



The VOICE

The Society of St. Vincent de Paul Newsletter

Columbus Diocese

Summer 2017

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President's Message Warren Wright



I hope everyone's summer has been going well. As you will see in this issue of the Voice, the Holy Spirit has been on the move in our SVDP conferences and council. Several

conferences offer reports on their recent activities serving those in need. Thanks to the conferences for providing this information.

The Microloan program, under the leadership of Deb Zabloudil, now has a Diocesan Microloan Board as well as County Microloan Boards in Licking, Franklin, Ross, Fairfield and Delaware Counties. A complete update is presented below.

In collaboration with Mt. Carmel Health System, our first Getting Ahead in a Just Gettin' By World will take place at the Marion-Franklin Community Opportunity Center starting the week of September 5, 2017. Participants are now being recruited. The 16-week, one-time-a-week program will empower participants to examine their lives, evaluate their resources, and plan their future stories for walking out of poverty. The first course will be facilitated by Khalifa Cochran and Anna Borsick, two former graduates of Getting Ahead. The second course is planned for the Mount Carmel Health Living Center on the Mount Carmel West Campus starting on

February 18, 2018. The location of the 3rd session has not been determined.

Recruitment materials for the Getting Ahead Program have been prepared for use by all conferences. These materials will be available at the Day of Recollection on Aug 20, the Friends of the Poor Walk on Sept 16, or by contacting the SVDP office to make other arrangements.

Conferences are being requested to assist in recruiting participants from your home visits, food pantries, etc. If a conference of group of conferences in an area has 8 to 12 interested participants, a 16-week course can be scheduled subject to the availability of funds and a location (\$8,000 needed per session). With conference contributions to the Diocesan Systemic Change fund, we have funds available for conducting a 4th course. Funds for the first three courses have been provided by an anonymous donation of \$25,000. Many thanks for Jody Stahr of St. Paul conference and Ladonya Brady of Mt Carmel Urban Health for their leadership with the Getting Ahead Program.

Many blessings,
Warren

God never spares His servants from trial because He does not wish to spare them the merit and glory", Frederic Ozanam

Up Date On Microloan Program

On Saturday, July 22, 50 Vincentians met at St. Paul the Apostle Church in Westerville to learn about our St. Vincent de Paul Microloan Program and to volunteer as financial mentors and county board members. Conference members from Delaware, Hardin, Licking, Fairfield, Franklin, and Ross counties were on hand for a day of learning, training and fellowship now that we are ready to expand our reach so we can serve more people.

Members of the Licking County Microloan Board, Jim Jackson (St. Edward, Granville) and Joe Tebben (Blessed Sacrament, Newark) were there to share their experiences in starting the Microloan program from scratch. Kathi Jackson, President of the SVdP conference at St. Edwards, was also on hand to talk about how home visits have changed as a result of being able to provide access to Microloans. Jim shared the policies and procedures that Licking County has developed, including the criteria for making a loan, the types of loans they will and will not make, the decision making process for initiating loans, and how to maintain good relationships with the credit union.

Licking County's partnership with TrueCore Federal Credit Union has been in place for a year, with their first loan being made last fall. Since that time, they have vetted 14 people for loans and have approved 7 loans for home repair, school expenses, and most often, car repairs. All loans are current with no defaults at this time.

In addition to Jim and Joe, John Murphy is the third member of the Licking County Microloan Board. Each county has its own governing board to oversee the program, set policies and procedures for its operation and to make final decisions on awarding loans. Additionally, they can help with fundraising, recruiting volunteers, and maintaining a relationship with their partner credit union. One final task for each county board is to mentor the next county to help them get off to a great start with their Microloan program. Since we have 4 counties close to being ready to make their first loan, Licking County had the task of mentoring all 4 counties at once.

Franklin County and Ross County both have credit union partners, County Microloan Boards and committed volunteers who are ready to be financial mentors. Delaware and Fairfield Counties have County Microloan Boards and are in the process of recruiting financial mentors. A credit union partner will be announced soon.

