

# GOOD SAMARITAN

## St. Vincent de Paul | Louisville, KY

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## Family Feels Blessed By St. Vincent de Paul

When Keisha and her two children came to St. Vincent de Paul, they had little but the clothes on their backs.

"The boys received everything they got for Christmas last year from St. Vincent de Paul," Keisha recalls. "That includes their coats, their hats, their toys ... all of it came from the Santa Shop (*pictured, at right*). It was a huge blessing, because when we came here, we had nothing."

The family had been living in a cheap, 1-bedroom apartment in the area, but when Keisha and her husband split up, she could no longer afford the \$400 rent and other living expenses on her own.

She and her little boys had nowhere to turn but a homeless shelter. It was hard for her sons, but Keisha resolved to set a positive example.

"They did OK because I tried my best to handle it well," she says. "I still got them to their bus stop on time, and we were still able to do normal things like go

to church. Their routine didn't break that much, and that made a big difference in them getting through it."

In their former apartment building, a bedbug infestation resulted in them having to discard most of their possessions. "We had to leave there with nothing," Keisha recalls. "That meant we had no clothes, no furniture, no toys or books."



Late last year, when she was referred to St. Vincent de Paul's supportive housing program for homeless women with children, she leapt at the chance to get back on track.

Keisha gets assistance with the rent on her 2-bedroom apartment and case management designed to help her become self-sufficient.

She has been an ideal client, according to her case manager. A full-time English major, Keisha maintains a perfect grade point average while working 20 to 30 hours a week as a secretary at her college.

"It's a challenge trying to be a single mom and a full-time student," Keisha says, "but I love it. This is a good environment here."

Having better living arrangements for herself and her sons has alleviated some of Keisha's burdens as the family's sole breadwinner and allowed her to focus on building a solid future for all three of them.

She hopes to follow in the footsteps of her great-grandfather, an African-Methodist pastor, and pursue a bachelor's degree in theology at Bellarmine University.

"St. Vincent de Paul has been such a blessing for us," Keisha says. "I love living here. It's a community where, if you need something, somebody can help you. We help each other. A lot of us don't have [extended] family members nearby, and so we all become like each other's family."



Her boys are happy and flourishing. "It was a little difficult at first, with a new school, a new environment and new people, but it has turned out really good. They have friends now."

At DePaul Apartments, the boys are both enrolled in free after-school tutoring offered through the Jefferson County Public Schools, where nearly 10 percent of the student population is homeless.

Keith, 10, and William, 8 are both prospering," Keisha says proudly. "Reading is their major hobby. A new book they're enjoying right now is *Diary of a Wimpy Kid*."

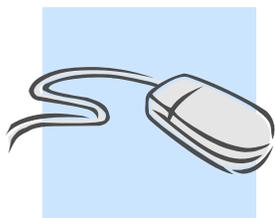
Keisha looks forward to celebrating her second Christmas at St. Vincent de Paul. They have no special plans, and that's the way this close-knit family of three likes it.

"We're going to see if our church is going to be doing anything special, but other than that, we're looking forward to just staying at home on Christmas and loving on each other. That's the main thing we're gonna do."

# GOOD SAMARITAN

## *If You'd Like to Help* **A Few Simple Ways to Support SVDP's Mission**

Traditionally, December is when many of our donors plan year-end charitable contributions. If you haven't yet made such a donation to St. Vincent de Paul and would like to do so, we invite you to consider some of these convenient options.



The easiest method is to visit our website, where you can make an online donation. Visit [www.svdplou.org](http://www.svdplou.org), where you'll see a "Donate Now" button on the right side of the screen. Click it to

make a secure gift in any amount. We will gratefully acknowledge your gift and send you a letter for your tax records.

Another way to support our mission is by automatic drafts to St. Vincent de Paul through your bank. Many donors like the advantage of not having to remember to write a check each month. Call us and we will be glad to assist you in setting up electronic payments.

Bequests are another important source of funding for our nonprofit charity. These gifts have a profound and lasting impact on our ability to carry out our mission to serve the poor and homeless in our community.

Gifts of stock and other assets are also ideas you might want to consider. Please consult your financial planner if you're interested in learning about ways to include St. Vincent de Paul in your estate planning.

Finally, many employers encourage employees to donate to charitable organizations by matching their support. This is a great opportunity to increase the size of your gift. Check with your company's Human Resources Department for information on your employer's specific matching program. Simply complete the matching gift form provided by your employer and send it to St. Vincent de Paul.

If you have any questions or would like to discuss planned giving options, please contact **Nancy Naughton at (502) 301-8682**.

## **At-Risk Family Finds Hope through New Housing**

A young mother in crisis recently showed up at St. Vincent de Paul's inner-city campus. A victim of domestic violence, she was fleeing an abusive relationship and had nowhere to turn.

She was scared and desperately trying to find a way to take care of her four children, ranging in age from a 7-year-old to an infant.

Fortunately, St. Vincent de Paul was in a position to help.

Ed Wnorowski, SVDP's executive director, enlisted case managers to find out more about her particular circumstances, and to assess her eligibility for our programs.

In the end, she was thrilled to learn that she will qualify as one of the first residents in one of our brand-new apartments here at St. Vincent de Paul. Within a year, the goal is to have all 54 new apartments occupied with people like this young woman and others in her situation.

She is precisely the reason St. Vincent de Paul undertook the campus expansion. Now she and other families and individuals who are homeless or on the brink of becoming homeless will be given the opportunity of clean, safe and affordable housing. And they will have access to professional case management to help them move forward.

