



Conference News and Notes
for Wednesday, March 1, 2023
Sent to all Vincentians & Staff

Vincentian Reflection for the Second Sunday of Lent
March 5, 2023

Gospel: (Matthew 17:1-9) Jesus took Peter, James, and John his brother, and led them up a high mountain by themselves. And he was transfigured before them; his face shone like the sun and his clothes became white as light. And behold, Moses and Elijah appeared to them, conversing with him. Then Peter said to Jesus in reply, "Lord, it is good that we are here. If you wish, I will make three tents here, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah." While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud cast a shadow over them, then from the cloud came a voice that said, "*This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him.*" When the disciples heard this, they fell prostrate and were very much afraid. But Jesus came and touched them, saying, "*Rise, and do not be afraid.*" And when the disciples raised their eyes, they saw no one else but Jesus alone."

Reflection: Christian living is about being "touched" by Jesus so that the fleeting moments of glory are made permanent in bettering the lives of others. We don't "build tents"; we feed the hungry, clothe the naked, touch the downhearted, visit the lonely, encourage the discouraged...bringing the tenderness of Christ to all persons who are destitute and forgotten. In this way Christ touches others through us. (*Living Liturgy*, p. 68)

Vincentian Meditation: "So very often, many outpourings of affection for God, of resting in his presence, of good feelings toward everyone and sentiments and prayers like these, although very good and very desirable, are nonetheless suspect if they do not express themselves in practical love which has real effects...Let us love God, my brothers, let us love God. But let it be with the strength of our arms and the sweat of our brow." St. Vincent de Paul (McKenna, *Praying with Vincent*, p.64)

For Vincent, faith and love had to manifest in action.
Do we have Vincentian intentions and aspirations still hidden within us?
How do we, personally and collectively as our Conference, make sure our good intentions are made real by our actions?

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Your Conferences Support team wishes you and those you love best a blessed Lenten season. We are eager to support your Conference, your good works, & you in this first Lent of our *Beacons of Light* journey.

Your Formation and Training Opportunities & Tips

Vincentian Retreat 2023



Beauty of the Home Visit

Saturday, March 11

8 AM to Noon

St. Francis Xavier Parish

Key Speaker: Tim Williams, SVDP National Formation Director

Our Annual Vincentian Retreat: Calling all Vincentians! Whether you are brand new or a Vincentian veteran of many years, you are invited to indulge yourself this Lent with a few hours on retreat, **led by Tim Williams – SVDP National Formation Director (back by popular demand; some of you will recall Tim facilitated an engaging retreat for us last year on the essential element of Friendship in our Vincentian vocation)**, as we refresh our own Vincentian calling and the way we see the **Home Visit** on **Saturday, 3/11, 8am-noon at St. Xavier (downtown)**. Whether you make home visits yourself, or you have another role in your Conference, each of us is deeply impacted by our Conference's experience with our neighbors in unique ways which allow us to appreciate our heritage and see the face of Christ in one another.

Downtown parking concerns? We have a parking guide available to show you cost-effective parking locations in the area - just click here:

<https://www.svdpcincinnati.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/Annual-Vincentian-Retreat-instructions-2023.pdf> . And you can carpool with fellow Vincentians and deepen your friendship!

Signup Today! Here's the link: <https://form.jotform.com/230394151480047> . When you register, you will be asked to answer a few optional questions anonymously which will enable us to be most relevant to your journey.

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Chris Kelley, our Formation and Service Learning Director, can be reached at 513.345.1767 or ckelley@svdpcincinnati.org .

Growing Our Conferences Through Communication Workshop Empowers!



Yesterday evening, over 20 Vincentians from throughout our District Council gathered at St James of the Valley (Wyoming) to share ideas and learn of ways to better create awareness, nurture relationships, and attract members and donations - financial & in-kind - to support our neighbors. We are energized that some of our Conferences have proven quite effective at inviting & adding new Vincentians to their circles of faith, friendship, & service. As Vincentians, we know when we come together with one voice and one body, we can be a beacon of hope powerfully communicating Christ's love for every person whom we are honored to serve.

