

VOLUME 7 ISSUE 1 WINTER 2019

FACES *of* HOPE

THE DIFFERENCE YOU'RE MAKING FOR OUR NEIGHBORS IN NEED

YOU ARE A
REAL HERO
TO A FAMILY AFTER
A TRAGIC LOSS



SOCIETY OF ST. VINCENT DE PAUL

... HELPING NEIGHBORS STARTS AT HOME ...

Thank you for being part of our family!



Growing up with a disability, I was incredibly blessed to be raised in a loving, stable family with my

mom, dad, and seven brothers. (*My poor mother!*)

But even in that tight-knit home, life itself wasn't enough. I needed, and received, the support from a larger community ... from our parish and my Catholic grade school in Breese, Illinois, to classmates who accepted me and became my friends, to employers willing to take a risk on hiring someone born without arms.

These communities became, and are still today, my larger family.

Those we serve, too often, have neither financial security nor the rich blessing of a loving, supportive family. But they have you.

And so, each time you make a donation or say a prayer for someone who turns to the Society of St. Vincent de Paul for help, you become part of their larger family – like the love and care you gave the family you'll read about on page 4.

As one family in Christ Jesus, it is our privilege, honor, and calling to share with them.

Thank you for being a part of our family!

John P. Foppe
Executive Director

The Most Important Charitable Gift You Will Ever Make

Gifts from **wills and retirement plans** from donors like you served 8,430 households, 25,289 people, with \$952,562 in aid in 2018.



BASIC NEEDS

food, clothing, utilities
\$446,676



EXTRAORDINARY NEEDS

housing, transportation,
home repair
\$407,559



DISASTER/EMERGENCY

flood, fire, tornado
\$98,327



2018 TOTAL

\$952,562

Please consider making a gift to SVdP from your will or retirement plan, and leave a legacy of charity. Call Ryan Carney at 314-881-6003 for more information.



DONOR SPOTLIGHT

Like you, The Muellers have been called to share

Joe Mueller “grew up a Vincentian.” He remembers as a young boy sitting in the car with his mom and brother, waiting for his dad who was inside someone’s home offering assistance. Joe’s father was President of the Little Flower Conference in St. Louis, and his mom explained to the kids that a great many people needed their help.

Joe joined the Conference shortly after his father’s passing; he was just 21. That was 63 years ago. In 1976, he and his wife Nancy helped reactivate the Mary Queen of Peace Conference in Webster Groves.

“I had been active in other groups,” Nancy says. “But I really wanted to be helping the poor. I admired the Vincentians I knew. They are so dedicated; they are such caregivers.”

In addition to offering countless hours of time, the Mueller’s also contribute financially to the St. Louis Council. They appreciate the stringent stewardship of their charitable gifts. “I know the money isn’t used for ‘peaches ’n cream,’” Joe says. “Everything goes to aid us in our work. SVdP is one of the few organizations that goes out and has direct contact with people in need. Nancy and I just feel that the Lord has blessed us, and we must share it with others.”

Since the Conference treasury fluctuates in parishioner donations, Joe feels fortunate to be able to ask the Council when a need arises that falls beyond the Conference’s means to respond. “The Council is there to get a family back to where they need to be, helping with major expenses like housing or a car.”

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Joe Mueller

Nancy shares how belonging to SVdP changed her life. “You look at the world differently. You no longer think of yourself first.”

Joe and Nancy Mueller live and serve in Mary Queen of Peace parish in Webster Groves where they raised four children. Joe has been a practicing attorney since 1959. Beyond his Conference membership, he has served the Society of St. Vincent de Paul as National President (1993-1999) and International First Vice President (1999-2005).

BECAUSE OF YOUR GENEROSITY, THE VALLES FAMILY ENDURES AFTER TRAGEDY



This past August, Israel Valles was killed in a brutal attack by a coworker. He was the family's sole supporter.

Berta, Israel's wife, and their three daughters were grieving and also feared they might have to move back to Mexico. The girls have never known any home but St. Louis, and Berta feels their future is here due to education and opportunity.

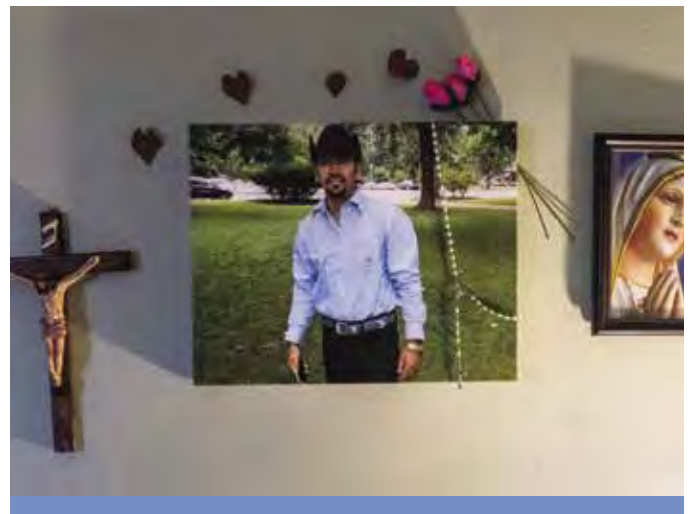
When staff at St. Cecilia's became aware of the family's tragedy and plight, they sprang into action.

Without a St. Vincent de Paul Conference of its own, the parish partnered with Vincentians Joe Hurley and Eliot Casey from another area parish. Joe and Eliot, both bilingual physicians, visited Berta's home.

They were there just days after the tragedy to help Berta and her girls as they mourned the death of their father and husband and started to pick up the pieces of their lives.

