

THE SOCIETY OF ST. VINCENT DE PAUL • ST. TIMOTHY CONFERENCE

A Servant's ♥ Heart

CELEBRATING SERVICE, COMPASSION & GOD'S LOVE • APRIL 2025



Why Am I a Vincentian?

by Charlene Unterkofler

Have you ever heard the term Vincentian? A food pantry or thrift store helper may come to mind, yet I am a Vincentian, and neither of those.

The root word Vincent comes from the well-known 17th-century French saint, St. Vincent de Paul. The Society of St. Vincent de Paul was founded in Paris in 1833, and named after this patron saint of charitable societies. Its members are called Vincentians. Today, the Society spans over 150 countries and the Arlington Diocese has eleven active conferences that model spirituality, friendship, and service.

My Vincentian journey over the last few decades is a testament to its transformative power. I've witnessed how God can place a humble Vincentian in an ordinary situation and empower them to impact their neighbor's lives in deeply fulfilling ways.

As a Vincentian, I've accomplished things through God's grace that I never imagined. I met a woman in a nursing home and took her to a prison to visit her son who she hadn't seen in twelve years. I helped a young family relocate after they learned that their son had a brain tumor. I've comforted dozens of senior fire victims who lost everything in a fire and helped them resettle. I supported a homeless woman's journey to bury her mother's ashes.

God's love and compassion for the poor are at the heart of the Vincentian mission. Vincentians are called to: Be the face of Christ! See the face of Christ! The five key Vincentian virtues are simplicity, humility, gentleness, selflessness, and zeal.

When William Shakespeare coined the expression, "The world is my oyster," he wasn't referring to Vincentians, and yet, the world is my oyster when I can bring joy to wherever God calls me.

The entire article can be found on pg. 13 at <https://arlingtoncatholicherald-va.newsmemory.com>



"Those who love the poor in life will have nothing to fear in death."

-St. Vincent de Paul



If you need help:
1-800-873-0613

General SVDP information:
Sandy svdp.st.timz@gmail.com
Food Pantry Information:
Peggy proberts8@cox.net
To Volunteer:
Vivienne cammras@gmail.com



Please use this QR-Code
to donate to SVdP
at St. Timothy's

Message from the President

This issue highlights the value of working together in the Lord's Vineyard. There is strength in numbers! The generosity and compassion of our parishioners, neighboring parishes, other faith-based communities, and our fellow Vincentians scattered across the Mid-Atlantic region is truly amazing!

The last seven months, your combined gifts and donations helped with rent, utilities, auto repairs, extraordinary medical bills, food, and baby items for over 1,700 families. We proudly announce that 98% of all donations were used for direct assistance in our prior fiscal year. Responsible stewardship requires us to continually search for awesome volunteers, pro-bono work, and cost-efficient programs and services that will lead us to fulfill our mission in the Society of St. Vincent de Paul to:

See the Face of Christ, Be the Face of Christ!

Please give generously and join us for our meetings, held on the 2nd Thursday of each month at 7:00 p.m. in the New Parish Hall.

May YOU be always blessed,

Sandy



Warm Coats and Compassion

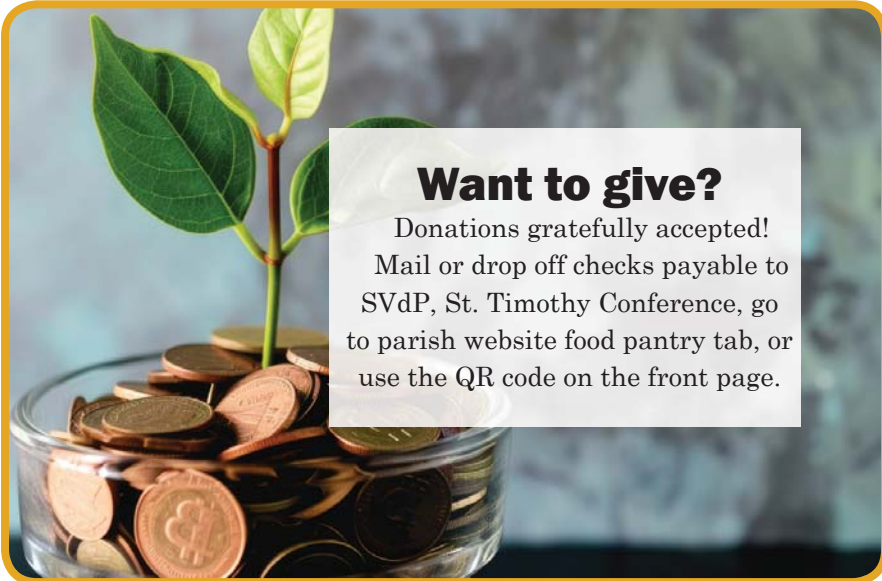
The Knights of Columbus at St. Clare's Parish in Clifton came through again! Their donation of seventy brand-new children's coats went a long way to helping families in need. Diane Michalke, a Vincentian, managed the tracking and delivery of the coats, ensuring local families could keep their children warm during winter.

Forty-four coats were given to children from families we had served throughout the year. Some coats were accompanied by Christmas gifts from Blue Envelope Sponsors, who furnished children's toys, books, learning games, candy, and clothing. The Blue Envelope Project blessed nine families last year and hopes to have more sponsors in 2025 to expand this important work.