Thanks to our St James of the Valley Conference for hosting; to Chris Kelley, Alec Jewell, Alyson Gerwe, Susan Hall, & Olivia Scheper (in order of appearance) for their co-facilitation; and to our Vincentians who invested their evening to share and gain proven creative perspective.

Please watch the Member Resources page of our website for a link to the insight-packed PowerPoint presentation utilized in this workshop.

Sharing Good News About Your Vincentian Support Team

As we read in our Rule, "Councils exist to serve all the Conferences they coordinate. They help the Conferences to develop their spiritual life, to intensify their service and to diversify their activities so that they may always be responsive to the needs of those who suffer." (Rule, 1.3.6) Our Conferences and our Vincentians are the heart of our mission, and nothing is more important than ensuring that you all have the support, tools, and resources you need to grow in holiness and friendship while serving our neighbors in the Vincentian way. As we emerge more fully from COVID, walk together through the early stages of the five-year *Beacons of Light* process, and complete the development of our next strategic plan, we recognize that our Council is called to accompany our Vincentians in a new way. With that in mind, we have determined that we need to make more support available to our Conferences. To that end, we have made enhancements to our Conferences and Formation and Service Learning staffing. **A key component of all the changes outlines below is that all members of this team will make up a new team - Vincentian Services.**

Tom Roberts will now be serving in the role of Director of Conference Engagement, leading the support of and strategic planning for our Conferences through *Beacons of Light*. In this role, Tom will be spending a great deal of time getting out to visit with our Conferences & Vincentians, meeting with pastors, engaging with the Archdiocese of Cincinnati, and sharing what he learns in those meetings with the rest of our team, so that we can better understand the challenges and needs of our Conferences, and offer the supports needed to address them. Doing this work will ensure that we emerge as a stronger, more vibrant network of Conferences at the completion of the *Beacons of Light* process. Tom will continue to lead our Conference Life Committee. Tom's love for and

deep understanding of our Conferences will make him an ideal leader for these efforts. **Alec Jewell has been promoted to Vincentian Support Manager**, leading **Olivia Scheper, our Conferences Support Coordinator**, and **Dayna Patrick, our Volunteer Coordinator**. This team has great passion and zeal for the Vincentian charism, and are eager to further support our Vincentians and our volunteers. Alec and Olivia have been a tremendous support to our Vincentians, and they will continue to be so as they take on more leadership of the Vincentian Services program. Please see Alec and Olivia as your go-to resources for day-to-day questions about Conferences.

Chris Kelley will continue to serve as Formation & Service Learning Director. Chris will lead **Mo Kelly, our Ozanam Center Program Manager**, and **Maggie Sheehan, who has been promoted to Youth & Young Adult Program Manager**. We hope to continue to grow our Ozanam Center under Mo's talented leadership, and to nurture further growth of our engagement of young people into our mission, with Maggie at the center of those efforts. In including these programs as part of Vincentian Services, we hope to reaffirm the connectivity of formation, training, and Service Learning to Vincentian life, and to offer new and different opportunities for faith formation.

Sunnie Johnson-Lain will continue to serve as Senior Director of Services, now additionally overseeing the strategic elements of Conference life, including the future path for our Conference Assistance Fund, overseeing Safeguarding, and supporting and guiding the team above.

Our hopes & prayers are that this newly formed team will bring together the remarkable gifts that exist to serve our Vincentians more fully than we have ever been able to, in this time when that support is so needed.

Upcoming Changes to SNAP Benefits: Anticipating Impact Upon our Neighbors - and our Food Assistance

During the COVID pandemic, neighbors receiving SNAP benefits had a second emergency allotment benefit loaded on their card, subsidized by COVID funding. This federal emergency funding is about to expire. **Beginning this month (March 2023)**, neighbors will only receive the amount of their first benefit. This comes at a time when our food pantry network is already experiencing far greater demand relative to prior quarter or prior year, and food inflation is the highest it has been since 1979.

