



Vincentian Charities

Newsletter and Chronicle of Activities
SOCIETY OF ST. VINCENT de PAUL
Louisiana, Capital Region
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*Serving God's Poor in our
Community Since 1865*



Bishop Michael Duca and Diocesan Council President Kim Boudreaux induct Reginald Brown, Sr. into the St. Vincent de Paul Top Hat Hall of Fame. See more about this year's event below.

St. Vincent de Paul Honors Outstanding Volunteers

On October 22nd, at St. Joseph's Cathedral, Bishop Michael Duca and many of our St. Vincent de Paul Conference volunteers and supporters gathered to celebrate another year of dedicated Vincentian service to our less fortunate neighbors in our community. After a beautiful Mass liturgy and a wonderful homily from Bishop Duca, an awards ceremony was held to honor those volunteers who made a significant impact in the entire Capital Region. Bishop Duca recognized two Vincentians who have distinguished themselves through their ministry to our neighbors in need. Along with Bishop Duca, St. Vincent de Paul Council President Kim Boudreaux presented awards to some of our outstanding volunteers.

In 1990, we established the Top Hat Hall of Fame Award. The name of this award comes from Frederic Ozanam who visited the poor in his top hat. This is the highest award given by St. Vincent de Paul for exemplary service. This year it was decided to bestow this award on two Vincentians.

Frederic Ozanam founded the Society in Paris, France in 1833. Father Delacroix brought the St. Vincent de Paul ministry to Baton Rouge in 1865, and we have served the poor and homeless in our area since that time.

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WBRZ recently successfully held the Second Annual 2 The Pantry Campaign in support of our St. Vincent de Paul Dining Room. **We are so grateful to**

WBRZ Channel 2, Associated Grocers and Valluzzo Companies- McDonald's for continuing to support us in our mission throughout the Greater Baton Rouge area.

This campaign was just in time to help us with our upcoming Thanksgiving services. On Thanksgiving Day, our volunteers will serve turkey with all the trimmings to hundreds of people who, unfortunately, have little to celebrate. Many of them are living in homes where people have to skip meals or eat less to make ends meet. Some of them have no homes.

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In the photo above, mothers show their love for their children.

We All Count on Our Mothers

We all count on our mothers! Through the years, thousands of mothers come to our Bishop Ott

Sweet Dreams Shelter in desperation with their children tightly holding on. Sometimes they have a few possessions, they might even have an old car, but one thing they all have in common is love for their children.

Many of us have been blessed with extraordinary mothers. The vast majority of parents we serve are women who have lost everything but the title of Mom, and they have the same commitment to helping their children grow into the best they can be. We are here for all of the mothers (and fathers too) to help them learn how to express their love for their children by helping them to be the best they can be in school, and to focus on a life of work and success.

The mothers we help cannot even think about their children's future if they are sleeping in their cars, or even worse, sleeping outside. The parents we help count on us - for a safe place to call home while they put their lives back together. Our Bishop Ott Sweet Dreams Shelter is the first step to help mothers to break the cycle of homelessness.

Throughout this article, you see mothers with their children, one expectant mother and even one older mother. In these pictures, you see joy and happiness, but that's not how these mothers and children came into the shelter. The parents came in feeling embarrassed, and the children were frightened from all they had just experienced from being homeless.



Our services are transformational and allow those we serve to land in a good and stable destination. Our services begin with providing shelter and giving a hand-up of hope by providing case management which helps parents in understanding what caused their homelessness; how to be better parents; and assists them in taking the steps necessary to prevent a recurrence of the nightmare of homelessness.

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In this issue - A Picture of Progress with Chapel Project Preparation for Thanksgiving



Bishop Michael Duca and Diocesan Council President Kim Boudreaux induct Martha Cedotal into the St. Vincent de Paul Top Hat Hall of Fame.

St. Vincent de Paul Honors Continued from page 1

Martha Cedotal was honored with induction into the Top Hat Hall of Fame. She has been an active St. Vincent de Paul Conference member at St. Aloysius parish for many years. Several years ago, she stepped up to help our Council to establish and operate a new outreach effort – named the Ozanam Initiative. This effort provides services to our neighbors in need in the Diocese that live in an area that does not have an active conference ministry. The initiative reaches out to help families in need with rent, utilities and other critical daily living expenses. This effort has responded to many calls and have helped families avoid homelessness. Her commitment to serving those experiencing poverty and homelessness has made a real impact in our Diocese.

Retired Constable Reginald Brown, Sr. was honored with induction into the Top Hat Hall of Fame. In 1987, community volunteers came together to form Holiday Helpers to provide a Thanksgiving meal to those throughout our city. Holiday Helpers has touched thousands of lives through the years, and continues to do so today as a program of St. Vincent de Paul. Reginald has been called Mr. Thanksgiving in Baton Rouge because of his spirit of giving and caring for his community. He was the founder of Holiday Helpers and has been a St. Vincent de Paul leader and supporter for many years. Today, he serves as Board Chair of our St. Vincent de Paul Special Works Board of Directors. His dedication to St. Vincent de Paul and his neighbors in need is truly inspiring.

