



† A VINCENTIAN VOICE †

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St. Louise de Marillac

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 their hands to us,**

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The Way of the Cross

The Fourteen Stations of the Cross

Christ condemned to death
 The cross is laid upon him
 His first fall
 He meets His Blessed Mother
 Simon of Cyrene is made to bear the cross
 Christ's face is wiped by Veronica
 His second fall
 He meets the women of Jerusalem
 His third fall
 He is stripped of His garments
 His crucifixion
 His death on the cross
 His body is taken down from the cross
 Christ is laid in the tomb

Corporal Works of Mercy

Feed the hungry.
 Give drink to the thirsty.
 Clothe the naked.
 Visit the sick.
 Shelter the homeless.
 Visit the imprisoned.
 Bury the dead.

Spiritual Works of Mercy

Admonish sinners.
 Instruct the ignorant.
 Counsel the doubtful.

A MINUTE MEDITATION



A Reflection From Father Ken York, Spiritual Moderator

A sick man turned to his doctor as he was preparing to leave the examination room and said, "Doctor, I am afraid to die. Tell me what lies on the other side." Very quietly, the doctor said, "I don't know." "You don't know? You, a Christian man, do not know what is on the other side?"

The doctor was holding the handle of the door; On the other side came a sound of scratching and whining, and as he opened the door, a dog sprang into the room and leaped on him with an eager show of gladness.

Turning to the patient, the doctor said, "Did you notice my dog? He's never been in this room before. He didn't know what was inside. He knew nothing except that his master was here, and when the door opened, he sprang in without fear. I know little of what is on the other side of death, but I do know one thing...

I know my Master is there and that is enough.'

A MESSAGE FROM OUR COUNCIL PRESIDENT...

Dear Friends,

God has given us a task-to serve the poor and to do so with compassion, understanding and love. This call to serve takes on special meaning during lent and allows us to grow closer to our suffering Lord through the sufferings of the poor.

In this ever-changing world, we need to work towards our goal of new membership to continue the foundation we have laid so we can carry on our outreach to those in need. We must evangelize others to help us in God's mission of mercy.

During this Holy Season of Lent, I am asking you to please pray for the Society of St. Vincent de Paul that we may continue to strengthen and expand our programs and charity. **Each of you**, as a member of your own Conference, also has an important responsibility as a member of the Belleville Council. I am asking that you please support the Belleville Council Society of St. Vincent de Paul so that we may continue to grow and ensure that the spirit of St. Vincent de Paul lives on into the future.

~Peace to you, Joe



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Belleville Council
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COUNCIL NEWS

**ST. ELIZABETH ANN SETON
CONFERENCE**

The Belleville Council would like to congratulate our newest conference! The recently formed Elizabeth Ann Seton Conference is made up of members from SS. Peter & Paul Parish in Waterloo, St. Patrick Parish in Tipton, St. Augustine of Canterbury in Hecker, St. Mary in Valmeyer, & Immaculate Conception in Maddonville. Judy Rebholz is President. Their Conference attended an Ozanam Orientation in February. Please keep them and their new ministry in your prayers.

SISTER ANN'S ANIMALS

Sister Ann Connolly has taken on a new project since retiring last year~she is crocheting wonderful stuffed animals for St. Vincent de Paul. Since Christmas, these cuddly toys have raised more than \$500 for our ministries! They come in all colors, sizes and shapes and are available for any donation. Please contact the S.V.d.P. office to pick up your very own-they make a great gift! THANK YOU SISTER ANN & KEEP ON CROCHETING!

QUILT BINGO RAISED NEARLY \$3,000

Thank you to all who helped in **any** way to make our first Quilt and Afghan Bingo a success! The event netted nearly \$3,000 for our ministries and we are so grateful!

CHARITABLE GIVING

“GIFT & MEMORIAL FUND” 

“LOAVES & FISHES”

Donations (payable to SVDP) can be mailed to:

St. Vincent de Paul Office PO Box 3310

East St. Louis, Illinois 62203

The Council has recently completed an informative **Charitable Giving Brochure** that is available by contacting the S.V.d.P. Office. Help spread the word!

