

VINCENTIAN *NewsFlash*



special features

DONOR SPOTLIGHT

Charles H. Dater Foundation

CONFERENCE SPOTLIGHT

St. Paul

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED



a message from our EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Karen Zengel,
Executive Director

I recently spoke with a friend of the Society on the phone who was returning my call. Later that day in talking with Casey, I mentioned the conversation and Casey immediately asked, “How is he doing?” After a very long pause, I realized I could not answer that question because I did not even take the time to ask. I was horrified. And, if you are reading this.... I am so sorry! If you know me, I am not one for small talk, especially on the phone. I am an introvert to the core who values efficiency, so I tend to “cut to the chase” quickly.

Riddled with guilt, I spent some time thinking about this blunder. Slow down Karen. Think about the other person. I sincerely appreciate when someone asks me a genuine “how are you?” and takes the time to listen. St. Vincent de Paul is a person-to-person ministry and one of our essential Vincentian virtues is selflessness. Everyone deserves to be seen and heard. It does not matter who that person is – neighbor in need, customer, teammate, Vincentian, volunteer, donor, or community partner. We are all made in the likeness and image of God. Every exchange is an opportunity to see him and speak with him. How would we talk to God if we met him face to face, or if he called us on the phone?

So, take two – I met a guest at our pantry, patiently waiting in the hallway at our Erlanger facility. I stopped to make sure he had been helped and we had a real conversation. He was in a car accident, hit by a drunk driver, that left him disabled. He could no longer drive, lost his job, and had to rely on TANK to bring him to our pantry. But that was only part of his story. In his younger days, he was an avid runner and worked in schools helping at-risk children. He lit up as he shared what he loved and what he looked forward to despite his challenges. It was the best way to end my day.

I am so grateful for this vocation and all the people who make it – our neighbors in need, customers, teammates, Vincentians, volunteers, and donors. You remind me, “Slow down, Karen.” Jesus is here with us and we need to have a conversation with him. Thank you for all that you do to support our good works.

EASTERN KENTUCKY mission trip

In May, a 10-member mission group led by Pete Stark, Vincentian and Disaster Operations Chair, traveled to Eastern Kentucky to work with CAP, the Christian Appalachian Project, to assist with recovery efforts for those affected by the severe flooding that took place in that area. Mr. Stark led a group of volunteers from Indianapolis, Louisville, and Northern Kentucky. They traveled to Paintsville, Kentucky, joining CAP and local relief efforts in the surrounding areas.

The group broke up into two teams, removing and replacing trailer skirting for mobile homes, rebuilding porches, installing handicap ramps, and reinforcing safety railings for residents in need of increased safety and accessibility. The team also replaced damaged exterior doors on homes and interior doors to improve the safety and living conditions of residents unable to fix

these problems on their own. One team even performed a partial roof replacement to prevent further home damage for a resident waiting for a replacement. In addition to all this work in the field, one volunteer spent time preparing food in CAP’s kitchen for those in need.

All this work was accomplished in three days. “It was like we had been working together for ten years,” Stark said. This volunteer group was very handy with tools, jumped right in, and worked fluently as a team. Pete went on to say the work was “humbling, rewarding, and they had a lot of fun in the process.” The target date for the next mission trip will be late March/early April 2024.

If you are interested in joining one of these mission trips, please contact Pete Stark at robertgstark55@gmail.com.



20th annual HUNGER WALK

St. Vincent de Paul Northern Kentucky participated in the Freestore Foodbank’s 20th annual 5k Hunger Walk this past Memorial Day, May 29. We had a 31-member team that participated in the event, raising \$1440 in credit at the Freestore Foodbank. This credit will be used to purchase items needed for our food pantries to continue providing for those struggling to make ends meet here in Northern Kentucky.

Becca Gerding, Site Manager for the Cold Spring Food Pantry and team captain for the event, said the following about the Hunger Walk.

“It is so fantastic to see such a mix of neighbors spending their holiday morning walking for the same cause. Experiencing hunger hits so close to home, especially in today’s environment where costs continue to rise. Your neighbor could be skipping dinner so their kids can eat or deciding between feeding their family or paying the electric bill. It is fundraisers like this that continue to help us meet the rising demand in our community, and I am so glad to be able to be a part of it!”

In addition to the Hunger Walk, our STAMP OUT HUNGER food drive with Postal Workers took place Saturday, May 13. We received 2,673 pounds of food from the Erlanger Post Office and 247 pounds from the Union post office, for a total of **2,920 pounds of food** provided for our local neighbors in need. The need for food from our pantries has almost tripled compared to last year. These efforts ensure we can meet the demand for food among those struggling to make ends meet. We are so grateful to our community, which helps us feed our neighbors in need!