We also have a Diocesan Microloan Board who will help coordinate the Microloan Program across the diocese. This includes

offering to help county boards with questions, helping with outreach to credit unions, troubleshooting, training, and fundraising as necessary.

If you are interested in volunteering as a financial mentor in Delaware, Fairfield, Franklin Licking or Ross County, please contact Deb Zabloudil at debzabloudil@gmail.com. I will make sure someone from your county board contacts you. Training for Franklin County is scheduled for August 19 and Ross County for August 26. Contact Deb Zabloudil for more information.

Diocesan Microloan Board: Phil Hunt, Janet Jobko, and Bob Zabloudil

County Boards:

Delaware County: Cliff Curtis (St. Mary Delaware), Joyce O'Neill (St. Paul) and Chris Shamro (St. John Neumann),

Fairfield County: Teresa Scarpitti (Lancaster Community SVdP and St. Bernadette), Angi Skinner (St. Mary-Bremen), Ed Weber (Lancaster Community; St. Mary Lancaster)

Franklin County: Arun Alex (Holy Spirit), Erin Hennessey (St. Andrew), George Rooney

Licking County: Jim Jackson, John Murphy, Joe Tebben

Ross County: David Lanning (St. Mary Chillicothe), J.J. Pauls (St. Mary Chillicothe)

Reports From Conferences

The St Joseph SVDP in Circleville is 8 members strong. We assist with rent, utilities, food coupons and goodwill coupons. We carry a toiletries gift basket which families can choose any necessities they need while we visit.

St Joseph conference meets 2 times a month: first meeting is mostly business, second meeting is little business plus prayer service for all families we have visited that month. We are currently gearing up for Friends of the Poor Walk/ Run. God Bless all Vincentians

Judy Schneider

The St. Colman SVDP in Washington Courthouse has eight active members who use a plan of action that evolved into a pretty efficient process, mainly because its early members were excellent at streamlining our services. We feel the way we operate now provides maximum

service to those in need without placing an undue burden on our members. We are listed in the "Community of Help" directory, and often work hand-in-hand with Community Action Commission as well as with other agencies, businesses, and churches within Fayette County. We use a cell phone designated for our calls, and have a schedule, each member being assigned a two-week call duty during which she is mainly responsible for meeting with clients, paying bills, and depositing donations. St. Colman Church has a fifth Sunday collection for us, and we also receive contributions from Knights of Columbus, our church, two other churches, and memorials and gifts. Through the generosity of many, we strive to do what we are able in order to help our neighbors in need. Sometimes it is as simple as offering our prayers and reminders that they are not alone.

RayJana Deeks

The St. Peter, SVDP in Chillicothe food pantry at St. Peter Church has been especially busy this summer with up to nearly 70 households served weekly. So many families, including the working poor, are struggling to feed their children when they are not getting free meals at school. We are able to keep our shelves stocked with generous donations from our parishioners and collection drives sponsored by our Knights of Columbus Council, PSR and Bishop Flaget School students, parish youth and young adult groups and responses to a recent urgent request posted on our parish Facebook page. Best of all, we were invited to be the July recipient of donations collected at Monday night performances of "Tecumseh!" which offers a \$10 ticket discount to Ohio residents who bring at least 2 cans of food to the nationally renowned outdoor drama. Our Vincentians staffed a table to meet and thank donors and return with a loaded pickup truck each week. Our 5 collection nights brought us about 2,700 canned and packaged food items. We are blessed!

We look forward to participating in the diocesan micro-loan program initiated for Ross Country by our neighbor conference at St. Mary's Church. Please pray for this effort to assist our clients with emergency or crisis needs.