"We first of all wanted to let them know someone cares," Eliot says. Through speaking with the family, Drs. Casey and Hurley discovered the extent of their needs that went even beyond grief.

Berta is extremely grateful for the help from the Society. Absent any public assistance or income, Her bills were accumulating. Acting as interpreter, Carely shares her mom's sentiments. "She is very thankful. You have brought much help, and prayers too, and food, and Christmas gifts for us girls. You helped catch us up on bills."



Donor generosity to the St. Louis Council of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul makes visits like these possible. Donations to the Council are used entirely to benefit the needs of neighbors served by parish-based conferences

Such giving and friendship has helped bring hope back into the lives of Berta and her girls, for whom faith and family mean everything, evident in the family's modest living room, where dozens of photos adorn the walls and side tables ... Happy family moments. Confirmation Day. Baptism. A large portrait of Israel. And numerous devotional images of Mary and Jesus.

During their ongoing visits, the doctors share friendly conversation with Mom and girls. They ask how the girls are doing in school. They ask about new needs. And they remind them frequently about the power of their Catholic faith and the importance of their family at St. Cecilia's — a lively, growing church community who love and care for them.

“You have brought much help, and prayers too, and food, and Christmas gifts for us girls. You helped catch us up on bills.”



WITH YOUR HELP PHYSICIANS DELIVER HOPE *and* HEALING

“It seems like I have always received more than I give,” Eliot says. “And it makes me appreciate all that God has given me, especially the gift to be able to serve those less fortunate.”

Eliot Casey



Vincentian volunteers Eliot Casey and Joe Hurley have a heart for serving people in dire need.

Both are long-time medical doctors in St. Louis. In addition, over the years, each has taken part in many medical missions, traveling to Central America to offer lifesaving treatment to sick children and adults who have little or no access to health care. Their mission in St. Louis, however, is not in medical care, but rather to bring hope and resources to those in need.

Recently, Drs. Casey and Hurley answered a call for help from St. Cecilia Church in south St. Louis. St. Cecilia is home to hundreds of Hispanic families living across the Archdiocese.

One of those parishioners is Berta Serrano. Berta lost her husband (and the family's sole provider) in a brutal murder in the fall. When she and her children didn't know where to turn, their parish family, along with Drs. Casey and Hurley, stepped in with compassionate, ongoing material assistance and spiritual support. They are walking with them along their journey of healing. (See story, page 4)

For these doctors, as for every Vincentian, sharing the love of Christ is the most meaningful aspect of



their ministry – for that sharing is where both giver and receiver are greatly enriched.

Dr. Hurley explains. “Of all the outstanding outreach organizations I’ve belonged to, SVdP is the most meaningful. One reason is that most other groups, by pure necessity, accomplish a focused goal – such as the medical missions where all day I repair hernias, removing gallbladders, etc.

“That kind of work puts somewhat of a barrier between us and those we help. With SVdP, we enter homes of our neighbors in need every week. We can see and understand how they live day to day. Jesus always lived at the margins with the poor and disadvantaged ... for those seeking Him, that’s one place where He can be found.”

Dr. Casey concurs. “We see them to let them know someone cares. We want them to know we’re in this together. Just because I may have more than someone else, I am not here to make anyone feel less. We carry out the corporal and spiritual works of mercy.

“It seems like I have always received more than I give,” Eliot says. “And it makes me appreciate all that God has given me, especially the gift to be able to serve those less fortunate.”

Joe notes, “Our neighbors’ weekly stories cannot fail to tug at the heart. I think of the oh-so-many faith-filled men and women in our conference when I joined and who showed me the way. For them, and for our very generous donors, I am deeply grateful.”

Retired pediatrician Eliot Casey, MD, is a 30-year Vincentian. Vascular/general surgeon Joseph Hurley, MD, is a 9-year Vincentian at the Society’s St. Anselm Conference.

Thrift Store Locations

Dellwood

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

Lemay Ferry

3924 Lemay Ferry Rd.
St. Louis, MO 63125

Creve Coeur

11015 Olive Boulevard
Creve Coeur, MO 63141

St. Ann

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

Fenton

625 Gravois Rd.
Fenton, MO 63026

St. Charles

1069 Regency Parkway
St. Charles, MO 63303

Florissant

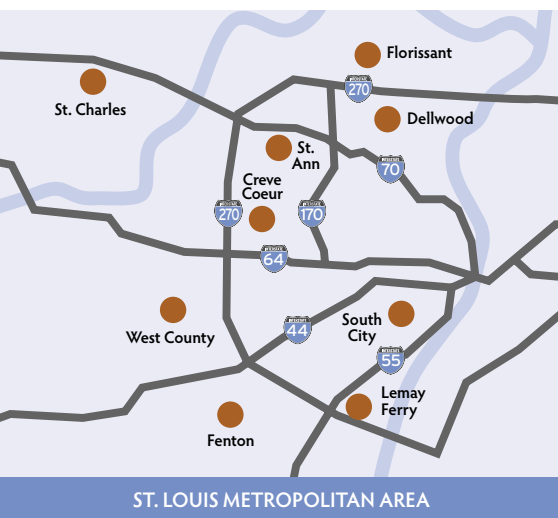
1 Paddock Hills Shopping Ctr.
Florissant, MO 63033

South City

4928 Christy Blvd.
St. Louis, MO 63116

West County

13986 Manchester Rd.
Ballwin, MO 63011



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

... HELPING NEIGHBORS STARTS AT HOME ...

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

United Way
of Greater St. Louis



Thank You, SVdP Thrift Store Volunteers!

More than 420 volunteers assist in our nine SVdP Thrift Stores. Your time and talent are an invaluable treasure in serving SVdP and our Neighbors in Need. We thank you for your service and for shopping in our stores.

