

IN *Charity* AND TRUTH

VOLUME 4 ISSUE 2 SUMMER 2016



CELEBRATING THE
YEAR OF MERCY
Dec. 8, 2015 – Nov. 20, 2016

How Your Support Changed a Life

IN THE VERY LAST HOUSE down a six mile gravel road in Ste. Genevieve, Chelsea and her kindergarten daughter live with Chelsea's father. Chelsea is a waitress in one of the town's restaurants and her daughter goes to school. But when Chelsea's car broke down, so did their lives.

"I've been without a car for a while and having to rely on others," Chelsea told us in the parking lot of St. Agnes parish. "I take my daughter to school. I live down a gravel road and I can't really walk to work. Having to rely on other people is really tough."

Chelsea was starting to lose shifts at work because she couldn't get to the restaurant. After her work hours had been cut to two shifts a week, she applied for food stamps. She had heard from a friend about the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, and went to the Conference at St. Agnes to ask for help with food. She met Vincentians Wayne Basler and Doris Resinger-Basler, who used the food pantry to help Chelsea immediately, and then scheduled a home visit. That's when they discovered she needed a car.

"I couldn't take my daughter out to a park without calling a friend to take us," said Chelsea. "I felt terrible relying on others to help me take care of the things I needed to get done as an employee, a mother and a daughter."

The Vincentians at St. Agnes worked with the Council Office to ensure Chelsea had all the appropriate proof and paperwork, and helped her with the \$5000 she needed to



Chelsea says having a car "makes me feel like I am 16 again!"



Vincentians Wayne and Doris Basler hug Chelsea after the St. Agnes Conference in Bloomsdale helped Chelsea buy a car.

buy a used car. After looking over a few models, she chose a silver four door 2006 Dodge Stratus.

Since she received the car, Chelsea is picking up more shifts at work because she can come in at the last minute and doesn't need to find a ride. She's now meeting with potential, long term and more stable employers in hopes of eventually going into elder health care. She also wants help those who helped her by driving the elderly in the community to their doctors' appointments.

Chelsea smiles, "This changes my life because I'm actually able to do things with my daughter. It's uplifting to me that other people have gone out of their way to help me out in such a big way and it's changed my life."

But it also changed the lives of the Vincentians. Wayne struggles with tears as he talks about the work he has done with the Society of St. Vincent de Paul.

"When something like this comes up, I go to pieces because I'm so happy that God has helped her, helped us. We all grow that way.

The world is chaotic. It's everyone for themselves, but here at St. Agnes and St. Vincent de Paul, we are people helping people. Period. And that's what our Society is all about."

To see and hear Chelsea, Wayne and Doris tell of their experience in their own words, you can watch a short video at www.svdpstl.org. Without your help, none of this would have been possible.



DEAR FAMILY,

As preteens growing up in rural southern Illinois, my friends rode their bikes everywhere, pedaling further away from their homes to maintain their burgeoning social lives.

Since I was born without arms, riding a bike was not possible for me. I remained dependent on my brothers for rides, often feeling isolated trying to keep up with my friends.

I experienced my first taste of independence when I learned to drive a car (left foot to steer, right foot to operate the gas and brakes). “Look, Mom, no hands!” I exclaimed as I drove myself wherever I wanted and needed to go and even held down my first job. I never took it for granted.

Our neighbors in need can experience that same liberating self-sufficiency, thanks to the Society’s Transportation Assistance program.

A lack of access to reliable transportation only deepens the cycle of poverty and isolation. Without a car, it can be nearly impossible to get to a job interview, let alone work enough regular hours to make ends meet. But without a job, it can be nearly impossible to afford a car. This is especially true in rural and suburban areas where there is no public transportation.

As you will read, poverty has different faces in different places. People living in poverty in rural and suburban areas face different challenges than those in traditionally poor inner-city neighborhoods. Thankfully, our Vincentian volunteers are there to provide hope to our neighbors in need across the St. Louis area, whether they need help with transportation, rent, food, prescriptions or more.

