Dear Vincentians,

What a journey this has been! Since late 2014 when I joined the Society’s Diocesan Council, a lot has changed: we became a major player in hunger relief in Northeast Ohio, we acquired a building that will become a hub of services to the community, we have strengthened our relationships with other agencies, we have greater visibility in the community, our fundraising efforts have been largely expanded, and we even secured a reliable new truck!

One fundamental thing has not changed though: our steadfast commitment to grow closer to God through our service to the poor. I am a better person now because of your witness. Yes, we have created solid internal systems and processes and our financials are clear and positive; yet at the end of the day, it is the Love and Hope we bring to the poor that keep us strong.

Thank you! Thank you for sharing your experiences, successes and struggles. Thank you for allowing me to assist you with some of the challenges you faced. Whether it was a simple joint effort, or a connection to a resource in the community or just acting as a sounding board, you helped me grow and feel closer to God myself - and for all those interactions I am eternally grateful.

But now it is time to say farewell. After a long and deep (and in times painful) discernment process, I believe our Lord is calling me to something else. At this time, I do not know exactly what it is yet, but I am a big believer in Kairos, and so I am open to His will and His timing. I am proud of my contributions to help bring the Diocesan Council to a more solid position, and I feel confident in our leadership to develop it even further.

With a bittersweet feeling as I leave the organization I have come to love, but excited about surrendering to God’s will and the possibilities ahead, I wish SVDP a continuing successful journey as it fulfills its mission within Vincentians and the communities we serve. Thank you for the opportunity to serve and grow in my own spiritual journey.

I will always be a Vincentian at heart.

Anelize Nader
**Bishop Malesic Blesses SVDP’s New Box Truck**

The Most Reverend Edward C. Malesic, bishop of the Catholic Diocese of Cleveland, recently visited the Society’s Brookside Hunger center to bless its new box truck. SVDP staff, Board members and volunteers convened behind the center on May 10 for the Bishop’s special blessing, which preceded a tour of the center.

SVDP recently purchased the new vehicle with funds raised during a special matching gift appeal. It replaces the Society’s 20-year-old truck that increasingly became unreliable and incurred ongoing costly repairs, explained Anelize Nader, the Society’s chief executive officer. “This new truck has been a dream for us the last several years and is very special because it is truly a gift from the community. It’s more important now than ever, since we have even been using it as a mobile pantry during the pandemic. We are extremely grateful to Bishop Malesic for blessing our new truck, which will be used to help so many more people in need.”

The truck serves as a lifeline to Northeast Ohioans in need by delivering basic needs emergency help across the Diocese’s eight-county service area. Traveling an average of 1,800 miles monthly, it transports food from the food bank to SVDP’s multiple hunger centers and Ozanam centers in order to save pickup and delivery charges. It also delivers beds and mattresses to low-income families, blankets to local agencies for distribution to homeless individuals, school supplies and toiletries to low-income children, and donated furniture to needy families.

**Prayer Corner**

Please keep the following individuals in your prayers:

- **Anthony B.**
- **Elaine**
- **Juan Saul**
- **Dave Swaysland**

St. Vincent de Paul, pray for us.

Please submit special intentions to Natalie Schrimpf

nschrimpf@svdpcle.org

"Whether we realize it or not, prayer is the encounter of God’s thirst with ours. God thirsts that we may thirst for him."

- St. Augustine

**Come Holy Spirit**

This month, we celebrate the feast of Pentecost. We pray, “Come Holy Spirit and renew the face of the earth.” Soon after the feast, when the First Communions and weddings are over, the Church’s year will turn to “ordinary time.” I encourage you in each of our Conferences to focus on bringing new people into your membership. Think of how you first were attracted to ministry as a Vincentian in your parish.

What drew you to join the group?

Truth be told, the Holy Spirit was working in your life at the time. Let’s focus our prayer this month alone and together on very important questions.

Who will come after us to carry on?

How is the Holy Spirit working in us and among us to sustain and expand this ministry?

**A Message from Our Spiritual Advisor**

by Sister Cheryl Keehner, CSA

NEW SVDP BOX TRUCK

Bishop Malesic Blesses SVDP’s New Box Truck

Bishop Malesic at Brookside Hunger Center

Bishop Malesic (l) & Bill Allport, SVDP volunteer

New SVDP Box Truck

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Hunter Stecko - Inspiring Others Through Servant Leadership

Service to others is a way of life embraced by all Vincentians who have come before us, and it is natural to wonder if future generations will carry the torch of service forward with the same level of commitment and dedication. The good news is that we can already see future leaders in our midst today, and there is a shining example paving the way at the Father Michael Wittman Ozanam Center at St. Philomena Church in East Cleveland.

Hunter Stecko, a graduating senior from Case Western Reserve University at the end of May, started serving as a volunteer at the Ozanam Center during his freshman year as part of the “Saturdays of Service” program at the University and through Holy Rosary Parish. A native of Monessen, Pennsylvania, Hunter clearly remembers the first time he volunteered and was stationed with some of the other CWRU students in Hospitality. “East Cleveland, in some ways, is very much like the town where I grew up. My heart formed an instant connection with the people, both volunteers and clients, that I knew would be inescapable for as long as I was a student at CWRU,” he said.

Progressing from an occasional volunteer to a regular, Hunter worked his way throughout the organization in a variety of roles and impressed other volunteers with his kind spirit and by doing anything he was asked to do. One Saturday, a client asked if there were any bibles available and there were none at the time, so Hunter purchased 150 bibles with his own money so they could be given out to clients.

This past winter, Hunter joined the Saturday managers team at the Ozanam Center and embraced the added responsibilities of overseeing the operations needed to distribute food and clothing each week. He committed his time while working toward a double major at school and will receive a Bachelor of Science in Electrical and Computer Engineering with a minor in Chemistry and a Bachelor of Arts in Computer Science with a minor in Political Science. In addition, Hunter served as president of the Undergraduate Student Government his senior year and helped to create the Community Commitment statement as part of the University’s response to the COVID-19 pandemic. He was also involved in the distribution of COVID vaccines on the CWRU campus on top of his already very busy schedule. Hunter will continue his studies after graduation and will enter medical school in the fall.

“My heart formed an instant connection with the people…”

“As I reflect on my time at the Ozanam Center, I can’t help but to count all of the blessings that have been given to me in my life,” he said. “From all of you, I have learned character traits that I will not soon abandon: generosity, self-sacrifice, humility, resilience and compassion – and the importance of caring for those who are in greatest need in our community.”

Hunter embodies all the Vincentian qualities of a servant leader—inspiring others through his selfless commitment to a life of service. While his future is still unfolding, we can rest assured that young leaders like Hunter will continue to take us forward and set the example for others to follow.

Thank you to all who contributed to our Race for Hunger Relief matching gift appeal, which raised more than $55,000. The proceeds will help SVDP meet the increase in new people visiting our centers for nourishment since the pandemic began.

Held in partnership with Great Lakes Brewing Company, the online campaign temporarily replaced the annual in-person Kentucky Derby Party fundraiser, which could not be held safely this year due to the pandemic.

SVDP operates one of the largest hunger relief programs in Northeast Ohio that includes eight main hunger/Ozanam centers and multiple parish-based food pantries. These centers provide emergency food, including nutritious produce, protein-rich eggs, meats and more to food-insecure men, women, children and seniors across the region.