

VOLUME 9 ISSUE 1 SPRING 2021

FACES *of* HOPE

THE DIFFERENCE YOU'RE MAKING FOR OUR NEIGHBORS IN NEED



...
YOU
RESTORED
HOPE TO THIS
FAMILY
...



SOCIETY OF ST. VINCENT DE PAUL

... NEIGHBORS HELPING NEIGHBORS ...

“WE’RE ONLY AS WELL OFF AS OUR COMMUNITY.”

Business owners Dan, Tim, and Matt see working with SVdP as an important part of their Christian walk.



WHEN BUSINESS PARTNERS Dan Benninger, Tim Millsap, and Matt Timme were looking for ways to expand Tri-State Equipment’s philanthropic activities and help people in need in the community, working with the Society of St. Vincent de Paul was the obvious choice.

“Tim and I have known John Foppe for a while,” Dan says, “and he had mentioned some ways to get involved with SVdP. It just really fit that this was the organization we wanted to partner with.”

“It just touches on some things that are really important to us,” he explains. “One is the St. Louis community. We’ve got a St. Vincent de Paul Thrift Store just down the street from our office, so it’s a daily reminder of what they’re doing in our community, a community that needs it. And of course it’s rooted in the Catholic Church.”

And so, last fall, Dan, Tim, and Matt announced a company-wide campaign to collect coats to help people in need stay warm during the upcoming winter. And they decided that, for each coat donated, Tri-State would also make a cash donation to SVdP.

“We just had to make an announcement, put up a few signs, and people got excited,” Tim says. “I don’t remember exactly how many coats we ended up with, but it was very successful.”

We asked the partners why giving back to the community like this is such an important part of how their company does business, and what they’d say to other business leaders looking to get involved in a similar way.

“You know, we’re only as well off as our community,” Tim says. “It’s hard to run a successful company if St. Louis is filled with suffering people.”

“You can talk a big game in your company’s mission statement,” he continues, “but the important part is living it. For the three of us as owners, it really comes from a kind of apostolic place, trying to live out the mission of being Christian business owners. It’s a key part of our spiritual lives to make sure our daily actions are reflective of our call as followers of Christ.”

“I think people want to be part of something bigger like that, employees as much as owners,” Dan says. “There are really two communities. There are the people in need around us, and there’s also our company community. It makes for a stronger family environment when we’re all pulling together to do something positive like this.”

“I think we can have more fun next Christmas when we’re not in a pandemic anymore,” Tim says. “We’ll get started earlier, and hopefully we can raise even more and help even more people.”

Your Love Brings Healing Every Day



“Therefore, if any one is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away, behold, the new has come.”
 – 1 Corinthians 5:17

One of the things I love about my job is that I get to see God’s healing, restoring power at work in people’s lives, not just during this holy season of Easter, but every day. And best of all, I get to share the stories of renewal with you. Whether you are a donor, a Vincentian, or someone who remembers us in your prayers – you are the loving hands and heart of Christ in our community.

Davina’s story on page 4 is a great example of that. She and her two boys have faced many challenges together, even before she was furloughed from her job because of the pandemic. When they were in danger of losing their home, your kindness allowed the Society of

St. Vincent de Paul to give them the help they needed to keep a roof over their heads.

Davina says she never expected to need help . . . but if the last year has taught us anything, it’s that life circumstances can change without warning. We all have to rely on each other to stay safe, secure and healthy. Your generosity and compassion make such a difference! Your neighbors appreciate your love and support, and so do I!

John P. Foppe
 Executive Director

You Can Make a Difference Every Single Month

BECOME A SUSTAINER



\$10/MONTH
 Fills a prescription



\$25/MONTH
 Provides a child with school clothes



\$50/MONTH
 Helps a food pantry feed a family for a week



\$100/MONTH
 Pays a utility bill



\$200/MONTH
 Provides a child with a bed

Benefits of monthly giving:

Automatic – You don’t have to remember to write and mail a check every month.

