



THE VINCENTIAN WAY

The Official Newsletter of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul of Long Island

We Help People...

ISSUE 1 ♦ 2021



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Save the Date—May 17th

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A MESSAGE FROM TOM ABBATE CEO & Executive Director



Dear Friends,

Happy New Year to all. Usually at this time of the holiday season, we reflect back on the prior year and give thanks for all we have received and experienced. We must take time as we begin a new year to enjoy those we have around us, and to remember friends and loved ones we have lost. We have welcomed children and grandchildren, and couples have celebrated the sacrament of marriage. We have celebrated first Communions and Confirmations, and continue to practice our Catholic faith.

We have seen a global pandemic, causing consequences that no one could have anticipated. We have seen political and racial tension that has gripped our nation. There is record unemployment and financial hardship on people and businesses. We honor those that stepped up to fill the varied roles of essential workers to tend to those impacted by COVID-19. These times of hardship have increased the number of our neighbors that are in need of assistance. We will work tirelessly to assist our fellow Long Islanders. When this Coronavirus world we currently are living in turns the corner, it will not signal the end of poverty on Long Island. We will continue on our mission of charity as we have for close to 80 years, reaching out and visiting our neighbors once again in their homes and creating a path to self-reliance and pride.

There is hope on the horizon that the rollout of the vaccines will start us on a path of healing and people coming together once more.

We must also pay tribute to our Vincentians, who have prevailed throughout 2020 to help our neighbors. These empowered Vincentians—1,200 strong—have kept our mission of charity a beacon of hope in our communities. Many Conferences adapted to outdoor food pantries and home visits by phone, Zoom or outdoor meetings with social distancing. The Vincentian spirit is shared by so many here, around the country and the world, and is truly a Christian calling to seek and find the forgotten, the suffering, or the deprived.

Vincentians around the world have been continuing the works of St. Vincent de Paul and Frédéric Ozanam through this crisis by loving and listening with a Vincentian heart. We thank you for your perseverance, and wish you health and happiness in 2021.

Yours in the spirit of St. Vincent de Paul,

Thomas J. Abbate

CEO & Executive Director

DONORS & PARTNERS

“Vote with a Coat” Election Day Drive

Throughout the month of October, SVDPLI partnered with several local businesses in order to keep Long Islanders warm this winter. Keying off of Election Day, our “Vote with a Coat” drive spanned over 35 locations in Nassau and Suffolk Counties, and yielded a collection of 523 new or gently-used coats for those in need.

A huge thank you to BNB Bank, Lorraine Gregory Communications, Blue Point Brewing Company and to our incredible teams at the Garden City Park and Huntington thrift stores for coming together for this exciting project. And a tremendous thank you to Cox Media (106.1 BLI and 102.3 WBAB) for helping to spearhead and publicize this important drive!



(L to R): President/ CEO of Lorraine Gregory Communications Long Island, Greg Demetriou; VP of Administration Gina DelVicario; and SVDPLI CEO/Executive Director Tom Abbate



(L to R): Kevin Santacroce, BNB Bank Chief Lending Officer; Jamie Nelson AVP, Marketing & Events; Tom Abbate CEO/ Executive Director-SVDPLI; John McCaffery Jr., CFO & Treasurer; LuAnn Commisso, Branch Manager/Hauppauge, Kevin O'Connor President & CEO, Howard Nolan COO and Corp. Secretary

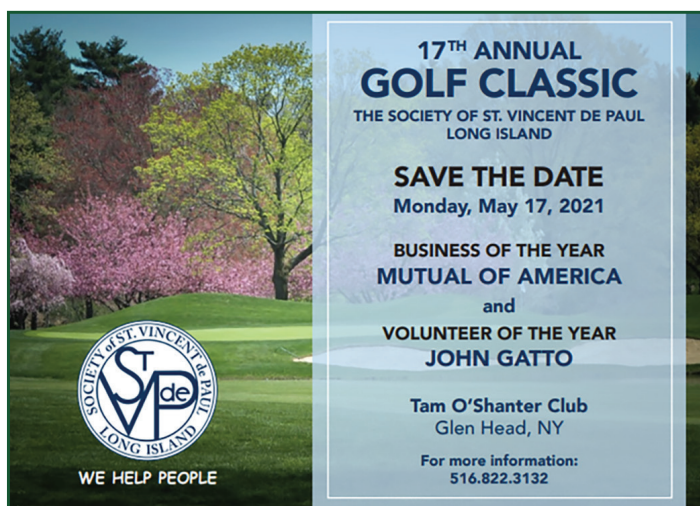
Join us for the 17th Annual Golf Classic

While we were devastated that the COVID-19 pandemic forced the cancellation of last year’s annual golf outing, we are so excited to be returning to Tam O’Shanter Club in Brookville for the 17th Annual Golf Classic on Monday, May 17th, 2021!

