



THE ROLE OF A SPIRITUAL ADVISOR

Since the beginning of the Society, a Spiritual Advisor has been appointed to help foster spiritual life within the Conferences and Councils under the guidance of the Holy Spirit and in conformity with the Rule and Statutes of the Society.”

The spirit of poverty and encouragement

Members of the Society are united in the same spirit of poverty and of sharing. They encourage one another to live a profound spiritual life and spirit of prayer. For this purpose, the role of a Spiritual Adviser is very important.

Rule 3.13



Vincentians serve in hope. They rejoice in discovering the spirit of prayer in the poor, for in the silence, the poor can perceive God's Plan for every person.

Rule 1.11

Why is Spiritual Growth Critical?

Focused on our true mission: the primary purpose of the Society for the **growth in the spirituality of the members** because:

- We can't give to others what we don't have ourselves. A special accountability to model the virtues, especially in difficult situations/relationships
- We need the grace of the Holy Spirit especially in difficult and challenging situations so a spiritual advisor must seek and call on the Holy Spirit during ALL parts of the meetings.

The word Advisor comes from the Anglo-French word : "to look at, examine, consider, inform.

The Spiritual Advisor journeys WITH fellow members as an animator, encourager, partner, friend.



THE ROLE OF THE SPIRITUAL ADVISOR IN A CONFERENCE

Am I Holy Enough?

There is a common misconception that the Spiritual Reflection is intended to be “taught,” as a homily, or merely shared by reading aloud from a personal trove of Catholic or Vincentian literature. As a result, we sometimes find ourselves asking, “Am I qualified to be a Spiritual Advisor? **Am I holy enough?**”

The short answer to that question is, “**Yes.**”

The Spiritual Advisor is called not to be a teacher, but a “**spiritual animator**”; to be dedicated to learning about Vincentian Spirituality; not to have all the answers, but to seek answers together with other members; not to form members, but to encourage each member to pursue personal formation on our shared Vincentian Pathway. Indeed, this is consistent with an outcome of Vatican Council II – a renewal of an appreciation of the priesthood of all believers.

The Spirituality of St. Vincent

Having been placed under the patronage of St. Vincent de Paul by the founding members, members of the Society are inspired by his spirituality, manifest in his attitudes, his thoughts, his example and his words.

Rule 2.5

How to Lead the Vincentian Reflections

It is important to describe the process which is going to take place, and do not be afraid of repetition just because you have done this many times before:

- Provide a copy to each member of your Conference for their personal reflection
- Stress that sharing is not compulsory and mention the need for confidentiality regarding what our fellow members may share.
- Ask, or assign, different members to read the different sections:

Leader invites group to:

- Become relaxed and aware of God's presence with us
- Reading
- Each section is read aloud, slowly and prayerfully, by the different members
- Hearing different voices will allow different emphasis on words/phrases

Quiet Period

Leader invites everyone:

- To quietly reflect on the readings and notice if anything strikes them
- Introduces the Discussion Question suggested in the Reflection
- Allows 2-3 minutes of quiet

Sharing

Leader invites members who wish to share on the Discussion Question, or on how one of the readings struck them. Possibly not everyone will share, but time should be allowed for each person who wishes to share his/her thoughts.

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Rule, 3.13

The Spiritual Advisor in the Conference

- Inspires and challenges new works
- Assists in the development of Vincentian spiritual formation
- Keeps focus on practical love toward the poor
- Reinforces our Core Values and keeps them at the forefront of our work

At Conference Meetings:

- Lead/delegate opening and closing prayers
- Utilize published Society resources or provide appropriate Vincentian or scriptural readings
- Lead discussion/reflection after each reading
- Insure all meetings are conducted in a spirit of Vincentian friendship

