How soon will we have new Conference Finder maps for SVdP and the Archdiocese?
We anticipate redrawn Archdiocese maps will be made available after Pentecost as changes occur. We will share that information on our website when the Archdiocese makes it available.

Will Council handle ServWare data consolidation for merged Conferences?
Yes. While some assistance will be required, the Council Office will facilitate the merging of Conference data.

What will happen to a merger that involve 2 Districts?
If two or more Conferences merge, the new Conference will be part of the District that the parish remaining open resides in. No immediate changes in District boundaries are planned at this time. District boundaries will be assessed on an ongoing basis and may change in the future.

The guidelines refer to separate and adequate resources (financial and members). Does adequate members mean parishioners sufficient for a vibrant worshipping community? This guideline applies where a pastorate may potentially have more than one Conference. If more than one parish remains active and independent, with separate finances, in a pastorate - those parishes are eligible to have separate SVdP Conferences - at the discretion of the pastor. However, in order to have a Conference at any eligible parish, there must be adequate members for a fully staffed Conference and sufficient income, primarily from the parish itself, in order to carry out its mission.

Some Vincentians are concerned about significant increased travel. Will the Find Your Parish for today’s parishes be archived and available so that travel can be kept to a minimum when assigning Neighbors in need to Vincentians? The Pastorate maps will be updated by the Archdiocese and the Council Office will update our “Find Your Parish” maps as we receive updates from the Archdiocese. The updated maps should provide information sufficient to plan home visits.

It is our understanding that the timeframe for the new pastorate implementation is 1 – 3 years. You mention SVdP planning for the pastorate Conferences should be done in advance of the transition. Has the Archdiocese communicated the plan for the roll out of new pastorates? Timing is an important factor in this initiative and for providing continuity for our Neighbors. We do not know the scope or completeness of what the Archdiocese will communicate on Pentecost, May 28th, 2023. Regardless of what the Archdiocese communicates, the Council Office has developed a merging process for Conferences that is focused on
maintaining continuity of service to our Neighbors. Please see the Council website under the All Things New page for Conference Merger Resources.

The needs of a Conference may well exceed the parish capability to support operations of the Conference.
The merging process developed by the Council is intended to initiate and cultivate creativity and transformational change in each new Conference as Vincentians come together and craft ways to serve their Neighbors better than ever. Merging Conferences should result in more Vincentians and potentially more resources in each newly formed Conference. It will also mean a larger territory to cover for helping Neighbors in need. We expect that each Conference will identify solutions that work best for their members and we are happy to offer guidance. We also know that twinning resources and people is very valuable. There are many examples of Conferences twinning with others both inside and outside of their District.

Are you anticipating a loss of Vincentians just as there is a projected loss of parishioners as a result of these mergers? We pray that we do not lose any of our cherished Vincentians. It is possible that some Vincentians may decide to retire. That said, recruiting has always been and is still the lifeblood of any Conference. It is of critical importance for newly merged Vincentians to revitalize and transform daily Conference life into a vibrant and fulfilling environment that is attractive to new members.

Will food pantries be consolidated for 2 Conferences with a merger?
That will depend on several factors, including current locations of the pantries and whether or not the buildings that house the pantries will remain open and available. Ultimately, those decisions should be made by the merging Conferences with support of the pastor.

If we are merging with a Conferences in our pastorate that is not using ServWare, would it be acceptable to add their records to our ServWare account if they are amenable?
Absolutely! Paper records will have to be entered manually into ServWare. If their records are stored electronically in a spreadsheet, it may be possible to (but not guaranteed) electronically import them. Contact John Doyle for more information (johnd@svdpstl.org).

Will facilitators be available to assist in merging planning?
Yes! Members of the Council Staff will review the information received on Pentecost and will reach out to Conference Presidents in impacted pastorates. The Council staff has prepared a Phased Merger Guide to help Conference leaders facilitate their Vincentians through the merging process.

If we were told that our parish is a stand-alone parish, does that mean another Conference from a closed parish will not join us? Some pastorates are comprised of only one parish with one SVdP Conference. These Conferences will generally continue to act as a stand-alone
Conferences - although there could be exceptions. When multiple parishes/Conferences are in one pastorate, and parish(es) within that pastorate close, then SVdP Conferences will merge under the surviving parish.

**Why must we implement the Minimum Requirements and go through the revitalization process?**

Let’s start with a quote from our Manual (**Manual: 1.3 THE RULE**)

> Our Society is a free and fraternal association. No one can be compelled to remain in it against one’s will. Therefore, a member, Council, or Conference choosing to belong to the Society must be in accord with the Rule in every respect... ...The Rule is not restrictive but liberating and life-giving. It expresses who we are, what we are, where we have been, and who we want to be...

All of the Minimum Requirements are contained in the Rule and Manual – there is nothing new. They have existed all along, however, some Conferences have drifted from employing all of them. As stated above, they are “liberating and life-giving”. The most vibrant and flourishing Councils and Conferences are that way exactly because they follow the Rule and the Manual.

All Things New has changed the Archdiocesan landscape and our Vincentian Vocation calls us to listen to the promptings of the Holy Spirit and respond to these changes as Christ would have us. We will be losing somewhere around 35% of our Conferences while keeping the same geographic area and the same number of Neighbors. Revitalization will be critical to the future of each Conference and our Council as a whole. Because fewer Conferences will be serving the same needs, all Conferences will need to be filled with a tight knit group of Vincentians who are spiritually flourishing and command strong operations to serve their Neighbors. Will we face challenges? Yes. Will it be worth the effort? Absolutely yes! Our Neighbors will very much appreciate our efforts!!