This year, we are thrilled to be honoring Vincentian John Gatto (St. Matthew-Dix Hills) as our “Volunteer of the Year” and Mutual of America as our “Business of the Year.”

While the schedule of activities is subject to change based on the ongoing pandemic, one thing remains certain: this annual event will raise funds and awareness for those in poverty across Long Island.

Stay tuned as more information regarding scheduling becomes available in the coming months. For more information on sponsorships and registration, contact Erin Geier at 516-822-3132.



RAISING FUNDS & AWARENESS

Scouts' Honor: Generosity from Long Island's Youth

We have been so inspired by stories from around the country involving young people who have answered the call for help from those affected by these challenging months. Here on Long Island, we are so grateful for the support of two Boy Scouts who selected us as the beneficiary of their Eagle Scout Projects.

“Back to School” Drive in East Northport

The high cost of school supplies poses a challenge for many parents in poverty. Fortunately, Brendan Murray of Boy Scout Troop 474 (Suffolk County Council) found a way to help those unable to afford these supplies in his East Northport community.

Brendan ran the “Back to School Supply Drive,” at St. Anthony of Padua RC Church, an annual collection for the local children whose families rely on the SVDP food pantry for their many needs. Additionally, Brendan ran a car wash to raise money to purchase 72 lunch boxes for elementary school children and 70 padlocks for secondary students to include with the school supplies.

At the October monthly meeting of the St. Anthony of Padua Conference, Brendan was thanked for his service and his generous donation of \$900.00, which was left over from his fundraising. The members estimated that the value of the school supplies he collected exceeded \$7,000 and noted that it was the largest collection that they had ever seen!

In total, his project provided school supplies to 142 elementary and secondary school students in the East Northport community.

Oyster Bay Shoe Collection

When William Capone of Boy Scout Troop 299 (Theodore Roosevelt Council) approached us about hosting a shoe drive in his community, we so thrilled for his partnership. Walking is often the only means of transportation for those in poverty.

Despite the pandemic creating a host of difficulties, including school closures and virtual meetings, William rose above these immense challenges and raised the funds he needed to secure the building materials his project's masterwork: an enormous shoe, fit for a giant, which would serve as his collection box.

Throughout the weekend of October 24th, William and his troop set up outside of St. Dominic's RC Church in Oyster Bay, collecting shoes from parishioners as they made their way into mass. At the conclusion of the drive, **William had collected an incredible 1,055 pairs of shoes!** Additionally, William donated his remaining fundraising dollars to support our mission.

We at the Society would like to extend a tremendous thank you to the Capone Family and Troop 299 for their hard work and generosity, particularly in these chilly winter months.



Brendan with the Vincentians from the St. Anthony of Padua Conference who helped him, Maureen Rogers and Jo Kerrigan



William during his shoe collection at St. Dominic RC Church

12th ANNUAL FRIENDS OF THE POOR 5K WALK/RUN

Walk Sponsors

As with all traditionally-large gatherings, our 12th Annual Friends of the Poor 5K Walk/Run looked a bit different this year. In lieu of our typical walk at Bethpage Community Park, smaller, Conference-led walks took place from September 26th-October 3rd.

And while we missed the group atmosphere and celebration, we're thrilled to report that 1,127 individuals participated in this year's event through a myriad of physical activities—walking, running, paddle boarding, and so much more! This is a record number of participants, and represents a 38 percent increase from last year's event!

A tremendous thank-you to the following sponsors for supporting our work, particularly during this tumultuous year:

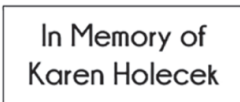
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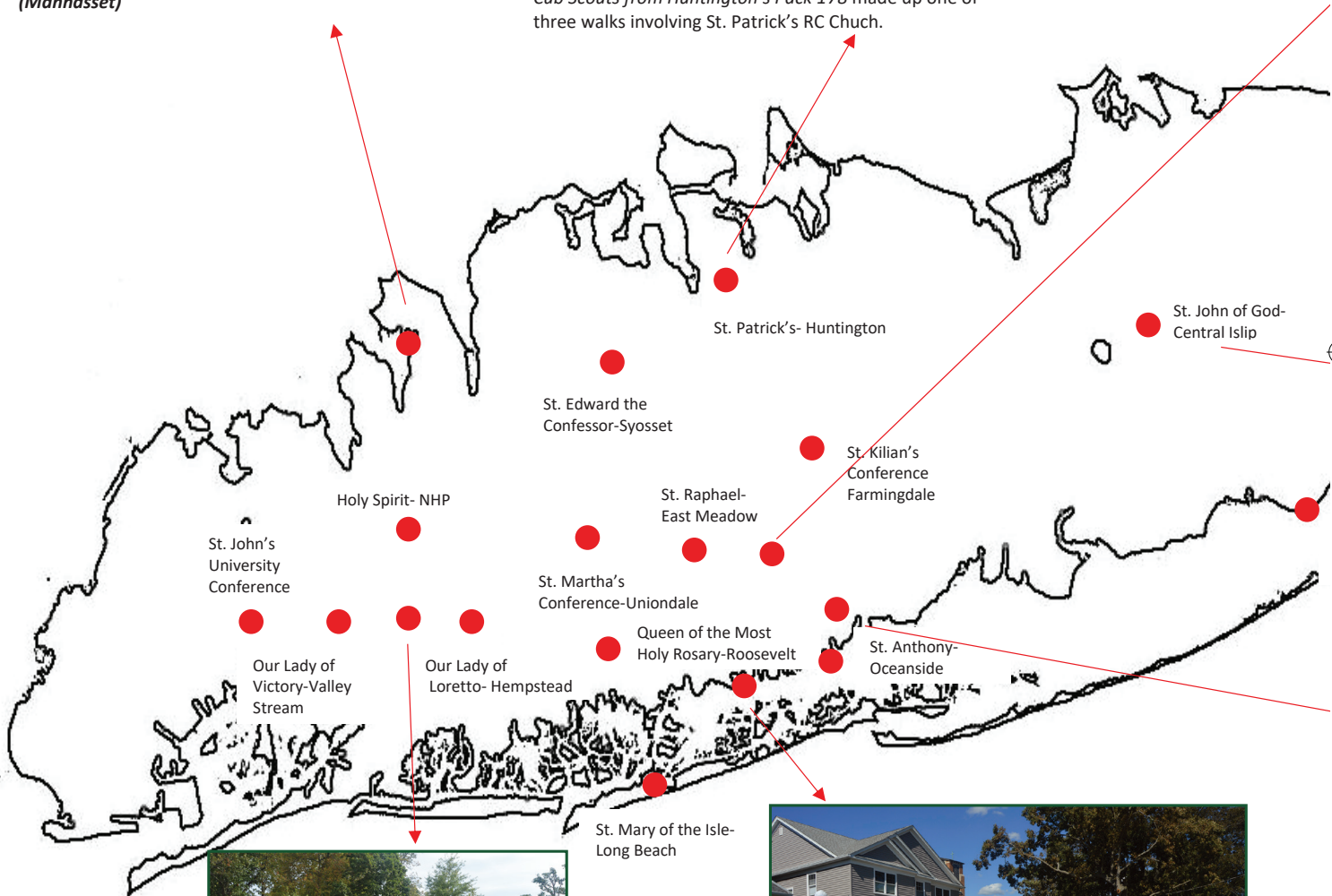
12th ANNUAL FRIENDS OF THE POOR 5K WALK/RUN



A tiny, but mighty walk at **St. Mary's Conference (Manhasset)**



Cub Scouts from Huntington's Pack 178 made up one of three walks involving St. Patrick's RC Church.



Participants from **Our Lady of Lourdes (Malverne)** walk through the Steven McDonald Memorial Garden of Forgiveness



The Conference at **St. Raymond (East Rockaway)** takes to the street

A VIEW FROM ACROSS LONG ISLAND



St. Martin of Tours Conference (Bethpage) raises money, awareness and receives donations of food in partnership with Operation HOPE



Mary Immaculate
Bellport



The Conference at St. John of God outside of their Parish



The Conference at St. Agnes (RVC) outside of the Cathedral

All together, eighteen Conferences from SVDPLI, plus students at St. John's University, led their own walks in Nassau and Suffolk Counties. While each event looked slightly different, each one achieved the same goal of raising funds and awareness for people in need across Long Island, and we're proud to say that we raised more than \$145,000!

Please mark your calendars for next year's 13th Annual Friends of the Poor Walk on Saturday, September 25th.

