The Society operates one of the largest hunger relief programs in Northeast Ohio with its multiple Ozanam/hunger centers and various parish-based food pantries. When the pandemic began last spring, hunger relief was at the forefront of SVDP’s emergency assistance.

The health crisis has caused a significant decline in household incomes for too many Northeast Ohio families. The result is that they are simply unable to afford a basic necessity – food. We have seen this first hand during 2020, when our Ozanam and hunger centers served 9,260 NEW people who found themselves in need of emergency food for the very first time (this is in addition to the other 120,000 people that we normally serve).

Although the health crisis prevents us from holding our annual in-person Kentucky Derby Party fundraiser, we are again partnering with Great Lakes Brewing Company to raise funds for our hunger relief program during this (hopefully!) final stretch of the pandemic.

Contributors will also have a chance to participate in our virtual Kentucky Derby hat contest and receive a Great Lakes Brewing Company cocktail recipe. Once you submit your contribution, you will receive an email with detailed information on participating in the winning horse selection, the hat contest and the beer cocktail recipe.

Click here to donate.

Bishop Malefic's Letter of Support to Diocesan Priests

We are very grateful to Bishop Edward Malefic for his letter to Diocesan priests in support of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul. The letter was recently included in the Diocese of Cleveland’s Memorandum.

Click here to read.
A Message from Our Spiritual Advisor

Prayer is nothing else than union with God. When the heart is pure and united with God it is consoled and filled with sweetness; it is dazzled by a marvelous light

- St. John Vianney

Prayer Corner

Please keep the following individuals in your prayers:

**Anthony B.**

**Sister Cheryl Keehner**

**Elaine**

**Juan Saul**

**Dave Swaysland**

St. Vincent de Paul, pray for us.

Please submit special intentions to Natalie Schrimpf
nschrimpf@svdpcle.org

Life After Lent

As spring approaches and restrictions from the pandemic are loosened, we might be tempted to arise and experience the joy and freedom of a “spring break.” The reality of course, is that some of our neighbors are still feeling isolated and challenged.

The homebound, the homeless, the prisoners and refugees at our borders are anxious and stressed, and are struggling with feelings of powerlessness. How can we be a Light in the darkness and proclaim Resurrection to those yearning for it? What, beyond material assistance, can we offer in our one-to-one service?

New Box Truck is Ready to Deliver to Neighbors in Need

The new vehicle replaces SVDP’s 16-year-old truck, which had become unreliable and costly to repair. Traveling an average of 1,800 miles monthly across Northeast Ohio, the truck is used to pickup/deliver food to our Ozanam centers/hunger centers, which saves money by not having to incur Greater Cleveland Food Bank delivery costs. It is also used to distribute beds and mattresses from our Conference Supply Center to families in need, blankets to local agencies for distribution to homeless men, women and families, school supplies and more. It has even been used as a mobile food pantry during the pandemic in order to keep staff, volunteers and the people we serve safe while still providing hunger relief.

Thank you to everyone who donated to SVDP’s New Box Truck Campaign. Because of the amazing community support, we recently purchased our new box truck and completed the signage! It is now ready to hit the road and deliver help and hope to people in need.

Scripture Insight:

First Corinthians 3:9 says we’re “co-workers in God’s service.” Later in this book, Paul develops further the idea that believers are complementary co-workers. We may have “different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them” (12:4). Whatever our gifts, God is the gift-giver. And these different gifts lead to “different kinds of service,” which are offered to “the same Lord” (v. 5). Whatever services we may perform, they all serve the same God. Through the variety of “different kinds of working...in all of them and in everyone it is the same God at work” (v. 6). We’re all working for the same team, and we’re all powered by the same leader of that team—God Himself. In this sense, we’re not only each other’s co-workers, we’re God’s co-workers too (3:9).
Vincentian Spotlight

Every month, we will try to feature a Vincentian from one of our Conferences, sharing what he/she does and the impact of this work on those we serve. Feel free to submit stories about your fellow Vincentians by contacting nschrimpf@svdpcle.org.

Toni House – Blessed Trinity, Cleveland

Toni House became involved in SVdP eight years ago after being asked to join the Conference by Eileen Hamblen, now our president. From the very beginning, she demonstrated her leadership qualities. She quickly became secretary and now serves as treasurer. She has replicated her own introduction to the Society by conducting talks to parish groups and has recruited others to join the Conference.

In an effort to better help neighbors we serve gain access to the assistance they need, Toni has researched various city, county and federal assistance programs.

Over the years, she has established valuable connections with businesses and organizations in our neighborhood and beyond that help our neighbors with everyday needs such as food, clothing, rent and utility assistance.

For example, Toni has collaborated with Bellaire Puritas Development Corporation, our local community development organization, helping our Conference obtain grant money so that we may assist the parish in distributing COVID-19 relief money to members of the community.

In addition to her vital work within our Conference, Toni also worked with the St. Vincent de Paul Church Conference by making home or phone visits to assist them with their cases. She routinely networks with other Conferences to build relationships that often lead to joint cooperation and twinning between Blessed Trinity and others.

Toni was instrumental in driving our Conference to computerize through the Vincentian Case Management System by Agular Systems (CMS). This has improved not only our case management process by allowing us to coordinate better with other local Conferences, but also our treasurer function, making it so much easier to fill out our annual report. She also worked to obtain dedicated office space and a phone line at the rectory. Toni checks our phone at least twice daily for referrals — often even while on vacation. She then assigns the cases to the most appropriate member.

When provided the opportunity to study to become a formator and present Ozanam Orientations, Toni’s hand was one of the first raised. She completed the training and, not too long before the lockdown, shared her passion and knowledge with a new class of Vincentians.

When the pandemic lockdowns began, Toni strove to keep our Conference going, despite the hardships. She introduced Zoom meetings that allowed us to continue meeting and to have effective “home” visits. She advocated on behalf of our neighbors in need with CMHA, attempting to minimize the effects of the lockdown on the poor. As treasurer, she has managed grants that we have received for our COVID-19 response.

Toni is amazing in that she always knows someone who wants to donate appliances, furniture and other goods. She is committed to not letting these resources go to waste. She maintains a list of our neighbor’s needs and directs the items to the next family in need. Her garage is typically overflowing with furniture and appliances waiting for a new home. This enterprise has even expanded to another Conference member’s garage.

Toni is also active at Blessed Trinity parish in other ways. She is on the parish’s Finance Committee. She is a Sunday counter. She participates in the parish’s Bible study group and is involved in Christmas Help a Family.

On top of her frenetic Conference and parish life, Toni is the loving and doting grandmother to eleven energetic grandkids. More than one Zoom meeting has been entertained by the antics of one of the little ones she cares for.

She is a valued asset to our Conference for all these reasons, but especially for her tireless efforts to help those in need in a non-judgmental and dignified manner. Her work inspires the rest of our members to become better Vincentians.

By Eileen Hamblen & Eric Russell

St. Anthony Messenger Highlights The Society of St. Vincent de Paul

The St. Anthony Messenger recently published a close-up look at the Society, its history, Vincentians and impact to people in need across the country.

Click here to read this heart-warming article.