Francisco Solares, one of our newest members, connected us with the Family Liaison at a nearby elementary school, who received eight coats to distribute to students in the reduced lunch program. The remaining eighteen boys' and girls' coats were warmly received at a Fairfax County homeless shelter for women and children. These heartwarming endeavors make a huge impact on our community.

Want to give?

Donations gratefully accepted!
Mail or drop off checks payable to SVdP, St. Timothy Conference, go to parish website food pantry tab, or use the QR code on the front page.





NEIGHBOR STORIES

Service we owe our neighbor, who is the image of God.

From Grief to Joy

Kelly came to us shortly after losing her eldest daughter to diabetes. She and her husband had spent so much time caring for their daughter that they had lost their jobs. We visited their home and witnessed their deep grieving firsthand. They shared memories of their beloved daughter, her dreams, and kindness.

Your donations helped us pay the rent and ease the family's burden during a difficult time. A year later, we learned that Kelly was expecting a baby girl and the family was moving to a new place. Once more, your donations helped us cover some of the expenses, and our referrals provided baby items, clothing, and food. This time around, the home visit was filled with joy and laughter!

**"We visited their home
and witnessed their deep
grieving firsthand."**

With Arms Open Wide

In our last issue, we shared a story about a young woman named Maria, the sole income earner for a family of five since her father needed long-term hospital care. In our last issue, we shared a story about a young woman named Maria, the sole income earner for a family of five, due to her father needing long-term hospital care. We were pleased to hear that Maria's father is recovering at home. Unfortunately, he returned with numerous medical bills the family could not pay.

Our St. Vincent de Paul chapter or conference enlisted the aid of the Mid-Atlantic Region Financial Assistance Network (MARFAN). MARFAN is a new funding program that helps with extraordinary circumstances and represents about 400 SVdP conferences in seven eastern states: VA, DC, WV, MD, DE, NJ, and PA.

Tyranny of the Moment

Our neighbor, Sara showed us an electric bill totaling thousands of dollars! She was facing significant challenges with medical issues and a tenant who had stopped paying rent. The situation had spiraled out of control, and Sara could no longer recall the names of organizations she had contacted or even her utility account number!

She was experiencing "tyranny of the moment" when major stress clouds judgment and clear thinking becomes impossible. After assuring her of our support, we helped her organize her thoughts and encouraged her to contact other community partners to bridge the gaps.

The next day Sara was more optimistic. Having circled back and reconnected with various agencies, Sara acquired over a thousand dollars in support, and her utility bill was reduced by half. With her debt paid off, she could smile again and exclaim "God is good!"



Holiday Giving

The American Heritage Girls supplied home-made cookies for our Christmas Food Pantry distribution and the Challenge Girls Club provided packets of candy canes. National Jr. Honor Society students from St. Timothy School greeted pantry visitors with smiles and packets of goodies. Various ministries at St. Timothy generously responded with enough gift cards to help support 250 families.

We are also grateful for the following partnerships:

- New food pantry bulletin board by Kate & Nestor Ojeda
- Soup can drive by St. Veronica Catholic School
- Food drive by St. Joseph's School
- Diaper drive by St. Andrew Catholic Church
- Easter bags by St. Timothy Catholic School
- Fruits and vegetables by St. Timothy KoC
- Free children's clothing by Boxes of Basics



Meet & Greet

In partnership with the Knights of Columbus, SVdP will sponsor a "Meet and Greet" in the New Parish Hall on Sunday, May 4th, following the 7:30 a.m., 9:00 a.m., 10:45 a.m., and 12:30 p.m. Masses.

All are invited to enjoy coffee and donuts and learn more about our Food Pantry, emergency assistance, and special projects.



ServWare

In January, our SVdP conference transitioned to ServWare, a secure web-based program that streamlines the process of serving our neighbors. Due to its efficiency and affordability, the program has gained widespread acceptance with SVdP groups everywhere. We are grateful to the Vincentians who developed the program and the SVdP Holy Spirit Conference members who provided consultation.

HOW WE HELPED OUR NEIGHBORS

August 2024 through February 2025

| | |
|--------------------|-------------------|
| Utility Bills | \$ 45,496 |
| Rent/Mortgage | \$ 69,002 |
| Food Assistance | \$ 52,057 |
| Car Payment/Repair | \$ 3,336 |
| Other SVdP Support | \$ 16,942 |
| <hr/> | |
| TOTAL | \$ 186,834 |



FOOD PANTRY

Number of Families Served

| | |
|---------------------|------------|
| August'24 | 197 |
| September'24 | 205 |
| October'24 | 190 |
| November'24 | 238 |
| December'24 | 270 |
| January'25 | 173 |
| February'25 | 174 |

DID YOU KNOW?

Little Known Facts About St. Vincent de Paul

He entered the priesthood to acquire a comfortable lifestyle until the confession of a dying man revealed his true charism to serve the poor.

He was kidnapped on a ship by pirates five years after being ordained and sold as a slave; after converting his master, both escaped.

His incorrupt heart is found at the convent of the Sisters of Charity in Paris.

Each month, an average of 207 families are served and 6,500 lbs. of food distributed.

To donate food, see the bulletin for a list of needed pantry items.