**PLEASE REMEMBER THE
SOCIETY OF ST. VINCENT DE PAUL
IN YOUR ESTATE PLANNING.**
**We have an unwavering commitment to
serving the poor.** For more information, please
contact Joe Hubbard at 618-398-5616


COUNCIL PROGRAMS

Please Contact Pat Hogrebe at 618-799-8505 for more information or to schedule an appointment.


“LILLI” Low Interest Loans for the Low Income fosters fiscal accountability and responsibility by offering loans up to \$300 at a low 4% interest rate. This is not a rental or utility assistance program but rather seeks to

“POP” (Prescription Outreach Program) provides generic medications for chronic diseases through a plan being administered through *Express Scripts* in St. Louis.

GEAR UP (A Partnership of SVDP & Poverty Services) provides free clothing for men seeking job opportunities.

 **JOBLINK** published weekly on the S.V.d.P. website. Click JOBLINK for employment opportunities.

BUDGETING CLASS & JOB SKILLS WORKSHOP

Call to register 394-3568 ext 2 

March 25- SVDP Office 5:30 PM

April 8- SVDP Office 5:30 PM

April 22- SVDP Office 5:30 PM

March 20- Interfaith Pantry 11AM at 205 W. B Street

Last Thursday/month 5:15 PM Cahokia Library

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

Phone _____ Class Date _____

MAIL TO: SVdP Budgeting & JOBSKILLS Workshop

PO Box 3310, East. St. Louis, IL 62203

Conferences are encouraged to refer clients to
Budgeting/JOBSKILLS



LOOK AT OUR WEBSITE

www.svdpsouthil.org



COUNCIL SPECIAL WORKS

MOBILE SOUP KITCHEN

A Message from Gerry Hasenstab

The mobile kitchens have been very busy this winter. In December the Ford Bus (#3) was retrofitted to be the "Santa Bus". This is always a fun time. The seats and tables are removed and in their place is a train board that has three trains on it and a Christmas tree. The interior had snowflakes and winter scenes on the walls and windows. These were supplied by members of the Mobile Kitchen Committee. There are singing stuffed toys. One sings gospel music; another plays jazz Christmas carols, while still others play medleys of Christmas songs. After the kids see the trains and the moving toys they get to see the big guy and get their picture taken with him. They are then given a stocking with small toys and coloring books. The stockings were donated by the employees of the Bank of O'Fallon. They made over 500 stockings for us this year.

All the while the Santa bus was rolling the other bus #4 was faithfully going out in the evenings feeding the hungry on its normal schedule.

During January and February the buses were called upon to be heating stations a few times. They went out on two weekends to give hot food and a place to warm up for several people who live outside or in buildings with no heat. Only three nights were lost to bad weather.

A major repair was done in February. The heater on bus #3 went out and needed to be replaced. This was an expensive repair but we count on the generosity of our supporters to help us keep the Kitchens rolling. In March bus #4 will have its floor replaced. The bulk of this work will be done by volunteers. It should be up and running in a couple of months.

As usual we can still use some bus drivers. The minimum requirements are: CDL class B license. It would be great if the driver has the passenger endorsement and be air brake certified. These are not necessary but make life much easier.

COSGROVE'S SOUP KITCHEN

Cosgrove's Soup Kitchen would like to extend our sincerest thanks to everyone for all your food and in-kind donations! We fondly refer to you as our "KITCHEN KEEPERS" because you are truly

KEEPING OUR KITCHEN GOING! May God bless you.

S.V.D.P. THRIFT STORE

The St. Vincent de Paul Thrift Store is "Sprucing up for Spring" and looking for gently used items to provide merchandise for our store. Our Thrift Store is a vital ministry for not only East St. Louis and its collar communities, but also throughout the diocese. People come from all around Southern Illinois and we are able to provide much needed items because of your generous donations! We are always in great need of furniture, appliances and household items! The store is open from 8am to 3pm Monday through Friday and from 9am-noon on Saturdays. Please call 618-398-3568 (extension 1) if you would like a pick-up of your donation. The store manager, Michael, will call you back to schedule a convenient time.

