



# THE VINCENTIAN WAY

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

*We Help People...*

ISSUE 1 ♦ 2020



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## A MESSAGE FROM TOM ABBATE CEO & Executive Director



Dear Friends,

Happy 2020 and a hopeful start to a new decade as well. As we look back, we are always amazed by the progress of medicine, science, electronics and how we communicate with others. We have become more aware of how our actions impact our environment. Our awareness of global events is also more heightened than ever before.

And yet there is one constant in society that has never been solved: poverty. Why do poverty and homelessness survive through centuries of innovation and social improvement? The solution to that question may elude us all for some time to come.

It was over 400 years ago when our patron St. Vincent de Paul began his mission of charity. This year also marks the 175th Anniversary of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul in the United States. Over our history in the U.S., we have continually expanded in new towns and cities and enhanced the tools our Vincentians have available to help our neighbors.

There are government agencies, large non-profits that operate on a global scale, but only you — our Vincentians — sit down with your neighbors in their homes and create an atmosphere of friendship to help alleviate their distress.

As Vincentians, we are called to serve by our spirituality and commitment to help our neighbors. We must also ensure the Vincentian charism will endure by inviting others in our community to join us in our mission of charity. We must continually revitalize our spirituality by sharing in prayer and reflection. We must also revitalize Conferences to re-energize our existing members and recruit new friends. The power of the home visit can never be understated and is the core of our Vincentian heritage.

In this decade, we will create more advancements that will assist in confronting the challenge of poverty directly. But to truly make an impact and to follow Christ's example, we must recruit additional apostles to further spread the good works of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul.

Yours in the Spirit of St. Vincent de Paul,

Thomas J. Abbate  
CEO & Executive Director

## DONORS AND PARTNERS

### THE 1948 LEGACY SOCIETY: A GIFT OF FAITH & LOVE

Your *Legacy of Faith* is the ultimate gift you can make to ensure your charitable wishes are carried out beyond your lifetime. Estate planning offers the opportunity to continue making an enduring statement of faith and leave an indelible mark on The Society of St. Vincent de Paul Long Island (SVDPLI).

You may be surprised that even the smallest of assets can be turned into gifts which will ensure the viability of The Society of St. Vincent de Paul in perpetuity. Assets not previously considered, such as a life insurance policy or appreciated stock, may be identified and used to make a generous gift.

The **1948 Legacy Society** was created to help us provide an ongoing stream of funding to enable our Vincentians to provide assistance to those in need. Through the 1948 Legacy Society, we acknowledge the philanthropic intent of individuals who have made provisions in their estate plans or by other means to benefit SVDPLI.

There are numerous planned giving opportunities that may be consistent with your philanthropic goals and personal financial situation. Working with your financial advisor, accountant or attorney is most often the best way to achieve your goals.

For more information on becoming a member of **The 1948 Legacy Society**, please contact Joanne Courtien, Director of Development at (516) 822-3132 ext. 106

*“Charity must never look to the past, but always to the future, because the number of its past works is still very small and the present and future miseries that it must alleviate are infinite.”*

Blessed Frédéric Ozanam

### SAVE THE DATE! THE 17TH ANNUAL GOLF CLASSIC



Preparation for the 17th Annual Golf Classic is in full swing! Join us on Monday, May 18th as we recognize John Gatto (St. Matthew-Dix Hills) as our “Volunteer of the Year” and Mutual of America as our “Business of the Year.” As always, the event will take place at the beautiful Tam O’Shanter Club in Glen Head, featuring gourmet food, exciting raffle prizes and giveaways galore!

For more information on sponsorships, registration and day-of activities, contact Erin Geier at 516-822-3132.

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Huntington  
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(631) 858-0380



# RAISING FUNDS & AWARENESS

## 11TH ANNUAL FRIENDS OF THE POOR WALK: HAND IN HAND, HEART TO HEART, HOPE ON THE MOVE

The Society of St. Vincent de Paul Long Island was once again blessed with beautiful weather for the 11th Annual Friends of the Poor 5K Walk/Run on Saturday, September 28th at Bethpage Community Park.

We were so grateful to have Most Rev. John O. Barres in attendance that morning, who shared his inspiring sentiments about helping those in poverty on Long Island. A special thank-you to our community partners who attended the event as well: Catholic Health Services, the Long Island Coalition for the Homeless, the Family and Children's Association, Catholic Charities Immigration Services, the St. John the Baptist Diocesan High School Media Club and the SVDP Conference at St. John's University.

