

**Society of
St. Vincent de Paul
Conference Treasurer's
Manual**



Conference: _____

Date: October 1, _____ **to September 30,** _____

PURPOSE OF THE MANUAL

This manual was developed to assist Conference Treasurers to:

1. Perform their jobs within the regulations set forth by the National Council of the United States, Society of St Vincent de Paul.
2. Ensure that money and goods donated to the Conferences are used properly and for the purpose for which they were given.
3. Protect the Conference, its members, and the other different levels of the Society of St Vincent de Paul from the scandal on improprieties.

This manual should be given to Conferences in conjunction with a training session with the President and the Treasurer of each Conference in attendance. The use of this manual does not mean that Conferences have to stop using a computer bookkeeping system. Nor does it mean that the Conference has to use all of the forms that are provided in this manual. The bookkeeping forms presented in the manual are only guides/suggestions.

The information in this manual should be used in conjunction with the information in the Rule, the Manual, and the nationally approved Bylaws. Therefore, it is a requirement that each Treasurer have a copy of each of those documents.

FORWARD

The handling of the Society funds is a serious responsibility. The material in this book will make the task easier for those who take on the role of the treasurer. You are encouraged to read the information in this handbook as well as the National Council's policy regarding the use of Vincentian funds, which can be found in the Rule, Manual, Nationally Approved Bylaws and National Council Resolutions. Please also note the information in the addendum at the end of this handbook.

In regard to our Society's responsibility, the following quotes apply:

As a self-governing group, the Society draws up its own rules and regulations. It chooses and conducts its own charitable activities. It uses its own leaders. It manages its funds and holds itself accountable for their proper use. Accordingly, contributions received must be devoted exclusively to the charitable purposes and programs of the Society. Officers and members are prohibited from applying funds to non-Vincentian causes or works, however praiseworthy these may be. [Rule, Part I, 3.14 and Manual, page 26, chapter 2]

“Councils may receive funding requests from charitable organizations outside the Society. Funds donated to the Society, however, must be used only for works that involve the personal service of Society members. The Society does not raise or contribute money for activities, no matter how praiseworthy, in which its members are not personally and substantially involved. We must honor the intentions of our donors, who have chosen to give to the Society, rather than other organizations, with the expectation that their gifts will be used for Vincentian work and no other purpose. [Manual 2007 p 38]

May the spirit of St Vincent and Blessed Frederic be with you always.

NOTE: References to the 'Manual' are from the new 2007 'MANUAL' and the 2006 'RULE' unless otherwise specified.

SVDP Funds Only for SVDP Charity

Some things never change. One of those things is the love all of us feel for those in need. Today, more than at any time, people and organizations are reaching out for help. And more than ever before we in the “not for profit” are being asked to fill the void.

The demands upon you to help are quite common to Vincentian units across the country, and they have not changed, only intensified over the years.

Often there is a concern regarding whether or not the Society funds may be used to support other groups. Because of the Society’s concern for the poor and its closeness to all Church and Community relief activities, members tend to be supportive of non-Vincentian service groups, particularly when such bodies conduct helping programs.

Insofar as moral support is concerned, Vincentians ought to be in the forefront. Good will towards others and a spirit of cooperation has characterized the Society in the past. Around the turn of the century the Society became the first national Catholic organization to establish working relations with non-Catholic welfare groups.

Today, we note that all community leaders recognize the need for teamwork among service agencies and organizations. The immense job facing the private sector today calls for collaborations whenever possible. We should not refuse that call.

The only note of caution is that of surrendering the identity of the Society to some larger entity. The Society has been successful since 1833, in part because it has earned the respect of people throughout the world. We are private, but have our special identity. Many benefactors support us because of our works, not because we have amalgamated into some larger less specific whole.

Simply stated, may we use SVDP funds to support other charitable groups? The answer is “NO.” The manual makes it clear that contributions received must be devoted exclusively to the charitable purposes and programs of the Society. Officers and members are prohibited from applying funds to non-Vincentian causes or works, regardless of how praiseworthy these may be. [Rule Part 1 3.14]

Maybe on the surface this may seem harsh, but if you think about it, you will find it rooted in good common sense. The Society membership uses the funds of its members and donors to further the work of the Society. If these contributions are funneled into the work of other organizations (however laudatory), then we become merely a conduit. Further, we make the assumption that ‘the donors would want to support that group.’ This is a decision we have no right to make.

Let's review the question of solicitation of funds from one Conference or Council to another. The propriety of this clearly stated in a Resolution adopted September 29, 1979 at the National Meeting in Green Bay Wisconsin, it states: "All appeals for financial help made to the Society of St Vincent de Paul across Diocesan lines must first be submitted to the National President of the Society for investigation; and, if approved, bear such sanction in writing or else be judged to be unauthorized."

It should be noted that the transfer of funds from one Vincentian jurisdiction to another as part of the International Twinning Program is accepted and endorsed. In order to provide the necessary information base and accountability, all such arrangements should be arranged through the respective National Councils of the linked Conferences. The assurance of accountability is made by the National Council's International Twinning Department in conjunction with the Society's International Office.

It should also be noted that there are Conferences who operate Special Works and/or Thrift Store(s). If that is the case, some Conferences choose to keep separate financial records for those works and stores. Some choose to incorporate all income and expenses in the main Conference account. If your Conference chooses to maintain separate records, a financial report must be given to the Conference at least monthly, and then all records must be combined at the end of the fiscal year for the Conference annual report.

The Spirituality of Handling Money

“Money makes the world go round.” “You can’t do anything without money.” “Money is an instrument of the devil.” You may have heard any and all of these statements as well as many other similar statements. However, you may not have heard anyone relate spirituality to handling money. Well, the fact is that the proper use of money can help one to grow spiritually.

Everyone understands that the work of the Society at both the Conference and Council levels requires money. We also know that God has called us to this ministry and, as such, all aspects of this ministry fall within His Will. He expects us to be good stewards of the ministries to which He called us (from the prayer for the Perseverance of Vocations). “All aspects” includes the solicitation and management of the funds needed to operate.

As Treasurers of Conferences, you are expected to fulfill God’s Will in managing the funds of the Society. It is in doing His Will that we can grow spiritually. Pray regularly, asking God to guide you in fulfilling the role He has chosen you to fulfill.

