

The Good Samaritan

The Age of Miracles is Not Past

By Rich Flaherty, Director of Development

In our Christmas appeal, we highlighted an amazing letter we received from Vincentian Anita Garrison. As a supplement, she sent the following presentation that her father Edward Fitzgerald Hayden gave at St. John's Church in Paducah on March 21, 1982. Edward and his wife, Zita Mae, opened the St. Vincent de Paul Thrift Store in Bowling Green, and Edward was asked to talk about St. Vincent de Paul to the parishioners. Even though he spoke 38 years ago, much of what he discusses is still relevant now, especially as we manage living during COVID-19. A special thank you to everyone who does the great work Edward describes in the name of St. Vincent de Paul.

Thanks to Father Danhauer's kind invitation, I have an opportunity to speak about a subject that is dear to my heart, The Society of St. Vincent de Paul. My father worked in the Society for many years in Owensboro, so I guess it sort of comes natural for me to be so interested in this work.

In times past, the works of the Society have usually been thought of as associated with the poor, and this is also true today, although the scope of our endeavor has been broadened into the area of helping anyone in need.

Now, to a greater or lesser degree, we all have needs. The examples are many. We have all been lonely at times, we have all lost, or will lose, someone near and dear to us. Most of us have been sick at

one time or another, maybe several times, or perhaps we might have just needed someone to talk to - someone who will listen to us with real interest and Christian concern. All of these and more - many more - offer opportunities for the St. Vincent de Paul Members to be of assistance to someone in need.

As to the poor, due to present economic conditions, whether it be because of the recession, attempts to fight inflation or whatever conditions that may have contributed to the problems. All of these things are combining to work additional hardships on the poor.

Right now, people are hungry who were never hungry before. Right now, people have insufficient clothing who always had enough before. Right now, there are people who can't afford medical care or medicine, who never had this problem before. Right now, people are being evicted from their homes who never had trouble paying their rent before. Right now, people are having their utilities cut off who were always able to pay—until now. And these are young people, middle aged people, and elderly people. And besides these, we still have the poor unfortunates who never could fully meet their obligations.

If you add these two groups together, it becomes evident that there are a lot of folks who need assistance. It is also



Anita Garrison's scrapbook page with thrift store memorabilia.

evident that the Society of St. Vincent de Paul must do its share in helping in as many ways as it can. Sounds like a big task, doesn't it? And indeed it would be a big task if any one of us, as individuals, were to try to take on these problems alone. But in an organization like The Society of St. Vincent de Paul, it is a different story altogether. As an organization—and the bigger, the better—we can draw on the prayers, experiences, resources, and moral support of each other. As an organization—and the bigger, the better—we can reach more people and exert a Christian influence to

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Donor Survey

We are coming to the end of our Annual Donor Survey and we want everyone's feedback to help us improve our communication with you. If you have returned it, thank you. If you not returned your donor survey, a copy is included in the newsletter. Please fill it out and return it in the remittance envelope. Thank you for helping us.



**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.

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— 2020 —

St. Vincent de Paul Louisville by the Numbers

Permanent Housing Programs (All scattered site, all on-campus apartments except Tranquil)

- 337 people have been served since January 1, 2020
- We served 57 families and 117 individuals
- We served 141 children
- 78% of exits were positive

Ozanam Inn Men's Shelter

- 378 men have been served since January 1, 2020
- 71 people exited to stable housing

VA Program

- 37 men have been served since January 1, 2020
- Since January, 70% of men served have exited to permanent housing
- 22% of clients with a goal to be in recovery are successfully in recovery

Tranquil House

- 11 people were served since January 1, 2020
- 67% increased or maintained mental health services
- 45% got a new resource in the community from their case manager

Family Success Center – NTI (Non-traditional Instruction)

- 24 children have been served, average daily attendance is 13
- 93% of participants are up to date with their assignments. When NTI support started the first week in September, only two participants were up to date on assignments.



Darius made a parachute out of a shopping bag for an assignment during NTI at the Family Success Center.

- Our goal is for 75% of students to increase or maintain their grades. As of the end of October, we had not received report cards yet.

Mental Health and Substance Use Program (Clinical Services)

- 324 people have been served to date
- 94 Crisis have been resolved since January 1, 2020 with a 93% success rate
- 92% of participants in individual counseling report making progress on a therapeutic goal

Success Stories

Tom is a longtime client of Ozanam Inn Men's Shelter who suffers from an extensive history of chemical dependence and a severe mental illness. He is currently utilizing Sanctuary Bed and the Mental Health and Substance Use program. Tom has been able to identify triggers stemming from a history of trauma leading to more constructive thinking resulting in use of positive coping skills, relapse prevention and goal attainment including pending employment and housing.

