

# The Good Samaritan

## Call to Service Passed from Generation to Generation

By Abigail Costello, Development Coordinator

For over a year now, Deacon Jack Koenig has been the spiritual advisor to St. Vincent de Paul Louisville, but this isn't the first time he and his wife, Donna, have been involved with the organization. They started volunteering as Vincentians at Our Mother of Sorrows parish in 1997.

In 2008, Jack was approached about becoming a Deacon. He thought a lot about it and ultimately decided to dedicate the next four years of his and Donna's life to becoming an ordained Deacon. He also became more involved with St. Vincent de Paul Louisville.

During his year of discernment, Jack was told to go to a place outside his comfort zone. For Jack and Donna, that doesn't exist. He volunteered in the Ozanam Inn Men's Emergency Shelter and assisted with the St. John's recovery program that was active at Ozanam Inn at the time, sometimes even leading the sessions. It was an easy decision for him to give of his time at St. Vincent de Paul Louisville because his heart lies in helping the needy. "I still know some of the guys that graduated from the class," Jack said of his time as a volunteer.

Donna got involved at St. Jude Women's Recovery Center, working with the women going through recovery. Back then, the women stayed upwards of a year in the recovery program, and Donna got to know many of the women well and helped them to break down their walls and barriers of trust. "There is a lot of need around, so we love to do it," she said.

As the Spiritual Advisor to St. Vincent de Paul Louisville, Deacon Jack will lead prayer before meetings, participate in the induction of new Vincentians, and once led a prayer service when a White Flag guest passed away. Of his presence,

Deacon Jack says it "keeps the idea of God in what we are doing."

Where did this passion come from? For Deacon Jack, it was both of his parents' active involvement in their church and community. At a young age, he knew he wanted to be a doctor and serve people. It was during his time volunteering at Kosair Crippled Children Hospital that he knew he wanted to be a pediatrician.

Donna's passion was seeing her mother's generosity, but mainly when her daughters started getting involved in high school. This past year the Koenig's volunteered at Santa Shop with their daughter and granddaughter. Donna said, "There were smiles on their faces, and there were a lot of thank-yous for what we were doing. We didn't come for that. We came to help. That's not why you come. I enjoy meeting the people."

Sometimes you don't realize who's watching. Deacon Jack & Donna were at an event with their granddaughter, where attendees could purchase food. Seeing there was so much food left after the event, their grand-

daughter wanted to buy the unsold food and give it away to the homeless. The caterer heard what she was doing and ended up giving it all to her for free. They then drove around, passing out food to the homeless. "You're really surprised when you see it go forth. You do it because you want to, but you don't realize they (grandchildren) are watching you," Donna said.

Donna adds, "We feel like we are seeing the face of Christ in people and it means so much to us. If you start looking for it, it's easy to spot. But most people don't see it. Seeing them because they are people. Not because they are in need. That's where it all comes from. Treating them with respect."



Deacon Jack and Donna Koenig



**READER ALERT:** In this issue, we're catching up on stories that would have been published in earlier issues, but the coronavirus crisis disrupted publishing. Those stories are still important and we want to share them with you.



St. Vincent  
de Paul  
LOUISVILLE

## The Good Samaritan

The monthly newsletter of  
St. Vincent de Paul Louisville

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## Our Mission

St. Vincent de Paul Louisville partners with individuals and families in crisis and helps them navigate a path to stabilize their lives and reach their full potential.

## Support SVDP

To find out more about our work or  
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## STAY UP TO DATE

### Coronavirus Crisis & St. Vincent de Paul Louisville

Please visit our website for the latest information about the coronavirus crisis and how St. Vincent de Paul Louisville is coping. There's a link at the bottom of every page. Just go to [svdplou.org](http://svdplou.org). You'll find information about volunteering, donating, and how we're adapting to the current crisis.

## Veterans Focus of Capstone Project

On February 26, Cynthia Keller, senior at the University of Louisville's Kent School of Social Work, presented the culmination of her practicum semester to the staff at St. Vincent de Paul Louisville.