CHRISTMAS in july

Some early birds take advantage of Christmas in July sales to get a jump on their holiday gift shopping for December. But Christmas in July has other benefits this year, too. At SVdPNKY, we will partner with donors and local businesses to collect Christmas gifts for our Vincent’s Angels program.

Families who are in need of Christmas gifts for their children call our Assistance Call Center starting in November to be added to a special list. Some families are served through our Adopt-A-Family program; however, we typically receive more requests for help than we can fulfill through that program. Vincent Angel’s is a supplemental Christmas program for those who are unable to be helped through the Adopt-A-Family program.

In 2022, we hosted our largest Vincent’s Angels toy distribution at the Sterling Event Center at St. Barbara Church. At this event, families chose gifts for their children. Thanks to wrapping paper and gift bags donations and a volunteer crew of elves, we also wrapped the gifts to have

them ready for the magic of Christmas morning. Last year, this event served **540 children with over 2,700 toys**. Thanks to community partner, Be Concerned, we were also able to help with some last-minute frantic requests for assistance after the event. Don’t we live in a wonderful and giving community?

We are starting early this year collecting toys and gift cards for children to meet the demand in December. We are asking our generous donors for donations of new toys and/or gift cards for various ages. We hope that you will participate! New toys can be dropped off in July at any of our four St. Vincent de Paul stores. If you are looking for other ways to bring some Christmas fun to your summer, stop in one of our stores and check out the holiday displays and promotions in July. The proceeds from Round Up at the register during July will benefit the Vincent’s Angels program. If you can’t make it to one of our locations, you can also visit our website to donate directly to Vincent’s Angels.

raising awareness ON POVERTY

This year, we've all felt the shock at the grocery register when we realize that our dollar is not going as far as it used to. In fact, last year we saw the largest annual increase in the cost of food since the 80's. In 2023, we have seen demand on our Erlanger food pantry triple due to inflation and the reduction in SNAP benefits. It is the work of the SVdP Voice of the Poor (VOP) Committee to dive deeper into the unmet needs of our low-income neighbors and raise awareness within the community as to why services are needed.

Chaired by Aaron Wolfe-Bertling, a Vincentian with the Mother of God Conference, the committee has adopted St. Vincent de Paul USA's recent advocacy agenda supporting the investment of affordable housing and opposition to cutting SNAP benefits in the Farm Bill. The Farm Bill is expected to come out of committee in late June or early July and go to the U.S. House of Representatives. While there is no way of knowing what will ultimately be included in that bill, the thought is that there may be no adjustments to eligibility. However, the funding may not be available to meet the need.

The most pressing issue, locally, is the lack of affordable housing for our low-income neighbors. Just in the past year, two local public housing complexes have been shut down. Rising rent costs coupled with the lack of inventory has caused more homelessness and an increase in rental assistance requests for SVdPNKY. In addition to the struggle of finding housing, Aaron shared a local story that illustrates the issues that low income renters encounter. Lisa and her three children lived in rental property that was damaged when the driver of a truck lost control hitting the side of her residence. The impact left a visible hole in the side of the home. The family continued to live in the home as they had nowhere else to go. Unfortunately, the landlord put off repairs to the home and eventually the city condemned the structure. However, during this situation, Lisa continued to pay rent because Kentucky Law does not allow her to withhold rent payments. In the end, Lisa and her family must now find another place to live.

"It is our (Vincentian) responsibility to not only assist with the needs of the poor but also, address the barriers encountered by the poor and address systemic changes that cause poverty. The work of the VOP Committee, in cooperation with the Bishops and influenced by our Catholic values, is to educate and mobilize our Vincentian members alongside our neighbors in need, who encounter day to day challenges, to speak to the issues in the community and with elected official to effectuate change," commented Aaron Wolfe-Bertling.

One of this year's focus areas by the VOP Committee is Kentucky House Bill 21 that was signed by Governor Beshear in April. The bill allows those experiencing homelessness to use the shelter as their permanent address to obtain an ID. A valid identification is necessary to complete a job application and obtain services such as prescriptions and housing, and even to go to the library. The committee is now looking to work with local counties and community transportation to address transportation issues that are barriers to low-income workers and employment opportunities. "It's our duty to raise awareness about how local, state or national decisions or inactivity impact our impact residents in need," said Aaron. In Cincinnati, there is a trial setup with the Metro bus system in identified regions that allows residents to get a ride anywhere in that region for a \$2.00 fare. It's an "Uber like" program with the goal of reducing transportation barriers.

With these pressing matters at the forefront of everyone's minds, Voice of the Poor Committee is encouraging all Vincentians to sign up for Voter Voice to make our voices heard. More information about this can be found at votervoice.net/SVDPUSA/home.

ST. PAUL conference spotlight



The St. Paul Conference is a vibrant conference of 21 members serving the city of Florence.