Your support makes these new beginnings and promising futures possible.



*With Thanks and Gratitude, the St. Vincent de Paul Staff Wishes our Good Samaritan Readers, Donors and Volunteers a Merry Christmas and Joyful New Year!*

# Fall Activities and Volunteer Projects Build Community

Volunteer visits, special events and fundraising activities have been in high gear over the past several months, helping promote a sense of community with our clients and supporters.

The 4th Annual Friends of the Poor Walk went off without a hitch, as hundreds of participants gathered Oct. 16 at Churchill Downs to walk the famous track for a good cause. *(Pictured at right is a group of walkers from Holy Family Catholic Church.)* Pledges and donations surpassed last year's total of \$35,000! All money raised by the Walk goes to local conferences, who will distribute the funds to families and individuals seeking temporary emergency financial assistance with rent, utilities, food and other basic necessities.

Volunteers from Holy Spirit Catholic Church returned to St. Jude Women's Recovery Center again this year for a Halloween party for residents and children on our campus. *At right: Skye and her friend Danae came dressed as a skeleton and a vampire, respectively.*

Seniors from Mercy Academy *(bottom of page)* took advantage of their Fall Break to help out at Roberts Hall, St. Vincent de Paul's supportive housing program for women with physical or mental disabilities.

The girls painted the kitchen and dining rooms in butter yellow and pool blue, and spruced up the bulletin board in the dorm-style building's front entryway. Kay Redfern, program manager at Roberts Hall, says her clients also enjoyed fellowship with the caring teens.



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# Plan Ahead:

Sunday, Dec. 11 – Santa Shop, Open Hand Kitchen

Saturday, Dec. 17 – Holiday Food Basket Assembly

January 21, 2012 – Ozanam Orientation

9 am to Noon

SVDP Administration Building

Cost: \$10 includes materials and Continental breakfast

Registration required by January 14, 2012

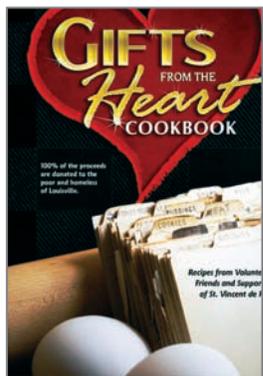
Contact Donna Young, 301-8688; [www.svdplou.org](http://www.svdplou.org)

## Christmas Countdown

*With Christmas only a few weeks away, here is a checklist of tips that will help support St. Vincent de Paul's critically needed programs for families and others in need this holiday season.*

**1.** Tidy up your cabinets and cupboards, and gather up your gently used household items and clothing for St. Vincent de Paul's four area Thrift Stores. Our stores rely on your support to keep store shelves stocked with merchandise that will appeal to our customers and keep them coming back. Drop off your donations at any of our stores during regular business hours. If you have furniture in good condition or other large items to give, please call us to schedule a free pick-up: (501) 589-7837.

**2.** Cookbooks also make great gifts. Copies of our popular *Gifts from the Heart Cookbook: Recipes from Volunteers, Friends and Supporters of St. Vincent de Paul* (2010) are still available. Priced at \$15 per copy, the 235-page, spiral-bound book is available in our Thrift Stores. For a nominal fee, we can mail the books to loved ones on your list. Contact Kathi Johnson at (502) 301-8695; [kjohnson@svdplou.org](mailto:kjohnson@svdplou.org)



**3.** Purchase Kroger gift cards as stocking stuffers for all the loved ones on your Christmas shopping list. The \$25 gift cards are redeemable for groceries, fuel or pharmacy purchases, and the cards are renewable at all area Kroger locations. To get cards, please call (502) 301-8695.

## Assumption Students Reflect on Visit to SVDP Campus

When I went to St. Vincent de Paul my class was given a tour of the facility. It was very eye-opening and memorable. We got to see the room where the men sleep and learned about how the process works as far as who gets a bed and who is turned away.

We also got to see the kitchen where the meals are served.

Both of these things opened my eyes, but it was the woman from St. Jude's who spoke to us who touched my heart. She told us about her troubled background and how she is growing as a person through this program.

She is very inspirational and I really enjoyed hearing her speak.

My field trip to St. Vincent de Paul truly changed my outlook on the homeless and the homeless shelters. St. Vincent de Paul contributes a lot to the community.

— Haley Spalding



I had a great experience at St. Vincent de Paul. I learned so much about the way they work and how serious the issue of homelessness is.

Before this trip I knew very little about St. Vincent de Paul and homelessness around Louisville.

The people at St. Vincent de Paul were so kind and welcoming, and it made it a pleasure to visit.

My trip inspired me to want to help out around my community and assist people who experience these hardships.

— Emily Heck



*If you would like to learn more about St. Vincent de Paul's programs for the poor, please contact us to schedule a tour of our campus. Call Donna Young at (502) 301-8688; [dyoung@svdplou.org](mailto:dyoung@svdplou.org).*

## 2011 Holiday Food Basket Outreach

Please bring your donations of canned goods and nonperishable foods to St. Vincent de Paul no later than Dec. 9, and make plans now to help us assemble the food baskets that will be given to families in need. Youths are especially encouraged to participate in this fun event, which will fulfill school service hours.

### Here is a list of needed items:

Canned Green Beans  
Cranberry Sauce  
Cake Mix/Frosting  
Instant Mashed Potatoes  
Dried Beans  
Macaroni and Cheese  
Pasta/Macaroni



Spaghetti Sauce  
Hamburger/Tuna Helper  
Tuna  
Sugar  
Flour  
Peanut Butter  
Jelly