Mary Elsass

The Sacred Heart SVDP in Coshocton is located in a rural Appalachian county experiencing a diminishing base for employment opportunities. Coshocton County currently has an unemployment rate of 7.2 % which places it as having the 7th highest level of unemployment rate of all Ohio counties. Several of the county's larger employers have either reduced their employment rolls or closed their doors completely. From 2012 through 2016 Coshocton County has lost 51 active businesses. This has resulted in many individuals and or family members finding themselves either unemployed, under employed, or having to work multiple part time jobs in an attempt to meet their basic needs and expenses. A good portion of the individuals that contact Sacred Heart Saint Vincent DePaul for assistance were living a comfortable life style before they suddenly found themselves facing an economic turn around and needing help.

There are approximately 50 churches of various denominations in Coshocton County. Sacred Heart is the only Catholic Church in the County and has a total membership of 540 parishioners. Based on the 2010 U.S. Census, Coshocton County has a population of 36,901. That places the registered Catholics at 1.5% of the county population. Sacred Heart Conference has 15 active members and receives the majority of its funding through the very generous donations of the Sacred Heart Church parishioners. These donations are received from the second collection of each month that has a 5th Sunday in it. Saint Vincent DePaul has also received additional monies from various club fund raising activities and gifts from local benevolent organizations. From the start of this fiscal year, October 1, 2016 through July 31, 2017, Sacred Heart Conference has received over 230 calls for assistance and has disbursed over \$17,000.00 to aid these individuals and families.

Over 300 people (individuals and families) were contacted, home visits made, and 4,825 donated miles driven on those visits. Unfortunately we had a period in the spring where the requests for assistance exceeded the funds available and we were not able to assist

any callers until we received the money from the 5th Sunday Collection. Although names were not taken during this period, the callers were referred to other churches and organizations for possible assistance.

All calls for assistance have to be called into the Sacred Heart Church Parish Office and the names and contact information is then given to the Saint Vincent DePaul Conference members for assignment for home visits. The people that we help are fathers, mothers, and children who are going through a difficult time in their lives. Rent and utilities continue to be the major need. Help is based on need and not church or religious affiliation.

Richard Shannon

The St. Elizabeth SVDP begin in July 2001. In an effort to be faithful to the founding spirit of Frederic Ozanam, our Conference from its beginning operated a Parish Emergency Food Pantry, started making visits and phone calls to parishioners who were either hospitalized, recently widowed, homebound or in a nursing home and made sandwiches for St. Lawrence Haven on a monthly basis.

Through 5th Sunday collections, our Conference was able to help our neighbors within the 43229 and 43231 zip codes with rent or a utility bill as well as help any parishioner who had an emergency request. To better serve the people that we help, our Conference initiated various parish drives: food, toiletries, clothing and school supplies. And when Costco of Easton opened its doors, Past President Bob Zabloudil established a relationship with them to donate their left-over breads and bakery goods to St. Vincent de Paul for delivery to area food pantries.

Our Conference is very active and our St. Elizabeth Parish, which is celebrating its 50th Anniversary this year, is made up of generous parishioners who have always supported us. Over the past 16 years, St. Elizabeth Vincentians have grown in spirituality, fellowship and service. In 2016, St. Elizabeth Vincentians volunteered 4,264 hours to help those we serve.
Toni Ventresca

The St. Timothy's SVDP has completed numerous projects this year. We have collected underwear, towels, sheets and shoe for the SVDP clothing center as well as financial donations for the center. We made and distributed "mercy bags" for the homeless, collected brown grocery bags filled with food items for St. James the Less food pantry in addition to our monthly food collection for St. James. We make 500 sandwiches each month for St. Lawrence Haven. We also twin with several other conferences each month as well as purchase monthly bus passes, pay utility bills, pay rent when needed and provide a monthly pizza dinner to Choices.
Mary Fabro.

The St. John Neumann SVDP in Sunbury reported the following items of interest.

