

The Good Samaritan

A mother secretly flees an abusive marriage in China with her daughter



In Jan. 2020, Yifan finally had enough. In an abusive marriage and feeling unsafe in her home country, she secretly fled from Shanghai, China, with her three-year-old daughter Link.

"In China, I didn't get help," Yifan said. "They didn't care. They said it was a family issue. No one came."

Yifan and Link traveled to Louisville of all places.

"It is the bluegrass state and a traditional American city," Yifan added. "It's peaceful and beautiful with a natural view. I don't like big cities at all."

When Yifan arrived in America, she was broken. She was filled with fear, anxiety, and questions, and without income, food, or an ID card. Yifan's future looked hopeless, but she had a little one to care for.

"I was so tired from the domestic violence in my marriage. I was doubting myself. I didn't know what was wrong," she said.

Through the Coalition of the Homeless, they were referred to our Domestic Violence Transitional Housing Program in June 2022. Yifan received support for the first time.

"I used to think I had been abandoned by the world. But after coming here, I've come to realize that I am cared for. I've always tried to solve problems on my own, but here, I learned how to ask for help."

We provided Yifan one-on-one and group counseling for her depression and pet therapy for her daughter. She has also utilized our case management services, help from the Food Pantry, and received presents from Santa Shop.

"I started to heal my depression, calm down, and rest. I was able to think about my future," Yifan added.

Today, their hope is restored. They live in one of our fully furnished and affordable on-campus apartments where they enjoy the playground. They pay no more than 30% of their income towards rent.

"It is much safer and has more space," she said. "This apartment is very helpful because I don't have enough income to support the both of us."

Yifan has a driver's license, car, and job. Link is enrolled in first grade. They visit the library, participate in community activities, attend church, and take English class. But more than that, their future is changed for generations to come.

Because of your generosity this past fiscal year, Yifan and Link were two of the 867 people we were able to house (Oct. 1, 2023 to Sept. 30, 2024).

“Thank you so much St. Vincent de Paul! You **SAVED** and **REBUILT** my life!

Yifan and her daughter, Link, clients from DePaul Apartments



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The Good Samaritan

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Our Mission

We house, feed, and support those in
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St. Vincent de Paul Louisville



The Spirit of Giving: 28th Annual Santa Shop delivers joy



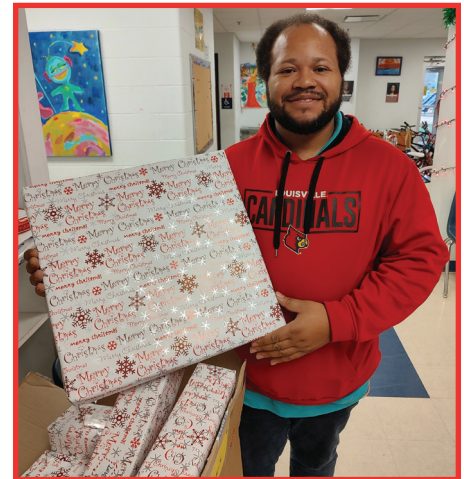
Heather, a mother of two, is not used to asking for help.

However, after losing her job because of a persistent illness earlier this year, she needed support this holiday season.

"This experience was so wonderful, and I really appreciate all you are doing for the community," Heather said (pictured above). "It takes some of the burden off due to my illness. I couldn't work or afford to get my kids anything. I've never had to do this. I've always been able to provide."

The 28th Annual Santa Shop, which was held in the Family Success Center gym on our Shelby Park campus, had a mini mall set up on Sunday, Dec. 15, from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Registered parents or guardians were able to shop for their children.

We served 1,159 children (ages infant to 17 years old) and 409 families. This was our largest turnout yet.



Dante shopped for the first time (pictured above). He and his girlfriend support five children.

"I'm overjoyed you're doing this for the community for people who—like myself—are unable to provide certain things for our kids," Dante said. "My girlfriend and I are struggling with rent, so this is a blessing."

While walking with a volunteer, shoppers received stuffed animals, dolls, sports balls, toys, outfits, hair accessories, clothing, pajamas, winter coats, books, board games, and stocking stuffers for their children. They also had the option to get their gifts wrapped.

Volunteers consisted of families and friends, SVDP parish-based conferences, local businesses and Catholic schools, and the University of Dayton Alumni Association. They served in a variety of



Download your 2024 Santa Shop photos



Dave Calzi, former SVDP CEO &

What I Learned



roles—as gift wrappers, “elves” walking around with shoppers, manning a station in the mini-mall experience, or making crafts with those who brought their children.

Kim Sweet and Sharon Merker are sisters who served at Santa Shop. Their family and friends donated more than 1,000 books.

“This is near and dear to my heart,” Merker said. “We have a table in honor of our mother. We call it ‘Tillie’s Bookshelf’ because our mother was a kindergarten teacher and an avid reader. Our goal was that no one walked away empty handed.”

