



St. Vincent de Paul

Serving God by Serving Others...
One Person at a Time

NEXT WEEKEND, DECEMBER 14TH AND 15TH IS OUR ST. VINCENT DE PAUL ANNUAL PARISH APPEAL FOR YOUR SUPPORT.

Our local SVDP Conference members for St. Clare, St. Nicholas and Corpus Christi parishes have volunteered over 2,631 hours to help 567 families with rent, mortgages, utilities, food, medicine, clothes, furniture, transportation, household and car repairs, budget counseling, job referrals, and spiritual and emotional support. We visited 131 neighbors in their homes to offer personal one-on-one help. We try to solve every request for help that comes in, and if we cannot, we find help and refer them to someone who can. Hopefully the following story helps convey how important this work is.

Maria lived with the father of her 6 children for 15 years, even though he was physically abusive. Because of her constant fear and love for her children, she finally found the courage to leave, find a different home, and support her family alone. She found an apartment several miles from her job and walked to and from work each day. However, unexpected emergencies quickly caused more financial and emotional stress than she could handle. A neighbor referred her to SVDP, and we took her 8 badly needed bags of food. As we talked, her children happily argued about who was carrying the heaviest bag of groceries into the apartment.

When we met again, we began by praying for strength and thanking God for being able to help neighbors. We discovered her water had been disconnected, and her salary could barely pay the bill and their other, meager living expenses. She felt she was failing her children. We covered the bill to restore her service and then discussed her needs, using our many resources to find extra help for her. With monthly visits to the food pantry, a restructured budget, picking up a few extra hours at work, and, most of all, her faith and determination, she is slowly overcoming her struggles and doesn't feel like a failure anymore. We occasionally deliver food from the pantry when her neighbor can't give her a ride and are always greeted with the children's hugs and happy noise. These hugs and smiles are lifetime SVDP memories.

Your past generous financial support and prayers have allowed us to continuously assist our neighbors, like Maria, with their desperate needs. We are thankful and very grateful to you for opening your hearts to those aided by the St. Vincent de Paul Society.

HOW TO HELP

PLEASE RETURN THE ATTACHED ENVELOPE NEXT WEEKEND –**DECEMBER 14/15**– WITH YOUR CONTRIBUTION.
CREDIT CARD DONATIONS CAN BE MADE ONLINE AT STCLARECHURCH.WESHAREONLINE.ORG/SVDP



A VARIETY OF PROGRAMS AND SERVICES ARE OFFERED IN A SPIRIT OF FELLOWSHIP AND CHARITY

Our O'Fallon conference needs your time and talent, and if you are interested call the St. Clare Parish office at 618-632-3562. Many of our local Vincentians also volunteer their time and talents at the Belleville Diocesan SVDP. Please take the time to read about those services below and see where your time and talent can be used to serve God and our neighbors. To help there, call 618-394-0126.

COSGROVES SOUP KITCHEN - Feeds 200-300 people 6 days a week.

THE OUTREACH MINISTRY CENTER - Offers services including a coffee bar, laundry center, showers and clothing.

THE ST. VINCENT DE PAUL THRIFT STORE - Offers very low-cost quality merchandise for personal and household needs, especially for the poor.

THE ST. VINCENT DE PAUL SOUP BUS - Two renovated school buses go out into the community to feed the needy an evening meal.

THE HELP CENTER - Assists individuals with obtaining needed documents for personal identification and state IDs -- and helps:

- With solutions for emergent crises
- With homeless prevention and intervention
- With welcome baskets for those moving out of homelessness
- With health screening and community agencies, etc.
- With "jobskills" classes and support
- With transportation assistance
- With budgeting and resume classes
- With needed items through the "Clothes Closet" every Thursday
- With Bible Study and prayer services

GEAR UP AND CAREER GEAR - Provides free clothing for men and women looking for employment.

LILLI - LOW INTEREST LOANS FOR LOW INCOME - A loan up to \$300 for crises situations with minimal interest.

POP - PHARMACY OUTREACH PROGRAM - Provides assistance for prescription medications.

BURIAL PROGRAM - Provides burial assistance for low income households.

THE NIGHT DROP IN CENTER - Will be open from 7:30 p.m. to 7:30 a.m. to provide people who are deprived with a safe place to spend the night. It is equipped with lavatories, TV's, computer center, a coffee bar that will offer evening sack lunches and comfortable 3-position chairs for comfort during the night. It is not a shelter but will be a safe haven for all who come. The NIGHT DROP IN CENTER will be a bridge to existing services already provided by the Society of St. Vincent de Paul.