Holy Moments
VINCENTIAN NEWSLETTER
December, 2020

A Publication of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, Diocese of Cleveland

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Matching Gift Box Truck Appeal: Delivering Emergency Help & More

For more than 16 years, SVDP’s old box truck has been one driving force behind our emergency assistance program.

It travels 1,800 miles monthly across Northeast Ohio to pickup/deliver food to our Ozanam centers/hunger centers, which saves money by not having to incur Greater Cleveland Food Bank delivery costs. The truck 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 so much more!

And in an effort to provide hunger relief and keep staff, volunteers and the people we serve safe during the pandemic, it has even been used as an outside mobile food pantry.

Unfortunately, the truck has been incurring frequent costly repairs and has become increasingly unreliable, which makes it challenging to survive the winter.

SVDP Cleveland recently kicked off a special fundraising appeal to garner the income for a reliable replacement truck. Thanks to several generous anonymous donors, every donation to the Box Truck Appeal will be doubled. Please consider making a donation by clicking here. Thank you.

Congratulations Akron District

Congratulations to Akron District SVDP Conferences for their recent CARES grant award of $50,000 from the Akron Community Foundation’s Summit County COVID-19 Nonprofit Emergency Relief Grant Program.

The funds will be used to help area low-income individuals and families with eviction and homelessness prevention, utilities, food and clothing. A portion of the grant will help provide sleeping bags, tents and warm clothing for the homeless, in addition to emergency short-term housing for individuals that are not shelter-resistant. Their Ozanam Center will also benefit with winter clothing and additional food.

CSC Orders Pending Resupply

We have recently been informed by one of our suppliers that there has been an overwhelming need for beds and mattresses this holiday season. Due to this increased demand and logistical delays caused by the pandemic and the holidays, they are temporarily out of stock on most bed frames and futon mattresses. The expected delivery date for this inventory is mid-January, 2021.

We are in regular contact with this supplier and will be notified of any additional changes.

Thank you for your continued patience. If you have any questions of would like to cancel an existing order, please contact jbruening@svdpcle.org
A Message from Our Spiritual Advisor

May Advent fill us with hope as we wait for the coming of our Savior.

May bonds of love for one another be strengthened in our homes and in our parishes.

May those who ask us for help be welcomed and received as Christ.

May we as persons of good will be filled with peace as we give glory to God day by day.

May we be instruments of peace in our world.

by Sister Cheryl Keehner, CSA

DECEMBER: Happy New Year!

Ordinary time is over and on the First Sunday of Advent, we turn another page on the Church’s liturgical calendar. We pray together:

"Prayer is in fact the recognition of our limits and our dependence; we come from God, we are of God, and to God we return."

- St. John Paul II

Prayer Corner

Please keep the following individuals in your prayers:

The O’Neill Family
Dave Swaysland
Juan Saul
Mary Ann Cowling
Cheryl Davis
Paul M.
Al Schiazza
Sr. Cheryl Keehner

St. Vincent de Paul, pray for us.

Please submit special intentions to Natalie Schrimp: nschrimp@svdpcle.org

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Seeking Members for SVDP Young Professionals Board

The Society is seeking social justice-minded young adults for its Young Professionals Board. The YP Board will engage the community in the spirit of service, culture and faith of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul. Its members will be able to experience meaningful work impacting our brothers and sisters in need across Northeast Ohio, grow in leadership skills (e.g. event planning, fundraising, advocacy and service) and form relationships with like-minded young professionals, SVDP members and the Diocesan Council Board and staff. Please spread the word among family and friends.

For more information, contact Anelize Nader at 216-696-6525 x3560 or anader@svdpcle.org.

“Fred Talks” Videos Available from National Council

The National Council has created an additional resource for Vincentians to learn about Vincentian heritage, traditions and spirituality via short videos for on-demand viewing.

Inspired by the popular TED Talks and aptly named after SVDP Founder, Blessed Frederic Ozanam, the “Fred Talks” videos highlight some of the Society’s core tenets in small doses.

Click here to watch.

Let’s get social!

Follow us on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram & YouTube

www.svdpcle.org
Jose Ortiz by Carmen Rivera, President, Sacred Heart Chapel – Lorain

Spiritual. Diligent. Energetic. Possessing the ability to work well with others, coordinate projects involving many people, and having an innate desire to help those in need.

The above description can certainly be applied to many members.

But in the eyes of the St. Vincent de Paul Society’s Sacred Heart Chapel Conference members in Lorain, our president for the past six years, Jose Ortiz, fits this description especially well. He and his wife, Gladys, are very faithful members. Before joining the Society, Jose was always helping out around the church with maintenance needs, fundraisers, and collections, but most of all in getting his family members and acquaintances to join the parish. Some might call him a king since he does dress as one during the yearly Three Kings (Epiphany) Celebration when he hands out gifts to the children.

He is soft spoken in asking for help, but since he leads by example, it is hard to say no to him for any project. In turn, he also has a hard time saying no when there is a need. When he started, the membership was fading and he was quickly nominated for president. With that sly smile, he took the position but said he was better at helping the poor than running a meeting. So he quickly surrounded himself with others that would help him. At the time, we had about six members, and with Jose’s sense of humor and constant prompting after masses, we have grown to 25 members.

The Society is very visible at Sacred Heart Chapel during masses, special events and fundraisers. During his leadership, we have held monthly luncheons for the homeless, during which Jose drives the van to pick them up. We pick up and distribute donated furniture, which usually involves Jose and his pick-up truck. We assist with rent, utilities and food for hundreds.

Starting My Advent Journey During Less-Than-Normal Times

As I sit here frustrated and a little confused, I must look at all the blessings God has provided me, my family and SVDP. Sure, the Covid-19 pandemic has cramped my style but life goes on. The Advent season is the time to prepare to greet Jesus. Like the journey Mary and Joseph took to Bethlehem, there can be difficulties.

My wife, Barb, and I recently put up Christmas lights both in front and in the back of the house. Barb absolutely loves color and as many lights as possible. Me, not so much, too frustrating. We have been married for 55 years and the light project is still a challenge each year. The person on the ladder stringing the lights thinks he should be in charge, while the person on the ground just handing up the lights thinks she is in charge. Needless to say, the conflict continues until all the lights are up. Then she plugs them in and they actually work.

Yes!! It is a holy moment as the multicolored strings illuminate the dark and dreary early winter surroundings. But these strings of lights pale by comparison, when I think about how the birth of our Lord Jesus was like a beacon of light in a dark world more than 2,000 years earlier.

So now I continue to seek the joy of Christmas. But this year is different. Some close friends have died and others are quarantined because of Covid-19. During a season that celebrates gathering together, we are all trying to adapt to alternative ways to stay connected while remaining safe. It hasn’t been easy. But thank the Lord that better days are on the horizon with the development of an effective vaccine. Until then, we must do our best, weather the storm and offer up this challenging time to God.

by Ed Leszynski, Board President

National Council Virtual Formation & Spiritual Training

The National Council is offering several online opportunities for Vincentian formation and training. We encourage you to take advantage of this worthwhile leadership series during a period when we are spending a great deal of time at home. The information is extremely worthwhile and your Vincentian life will surely benefit from participating!

December 9, 7:30 PM Eastern
Servant Leadership and Our Vocation

December 15, 7:00 PM Eastern
Seven Duties of a Conference President

Thursday, December 17 at 3:00 PM Eastern
“Fratelli Tutti: Paths of Dialogue”
Voice of the Poor Third Thursday Webinar