Helen worked with her case manager at Robert's Hall to access a class at the Urban League which will result in her eviction being forgiven. This is the last barrier for Helen to be able to obtain housing outside of Robert's Hall.

MIRACLES

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a far greater extent than any individual could ever do alone.

And as usual, when a need arises, Divine Providence steps in with unusual help. Until recent times, the Members of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul have always been men. But today, for these times, both men and women are members of and are working in the Society. Needless to say, both men and women are finding a rewarding vocation in service to the needy.

The women's touch adds a new dimension to the society and to its work. Vincentians—that's what we call ourselves—have always worked in pairs when making home visitations, or in our other personal contacts with those who need us, but I'm sure you can see that such visits could often be made more appropriately by two women, or by a husband and wife. My wife and I have spent many rewarding hours conversing with families in whose homes we have visited. We might have been advising them on family budgeting (we raised seven children so we know a little about family budgets). Or we may have been trying to console them over some difficulty one of their children was having etc. These are but two examples of the several opportunities we, as a couple have had.

Now I'm sure you have all heard the saying, "The age of miracles is not past." Well, believe me, it isn't! In our



Anita Garrison



Zita Mae Edward cutting ribbon for new thrift store in 2005.

local conference of Holy Spirit and St. Joseph in Bowling Green, any one of our members can cite examples of what we call "Little Miracles." We happen to operate a St. Vincent de Paul Thrift Store, where we sell donated clothing, small appliances, utensils, dishes, and what-not to the general public at a nominal cost, or at no cost at all if our "customers" can't afford even that nominal cost. However, we know that the poor—especially the poor—would rather pay a little something if they possibly can, and we let them pay, if they wish. Because in so doing, we can help them preserve their dignity, which is something we always try to do. But back to the Miracles. For example it may happen that someone will come into the store, who truly needs a pair of shoes for one of their children. And perhaps we find we have nothing that fits. It occurs too often to be a coincidence, that at that very time, someone will bring in a bundle of clothing, and lo, and behold, there will be a pair of shoes of the exact size needed.

Another example: Our Bowling Green conference has usually had an adequate treasury - because of store sales, fifth Sunday collections, and donations from well-wishers. But because of the unusually large number of requests we had at

Christmas, we were nearly broke. In fact, we were down to our last \$.19. One of our members remarked, "Well, it's God's money we spent, and if He wants us to have more, He'll see that we get more." Within a week, our treasury was replenished fully, because of a minor boom in store sales. Another fifth Sunday collection coming up at just the right time, and a large donation, completely unsolicited from a man in Colorado. See why we believe in Miracles!

Now if anyone is wondering about whether or not they are qualified for this work, let me tell you a little more about our Bowling Green Conference. We used to call ourselves the conference of the old, the lame and the blind. Five of our members are over seventy, two of these are women, one of whom is blind - most of the rest of us crippled up or had some ailment or the other. So you can see, God can use all of us in some way. All we need is a love of God, a love of neighbor, a compassionate heart and a little bit of willingness.

So if you're looking for a way to increase your own faith, and to gain more blessings for your family and your parish, I'm sure you will find working in the Society an excellent way to see it happen. Thanks for listening—and God bless you.



New Info Kiosk on Campus

Scout Trae Miller (third from left) built, with help from other members of his troop shown here, an information kiosk and installed it in the parking lot next to the playground. There are plans to install other kiosks around campus too. Trae is a member of Troop 71, based at the Middletown Fire Department. He's a senior at Male High School and will be attending UofL's J.B. Speed School of Engineering.

These kiosks will welcome visitors to campus with maps and information about services available.

Thanksgiving to Go

We are grateful for all those that donated to our Thanksgiving meal at the Open Hand Kitchen, including the St. Patrick Concession Team and Men's Club.

We missed our volunteers that would normally serve the meal to guests, but our kitchen staff rose to the occasion, prepping and handing out a few hundred meals.



Donations from St. Patrick Concession Team and Men's Club.



Thanksgiving to-go meals ready to be handed out from the Open Hand Kitchen.



Your Holiday Celebrations Can Support SVDP

Enroll in Kroger's Community Rewards program and all your holiday food shopping will earn rewards that fund campus programs at St. Vincent de Paul Louisville.

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