Every household that receives SNAP benefits will be affected. The minimum reduction amount is \$95, and many families will see a significantly higher reduction (depending on whether they were receiving the maximum benefit amount prior to COVID). In addition, many households did not send in their proof of deductions (such as rent, childcare, etc) during the emergency allotment period. Please share this information with neighbors and help them plan for the reduction of benefits. Ask them whether they've submitted proof of deductions to JFS, and encourage them to use the Ohio Benefits Self-Service Portal to do so. If they need assistance using the portal, they can reach out to a certified SNAP benefit assister at the Freestore Food Bank, 513.381.7627. Click [here](#) for a flyer with additional resources.

The Center for Community Solutions hosted a webinar entitled, "Helping Ohioans Prepare for the end of SNAP Emergency Allotments". You can find a recording of the webinar [here](#). It is a little over an hour long and well worth the time if you're looking for a better understanding of these upcoming changes and how our neighbors will be affected.

And So We Respond With an Opportunity for Action...



Council-Wide Food & Personal Care Drive to Fuel our Pantries Network

We have experienced a record-breaking year in our network of food pantries, with more people turning to us for help than ever before. And with SNAP benefits poised for a reduction beginning in March (see above), we anticipate even greater need among our neighbors.

Please accept this invitation - Would you and your Conference consider assisting us in fighting food insecurity by hosting a food or hygiene drive this season? If your Conference has a food pantry within our network, all items collected would stay within your pantry. If your Conference does not have a food pantry, all items will go toward stocking the shelves within the Catino Choice Food Pantry in our Neyer Outreach Center (NOC). We will provide the needed materials to help make your drive a success, such as collection barrels and promotional material. If this interests you and your Conference, please [click here](#) to sign up. You can reach out to drives@svdpcincinnati.org with any questions or concerns. On behalf of your/our neighbors, thank you!

Medicaid Unwinding - New Developments - How You Can Help

We have recently highlighted impending changes in the administration of Medicaid. Our State of Ohio has announced an aggressive timeline beginning in April with rolling Medicaid cancellations on May 1, June 1, & July 1. It is vital that our neighbors currently on Medicaid benefits act now to address their medical coverage needs. Please see and share our flyer available at this link:

<https://www.svdpcincinnati.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/Medicaid-Flyer.pdf>

Know a Neighbor Who Could Use a Motorized Hospital Bed?

Vincentian Sharon Weckel of Our Lord Christ the King Conference (Mt Lookout) has nurtured a loving friendship with a resident at Marjorie P Lee Retirement Community on Shaw Ave in Hyde Park. This resident personally owns a high-quality, motorized hospital bed which she would like to donate to a neighbor as she transitions to deeper care at this facility. Please understand that this bed would need to be disassembled and transported to its new "home". If your Conference or you know of someone who would value the blessing of this bed, please contact Sharon Weckel at 513.235.1706 or sweckel223@gmail.com. Please, only Vincentians should use this personal contact info. We extend our deep gratitude to Sharon & the members of Our Lord Christ the King Conference for their Eucharistic Ministry, their care for our neighbors, and sharing this opportunity with their fellow Vincentians.

Beacons of Light Progress

Love in Action - Families of Parishes will be communities of charity and justice, serving those most in need and working to change systems that oppress and marginalize.

The Beacons of Light Pathway Planning process includes a parishioner-based Love in Action Transitional Team. Opportunity: this team is likely forming in your Family -

and your Vincentian vocation is all about Love in Action. We have at least 1 Vincentian committed to his Family's Love in Action Transitional Team. How is your Conference connecting with fellow ministries committed to Love in Action?

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You can find our Archdiocese's February 2023 *Beacons of Light* Parish Vitality 6 Month Report, and other *Beacons of Light* resources, by exploring at this link:

[Beacons of Light](#) .

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Our Conference Presidents and our Conferences Support team are actively preparing to meet with each of the 24 pastors of Families of Parishes within our District Council's Hamilton County footprint. Our goal is to meet with these pastors before our Saturday, 4/29, Annual Conference Presidents Meeting as we further nurture our collaboration in *Beacons of Light* in each of the respective Families. We are quite encouraged and pleased as Conference Presidents are sharing positive developments of friendship, faith, & service shared among Conferences within their Family. Some intra-Family Conferences have partnering with material and people resources in service.