1. *Assistance Intake*: we continue to meet with individuals or families seeking limited material or financial assistance for overdue bills, rent, medical bills, groceries and auto repairs.
2. *Prison Ministry*: we meet at both the Men's and Women's jail to serve the spiritual and religious needs of the inmates. We have committed to furnish a refrigerator and stove to the Unity House, located in Delaware, for women released from jail with addiction and abuse issues. The Unity House will integrate these women into our society.
3. *Family Promise*: this is an interfaith ministry offering temporary bed and board to homeless families at the Family Promise Home in Delaware. Families obtain assistance while they search for jobs and permanent housing. St. John Neumann volunteers host the site for one week each quarter. Volunteers (20 to 25) prepare and serve dinner, be overnight hosts and supply groceries to the families staying at the house. This ministry has a success rate of over 80% in getting families into permanent housing.
4. *Big Walnut Friends Who Share (BWFWS)*: This interfaith volunteer group assists people living in the Big Walnut School District by providing food, clothing, small household items, furniture and appliances.
5. *Senior Groceries*: this program provides groceries to those Senior clients that require food

items to make up any shortfalls in their monthly groceries. We were awarded a Program Grant to continue this ministry.

6. *H.U.G.S. (Hands Uniting God's Spirit)*: we reach out to those in need of comfort or solace through the loving and prayerful creation of handmade knitted, crocheted, sewn or quilted lap blankets or shawls. The blankets or shawls are blessed by Father.

John Kutys

The St. Joan of Arc SVDP in Powell is busy meeting with the various food pantrys that we support both financially and with volunteers. This is a new event that we are implementing to ensure that our resources are being utilized efficiently and effectively. We are working through the process and will have a standardized format which we can use going forward by the end of this calendar year. We are also reviewing the progress of individuals we have on a monthly stipend. The goal is to have them self sufficient at some point (targeting 1 yr. of assistance) thus being productive and an improved self worth with the hope they will become advocates for those in need thus.

David Bordeau

Our Lady of Peace SVDP has been busy making available to all our members some new approaches and other opportunities available to us that assist our clients in their needs. Sometimes it is only change for the washing machine, while other people's needs are more serious including rent or utilities resulting from illness or job loss. We have had speakers from Clintonville Resource Center (CRC) and Catholic Social Services; we hope to add more speakers in the fall. Our president has developed an interviewing form, that enables him and whoever is accompanying him to get a complete picture of needs, what is available to them, and how they plan to proceed if we give them help now. The committee can now see the full nature of their needs and can vote on what we can approve financially to help. We have also been blessed with neighboring SVDP groups who have twinned with us on many occasions.

Our monthly sandwich making has become an opportunity for other parishioners to

help with our work. We meet the third Sunday of the month and invite those attending 8:30 Mass to join us. It works very smoothly and often as quickly as 30 minutes, we have completed 300 ham and cheese sandwiches. Before leaving, we say a prayer that this food will nourish the homeless at St. Lawrence Haven and fill their hearts with the love of Christ

Henry Rutland

The St Mary Magdalene SVDP has as its primary mission to offer emergency assistance to our neighbors in need by providing sustenance, shelter and the necessities of life support as best we can. The volunteers of our conference carry out this mission in a variety of ways, made possible through the generosity of St. Mary Magdalene parishioners, school children, and the support of our fellow Vincentian Conferences.

We continue to carry out this mission through referrals from JOIN. All families who seek assistance for the first time are met with on a one to one basis, allowing for the personal contact that provides information on the family, their current situation and needs

With the resources available to the conference we address those needs. Our SVDP food pantry makes deliveries to families who because of aging, health issues or lack of dependable transportation need assistance. We offer emergency financial assistance for rent, utilities, and verifiable public transportation requests. We have a monthly commitment to support St. Lawrence Haven with sandwiches & bottled water.

As a conference: We volunteer with our Parish Bereavement Committee helping to bring closure to family and friends of the deceased members of our parish by offering a meal at the parish hall following final rites of our faith.

We assist our neighbors in the Appalachian area of our Diocese by co-sponsoring with the K of C an annual Fall clothing, small home furnishings and appliances drive for the St. Francis Center in McArthur, Oh.

