Dear Vincentians,

What uncertain times we are living in! I am not even going to list all the questions going through our minds right now, as we are all inundated with news and opinions about what we should or should not do all day long.

Yet, there is one belief we all hold dear: the Lord is with us.

Through the good and the bad, He does walk alongside us. And even in these uncertain times, we still are His Hands and His feet (as well as His eyes and His smile). It is now more than ever that our Vincentian vocation comes into play. What is our Mission? To bring God’s Love and Hope to those who come to us.

Even if we are afraid to leave our homes, or afraid of seeing or talking to people, there’s still so much that can be done to alleviate our neighbors’ fears and burdens. We are SO blessed in so many ways! How can we share these blessings with others, in the Spirit of St. Vincent de Paul? How can we do it amid this pandemic? Be creative, just as our patron was.

Phone calls, Facetime calls, Zoom calls... Keeping the distance at front porches, parking lots, any open area. If calls have been slow, should we stay passive, or can we take an active role and reach out to those we have served in the past and check on them? Can we go beyond our parish boundaries and offer assistance to underserved areas, or underserved populations?

I recently heard that Vincentians have been the face of the Catholic Church in our communities in times of the Covid-19 pandemic. Indeed, there is so much that can be done.

And, as I said, the Lord is with us. Always. And I was once more reminded of that when we received confirmation this past week that the Greater Cleveland Rapid Response fund (coordinated by the Cleveland Foundation) has awarded SVDP a major grant to help us help others with rent and utilities assistance. If your Conference is in need of extra financial resources to assist those who come to you, feel free to reach out to me at anader@svdpcle.org.

May the Peace of our good Lord be with you all, now and always.

Anelize Nader, CEO
For the past three Mondays, trucks have arrived at our Brookside pantry with hundreds of boxes of donated produce and dairy products (part of the USDA Farmers to Families program).

These boxes needed to be offloaded from the truck to pallets for distribution to our friends who visit our pantry.

Looking at the task was a bit daunting, however my heart was warmed and my back muscles relaxed when I saw a group of volunteers from the St. Ladislas Knights of Columbus from Westlake. These men not only worked hard to accomplish the task but also provided moral support in our efforts to feed those needing help.

Thank you Knights of Columbus for being a Holy Moment...

Ed Leszynski

Thank you to all who donated to the Society’s Race for Relief on-line matching gift campaign for our hunger centers last month. Held in lieu of our annual Kentucky Derby Party – which was cancelled due to the COVID-19 crisis -- the virtual event was promoted via social media and targeted email blasts that featured video testimonials from hunger center/Ozanam Center clients, volunteers, staff and community partners.

We would also like to especially thank our key partner, Dan Conway at Great Lakes Brewing Company, for his invaluable participation in the campaign. Thanks to a collaborative effort, the event raised $62,548.00 to help nourish thousands of individuals and families during the health crisis.

On-Line Matching Gift Campaign Raises $60,000+ for SVDP Hunger Relief

Our Immaculate Conception Conference in Willoughby will host the 16-week program starting Monday, August 3 for Lake County residents seeking a life out of poverty. Getting Ahead in a Just-Getting’-By World is a program for change that offers useful tools, practical advice and valuable communication to help individuals and families directly affected by poverty.

The Conference is seeking donations of $25 gift cards to distribute to participants at the end of each session. If you are able to help, the cards may be purchased at the Dollar Tree, Aldi, and Speedway (gas cards) stores (where participants customarily shop).

For details and registration, contact Sue Penicka at 440-375-1548 or ICSVDP1@gmail.com.

Immaculate Conception Conference to Host its 2nd Getting Ahead Program to Help People Escape Poverty

St. Ladislas Knights of Columbus with staff from Brookside Hunger Center

Produce and dairy boxes provided through USDA Farmers to Families program