Chapter 1

The Conference Treasurer and Conference Funds

Duties of the Treasurer

The Treasurer is responsible for the Conference funds, for preparing the Conference's budget (where one is needed), and for keeping accurate and appropriate records of all the receipts and expenditures. The Treasurer keeps the accounts which should be audited at least once a year by two members delegated by the Conference/Council or by a qualified person (CPA) or an accounting organization.

Most Conferences do not use or need a budget. A budget would be necessary if the Conference has a lot of fixed expenses. Allocating Conference funds to various types of services (such as food, rent, utilities, etc.) is impractical since the Conferences are called to help in whatever way is needed and we don't know from day to day what our Lord is going to send our way. Those Conferences, that have a number of special works and/or stores, would require a budget since there are typically a lot of fixed expenses associated with those operations.

The Treasurer does not decide how funds of the Conference are to be spent. Those decisions are made by the Conference as a whole. The Conference decides how much is to be spent, on whose behalf and to whom. The only veto power that the Treasurer has is when the funds requested do not exist in the Conference account(s). If the Treasurer believes that a financial transaction is contrary to the Rule, the Treasurer must bring this to the attention of the Conference before executing the transaction. Again, the decision of how funds are to be spent is made by the Conference as a whole.

The Treasurer keeps up-to-date financial information, which is reflected in the Treasurer's report at each meeting. In this way, the true financial condition of the Conference is known at all times. Funds belonging to the Society have always been, and must always be, kept separate from the Treasurer's personal assets as well as those of the parish.

Conference funds should be deposited regularly and promptly in a bank account in the Conference name (with the Conference or Council EIN number).

A bank report and balance should be submitted, at least quarterly, and verified by the President or an audit committee of two members. For auditing purposes, invoices and statements are obtained before any disbursement is made. Whenever possible, all payments should be made by check.

The credit of the Conference must at all times be safeguarded and, therefore all accounts should be paid as they are due.

Conference Income and Expenditures

It should be remembered that Conference Income & Expenditures relates to all accounts of the Conference: checking, saving, investment accounts. The journal is intended to record activity on all accounts combined.

The principal forms of Conference income and receipts are:

(The numbers coincide with the numbers on the Master forms 'D' & 'E' and the Annual report.

The explanations below constitute a brief look at the item; there is a more detailed explanation in Chapter 3.)

- 1 (Donation from members) collection at meetings.
- 2 (Church/Poor Box Collections) other gifts, collections, contributions and offerings coming through the parish.
- 3 (Fund Raising Proceeds) There are three categories for Fund Raising: A) Special Works, B) Stores and C) Special Events/Other. Special Events/Other includes special fund raising events e.g. "Friends of the Poor Walk/Run," Bake sales, etc.
- 4 (Other SVDP Unit Contributions) grants received from the Councils or other Conferences of the Society.
- 5 (Other) Other has three categories: A) Grants, B) Disaster Funds, C) Capital Campaign Funds, D) Other Restricted Funds and E) Misc. Receipts. Misc. Receipts includes interest, bank adjustments, legacies, etc.

The principal expenses are:

- 6 Those we serve: (Rent, electric, utilities, medical, etc. paid by the Conference to help persons or families in need.) This also includes funds spent in direct aid by special works and stores operated by the Conference.
- 7 Disaster Contributions: Funds paid to aid persons or families in a disaster or funds sent to the National, District or Diocesan Councils to aid in a disaster.
- 8A Domestic Twinning: Funds sent to a Domestic Conference or Council (over and above the solidarity contribution).
- 8B Foreign Twinning: Funds sent to a Conference or a Council outside of the United States. This must be done through the National Council.
- 9 Solidarity Contributions

- 10 Contributions to Upper Councils. Funds sent to an upper council over and above disaster, twinning and solidarity contributions.
- 11 Operating Expenses: There are four categories identified: A) Special Works, B) Stores, C) Special Events, and D) Other. Other includes expenses paid to operate the Conference, e.g. phone, printing, postage, etc.
- 12 Other: All other expenditures not covered by another category.

Chapter 2

Before You Begin: Internal Control Bookkeeping Tips

No one ever said it was easy to be a Conference treasurer but the following tips could help simplify your job and might protect you and the Society if ever your integrity is in question.

Section 1. About Banking Conference Funds

1. Never keep Conference funds in an account that is the personal account of one of the members of the Conference or of the funds of the parish.
2. It has been recommended that the Conference should use a banking facility that will return canceled checks or electronic check images to the Conference. Many banks hold checks rather than send them, but they make available a process for retrieving specific checks on request. Some banks send images of the checks with the statement.
3. It is recommended that there be two signatures on all checks. This is a Council/Conference decision. (NOTE: many banks will honor checks with one signature regardless of your requirements. You should never have checks on hand already with one signature.)
4. Many banks do not charge a monthly service fee to churches or not-for-profit organizations. Don't be timid about negotiating with the bank on this matter or about switching to a bank that does not charge a monthly service fee.
5. When opening an account, the bank will ask for the federal tax identification number (EIN) of the Society. It is _____. This is a nine-digit number assigned by the IRS for businesses and other organizations (similar to a personal social security number.) The number you use must be assigned to your Conference or to your Council. DO NOT USE THE EIN OF THE PARISH. The bank may ask to see the IRS determination letter for your non-profit status.
6. Reconcile the Conference account(s) each month when you receive the monthly bank statement(s).

Section 2. Income

1. When you receive checks as income, first endorse the back of the check with the proper Conference endorsement. (This will safeguard the check in the event of robbery before you have a chance to make a bank deposit.)

2. If a copier is available, make a copy of the front of all checks received. This is done for different reasons:
 - After making a copy of the check you can immediately put the check away in a safe place.
 - Use the copies when recording on the income page of the CONFERENCE TREASURER'S MANUAL.
 - You can use the copies for sending out thank you notes.
 - Retain copies by month in your files. They come in handy when trying to settle donor disputes or answer inquiries from either the church or the donor. You can put a copy of more than one check on a page, but, be sure and record the classifications (from members, church/poor box, fund raising, other SVDP units, or other) as appropriate near each check on the page or group the checks of the same classification together on the same page.
- 3 When you receive cash and you know who the donor is, then be sure to record the donation on the Income page separately from other cash donations. And, when you record it, put down the name of the donor in the details column.
- 4 Be sure and list cash received for different classifications in the proper column as you do with checks.

