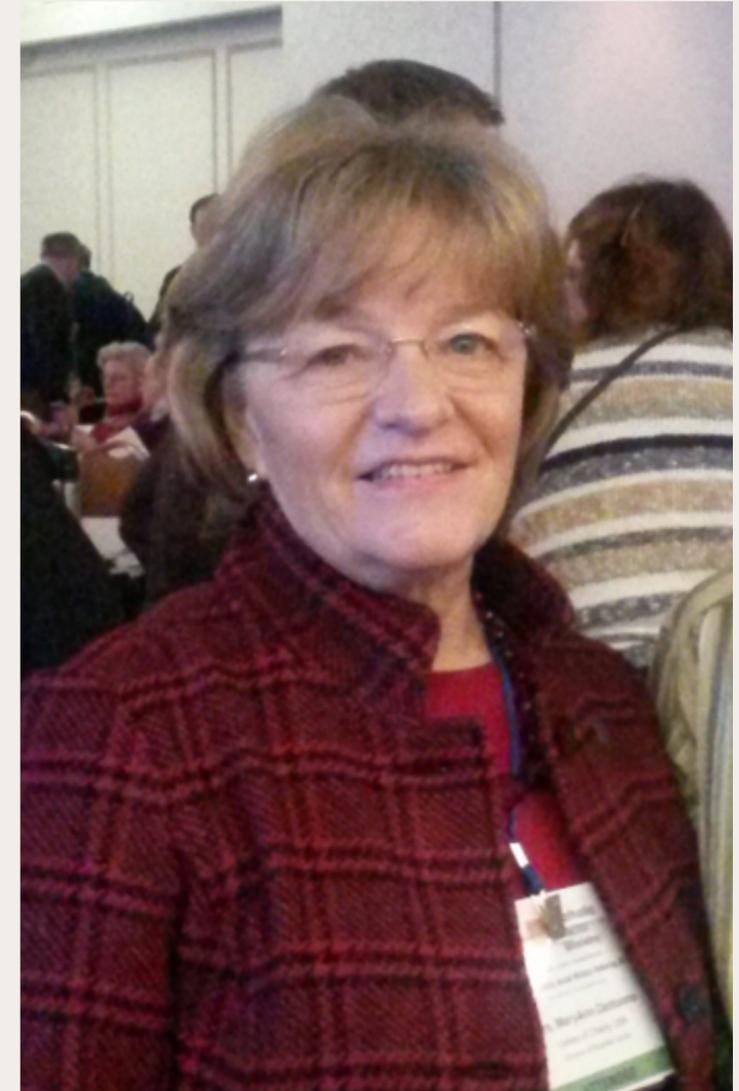


Jack Murphy - St. Vincent de Paul Society

“St. Vincent de Paul Society/Voice of the Poor has always used a collaborative approach to advocacy. We learned early on that, while Vincentians have a great depth of experience in direct contact with those in need, we don’t have a great deal of experience or strength in the public legislative world. Therefore, throughout the US, you will see examples of Voice of the Poor Vincentians working with Catholic Charities, the Catholic Campaign for Human Development, the US Conference of Catholic Bishops, and other like-minded groups to pool our resources to speak on behalf of those we serve.”

Tip 2: Know your strengths

“We have this wonderful natural network that we’ve already created... the Vincentian Family. When you start any type of advocacy, you need to build your network. Because of our efforts in the work with housing, in terms of being with the people... we’re entitled to a seat at the public policy table, and using that effectively for the poor can bring about tremendous change in our communities. [...] So we have a tremendous validity because we are in touch with, or we are a bridge to, the poor, and we need to be involved in government as experts on poverty, as experts on solutions to poverty, and what can be done to alleviate the situations that are not working for people.”



**Mary Ann Dantuono, President,
Ladies of Charity USA**

Tip 2: Know your strengths



Jack Murphy - St. Vincent de Paul Society

“There certainly are many other groups with much more experience in the public arena than the Society of St. Vincent de Paul. However, other advocates always welcome our contributions because of the unique approach we take to our service, visiting those in need in their homes. That makes for some powerful advocacy.”

