

The Mission of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul

Inspired by Gospel values, the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, a Catholic lay organization, leads women and men to join together to grow spiritually by offering person-to-person service to those who are needy and suffering in the tradition of its founder, Blessed Frédéric Ozanam, and patron, St. Vincent de Paul.

As a reflection of the whole family of God, members, who are known as Vincentians, are drawn from every ethnic and cultural background, age group, and economic level. Vincentians are united in an international society of charity by their spirit of poverty, humility and sharing, which is nourished by prayer and reflection, mutually supportive gatherings and adherence to a basic Rule.

Organized locally, Vincentians witness God's love by embracing all works of charity and justice. The Society collaborates with other people of good will in relieving need and addressing its causes, making no distinction in those served because, in them, Vincentians see the face of Christ.

Where you see evidence of St. Vincent de Paul in the Treasure Valley, you frequently see the words “We Help People”: a very simple mission. To fund that help, the Our Lady of the Valley Conference in Caldwell, Id. invited all to participate in the International Dinner, the major fundraiser of the year. This year was the 4th Annual event, held on Oct 7 in the Holy Family Hall at Our Lady of the Valley.

This International Dinner serves several purposes for our conference. We use the special foods and entertainment to showcase the richness and variety of cultures in our area, and bring our community together. During the evening we are able to expose more and more people to the work of the St. Vincent de Paul. The proceeds of the dinner are a major means of support to our conference.

At this year’s dinner, dishes from around the world were featured, foods from the many cultures found here. Most are popular favorites year after year, but we always add something new to the menu. Solomo pork sandwiches and rice pudding were offered at the Basque table. A tasting menu included: Tamales from Mexico, Lumpia and Noodles from the Philippines, Sauerkraut and Sausage from Germany, Kalua pork, fried rice and watermelon salad from Hawaii, Saifun noodle salad from Japan, Baklava from Greece, Spaghetti and Meatballs from Italy, Ice Cream from Holland. Chicken Americana and Cole Slaw from the USA. Food was all handcrafted by ethnic experts, and presented with decorations from their regions. This year a new table, Breads of the World, rounded out the fare.

Entertainment included a classical soloist (Adriana Sena), authentic Aztec dancers (Danza Azteca), Bahamian rapper from Cofl(Irvin Brown), solo violinist (Don Hancock), fiddlers, cello & piano (the Mullen Family), and Cofl students from Ecuador, Swaziland and the Canary Islands (Nullus Notio Band). Colorful flags and decorations created a global atmosphere

A Silent Auction with over 200 items allowed attendees to further fund the mission of St. Vincent de Paul. Handmade items as well as unique giftware donated by supporters of the Society were displayed for bidding. Included in the auction items were the popular Buy a Box, Buy a Basket & Buy a Bed. A bidder could “Buy a Box” of fresh produce, “Buy a Basket” of Toiletries, or “Buy a Bed” for a child. Monies collected from these are set aside for our home visitors to purchase these specific items for families in need.

Generosity of the participants and parishioners in time, talent and treasure kept costs for the dinner negligible, so proceeds can go directly to help the needy in our area.

The 4th Annual International Dinner was an enormous success thanks to all who made the event possible, and those that supported the event by attending.