



## March 2020 Newsflash

---



### Message from Executive Director, Karen Zengel

Over the last couple of weeks, it feels like the information around COVID-19 changes on an hourly basis. While I appreciate the quick actions to protect our community's health and to preserve our economy, the swell of changing information has made it very difficult to make decisions for our own ministry. And, I can't help but worry that we are providing the right guidance for our Vincentians, our staff and our neighbors

who will undeniably need us more than ever. However, in the midst of all of this, a message on the radio reminded me that worrying is an activity that we do to obsess over what might happen. Praying is an activity that we can do so God can make things happen.

My husband had the honor and pleasure of attending the National Catholic Youth Conference with my daughter in November. At that conference, he heard Immaculee Ilibagiza speak about her experience in growing closer to God during the Rwandan genocide. Immaculee spent 91 days crammed in a tiny bathroom with 7 other women, hiding from the killers who hunted her and everyone important to her. The only thing she could do at that time was pray, nearly 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Her fate was out of her control and no one could help but God himself. And, he did. She survived the genocide. Even more miraculously, she survived with an open heart and mind, forgiving her former neighbors and friends for committing atrocities that you'd think would only occur in our worst nightmares.

Her story is amazing and a testimony to the power of prayer. It reminded me that at this time especially I need to take every opportunity to talk to God. God hears our every thought – the good, the bad, and the ugly. I want to make it my commitment to turn the good into gratitude (because it is out there!) and to ask God to please take the bad and the ugly.

So, I'll thank God for the information that helps us understand this situation better each day and pray for his guidance to lead us forward. I thank him for all of you, who are also praying at this time, and continuing to serve, ensuring hope is ever present to everyone we encounter.

---

### Message from President, Casey Guilfoyle

#### Creative Compassion: Our Vincentian Calling

As our country and indeed the world is rocked by the COVID-19 pandemic, we can pause and reflect on how do we as Vincentians respond responsibly. In Northern Kentucky and within our Society of St. Vincent de Paul we are working hard to reconcile the science of disease spread, the need for social distancing and the fundamental nature of our mission and the impact we have on our neighbors facing a crisis. Just a month ago we celebrated a new "friend-raising" event,



aply named “Creative Compassion” with its focus on creating works of art from the many items donated to SVdP NKY Thrift Stores and auctioning them to the highest bidder. I know everyone who attended marveled at the display of creativity by young artists from our high schools and local universities. I especially liked the pieces which aimed to underscore the theme of poverty. It was a memorable evening and an uplifting experience to be part of that event.

It’s now our turn as Vincentians to be just as creative as we reach out in compassion to the requests for assistance coming from our neighbors during this crisis with its extra challenges. More than ever our Society will be called upon to find new ways to offer that person to person service that makes us who we are. We need to take time to earnestly pray about how we can respond responsibly, we need to attentively listen to our neighbors material needs and their other less tangible needs- connection and community and hope- as we ourselves work on embodying creative compassion.

I know we can meet this challenge. I am overwhelmed with gratitude as I witness the all out effort given by our team to maintaining our retail stores inventory for those we serve and revenue for all the good works we do. Check out our Facebook page to view creative ways to support this effort! Our executive board immediately responded by doubling the monthly stipend available if individual parish Conference funds are stretched due to the crisis. We will continue these and more creative response efforts as together we embrace our call to creative compassion.

---

## Our Early Response to COVID-19

SVdP NKY is closely following the daily developments surrounding our community’s efforts to stop the spread of COVID-19. It’s been a delicate balance between preserving our ministry to those in need when it will be needed most, remaining operational to support our employees and responsibly implementing the recommendations to help stop the spread of COVID-19. Here are the actions we’ve taken thus far in response:

- Our call center remains open every day to accept calls from those in need between 10 am and 2 pm. Vicki Dinterman and Sister Judith Niewahner have been reporting daily to run the call center, while maintaining their distance from one another. We also have the ability to forward call center calls to people who are working remotely to provide some relief for these two wonderful ladies.
- For the most part, our Vincentian home visitors are conducting “visits” over the phone. Our Vincentians have provided food via drop-offs to our neighbors in need. Conferences are continuing to meet remotely, via conference calls, Skype or Zoom. Our spiritual growth through service and meaningful personal relationships are priorities of our ministry, even when we are not able to see each other face to face.
- We are encouraging fast turnaround times for those who are reaching out for help. While disconnects and evictions are suspended for the time being, we still want to make every effort to respond to requests for financial assistance and help in some way. These expenses will accrue if not addressed. The Council has increased its support to conferences to help meet an anticipated uptick in requests for assistance. We are actively applying for grant opportunities to ensure we are able to meet the needs that come our way.
- The Erlanger food pantry is open for drive through service on Tuesday’s from 10 until noon and 3 until 5 and Thursday’s from 10 until noon. Our Falmouth food pantry is also open daily from 9 until 4. Lastly, we are offering food delivery to individuals who fall outside of our conference coverage and cannot make it to our pantry during these times.
- Our stores have been closed to the public since March 17th. Our store employees have been busy cleaning, disinfecting and making preparations to re-open when the time comes. Vouchers can be redeemed by appointment if absolutely needed. We’ve also opened an online store on Facebook and eBay to help raise funds for operations.
- Our donation/warehouse team continues to report to work with a limited staff practicing six feet of space to minimize potential exposure of the virus. We have stopped actively soliciting material donations for the short term, but we continue to receive drop-off donations at our stores and in our blue bins. These donations are important to supporting our operations and ensure we will be ready to re-open our

- retail stores when the time is right.
- Our drivers also continue to report to work. We've temporarily stopped donation pickups, but our drivers are working to keep the blue bins tidy. They are doing food deliveries to conferences who may be running low in their own pantries and to individuals who cannot make it to our pantry. They are also making trips to partnering agencies who have supplies to share and will be making trips on behalf of partners who may not have trucks to replenish their own operations.

We thank you for your continued service to those in need, your continued support of the ministry and your prayers as we all weather this storm together.

## Rejoice! He has risen!

Easter is a time to rejoice and be renewed. A great way to keep your Lenten promise of prayer and continue to rejoice in God's word, is to follow along with Deacon Mike Lyman's **weekly reflections** for Vincentians. These reflections aim to help Vincentians through their spiritual journey of giving back to those in need.



A great way to continue to give after Lent is over is to challenge yourself and your family to set aside one item a day for an extended period of time, then donate all of the items to SVdP NKY! While our donation centers have suspended person-to-person donations to minimize the spread of germs and practice social distancing, donations can be deposited into the blue bins located at the Erlanger facility and **parishes throughout Northern Kentucky**.

# We Are Making A Difference

## Delivering Hope and Comfort Story Submitted By: Dennis Coyne

St. Barbara's Conference received a call from Vicki Dinterman from the SVdP Call Center about an 85-year-old woman with cancer who needed help with fuel oil earlier this winter. She was in an unserved area for a Home Visit. The St. Barbara Conference was the closest. Vicki was moved by the request and wanted to know if St. Barbara's could help. The case came to Debbie Raines and Dennis Coyne.

As Dennis and Debbie arrived at the home, two adult children helped with the groceries. Dennis and Debbie immediately noticed the son's face was disfigured. They would later learn during the discussion that Henry had cancer of the jaw. He showed them where they took a piece of bone from his leg to reconstruct his jaw. The daughter told Dennis and Debbie that their mother, Roberta, was terminal and probably had less than two weeks to live. She would receive Hospice at home.

The daughter, Anne, asked them to meet Roberta. Anne explained why they were there. Roberta was in too much pain to communicate. Debbie told her that the St. Barbara Conference would pray for her. They left the room to meet with David and Anne to understand the situation and the need. In this conversation, they learned that 2 other brothers had died of cancer in the last two years. When David left the room to put away the groceries, Anne quietly told us that David has about 2 years to live. Dennis and Debbie also learned that Roberta's husband died in the last year. By this time, they could not help but think of the biblical story of Job and the death of his family members.

Debbie and Dennis assured the family, that they would contact Lykins Oil to arrange for the furnace fuel oil that day. Despite the pain the family was clearly navigating, David and Anne shared stories of good days in the past and how their father built the family home. They spoke of how Roberta kept the house immaculately clean and was using the vacuum cleaner just two weeks' prior – a cane in one hand and pushing the vacuum with the other.

Vincentians, Debbie and Dennis, prayed with Henry and Anne for the peaceful death of their mother. They left and immediately called Lykins to ensure they would be out quickly. Roberta died 4 days later in the comfort of her warm home.