Tip 3: Recognize, and build on, existing partnerships

Many of us are already collaborating in our conferences. We may partner with other community or faith-based organizations to pay a bill for a family, we may partner on food drives, etc.



Tip 4: Look for ways to expand from one-to-one service, to one-to-many

However, if we are to really make a difference in our communities, we are going to have to expand our work from one-to-one direct service to one-to-many... through education, advocacy, and collaboration... with our parishes, with other conferences and with our communities.



Tip 5: Start with your local area

How do we take our collaboration to the next level? Start with a neighboring conference. Look for ways you can work together to mitigate the contributors to poverty in your area. Maybe it's a lack of transportation to jobs. Maybe it's a lack of affordable healthy food in your area. Or, perhaps its fostering collaboration among those we see on home visits, to teach them how to work together to get a landlord to improve energy efficiency or some other housing condition.



Tip 6: Start within your parish

Go to your parish to enlist their help in dealing with need. Your role can be to use the facts you gather on home visits to find root causes-- problems that are common among many or most people. You could look to JustFaith groups, social justice ministries, or others with a concern for people in need.



Tip 7: Don't try to do it all yourself (work together to achieve a common goal)

This is certainly not a new concept for Vincentians. St. Vincent was a master collaborator. Just our simple tradition of visiting the poor in pairs is a nod to the power that collaboration can bring to a challenging situation.



Tip 8: Be open and flexible

Think outside the box to identify other groups that share your mission. Saint Vincent brought people together to find solutions to the challenges poverty causes in a community. He wasn't wedded to one solution. He was driven by service, and was open to any group that shared his mission.



Examples



Example 1: Youth Group

When I was in high school in North Carolina, I wanted to start a CYO (Catholic Youth Organization) group in my parish. I had a lot of relatives from the northeast and they talked about retreats, service projects, movies and it sounded like great fun. So, I put notice after notice in our parish bulletin. Even though my pastor endorsed starting a youth group, I couldn't get enough participation to field a bowling team.

LIBRARY NOTES

Lent [264.1] is traditionally the time for Prayer, Fasting and Almsgiving. This week let's look at some of the books we have in Your Parish Library on Prayer.

Around the Year with Emmet Fox is a collection of 365 daily meditations by a Christian spiritual teacher that speaks to the everyday needs of humanity. [242 Fox]

Praying with Mary is a treasury of prayers to Mary, the Mother of Jesus. Filled with prayers by Saints and writers from throughout the history of the church that will address all occasions.

Praying with St. Paul is a handbook of daily reflections that leads the reader into the richness of the writings of the great Apostle to the Gentiles. [242Cam]

Step by Step to Calvary [Praying through the Stations of the Cross] [242Bur] is a wonderful contemporary and inspirational series of meditations on the Stations

The Library will be closed next Sunday [3/15] due to the Annual Religious Education conference.

COME AND CELEBRATE ST. PATRICK'S DAY AT OLD MISSION SAN LUIS REY!

Mass at the Old Mission Church on Tuesday, March 17, 2015, at 6:30 pm followed by Pot Luck Dinner in the Retreat Dining Room.

For information and to donate to the Pot-Luck, please contact Jim and Diane Manning at: (760) 724-3319 / jdmanning@cox.net

Céad míle fáilte!
A hundred thousand welcomes!

 **MEN'S PRAYER GROUP** meets at the Old Mission on the **First Thursday** of the month. 7:00-9:00 p.m. **Scripture – Conversation – Prayer – Fellowship** St. Francis Room Mission San Luis Rey

For more information, please contact Fr. Adrian at fradrian@sanluisreyparish.org or 760-547-0723

M.O.P. Rummage sale POSTPONED

We will have to hold off on our rummage sale until we have enough treasures to sell. We will continue to collect your donations and will let you know when we have a new date. Thank you to all who have donated.

