



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

... HELPING NEIGHBORS STARTS AT HOME ...

Help for the Homeless

When a homeless man or woman visits the church, knocks on the rectory door, or calls a Conference seeking help, how might we as Vincentians serve them? Often, we feel helplessness, unable to change our Neighbor's situation. Our Executive Director, John Foppe, reminds us that these moments are an opportunity for us to grow closer to Christ, an invitation to completely depend on God's love and providence to guide us. Turning it over to God allows our work to flourish—perhaps not in the way we anticipate, but always in accordance with God's plan.

How might we help our homeless Neighbors?

Pray for them. Consider the prayer below or write one of your own:

O Lord, to whom no one is a stranger and from whose help no one is ever distant, look with compassion on those without a place to live; restore them, we pray to a home of their own, and give us a kind heart to help the homeless in their need. We ask this through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen

Prepare Blessing Bags in advance to hand out to our homeless Neighbors. Consider including:

- **Nonperishable, prepackaged food** such as protein bars, granola, cookies, fruit cups, trail mix, dried fruit, peanut butter crackers.
- **Toiletries** such as toothpaste, toothbrush, hand sanitizer, wet wipes, deodorant, lip balm, tissues.
- **A prayer card.**
- **Bottled Water** or a water bottle that can be refilled.
- **Socks.**
- In cold weather, consider adding gloves, hand or foot warmers, knit hats.
- In warm weather, consider sunscreen.

Stock blankets or sleeping bags and rain ponchos or umbrellas. Some Conferences have offered tents to homeless Neighbors.

Offer gift cards for a local and easily accessible fast-food restaurant nearby. \$5 on a gift card may allow our Neighbor to get a hot meal inside.