

# Society of St. Vincent de Paul

## Quarterly Newsletter

October 2026, Issue No. 11



### President's Note

Barb Norman,  
SVdP President

Dear Friends,

Thank you to all the members of St. Vincent de Paul who elected me to be your next president. I am deeply honored and hope to serve you in the tradition of those who came before me, following in the footsteps of our founders.

I have been a member of the St. Thomas Conference for 38 years. Over the decades, I have seen many changes in how we meet the needs of our neighbors, but our mission has always centered on face-to-face encounters with those who request our help. For 50 years, we ran a thrift store to provide clothes and household items. Today, our focus has shifted toward preventing evictions and utility shut-offs. When visiting our neighbors in their homes, we provide essential items, listen to their stories, and offer encouragement.

For 20 years, we maintained an office in the parish to assist those who came to St. Thomas looking for help. Since the COVID-19 shutdown, we have transitioned to working closely with social service agencies in Washtenaw County that serve clients in need.

The number of unhoused individuals and families struggling with financial insecurity is growing faster than our resources. Deciding whom we can help and whom we must turn away is a heavy challenge. As you can understand, prayer is the tool we rely on most in this work. We depend entirely on the guidance and support of the Holy Spirit.

I ask for the prayers of everyone at St. Thomas to keep our ministry strong, so that the work we do brings the hope of salvation to those we serve.

### Why am I a Vincentian

Serena Larson is a devoted Vincentian who does many of our Home Visits. Our neighbors open up to her warmth and her huge heart. Here is her story:



Jesus loves me in my poverty, weakness and suffering, and I am compelled to seek to love Him and the poor as a Vincentian. It is truly a beautiful and profound privilege to call and visit our neighbors in need in the midst of their struggles, often at times of great vulnerability, and to meet them there. As a Vincentian, I meet them with some material help and resources but, most of all, with the presence of Christ through listening, compassion and prayer. In this way, they know that they are not alone in the Body of Christ and that Jesus is helping them carry their burdens. These are holy moments of grace for both my neighbor and me, when darkness recedes with the light of Christ. The poor are full of His light, and Jesus loves them most especially. I am so blessed to serve the poor as a Vincentian and help lift them up so this light can shine more brightly for all of us. God bless.

### Quote of the Quarter

"A sure way for a Christian to grow rapidly in holiness is a conscientious effort to carry out God's Will in all circumstances and at all times."



**St. Vincent  
dePaul**



Based in the offices of St. Thomas Church, the Ann Arbor SVdP conference collaborates closely with local social workers to pinpoint individuals and families requiring assistance. Once identified, SVdP members assess the most effective aid, be it financial assistance, home visits, resource referrals, or other forms of support. Our members live out their vocation by providing companionship, encouragement, and prayers during challenging times for those in need.



## Blessing Bag Needs

When we visit our Neighbors in Need we prepare a Blessing Bag for them. The Blessing Bag contains items that can't be purchased with a SNAP card such as cleaning products, personal hygiene items and paper products.

Currently our pantry is very low on Kleenex, paper towels and hand lotion. We also need garbage bags, sandwich bags and Quart size bags. If you can find it in your heart to help please drop off your donation at the Parish Office with a note or tag that says "SVDP". You may also opt to contribute a gift card from Meijer or Amazon and we'll do the shopping.

We are so grateful for all our parishioners who contribute to help our Neighbors keep their families intact and functioning! God Bless all of you!

## Service to our Neighbors - Prayer Requests

During our visits to Neighbors in Need many ask us to pray for them and their intentions. We'd like to share some of them with you and ask you to join us by adding them to your prayer list:

- Holly and her 9 year-old autistic son ask for strength and faith in Jesus
- Carmen wants prayers for her parents' health issues
- Aaliyah for success in her new job, her daughter and peace
- Alex for financial stability and his brother

## Fellowship

November 26 - Annual Thanksgiving collection to help SVDP help others

November 29 - Advent Tree with ornaments to benefit our Neighbors in Need

## Thanksgiving Giving

One of the many traditions at St. Thomas is the annual Thanksgiving Collection to benefit our Neighbors in Need. If you wish to donate, we will have envelopes in the pews Thanksgiving weekend. If it's more convenient you can contribute online:

<https://giving.parishsoft.com/app/giving/stthomasann Arbor>

The Thanksgiving collection is the cornerstone of our work. For our Fiscal Year ended September 2026 we've assisted 444 households

that are home to 548 adults and 493 children and \$101,934 spent in direct assistance for rent, utilities, car maintenance, and medical needs. We also made 156 home visits delivering a Blessing Bag and offering our Neighbors friendship, hope and prayers.



We are experiencing a surge in requests for assistance and are currently running low on funds and are appealing, once again, to your generosity. Please prayerfully consider a donation to SVDP so we can continue to help our Neighbors in Need.

## **Be a G.E.M. (Gives Every Month)**

Every day families in our area and our Parish need help. Every day families turn to Vincentian volunteers for aid - aid that you can help deliver by giving monthly. When you become a GEM (Gives Every Month) you extend a hand of hope directly into the homes of those in need.

A GEM is committed to helping each and every day by making an online donation once a month. If you'd like to become an SVDP GEM please see the link above.

If you'd like to discuss becoming a GEM with a Vincentian, please contact: Carol Dick at [tdcd40@comcast.net](mailto:tdcd40@comcast.net)

**Are you being called to serve Christ as a volunteer for St. Vincent DePaul Society?**

**Contact us at [barbleenorman@gmail.com](mailto:barbleenorman@gmail.com) or 734 761-8606 extension #8."**

