

# St. Vincent's Way

CINCINNATI DISTRICT COUNCIL



Special Edition 2008

## Helping others a family tradition

St. Vincent de Paul's Adopt-A-Family program brings families of all ethnicities, cultures and religions together to help meet needs in times of crisis. Carolyn and Doug Goldberg of Anderson Township celebrate both Hanukkah (his traditional faith) and Christmas (her Christian heritage), but for the past six years, they have turned their holiday tradition into an opportunity to help needy families. Instead of giving family gifts, they decided to adopt a family for Hanukkah through St. Vincent de Paul.

Each year, Carolyn receives a list of requested items from the Society that is provided by a family in need. Over the years, Carolyn and her teenage daughter have enjoyed shopping together, purchasing items ranging from clothing and toys to a bicycle or household goods. Then together they wrap the presents and deliver them to the Bank Street

ministry center, which distributes the gifts to the adopted family.

"Usually we try to shop to be economical about it and we like to shop early, most of the list is usually clothing for the kids," Carolyn said. "People don't ask for wild things—I think that is what I liked about it. They asked for things they needed and things they could not afford for their children who had needs."

Over the years, the family has provided holiday gifts for many different families, and the Goldbergs always include a grocery gift card to help with a festive holiday meal. "It is nice to help people less fortunate than us," Carolyn said. "It has been a good experience. We definitely will continue helping."



## Neighbor to neighbor, St. Vincent de Paul helps fill the gaps

By Mark Kroeger  
President of St. Vincent de Paul

I am ever mindful that we're fortunate to live in one of the most prosperous countries in the world. As

Americans – as citizens of the United States – we have so much for which to be thankful. I'm particularly aware of the many blessings my family and I enjoy as we prepare once again for another holiday season.

But I'm also aware that there are far too many in this land of plenty who don't share in its collective wealth. There are far too many of our neighbors who, for one reason or another, have been marginalized by poverty. Too many people are struggling just to make ends meet or, even more disconcerting, just to survive.

From the chronically unemployed, to industrious low-income workers and to families whose livelihoods are teetering on the precipice of a global recession, the opportunity for "neighbors helping neighbors" seems endless.

True, there are plenty of taxpayer-supported government programs out there to help those in our society who are less fortunate. But if we're honest with ourselves, we know that it's not nearly enough. The need grows every

(Continued on pg. 2)



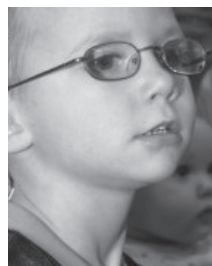
Carolyn, Max, Sara and Doug Goldberg

To get involved, call  
LaMonica Sherman at 562-  
8841 ext.237, or lsherman@  
SVDPCincinnati.org

# Make a Difference—Volunteer!

Want to help make a difference this holiday season? Preview the many volunteer opportunities available through St. Vincent de Paul, then pick up the phone and call Sarah at 562-8852 x217 or email her at [sgerrety@SVDPCincinnati.org](mailto:sgerrety@SVDPCincinnati.org) to get involved.

**Distribute Thanksgiving Food Baskets:** Give a family hope with a Thanksgiving meal they can share together. Donate a turkey basket with all the trimmings or join us for the food giveaways:  
**Nov. 21-** help distribute Thanksgiving food baskets at our Winton Hills office.



**Nov. 24-** help set up to distribute Thanksgiving food baskets at our West End location.

**Nov. 25-** join our West End Choice Food Pantry in serving over 500 families who receive supplies to cook a homemade Thanksgiving dinner.

**5 Cares Coat Drive:** Keep a family warm this winter by donating new or gently-used coats now through December 2 at local fire departments and Gold Star Chili locations.

**Nov. 19- 21 and Dec. 3 – 5-** help sort and hang coats to be distributed to people in need.

**Nov. 22 and Dec. 6-** help distribute coats to people in need.

**Distribute Christmas Food Baskets:** Bring joy to a family just in time for Christmas. Pack a Christmas meal for a family or join us for the food giveaways:

**Dec. 19-** help distribute Christmas food baskets at our Winton Hills office.

**Dec. 22-** help set up to distribute Christmas food baskets at our West End pantry.

**Dec. 23-** join our West End Choice Food Pantry in serving needy families all the ingredients needed to make a Christmas dinner.

