Give Hope

Donate old vehicles to SVDP by calling 1-800-322-8284 or by visiting the webpage: Click Here

Leave a Legacy

Please remember SVDP Cleveland in your will and estate planning. Click Here

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Holy Moments
VINCENTIAN NEWSLETTER
February–March, 2021

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

Additional Emergency Assistance Funds Available

We are happy to announce that the Society was awarded a $40,000 grant from the Catholic Foundation in Texas through their Good Shepherd Fund for rent and utilities assistance in our Diocese.

This grant comes in addition to the $71,000 for rent and utilities that was recently awarded from the Cleveland Foundation’s Greater Cleveland COVID-19 Rapid Response Fund.

We are blessed by the generosity of these foundations, which allows us to go even further in our efforts to prevent evictions, homelessness and utilities shut-offs.

Especially now, with such a frigid and snowy winter, our assistance to those in need is more critical than ever. Let us reach out and find those individuals and families in need so as to serve as our Lord has tasked us to do. God bless!

If you need additional funds, please contact Anelize at 216-696-6525 x. 3560 or email anader@svdpcle.org.

A Sense of Purpose: An Ingredient to Longevity

As a Vincentian, the work I do infuses meaning into my life and allows me to experience those holy moments while helping people in need. Even my doctors have told me to stay involved in this ministry as it gives me many benefits, which include remaining active, socialization, and gaining a deeper sense of purpose. I am sure my fellow Vincentians can relate to this joy of helping others.

I wanted to share a very relevant article a friend recently sent me. It speaks to my own sense of purpose I receive by volunteering for the Society.

Click here to read the article by Ed Leszynski, Board President

For the Discenzos, Birthdays Are a Time to Give to Others

Sometimes, the wisest life lessons are demonstrated by the youngest teachers.

Despite the fact that they are only seven years old, the Discenzo twins already understand that it is better to give than receive. For their birthday this year, young Abigail and Angelo raised nearly 1,074 pounds of food and $400 in financial contributions for St. John Vianney SVDP Conference food pantry in Mentor.

But this isn’t the first time. In fact, the Discenzo family has been hosting food drives instead of receiving birthday presents for the past six years.

Click here to read more about this generous family in the News-Herald.
A Message from Our Spiritual Advisor

**March**

Researchers tell us that most people keep their New Year’s Resolutions for a couple of months before slipping back into easier modes of operation. Now midway through Lent, as we join the disciples following Jesus day by day and noticing His interactions with people, here’s a suggestion to carry us as we journey together toward Easter (April 4).

From the prophet Micah 6:8 -- *This is what the Lord asks of you, only this: to act justly; to love tenderly; to walk humbly*

Update: “Thank you all for prayers these past few months. I am now recovering from foot surgery and doing well here in Lakewood. The doctor promised that I could wear new shoes on Easter! My experience of being "homebound" has made me more aware of my neighbors. I am so grateful for those who help me with groceries, laundry, and all the tasks of daily living we take for granted.”

**Look for SVDP in Northeast Ohio Catholic Magazine**

Volunteers are the lifeblood of the St. Vincent de Paul Society, and SVDP will be included in an article about volunteers in the next issue of *Northeast Ohio Catholic Magazine*. SVDP is one of several organizations mentioned that rely heavily upon volunteers. During the pandemic, hunger relief has been at the forefront of assistance, which is why the magazine is highlighting the works of one of SVDP’s Ozanam center volunteers.

The story will be published in advance of National Volunteers Week, which is April 18-24.

**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: [nsschrimpf@svdpcle.org](mailto:nsschrimpf@svdpcle.org)

“Prayer is being on terms of friendship with God, frequently conversing in secret with Him, who, we know, loves us”

- St. Teresa of Avila

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**Online Training Opportunities**

**Ozanam Orientation**

Tues. and Wed., March 23 & 24, 7-8:30 PM via Zoom. Contact Gary Sole to register by March 15: [gssole@svdpcle.org](mailto:gssole@svdpcle.org). Please include telephone number, Conference/Parish name, name and addresses of attendees (to receive a book) and email address to receive the Zoom link.