THRIFT STORE IS NOW ONLINE!

The St. Vincent de Paul Thrift Store is now online and we are in need of nice quality, smaller merchandise! If you have anything to donate, please call the SVdP office at 618-398-3568 x2 (Please leave message) WE APPRECIATE YOUR DONATIONS!

VOLUNTEER WITH S.V.d.P.

Become a part of something worthwhile! Volunteer with the Society of St. Vincent de Paul where together we **do make a difference!** Call Pat at 618-799-8505 to discuss volunteering opportunities!

Voicing justice

Offering hope

Lifting hearts

Understanding & cooperation

Nurturing spirits

Teamwork to build community

Empathy & compassion

Easing burdens

Respecting life

Solutions for the future



**THANK YOU TO ALL OUR
VOLUNTEERS~WE TRULY
APPRECIATE YOU!**

Repentance...



Reconciliation

A Brief History and Definition of Lent

The first reference to Lent as a period of forty days preparation occurs in the teachings of the First Council of Nicea in AD 325. By the end of the fourth century, a Lenten period of forty days was established and accepted in the Church. Pope St. Leo (d. 461) exhorts the faithful to abstain that they may “fulfill with their fasts the Apostolic institution of the forty days.”

In its early development Lent quickly became associated with the sacrament of baptism, since Easter was the great baptismal feast. Those who were preparing to be baptized participated in the season of Lent in preparation for the reception of the sacrament of baptism. Eventually, those who were already baptized considered it important to join these candidates preparing for baptism in their preparation for Easter. The customs and practices of Lent, as we know them today, soon took hold.

Adapted from The Essential Lenten Handbook.

“Lent is a retreat that the Church gives us in order to re-focus on what should be first in our lives. The purpose of Jesus’ life was to glorify the Father and save the world. . . Lent is not first a time of giving up but a time to re-choose to be the victim of Christ, the Lamb. It is a time to live the Beatitudes.” (Fr. Dominique, OSJ)

“Each year, Lent offers us a providential opportunity to deepen the meaning and value of our Christian lives, and it stimulates us to rediscover the mercy of God so that we, in turn, become more merciful toward our brothers and sisters. In the Lenten period, the Church makes it her duty to propose some specific tasks that accompany the faithful concretely in this process of interior renewal: these are prayer, fasting & almsgiving.”

(Pope Benedict XVI)

A lot was achieved through the death of this Sacrificial Lamb. The greatest achievement of all, was the provision for our sins to be taken away. And not only our sins, but the sins of the whole world (1 John 2:2).

The following meditation from the March 2010 Issue of *Magnificat* embodies the heart of the work of The Society of St. Vincent de Paul...

COMPASSION

Compassion walks the city
And listens for uncertain feet
That seek a home they cannot find
Because the heart that leads is blind.
Compassion holds a steady light
To show the way through chill of night
And takes the homeless by the hand
To lead them to a warmer land.

Compassion walks where life is hard,
Where eyes are blank and faces marred
By pain too great to understand.
Compassion is the Shepherd’s name:
Who from the halls of heaven came
To travel landscapes bare and bleak
For those that only love would seek.

Compassion does not tire or sleep
But walks wherever sufferers weep
Through ages past and still to come,
Until the world is gathered home
To rest at last where Mercy reigns
And heals all ills and stills all pains.
And there Compassion’s walk will cease,
Where God is all, and all is peace.

FASTING FOR LENT

A Lenten fast usually involves abstaining from food and drink while focusing on prayer and spiritual reflection. There are also other ways we can fast in order to grow closer to God. Here are a few ideas:

Fast from watching TV one night a week so that you can spend time on a Lenten practice.
Fast from watching one movie during Lent and give the money and the time on service to others.
Fast from using foul language and put-downs and begin affirming others with positive speech.
Fast from purchasing new things like clothing, music, and magazines; instead make a donation for charity.
Fast from holding resentments - practice forgiveness.
Fast from gossiping and dishonesty and begin the practice of honesty and truthfulness.
Fast from a favorite snack food or drink and set aside the money you would have to spend on them for charity.