Allottable – You can budget the amount.

Affordable – You can break a larger gift into smaller amounts.

To learn more about how the Apostle of Charity Giving Society recognizes you, visit our website at www.svdpstl.org/Donate. To become a Monthly Sustainer, contact Claire Arends at clairea@svdpstl.org or 314-881-6035.

“IT WAS A MIRACLE. THAT’S WHAT IT FELT LIKE.”

When a struggling mother cried out for help, you showed her and her sons how much you care!



ONE THING VOLUNTEERS have been hearing over and over again over the past year is, “I was doing okay until COVID happened.” The longer the pandemic lasts, the more individuals and families who had been managing to keep their heads above water suddenly found that they needed a little more help to get by. And when that happens, good neighbors like you have made sure they got the help they needed through your support of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul.

Davina Roberson and her sons Johnathan and Jaxon are great examples of that. The twin boys were born seven years ago, and almost immediately Johnathan suffered a cerebral hemorrhage that left him unable to talk or walk. Jaxon also has developmental disabilities, and Davina estimates that between them, her sons have undergone almost 20 surgeries in their young lives.

The boys’ father left the picture just months after they were born, leaving Davina to care for them on her own. Her career in the corporate travel industry gave her the flexibility to stay home, care for her sons, get them to their doctors’ appointments and school, make sure their needs were met, and then work overnight until it was time to start over the next morning.

It was a challenging life, but Davina and the boys were getting by, she says, until the pandemic hit, devastating the travel industry. In April 2020, Davina’s employer offered her a furlough, which would allow her to continue receiving medical benefits on the condition she not look for work elsewhere. That seemed like a good deal ... but as April and May stretched into September and October, and red tape and administrative errors dealing with unemployment benefits and Social Security meant no money was coming in, bills were



bills. Once those immediate needs were met, Dennis and SVdP also provided grocery vouchers and store gift cards to make sure there was food and clothes for her growing boys.

“My house, my electricity, everything was about to get taken away,” Davina says. “When Dennis jumped in to help, it was a miracle. That’s what it felt like.”

“I was pretty much at my breaking point,” Davina explains. “I was like, ‘I don’t know what to do. I’ve got two little boys here. What am I going to do? Tell me where to go for help.’ There was really no one except for the Society of St. Vincent de Paul that was able to help me.”

“If it wasn’t for the Society, we would just be lost,” she continues. “We would probably have lost our home by now, I’m sure. But now Dennis calls all the time and asks if there’s anything we need or anything they can get for me. I don’t know how I could ever repay SVdP and its supporters for all they’ve done for me.”

“There was no one except the Society of St. Vincent de Paul that was able to help me.”

piling up with no end in sight. Davina began to worry that they could lose their home.

That’s when she asked for help. And through God’s grace, you and SVdP were there to provide it!

Davina contacted United Way, and soon received a call from Dennis Tonkovic, a Vincentian with the St. Paul conference in Fenton. “He said, ‘I’m with St. Vincent de Paul, and I want to see what we can do,’” Davina remembers. “He asked questions about us and our needs, and then just jumped in and started helping. He’s like my angel right now.”

Because of the generous support of friends like you, Dennis could made a house payment for Davina right away, ensuring she and the boys could stay in the home Davina has been working for years to modify to meet her sons’ needs. SVdP also paid her outstanding electrical



Share the Gift of Renewed Life this Easter

MANY OF OUR NEIGHBORS are struggling with the economic and health consequences of the pandemic for a long time to come. And that's on top of the many other needs in our community that won't go away when the pandemic does.



Your continued support will directly affect the lives of your neighbors in need this Easter season and beyond. By giving today, you can lend a hand to a family struggling to make ends meet, provide a meal to a hungry child, or help in countless other ways.

