

# The Good Samaritan

## Q&A with a Domestic Violence Survivor

Shannon stayed at St. Vincent de Paul Louisville's Domestic Violence Transitional Housing in 2022. We helped her secure a housing voucher for an apartment, and she hopes to purchase her own home in the near future. We sat down with Shannon to hear her story.

### How did you end up at our Domestic Violence Transitional Housing?

I was assaulted by my offender and it was his second offense. I had filed an EPO (emergency protective order). He was taken to jail. They put him out of the house for 30 days. While he was out of the house, I called the Coalition for the Homeless, and they set up an interview. Then somebody called me from Transitional Housing. The next thing I know, we went to court May 31, and I had a bed June 3. So I was so thankful, so thankful.

### What was your experience like at SVDP?

I cannot speak highly enough of it. I really cannot. They give you the freedom to make the choices that you need to better yourself. They'll give you a bus pass so you have transportation to go wherever you need to go. There's a case manager. There are people working the desk that are just there to be supportive and talk to when you need them—morning, noon, and night. Then, there's a director. You can go to her and she will take care of any problem that's going on ... And the place was just amazing. You get your own room. You have a little refrigerator to keep your own stuff in it. The beds are comfortable, and they give you a new blanket, two pillows. If you need to go to the Women's Clothes Closet, you can do that. Then, the Food Pantry is on Tuesday and Thursday. You can only go once a week, but you get everything you need to care for yourself. The kitchen is right there for you to cook in yourself, and you clean up after yourself.

### Do you think it would've been possible without SVDP's help?

No. No. I've been an addict for a long time—about seven years—and I've been to recovery and rehab and all that. But the truth is, if they lock you in somewhere you have to do what's right. But here, they don't do that. They don't lock you in. You have the freedom to make the choices that you need to make to

get yourself back. And that's what happened when I was here. I took myself back, and I couldn't have done that without the love and support that I found here ... St. Vincent de Paul does an awful lot that people really don't know about.

### What was it like to know you were safe?

A gift from heaven. It really was. They don't let anybody in that door, nobody ... And it was just nice to know that I could be somewhere and not worry about somebody coming up and doing something crazy to me. I'm so thankful for this place.

And without it, I couldn't be who I am now. This has been a beautiful thing, an absolutely beautiful thing. I love butterflies. I'm all about metamorphosis and change. I felt like this place was my cocoon. I really did.

*"I love butterflies. I'm all about metamorphosis and change. I felt like this place was my cocoon."*





ST. VINCENT  
de PAUL

LOUISVILLE

## The Good Samaritan

The monthly newsletter of  
St. Vincent de Paul Louisville

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## Our Mission

We house, feed, and support those in  
need with compassion and dignity.

## Support SVDP

To find out more about our work or  
make a donation, visit our website.

[svdplou.org](http://svdplou.org)



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## Happy Mother's Day!

## Fifth Annual Roses & Rosé Raises Record \$30,000!

We want to thank the 215 guests who  
attended the fifth annual Roses & Rosé  
on Saturday, April 29, at The Olmsted.  
With your support, we were able to raise a  
record of \$30,000.

The event included a buffet-style  
brunch, rosé wine and mimosas, silent  
auction items, wine pull, vendors, and  
time to celebrate motherhood.

All of the proceeds from Roses &  
Rosé will benefit our Domestic Violence

Transitional Housing Program, which has  
18 units for survivors and their families.  
The program offers housing and services  
that meet families' and individuals'  
immediate needs for safety and help them  
exit to stable, permanent housing in the  
community.

We had 15 individuals and conferences  
purchase a nice meal for one of the many  
women we serve, which was delivered on  
Friday, April 28. It was so much fun!



**NDS** LAW OFFICE OF —  
NELLIE DRAUS STALLINGS



THE KOENIG FAMILY

SVDP CONFERENCE OF ST. BERNADETTE, INC.







**Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Recap**  
Jan. 23 to April 14 at the Family Success Center



**500 CLIENTS FILED  
THEIR TAX RETURNS**

## Tragedy leads Lukisha Thomas to work at SVDP

Lukisha Thomas' world was turned upside down on June 23, 2019.

Her youngest daughter Tyyatta, 23, was murdered by a man who wanted to be more than friends.

Though it was a time of unspeakable tragedy, Thomas now works as a Program Aide at St. Vincent de Paul Louisville's Domestic Violence Transitional Housing Program and loves every minute of it.

"If I had known what I had known, I would have been able to better protect her," Thomas said. "That made me want to work here. If I could save another life

and be able to talk to some of these women and keep them from a lot of situations I couldn't keep my daughter from, it was my chance to right the wrong I didn't get to correct. I love it."