The makeup of Florence is mostly older neighborhoods, many apartment complexes, and one Senior Living facility. Recently some complexes have been sold, and the new management decided to no longer accept Section 8, resulting in higher rents. This dynamic has led to a decline in the number of affordable housing apartments in Florence and an increase in requests for rent assistance. Prior to 2019, St. Paul's conference covered the area from the city of Florence south to just short of Walton. In partnership with St. Barbara and St. Timothy, their coverage area was reduced to enable St. Paul's to serve their immediate parish area better.

St. Paul's conference members are very dedicated to serving the people of Florence and their parish. Their parishioners are extremely generous in providing donations to support the work of the Vincentians. These gifts make it possible to provide neighbors in need with financial assistance and basic necessities. The conference will also provide clients with pertinent information, like setting meetings with CAC and Brighton Center to address deeper, long-term challenges. They supply Food Resources to clients and encourage them to utilize resources to help reduce expenses and save money for bills. In addition to these options, the Mary Rose Mission in Florence serves a good hot meal daily. Since it is close to the local senior complex, many will go there to eat. Conference President Marla Kelly described the mission as "a gem in our own backyard." While the conference may not be experts, they connect neighbors with the right people and agencies that can help them.

St. Paul's conference maintains its own food pantry. Food drives done with their parish and other groups provide either food or money to help replenish the pantry. The Knights of Columbus Bishop Ackerman Council hosts food drives and divides the food between the Immaculate Heart of Mary and St. Paul conferences. Their parish school, St. Henry District High School and various companies that match donations from conference members also provide significant support. Finally, Council has provided support through the FreeStore Foodbank order program and the pizza distribution program. All these efforts help to restock the St. Paul pantry at critical times.

Other activities include delivering Thanksgiving and Christmas meals, working with their parish Christmas Giving Tree coordinator in providing the families and gift ideas for the program, and the distribution of gifts.

Knowing that an important part of our ministry is being the hands, feet, and voice of Jesus, the St. Paul Vincentians pray with and for those they serve. Last fall the conference began giving clients Matthew Kelly's book Holy Moments and/or the Pocket Gospels and Acts of the Apostles book from the USCCB, donated by conference members themselves.

Friendship and building meaningful relationships are central to being part of St. Vincent de Paul. The conference looks for opportunities to do this among their Vincentians and within the parish. The conference recently began reaching out to parish families who have lost a loved one, sending sympathy cards to a family member to let them know they are praying for them. The conference also recognizes other parish groups, organizations, or parishioners helping the parish grow and improve. In addition to this community enrichment, the conference plans to begin social gatherings for their team.

To keep the parish informed of the importance of their support, the conference publishes financials in the monthly parish paper. St. Paul's conference also includes stories. One story is highlighted below:

Recently we had a request from Jane asking for help with rent. She lives in the Florence area with her husband and two teenage sons. Jane had been undergoing treatments for cancer. The cancer treatments made it difficult for her to work. While her husband was working, his work as a bread delivery driver was slow. The household fell behind on rent with only one income and medical bills. She received some assistance from her father, but he could not pay the full amount. We helped Jane make up the difference to pay the rent. We also provided food assistance and gave the family two gas cards to free up their limited income for other expenses.

To best summarize the work of the St. Paul Conference Vincentians, Marla shared this quote from a new conference member:

"I started with SVdP not really knowing what it was all about and was not comfortable meeting with clients. But after going with several members on these visits, it got better, and I learned so much. I am still learning ways to help people. We do not solve the world's problems, but we help one person's world get a little better through our assistance, listening, and caring."

IMPACT

assistance provided
10/22 through 05/23



\$270,373
IN RENT



\$642,083
IN FOOD



\$339,998
IN UTILITIES

REMEMBERING & Honoring

Donations received December 2022 through May 2023

in honor

Mairead Rauch & Stephen Calme Wedding

Roger & Diane Keller

Liam Crossen

Trevor Crossen

William & Mary Donnermeyer

Ann Marie Donnermeyer

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Amy Richmond

Jackie Wagner

Eric & Diane Wurzbacher

Margaret Martin

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Mark Nieman

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Sue Ochsner

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Jennifer Blanchard

Tom Boardman

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Dennis & Sharon Geiger

Don & Judy Griffin

David Schierloh

Don Stacy

Lou Settle

Tom & Mary Ann Thistleton

Carl & Catherine Gillman

Ed Vogel

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Rose Voulgarakis

Mario Voulgarakis

Carole Wilke

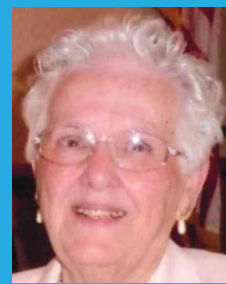
Marianne Enginger

Frank Yourison

Karola Yourison

We remember and honor
these Vincentians that have
recently passed away.

May their souls rest in heavenly peace.