COUNCIL HAPPENINGS

“DEVOTION TO MARY” SPIRITUALITY EVENT

Since the earliest days of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, members have shown great devotion to Mary, the Mother of God. After all, it was our founder, Blessed Frederic Ozanam who formally proposed that she—Mary Immaculate—should be the heavenly patroness of the Society.

On December 9, 2020, a day after the Immaculate Conception, the Diocesan Council hosted a unique virtual event, *Diversity of Devotion to Mary Our Mother and Patroness*, and offered an online experience, reflective of a multi-cultural festival involving education, music and artistry.

Three different devotions were featured: Our Lady of Guadalupe from the Hispanic Apostolate, Our Lady of Perpetual Help from the Haitian Apostolate, and Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal from the Vincentian Family. Knowledgeable presenters, respective of the cultures the devotions were connected to, shared the history and traditions of each of these devotions. In her welcoming remarks, Paula Migliore quoted St. Alphonsus Liguori, ***“In His eagerness to show you mercy, God has given His Son as your Advocate. And then to make your confidence even stronger, He has given you another Advocate, who obtains through her prayers whatever she asks. Go to Mary, and you will see salvation.”***

Diana Pizzaro, from the DRVC Office of Faith Formation, detailed the story of Juan Diego and the apparition of Our Lady of Guadalupe from Mexico. She shared how this celebration is a source of unity in many parishes with Latinos across the nation.

Maryse Emmanuel-Garcy, a pioneer of the Haitian Apostolate in the DRVC and a HAFALI (Haitian American Family of Long Island, Inc) advocate, described how immigrants bring their devotions to the United States as a way of maintaining ties with their country of origin and empowering them as they assimilate.

S. Patricia Evanick, a Daughter of Charity serving in Campus Ministry at St. John’s University, explored how St. Catherine Labouré, known as “the Silent Saint,” worked to commission the Miraculous Medal but never shared, until her dying day, that she was the one tapped by Mary to bring this powerful medal of comfort and strength to the public.

As mentioned, in between each of the dynamic speakers, the icons, underscored by a music selection of the associated culture, were displayed as moments of individual meditation for the participants. A virtual choir of 450 voices from 33 countries, organized by Canto Católico, sang *Salve Regina* and ended the program, truly representing the diversity of devotion the evening meant to highlight.



DISMAS HOUSE ALUMNI

DISMAS HOUSE ALUM STORY: JOHN BALL “PAYING IT FORWARD”

People who have been in prison know what it's like to be down on their luck—to feel despair, and to feel like a societal outcast. Upon reentry into everyday life, it is no surprise that many returning citizens feel reawakened, and are determined to have a fresh start. Perhaps it is this new lease on life that compelled a recent Dismas House alumnus to act when he noticed a stranger in need of help.

When John graduated from Dismas House in 2018, he began working as a truck driver in Brentwood. As he familiarized himself with his surroundings, he began to notice a small, dilapidated shack in a wooded area along his route, and a single resident of that shack, who supported himself by collecting bottles and cashing them in at a nearby deposit. Sensing this man's hardships, John took it upon himself to buy a dozen bagels and pay a visit to man's dwelling.

John quickly struck up a friendship with this man, called Phil*, and discovered that like himself, Phil was a recovering addict. However, John noticed a profound difference in their attitudes that made him understand Phil's situation more clearly; simply put, Phil had lost hope and faith in his fellow man, and felt discouraged and unwelcomed back into society.

John knew that his employer was looking for new hires, and suspected that not only would Phil be a great candidate for the job, but that employment could be the key to Phil's future. Still, John felt a bit apprehensive about taking the next steps and connecting Phil with his employer. After all—John was a fairly new employee himself, and as a returning citizen, his own employment prospects felt precarious.

Still, John decided to take the chance, and found Phil a job at his company. And what a wonderful decision it turned out to be.

Within an hour of applying, Phil was hired as a full-time employee. Although initially a bit shy, Phil acclimated to his environment almost immediately, and was accepted like family by his new coworkers. After saving up his paychecks, Phil was eventually able to rent a studio apartment from one of his colleagues and purchased a used car from another. John is in awe of Phil's rapid growth within the company, and predicts that before long, Phil could even be “running the place.”

“There were times in my life where I wasn't that far from Phil,” says John. “I think if I wasn't in Dismas House, I could've ended up in a shack like that, or even worse—back in in prison. ***I don't think I'd be here today if I didn't have hope.***”

Hope: it is the very thing that allowed John to put his faith into action, and it is the driving force behind what we do at Dismas House. Just as John saw a light in Phil, we too believe in second chances, and that our residents can not only reenter society safely and confidently, but that they can flourish with proper community support. It is one of our most important tenants, and one that we are proud that John has remembered in his journey.