Section 3. Expenses

Each expense made by the Conference should have supporting documentation.

For example:

- A cash register receipt or copy of a cash register receipt for Conference purchases;
 - An invoice or copy of an invoice for Conference purchases;
 - A copy of a client's bill that is to be paid (if there is no copier available to the Conference /member then be sure and record the following information: the name and address of the client as it appears on the bill and the account/customer number); and
 - A letter or copy of a letter from the Council stating what the payments are for and when they are due.
- 1 The Treasurer should write the following information on each piece of documentation: the date the disbursement was made, the number of the check used to pay the bill or purchase, the initials of the person who authorized the disbursement/the person who purchased the item(s). If the cash register receipt, bill or invoice doesn't name what was purchased then write that on the receipt. Most of us have a hard time remembering what was purchased and by whom, a year later when we face an audit.

- 2 Likewise, each check written should have some or all of the following written on it: the name, address and account number for a person's utility bill; the invoice number or account number for other bills when appropriate; the reason for the purchase. (Examples: for stamps, food for food pantry, clothing for kids back-to-school).
- 3 Pay all credit bills on time. For example: the Conference account at a neighborhood drug store, the account at the grocery store, or the account at the gas station. Paying a bill late paints a bad picture of the Society in the eyes of the businesses that the Conference used for credit.
- 4 If a Conference does not receive canceled checks back from the bank or is unable to make a copy of or keep the original bill, cash register receipt, or company invoice; then complete a Conference Service Invoice (see Master A) or Conference Purchase (see Master B form) and use it as the documentation for the expense.
- 5 If the Conference gives out food vouchers or gas vouchers, then maintain the Conference Voucher Record (see Master C). This form will help keep track of which clients receive the vouchers, the dates the vouchers were given, what kind of vouchers were given, and if the vouchers were actually used. Vouchers should have an expiration date written on them and that date should also be recorded. It is also a good idea to number or code each voucher to help in tracking in case of theft of the vouchers. The Conference's money and time can be wasted if the person we're serving only wants cash, takes the voucher, and never uses it. It should also be recorded on the person's information sheet or card that they received a voucher.
- 6 Funds that are received by the Conference in which the donor specifies that his/her donation be spent on a specific program must be spent on that program. These are restricted funds; but they cannot be specified to help a particular individual or family. (For example, Mr. Jones gives \$500.00 to the Conference to help pay for funeral expenses of those in need. The \$500.00 must be spent in the way Mr. Jones requested.)

Section 4. Petty Cash

- 1 The keeping of a petty cash fund is not encouraged.
- 2 It is recommended that Conferences do not give cash to clients; but in some circumstances, it can be done.
- 3 It is recommended that Conferences do not give cash to members to make purchases.

However, if the Conference is in the practice of doing one or all of the above, it should be remembered that the custodian of the petty cash fund is the person responsible for making

up any shortages in the fund. The petty cash fund has just as much importance as any other account the Conference has and should be treated as such. If keeping a petty cash fund is the practice at your Conference then have a small petty cash fund, not more than \$50. There must be a receipt for each time money is used from the petty cash fund. When cash is given to those we serve, the receipt should be a piece of paper stating:

- The date the cash was given
 - The name of person the cash was given to
 - Purpose for which the cash was given
 - The signature of the person the cash was given to
 - And the names of the Vincentian case workers
- 4 When giving a member cash to make a purchase for the Conference: have the member bring back a receipt for the item(s) purchased and be sure that marked on the receipt is:
- The name of the member who made the purchase
 - The name of the store the purchase was made at
 - The reason for the purchase
 - What was purchased
 - For whom it was purchased (if intended for someone the Conference is serving)

When the Treasurer replenishes the fund, petty cash disbursements are to be recorded on the Expense page under the appropriate classification.

Section 5. Internal Revenue Service Regulation Regarding Donations and Other Tax Information

Two IRS regulations regarding charitable donations went into effect January 1, 1994. These regulations affect donors and the charities they donate to.

- 1 \$250 or more threshold for gifts made after 1993. No longer will a canceled check serve as proof of a single donation made in the amount of \$250.00 or more. The Conference must provide the donor with a written receipt/letter before the donor files his or her income tax return or before the donor's income tax return is due - whichever is earlier. The receipt/letter must provide a written acknowledgement of the contribution that states:
 - The amount of money given and/or a description of any-cash contribution received,
 - Whether the charity provided any goods or services for the contribution,
 - A description and value of the goods or services furnished by the charity. For example, when the Conference sends out a thank you note to a donor who gives a check for \$250 and the donor received no goods or services in exchange for the donation; insert a message like the following:

This letter serves along with your canceled check as proof to the IRS of your donation of (insert amount of donation). Let it also be known to the IRS that no goods or services were given to you for your donation.

Effective January 1, 1994, IRS regulations regarding charitable donations have changed. No longer will your canceled check be adequate proof of single donations of over \$250. You will also have to have a letter of receipt from the charity you donated to. Therefore, you need to file this letter.

If your Conference is going to receive vehicles as donations, it is a requirement that you become familiar with the tax laws and regulations (federal, state and local) associated with that type of donation. It is recommended that you use the National Vehicle Donation Program described at www.svdpcars.com.

2 Quid Pro Quo contributions for Gifts Made After 1993

Charities will have an express reporting obligation to provide written disclosure to donors of the value of goods or services the donor received in return for a donation of more than \$75. Penalties may be imposed on charities for noncompliance with this new reporting requirement. (For example: your Conference has a dinner dance fundraiser, Tickets cost \$100 per couple. It cost the Conference \$40 dollars per couple for the meal. The band donates their services free to the Conference. The tickets and advertisements must state something to this effect:

Tickets: \$100 per couple.

Value of meal per couple: \$40.

Value of deductible donation: \$60.

3 Volunteer Services

The value of volunteer services cannot be deducted by the volunteer.

4 Raffle Sales And Bingo Cards

Payments for raffle tickets and bingo cards are not deductible as charitable contributions.

5 State Sales Tax Exemption

In order to purchase items for the Conference and not pay any sales tax you may want to apply for a state tax-exempt form/letter/number. You can ask an accountant or your District Council for help. On the forms, it usually asks the reason the organization is exempt. The Society is a not-for-profit organization as defined by the Federal Internal Revenue Service. Each state issues its own exemption letter/form/number. You may want to keep a copy with the Master pages at the end of this book. (Check with your Diocesan or District Council as to the requirements in your state.)