Mark your calendars and be sure to take advantage of the many online trainings available to Vincentians from the National Council:

**Getting Ahead Facilitator Training**

- Wed., April 21 & 28, 6:30 – 9:30 PM
- Wed., July 21 & 28, 11:30 AM - 2:30 PM
- Wed., October 13 & 20, 6:30 - 9:30 PM

Registration for the April sessions will open in late February

**Growth and Revitalization Webinars**

Join us on the 3rd and 4th Tuesday of each month at 7 PM ET for *Best Practices and Lessons Learned: a webinar series focusing on Growth & Revitalization*

Upcoming Sessions (Registration is for January-April series):

3rd Tuesdays are for members interested in growing Conferences

- **March 16**: Growing Conferences – Starting Conferences during COVID
  - Click here to Register

4th Tuesdays will focus on Conference revitalization

- **March 23**: Conference Revitalization – The Importance of Communication when Revitalizing
  - Click here to Register

National’s webinars are recorded and available for viewing on demand at: [https://www.svdpusa.org/growth-revitalization/growth-and-revitalization-webinars](https://www.svdpusa.org/growth-revitalization/growth-and-revitalization-webinars)
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.

Ed Zivkovich, St. Mary - Painesville

Ed Zivkovich, president of St. Mary Conference in Painesville, has been a member of the parish since 1978. He was introduced to SVdP at a couples spiritual discussion group by a member who was the Conference president at the time. When Ed learned about the Society’s mission, vision and purpose, he was inspired by the fact that we bring hope to people in need and bring Christ to those we visit. He joined the Conference approximately 18 years ago.

Ed was Conference president when the group decided to secede from the organization. He then became active in the parish ministry that assumed activities of the former Conference operation. In 2017, Anelize Nader at the Diocesan Council approached him to introduce the possibility of the group rejoining the Society. After Anelize visited with group members, who discussed reasons that led them to secede, St. Mary decided to rejoin the Society. The group recognized the benefits of working as a network and under the Diocesan Council, and Ed again began serving as its Conference president. Over time, the Conference has also benefitted from the Diocesan Council’s Conference grants for emergency assistance, as well as the availability of beds and blankets from its Conference Supply Center.

Painesville is an area with a high concentration of poverty in Lake County, and St. Mary Conference is extremely busy serving those who seek assistance. It is also home to a significant Hispanic community, and St. Mary is known as one of the churches that serves this population via masses and other ministries delivered in Spanish.

In addition to his role as Conference president, Ed helps feed people in need by distributing meals on wheels. He has managed the Conference food pantry for four years (where he spends more time than at other Conference tasks) and works at the parish mobile pantry that provides food nine times each year. He is also a parish eucharistic minister.

Race for Hunger Relief – the Final Stretch!

Who would have thought 10 months ago that by this spring, we still would not be able to meet in person for trainings or events? The truth is, in-person gatherings are not yet an option.

Unfortunately, hunger is still prevalent in our communities, and even more so now after many more individuals have experienced job losses, furloughs and decreased working hours. As Vincentians, we know firsthand that people are faced with difficult choices to make. We help our neighbors financially when we are able to, and most of our Conferences – along with our hunger centers and Ozanam Centers – provide one of the essential ingredients to a dignified life: FOOD.

Everyone should have access to healthy and nutritious food. In 2020, our largest pantries provided this necessity to nearly 130,000 people – blessed be our members and volunteers!

But the reality is that providing food has its costs.

That’s why we will soon kick off our 21st Annual Kentucky Derby Party fundraiser for our hunger relief program which, again this year will be an online matching gift campaign: Race for Hunger Relief – the Final Stretch. This year’s event will be tied to the actual Kentucky Derby that will occur live on May 1. The campaign will include a virtual hat contest and small online silent auction, and people will be able to choose the winning horse.

Be on the lookout for an invitation to join in this fight against hunger! The message is clear: there are too many people going hungry, but we can help if we have the support of the community. Please spread the word!