For questions or to arrange a pick up please call Lee Bickford 760.522.2738

EASTER LILIES

Help decorate our worship spaces for Easter as well as remember a loved one (living or deceased) by donating an Easter Lily. Please fill out the form below and mail or bring to parish office with a donation of \$10.00 per intention. Your name and intention will be included in the Easter bulletin so that our whole worship community can join you in praying for your loved one as we enjoy the beautiful flowers! The deadline for donations is **WED. MARCH 18, 2015.**

Name: _____
Phone #: _____
Intention: _____
Circle one: Living or Deceased
Donation Amount: _____

A STORY NEVER TOLD, just released by the Old Mission San Luis Rey Historic Foundation: *The Real World of Mission San Luis Rey* by Jim Downs, available at the Mission Book Store.

 **USHERS NEEDED - ARE YOU WILLING TO SERVE?**

Our parish is in need of ushers for the 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Sunday Masses. If you already attend either Mass, please consider getting involved in this wonderful ministry of hospitality.

Ushers welcome people as they enter, help folks get seated, take the collection, pass out bulletins and possibly answer questions or gives directions.

If you would like to volunteer or just need more information, please call Tom Crowder, Head Usher, at 760-717-5452.

ANNUAL CATHOLIC APPEAL 2015

If you have not done so, please make a pledge today! There are many ways to respond to the Annual Catholic Appeal: You may visit www.diocese-sdiego.org or stop by the parish office and pick up a pledge card.

4 | MISSION SAN LUIS REY PARISH, Oceanside, California — March 8, 2015

Youth Group



I mentioned my frustration to a Quaker neighbor who said that she had the same trouble organizing youth in her congregation. We found another friend who invited us to his small Methodist youth group and we formed the first Ecumenical Youth Organization. Eventually, we had enough participation from our own congregations to break into faith groups. But we continued to meet periodically and did several service projects together.

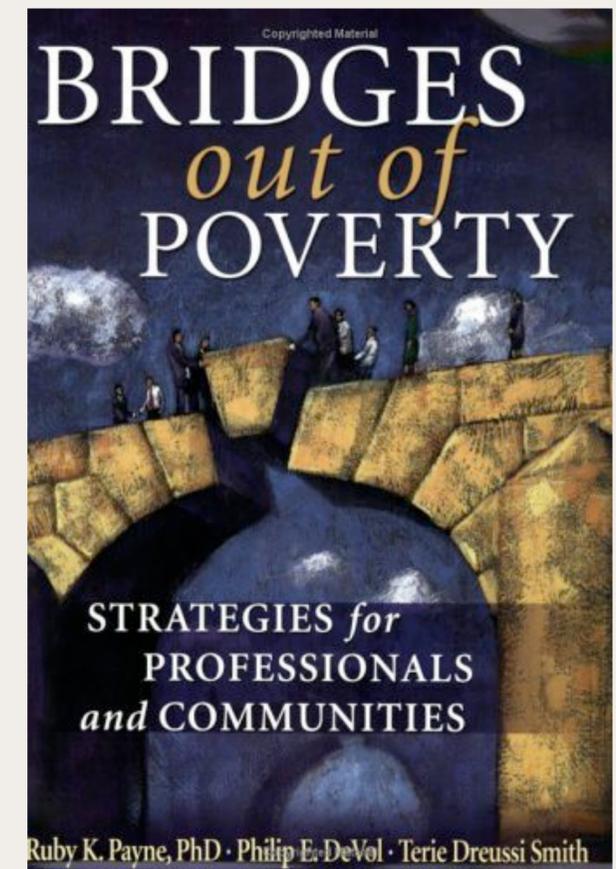
Youth Group

Each of us in that situation was just looking for a chance to socialize. We didn't set out to become more aware of, and sensitive to, each other's faith traditions. And we certainly didn't plan to be an ecumenical example to our community. But that's what we did. We didn't all get exactly what we wanted at the beginning. In the end, we got much more than we anticipated.



Example 2: Bridges Out of Poverty

When looking at the materials forming the basis of the St. Vincent de Paul Society's systemic change curriculum, Bridges Out of Poverty, collaboration in a community setting is the intentional creation of a continuum or wraparound services between agencies.