A sales tax-exemption is usually given based on a Tax-ID (EIN). Most Conferences use the EIN of the District or Diocesan Council to which they belong. If this is the case for your Conference, the Council will have to apply for the sales tax-exemption and, once received, make copies of the sales tax-exemption letter and distribute it to the Conferences.

The sales tax-exemption generally applies to all purchases made. However, in order to actually take advantage of this, you have to show the letter whenever you make a purchase (the vendor may have to make a copy for their files). Some vendors that you use regularly may keep a single file copy of the letter and grant the exemption with every purchase, so you don't have to show the letter.

In the long term, sales tax-exemption can save the Conference a lot of money. Therefore, it is really important that all members who would make purchases on behalf of the Conference know about this and have access to the letter.

- 6 It is recommended that the Conference keep on hand copies of thank you letters/receipts given/sent to donors for 3 years.

Chapter 3

Definitions of Income and Expenses Classifications

Section 1. Definition of Income Classifications

The various “INCOME” classifications are defined as follow:

Item 1. Donations from Members: This includes financial contributions from Active, Associate and Contributing Vincentian Members, including the secret collection taken up at Conference Meetings. It is not necessary to try to isolate and count checks from Members that come through Church collections.

Item 2. Church and Poor Box Collections: This includes financial support from Church collections, Poor Box Collections, alms from distribution of religious papers at the Church door, and other Church-related offerings.

Item 3A. Fund Raising – Special Works: This includes receipts from all Special Works operated by the Conference.

Item 3B. Fund Raising – Stores: This includes receipts from all Stores operated by the Conference. On the Stores Annual Report, this item is titled “Total Revenue.”

Item 3C. Fund Raising – Special Events/Other: This includes donations not made in Church and financial support from activities not directly or exclusively Church-centered, such as suppers, and memorial donations. Fund Raising activities generally include all activities in which financial support is actively solicited (this includes Friends of the Poor Walk donations).

Item 4. Other SVDP Units Contributions: This includes financial support received by your Conference from any other Vincentian entities (e.g., Councils and/or Conferences). Friends of the Poor Grants are to be included here. Do not include funds that are transferred to the Conference from the stores and special works that the Conference owns and operates.

Item 5A. Other – Qualified Government Grants Only: This includes ONLY grants received from federal, state, and local government agencies that individually exceed \$50,000 with documentation that the grant provides an administrative allowance of ten percent or less. All other grants are to be included in 5D below (Other – Other Restricted Funds).

Item 5B. Other – Disaster Funds: This includes all money received for local disasters for which a special non-operating fund has been established. For example, if your Conference area suffered from a tornado, hurricane, or other disaster for which a special non-operating fund has been established, it can be included here.

Item 5C. Other – Capital Campaign Funds: This includes all money received for a formally defined non-operating capital campaign fund for your Conference. For example, if your Conference has established a capital campaign to raise funds to build a new pantry/office or make major renovations to an existing one, then the funds collected are restricted for that use and can be included here.

Item 5D. Other – Restricted Funds: This includes all funds received for special projects for which a fundraising campaign was designated. For example, if your Conference has a special campaign to raise funds for a Back-To-School Program, then the funds collected are restricted for that use. This DOES NOT include “memo” designations on checks or special Conference-designated funds. For example, if someone writes “for food” on their check in the memo area, these would not be considered restricted funds. Also, Conference-designations such as part of a budget do not restrict funds. This category also includes all grants that are not qualified and included in 5A above.

Item 5E. Other – Miscellaneous Receipts: This embraces all other sources of income (e.g., interest, bank adjustments, legacies, etc.).

Section 2. Definitions of Expenses Classifications

The various “Expense” items are defined as follows:

Item 6: Those We Served: This includes all funds expended for goods and services provided to those we served, including cash, checks, certificates, and gift cards. The principal method for payment of aid will be check, paid directly to the provider of those goods or services. This also includes the cost of food purchased to stock your food pantry. For those Conferences that operate stores and other Special Works, this includes dollars spent for direct aid to those in need.

In the case of gift cards and certificates, this includes the amount spent to purchase them-and does not reflect when they are distributed. If a member pays for some goods or services for the person they are serving out of their own pocket, they must be reimbursed for that expense by the Conference. The expense is then recorded as a valid expense of the Conference. If the Conference member does not want the money back, they must endorse the check and give it back to the Conference to be treated as a deposit. This provides a proper audit trail of the transaction.

Item 7: Disaster Contributions: This includes all monies expended for disaster relief locally, nationally and internationally.

Item 8A: Domestic Twinning: This includes funds sent to another domestic Conference or Council (over and above the solidarity contribution).

Item 8B: Foreign Twinning: These are funds sent to a Conference or Council outside of the United States. These funds must be disbursed through the National Council International Twinning Program.

Item 9: Solidarity Contribution: This is the annual solidarity contribution to upper Councils and Regions.

Item 10: Contributions to Upper Councils: Funds sent to an upper Council (over and above disaster, twinning, and solidarity contributions).

Item 11A: Operating Expenses – Special Works: This includes all funds expended to operate Special Works. This DOES NOT include dollars spent as direct aid to those in need in those special works.

Item 11B: Operating Expenses – Stores: This includes all funds expended to operate Stores. This DOES NOT include dollars spent as direct aid to those in need in those stores.

Item 11C: Operating Expenses – Special Events: This includes all funds expended to operate Special Events. This includes dollars spent to run such events as the Friends of the Poor Walk, fundraising dinners, etc.

Item 11D: Operating Expenses – Other: Include Conference operational expenses such as postage, stationery, printing, phone, travel, and similar expenses, as well as any rent or utilities paid by the Conference for use of facilities.

Item 12: Other: This includes all other expenditures not covered by another category. (Please attach an explanation.)

Chapter 4

General Instructions for Recording Entries on the Income and Expense Journal Pages

Section 1. Recording Entries in the Income Journal Page

This journal was designed to make it easier for the Treasurer to give Treasurer's Report at the meeting of the Conference. Both the Income and Expenses entries/pages should be balanced in accordance with the frequency of the Conference meetings.

