

Friends of the Poor Walk raises about \$25,000

Approximately \$25,000 was raised for the Society of St. Vincent de Paul's Columbus Council through the organization's eighth annual Friends of the Poor Walk on Saturday, Sept. 16 at Topiary Park in downtown Columbus. About 300 people participated, most of them walking four times around a quarter-mile course through the park. Money from the walk is used by the council and Vincentian conferences throughout the diocese for charitable works and social justice programs. The council's chaplain, Father Charles Klinger, pastor of Westerville St. Paul Church, opened the walk with a prayer for the people most in need and neglected in the nation. Vincentian Council President Warren Wright discussed the organization's work, thanked walkers for their participation, and introduced members of a family displaced by Hurricane Harvey who are being supported by Vincentians in Columbus.

Danielle Gray, honorary chairwoman for the walk, shared several inspiring stories about her contact with the needy in Columbus through the council. She spoke of an elderly woman who died of malnutrition; men who suffer from addiction and lack of employment opportunities; and families who cannot for one reason or another fend for themselves. The walk's chairman, John Willig, said, "God calls us to be his hands and his voice for the poor. Open your lives to allow him to use you for his purpose." Each walker received a T-shirt with a sketch of Jesus washing Peter's feet and a quote from John 13: "As I have done for you, you should also do." The choir from Cristo Rey Columbus High School, located adjacent to the park, inspired many with its presentation of *As I Have Done for You* with guitarist/soloist Chris Sullivan, and *Let There Be Peace on Earth*.

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