

Mt. Washington Store to move, expand

Mt. Washington's St. Vincent de Paul thrift store is moving down the street and expanding into a new 10,000 square foot building on Beechmont Avenue.

Every day the Bank Street ministry center receives over 250 calls for help with basic necessities, not including the many families that regularly depend on the thrift store's low prices to stretch their budgets. The expanded space gives great opportunity to increase the ability to help more families, but items are still needed to fill the new store and keep the other five stores well stocked.

The site more than doubles retail square footage, with plenty of convenient parking surrounding the building. Two traffic turn-in/exit points connect the lot to Beechmont Avenue and Roxbury Street, making donation drop-offs an easy stop and go event. Prentice Carter, director of operations for St. Vincent de Paul, anticipates the doors opening in November.

The current Mt. Washington store location is one of the Society's six thrift stores and has been serving Mt. Washington for more than 20 years. The store has expanded twice in the last seven years, but "even with expansions we could not meet the growing need from neighboring communities to help clients needing to exchange emergency merchandise vouchers for retail goods," Carter said.

With the additional space, items are needed to fill the new store and keep the other five stores well stocked. Give your unwanted, gently-used items to a neighbor in need.



Giving is easy

For a free pickup of gently used clothing, household goods or furniture, call 421-CARE (2273). Donation drop boxes stationed at parishes and businesses are scattered throughout the Greater Cincinnati area. Or conveniently drop your items at the closest thrift store drop box - 24/7:

Evendale 9864 Reading Road (513) 563-2949	Opening Soon! Mt. Washington 2300 Beechmont Ave. (513) 231-1239	Milford 813 Main Street (513) 248-2664
Mason Town Center 1065 Reading Road (513) 492-7940	Este Superstore 4530 Este Avenue (513) 681-9838	Colerain 6900 Colerain Avenue (513) 741-1641

A lasting legacy

Most of us, if given the chance, would like to leave some kind of lasting legacy to show that our lives have made a difference in society; that we have contributed to an important cause that will benefit the lives of others for generations. In the past, only a privileged few could create such legacies. But today, with tax-favored methods of giving, many more can participate and experience the joy that comes from making a difference.

Giving can be rewarding, especially when you combine it with financial and estate planning. Planned giving is increasingly popular, and for good reason. Individuals are able to support their favorite charities while enjoying greater tax and financial benefits.

You could save more taxes, increase your retirement income, or provide more cost-effective support for a loved one. But you also have the opportunity to make your personal statement, to make a larger gift than might otherwise be possible, to help shape the future, and to leave a lasting legacy.

For more information on how you can effectively reach out to your neighbor in need, call Julie Rack (513) 562-8841 ext. 225.



St. Vincent's Way

CINCINNATI DISTRICT COUNCIL



Holiday Edition 2009

Instantly homeless, single mother starts over



Life has not been easy for Erin, a single mother living away from her family, but she worked hard to earn her GED and begin college while providing for her five children.

Just when luck seemed to be favoring Erin, she came home one evening to find her house on fire. Everything was

weeks, but then once again found herself without a place to live. "We had to return to the home, tip-toeing around our charred stuff," Erin said. "Little things were hard for my kids, sleeping on the floor and not having a table to do homework on."

Then, on top of the shock of losing everything, Erin's 12-year-old son was injured in a car accident and ended up in a full body cast.

Not knowing what to do next, Erin visited St. Vincent de Paul and received help with groceries, clothing and household items. A client advocate also worked with her

to find a new apartment and furniture. "If it wasn't for this agency I would not have survived. My children's spirits were lifted," she said.

"Until this, I never knew how important places like St. Vincent de Paul were," she said.

The hope of the holidays does not need to remain lost this year. It is not one person alone that brings hope back into a family's life. Restoration begins with

Make a difference by helping a struggling family this holiday season. For more information, see page 3.



destroyed. While Erin was grateful that no one was home during the fire, clothing, photo albums, toys, furniture and family keepsakes were gone.

Without family nearby to turn to, Erin found herself instantly homeless. "Seeing everything gone that I worked for - it's devastating," Erin said. "We were in shock, starting over."

With the help of several organizations, Erin was able to stay in a hotel for three

From the President

Volunteers are glue holding together Society's work

Volunteers are the most precious assets of St Vincent de Paul. The Society has more than 800 volunteers taking phone calls and making home visits among our 58 parish-based volunteer groups, or conferences, city-wide.

While that may seem like a lot, I know from experience it can sometimes feel overwhelming to the volunteers taking the calls, especially recently, given the increase in need created by our ailing economy.

What keeps volunteers from getting overwhelmed and discouraged? It is their strong faith and their ability to help that keeps them going.

Imagine living for a week or more without electricity. The inability to provide such a basic need sets into motion a downward spiral that has both monetary and emotional

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sacrifices: the financial generosity of several individuals, the gift of undivided time, a kindhearted prayer and an encouraging hug. Consider your response to your neighbors in need. See the attached envelope to make a gift, contact Julie Rack at 513-562-8841 ext. 225 or jrack@SVDPCincinnati.org to learn more about giving, or contact Drew Tilow at (513) 562-8841 ext. 211 or email at dtilow@SVDPCincinnati.org to volunteer.

