



Vincentian NewsFlash

Fall 2021

Holy Spirit at Work Among Us

Message from Executive Director, Karen Zengel



I recently had the opportunity to present to the Junior class at Notre Dame Academy. The discussion focused on the challenges of poverty in Northern Kentucky, followed by what St. Vincent de Paul actually provides to the community. Prior to this discussion, many of these students only knew St. Vincent de Paul as a place for material donations and thrift stores. As a result, I made sure to share this famous quote, "No act of charity is foreign to the Society."

How this comes to life in our work is fascinating and one of the reasons I love being part of this ministry. When a neighbor reaches out to us, they have one thing in mind – an immediate basic need that is not being met. I need

help with rent. I cannot pay my utility bill. There is no money for groceries. It starts with a simple ask; however, it often ends with much more.

A simple visit leads to a conversation. A meaningful connection between the person in need and the pair of Vincentians who have taken the time to make the visit. They peel back the onion, ask questions to understand the context and the consequence behind falling short on the request. They listen intently. Our Vincentians share experiences, knowledge and referrals. In the last eighteen months, the needs have become deeper and more complicated and sometimes just being able to talk it out leads to unexpected solutions. We have so many examples of this –twinning across conferences, partnerships with other service agencies, new programs such as our homeless assistance program and extended outreach to areas not covered by a conference. In this newsletter, you'll read about the unique ministry of our St. William's Conference and some seasonal programs designed to address the extra expense that comes with winter that not all can cover. All of these forms of outreach are a representation of "no act of charity is foreign to the Society."

These ideas and approaches are the Holy Spirit at work –presenting solutions as we work in community with each other. We are not alone and when we look closely, we see God at work among us.

While our ministry provides help, watching how that help comes to fruition feeds hope. Hope

Hitting the “Reset” Button!

Message from President, Casey Guilfoyle



Whenever there's a glitch on any electronics, my 1st instinct is to “reset” the device by giving it a break, either turning it off and then back on or unplugging it completely. Maybe we all need a “reset” once in a while in our own lives, even when it's just a bit of low energy levels we are feeling. The chance I had to attend the Society's 2021 National Assembly in Houston in late August was my opportunity to unplug and “reset” my zeal for Our Society. It proved to be true to its theme of “New Horizons of Hope and Service”. I left inspired and re-energized to look beyond what we've been through with the pandemic and forward facing to a new fiscal year, with our refreshed Strategic Goals that align beautifully with our essential elements.

Attending with a group of 600 + like-minded Vincentians and learning more about how different Conferences and Councils respond to some of the difficult challenges we face as a Society was refreshing. We are not alone in our struggles to “reset” after the pandemic with revitalizing our membership and reinstituting our home visits. Sr. Judith and I have visited with quite a few Conferences over the summer and will continue to assist in whatever ways we can to help all our Vincentians reset waning energy levels. We will have our “Invitation to Serve” ready to roll as needed, have guidance for new officers and are in the planning stages of new workshops to “re-imagine” the Home Visit after some difficult months of distancing. I have no doubt that we will continue to grow in friendship, we will continue to expand our reach in service and we will continue to nourish our Vincentian spirituality. I have been refreshed, reinvigorated, re-energized and renewed. All from a simple reset!

Donor Spotlight

It's that time of year again! Our annual holiday programs will be kicking off within the next month. Many of us recall the lack of celebration during the holidays of 2020 due to the pandemic, but most of us were fortunate and blessed to celebrate meals and gift giving with our immediate families. Many families in need are not as fortunate. After paying for necessities, there just aren't enough funds available to buy a holiday meal and/or gifts. At St. Vincent de Paul, we receive hundreds of requests for Thanksgiving meals, gifts for children to open on Christmas morning, and warm coats for families that struggle to keep up with their financial obligations.



Recently, we contacted several donors that donate to our holiday programs year after year, and asked what inspires their holiday giving.

William said that his family has made it a Christmas tradition to give back to the less fortunate at this special time of the year. “When my children were young, we would read the Christmas story as a family and were touched by the gifts presented to Jesus by the wise men. So, we wanted other children to feel the joy of receiving a gift on Christmas morning.”

Laura, whose family also struggled financially during her childhood, received gifts at Christmas. When she was a child, she was told the gifts were from Santa. Later in life, she became aware that her aunts and uncles bought those gifts so that the family could have a merry Christmas. Laura is “paying it forward, hoping all children in need have a cheerful holiday.”