God bless you for sharing Christ's love and life-changing grace in St. Louis!

www.svdpstl.org/donate • (314) 881-6035



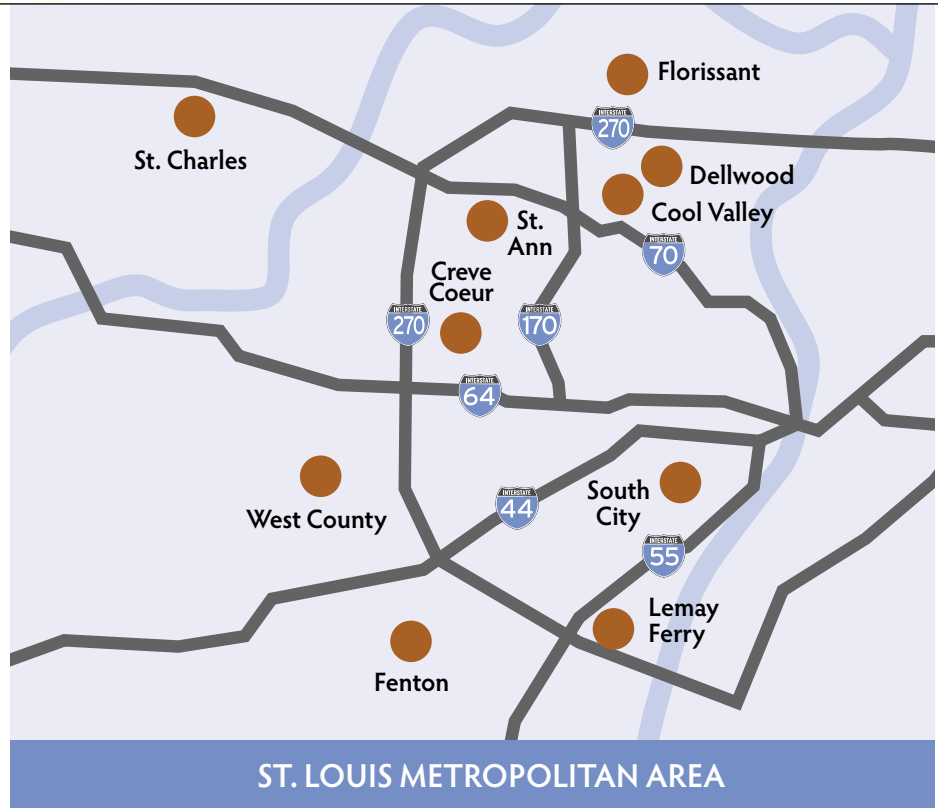
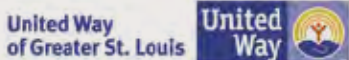
**SOCIETY OF ST. VINCENT DE PAUL
ARCHDIOCESAN COUNCIL OF ST. LOUIS**

... NEIGHBORS HELPING NEIGHBORS ...

Society of St. Vincent de Paul
Archdiocesan Council of St. Louis
1310 Papin Street
Saint Louis, MO 63103
(314) 881-6000 • svdpstl.org

Our Mission

A network of friends, inspired by Gospel values, growing in holiness and building a more just world through personal relationships with and service to people in need.



Thrift Store Locations

Cool Valley Thrift Outlet
1225 South Florissant
St. Louis, MO 63121

Creve Coeur
11015 Olive Boulevard
Creve Coeur, MO 63141

Dellwood
10052 W. Florissant Ave.
St. Louis, MO 63136

Fenton
625 Gravois Rd.
Fenton, MO 63026

Florissant
1 Paddock Hills Shopping Ctr.
Florissant, MO 63033

Lemay Ferry
3924 Lemay Ferry Rd.
St. Louis, MO 63125

St. Ann
10585 St. Charles Rock Rd.
St. Ann, MO 63074

St. Charles
1069 Regency Parkway
St. Charles, MO 63303

South City
4928 Christy Blvd.
St. Louis, MO 63116

West County
13986 Manchester Rd.
Ballwin, MO 63011