Although the circumstances around the visit were very sad, Dennis and Debbie were able to address the immediate worries of the family and offer prayers of comfort during that very trying time. Dennis remarked, "That day was a good one to be a Vincentian and have the financial support of our parish to help those in need."

---

## One Small Request Leads to Big Impact Story Submitted By: Carole Pagano

This past fall, Mary Queen of Heaven Vincentians visited with a client who had requested groceries. Upon arrival, they noticed the man, Kevin, had no furniture and was sleeping on the floor. Their hearts were touched and knew that they had to do much more for Kevin. After talking to Kevin, they learned he was disabled, diabetic, and a Marine Veteran. Vincentians, Kathy Bohman and Carole Pagano, knew that they had to help this man as much as they could.

Carole told her family about Kevin and to her sweet surprise, her youngest daughter was getting rid of a recliner chair. Carole reached out to Kevin and he said he would gladly accept it. The next day, Carole and her husband, Lee, delivered the chair to his second floor apartment.



Time passed and Carole and her husband were shopping and decided to check out a mattress store. They asked the manager if the store would consider donating a mattress to the man in need. The next morning, the mattress store called to let them know they would donate a mattress but it had to be picked up in Ohio and they couldn't include a bed frame. Carole and Lee agreed to pick up the bed and they purchased the frame on their own. Extra help was needed to get the mattress and frame to Kevin's apartment. Nico, Carole's and Lee's 15 year old grandson, was eager to help.

Christmas was approaching and Kevin had touched the lives of Carole's family. The family wanted to help Kevin more and decided to set up a Christmas tree in his home, as well as 'play' secret Santa for Kevin. They dropped off presents at his doorstep before Christmas, and Carole and Kathy delivered a Christmas meal as well.

Kevin shared that he had a storage unit but was unable to pay the bill to access it. Lee tried to contact the storage unit owner to work out a deal, but the company would not budge. So Carole contacted, Steve Kidney, treasurer of Mary Queen of Heaven's conference, to see what they could do to claim Kevin's items from storage. Steve was able to come through for Kevin and pay the storage unit bill. The next morning, Carole got a call from Kathy, asking if she and her family could be at the storage unit at 11 that morning. They all met there and Carole's son-in-law brought his truck with an extra-long trailer. It was a long 6-hour day of hard work and by the evening, they had all of Kevin's furniture and belongings in his apartment.

Kevin was graced with St. Vincent de Paul NKY Vincentians whose mission is to help Christ's less fortunate. What started as one visit with a pair of Vincentians ended as a group effort motivated to give a single man hope through many gestures. This story reminds us that what we do as a whole is so important. The help we give to our neighbors in need really gives back so much more to us, and makes us better people.

# News and Events

**Creative Compassion Recap**

Thank you for helping us make **Creative Compassion: A Night of Art for Our Neighbors in Need** a great success! We partnered with 18 local artists from local schools, including: Northern Kentucky University, Mount St. Joseph University, University of Cincinnati and Notre Dame Academy. We also had an artist of our own, SVdP donation center worker, Mike Taylor! The artists created their pieces using an item(s) from our thrift store.

Over 150 guests enjoyed the evening. Guests enjoyed the atmosphere at New Riff Distillery and dinner by the bite prepared by EatWell Caterers. Kelly Rippa, WLWT Channel 5 Morning News Anchor, emceed the night and provided that celebrity presence every special event tries to achieve. Proceeds from the silent and art auctions, and thrift store boutique will support our mission to serve our neighbors in need. We will host this event again next year and hope that you will join us!

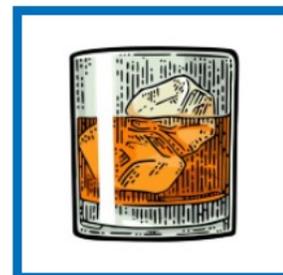


---

## Congrats to our Bourbon Raffle winners!

Congratulations to our Blessings for Bourbon Raffle Winners!