At this special time, we reflect on the past year and feel blessed. Giving to those in need during the holidays does our heart good. Last year, with the generosity of the community, we were able to brighten the holidays for 497 children. Keep reading to hear about the different ways you can get involved this winter!

Programs Spotlight

This year we are supplying **Thanksgiving meal baskets** filled with turkeys and dinner sides to neighbors in need, so they may celebrate a holiday meal with their family. We are in need of volunteers to help with assembling the baskets and distributing them. If you would like to sign up to volunteer or have questions, contact Becca Gerding at becca.gerding@svdpnky.org. Donations in the form of a check, cash or gift cards to local grocery stores would also be appreciated. Donations can be mailed to us at 2655 Crescent Springs Road, Covington, KY 41017 ATTN: Thanksgiving Meal Baskets. Thank you for your dedication to serving our community this Thanksgiving.



Buying a warm winter coat can be a hardship for our neighbors struggling to make ends meet. Would you like to help? Do you have gently used coats for the upcoming **Coat Drive**? More details to follow in the next couple of months to let you know where you can drop off your donations.

In-person coat distribution weekends return this year!! Last year, we provided 400 coats to keep our neighbors warm and expect to provide even more this year with the return of our distribution events!



If you are interested in donating to help purchase new coats, you can do so by [clicking here!](#). Thank you!

If your family or company is looking for a way to give back this **Christmas** season, consider **adopting a family in need** and shopping for their Christmas gift wish list. This is a great family/group service project that delivers sheer joy to those who receive! Last year we were able to provide gifts to 93 children in need. Contact Mark Bradley at mark.bradley@svdpnky.org or 859-426-2649 if you would like to

participate. Thank you!



Vincent's Angels, now in its 4th year, supplements our Adopt a Family Christmas program by allowing families in need to choose gifts for their children from a variety of donated new toys or gift cards. Thanks to the generosity of our donors, we host a special day when families in need come and "shop" for Christmas gifts, making it possible for parents to enjoy the magic of Christmas morning with their children. Last year we served 404 deserving children. Stay tuned to learn more about donating toys and/or gift cards. Thank you!



Conference Spotlight

St. William's Conference

St. William SVdP Conference located in Williamstown, Kentucky plays a very important role in helping those in need in Grant County. This conference is small but mighty and Fr. Clift, the pastor, is very supportive in helping the conference succeed.

Food is the most requested form of assistance followed by rent assistance. The lack of transportation and resources make it hard for families to obtain affordable, quality food. As a rural community, a convenience store and the local Walmart are the only options to purchase food. These places are only accessible by car. Fortunately, the St. William's food pantry is well stocked with all the essentials to deliver to neighbors in need. When the pantry runs low on inventory, Vincentians have been able to count on Williamstown High School to host a food drive. St. William's Conference also hosts a mobile food distribution once a month with Catholic Charities and Anthem Insurance Company, where they are able to provide shelf stable goods along with fresh produce and meat to families in need.



Lack of affordable housing and lack of employment at a living wage are current problems in Grant County. The shortage of affordable housing is due in part to the tourist boom associated with The Ark Encounter, with many homes being converted to bed and breakfast establishments, instead of rental housing for Grant County residents. Those without housing have nowhere to go as there are no homeless shelters in the area. As a result, the need to keep families safe in their homes is a priority for the St. William Conference.

The personal connection that Vincentians make with neighbors is truly touching. They strive to connect with neighbors in need on a personal level by getting to know each person they serve.

Members of the St. William's conference remarked that some of the people they help with food are single, older gentlemen who come together to receive food each month. Because of the lack of affordable and accessible housing, the men live together and rely on one another to make ends meet.

There is also a large Hispanic population in Grant County served by the St. William Conference. One Hispanic neighbor who was recently assisted with rent also needed funds to pay for her citizenship test. Vincentians were able to help her with both and she successfully became a citizen of the United States!

We truly appreciate the dedication of our St. William Vincentians who serve so many neighbors in need. Thank you to St. William and Father Clift for being neighbors Grant County can count on.

Choice Food Pantries

Our two food pantries in Erlanger and Cold Spring are both now operating as Choice Food Pantries. Now neighbors can choose what items they need to best serve them. This option allows neighbors to “shop” with a grocery cart and choose different kinds of foods, paper products and hygiene items that they truly are in need of. This gives us a better understanding of what our neighbors want and need and in return we know what to ask for when reaching out to our donors and community partners. We are also less wasteful because neighbors are not throwing away unused/unwanted items. When giving out boxes in the past, we used our best judgment to know what families and individuals needed. But now with this personal “shopping” experience in our Choice Food Pantries, neighbors can make sure that the food they are getting is nourishing and specific to their dietary needs. Our Choice Food Pantries also gives neighbors a more ‘normal’ experience similar to when shopping at a convenience store or grocery store. Our goal is to make sure that our pantry visitors have a dignified and pleasant experience where they feel welcome.