*Name changed for anonymity



THANK YOU DONORS & SUPPORTERS!

JULY 2020 - NOVEMBER 2020

The generosity of private and public funders is essential to the Society of St. Vincent de Paul as it fulfills its commitment as an international organization of the Catholic laymen and women who seek in a spirit of justice and charity to help the poor, the needy and the disadvantaged through practical works of charity.

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The following donors have made a commitment to give a scheduled amount to the Society on a monthly basis.

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GIVING TUESDAY 2020

How blessed we were by the kind donors who participated in our Giving Tuesday initiative on December 1st. This year's theme—How Do You Give?—focused on different ways our donors, volunteers and community partners show their generosity to the Society, including donations of time, talent, food, clothing and prayer.

In just 24 hours, we raised more than \$21,000 for neighbors in need. This simply could not have been possible without the support of our matching donors, who matched gifts up to \$5,000 that day: The Al & Peggy DeMatteis Family Foundation, Dr. and Mrs. John Franco, Mr. Al Messina, Sonia Burgos and several anonymous donors.

TRIBUTE GIFTS

JULY 2019 - NOVEMBER 2020

We express our deepest sympathies to the family and friends of the following people in whose memory the Society of St. Vincent de Paul received contributions.

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Reverend Monsignor Patrick Armshaw August 22, 1936 – October 29, 2020

Father Pat Armshaw, who passed away in October of this year at the age of 84, was someone who very much exemplified a commitment to the poor. "Father Pat," as he was usually known, served for twenty years as the Diocesan Spiritual Advisor. In his down to earth manner, he really sought to respond to the needs of the poor in each parish where he served. He truly possessed the Vincentian spirit of love of God and love of neighbor. Father Pat was an inspiration to so many and was loved by the people to whom he ministered. We pray that the

Lord will welcome him into his kingdom as a friend of the poor and receive the reward of life eternal.

Oh God who, by raising him to the dignity of Priest, gave your servant, Reverend Monsignor Patrick Armshaw a share in the priesthood of the Apostles, grant we blessed you, that he may be joined in fellowship with the forever more.

Amen



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SPIRITUAL REFLECTIONS FROM FATHER JERRY



40 days: this reference is often used in Lent, as many Christians commit to fasting and giving up certain luxuries in order to replicate the sacrifice of Jesus Christ’s journey into the desert for 40 days, as they prepare for the Resurrection at Easter. Perhaps, on some level, the 40 weeks that we have endured the coronavirus pandemic often felt similarly to that self-sacrificing effort as we curtail our usual activities and experience special event cancellations.

However, throughout these unsettling months, Vincentians have been receiving correspondence from Fr. Jerry Ringenback, the Diocesan Spiritual Advisor, in the form of “Thursday’s Thoughts.” These emailed remarks invite Vincentians to consider some specific aspect of their faith life through metaphors, role models, and good, old-fashioned soul-searching. At the time of this publication, he has produced 40 days of reflections. Fr. Jerry might say that is no coincidence.

Somehow, Fr. Jerry has been able to address the challenges of the pandemic, as well as the socio-political circumstances with which our country has struggled in a gentle, compassionate voice. He has approached these topics from a place of grief and gratitude as well as hope and humility. He has shared the voices of Pope Francis as well as Mister Rogers. Moreover, each weekly reflection has kept the mission of the Society and its dedication to the poor and marginalized front and center.

The compilation of the articles could appear as a prayer journal, reflecting the individual experience of Fr. Jerry since March. However, the overwhelmingly positive reception they have received indicate they are more reminiscent of other Vincentians’ perspectives who have journeyed these 40 days as well. If you are interested in receiving a sample of one of these reflections, please contact info@svdpli.org.

IN MEMORY OF DECEASED VINCENTIANS

Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them. May the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.

Anthony Cascardi

St. Joseph-Hewlett

Andrew Clarke

St. Anthony-Oceanside

Maria Clavijo

St. Martha-Uniondale

Tom Cook

St. Frances de Chantal-Wantagh

Louis Craco

St. Mary-Manhasset

Philip Davi

St. Joseph-Hewlett

Eileen Devlin

St. Barnabas-Bellmore

Susan Faber

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St. Boniface Martyr-Sea Cliff

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Alan Kusa

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Kathleen Meehan

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Joseph Visone

St. Raphael-East Meadow

Tom Waters

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