None of this would be possible without your help. Thank you for supporting our mission of mercy.

Most humbly and gratefully yours,

John P. Foppe, Ph.D. (h.c.)
Executive Director

Donor Spotlight Schicker Family Continues Legacy of Charity

FOR BILL SCHICKER,

owner of Schicker Automotive Group and longtime friend of the Society, running a business has a deeper meaning.

The Society partners with Auto Buy Credit, part of the Schicker Automotive Group, for its Transportation Assistance Program, which empowers Vincentian volunteers to purchase cars for their neighbors in need.

“It’s a great partnership,” Schicker said. “Our goals are exactly the same. I’m in business, but my goal is also to help people who can’t help themselves.”

The Schicker family’s work with the Society is part of a long legacy of charity left by Bill’s wife, Mary Lou, who passed away last year.

“Mary Lou is the inspiration behind everything we do with helping people in need,” Bill continued. “Our whole family is all about giving back.”

While raising their eight children, Mary Lou insisted the family use their free time to serve at food pantries or pack care boxes for the homeless. Today, the family continues to volunteer for the social ministries at St. Vincent de Paul parish in St. Louis.

Mary Lou was an affiliate of the Congregation of the Mission Vincentian Fathers and Brothers, where she saw firsthand the challenges faced by those living in poverty. She helped people find the clothes they needed for job interviews, only to be faced with another challenge: they did not have reliable transportation to get to work.

Empowering someone to own a car can change their life, Bill said.

“It makes people stronger to stand up and have ownership of something,” he said. “My heart gets full when I see someone beat an addiction or bring themselves out of where they once were.”



Bill Schicker

Getting our Youth Involved

Mini Vinnies at St. Charles Borromeo Live Vincentian Mission

ON ANY GIVEN DAY, 13-year-old Knoll Hirtz from St. Charles Borromeo's Mini Vinnies group may wake up early to volunteer before school, give up a half day for a service project or spend the weekend putting on a rummage sale.

His motivation? A heart for service to children living in poverty.

Following in the footsteps of St. Vincent de Paul, these 49 seventh and eighth graders learn to be the face of Christ to those in need by conducting a variety of service projects throughout the year.

The Mini Vinnies meet weekly during the school year and monthly during the summer to pack meals for children facing food insecurity in the nearby Orchard Farms School District.

Even outside of traditionally low-income neighborhoods in the inner city, children face poverty and hunger for a variety of reasons, like their parent's job loss or underemployment. They rely on free breakfasts and lunches at school but may go hungry at home.

The Mini Vinnies know when they go home they can get a snack whenever they want, said Paula Wagner, sponsor of the group. It makes them feel good to know other less-fortunate kids will have something too.

During the Year of Mercy, the group focuses on practicing all of the corporal works of mercy: visiting soup kitchens, packing backpacks for hospitalized children or Criminal Justice Ministry clients, and more. Hirtz says, "It's what we are supposed to do as Catholics. We are always being taught



Mini Vinnies load up boxes of food for young students in the Orchard Farm School District.

and talking about the Beatitudes, and doing this just relates everything back to our faith."

The Mini Vinnies also serve alongside the parish's SVdP conference, known as Big Vinnies, helping with the Christmas giving tree and other donation drives.

The Big Vinnies share their heart for service with the younger kids, Wagner said. They get to experience the blessing it is to serve, and then they want to continue those blessings.

Leave a Legacy

MANY YEARS AGO, a local couple included the Society of St. Vincent de Paul in their will. They lived a caring life and wanted to make sure they could continue to help their neighbors in need long after they were gone. The gift they left the Society was generous, and will help so many people who have lost their job, or had unexpected medical expenses, or couldn't pay their heating bill because the winter was unusually bitter. What this couple's gift was able to accomplish after their

death reflected their life in a very meaningful way.

Please prayerfully consider mentioning the Society of St. Vincent de Paul in your will.

Making a bequest also benefits those *you* leave behind because of the many tax advantages. Most importantly, your legacy can continue in the lives of so many others long after you are gone.