**Angels Toy Program:** Be a Christmas Angel for a family in need! Give a new toy or a financial gift so children may awaken to a gift on Christmas morning. Children make a gift for mom and dad while their parents pick out their gifts. There are many ways you can lend a hand:

**Dec. 5-** help organize toys.

**Dec. 6-** help with toy give-away.



**Dec. 14-** help transport toys donated by Sacred Heart school children.

**Adopt-A-Family:** Each Christmas morning there are children in Cincinnati who wake up to find themselves forgotten by Santa. Bring joy to needy children by adopting a family. We supply you with a Christmas wish list from a family in desperate need and you provide the presents! Drop your gifts off at St. Vincent de Paul or deliver them directly. Call LaMonica at 562-8841 ext.237, or [lsherman@SVDPCincinnati.org](mailto:lsherman@SVDPCincinnati.org).

**Clean Out Your Closets:** Clean out your closet, garage and basement to donate your gently-used clothing, furniture and household items. Drop off items at any of our locations, schedule a pick-up with St. Vincent de Paul by calling (513) 421-CARE.

**Organize a Drive:** Conducting a drive is a great team-building activity and a wonderful way to help those in need. Our staff can help you organize a drive or event at your school, office or church.

## Neighbor to neighbor, St. Vincent de Paul helps fill the gaps

(Continued from pg. 1) year and far outstrips the financial resources we, as taxpayers, are willing to commit to helping the poor.

That's where the Society of St. Vincent de Paul comes in. We provide emergency assistance to our neighbors like no other government program or social service agency. Neighbors know to turn to our parish conferences when public funds run dry. They know to turn to a Vincentian when they need clothing, food, help with their utilities, much-needed medication and – most important of all – tangible evidence of God's love and mercy.

Thanks to you, and all of those who donate so generously of their precious time and money, we're here to help.

That's truly a blessing to be thankful for.



# Who Do We Help?

The Society of St. Vincent de Paul is a place of hope for families when their burdens are heavy. Whether there is an emergency need for food, help with bills or prescription medication we are here to help in a crisis. Often, a caring friend and a bit of help at the right moment is all that is needed to keep a family warm and safe together in their home.

## A big step forward

In a recent Operation Bootstrap class for the chronically unemployed, Bill, 44, asked for help with a long overdue utility bill so he could get an apartment and start over. The former boxer was homeless and living at a shelter. Several St. Vincent de Paul conferences joined together to pay his debt. Afterward, Bill said his life was coming together for the first time in a long time.

The weekend he moved into his new apartment was a landmark. Bill went to visit his sons at his mother's home and told them how his life was changing. They were excited about the news and wanted to spend the night at his new place. Bill said no because he had no food. They responded: "Daddy, we'll bring some." Again Bill said no because he had no beds or furniture. Undeterred, they said: "We'll sleep on the floor." At this point in Bill's story, tears were streaming down his face. He said no again and said the electric would not be on yet. His 14-year-old son said: "Daddy, I'll climb the pole and turn it on."

Bill's children, brothers, and mother visited the apartment to share the beginning of his new life - his first family gathering in years. In telling his story during the Operation Bootstrap class, Bill was overwhelmed and said, "I made a big step forward this past weekend. I know I have more work to do." Through the Bootstrap program and St. Vincent de Paul, one man is taking the first steps toward a new life.



## Vanessa

Vanessa, a young mother of three children, supports her family working for the Cincinnati Police Department as a crossing guard. After being homeless, she recently moved into an apartment, but did not have a dining room table at which to share meals and family time with her children.

Members of the Bellarmine St. Vincent de Paul volunteer conference provided Vanessa with a furniture voucher to select a dinette set for free at one of the

Society's thrift stores. Conference members also gave Vanessa a children's bible to read to her children.

Vanessa said the Bible story of Job gave her strength during the time she and her children were homeless. No matter how bad things got, Vanessa stressed to her children that God was always with them and would help. Vanessa's faith, courage, and love for her family inspired and warmed the hearts of the St. Vincent de Paul members who were privileged to meet her.

## Charitable Pharmacy a lifeline when trouble strikes

Harvey and Tamie have always worked hard to make ends meet. Tamie contributed to the family budget for years as a waitress and Harvey worked a variety of jobs, from grocer to retail. But hard as they worked, medical insurance was a "luxury" they couldn't afford.

With escalating gas and food prices, plus serious medical emergencies, they are living on the edge. Their 4-year-old son, Hunter, was born with club feet and needed extensive surgery on both legs. In addition to the surgery costs, they struggled to even find the gas money for the trips to the hospital for Hunter's surgery prep. Now it's a strain on their budget to afford weekly trips to Hunter's physical therapy.

