

## **SVdP Email update from April 17, 2025**

Hello to all, and a very special welcome to our new members! We are so very grateful that we are being given the opportunity to share this ministry with you. At this time, which includes pending membership, our conference has 116 members.

1) Our original May 23rd general meeting date needs to be changed for two reasons; the 1st reason is the most important. Our very long-time member of our ministry, Dianne Picotti, has made a big decision to sell her home in Toms River and move to Jackson. Due to distance Dianne will no longer be able to help with our food pantry and documenting our data for each of our cases. Dianne has been more than faithful to her commitment (since 2011), and we want to share our gratitude to her.

**The new general meeting date is May 16th at 1:30 in the parish center.** Mary Jo Phillips has volunteered to take on Dianne's responsibility. (thank you!) As always for our general meeting we will be serving a light lunch as the result of a donation from a member, plus we'll have some additional salads, beverages, and desserts. I have spoken to Dianne and that day is very convenient for her. **PLEASE join** us if the day is convenient for you. We have many different topics to discuss together. So, in addition to the luncheon each ministry coordinator will give an overview presentation and bring us all up to date.

As of now, our June date of **June 27th** is staying the same. It is always a pleasant afternoon when we can be together. A contact was made to John Connelly, and we hope to have a guest speaker at our meeting in May.

2) Although our Board members are also involved in so many aspects of our conference, we have been able to consistently have our weekly Monday board meetings to ensure our support to our guests. Although the church is closed this Monday we are still meeting. We will get together at my home, giving our home visitors the support to help our guests move forward with their concerns. If there is anything in particular you would like us to address on Monday, please let any of our Board be aware of your concern or question.

3) I have attended two very important County meetings, and a few of us have been able to attend some, if not all the Town Hall meetings with regard to the homeless shelter being proposed at the location of 405 Washington St. I have comfortably stated in public that it may not be the right place, but for now, it is life's only option for a period of time. Humanity needs to have a much better beginning in our County. I presented our conference data of last year to the zoning board members stating that so much more needs to be done.

Meg and I were together the other night, and Debbie, Ben and Ed have also attended previous Town Hall meetings. We need to represent our comments as individuals, not SVdP according to a diocesan meeting I had with Joan Olden. We may mention we are members of SVdP. I would like to discuss the upcoming May 22nd Town Hall meeting with you on May 16th and get your insight.

4) There are always wonderful celebrations of life that we get to experience every day, and we are so blessed. Yet, at the same time I would like to ask you to keep close to your heart, and in your prayers Marie DeSordi, Carl Galanti, Archie Miller, Marie Alfano, Ben Russell, and Annette Avena. We want them to have the best of health possible and in the case of Marie Alfano and Annette some sense of peace as they both recently had a profound loss in their lives of someone they love.

5) Susan DeMillio gave me a wonderful book entitled; "Holy Moments...a handbook for the rest of your life." written by Matthew Kelly. I have enjoyed reading the book very much. The following is an excerpt, and I would like to share it with you:

*"You have so much more to offer. You sense it. You have known it for a long time. It's a truth that lingers, waiting patiently for you to pay attention to it. It's a soul sense, when your soul senses such a thing, it should never be ignored. You may find yourself saying or thinking..."Something is missing..." "there must be more to life"... "I have so much more to offer..." These are actually sacred truths. But we often treat them as human malfunctions. We think we need to be fixed., and that is the tragedy. When you experience these yearnings, something is very, very right. You are not malfunctioning. Nothing could be further from the truth. Your heart, mind, body, and soul are working together to get your attention. These longings are amazing signs that your whole person is functioning beautifully.*

*When you sense that something is missing, that there must be more to life, or that you have so much more to offer, your intuition has never been so sharp. Claim these to be sacred truths about yourself. Listen and follow where they lead. We think something is wrong, we think we need to be fixed. We view these sacred truths about yourself. Listen and follow where they lead.*

*Each of these yearnings is a summons to live a more meaningful life, an invitation to live life to the fullest, a sacred call to become who you were created to be. We crave more because we were made for more."*

At this time of Easter, we are grateful for the lives we have been given and the blessings we do receive. Please remember what a blessing you are to your family, your friends and to all who we serve. In addition, remember you have truly become who you were created to be, and as I have mentioned to many of you, I am grateful to share this life knowing you.

I do need to end on a note that I had not anticipated. As many of you know several of my grandsons are in college at this time. Today our family was notified that Florida State University was in lockdown and one of my grandsons is a student at the university. We are profoundly grateful that Gavin was in class at the time of the shootings, however students lost their lives today in a tragedy that makes no sense. Let us remember the families of the victims and let us pray that there will be an end for senseless gun violence in our country.

Take very good care of you every day, and I look forward to seeing each of you on May 16th.

Warmest regards, *Gemma*.