Her Capstone Project was called "Increasing Treatment Engagement Among Homeless Veterans." When asked about her time here, Cynthia said, "I am specializing in military social work for the MSSW program so the research project is geared towards working with homeless veterans. I have enjoyed overall working with the veterans because I am veteran. I was active duty for six years and have been an Army Reservist for three years and feel at home giving back to the veteran community helping those in need. During my time spent at St. Vincent de Paul Louisville, it was significant to learn about the individual strengths of homeless veterans and find out what negatively impacts them to problem solve and diminish the barriers."



Cynthia Keller, senior at the University of Louisville's Kent School of Social Work and Matt Weaver, Coordinator of Clinical Services at St. Vincent de Paul Louisville.

## Fifth Third's eBus Visits Campus



On March 4, the Fifth Third Bank Financial Empowerment Mobile paid a visit to St. Vincent de Paul Louisville. Fifth Third Bank employees Michael Amsdem and Ronitra Elliot coached visitors about fraud prevention, viewing credit reports, and home ownership. Fifth Third Bank remains a steadfast partner of St. Vincent de Paul Louisville and the community we serve.

## Success Stories

Joy entered into the program at St. Jude Women's Recovery Center with chronic substance abuse disorder, severe medical abnormalities, as well as mental health disorders. Joy received the time she needed to address her medical and mental health diagnosis, so that she could work on getting her life in order regarding her recovery journey. Joy worked closely with case management to obtain and maintain health insurance, housing, identification, and SNAP benefits. Joy stayed longer than the allotted time due to her severe circumstances. She is currently employed, has a sponsor, is working her steps, meets with a therapist, and maintains her health appointments. Joy's light returned in her eyes and with every obstacle she faced, she was afraid, but she walked through them with support from our team and her other resources within the community.

Eileen has been housed through St. Vincent de Paul Louisville for several years. Over the years, her physical health has declined and she now experiences seizures. She has struggled with paying her rent and keeping her apartment habitable. Last month, her landlord said that he would not renew her lease and she had 30 days to leave the apartment. Housing and Programs collaborated to move Eileen to an on-campus apartment and add her son to the lease as her caregiver. Eileen will find additional support and flexibility in our on-campus apartment than she would with a private landlord.

When Jon came to Ozanam Inn, he had been homeless for more than a year. He had a chronic and severe mental illness that left him vulnerable to exploitation on the street. Jon entered the Sanctuary Bed Program at Ozanam Inn where he was able to secure psychiatric medication, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), a bank account, a phone, one-on-one therapy, contact with family and support people, insurance, a Social Security card, and an ID. He then began taking steps towards independence and an apartment with assistance and services provided by St. Vincent de Paul Louisville staff. Despite all of his progress, he did not adjust to his medication and continued to display mental health symptoms. His Case Manager at Ozanam Inn connected with Jon's family and helped him to become hospitalized at Central State Hospital so that he can continue to work on his mental health stability. These intensive services helped Jon become more stable so that he could work on his housing.

## 37 Vincentians Inducted

On Sunday, March 8, St. Vincent de Paul Louisville inducted 37 new Vincentians during a ceremony held at St. Paul Church on Dixie Highway.

Vincnetians play a critical role in the work we do at St. Vincent de Paul Louisville and we welcome these new members with open arms.

### Holy Spirit

Alex Singer

### Holy Trinity

Pat Arauz

Martie Bertrand

Mel Bertrand

Carol Pryor

Patty Rademaker

### St. Agnes

Mike Murphy

### St. Albert the Great

Mary Gates

Nagy Tawfik

LuAnn West

Mark West

### St. Bernadette

Pat Cheever

Chris Parrino

Linda Parrino

### St. Dominic

Leah Edelen

Rick Furman

Mary Hickman

Barbara Pettus

Christina Lewis

Mary Grace Lewis

Angela Medley

### St. Ignatius

Patty Becht

Mary Lou Durbin

Terry Kuhn

Karen Reckenwald

### St. Patrick

Dana Hughes

Gentry Hughes

Linda Lucchese

### St. Raphael

Marian Ackerman

Mike Armes

Frank Baldwin

Stephen Barry

Dana Emerson

Butch Fernandez

Judy Ford

James Laemmle

Jack Sullivan

## THRIFT STORE UPDATE

## All Three Louisville Stores Closed Indefinitely

Per Kentucky Governor Andy Beshear's order that all nonessential retail businesses are to close by 8 pm on March 23, all three St. Vincent de Paul Louisville Thrift Stores will be closed indefinitely. Additionally, drop-off donations will not be accepted. We ask that you do not drop off donations at our thrift stores as there will be no one to collect them.