Martha and Reginald are long time St. Vincent de Paul volunteers who join many other exemplary Vincentians in our Top Hat Hall of Fame. We are so grateful for all they do for those experiencing poverty and homelessness in our area.

Save on Your Taxes and Help St. Vincent de Paul

Did you know that if you are 70½ years old or older, you can give up to \$100,000 from your IRA directly to St. Vincent de Paul without paying income taxes on the money? The transfer does not generate taxable income or a deduction, so you'll benefit even if you don't itemize your deductions. If you haven't taken your required minimum distribution this year, your IRA charitable rollover gift can satisfy all or part of that requirement. If your spouse is 70 ½ years old or older, they can also give up to \$100,000 from their IRA. If you have questions, please contact Michael Acaldo at macaldo@svdpbr.com or call (225) 383-7837, ext. 0.



Michael Valluzzo of Valluzzo Companies – McDonald's and Valluzzo Team Members at 10011 Dawanadele Avenue McDonald's location pose for a quick photo during a major community food drive for St. Vincent de Paul. Taylor Rubach and WBRZ Channel 2 covered the event. See more details below.

2 The Pantry Continued from page 1

This year, our volunteers will be serving a Thanksgiving meal at our Dining Room and the Holiday Helpers' tradition at the River Center. We will also serve at St. Gerard Catholic Church and the McKinley High School Alumni Center.

Sometimes, we are overwhelmed by the number of people who turn to St. Vincent de Paul for the nourishment they need. Last year, we served 255,000 meals, and are on track to greatly exceed that number this year. But these people are not numbers – they are real people in desperate need. We see their faces; we hear their stories. They are struggling to survive and must rely on the kindness of others to help them through this difficult time in their lives.

We are gearing up right now for this effort, and we are still collecting critical items we need for our holiday efforts. Visit us at svdpbr.org to see an updated list of our food and supply needs. The meals prepared are served by our volunteers with love and compassion. Financial support is also needed to make these meals possible. Gifts can be sent to St. Vincent de Paul's Thanksgiving Efforts, P.O. Box 127, Baton Rouge, LA 70821 or give online at svdpbr.org.



From left to right, Megan Wilson, Marketing Director McDonald's Valluzzo Companies; Michael Acaldo, SVDP; Roeshawn Peters, Marketing Manager Associated Grocers; and Taylor Rubach, Multimedia Journalist WBRZ Channel 2. This was another successful drive for St. Vincent de Paul's efforts, and every item donated was critical as we continue to see large numbers of people needing a helping hand-up!

Calling all Cars

At St. Vincent de Paul, we rely on vehicle and boat donations to help us fund critically needed charitable programs. Thanks to the generosity of people throughout our community, these donations of cars, boats, motorcycles, RV's, tractors, riding lawnmowers and jet skis translate into dollars for the services we provide. If you'd like to donate a car, boat or recreational vehicle, give us a call at (225) 383-7837, extension 204, or go online at svdpbr.org.



In September, Society of St. Vincent de Paul members from throughout the U.S. met in St. Louis, Missouri to work on national initiatives to help our neighbors in need. Pictured from left to right, Ralph Middlecamp, National President St. Vincent de Paul; Tony Guaglirado, Eastern District Council President Baton Rouge Diocese; Kim Boudreaux, Diocesan Council President Baton Rouge; and Michael Acaldo, Baton Rouge CEO. Pictured in the background is a mosaic of Blessed Frederic Ozanam which is a replica of the mosaic in the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception. The National Council gave this as a gift to Ralph Middlecamp as his term as National President ended in September.

We All Count on Our Mothers Continued from page 1

This year we will provide over 17,000 guest nights of service to hundreds of women and children who have nowhere else to turn for help.



As the Thanksgiving and Christmas Holidays approach, we will be there for all the mothers and children that need our help. First, we ask you to use the below Sweet Dreams prayer card to pray for the families we serve. Second, if you are able to give at this time, we ask you to consider making a gift by mail or at svdpbr.org.



We thank you for your past support which enabled us to turn the nightmare of homelessness into sweet dreams of a brighter future for mothers (a few fathers too!) and children in our community.

Sweet Dreams Prayer

*Lord God, Giver of Life,
Fill us with your Spirit.*

*Use our hands to shelter the homeless;
Use our hearts to enable sweet dreams;
Use our voices to end homelessness.
May our actions improve life for others
And reflect your abundant love.
Through Christ our Lord, AMEN.*



Preparation for Thanksgiving

It's hard to believe that Thanksgiving is just a few days away. Check out our upcoming newsletter where we will highlight the Unified Jewish Congregation of Baton Rouge, whose Turkey Train is a critical part of our Thanksgiving efforts. We will also highlight all of the wonderful people who work to ensure that our community reaches even more people who are hungry on Thanksgiving. Please say a prayer for our efforts.