Meeting needs with prayer

Rosemarie was laid off her manufacturing job three weeks ago. Out of work and with three children, Rosemarie wasn't sure how she would feed her family. Her mother suggested the St. Vincent de Paul Carl & Edyth Lindner food pantry, where she received emergency bags of food to stretch her food dollars until she found employment again.

Bob Mierenfeld, a client advocate at St. Vincent de Paul, knows there is more than a bag of groceries, a rent check or a prescription that is given to people in need. "One of the most dramatic things is that you can see the power of prayer" in the lives of people visited by members of St. Vincent de Paul. Members often pray for the wellbeing of the families they visit.

"We not only provide services that meet their needs, but also give a sense that somebody cares," he said. "I leave them with some hope that they are not just forgotten or abandoned."

A couple hours of your time could make all the difference to a struggling family during the holidays. Decide how you can help by considering a volunteer opportunity.

Replace a burden with hope

The holidays are often the most difficult time of the year for those who come to St. Vincent de Paul. To replace a burden with hope, contact Drew at (513) 562-8841 ext. 211 or email at dtilow@SVDPCincinnati.org to volunteer. Opportunities include:



5 Cares Coat Drive: Keep a family warm this winter by donating gently-used coats through December 4 at local fire departments and Gold Star Chili locations. Or lend a hand during our coat giveaways:

Nov. 1 thru Dec. 18 – hang and sort coats to be distributed to those in need.

Nov. 21 – help give coats to families that could not otherwise afford them.

Thanksgiving Food Baskets: Give a family hope with a Thanksgiving food basket they can prepare and share together. Put together a turkey basket with all the trimmings or join SVDP to distribute the baskets:

Nov. 23 – help set up and organize for the distribution.

Nov. 24 – join our Choice Food Pantry in providing more than 800 families with all the items needed to cook a homemade Thanksgiving dinner.

Angels Toy Program: Be a child's Christmas Angel! Donate new toys, or make a financial gift and we will do the shopping. Volunteer to help the day of our Christmas Angel program:

Dec. 11 – set up and organize toys.

Dec. 12 – help with the toy giveaway.

Adopt-A-Family: Fulfill a child's wish list by adopting a family for Christmas. You receive a wish list and deliver the gifts to St. Vincent de Paul for us to deliver. Contact LaMonica Sherman at (513) 235-3353 or lsherman@SVDPCincinnati.org.

Christmas Food Baskets: Bring joy to a family for Christmas. Fill a basket with items for a holiday meal or join us for the food distribution:

Dec. 21 – help set up and organize to distribute food baskets.

Dec. 22 – join our Choice Food Pantry in providing more than 400 families all the items they need to cook a homemade Thanksgiving dinner.

Organize a drive: We can only give away what we have. Our office can help you organize a drive at your school, office or church.

Clean out and donate: Eliminate unnecessary items in your basement, closet and garage and donate your gently used furniture, housewares and clothing. Drop off items at any of our locations (see pg. 4) or schedule a free pick up by calling (513) 421-CARE (2273).



Holiday hardships turned to holiday hope through SVDP

During the holidays, our **Adopt-A-Family program** links caring businesses, organizations and sponsors to families with significant need. Our donors become the hands of Christ by providing families with a nutritious holiday dinner and presents. Sponsors receive a detailed Christmas wish list for a specific family.

The list typically includes requested children's toys and basic household items or toiletries for the adults, or clothing suggestions for winter essentials. Sponsors can deliver gifts directly to the family or bring them to St. Vincent de Paul for us to deliver.

Here are a few people who have asked the Society for help this season:

LaShon is a married mother of two who was laid off last year from a county job. Her husband, a painter, also was laid off about the same time. The family is living hand to mouth on unemployment benefits, "No one is hiring," she said. "It gets discouraging, sending out resumes." This season she isn't asking for toys, but clothes to keep her family warm during the cold winter months.

Valerie used to work at a local college as a cook, but was laid off a few weeks before she gave birth to her son. After searching for work, she finally landed a job working 15 hours a week. Unable to afford a bed for her son, she shares her bed with her child.

The 26-year-old woman said she is sad the way her life is working out "I feel pretty desperate with holidays coming up—I just feel desperate overall," she said. Valerie's Christmas wish is a bed and a few presents for her son this holiday season.

Michael and his wife Nancy took in their daughter's four children when a crisis hit. Unable to afford their expensive medicines, Michael and his wife realize it will be out of the question to provide Christmas presents for the children.

With the great changes this family is going through, a joyful Christmas morning for the children would make all the difference.

Angela, a single mother, works full time but still comes up short on funds each week after taking care of the needs of her five children. She's a hard worker, but her low-paying job does not allow for any extras.

For Angela, education for her children is the key, and providing educational toys and games for her children would be a blessing.



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consequences. Once the electric does go off, there are late fees and reconnect fees that mount and make our clients feel they will never be able to afford to get out of the "hole." Then comes the emotional fallout... despair, depression and hopelessness sets in.

Volunteers are so privileged to be the conduit between generous donors and families in need. Not only are we able to provide monetary relief, we also provide that one-to-one personal connection with a message of hope that says "You are



not alone," and through love and faith you will persevere.

Sandy Brielmaier
President of
St. Vincent de Paul



To adopt a family
this Christmas, call
(513) 235-3353