Example 3: Farm Bill

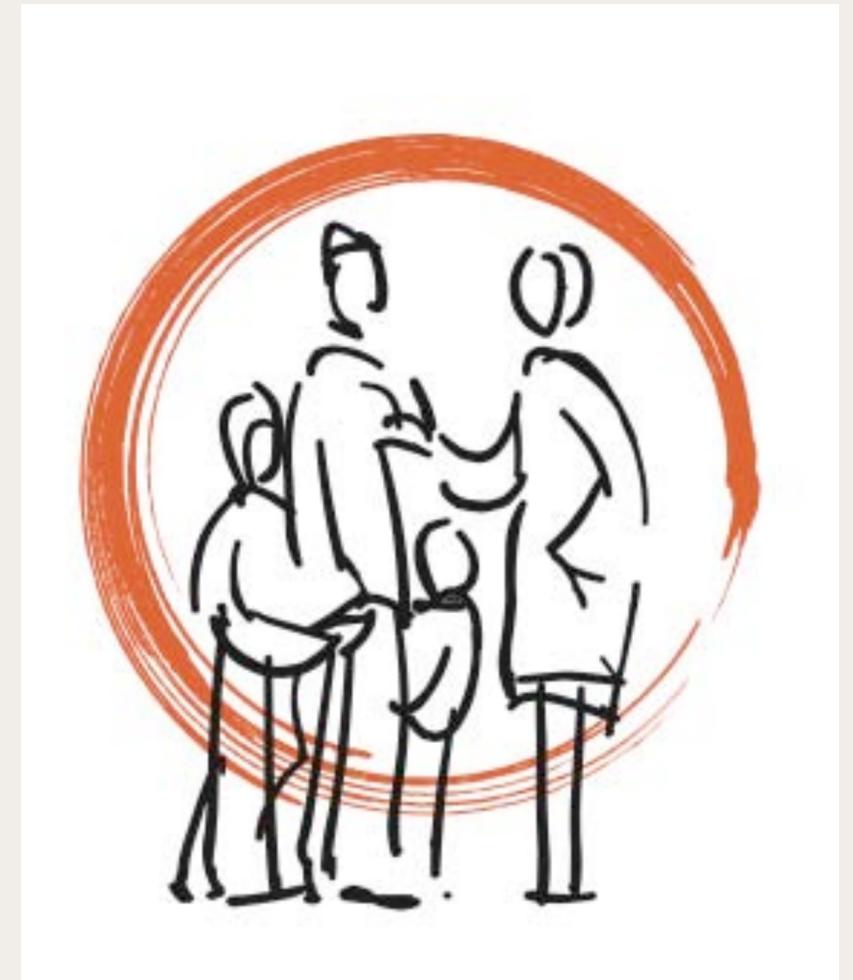
A recent example of effective collaboration on a national level was a joint [letter to the U.S. House of Representatives](#). SVDP USA's national president, Sheila Gilbert was one of six Catholic leaders, including two Bishops, who co-signed this letter asking for support of the Farm Bill, which includes critical support for SNAP on which so many of those we serve depend to keep their families fed.



Sheila Gilbert, President, SVDP USA

Example 4: Circle of Protection

Another recent example of collaboration we've joined is the [Circle of Protection](#). This is an organization of great religious diversity united in the belief that federal budget discussions must include the voice of the underserved. Voice of the Poor is representing the St. Vincent de Paul Society with other members of the Vincentian Family to unite in our support and advocacy for just immigration reform.