Harvey recently suffered a heart attack and now requires several medications that cost more than \$600 a month. Because he could not afford the medicine, he went for weeks without it. While Harvey was unable to work, they lived off Tamie's tips, "We couldn't afford his medication; we can't hardly afford the food we need," Tamie explained.

Thankfully, when Harvey was re-hospitalized, he discovered the St. Vincent de Paul Charitable Pharmacy and received his life-saving medications at no cost. "If it wasn't for St. Vincent de Paul, he wouldn't have made it," Tamie said.



## Creative, caring helpers partner with Society's mission

Throughout its history, St. Vincent de Paul has provided a glimmer of hope for those in difficult circumstances. While our mission has remained constant, our services have expanded to meet the growing needs of our neighbors. Growth is exciting, but we could not do what we do without you! Here are a few ways our services have expanded and new ways you can become involved in changing the future of our city.

### *This year the Society of St. Vincent de Paul has:*

- Opened a satellite office in Winton Hills, an often-forgotten community with tremendous needs.
- Filled more than 13,000 prescriptions valued at \$1.2 million through our Charitable Pharmacy.
- Provided over 19,000 bus tokens for more than 2,500 people for transportation to job interviews, doctor's appointments and school by collaborating with Everybody Rides Metro.
- Added a technology segment to Operation Bootstrap job readiness program.

### *To help a neighbor in need this holiday season, consider these simple ideas:*

- Host a holiday party, but instead of exchanging gifts, bring personal care items for families in need.
- Grab your friends and take a shopping trip to buy gifts for children whose basic needs are not being met.
- Clean out closets with your family to donate gently used coats to keep someone warm this winter.
- Package a Thanksgiving or Christmas meal for four in a box for our holiday food baskets, or drop a can in the Food From the Heart barrel when you shop at Kroger.

### *Consider giving to St. Vincent de Paul*

## Tax Law Favoring Charitable Gifts from IRAs Extended

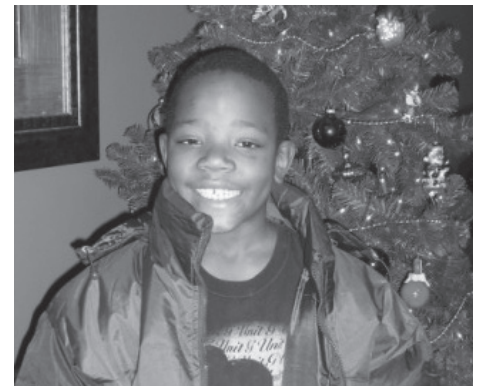
The new Emergency Economic Stabilization Act of 2008 makes donating convenient and even more rewarding. The law includes an extension of the charitable IRA rollover gift provisions that expired at the end of 2007. This allows individuals over the age of 70 1/2 to make direct lifetime gifts of up to \$100,000 per year

from an IRA to one or more qualified charities (such as St. Vincent de Paul) without having to pay

income tax on the distribution for gifts made before the end of 2009.

These tax-free IRA charitable donations will count for all or part of the annual required minimum distribution and may be appealing to those who don't otherwise need the income. By avoiding this taxable income, some donors also may be able to avoid or owe less tax on their Social Security income, depending on their overall taxable income.

A current gift from an IRA may also benefit those who don't itemize or who live in a state that does not allow chari-



*An excited little boy was able to pick out a coat in his favorite color.*



*One student helped two neighborhood children make Christmas gifts for their parents at the Angel Toy Program.*

Contact Julie Rack, Development Director, at (513) 562-8841 ext. 225, for more information.

table deductions for state income tax purposes (like Ohio). Charitable gifts from an IRA can allow for income tax benefits (i.e., not paying income tax on the withdrawal of income from an IRA) comparable to a charitable tax deduction. No itemized charitable deduction is allowed for "IRA donations," because no income is taxable to the donor; however, many donors may find that the ability to make the tax-free transfer makes this gift more beneficial to them. A charitable gift from an IRA also may be used to satisfy a pledge to a qualified charity.

For questions or to consider making a charitable gift to benefit St. Vincent de Paul, contact Julie Rack, Development Director, at (513) 562-8841 or [jrack@SVDPCincinnati.org](mailto:jrack@SVDPCincinnati.org) for more information.

