

To Columbus Diocese Vincentians

We are excited to announce the preparations for our first SVdP Thrift Store in Franklin County. Our store location will be announced as soon as the lease is finalized. Our projected opening date, provided the lease and everything related to it is finalized soon, will be 7/31/2019. With a successful opening, we will plan to open more stores so that we can develop a secure and steady funding stream to support the expanding needs of our neighbors and programming of our conferences and council.

Our first store is opening now because the need to have a reliable and steady source of income came from a committee working on the expansion of the Bishop Griffin Resource Center (BGRC) located at Christ the King parish. The BGRC supports people living in the East deanery. Demands for services are increasing, so the Board of the BGRC is planning a sizable expansion and wanted a way to fund their operations. St. Vincent de Paul-USA has a long history of operating successful thrift stores, so we offered to work with volunteers from BGRC to help open this first store. This first store will help us develop and plan for potential future growth of stores in the Columbus Diocese over the next 10 years. It will also give us a mechanism for developing a fund to open new stores, support conference needs (all conferences), Council ministries and projects, and to pay off a loan for start-up funds that is allowing us to open our first store.

I'd like to thank the Lancaster Community's St. Vincent de Paul Conference and BGRC for their large start-up loans to help us open this first store. Without their generosity, we would not be able to proceed. They are also supporting us with donations of goods that we can sell in our store. We are extremely thankful for their support of this project. We've also had tremendous support from a variety of people – both Vincentians and non-Vincentians – and we will share those names with you in the future.

A flyer announcing our Thrift Stores and the need for donations and volunteers will be in Franklin County church bulletins after the lease is finalized. We'll need your help making sure it gets inserted after we get it out to you. This flyer will give a brief overview of our Thrift Store project and will end with a message for parishioners to contact their local SVdP conference for more details. The flyer will also have the SVdP Thrift Store project coordinator's name and email address – Bob Zabloudil, bobzabloudil@aol.com - so you can refer more difficult questions to him. Bob, who has 35 years of experience in managing big box retail stores, has volunteered to spearhead this project for us.

When your conference members and parishioners hear about our new Thrift Store, there will be a lot of questions. We want to give you as much information as possible about the project that will answer most of your questions. Bob is willing to come to conference meetings to talk about the Thrift Store, too, so don't hesitate to call or text him at 614-507-4948 or email him at bobzabloudil@aol.com. It should only take 10 or 15 minutes of your meeting time.

Bob is also currently looking for a variety of volunteers to help with pre-opening tasks. He needs a committee of volunteers to help oversee the opening of the store. If you are interested in serving on this operating committee, please contact Bob. We are also looking for volunteers who can help with a variety of tasks including loading and delivering store fixtures to the new store, setting up the fixtures in the store, delivering donations to be sold, preparing donations to be displayed on the sales floor, and so much more. If you are interested in volunteering to help set up the store, please email ColsSVdPThriftStores@gmail.com. Our volunteer coordinator, Anita Foley, will answer the email and slot

you to help when projects are being done and you are available. There will be an incentive program for conferences who volunteer so they can earn vouchers to be used by the neighbors we serve.

Most importantly, we want your help in spreading the word so that we can have a successful beginning to our Thrift Store operation in the Columbus Diocese. Start saving your donations for the stores, help us spread the news, and join us to shop at the new store when it opens! Watch for a special opening just for Vincentians!

Included with this email is a list of questions and answers about the Thrift Store project. To answer some frequently asked questions about Thrift Stores:

- The Thrift Store will NOT replace or close our current free clothing stores.
- It will NOT be a location for a food pantry.
- It will NOT be a place to schedule home visits.
- It WILL be a revenue source for both our charitable works and systemic change programming.
- It WILL have a voucher program to supplement our conferences in helping those we serve with clothing, household goods and/or furniture.
- While volunteer help will be instrumental in the initial stages of getting a store up and running as well as after the store opens, we will have a paid staff. Volunteers will be important to the success of our store. Keep watching for more news about volunteer opportunities.
- We have outsourced our hiring to a professional human resources company, InnoSource, so that we can offer our full-time employees benefits. We will send out another message with a link to the employment application when it goes live.

Thank you for your support of our first Thrift Store!

Blessings,

Warren Wright
Diocesan Council President

Bob Zabloudil
Thrift Store Coordinator