You are radiating Christ, recognizing Christ in our neighbors, and representing our Catholic Church in these interactions. Yes, you are evangelizing!

Your pastor may have ideas & aspirations of how your Conference can be an even brighter *Beacon of Light* in your Family...just as your Conference may have ways your pastor can help fuel your good works.

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Do you have *Beacons of Light* progress to share from your Conference & Family of Parishes? We'd love to hear and share in this *Conference News and Notes* each week. You might just inspire others as we seize this opportunity to advance how we live our Vincentian vocation, engage our neighbors, transform our community, and evolve our Archdiocese. Please contact Tom Roberts at troberts@svdpcincinnati.org or 513.345.4910.

Winter Coat Vouchers - Program Concluded

Yesterday (2/28/23), was the final day of this season's winter coat distribution. Thanks to all who donated coats, hosted drives, and provided vouchers to our neighbors. Together, we distributed vouchers for over 1,600 coats (in addition to the 2,165 coats shared at our three off-site distribution events in November & December).

CMS Tips, Tricks, & Transformations

CMS is accessible from your web browser, using <https://cincinnati.cmssvdp.org> and nothing else.

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CMS Q&A Session, tomorrow (Thursday, 3/2), 5-7 PM. Invites were sent to your CMS Administrators who should have the link. Try [this link](#) if you want to join. If you are having trouble entering the session, email John Wessel at jwessel@svdpcincinnati.org , asap.

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Reminder – Email was distributed to all CMS admins regarding corrections needed to cases with Clothing and Furniture specified as the resource where Voucher – Clothing or Voucher – Furniture was the correct selection. Please have these cases updated asap.

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Thanks to St. Michael the Archangel Conference (Sharonville) for scheduling and attending a CMS refresher this past Monday, 2/27.

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Our St Margaret of Cortona/St John Conference (Madisonville) is poised to train & implement CMS - another step closer to full utilization & data unity in our Cincinnati District Council.

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CMS Statistics are available for you under the members area of our SVDP-Cincinnati website. Direct link to the page is <https://www.svdpcincinnati.org/conferences-members/member-support/> ; then scroll down and click on "CMS Statistics – Conferences". If you are not familiar with accessing and navigating the SVDP website, please contact your Conferences Support Team.

Free Income Tax Preparation Services Available

It is tax filing season. And for many of our neighbors feeling the financial squeeze, a tax refund is at least a short-term solution within their reach...sometimes with a little help.

Free Tax Prep, an initiative of United Way of Greater Cincinnati funded by the IRS, provides free (federal & state) income tax preparation and filing services for low to moderate income neighbors residing in our Greater Cincinnati area. These same services are available to neighbors on fixed incomes, neighbors with disabilities, and those with limited English language abilities. To learn more, explore United Way's webpage by clicking [here](#), or calling United Way of Greater Cincinnati's 211 helpline or 513.762.7900. Please also note that United Way is seeking volunteers to help provide this service. More information about volunteering is available at this link to their [website](#) page.

More Resources for our Conferences and Neighbors

Conference Assistance Fund (CAF)

Our January activity:

- You submitted **206** fresh applications
- We approved **192** applications; **4** were declined and **3** withdrawn

Our February activity (now complete):

- We received **178** fresh applications
- We approved **167** applications; **4** were declined and **6** withdrawn
- We currently have **28** applications in process

We fully extended our February CAF funding provisions of approx \$75,000 (including carryover) as of the afternoon of Tuesday, 2/28.

You can check on the status of CAF applications you have submitted by going to the Member Support and Forms page of our SVDPC-Cincinnati website and clicking on CAF Application Status, or use this link:

<https://app.powerbi.com/view?r=eyJrljoiNjQyZDg5NmMtNWQ1ZC00OTAyLWlwYmUtZTA2NGMwZmZmNmZiliwidCI6ImY2NWUwODUxLTYxM2QtNDEzNS05ZTE2LTUwOWFkYThjMDY2YiJ9> .