SVDP's Domestic Violence Transitional Housing has 18 units for survivors and their families who need housing and services that meet their immediate need for safety and help them exit to stable, permanent housing in the community.

Thomas works third shift—even volunteers off the clock—and has been at SVDP since Oct. 2021.

"This is my passion. I love people," Thomas added. "I love working with them one-on-one ... I love to mentor them. I love to talk to them about whatever they've been through, if they're comfortable sharing it with me."

Thomas' duties consist of providing security, ensuring the facility is safe and clean, as well as overseeing house rules and procedures.

As a "fashionista," Thomas does the women's makeup, nails and feet to "raise their self-worth."

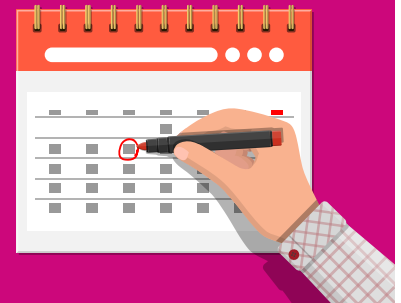
"S" is one of the girls, and I really worry about her like she's one of my kids. I'm a mother first," she said. "She comes to me and confides in me. They all do,



Lukisha Thomas

## Save the Date

UPCOMING EVENTS AT  
ST. VINCENT DE PAUL LOUISVILLE



*Come Join Us!*

**Clubs & Cocktails**

August 6th and 7th

For event information, to be a sponsor, or make a donation, please contact Makenzie Smith at (502) 272-2134 or [msmith@svdplou.org](mailto:msmith@svdplou.org).

Our thanks to Louisville Metro Government for their support



for the most part. I just love on them and give them advice. They're sweet ladies."

Some of the women come to SVDP traumatized and timid to the point of not wanting to be mentioned by name or room number for safety concerns.

"I tell them, 'Listen, we're not here to harm you nor hurt you ... we're only here to help you, so with that being said, you have to help us so we can help you,'" Thomas said.

She truly cares about each and every resident.

"If you're not compassionate, you don't need to work at a place like this," Thomas added. "This is my life. I'll die doing this."



## Conference: Epiphany Catholic Church

It's normal to be in need.

"I think part of our job is to get people to say, 'We all have needs sometimes.' And there's nothing shameful about being in need," said Beth Boehm, president of the Epiphany Conference.

Since 2017, Epiphany Conference has been serving those in need. With 12 active Vincentians, they field roughly 30 to 40 calls per month.

"I enjoy helping people," said Jane Burke, an active Vincentian.

While they may help pay a client's rent or mortgage, utility or medical bills, and adopt a family for Christmas each year, each Epiphany Conference Vincentian simply listens.

"Sometimes we're just an ear to hear them. We're just a sounding board," Burke said.

"I just think it's about being a friend to them and sharing with them," added Angie Curtis, an active member.

Epiphany Conference has served people from all walks of life, including single mothers and even a pastor's daughter.

"Sometimes they just want to hear somebody else say what they've already been thinking themselves," Boehm said.

Late last year, St Raphael Conference asked Epiphany and other SVDP Conferences to share in the expense of donating desks, file cabinets, refrigerators, and tools among other things to an elementary school in eastern Kentucky that was destroyed by last year's flood.

Epiphany Conference makes exit baskets for clients at Ozanam Inn Men's Emergency Shelter (see picture to right), which come with paper towels, toilet paper, towels, washcloths, soap, laundry detergent, toiletries, flatware, glasses, and dishes.

For those at the Domestic Violence Transitional Housing Program going into permanent housing, they make exit baskets with sheets, blankets, washcloths, towels, and pillows.



"It's not just about providing emergency aid to people who need it, but it really is about growing your own faith," Boehm said.

Epiphany Conference is not only an incredible example of helping people financially, but also being present with each client in their need.



## Tempur Sealy Donates 250 Mattresses

On March 31, Tempur Sealy donated 250 mattresses. We replaced all the old mattresses at Ozanam Inn Men's Emergency Shelter, our Domestic Violence Transitional Housing Program and in our various programs on campus. "Tempur Sealy is proud to partner with St. Vincent de Paul Louisville. Our mattress donation program helps deliver on our company purpose of 'improving the sleep of more people, every night, all around the world,'" said Erin Grant, Head of Public Relations and Communications at Tempur Sealy. "We are honored to support those in need as they transition to permanent housing." An army of volunteers helped unload three, 54-foot trucks to distribute the twin and queen size mattresses. They will truly get a good night's rest so that they can focus on finding permanent housing.

