



Parish Heartbeats: Stories of Faith In Action

“I want to serve and not be served.”

St. Vincent de Paul is a name familiar to Catholics, but what do you know about him and the Society that bears his name? As the patron saint of charitable causes, Vincent devoted his life to meeting the physical needs of the poor and downtrodden. His tireless devotion to securing the resources needed to help others is continued to this day in parishes around the world through the efforts of the St. Vincent de Paul Society.

Members of the Society are men and women who strive to grow spiritually by offering person-to-person service to individuals in need. That spirit is shared by many here at the St. Margaret Mary conference of the St. Vincent de Paul Society. Tony Dolinar is one of them. "I was volunteering at PADS when Chuck Hinds asked me to come to the St. Vincent de Paul monthly meetings and help out with visits to persons who come to the parish in need. Being a Catholic Christian, I felt this was something I could do to live out my faith. I want to serve and not be served. I thank God for all that He has given me, and now I want to give back."

For Frank Zaucha volunteering has always been central to his faith. As he sees it, "My faith has always motivated me in everything I do, so getting involved in church activities is second nature to me." His volunteer work with St. Vincent de Paul has helped him to better understand his faith and the hardships of those in need. "Working with St. Vincent de Paul has made me more aware of the message Jesus conveyed during his short time on earth; love and help your neighbor to the best of your ability. My visits with those who come to us for help have also made me aware of life and its many pitfalls."

In our parish, the Vincentians are the primary responders to anyone who comes seeking financial help in times of crisis. They not only help parishioners, but anyone who lives within our parish boundaries. Our St. Vincent de Paul volunteers offer tangible assistance to those in need on a direct, individual basis. It is this personalized involvement that makes the work of the Society unique. Aid may take the form of intervention, consultation, or often through direct dollar or in-kind service. An essential precept of the Society's work is

to provide help while conscientiously maintaining the confidentiality and dignity of those who are served.



Frank Zaucha (left) and Tony Dolinar (right) are two of the "Vincentians" who volunteer with our parish St. Vincent de Paul.

When Frank and I receive a call from the parish office we visit the home of the person(s) in need and discuss their situation," explains Tony. "Depending on the dollar amount, we sometimes tell them immediately if we can assist them. If there is some uncertainty or question that we need to review among ourselves, we tell them we will get back to them within a day and then inform them to what extent we can assist. Emergency situations, such as a shutoff notice of power, are usually taken care of immediately."

Our parish conference of the St. Vincent de Paul Society is always looking for more volunteers. All are welcome to attend the monthly meeting on the third Thursday of every month in Room 7 at 7:30 pm.

For more information about our parish conference contact Mark Oliphant at 630-548-4862. To make a donation send checks to our parish office made out to "St. Margaret Mary St. Vincent de Paul" or pick up a St. Vincent de Paul donation envelope which can be found on the cabinets in the narthex. One hundred percent of donations go to those in need.

- Tom Cordaro

Parish Heartbeats is an occasional bulletin column that celebrates the ways St. Margaret Mary parishioners make a difference in the lives of others.