



# STORIES

---

Stories are so many things. Stories are the way we connect with each other. Sharing stories is how we make sense of life. Vincentians often gather to reflect on the lessons, sorrows and miracles that occur in the course of their experiences with people who live in poverty.

Vincentian formation does not begin with reading a book, attending a meeting, undertaking a course or with those in need. The philosophy of Vincentian Formation is a 'GO-THEN' philosophy: -

**Go serve them, then come back and talk to your fellow members about it.**

**Go serve them, then begin to ask what works and does not work.**

**Go serve them, then begin to figure out why they, and others like our Companions, are poor in such a wealthy society.**

**Go serve them, then begin to ask others who serve them how they keep serving over the years.**

**Go serve them.**

The best learning happens when it is grounded in real life and real questions. It is in our sharing stories, about characters we have met, things we have done along the way, experiences with our Companions, that we realise we may have experienced a Vincentian moment.

These moments abound and are the primary way that we teach and support one another.

Adapted from the work of Fr Dennis Holtschneider CM

*Lord of all people,  
During your time on earth,  
you identified with the poor  
and instructed us to care for one  
another,  
for our neighbour  
and especially for the least of  
our sisters and brothers*

*Be with us as we advocate for the poor.*

*Help us to persevere in joy and love on  
their behalf.*

*Add your voice to ours  
as we speak out for those  
who are not heard in our communities.*

*Guide us as we work, comfortable in the  
knowledge*

*that we are doing your will  
for this day and time and place,  
and that you will take care of tomorrow.*

*We ask this in the name of Jesus, his  
blessed Mother, our patron saints, St  
Vincent de Paul and St Louise de  
Marillac and our founders, Blessed  
Frederic and Blessed Rosalie Rendu.*

Adapted from the work of Ruth Zeme