



An Update from our President

Dear Vincentians,

We are watching, with interest, the response of our government at all levels to the needs of the people we serve and employ. As I wrote earlier in the week, local Vincentians need to make the decisions on what to do but I would share best practices and what we are learning.

Today I have asked Tom Mulloy, National Director of Poverty Programs, to monitor the changing federal landscape so we can share the implications of those actions for our Vincentians.

Here are a couple of aspects we are watching:

- At many levels evictions and utilities shut offs are being prohibited. To the extent that applies to the people we serve, we may want to hold off using our funds for these purposes until we learn about the long term needs.
- The availability of unemployment benefits is being adjusted how it will affect any employees we lay off is still unknown. Councils certainly want to help their employees, but they could be assisted through this program, which could help preserve the funds of the Society.
- The direct cash supplement is also looking likely, but most likely it will only be provided to the taxpayer. This will also help many, but obviously some of those we serve will be left out.

Many Conferences receive their money through the parish, and if Mass has been canceled for several months that is immediately reducing their funds. Many of our stores are already closed. I expect most will be closed soon. This means we all will need to be in a mode of cash preservation.

Having accurate information about the changing available assistance will help us to make decisions about where we need to use our resources. For now, it seems prudent to carefully evaluate what we use our funds for and to go slow in making those decisions. This does not mean we stop doing charity, but when the dust settles, it may be more evident what help we are best situated to provide.

Please make sure you read tomorrow's e-Gazette as we will continue to communicate current information as it applies to the Society.

**Ralph Middlecamp
National Council President**

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