Charlene Braunwart
St. Paul
SVdP Conference



Sue Ochsner
St. Philip
SVdP Conference

SUMMER BREEZE

program



Now in its 25th year, our Summer Breeze Program, sponsored by St. Elizabeth Healthcare, provides new AC units to neighbors of all ages suffering from documented medical conditions such as asthma or COPD, and fans to anyone upon request. The program runs through August 31 and is the only annual heat relief program in Northern Kentucky.

The heat and humidity that the summer brings can exacerbate medical conditions. Because of this, we have once again partnered with St. E to bring this initiative to life. "This program is essential to making sure members of our community stay healthy as temperatures rise," said our Executive Director, Karen Zengel. "Being able to provide valuable resources to our neighbors in need is an important initiative for us and our community. We are grateful for the support that has allowed us to continue this program."

As the cost of living increases, the need for air conditioners and fans remains consistent. This year, even more of our neighbors will not be able to absorb the rise in prices for these items. The Summer Breeze Program helps economically disadvantaged clients with medical conditions stay healthy and cool in their homes.

Last summer, we provided 378 AC units and fans, valued at over \$22,000, to those suffering from the summer heat.

Those in need of an air conditioner or fan should contact us M-F from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at 859-341-3219. Neighbors may receive a new AC unit every five years with a doctor's note or a fan every year without a doctor's note.



This program is made possible by financial support from generous donors and foundations like St. Elizabeth Healthcare and the Agnes Nordloh Charitable Trust. To help purchase new AC units and fans for our neighbors in need or to learn more about the program, please visit www.svdpnky.org.

CHARLES H. DATER FOUNDATION

donor spotlight



CHARLES H. DATER
FOUNDATION

Charles Hixson Dater was born in Cincinnati in 1912 and grew up in Northside. His only sibling died as a child. He attended the University of Cincinnati and received his MBA from Harvard University. He served as an officer in the U.S. Army in World War II. He was only 17 years old when his father passed away and took over management of the family's financial holdings and land development. Following in the footsteps of his father, grandfather, and great-grandfather, he pursued and grew the philanthropic commitment to the community that had been a core value for the Daters since the mid-1800s. In 1985, Charles established the Charles H. Dater Foundation before passing away in 1993.

The Foundation's mission is to fund nonprofits in Greater Cincinnati that carry out projects that benefit young people in arts/culture, healthcare, social services and other community needs. Over the past 30+ years, the foundation assets have grown to over \$100 million. When considering grants, Foundation directors often ask the question, "How many children will feel the impact (of) our grant, and how deep will the impact be?" Since 1985, the Foundation has awarded more than 3,300 grants totaling over \$60 million.

Since 2013, we have been pleased to be entrusted with the Foundation's **funding of over \$200,000 for our Sweet Dreams bed program for children**. We are grateful for the continued support of the Charles H. Dater Foundation to SVdPNKY and commend the Foundation for helping meet the basic needs of children living in Greater Cincinnati.

We sincerely apologize for any omissions or spelling errors.

**Thank you to all who chose to honor and remember friends,
family and loved ones with gifts to St. Vincent de Paul.**



**SOCIETY OF ST. VINCENT DE PAUL
COUNCIL OF NORTHERN KENTUCKY**
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www.svdpnky.org

*For name, address changes or if you would like to receive our NewsFlash
please contact Lou Settle at lou.settle@svdpnky.org.*



volunteer

THERE ARE SO MANY WAYS TO VOLUNTEER WITH US!

- Serving in our food pantry
- Answering calls to our assistance line
- Sorting clothes or other material donations
- Delivering food to the homeless staying in hotels
- Help to plan a fundraising event

Contact our volunteer coordinator, Mark Bradley, at mark.bradley@svdpnky.org
or 859-426-2649 to discuss your next volunteer experience.



SAVE *the dates*

TURKEYFOOT TROT

The annual Turkeyfoot Trot 5k Run/Walk is back for its 16th year and will begin at 9 a.m. on **Saturday, November 18**, at Thomas More University. A "Super Value" Early Bird Registration will be available on July 19th and 20th for only \$10. T-shirts are optional for \$17 each. During these two days, race registration fees will be significantly reduced. Don't miss out on this special deal! Sign up through our website: [**svdpnky.org**](http://svdpnky.org).

FEAST DAY CELEBRATION

This year's Feast Day Celebration will be on **Saturday, September 23** at 10 a.m. at the Cathedral Basilica in Covington, with a brunch to follow at Latin School. Be on the lookout for an invitation to R.S.V.P. later this summer. This special day celebrates our dedicated Vincentian volunteers and leadership donors with mass and special recognitions. Our celebration takes place four days before the official feast day of Saint Vincent de Paul (September 27), whose own approach helps guide us in all we do in our modern ministry. We hope you'll join us!