



A NEW MEMBER ADMISSION PROCESS

In order to determine if God is calling them to become a Vincentian, a prospective new member with the approval of the Conference, will be welcomed as a guest at a Conference meeting and will be given a copy of the **Rule** and the **Member Handbook**. They will also be invited to attend an Ozanam Orientation. All new members must attend one within 6 months to a year of joining.

A prospective new member, due to their involvement in the Society's work, may be invited or may convey an interest in becoming a Vincentian as an **Associate Member**:

“Associate Members are those affiliated with the Society by formal action of the Conference or Council with which the member will be joined. Associate Members include those who sincerely and publicly accept the Society's Rule but may or may not belong to the Catholic Church and may or may not attend Conference meetings or engage in the works of the Society on a regular basis. Associate Members are kept informed of the developments and activities of their immediate groupings, as well as the general progress of the Society, particularly in the local area or diocese. They are invited to attend the general meetings and special observances of the Society and to participate in its charitable activities.” **(Rule: Part III-Statute 3)**

A prospective new member who may be invited or interested in becoming a Vincentian as an **Active Member** will be given a period of candidacy and discernment during which they will observe the Conference and participate in its activities:

“Active Members are those who participate regularly in the prayer life, meetings and charitable activities through personal contact with the poor of the Vincentian Conference. An Active Member accepts the Rule and Statutes of the Society, belongs to the Catholic Church and is received as a Vincentian brother or sister...Only Active Members hold office in the organization.” **(Rule: Part III-Statute 3)**

When a prospective new member requests to be welcomed into the Conference as a candidate for Active Membership, he/she begins an Admission Process.

An Admission Process for Active Membership

1. The following is a model of an Admission Process. The candidacy and discernment period will last approximately 6 to 8 weeks and will consist of the following:
 - ❖ The Conference members will read, reflect and share their lived experiences on each section of the SVdP Member Handbook with the candidate. Each member will have a copy of the handbook.
 - ❖ A Conference member will be assigned as a sponsor for the candidate. The sponsor will meet with the candidate to respond to questions and to describe the activities of the Conference.
 - ❖ The candidate will be given the opportunity to make at least two Home Visits with different Conference members. The exception would be in a Conference with Special Works where the candidate will be given opportunities for person to person service with those who are poor.
 - ❖ The Spiritual Advisor will lead the candidate in prayerful discernment emphasizing the Society's primary purpose of growth in Holiness and guiding them in Vincentian Spirituality.
 - ❖ At the conclusion of the candidacy period, the candidate will have a meeting with the President to discuss the candidate's experiences in the Conference. The candidate discusses the activities and services that they feel called to do as part of their ministry.
 - ❖ At this point, if the candidate has discerned that they have a Vincentian Vocation, they may request to become an **Active Member**.
2. After the President, Spiritual Advisor and the candidate discern readiness for Active membership the Conference takes formal action, normally by a resolution, to accept the candidate into Active membership. (**Rule: Part III-Statute 3**)
3. The candidate is then Commissioned as a new member of the Society and given the SVdP pin. This commissioning should take place at an appropriate time and occasion, normally at a Conference or Council liturgy or at a Festival Meeting. (**Rule: Part III-Statute 4**) The Commissioning Ceremony for a New Member is found in the Vincentian Celebrations book, or on-line: ([svdpusa.org/members/Tools/Spirituality-Formation/Vincentian-Prayers/Commitment and Commissioning Ceremonies](http://svdpusa.org/members/Tools/Spirituality-Formation/Vincentian-Prayers/Commitment-and-Commissioning-Ceremonies)).
4. The new member will continue walking the Vincentian Pathway through reflection and sharing on the Serving in Hope Modules and the other resources offered by the National Office. The Council will offer opportunities for Vincentian Formation by sponsoring the Ozanam Orientation, retreats and various activities. The new member will attend the

Ozanam Orientation Program within a year as required by the Society. The Conference assures compliance with the (Arch)Diocesan “Safe Environment” requirements.

5. To comply with the rules established by the Catholic Diocesan Church here in Dallas all new associate and active members must complete two additional requirements
 - a) Submit a signed volunteer release to the SVDP Dallas Council and pass a background check: a requirement to serve with us.
 - b) Complete the mandatory safe environment training and provide a copy of their certification to the Council officer, Maria Vega (membership@svdpdallas.org). This safe environment piece is an annual requirement: all members will have to renew and resubmit certification each year.