



Society of St. Vincent de Paul

Home Visit - Agenda

Pray before entering neighbor home

- Let **JESUS** enter through the doorway **FIRST**
- Introduction: Introduce yourselves and SVDP
- Discovery Questions
 - Please tell us what is your situation?

 - What type of help are you looking for?

 - What are the priorities of your needs?

- Family Questions
 - Husband employed at:
 - Wife employed at:
 - Number and ages of children:
- Financial Questions
 - House hold Income:
 - Any Income assistance:
 - Rent/Mortgage:
 - Utilities:
 - Phone:
 - Cable/Internet:
 - Car Loan:
 - Credit Card Payments/month:
 - Insurance costs:
 - Other expenses: Pay day loan, subscription services, etc.
- Describe the process for approving assistance
- Take completed Confidentiality Form
- Q&A
- Closing Prayer with neighbor –Ask permission first
- Lastly, thank neighbor(s) for allowing you into their home.

Pray after leaving neighbor home



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Home Visit Prayers

SAMPLE PRAYERS BEFORE ENTERING THE NEIGBOR HOME:

- “Lord Jesus, deepen our Vincentian spirit of friendship during this meeting, make us responsive to the Christian calling to seek and find the forgotten, the suffering or the deprived so that we may bring them your love. Help us to be generous with our time, our possessions and ourselves in this mission of charity. Perfect in us your love and teach us to live more fully in the Eucharistic sacrifice for all. AMEN.”
- Father, we ask you to provide all that we need as we do the work you have given us. Fill our hearts with your love, help us to listen with compassion and to speak with kindness and confidence. Clear the way before us, so that those we visit will be able to receive not only the material goods, but also our love and blessing.
- Jesus, we are going out in obedience to your command to love. We pray for the grace to love with purity and strength, not mindful of our own comfort or honor, but seeking to comfort and honor those who have called out to us. We ask your peace on their household and your help in being peacemakers.
- Holy Spirit, inspire us with joy and patience. Be at work in us to bring good news to the downcast, to heal the brokenhearted, to be witnesses of the love of Christ. Stir in us the fire of your love, and guide us with discernment, and wisdom, generosity and kindness.

SAMPLE PRAYERS AT THE END OF THE HOME VISIT:

- Lord Jesus, we thank you for the opportunity to assist *[Their Name(s)]* in this time of need. Strengthen and guide us all each day. Give us an awareness of your presence in our lives. Help *[Their Name(s)]* to walk the path with you that will lead to the resolution of these present needs and concerns. Amen.
- Dear Heavenly Father, thank you for this call, thank you for the opportunity to meet with *[Their Names]*, our brother and sister in Christ, Lord you know each of us. You knew us from the day we were born, you know our hearts, our needs, and everything about us. You told us that you will never leave us or forsake us. You ask us to seek and ye shall find, knock and the door will be opened, ask and it shall be given. We are all asking today for each of our needs, some spoken, some on our hearts. Please Lord, help us find our needs, show us the way, and help us all walk closer to you. Thank you again for this call. In your name and for your sake. Amen.

SAMPLE PRAYER FOLLOWING THE HOME VISIT:

- Thank you Lord for all the blessings you have given today. We ask you to continue to bless the ones we have visited, to inspire them to trust in you and come to you for their needs. We pray for *[Names of each person and specific needs]*. We pray that our work may be continued by your other servants and completed by your Grace. Glory be to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end, Amen



Home Visit Tips and Best Practices

MANAGE EXPECTATIONS

- Reassure neighbor that everything you discuss is confidential, but ask them if it is okay for you to talk to other agencies and vendors (i.e.: apartment manager, water company, etc.) on their behalf. If yes, have them sign a Neighbor (Client) Release form.
- Explain that you are volunteers. It is important the neighbor to understand that you are not employed by the Society.
- Explain that you are not a trained Social Worker.
- Explain that you are not authorized to promise any financial assistance at that time. You will discuss their situation at the next group meeting and will find out at that time if any financial assistance can be made.
- Explain the financial assistance guidelines set by your Conference. (i.e.: "If we are able to help you this time, we won't be able to provide financial assistance again for 12 months.")
- Tell them when they can expect to hear back from you and contact them when you say you will.

