



Vincentians in Action

A Vincentian Community & Framework for Reflection

Since 2002, DePaul's Vincentian Service & Formation Office (VSFO) has engaged a framework for reflection and community building called Vincentians in Action (VIA), an approach that is intentionally connected to direct service and community engagement. VIA is a framework rooted in:

- Wisdom and values from Vincent de Paul, Louise de Marillac, and the international Vincentian family
- Best practices in community engagement, social justice, and interfaith ministry
- DePaul University & Mission and Ministry's Goals & Strategies

VSF student leaders echo an essential VIA insight: "Service without reflection is just work – just another task." The core pillars of VIA – unpacked in VIA reflection and formation meetings after community engagement experiences throughout the year – are the following:

- Way of Awareness
- Way of Dialogue
- Way of Solidarity
- Spirituality
- Justice & Collective Liberation
- Intentional Community
- Vincentian Heritage & Living Legacy

VIA is intentionally communal. VIA recognizes that we can't do this alone; we cannot really engage in this journey of service, spiritual reflection, and social justice learning and action without being part of a community of support and challenge that both sustains us and invites us into deeper learning and transformation.

VIA engages diverse programming communities of student leaders in a *cascade* peer-to-peer leadership development process. Annually, VSFO invites student leaders from programming communities to collectively participate in three quarterly formation experiences each year, called VIA Big 3. These program communities include:

1. DePaul Community Service Association (DCSA)
2. Alternative Break Service Immersions
3. DePaul Service Days
4. Community Peacemakers (CPM)
5. Meet Me at the Mission (MMATM)
6. Vincentian Outreach & Formation (VOF)
7. DePaul Leadership Scholars (DeLS)/Vincentian Service Scholars (VSS)

Other VIA formation experiences implemented during the academic year include:

- Weekly VIA Senior Team Formation
- Weekly VIA Formation for DCSA, CPM, and Service Immersion Student Leaders
- VIA Student Leader Retreat
- Spring VIA Capstone Retreat

When students involved in VSFO programs and activities are asked, "What is VIA?" a common response is: "VIA is a space to *reflect on service*. VIA is a space of *belonging*. VIA is *community*." Developed by DePaul students, staff, and faculty in 2002-2003, VIA is one way that VSFO educates students to be spiritually grounded, ethical leaders of today and tomorrow.