

**Welcome and opening Advancing the Mission Conference – Oct. 27, 2015**

**Rhoda Kay Glunk, SCN**

**As you begin your conference on advancing the Mission and fundraising as Ministry, I would like to share a few brief insights from the Vincent tradition.**

**Both Vincent and Louise were very involved in the ministry of fundraising.**

**Whenever they set up a new house, they established a foundation to handle the finances for the house and its ministry.**

**Reading their correspondence reveals that they were involved in a multiplicity of financial undertakings and were well aware of the complexities of managing finances for ministry.**

**Vincent and Louise were also investors in the name of the poor: they invested in municipal bonds issued by the city of Paris, they took advantage of “duty-free” products to use in ministry. They cultivated benefactors both for donations and in kind services.**

**They were good stewards, themselves, as well as instructing others in how to perform the ministry of finance and fundraising. They were open to seeking the advice of others, relied on managers and those more adept in the world of finances. They set up systems and appointed reliable administrators to track and collect income, to be responsible for distribution funds and to respect the wishes of donors.**

**Vincent was also among the first to develop a practice of gathering reports and stories from the Vincentians in hands on ministry with the poor, and publish them for distribution to advertise the needs of the poor.. He saw this a a means to sensitize others to the meaning of what they were about.**

**In one communication to those approaching donors, Vincent counseled:**

***“present the condition of the poor truly and simply...donors love directness and not discourses...it is good for donors if someone writes about the good that they have seen their donations accomplish.”***

**To continue this vision, today's mission-driven ministry of fund raising requires extensive collaboration and advocacy. Vincent and Louise could fund their initiatives because their appeal always focused on the mission – to serve the suffering Christ reflected in the faces of the poor.**

**May your time spent in listening and sharing, examining and discovering these next few days, invigorate you and enhance your knowledge and skills as you return to your ministries.**

**God bless you and thank you for being part of our SCN family.**