Fast from being angry or upset with people who have hurt & offended you and pray for the courage to forgive.

Fast from feeling guilty or angry with yourself; instead, remember God's great love for you.

THE SACRIFICE FLOWER

My mother, who was a native American, taught me all kinds of wonderful ways to pray when I was a child. A very special one was the Sacrifice Flower prayer, which she adapted from the heritage of her people, the Seneca Iroquois.

She taught me to say this prayer when I was feeling low or had a burden I wanted to lifted. Later, I learned to use it for happy occasions and when I had a special request I wanted to make of God.

Like all mothers, she could always tell when something was bothering me. She'd say to me, "All right, Jo, I think it's time you went outside and find yourself a Sacrifice Flower. It's time you get your burden lifted from your heart and give it to God.

So, I'd go looking for a flower. Sometimes Mother would go out with me to help me with my flower or talk about what was bothering me. Sometimes, too, she had something weighing on her heart and she would find a Sacrifice Flower of her own.

The flower was supposed to be special, one that meant a lot to me. As a girl, I picked dandelions, hollyhocks, and daisies. So, I usually picked one of them. In addition, Mother said I was to be very careful with the flower because it had been selected for a holy purpose. I lovingly cupped it in my hands so nothing would happen to it.

When I got home, I did as my mother instructed and told the flower what burden I wanted lifted and taken to God. How was the flower to do this? Remember, this was a Sacrifice Flower, one that was going to die. The idea was that as life went out of the flower, it would carry my prayer to God.

That meant, of course, the flower was not to be placed in water. I had a shelf in my room that I liked to use for my Sacrifice Flower because it was sort of private and yet I could see it as I went in and out.

Everytime I saw the flower, I could see it giving its life for me and I could imagine my prayer being carried to the Lord. That was true even when I was elsewhere and was just thinking about the flower. Either way, I had a strong sense my prayer was being heard. My flower and I were in union.

Sometimes it took a few days, sometimes a couple of weeks. When the flower finally died, I would take it outside, say goodbye to it, and thank it for giving its life for me and for delivering my prayer. Then I would bury it so it would have a chance at a new life, and I always hoped it would come back as an even nicer flower.

In this simple, graphic way my mother taught me how uplifting prayer can be. And, in the process, she taught me about life, too--how basic both dying and rising are to living and how important it is that we become Sacrifice Flowers for each other.

--By Jose Hobday

THE CROSS ROOM

The young man was at the end of his rope. Seeing no way out, he dropped to his knees in prayer. "Lord, I can't go on," he said. "I have too heavy a cross to bear." The Lord replied, "My son, if you can't bear its weight, just place your cross inside this room. Then open another door and pick any cross you wish." The man was filled with relief. "Thank you, Lord," he sighed, and did as he was told. As he looked around the room he saw many different crosses; some so large the tops were not visible. Then he spotted a tiny cross leaning against a far wall. "I'd like that one, Lord" he whispered. And the Lord replied, "My son, that's the cross you brought in."

-Unknown



**THE WISDOM OF
BLESSED FREDERIC OZANAM**

“You have amongst your children many who are rich, Reverend Father-oh! what a salutary lesson, how strengthening for those soft young hearts, to show them the poor, to show them Jesus Christ, not in pictures painted by great masters or on altars resplendent with gold and light, but to show them Jesus Christ and His wounds in the persons of the poor!”

Prayer: Jesus, crucified and risen, grant me the grace to be ever more compassionate as I behold your wounds in the wounded poor. Give me the gift of an understanding heart. Grant me the grace to see you in the faces of my fellow human beings, especially in the faces of the poor, sick, lonely, and abandoned.

Taken from Praying with Frederic Ozanam;
Companions for the Journey