This resource is reserved for Vincentian members only; access to this resource can not be shared with neighbors, landlords, etc, under any circumstances.

So today we begin extending our March CAF provisions of \$60,000, pending any additions for twinning to CAF by Conferences sharing a resource surplus and any augmented funding from our Council.

Please contact Tom Roberts, 513.345.4910 or troberts@svdpcincinnati.org, for more info about twinning to our CAF.

We continue to encourage you to guide our neighbors to other publicly- & privately-funded resources available within our community...and to nurture relationships that extend well beyond immediate basic needs (material) assistance to provide lasting impact. Budgeting can be an eye-opening exercise that leads to changes to create a sustainable, livable new monthly model. How will our neighbor pay their rent, utilities, and other bills in the months to come?

Publicly-Funded Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERA 2)

ERA 2, funded through the City of Cincinnati, was available for qualified/eligible tenant neighbors who reside within the City of Cincinnati. The City's funding was committed to us only through December, 2022. We (Conferences) processed and approved **132** ERA 2 applications (of 139 submitted) which resulted in **\$398,488** in assistance to our neighbors. Huge thanks to those Conferences and Vincentians who submitted ERA 2 applications...and to Olivia, Alec, Mary Reid, and our Finance team for turning these applications into assistance extended to our neighbors.

No new news yet...but there are rumblings that additional ERA funding could be in the works. Stay tuned.

Rahe Beds Fund & Program

Our March bed request period is today to this Monday, 3/6. Please submit requests using our online form, which can be found [here](#). Due to high demand (and a welcome increase in number of vouchers redeemed!), **we will be accepting five requests per Conference in March**. Each month, we will evaluate the number of vouchers we can extend based on

the number of vouchers that have been redeemed. In recent months, we've been providing vouchers for significantly more beds than we have the budget to cover, due to low redemption rates. Now that our redemption rates are picking up, we need to pull back slightly the number of vouchers we extend. While fewer vouchers may seem like bad news, the reality is that **more neighbors are receiving beds than they were before.** January 2023 set a record for number of beds distributed through the Rahe Fund, and we expect the new bed model will continue to keep distribution numbers high.

You will notice that March vouchers will have slightly different voucher numbers than you're used to. This is an effort to standardize our reporting. Beginning March 1, all voucher numbers will be seven digits with the format FYB-XXXX. FY is the current fiscal year, B stands for bed, and the Xs will be a four-digit number (for example, 23B-0001). Please be sure you're recording the voucher number exactly when entering the assistance in CMS. Updated instructions can be found in the Bed Fund Conference Guide in the members section of the website.

If your Conference is considering **purchasing** beds to extend as assistance, you can get info, including current pricing, or purchase by contacting Dave Chidlow, Stores Retail Resource Manager, at dchidlow@svdpcincinnati.org or 513.853.1002. Your purchased beds will be picked up at our Clothing & Home Resource Center (CHRC) within our Liz Carter Center (LCC), 1125 Bank St. - the same place our Rahe bed vouchers are redeemed. **Please be aware that the bed purchase pricing has changed with our new bed vendor.**

A limited number of cribs and pack 'n' plays are available for neighbors with children younger than two. They can be requested by emailing rahebedfund@svdpcincinnati.org with the neighbor's name, date of birth, and address.

Metro Bus Passes (Everybody Rides Metro)

Your Conference has access to Metro single-day bus passes to be extended to neighbors for use for any of 3 defined purposes:

1. Commute to/from new employment
2. Commute to/from our Bank St services hub or other community social services
3. Commute to/from medical appointments

Please understand that these passes are sourced through the Everybody Rides Metro program and our Council is required to comply with the above-referenced usages and submit reports of passes distributed. Please also understand that your Conference will need to record bus passes extended in CMS for the neighbors receiving this assistance.