Please save the date for this year's Friends of the Poor 5K Walk/Run on **Saturday, September 26, 2020.**



SVDPLI Accountant Noyma Reyes is assisted at registration by students from the St. John's University St. Vincent de Paul Conference.



Maureen Sanchez and her students from the St. John the Baptist Diocesan High School Media Club interviewed participants about their motivation for walking/running.



SVDPLI Director of Transitional Houses and Vincentian Services Advisor Paula Migliore poses with WBLI's Syke, who amped up our crowd that morning.



Gail Lessick warms up our crowd with a Zumba routine.

Cover: (Left to Right) Most Rev. John O. Barres, Bishop of the Diocese of Rockville Centre; Tom Abbate, SVDPLI CEO/Executive Director; Robert Meekins, SVDPLI Board President; SVDPLI Spiritual Advisor Msgr. Gerard Ringenback

## A TREMENDOUS THANK YOU TO OUR 2019 WALK/RUN SPONSORS

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## RAISING FUNDS & AWARENESS

### THE #GIVINGTUESDAY BED PROGRAM

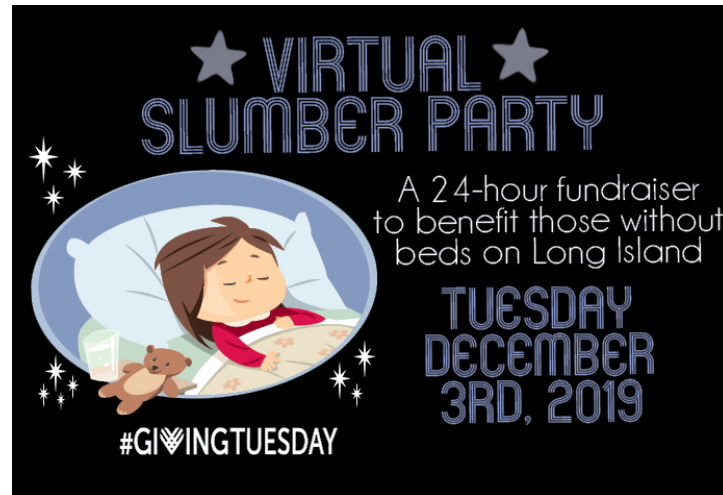
We all know what a poor night's sleep feels like. All day, you're in a fog, you can't concentrate, and you wait for the moment that you can go home and sink back into the comfort of your own bed. For some of our neighbors in need, this isn't an option. **For those without proper bedding, every night can feel like a poor night's sleep**, which can lead to serious cognitive, physical and emotional consequences.

With that in mind, SVDPLI launched the **Virtual Slumber Party** on December 3rd, 2019, as part of our Giving Tuesday campaign. Throughout the day, we shared statistics and success stories about our bed donation program, including the fact that SVDPLI thrift stores donate more than \$122,000 worth of bedding to neighbors in need every year.

How fortunate we were to have such a tremendous response from our supporters and matching donors! In just 24 hours, the Society raised more than \$19,000 to benefit those without proper bedding on Long Island.

A special thank you to The Howard and Barbara Farkas

Foundation, The Al and Peggy DeMatteis Family Foundation, Dr. John Franco, Bill Jennings, Sonia Burgos, Michele Walters and eleven anonymous donors, who served as our "Angel Investor" matching gift donors that day.



### RINGING IN CHRISTMAS CHEER WITH OUR ANNUAL TOY DRIVES



While the Christmas season is supposed to be a time for joy and hope, many of our neighbors in need are hit with struggle and hardship. In an attempt to alleviate some of that hardship, we proudly partnered with four different schools on Long Island and, with their help, collected hundreds of children's toys!

Throughout the months of November and December, students, faculty and their families donated brand new toys for the girls and boys who may otherwise go without. Trucks from our Garden City Park store were dispatched to pick up the donations and, upon collection, brought back to our Bethpage Office to be sorted and distributed to our Vincentian volunteers. Finally, the volunteers went back to their local parishes with their bounty of toys to present to families in need.

Thank you to the following schools and parishes for their participation: St. Mary's Elementary School (Manhasset), Island Trees Memorial Middle School (Levittown), St. Elizabeth Ann Seton School (Bellmore), St. Thomas the Apostle (West Hempstead), St. Joseph Elementary School (Garden City), Blessed Sacrament Church (Valley Stream), St. Mel Church (Flushing) and St. Gregory the Great Church (Queens).