We sponsor an annual Fall, winter coat, scarf, gloves & hat drive that benefits families in our neighborhood. These items are made

available at our Free Thanksgiving Dinner on the Hilltop and at our Holiday Christmas Toy and Grocery Ministry to families of our 3 parish Hilltop Vicariate.

We sponsor a parish response to Respect For Life Month, by seeking donations of baby items.

Joff Moine

The St. Francis of Assisi SVDP has had quite a few requests for help w/rent & utilities. We appreciate all the help we get from twinning since we are a small conference. Several of our members will be attending the ARCH training. We are looking forward to the Friends of the Poor Walk.

Lorri Kuczynski

The St. Andrew SVDP in Upper Arlington was established in 1965. Currently, there are 20 full members and 26 associate members. The conference has welcomed ten new members in the current fiscal year.

Since St. Andrew parishioners provide most of the funds to support our conference's services for the poor, we believe that it is important to give an accounting of our use of the funds through a yearly report published in the parish bulletin. At the suggestion of one of our members, Paul Breen, last year we started using the corporal works of mercy as the framework of our yearly report to the parish. A number of parishioners have given positive comments regarding the use of the corporal works of mercy as a framework for our yearly report to the parish. The following is adapted from our 2016 report:

•*Feed the Hungry/Give Drink to the Thirsty*

St. Lawrence Haven: \$6250 plus 520 volunteer hours, Sandwich Supplies: \$3465 plus 259 volunteer hours, St. Ladislav Food Pantry: \$1200, Bishop Griffin Food Pantry: \$500, Food Cards: \$1030, St. Stephen's Community Center: ongoing canned goods collection plus 30 volunteer hours

•*Clothe the Naked*

SVDP Clothing Center: \$580 plus 334 volunteer hours, Spring & Winter Clothing Drives/Hats & Gloves/Blankets & Linens: 72 volunteer hours

•*Shelter the Homeless*

Rent, Utility & Car Expenses: \$13,450, Collaboration with JOIN: \$3600, Outreach to the needy in South Columbus: \$1200

•*Visit the Sick/Comfort the Afflicted*

Visits and flowers to homebound at Christmas & Easter: \$470 plus 33 volunteer hours, SVDP members visit & take Holy Communion to the homebound: 16 volunteer hours.

•*Bury the Dead*

SVDP Funeral Fund support: \$500

Dan Fleck

The aim of our **Sts. Augustine & Gabriel SVDP Conference** is to help in a personal way those in any kind of spiritual and financial need. In so doing, the members reach out in a person-to-person manner in order to help bring justice and the friendship of true charity to those in need. More importantly, our members are experiencing their own spiritual growth as they help those in need.

We feed the hungry at our Food Pantry, we visit our sick parishioners, we provide clothes to those in need in our community; in collaboration with J.O.I.N we help with utility and rent assistance after home visits. Our conference holds a bi-annual Health and Wellness Fair in association with Mount Carmel Hospital. Our members volunteer to help make sandwiches for St. Lawrence Haven at Holy Cross Church once a month. Our conference is involved with SVDP Vincentian Action Network to help promote social justice. All are welcome to join, we operate a volunteer food pantry on the third Saturday of every month, inside the school cafeteria. We meet twice a month the third and last Sunday of every month, after Mass at 11:15 AM and 9:15 AM respectively. To become a member or to get help call our help line at (614) 268-3946 or visit our website at www.Aandgsvdp.wordpress.com

A picture of our diverse conference is at the end of this newsletter.

Many blessings,

Remember in Your Prayers

Russel Bonneville, husband of Sandy Bonneville, Vincentian at St Mary Magdalene

DIOCESAN COUNCIL

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- Ozanam Orientation: Maureen Meck, Kevin Murphy
- Voice of the Poor: Danielle Gray
- VOICE & Website: Charles Kielkopf
- 2016 Friends of the Poor Walk: John Willig
- Publicity: Dianne Keller-Smith
- Music: Joann Wright
- Photographer: Angela Ray

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