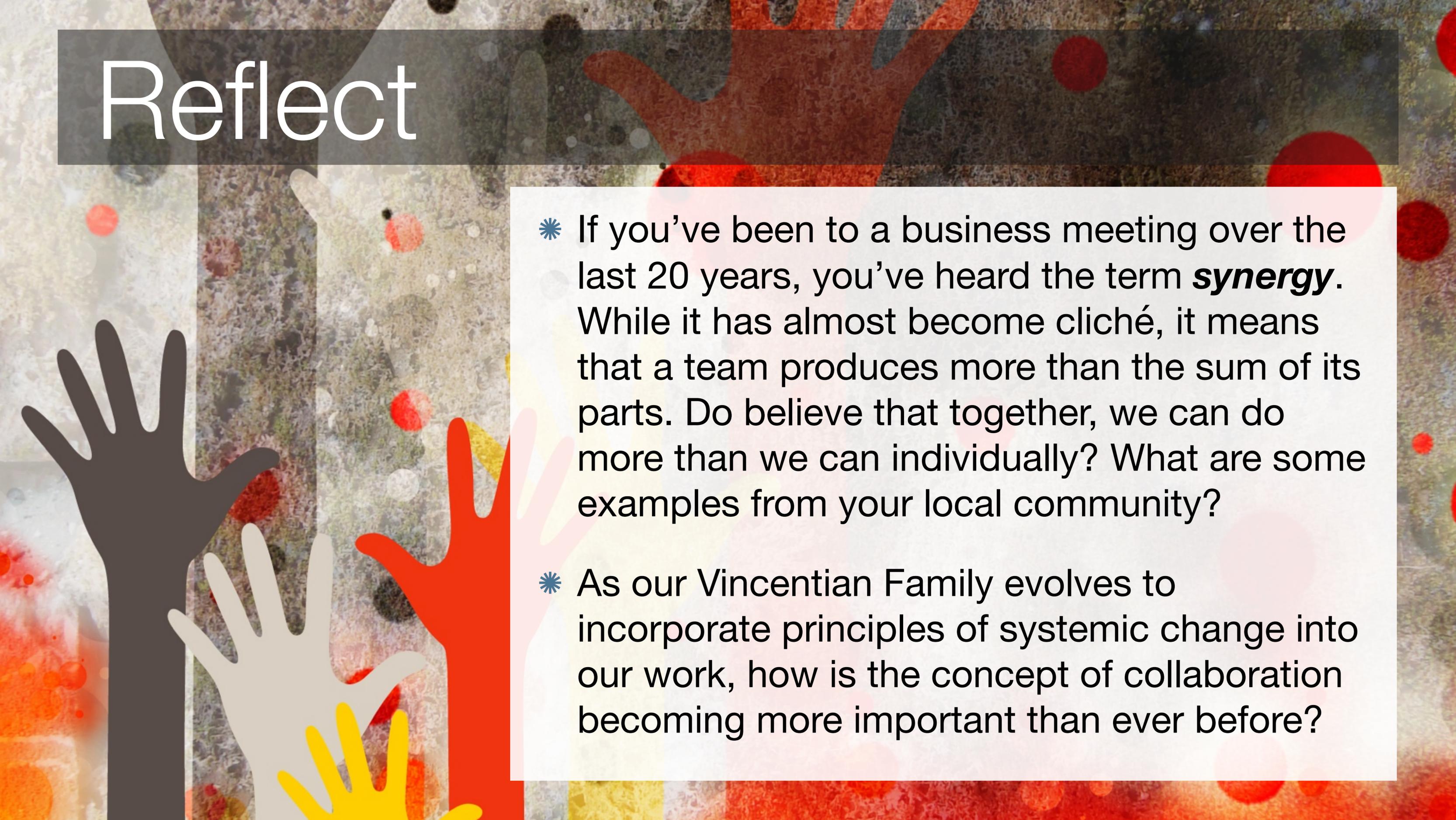
Guidelines

Some guidelines for collaboration involving the Society of St. Vincent de Paul in the U.S.:

- * Only the Board can speak publicly on behalf of the Society.
- * We can't lend our name to any effort that might ever support any policy or initiative counter to Church teaching.
- * We use the Voice of the Poor national position papers as a guide to the types of issues we tackle.