## COUNCIL HAPPENINGS

### L.I. INNOVATION PARK HOSTS A WEEK LONG CLOTHING DRIVE

The Society of St. Vincent de Paul Long Island is proud to be a member of the Hauppauge Industrial Association (HIA-LI), a forum for businesses across Long Island that provides networking opportunities, and hosts educational workshops and other events to benefit its members.

During the week of October 7th, we were privileged that the HIA-LI hosted us for a "Truck Stop in the Park" event at the Long Island Innovation Park at Hauppauge—the second-largest industrial park in the United States after Silicon Valley! Throughout the week, our SVDPLI truck visited a new business each day, and stationed itself in the parking lot for both employees and the public to donate their new and gently-used clothes. Despite some difficult weather, the drive had an amazing turnout, and we received hundreds of bags of clothing!

A tremendous thank you to the businesses who took the helm and hosted our inaugural "Truck Stop in the Park" event: **Albrecht, Viggiano, Zureck & Company, P.C. (AVZ); People's Alliance Federal Credit Union; Teachers Federal Credit Union; Adelphi University; and Voxx International Corp.**

SVDPLI is always happy to partner with local businesses on all different types of clothing drives. For more information, contact Erin Geier at 516-822-3132.



(Clockwise from Top Left): Adelphi University; People's Alliance Federal Credit Union; Voxx International Corp.; Teachers Alliance Federal Credit Union



## VINCENTIAN FORMATION

### NEGOTIATING THE RELATIONSHIPS OF PARISH LIFE:

A FORMATION EVENT

St. Vincent de Paul once said, “Forbearance (or patient self-control, restraint, and tolerance) is the bond of friendship that unites hearts in sentiments and action not only among themselves but in Our Lord, in such a way that they enjoy great peace.”

It is with that same forbearance that we framed our discussion on the evening of October 29, 2019. At our formation event, The Three Cs: Negotiating the Relationships of Parish Life, we hoped to provide some insight into the relationships that affect the Conference on a regular basis—that with the Pastor, with each other, and with our fellow parishioners. When we are in right relationship with the Clergy, the Conference, and the Congregation, we can receive many gifts and rewards from each of these interactions. However, we know that sometimes, they are fraught with tension and frustration. Instead, we want to build trust and in our thoughts and words give people the benefit of the doubt. We should assume they are always well intentioned at heart.

We know that there is a continuum of experience with some of these challenges among our Conferences. Some resonated with the examples provided; others found them foreign. However, the audience approached the discussion with open minds and learned how to anticipate and address them should they occur. Msgr. Jerry Ringenback offered insight into the role of the Pastor and the many responsibilities the priest assumes when administering over the parish as well as ways to engage other parishioners in the Society. Central Council staff, Paula Migliore and Terri Zenobio, explored how fellowship is promoted in the Conference among differences of opinions, passion and zeal for the ministry, and genuine concern for our neighbors.

This program was specifically designed with the revitalization and sustainability of our Conferences in mind. Serving in Hope Module VI explains, “Effective Conferences show initiative”. As Vincentians, we look to ways we can creatively improve our efforts in order to fulfill the goal of our founder, Bl. Frederic Ozanam, “to become better and do a little good”. For more information on this formation event, please contact the Central Council at 516-822-3132.

### SS. CYRIL & METHODIUS CONFERENCE HOSTS A CHRISTMAS CRAFT FAIR

A little snow couldn't stop the brave parishioners of Ss. Cyril and Methodius R.C Church from helping their local SVDP Conference to spread some holiday cheer! On December 1st, Vincentians from the Conference hosted their inaugural “Christmas Gift & Craft Fair,” complete with fine art, gourmet snacks and raffles.

With the participation of more than 130 craft vendors, Ss. Cyril and Methodius Conference saw a packed house, and netted more than \$6,000 to help neighbors in need in the Deer Park and North Babylon area.

“All in all, it was very beneficial to us,” said Conference President Rosemarie Farquharson. “We hope that it translates into helping our neighbors during these hard winter months.”

Plans have already begun to continue this exciting new tradition in December of 2020.



## NEIGHBORS

### OUT OF THE FIRE: ONE NEIGHBOR'S STORY

Winter can be a perilous time for homeowners, struggling to keep their dwellings warm amidst the freezing temperatures and onslaught of snow. In fact, the U.S. Fire Administration estimates that winter home fires account for eight percent of all fires in the United States annually, leading to \$2 billion in property loss each year. In an instant, a faulty boiler, space heater or cooking equipment can set a home ablaze, suddenly reducing years of memories to ash. It is a tragedy that can affect anyone at any time.