Thank you for considering a gift to the Society of St. Vincent de Paul St. Louis Council.





**SOCIETY OF ST. VINCENT DE PAUL
ARCHDIOCESAN COUNCIL OF ST. LOUIS**

... HELPING NEIGHBORS STARTS AT HOME ...

Our Mission

A Catholic lay organization, joining women and men together to grow spiritually by offering person-to-person service to those who are needy and suffering.

Please Remember Us

We pray that you remember the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, Archdiocesan Council of St. Louis in your estate planning. Your legacy will continue and strengthen one of the first charitable missions in St. Louis... since 1845.

Thrift Store Locations

Dellwood

10052 W. Florissant Ave.
St. Louis, MO 63136
(314) 881-6000

Fenton

625 Gravois Rd.
Fenton, MO 63026
(314) 881-6000

Lemay Ferry

3924 Lemay Ferry Rd.
St. Louis, MO 63125
(314) 881-6000

St. Ann

10585 St. Charles Rock Rd.
St. Ann, MO 63074
(314) 881-6000

St. Charles

1069 Regency Parkway
St. Charles, MO 63303
(314) 881-6000

South City

4928 Christy Blvd.
St. Louis, MO 63116
(314) 881-6000

West County

13986 Manchester Rd.
Ballwin, MO 63011
(314) 881-6000

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2016 Apostles of Charity

THANK YOU TO OUR GENEROUS DONORS

who have made donations of \$500 or more between January 1, 2016 – April 30, 2016.



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You are invited

**APOSTLES OF CHARITY MASS
AND LUNCHEON**

Tuesday, September 27
Noon-1:30 p.m.

A Vincentian volunteer will share how your generosity is making a difference in the lives of those in need.

Memorial and Honor Gifts

THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY

in remembrance and honor of your friends and family. The following gifts were received between January 1, 2016 and April 30, 2016.

In Memory

Albert Grewe
Joanie Huelsing
Frieda Wahlig
Harold Walker
Lois Koenen
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Leighton and Joan Wassilak

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50th Wedding Anniversary
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Conner Ash, P.C.
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Robert and Jeannie Younger
Chuck and Cathy Philips
Terry and Marian Mehan
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SOCIETY OF ST. VINCENT DE PAUL
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IN *Charity*
AND **TRUTH**

Giving Back a “Win-Win” for Thrift Store Volunteers

PEOPLE VISIT the Society’s seven thrift stores for many reasons. Some shoppers live on fixed incomes and cannot afford full-priced stores. Others come in to redeem a voucher for clothing or household goods. Thrifters hunt for treasures to reuse and upcycle.

None of this would be possible without the many volunteers who give of their time day after day to support the Society’s mission. The Society is always seeking volunteers to help process donations and assists customers at the stores.

The stores operate with significant volunteer labor and pass additional savings on to those in need. All proceeds stay in the community and support SVdP’s person-to-person services for St. Louisans in need, including utility and transportation assistance, prescription medications, food and more. Local parish conferences can redeem volunteer hours to provide store vouchers to neighbors in need.

“Our hours are going right back into the circle of helping people,” said Kathy Lunders, Vincentian volunteer at Ascension conference and regular volunteer at the Society’s West County store. “It really is a win-win.”

Lunders, retired Director of Sales and Facility Rentals at the St. Louis Zoo, mother of three and grandmother of seven, volunteers in the store’s housewares department once or twice a week. She creates displays, organizes merchandise and helps customers find just the right item they need.



Vincenian and West County thrift store volunteer Kathy Lunders chats with other volunteers at the ribbon-cutting ceremony for the new West County store location.

“When you give of yourself, the reward for yourself is so much greater,” she said. “I know that the work I do helps people in poverty get what they need to live a decent life, and it helps the people who donated, because they know that their donations are being respected and going to a worthy cause.”

To learn more about volunteering at one of our thrift stores, please contact Laura Stauder at 314.881.6038 or lauras@svdpstl.org, or visit svdpstlouis.org/store-volunteer-registration.