Before recording entries on the Income page (see Master D) on the journal, complete the following steps:

1. Have all checks (or copies of all checks, or a list of all checks) that were received by the Conference since the last time you made entries into the journal on hand;
2. Segregate all cash income that is known to be given by a specific person or project from and any other cash income received from miscellaneous sources (for example: collection at church segregated from cash received at a Sunday breakfast fund raising project from a donation from a specific donor);
3. Know the dates when the cash was received by the Conference;
4. Know what the amount of the BALANCE BROUGHT FORWARD (or the beginning balance) is - this figure is the balance brought forward from the previous page.

Now you are ready to make entries on the Income page. Enter the dates you are making this first entry, then enter the BALANCE BROUGHT FORWARD under the column entitled BALANCE BROUGHT FORWARD. Hereafter you can determine the BALANCE BROUGHT FORWARD amount by subtracting TOTAL on the Expense page from TOTAL on the Income page

Now you are ready to begin entering the Conference's income. To make entries on the Income page follow these steps:

1. Enter the date of the Income in the DATE column
2. Enter brief details. Example: the donor's name, type of name of fund raising event, poor box, monthly church collection, collection from members at meeting telling the source of income in the DETAILS COLUMN
3. Enter the amount of the Income in the column under the appropriate Income classification:
 1. RECEIPTS FROM MEMBERS
 2. CHURCH/POOR BOX COLLECTIONS
 3. A. FUND RAISING – SPECIAL WORKS

B. FUND RAISING – STORES

C. FUND RAISING – SPECIAL EVENTS/OTHER

Only one column is provided. Precede each amount with the appropriate letter: A, B, or C. Then provide three totals at the end.

4. OTHER SVDP UNITS CONTRIBUTIONS

5. A. OTHER - GRANTS

B. OTHER – DISASTER FUNDS

C. OTHER – CAPITAL CAMPAIGN FUNDS

D. OTHER – RESTRICTED FUNDS

E. OTHER – MISCELLANEOUS RECEIPTS

Only one column is provided. Precede each amount with the appropriate letter: A, B, C, D, or E. Then provide five totals at the end.

4. Enter the same figures (the ones entered in step 2) in the TOTAL column. When you have finished entering all of the Conference's income for the period (for one week period if you're Conference meets weekly, for two weeks if the Conference meets every other week. Etc.), then proceed with the next step:

- Draw one line under the following column: BALANCE BROUGHT FORWARD, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and TOTAL
- Bring down the figure that you have for the BALANCE BROUGHT FORWARD and place it in that column but underneath the line you just drew.
- Add each of the columns numbered 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and TOTAL column, each separately. Place the answers underneath the line you drew in step 1. For Columns 3 and 5, provide totals for letters A, B, C, D and E.
- Verify that no math mistakes were made by adding the BALANCE BROUGHT FORWARD figure to all of the totals you got in column 1-5. This total should equal the total for column TOTAL.
- Draw two lines under all the columns to indicate that this is the end of the period.

Please see the page titled Examples of the Correct Use of Income and Expenses Pages for example of how to make entries on Income page of the journal. [see page 22]

Section 2. Recording Entries on the Expense Journal Page

Before recording entries on the EXPENSE PAGE (SEE Master F) on the journal, be sure each expense has the required supporting documentation and that, each piece of documentation has the necessary information on it. Put all documentation in order of the date the check was written.

Now you are ready to begin entering the Conference's expenses. To make entries on the EXPENSE page, follow these steps:

- 1 Enter the date of the expense in the DATE Column of the EXPENSE page.
- 2 Enter a brief description of the expense. Examples: SVDP food for pantry, electric bill–Smith, Medicine-Jones, SVDP Disaster donation-Los Angeles, Solidarity Contribution-National and Regional.
- 3 Enter the amount of the expense in the column under the appropriate expense classification:

- 6: THOSE WE SERVED
- 7: DISASTER CONTRIBUTION
- 8A: DOMESTIC TWINNING
- 8B: FOREIGN TWINNING
- 9: SOLIDARITY CONTRIBUTION
- 10: CONTRIBUTION TO UPPER COUNCIL
- 11: A. OPERATING EXPENSE – SPECIAL WORKS
- B. OPERATING EXPENSE – STORES
- C. OPERATING EXPENSE – SPECIAL EVENTS
- D. OPERATING EXPENSE – OTHER

Only one column is provided. Precede each amount with the appropriate letter: A, B, C, or D. Then provide three totals at the end.

12: OTHER

- 4 When you have finished entering all of the Conference’s expenses for the period (for one week period if you Conference meets weekly, for two weeks if the Conference meets every other week, etc.; this is the same period as for the INCOME page) then proceed with the next steps:
 1. Draw one line under the following columns 6, 7, 8A, 8B, 9, 10, 11, 12, and TOTAL.
 2. Add each of the columns numbered 6, 7, 8A, 8B, 9, 10, 11, 12, and the TOTAL column: Place the answer underneath the line you drew in step 1. For Column 11, provide 4 totals for letters A, B, C, and D.
 3. Verify that no math mistakes were made by adding the totals of columns 6, 7, 8A, 8B, 9, 10, 11, and 12 together. This total should equal the total for the column TOTAL.
 4. Draw two lines under all the columns to indicate this is the end of the period.

The new BALANCE brought FORWARD on the INCOME page can be found by subtracting TOTAL EXPENSE from TOTAL INCOME. This total should be placed on the INCOME page under the two lines you drew and in the BALANCE BROUGHT FORWARD column.

Please see the next page for an example of how to make entries on the EXPENSE page of the journal.