News and Events

Feast Day Mass and Brunch

On Saturday, September 25 we hosted the annual Feast Day Mass at St. Paul Parish in Florence. The day was filled with gratitude for our Vincentians who work hard to provide assistance to our NKY neighbors in need. Mass was celebrated, followed by a delicious brunch where our Vincentians gathered in friendship reflecting on the past year of giving back. Thank you to those who attended and a special shout out to Sister Judith Niewahner for planning the special



day.



Norb de Jaco Vincentian Service Award

Congratulations to Morgan Moore from our Blessed Sacrament Conference! Morgan was honored as our Norb de Jaco Vincentian Service Award recipient this year at our Feast Day Celebration. Morgan truly exemplifies what it means to be a Vincentian and we are so proud that he is a member of our SVdPNKY family. He has been a Vincentian for 19 years. His fellow conference members describe Morgan as “selfless, thoughtful, kind, spiritual, compassionate and knowledgeable.”

He is very thorough with every neighbor he works with to make sure that all their needs are met and leaves every visit with a smile and prayer. Casey Guilfoyle, fellow Blessed Sacrament Vincentian, recalls one visit she attended with Morgan: “This neighbor was a schoolteacher who lost her job several months before, had depleted her retirement savings and now had no lights on because she had no money to pay her electric bill. It seemed clear that she was suffering from depression and Morgan's prayerful spirit and listening ears helped lead her to a better place in spirit as well as get the lights back on.”



Morgan values his relationship with God and shares his faith with every neighbor he assists. He takes his role as a Vincentian seriously and it shows in his dedication to help with not only Blessed Sacrament's Conference but also with our underserved areas. He is also part of our Microloan committee. Morgan is a wonderful husband, father and friend to many. We thank you, Morgan, for being a neighbor we can count on!

Jubilarian Awards

Congratulations to the Vincentians listed below for their many years of service with St. Vincent de Paul Northern Kentucky! Thank you!

Mary Gayle Taney (pictured left) -25 years
Laurie (pictured right) and Manny Iglesias - 20 years
Barry Hamlin - 20 years
Howard Anneken - 20 years



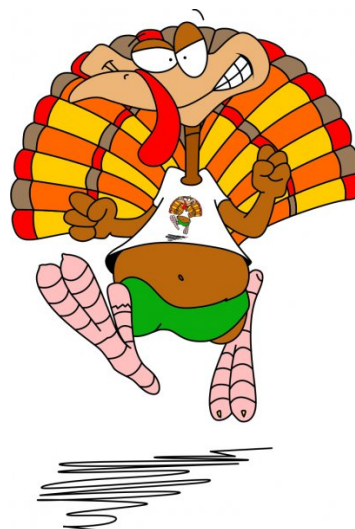
NEW St. Vincent de Paul Northern Kentucky Logo

Today, we are launching our new refreshed logo and we invite you to be some of the first people to see it online! The T is now in the shape of a cross which symbolizes our faith based roots and is a sign of hope to all those who encounter us. We've modernized by removing the outer circle around the logo and have chosen a cleaner font. We have simplified by removing the words "Society of" in our name. These changes represent the progress we've made and the continued growth and improvement ahead of us. Look for the logo refresh in print in our Winter NewsFlash early next year.



Turkeyfoot Trot Live 5k Run/Walk

Join us for the 14th Annual Turkeyfoot Trot 5k Run/Walk (Virtual Option Available) on Saturday, November 20 at 9 a.m. at Thomas More University! Sign up online and see race details by visiting runsignup.com or [click here](#) to print a paper registration form to mail it to us. This year's race is presented by Commonwealth Bank & Trust Company and Payroll Partners Inc. Interested in sponsoring? [Click here for more details](#). We hope to see you, your family and friends there!



Creative Compassion 2022

Save the date for Thursday, March 31 for our Creative Compassion art event hosted at the Drees Pavilion in Devou Park! Creative Compassion features local artists who create masterpieces from an item they've found in one of our thrift stores. The artwork is auctioned with the proceeds benefiting our outreach. Stay tuned -we will send information on how to purchase tickets in early 2022! We hope you can join us for a night of local artistic talent, dedicated to helping our ministry!

Interested in joining our planning committee? Please email Lou Settle at lou.settle@svidpnky.org.



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