INTERVIEW TIPS

- Ask what caused them to get behind and be a willing listener
- Be friendly and respectful – don't interrogate!
- Do not ask if they are a US citizen but you can ask if they have access to governmental assistance such as food stamps.
- Ask how they intend to cover their expenses next month – make sure their game plan is feasible.
- If the situation deems it, help the client face reality. Try to offer options – do they have family they can move in with until their finances can be stabilized? Be compassionate and understanding of their crisis.



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Guidelines for Home Visits and SVDP Team Interaction

- Spirituality
 - Pray prior to entering neighbor residence
 - Pray after leaving neighbor residence
 - Pray for wisdom and guidance in helping this neighbor
- Confidentiality
 - Home visits are confidential
 - SVDP meetings are confidential
 - Keep contacts outside of meetings confidential
- Safety
 - Know where you are going
 - Make an appointment to visit – if that appointment was arranged several days prior to going, call before arriving
 - ALWAYS go with another SVDP member
 - Observe surroundings and if possible go during daylight
- Be humble and respectful
 - You are a guest
 - You are not there to “fix” them
 - Can you see Christ in that person?
 - You will need to assess their situation in order to help; DO NOT JUDGE
 - Picture the person sitting in the meeting, imagine that they are listening to your report of their case
- Obtain information necessary to help in spiritually sensitive manner
 - You may know some advice – this may not be the time to push it
 - Greet in honest and respectful manner
 - Asking for help is usually embarrassing
 - The gap in financial status between you and your neighbor may be great
 - Ask general open ended questions first, take pertinent and obtain other information
 - Refer to the SVC intake sheet as a question rather than an assumption
- “I understand you may be having some trouble with your rent this month – is that right?”
- “Mr. or Ms. X said that you need some help – can you tell me more about that?”
 - Allow the neighbor to finish their initial story if at all possible – do not interrupt
 - State that there are some things that you might need know or take copies of in order to help and ask if you can have that information
- “Would it be okay if we talked with your landlord about your rent and late fees?”
- Can I see your lease agreement?
 - Don’t be so concerned with getting all of the details – this is not an interrogation.

[Type here]

- Include therapeutic statements as you obtain information – be truthful
- “This must be very hard for you to go through now after being so independent for so long”
- “ Many people have difficult times once in a while, it doesn’t mean you did anything wrong”
 - Ask for permission to contact further if more information is needed to help.
 - Close home visit with plan for follow-up
- Confirm best contact time and number
- Promise only what you are going to do
- Keep neighbor in loop on developments
- Let neighbor know when to expect an answer from the conference
- Approaches to difficult scenarios
 - Neighbor talks too much
 - Gently interrupt when possible to redirect the time
- “This is an important issue for you, but we will need to be leaving in the next 10 minutes – let’s see if we can get a handle on this one issue (x) and then we can address that first as the most pressing”
- If the neighbor is a talker on the phone, state in advance how much time you will have for the home visit
 - Neighbor’s needs are overwhelming (undocumented immigrant, no source of income, about to be evicted, disability or illness preventing work)
 - Assess situation as best you can
 - Restate for neighbor what you have heard
 - Address the process by which the Society handles each case
 - Explain the guidelines of how the financial support from SVDP is limited. This usually means that we cannot help more than (e.g.) one month’s rent. Address root of the problem (poor planning, abusive relationship, childcare needs, job skills, health, work performance etc.





Home Visit Summary

Important steps when making a home visit with neighbor(s):

- **S**ay a prayer, smile and say hello! Introduce yourself by **FIRST NAME**.
- **A**sk permission to enter his/her home. Ask to eliminate distractions (T.V., radio etc.)
- **I**nquire about his/her situation. Ask open-ended questions.
- **N**otice their needs, of the children, of the household
- **T**alk when given an opportunity, try not to interrupt, if possible
- **V**alue neighbor's dignity. Refrain from giving advice.
- **D**iscuss other options and give resources of which you are aware
- **P**ray with the neighbor - ask first if they would mind your saying a short prayer.

Lastly, thank them for allowing you into their home