If you have a donation pick up scheduled, Wanda will contact you with any updates.

Vehicle donations will still be accepted, but vehicle drop-offs are not permitted. Once our staff is permitted to return to work, we will resume accepting drop off vehicle donations. Please call Wanda at (502) 589-7837 to arrange for pick up of your donated vehicle.

We apologize for the inconvenience, but the health and safety of our donors, customers, and staff is our top priority now. To stay up to date with our Thrift Stores and other programs at St. Vincent de Paul Louisville, sign up for The Good Samaritan newsletter.

Proceeds from sales at our thrift stores directly fund our mission at St. Vincent de Paul Louisville. Closing stores and postponing fund-raising events will have a long-term impact on the services we provide and the health of our organization. Please consider supporting our mission with a donation today.



## Grant to Provide Veterans Complete Bed Sets



St. Vincent de Paul Louisville is the recipient of a “Caring for Community” grant from HomeServe USA, a leading provider of home repair solutions. HomeServe’s grant will help fund a new project called “A Place to Lay Your Head” that will provide complete bed sets—mattress, box spring, linens and pillows—to an estimated 40 veterans as they exit the program at Ozanam Inn Men’s Shelter and move into their new permanent housing.

“Veterans are an integral part of our community and culture, and St. Vincent de Paul Louisville is providing these heroes with the support and services they need to succeed in the next phase of their lives,” said HomeServe CEO John Kitzie. “Working together, HomeServe and St. Vincent de Paul Louisville will be able to provide many veterans in the city with the comfort of a good night’s sleep, which can make a world of difference during difficult times.”

On February 8, HomeServe USA toured campus and presented a check to St. Vincent de Paul Louisville. Pictured above, from left to right: Back row, Brian Scully, Veterans Case Manager; Jennifer Clark, Director of Programs; Lonnie Williams, Associate Director of Programs; Patrick Crady, Program Manager Ozanam Inn Men’s Shelter; Rich Flaherty, Director of Development. Front row, Jennifer Montanaro, Sr. Account Manager, and Myles Meehan, Sr. VP of Public Relations, from HomeServe; Rick Barr, resident of Ozanam Inn Men’s Shelter Veterans Program; Dave Vogel, Executive Vice President of Louisville Water Company; Ed Wnorowski, Executive Director/CEO.

## Thank You to All the New Food Pantry Volunteers



Our Food Pantry is completely staffed by volunteers, most of which fall into a high-risk category for contracting the coronavirus. We put out a call for new volunteers and the response was overwhelming. Thank you!

If you’d like to join us in the Food Pantry, volunteers can sign up at [signup.com/go/ZTnfTAS](http://signup.com/go/ZTnfTAS).

Visit our website for a special Thank-You message from Donna Young, Director of Volunteer Services and Conference Affairs.

## NEW DATE! Roses & Rosé Postponed Until August 8



Events like Roses & Rosé are critical to funding our mission at St. Vincent de Paul Louisville. While the safety of our supporters is a top priority, the work must go on.

We have picked a new date for Roses & Rosé. Join us for the second annual 2020 Roses & Rosé on **Saturday, August 8 from 11 am to 1 pm at Audubon Country Club**. It will be centered largely on a feel-good message of women, mother/sister-hood, friendship, empowerment, and of course having brunch & drinks, all for a great cause of supporting our neighbors in need of assistance.

Tickets are available at <http://bidpal.net/2020rosesandrose>. Last year’s inaugural event was a huge success. Please help us grow this event into an annual Mother’s Day weekend (normally), must-attend event. We thank you for your support.

**Tickets Available for Purchase at**  
**[bidpal.net/2020rosesandrose](http://bidpal.net/2020rosesandrose)**

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