INCOME PAGE

Date	Details	Balance Brought Forward	#1 Donation From Members	#2 Church/ Poor Box	#3 Fund Raising Proceeds	#4 Other SVDP Contributions	#5 Other		Total Receipts 'A'
2011									
1-Sep	Opening	\$240.00							
4-Sep	Taco Sales				\$150.00				\$150.00
4-Sep	Green Bags			\$800.00					\$800.00
11-Sep	J Kelly Memorial				\$200.00				\$200.00
11-Sep	Sacred Collection		\$30.00						\$30.00
	Total Receipts		\$30.00	\$800.00	\$350.00				\$1,180.00
	Total 'A' Income	\$1,180.00							
	Total 'B' Expense	\$754.00							
	Opening + A - B	\$666.00							

EXPENSES PAGE

Date	Details	Check #	#6 Those We Serve	#7 Disaster Contribution	#8A Domestic Twinning	8B Foreign Twinning	#9 Solidarity Contribution	#10 Contribution Upper Council	#11 Operational Expense	#12 Other	Total Expenses 'B'
2011											
1-Sep	Postmaster	2035							\$44.00		\$44.00
2-Sep	CPS Gene Brown	2036	\$50.00								\$50.00
5-Sep	Twin Columbia	2037				\$100.00					\$100.00
5-Sep	St Francis Conf.	2038			\$100.00						\$100.00
10-Sep	Food Vouchers	2039	\$250.00								\$250.00
11-Sep	National/Regional	2040					\$180.00				\$180.00
20-Sep	Upper Council	2041						\$30.00			\$30.00
	Total Expense		\$300.00		\$100.00	\$100.00	\$180.00	\$30.00	\$44.00		\$754.00

Chapter 5

“In Kind” Goods and Services Given

Section 1. “In Kind” Goods and Services and How To Assign a \$\$\$ Value for the Services

The Society uses term “In Kind” to refer to (donated goods or services given to the client instead of financial help). These donated goods and services are valuable and therefore must be accounted for in order to get a clear picture of the impact the Conference/Society makes upon the community that it serves. Like the other levels of the Society, the Conference must assign a value to donated goods and services given to clients and keep written track of that value.

The National Office asks that we account for the value of “things” given to clients such as food, furniture, clothing, household items, automobiles, etc. Assigning value to “things” is not an easy task. The following are some general suggestions for assigning value to “things”

1. If the “things” given are used items, the Vincentian should assign a value by honestly asking him/her what he/she would pay for the item(s) by taking into consideration the condition of the items(s).
2. It is acceptable to assign values using “blanket” value similar to the following:
 - used children’s shirts = \$2.00
 - used child’s shoes = \$2.00
 - used women dresses = \$6.00
 - canned food = \$2.00 per pound
 - used mattress set = \$75.00

This method of assigning value should take into consideration that particular like items assigned the same value are in relatively the same physical condition. For instance: that all mattress sets worth \$75.00 are in good condition, clean and not torn; or that all women’s dresses that are worth \$6.00 are in good condition and usable for going to the store, church or to work in.

The above values are simply examples and should not be taken as the true value to be cited. Your District/Diocesan Council should determine a list of associated values. IRS also has a list of values that can be used as deductions for donated merchandise that donors can use on their tax filings.

3. If the “things” are new, unused and undamaged, choose from the following methods to assign a value:
 - if there is a price tag still on the item, assign that value to it;

- if there is no price tag on then item, then the Vincentian should assign a value that he/she believes it would sell for if it were in a store;
- If the Vincentian does not have a good idea of the value, then he/she should check for the price in a store or in advertisements.

NOTE: When a Conference writes a voucher to their Council Thrift Store and the Conference does not pay for the voucher, the value of the merchandise is reported on the store report and not the Conference's. If the store is owned and operated by the Conference, the value is recorded by the Conference. If the Conference pays for the purchase, the value is recorded by the conference.

- 4 When recording the in-kind value of food distributed, keep in mind that Conferences normally give out food that is a combination of donated as well as purchased. If this is the case, make sure that what is recorded is the value of the donated food only. This may be difficult to determine on an individual basis. One way to do this is to estimate the average value of the donated food in a box or bag. Then simply use that average for each food box or bag distributed.

Assigning a value to “services” is usually an easier process than the one for “things.” “Services” are usually given by persons who actively work in the field of the “service” provided and therefore know the value of the “service” they provided to the Conference clients. Simply ask them what they would normally charge for their “services.”

For example: The client has a car that is in need of repairs because there are no breaks. The client works steadily and needs the car for his work. A parishioner owns a garage and has made it known to the Conference President that he would be willing to help a client occasionally by donating the labor charges on a job if the Conference pays for the parts. The garage owner agrees to do the job. The Conference pays for the parts. The garage owner tells the Conference President that the labor cost donated was \$60. Therefore, the value of the donated service is \$60.

The value of “In Kind” Services Given is reported at the Conference meeting just as is the Treasurer’s Report. The cumulative total value for the fiscal year is also given in the Annual Conference Report. Therefore it is advisable to keep accurate and up to date records of the value of “In Kind” Services Given just as you do with the other finances for the Conference.

Section 2. Example of the Correct Use of “In Kind” Service Value Form (see next page)

Chapter 6

The Annual Conference Report and Solidarity

Section 1. What Is the Annual Conference Report and Why Is It Necessary to Submit It?

In order for the upper levels of the Society to consider a Conference active or inactive, two things are required: 1) the completion and filing of the Annual Conference Report and 2) the payment of Solidarity Contributions to the appropriate upper levels.

The Annual Conference Report is a summary of the activities, financial condition, membership status and other statistical information about the charitable works of Conference. This report is completed by the Secretary and Treasurer of the Conference and signed by the President. The National requirement is that of Annual Reporting. (Some Councils require that Conferences report monthly or quarterly. If that is the case with the Council you belong to, make sure you get a copy of the monthly or quarterly forms and their instructions from your Council.)

When the Annual Conference Report is complete, three copies should be made, one for the Conference Records, one to be submitted to the District Council President and one sent to the (Arch) Diocesan Council Office. (If the Conference is not affiliated with any District or (Arch) Diocesan Council then the report is sent directly to the Regional and National offices.) Each District Council President consolidates the data from all the Conference Reports he/she receives and then submits the District Consolidated Conferences Report to the (Arch) Diocesan Council Office. All of the District Consolidated Conferences Reports are then consolidated into one report and forwarded to the SVDP National Office in Maryland Heights, MO.

Annual Reporting at all levels in the Society can be done online through the reporting facility of the National Database System. The Conferences enter their reports online and then a Consolidated Conferences report can be generated for each District Council. Each District Council enters its Annual Report and then a Consolidated Districts Report can be generated for the (Arch)Diocesan Council. The (Arch)Diocesan Council enters its Annual Report and then National generates a consolidated report for the Diocese.

Gathering the financial and statistical information is important to the Conference for a number of reasons:

- 1 The Conference members need the reinforcement of the impact of the work they have done. By looking at the financial and client statistics for the year, they can see how their parish and community have been helped and point out areas where they may need to improved or changed.
- 2 When the Conference shares the information from the Annual Conference Report with their fellow parishioners it can help increase financial and “In Kind” donations.