Our Bus Pass Guidelines sheet for Conferences is available to you on the Members Support page of our website <https://www.svdpcincinnati.org/conferences-members/member-support/>

or use this link to go directly to this document:

<https://www.svdpcincinnati.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/Bus-Tickets-Policy.pdf>

If your Conference wants to learn more about this program or request passes, please contact Alec Jewell, Conferences Manager, at ajewell@svdpcincinnati.org or 513.345.4983.

Birth Certificates

Our Neyer Outreach Center team is once again assisting neighbors who are in need of a birth certificate. We have enhanced our process so that neighbors may request and receive a birth certificate on the same day. Neighbors should come to our NOC (1146 Bank St) and request the birth certificate. They will then be given documentation to take to Elm Street Clinic (1525 Elm St) where they may retrieve their birth certificate on the same day, or at their convenience. A limited number of birth certificates are available each week, and all birth certificate requests must be made in person.

Cooking Improv with La Soupe

Our partner La Soupe teams with our Catino Choice Pantry to present monthly Cooking Improv demonstrations in the Teaching Kitchen at our NOC. Instructors from La Soupe and volunteers engage participants on basic cooking principles and how to use what you have to create delicious, nutritious meals. **All recipes are based off ingredients found daily in our Catino Choice Pantry. Neighbors are encouraged to sample the delicious dishes and discuss preparation and ingredients with our staff, volunteers, and resident La Soupe instructor, Chef Mona!**

These sessions are held on the first Wednesday of each month - which means **our next event is today (Wednesday), 3/1, 11am-1pm.** No pre-registration is required.

Feel free to share this information with your neighbors.

Haircuts from the Heart in our NOC

This is a free haircut program, courtesy of our partner Franciscan Ministries. As enhanced this month, **stylist Margarita is in our NOC every Monday, 9am-noon**, cutting hair in a room on the 2nd floor. Neighbors are accepted on a walk-in basis, and should sign in at our NOC reception desk upon arrival.

Education Center Within Our Neyer Outreach Center

Our NOC Education Center is available for our neighbors and Vincentians to use during our operating hours: Monday - Friday, 8am - 4pm, and Saturday, 8am - noon.

Language Service Available to our Conferences

A growing number of our Conferences are experiencing increased interactions with Latino members of our community...and are struggling to effectively communicate with neighbors who are most fluent or exclusively fluent in Spanish. We have contracted a dedicated language service to help you engage these neighbors in a welcoming, affirming manner. Any Conference member can download the "LanguageLine InSight" app on your smartphone, tablet, or computer at <https://insight.languageline.com/>. You simply need to use the Authentication Code **6NN692GLS2** the first time you login. Through this app you will have access to over 40 different languages, including Spanish, via an interpreter. You will have the option of either audio or visual (for those needing sign language); we strongly encourage using visual only when you must. **Please be efficient in your utilization as our Council pays by the minute for this service; and visual is nearly twice as expensive as audio. When you access the service, you will be asked for your name and department, you simply need to state your name, then "St Vincent de Paul Cincinnati Conferences", then your Conference name.** Be sure to only call through the app; you cannot use this service through a regular phone call.

Our Charitable Pharmacy, Social Services, and some Conferences are leveraging this tool to better engage our Latino neighbors.

If you have any questions or are having trouble accessing the service, please reach out to Alec or Olivia of your Conferences Support Team.

A final seed to plant: If your Conference is among those engaging more neighbors preferring or needing to communicate in Spanish, please consider this an opportunity to seek the addition of Spanish-speaking members. This could enhance your responsive communication and expand your Conference's perspective.

Christ Church Plumb Line

You've appreciated this community resource extending financial aid for qualified neighbors who are employed. Volunteers @ Christ Church are administering the Plumb Line on Mondays, 1-3pm, and scheduling in-person meetings for applicants for the following Monday (example: Volunteers in on 3/6 will be scheduling appointments for 3/13). **Please note: Since the volunteers @ Christ Church prefer to do an in-person interview with neighbors referred to them whenever possible, please be sure to tell the neighbor to expect Christ Church to reach out for an in-person interview when you are filling out a Plumb Line referral form with/for your neighbor.**

Olivia Scheper, our Conferences Support Coordinator, oscheper@svdpcincinnati.org or 513.345.4986, will continue to be your/our central contact point-person. **Plumb Line will only accept SVDP referrals from Olivia.**

Greater Cincinnati Water Works (GCWW)

GCWW's **Emergency Rental Assistance (ERA) Program** provides funds for assistance for eligible tenants residing in the City of Cincinnati. There are eligibility stipulations.