Lesley DePaola brought 40 family members and friends to gift wrap throughout the event.

“Our involvement was largely driven by our daughter wanting to give back,” DePaola said.

Mack, one of 22 Dayton alumni serving at Santa Shop, was an “elf” for a family of nine children and another of six.

During the event, we had two volunteers come as Santa and Mrs. Claus. Also, a trio from the Louisville Orchestra performed holiday music.

It was a special event from beginning to end.

Latiya, a mother with four children who lives in our affordable apartments on campus, has been coming every year for the past nine years.

“This means help. It means hope, and it means happiness to me and my household.”

Thank you to the volunteers and sponsors who brought a smile and joy to those in need at our 28th annual Santa Shop!

Thank you Partners!

Santa Sponsor:
Anonymous Donor

Holly Sponsor:
ICE and KU Foundation

Jingle Bells Sponsor:
Dauenhauer

Conference Partners:

- St. Patrick Catholic Church
- St. Michael Catholic Parish
- Holy Trinity Catholic Parish
- Ascension Catholic Parish
- St. Paul Catholic Parish
- St. Margaret Mary Catholic Parish
- St. Brigid Catholic Parish
- Holy Spirit Catholic Parish
- St. Aloysius Catholic Parish
- St. Peter the Apostle Catholic Parish
- Epiphany Catholic Parish

Community Partners:

- The DePaola Family
- The Rader Family
- Navy Reserve Center
- Knights of Columbus
- Higginbotham
- Assured Partners
- Altar'd State - Store 146
- The Merker Family
- Dean Dorton
- The Buckler Family
- Toys for Tots - Cletis Evans
- Trikes for Tots
- Metro United Way
- Tees-and-Textiles (TNT)

UPCOMING EVENTS at ST. VINCENT DE PAUL LOUISVILLE

**SAVE
THE
DATE**

You're Invited!

Roses & Rosé

Sunday, April 27

For event information, please
contact Makenzie Greenwell at
(502) 272-2134 or mgreenwell@svdplou.org

Our thanks to
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their support



SVDP Monthly Podcast

This podcast shares stories of people,
partners, and programs in the
Louisville community and across the
country who care about our mission.

You can watch or listen today at
www.svdplou.org/podcast/



Executive Director, in a column for The Record
from St. Vincent de Paul

Drive a Dream - Make a Difference: Vintage Car & Bourbon Raffle



2ND

Pappy Van Winkle 20-Year Reserve



1ST

1953 MG TD Roadster



3RD

On the Rocks Rare Bourbon Lot

From now until January 31, 2025, St. Vincent de Paul Louisville is hosting a "Vintage Car & Bourbon Raffle." With only 1,000 tickets available, the odds are better than many raffles—and for \$100 per ticket—it's a small price to pay for the chance to win big.

Every ticket purchased helps support our mission to house, feed, and support those in need with compassion and dignity. **This is an online raffle only.** Tickets must be purchased on the raffle website page. You can either scan the QR code above or visit <https://one.bidpal.net/svdpraffle/welcome>.

Enter for a chance to win one of these prizes:

Grand Prize: 1953 MG TD Roadster
(Valued at \$30,000)

This 71-year-old car is in excellent running condition and includes a removable soft top, side curtains, and a logbook

with photos detailing its restoration. The title is clear, with no liens, and only three owners. The first owner was a World War II Veteran who brought the car over from England in 1953.

The MG TD Roadster was what led to the start of the sports car enthusiasm in the United States, even before the Corvette and Thunderbird. With its open top and cutaway suicide style doors, it was and still is a wind in the hair fun and classic sports car. There are more photos on the raffle website page.

"What makes this raffle special is that you have three chances of winning a fabulous prize with just one raffle purchase. With all the funds going to St. Vincent de Paul," said donors Adam and Mary Lee Burckle.

The car can be viewed in person by visiting our Thrift Store at 10280 Shelbyville Road, Louisville, KY 40223, from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday.

Second Prize: Pappy Van Winkle 20-Year Reserve (Valued at \$3,700)

Pappy Van Winkle's Family Reserve is often regarded as one of the finest bourbons in the world. Its very low production and high demand make it rare to find.

Third Prize: On the Rocks Rare Bourbon Lot (Valued at \$1,000)

The package includes one bottle of Belle Meade Single Barrel Sour Mash, aged 18 years; one signed bottle of Belle Meade, finished in Oloroso Sherry Casks and aged nine years; and one GE Opal 2.0 Nugget Ice Maker + Side Tank. Discontinued as a national brand, these rare bottles would be a lovely addition to your bourbon collection.

If you have questions, contact Makenzie Greenwell, SVDP's Senior Development & Events Coordinator, at (502) 272-2134 or mgreenwell@svdplou.org.