- 3 Sharing the report with the parish can also encourage new membership in the Conference.
- 4 Informing the pastor with the summary results of the report can act as a positive reinforcement for the charitable works of the Conference by showing the pastor that, indeed, the Conference is helping him take care of the needy.

The combined statistics of all Annual Conference Reports are very important at all levels of the Society. At each level, the combined statistical information can be a huge benefit when seeking grants for funding or seeking other financial support. Often this funding goes to start new programs or to sustain/supplement existing programs that help the Conference with client aid.

Section 2. How to Complete the Treasurer's Report Portion of the Annual Conference Report

The report need not be a laborious job for the Treasurer if he/she has been doing their job throughout the year. The year-end figures for the Treasurer's Report and the "In Kind" Service Given sections of the Annual Conference Report are simply the cumulative figures of same sections of the weekly (or bi-weekly or twice monthly) reports found in the Conference Records/minute Book that is maintained by the Conference throughout the year.

To complete the Treasurer's Report and "In Kind" service sections of the Annual Conference Report, proceed through the following steps:

- 1 Obtain all of the weekly (or bi-weekly) reports that you have given to the Conference at the Conference's meetings. These should be kept in the Conference records/Minutes Book for the fiscal year (the fiscal year is from October 1st of one year until September 30th of the following year).
- 2 Have available the Conference's balanced checkbook, any petty cash, a bank statement showing any money that the Conference may have in a savings account or CD account, your Journal pages and a copy of last year's Annual Conference Report.
- 3 Taking the reports referred to in step #1 look for the first report for the fiscal year. On the first report under the section, Treasurer's Report, look for the words Balance at start of period. This figure should be the same as the figure for the Balance at the end of the period under this same section on last year's Annual Conference report. If the figure is the same then write the number down for the Balance at the start of the period on the Annual Conference report for this year. If the figures are not the same then the correct beginning figure must be determined by doing the following:

Go back to the balanced Conference checkbook-going back to September 30th of last year. Look and see what the checkbook balance was after the last transaction

was made for the period. Add to the figure the amount of any cash that remained in petty cash plus the amount in any saving account or CD for the period. This figure will be the Balance at start of period or the beginning balance for October 1st.

- 4 To obtain the figure for item number 1, on the Annual Conference Report under Receipts, proceed as follows: take all the weekly (bi-weekly) reports in the Conference Records/Minute Book and add together all the figures recorded for number 1. This sum will reflect the yearly total of Donations from Members
- 5 Follow the same procedure for items number 2, 3A, 3B, 3C, 4, 5A, 5B, 5C, 5D, and 5E.
- 6 The next step is to add the yearly totals for numbers 1-5E and that equals the Total Receipts for the Year. To check this answer, add all the Total Receipts from figures on all the weekly (bi-weekly) reports. The answers should be equal.
- 7 Now you are ready for the Disbursements column. To obtain the yearly totals for numbers 6-12 precede as you did in step 4 above.
- 8 Add the yearly totals for the number 6-12 and the sum will be the Total Disbursed.
- 9 To obtain the Balance at the end of period, proceed as follows: add the Balance at start of period to the Total Receipts and subtract the Total Disbursed. To check this answer, add all the Balance at the end of the period figures from all the weekly (bi-weekly) reports. The answers should be equal. This answer should also equal the balance in your checkbook as of September 30th of the current year, plus any petty cash, plus any money in savings, CDs, etc. (This answer will also be the Balance at the start of the period for October 1st of the next fiscal year.)
- 10 To obtain the figure for the “In-Kind Goods and Services Given” section, follow the same procedures as you did for the Treasurer’s Report.

Section 3: Annual Report Form

Conference annual reporting may be done in one of two ways. It may be done online through the National Council Database and Reporting System (www.svdpsusa.net). This is the primary method for reporting. Only authorized Vincentians are allowed to report this way. However, every Conference should have at least one member who is authorized to enter the annual report online. This authorization is given by the District Council President. For an Isolated Conference, the authorization is granted by the Regional Vice President.

The second method is to report using the paper forms provided by the National Office. These forms are available on the National Website (www.svdpusa.org). Many Conferences use the paper forms as a method for gathering and organizing the annual report data and then go to the online system to actually enter the data.

The Conference Annual Report is a three person job. The Secretary enters all of the statistical data. The Treasurer enters all of the financial data. And the President signs the document stating that everything is correct.

Section 4: Solidarity Contributions to the Councils

Conferences pay Solidarity Contributions to the upper councils of the Society. Some Conferences pay solidarity to both the District Council and (Arch)Diocesan levels as well as the National Council levels. Conference Presidents will be advised of their expected contribution each year. International and Regional Expenses are included with the National Council solidarity contribution.

Rationale: District, (Arch)Diocesan, Regional, and National Councils provide services to animate and coordinate Conferences. It is right that their expenses be fairly divided among affiliated groups. This is especially important when Regions or Councils have little opportunity to raise funds on their own. Conferences have a responsibility to provide Solidarity Contributions to provide higher units of the Society with funds to contribute to their services.

Chapter 7

Suggested Audit Procedures

Every Conference is expected to have an informal audit each year. This informal audit covers the operations as well as the financials of the Conference. If a Conference has a number of special works and/or a store, it may be necessary to have a formal audit by a CPA or accounting firm.

There is a separate document that can be found on the National Website that describes in detail how the Conference Audit should take place. This can be found in the [Growth & Revitalization Portal](#) under Conference Officer Training.

No attempt will be made here to explain this process.

Chapter 8

Retirement of Records

Section 1. Financial Records

The financial records of the Conference should be saved for the time defined in the Retention Schedule on page 32 of the 2007 Manual. This is the primary definition of retention requirements.

Annual Conference Reports and the Conference Record and Minutes Book are often saved for many years as a history of the Conference.

Section 2. Donor Correspondence or Donation Slips

The following donor correspondence should be saved for minimum of 3 years:

- Thank you letters,
- Correspondence telling the donor what he/she has given as a total for the year.
- Any donations forms or slips that can be used as proof of a donation.

Chapter 9

Using Computers for Conference Accounting

Section 1. Introduction

This Manual has focused on presenting a basic paper-based recordkeeping system since that method is available for every Vincentian to use.