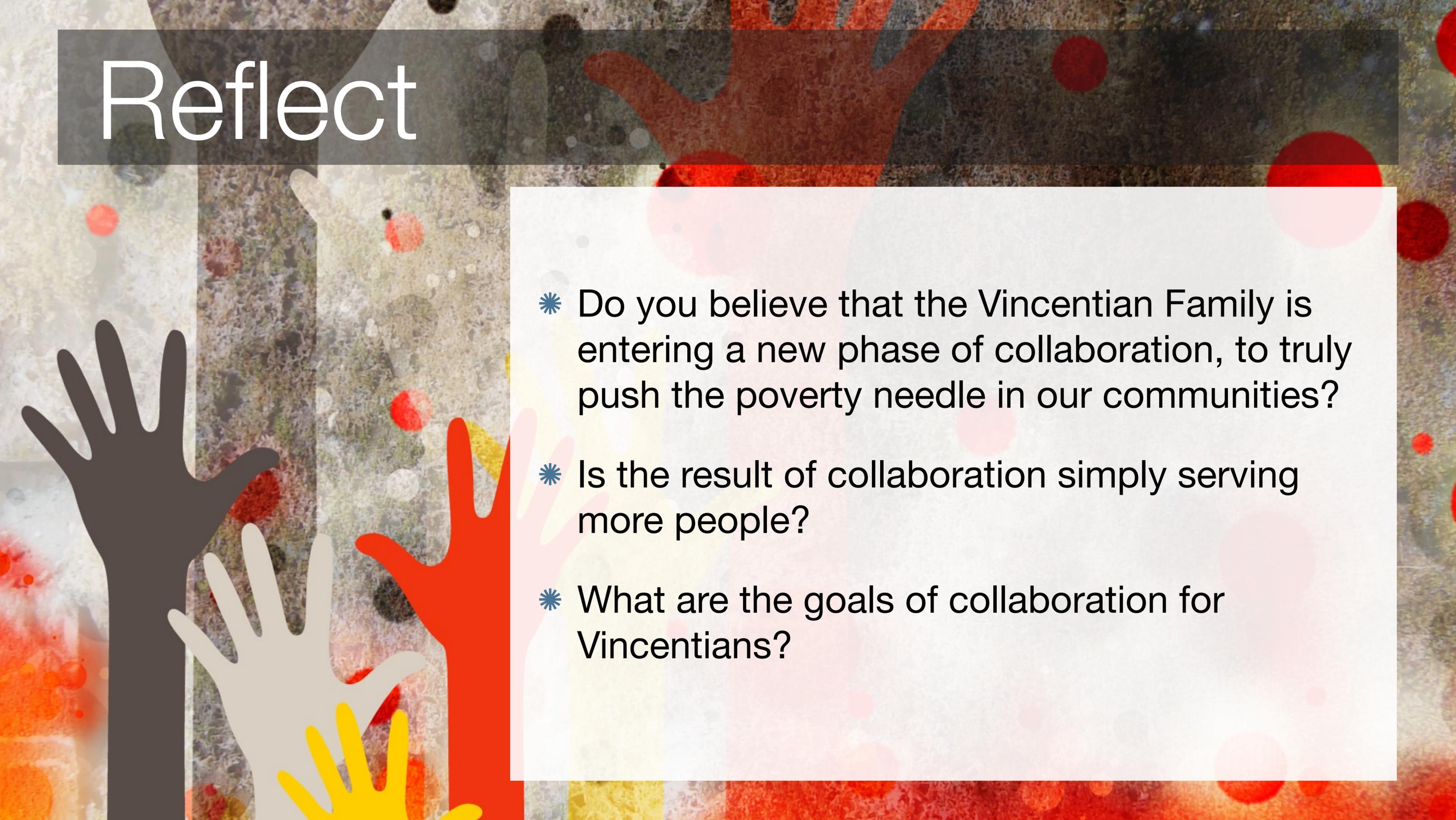


Reflect



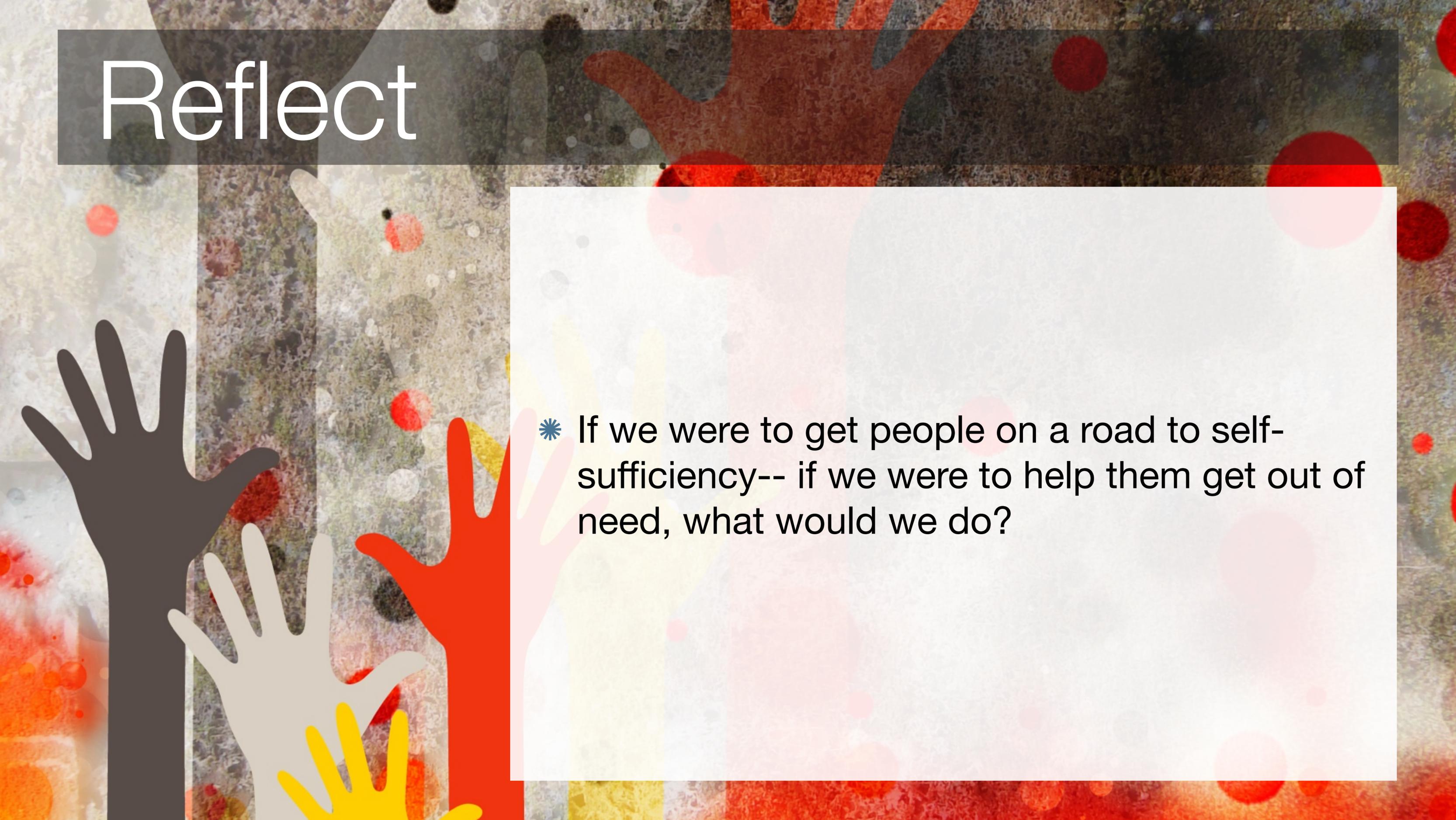
- * If you've been to a business meeting over the last 20 years, you've heard the term ***synergy***. While it has almost become cliché, it means that a team produces more than the sum of its parts. Do believe that together, we can do more than we can individually? What are some examples from your local community?
- * As our Vincentian Family evolves to incorporate principles of systemic change into our work, how is the concept of collaboration becoming more important than ever before?

Reflect



- * Do you believe that the Vincentian Family is entering a new phase of collaboration, to truly push the poverty needle in our communities?
- * Is the result of collaboration simply serving more people?
- * What are the goals of collaboration for Vincentians?

Reflect



- * If we were to get people on a road to self-sufficiency-- if we were to help them get out of need, what would we do?

- * This presentation was based on an article from the blog “*A Voice of the Poor*” by Jack Murphy of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul USA.

Thanks to him for giving us permission to share this material.