Tenants must qualify by completing an online application at assistance.mygcww.org. Renters can also call 513.591.7700 to receive assistance from the call center to complete an application. There is also a flexible payment plan through the PromisePay Portal.

GCWW customers can visit [GCWW.promise-pay.com](https://gcww.promise-pay.com) for details about the program and how to enroll. Renters not residing in Cincinnati city limits but living in Hamilton County can visit <https://erap.hcjfs.org/> for utility assistance. If you need additional materials or information, please contact GCWW at GCWWCares@gcww.cincinnati-oh.gov.

Duke Energy

On 1/25/2023, Duke Energy sent a release to community service partners with links to a variety of resources to assist their customers struggling with winter energy costs. We forwarded this release to our Conference Presidents on Thursday, 1/26/2023.

You can also find info by going to the Duke Energy website, clicking on the Financial Help

tab, and then clicking on Ohio.

Duke encourages us to follow our standard steps for processing pledges on customer accounts. For questions on accounts or pledges for neighbors requesting utility assistance, please contact Duke Energy's Centralized Agency Team at 800.241.3194.

Advocates are available Monday through Friday, 7:30am - 5:30pm.

Should our neighbor / their customer not meet Duke's qualifications for assistance, please refer them to Duke's customer care organization at 800.544.6900 where they may find assistance through a flexible installment plan.

State of Ohio Program for Struggling Homeowners

Save the Dream Ohio helps eligible Ohio homeowners facing foreclosure and/or who cannot afford to pay their mortgage payments, utility payments or other related housing costs as a result of economic hardship caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. The state of Ohio was awarded \$280 million from the U.S. Department of Treasury through the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 for the program. Click here for more information:

[Save the Dream Ohio - Managed by the Ohio Housing Finance Agency \(ohiohome.org\)](https://ohiohome.org)

Hamilton County COVID Assistance

Our neighbors & you can still find info and resources at <https://513relief.org> . **Hamilton County has refreshed funding at Hamilton County Job & Family Services (JFS).**

Neighbors can apply at 513Relief.org on their mobile device or desktop. [The Hamilton County Rent and Utility Program's application](#) can be submitted on a smart phone.

Please note: this funding comes from the same federal pool as ERA and other COVID relief programs, so a neighbor who has previously exhausted their access to this pool will be ineligible. Please refer Hamilton County neighbors who you believe to be eligible.

Cincinnati Eye Institute Foundation (CEIF) Vision Clinic in our Neyer Outreach Center

The Vision Clinic operates **by appointment** on certain Monday mornings & Thursdays as designated by CEIF. **This Vision Clinic will be open on Thursdays only in March, as follows: the mornings of 3/2 (tomorrow), 3/9, & 3/16; then all day on 3/23 & 3/30.** A limited number of walk-in exams can also be accommodated. To schedule an appointment, or to inquire for additional info, please call 513.207.6140.

You are Both Thanked & Invited

We thank you for your readership - we welcome your feedback to Tom Roberts at 513.345.4910 or troberts@svdpcincinnati.org - and we are eager for your content, including pictures, to make this weekly connection all the more relevant and empowering for you!

Our Mission

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

Our Call to Prayer

Lord, may this season of Lent be a time for conversion and action.

**Draw our hearts away from selfishness,
turn our lives to loving sacrifice.**

**Move our minds away from greed,
turn our thoughts to generosity.**

**Give us the grace to be true Vincentians,
empower us to love God with the strength of our arms and the sweat of our brows.
Amen.**



St. Vincent de Paul - Cincinnati | 1125 Bank Street, Cincinnati, OH 45214

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