***Help Us
Help Pat!***

The Society of St. Vincent de Paul and WBRZ-Channel 2 invite you to put a warm smile on children's faces and warm their hearts through Pat's Coats for Kids. By donating gently used coats you can help kids, who will be grateful to be protected from suffering from the cold this winter. Our Distribution Center will deliver your coats to them. Our thanks to Pat, who for the past 35 years has touched the lives of so many vulnerable children through this effort. Together we can keep children warm in their time of need with compassion. Please keep this effort and the children we serve in your prayers. To find out more, visit WBRZ.com.

A Picture of Progress...



Progress is being made on our St. Vincent de Paul Campus as a tree removal service is removing an old diseased tree. This makes room for our St. Louise de Marillac Chapel. We have finished our final plans, and this project will be underway soon. See our upcoming newsletters for more information.

Donor Advised Funds Are A Great Way to Give

If you have a Donor Advised Fund, please consider making a gift to St. Vincent de Paul. Simple and convenient, your Donor Advised Fund can make a significant impact in the lives of our neighbors in need. By including St. Vincent de Paul as part of your Donor Advised Fund, you can continue your generosity of love and help us to keep hope alive during these challenging times. If you have any questions about making a donor advised fund gift, please call Michael Acaldo at (225)383-7837, ext. 0 or email at macaldo@svdpbr.com.

3 Simple Steps to Make a Gift to St. Vincent de Paul

- 1) Recommend a Donor Advised Fund grant to St. Vincent de Paul to support our mission of helping our neighbors in need.
- 2) You can recommend your grant/gift by logging onto your Donor Advised Fund account or call your account representative. There are over 1,000 different fund sponsors (Baton Rouge Area Foundation, Fidelity, Schwab, etc.) across the country.
- 3) After you've logged into your Donor Advised Fund account, use our EIN (Tax ID #) number below and place it into the appropriate charity line, and make your gift.

Our EIN (Tax ID #): 72-0646911

Our Legal Title: Particular Council of St. Vincent de Paul of Baton Rouge, Louisiana

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 127, Baton Rouge, LA 70821-0127

Society of St. Vincent de Paul

P. O. Box 127

Baton Rouge, LA 70821-0127

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U.S. Postage
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Baton Rouge, LA
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Sweet Memories of Helping So Many Mothers in Need!

Tears filled my eyes, as I thought about this year's Sweet Dreams effort. It's hard to believe 22 years have gone by since we opened our Bishop Ott Sweet Dreams Shelter to provide hope and sweet dreams to thousands of women and children who had no place to call home. In this economy of rising rents

and costs, homelessness is becoming more and more common for families with young children.

Why was I crying about this year's effort? My mother passed away just a few months ago after a long battle with dementia. I think my mother was great! How blessed I was to have a mother and father that I could count on! I have witnessed thousands of mothers come to us in desperation with their children. Sometimes they have a few possessions, sometimes they might even have an old car, but one thing they all have in common is love for their children.

Just as I did, the children we serve love and count on their mothers. My mother was blessed with a wonderful mother, so she knew how to express that love by making sure I learned all of the most important lessons in life. And although those lessons are too many to list, they can all be summarized by the simple lessons of always being full of faith, doing your best in school and work, and being good to others. The mothers we serve have a commitment to helping their children grow into the best they can be. We are here for all of the mothers (and fathers too), to help them learn how to express their love for their children by helping their children be the best they can be in school and focus on a life of work and success.

St. Vincent de Paul continues to make a difference in the lives of mothers, children and all of those most in need – but it has certainly been a challenge. The beds at our Sweet Dreams Shelter and Men's shelters are full. The lines at our dining room are long. Our community pharmacy is saving lives. Our thrift stores continue to give away a tremendous amount of much needed clothing and household items.

We have been able to provide these services because of the continued support of so many of you. I wish I was in a position to report that the outlook for the remainder of 2023 and 2024 was better, but it's not. Our shelters provided over 26,000 guest nights of shelter last year, and will exceed 30,000 guest nights (men, women, children and families) this year, and our Dining Room served over 255,000 meals and will serve well over 260,000 this year. Last year, we served large numbers during the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays, and we anticipate exceeding those numbers this year.

On behalf of the thousands of individuals, families, and children we are blessed to serve, we want to express our heartfelt gratitude for your support. Because of your investment in our work, we have been here to respond to provide compassion and hope to those in need. Thank you! -- **Michael J. Acaldo, President & CEO**