Such was the case for Lisa\*, a single mother of seven children living in Mastic Beach. In 2017, with just two days until Christmas, the home she rented caught fire, sending her family into chaos—jumping from second story windows, scrambling for safety and trying to salvage the few items they could carry in their arms. Fortunately, every member of the family was able to make it out alive and unharmed, but in a matter of minutes, their home was engulfed in flames. Though firefighters did all they could, by the end of night, all that remained of the family's possessions were the clothes on their backs.

Lisa's fire was the top story on the evening news, and the community responded with a fury. Perhaps inspired by the Advent season, the family—now living in a hotel room—was flooded with restaurant gift cards, blankets and clothing from their neighbors in Mastic Beach. It was then that Lisa was first introduced to Michelle and Ron, two Vincentians from St. Jude Conference, who explained to her the mission of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul Long Island, and reminded Lisa that although her situation seemed drier, she had a strong network of people in her community that were there to support her.

With help from the Department of Social Services in Suffolk County, Lisa's family was able to find an apartment in the new year. But as time moved on and the news of their family tragedy died down, Lisa felt the support of the community waning. While she was grateful to have a roof over her family's head, she struggled to replace all of the items that had been lost in the fire. Remembering her warm conversation with Michelle and Ron, Lisa called the Conference at St. Jude for help in early 2019.

**Shortly thereafter, the Conference was able to provide Lisa and her family with a whole host of home furnishings, including beds, sofas, tables, dishes and kitchenware. But more than that, Michelle and Ron recognized how traumatic the fire had been for Lisa and her family, who were still struggling to cope with the loss of their old home and their irreplaceable family heirlooms. More than anything, Lisa recalls being thankful for Michelle and Ron's unwavering emotional support and for allowing her to grieve as they stood by her side.**

While a tragedy like a fire can befall anyone, it is only through a strong network of support from friends and neighbors that one can begin to emerge from the ashes. Lisa's story is a reminder about our Vincentians' true calling—to utilize the skills and talents with which they have been blessed in order to ease the suffering of our neighbors in need during their most trying times.



\*Name changed for confidentiality

## THANK YOU DONORS & SUPPORTERS!

### JUNE 2019 - NOVEMBER 2019

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 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 H. W. Wilson Foundation  
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Mr. and Mrs. Michael Fisenne

## TRIBUTE GIFTS

### JUNE 2019 - NOVEMBER 2019

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

James Abrams  
Beatrice Joanne Adams  
Elie Adummar  
Marie Agrusa  
Josephine & Victor Albanese  
Edward Alymer  
Anthony Ammirati  
Gaetana Ancona  
Alphonse A. Argo  
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Michael Reidlinger  
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Richard & Claudette Romano  
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Charlie Zanni  
Carmine Zanni  
Anne Zimmer  
Aunt Dottie

### ACT Monthly Donors Affecting Change Together.

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

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Michael Minutaglio  
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Paul McSloy  
Brenda Mohlin  
Carole Stuchbury  
Anthony Gervasi

### 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.

**Elsie Tomlin**  
St. Christopher,  
Baldwin

**Betty Gimber**  
Maria Regina,  
Seaford

**Joseph Koller**  
St. Thomas the Apostle,  
West Hempstead



#### Robert "Bob" Nesi (1953-2019)

The Society of St. Vincent de Paul Long Island continues to feel the loss of our longtime friend and supporter Bob Nesi. As a member of the SVDPLI golf committee since 2014, Bob was instrumental in making our annual golf classic a success, both individually and as a partner at DeMarco & Nesi LLC. Most recently, Bob lent his expertise to our Friends of the Poor 5K, helping spearhead the competitively timed run portion of the event. Throughout his life, Bob was a loving husband and father, a champion of various charitable causes, and a true hero to neighbors in need across Long Island. We will remember him always.



Society of St. Vincent de Paul  
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## Save These Dates

**March 21st: Annual Business Meeting**  
**March 25th-29th: Mid-Year Meeting**  
**April 4th: Ozanam Orientation**  
**April 18th: Northeast Regional Meeting**  
**April 26th: Mass of Thanksgiving**  
**May 18th: Golf Outing**

## OUR MISSION

A network of friends,  
inspired by Gospel values,  
growing in holiness and building  
a more just world  
through personal relationships  
with and service to people in need.

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