- 1st place - Dale Sunday
- 2nd place - Lara King
- 3rd place - Steve Roeding



---

## Revitalization

By: Dennis Coyne

The life of every Conference is its members. Recruitment of new members revitalizes a conference with new ideas, energy and enthusiasm. The “Invitation to Serve” Program (ITS) supported by SVdP National provides an effective way to attract fellow parishioners to our Society. Here is an introductory statement from the program:

*“The Society is open to all those who seek to live their faith loving and committing themselves to their neighbor in need.” (Rule, Part I, 3.1)*

Whether forming new Conferences or strengthening existing Conferences, eventually an effort must be made to persuade members of the parish to join the Society. Even strong Conferences must recruit. A healthy Conference will have a slow but steady turnover of membership. Attrition is inevitable because Vincentians may move out of the parish, become heavily involved in other ministries or have family commitments. New members bring fresh ideas and fresh energy to the Conference and reinforce veteran members in their commitment.

Casey Guilfoyle, Council President, asked Bill Kopp, 1st Vice President, to lead our Revitalization and Extension Committee to encourage positive growth throughout our Council, not just in membership but in all critical areas of our Society: friendship, service and spirituality. ITS is the most effective means to attract new members to share in our Vincentian vocation. Working with Bill on this endeavor and especially in the ITS support to conferences are Deacon Mike Lyman and myself. Previously, Mike and I have been the “go to”

people on this effort of recruiting new members and also encouraging in-depth formation through Ozanam Orientation. Using ITS as a tool in our toolbox was a highlighted topic at all 3 District meetings this past January and February. We strongly encourage all Conferences to consider an ITS for their parish.

The following Conferences have successfully conducted ITS programs since October: St. Therese, St. William, St. Paul, All Saints, and St. Anthony. Plans for the very near future include St. Augustine, Holy Cross, St. Tim, IHM, and St. Cecilia. Conferences that have conducted ITS in the prior 2 years are: St. Barbara, Divine Mercy, and St. Bernard. As stated in the ITS introduction, all conferences should conduct ITS for the vitality of their Conferences on a regular basis.

As we recruit new members, that also means we will offer Ozanam Orientation more frequently to form new Vincentians as required by National SVdP. To learn more about the ITS program and how it works, contact **Bill Kopp** at [billkopp6@gmail.com](mailto:billkopp6@gmail.com). He can provide you with everything you need to adapt the program to your parish. ITS is a proven program that will bring new members to your Conference! We hope you will consider doing an ITS at your parish later in the year.

---

## Partners for Prosperity

Our Partners for Prosperity program currently has 6 matches. Each mentee is a graduate of the Life Learning Center and is partnered with a Vincentian mentor. The hope for this year long mentorship is for the mentor to help the graduate define their personal goals, develop a plan on how to stay on track, and monitor their progress. Under normal circumstances, the matches meet one time a month in person and frequent phone calls to check in. During this COVID-19 crisis, matches continue to “meet” via phone. Vincentian mentor support is critical during this trying time for these individuals who have made an effort to transform their lives. Once the COVID-19 crisis has passed, Dennis Coyne will lead bi-monthly spiritual reflections and enrichment sessions to help our mentors understand and grow in their spirituality through this experience.

---

# Supporting The Mission

## KY Gives Day

St. Vincent de Paul is participating in Kentucky Gives Day again this year. “Kentucky Gives Day is an online 24-hour annual fundraising event bringing charities and Kentuckians—near and far—together for a powerful day of action.” KY Gives Day is done all online and will be held on May 12, 2020 this year.



---

## Kroger Community Rewards

Enroll your Kroger Plus Card with St. Vincent de Paul. It's an easy way to help SVdP! Every purchase you make at Kroger will provide support back to St. Vincent de Paul NKY. This support is critically important at this time to help us make sure we are meeting the needs of our neighbors. Go to **Kroger's website** and sign in to your account. If you do not have an account, make one! Then you put our organization number in: **SV688**. Thank you for helping us, help



others!

---

Please consider supporting your local parish SVdP conference as we all work together to help our community through the COVID-19 crisis. Thank You! For information on how to contribute, please reach out to your conference treasurer or our advancement director, Lou Settle, at [lou.settle@svdpnky.org](mailto:lou.settle@svdpnky.org).

You can also donate online at [svdpnky.org](http://svdpnky.org). You do have the ability to designate your donation to a specific program or conference.

---

We pray for your continued strength and health. Thank you for all that you do for our Neighbors in Need.

---

2655 Crescent Springs Rd  
Covington, KY 41017



FOLLOW US