However it is clear that computers can offer an excellent alternative way to maintain account registers, categorize transactions, and produce financial reports on demand.

Whether to use paper or computers is entirely up to your conference. It will depend on the equipment you have available and the comfort-level of the treasurer. Some Vincentians are used to paper-based accounting records, and prefer to stick with them. Others gravitate more naturally to computers, which for them are familiar and comfortable.

It is important to note what computers will NOT do for you. Computers DO NOT remove the need to maintain proper backup documentation (invoices, vouchers, receipts, etc.) for your transactions.

Section 2. Spreadsheets

A spreadsheet program can provide a simple way to lay out your checking register, as well as to lay out the exact same journal tables that are presented in this Manual.

You can add basic formulas to keep a running balance on your checking register, and to add up totals in your journals.

Advantages:

- Spreadsheets are familiar to many people, and available in common software packages like Microsoft Office and OpenOffice.

Disadvantages:

- You have to build the layouts yourself, and you need to create formulas if you want automatic calculations such as running balances and totals.
- It is easy to make mistakes in your formulas which will result in incorrect calculations. Careful proofreading and sanity checking is required.
- There are no built-in reports. You have to generate report templates by hand.
- There are no built-in features to help you reconcile your account. You have to do this yourself.

Section 3. Simple Accounting Software

Simple home or small-business accounting software such as Quicken can be an excellent solution for Conference bookkeeping. Such software is available for very reasonable prices, and there is lots of documentation available to help you know how to use them.

This is the recommended option for regular Conferences that wish to use a computer-based system.

Advantages:

- Specifically designed for bookkeeping, so the software already understands about accounts, registers and reports. You can focus on entering your information, and don't have to worry about designing templates or formulas.
- A key feature of such programs is the ability to generate reports. You can create a report for a meeting, or your year-end report, usually with just a few clicks.
- Another key feature is that it will help you reconcile your account to your bank statements, and will provide reports that you can file to show that you did this task.
- Since this class of software is focused on home and small business (non-expert) users, they focus on keeping things simple. You do not have to be an accountant to use this software effectively.

Disadvantages:

- The software comes with lots of built-in categories that you can use to classify your transactions, but none are an exact match for the categories on the Conference Annual Report. You can overcome this by adding categories, e.g.: "01-Members", "02-Church", and so on, and then being disciplined about using these categories that you created.

Section 4. Professional Accounting Software

Professional accounting packages such as QuickBooks or PeachTree are undoubtedly capable, but are usually overkill for regular Conference bookkeeping needs in terms of capability, complexity and cost.

Even if the current treasurer has already has the software and knows how to use it, keep in mind that no-one does a job in a Conference forever. Many members may be capable of using or learning simple accounting software, but your pool of members who can use professional-grade software is going to be small to non-existent.

EXCEPTION:

If the Conference operates a Special Work or Store with significant financial activity or paid employees, professional software is often essential, as is a skilled bookkeeper.

Section 5. SVdP Specialized Software

There are multiple versions of specialized software that have been developed by and for SVdP. These packages take into account:

- How things are done in the Society
- What the accounting requirements are
- The various categories of income and expense
- Tracking activity with those we serve
- Maintaining statistics as required by the Society
- Automatic generation of reports.

The best approach to finding an appropriate package for your Conference or Council is to contact the National Office, get advice as to what packages are available, and research them. In the long run, these packages can help keep the Conference organized and save time.

Chapter 10

Glossary of Terms

Bank Reconciliation

This is the process of balancing the bank statement with the checkbook balance.

Blanket

Used in text refers to assigning one monetary value to “In Kind” goods that are alike of the same quality/physical condition.

Clients/Those We Serve

This refers to those persons who are in need and helped in some way by the SVDP Conference or Council. The preference among members in the Society is to NOT use the term “client.” This term tends to make the Society seem like a business rather than a work of love. It is used here only as a term of familiar reference.

Disbursements

This means to pay out, is interchangeable with the words: expenses, payments, and costs.

Endorse/Endorsement

- 1 To write the name of the Conference/Society of St. Vincent de Paul/St. Vincent de Paul Society on the back of a check the same way it appears on the front of the check;
- 2 To write the words “For Deposit Only” and the bank account number can serve as an endorsement of the check.

Government Subsidy

This is an allotment, allowance, stipend, grant or income from the government. For example the Conference is paid a certain amount of money by the government for providing hot meals to senior citizens.

Legacy

Something handed down from one generation to the next or from a donor to a charity; is interchangeable with the words: gift, estate, inheritance, and bequest.

Receipts

The amount of something received; is interchangeable with the words “income” and “proceeds”.

SVDP Units

Refers to the different organizational levels of the Society of St Vincent de Paul: The Conference, District Council, (Arch)Diocesan Council, Regional, and National Council.

Twinning

- 1 Domestic twinning refers to the financial help that is given by a Conference or Council in the USA to another Conference or Council within the USA.
- 2 Foreign twinning refers to the financial help that is given by a Conference or Council in the USA to another Conference or Council outside the USA.

Vouchers

- 1 A vendor originated certificate, document, or statement that the Conference or Council purchases directly from the vendor and gives to clients to use for certain purchases at that particular vendor’s place of business.
- 2 A Conference (or Council) originated certificate document that has been previously agreed upon with the vender and guarantees to the vender that the Conference of Council that distributes the voucher to clients will pay for the items purchased at the vendor’s place of business.

Chapter 11

Master Forms

- Master A. Conference Service Invoice
- Master B. Conference Purchase Invoice
- Master C. Conference Voucher Record
- Master D. Income Page
- Master E. Expense Page
- Master F. “In Kind” Service Value Form
- Master G. Bank Reconciliation Form

Conference Service Invoice

Name of Conference: _____

Information about the person services were given on behalf of:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Name of Vendor/ Company/Person Paid	Account Number of The Person Served	Date Bill Was Paid	Check #	Amount Paid

Signature of Vincentian Authorizing Payment: _____

Signature of Vincentian Signing Check: _____

MASTER A

Conference Purchase Invoice

Name of Conference: _____

Name of Vincentian Making Purchase: _____

Was the purchase made with a Conference Check? _____ Yes or _____ No

Date of Purchase	Name of Store or Vendor Purchased From	Items Purchased	Check #	# Units Purchased	Price Per Unit	Total Cost
					Total Amount of Purchase	

MASTER B

