

Our Lady of Mt. Carmel
 2121 S. Rural Rd.
 Tempe, AZ 85282
 Phone: 480-966-1974
 Email: thieme@asu.edu



The Vincentian

Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Conference

Winter 2009

Contents

Thanksgiving Food Drive 2009 1

Adopt-A-Family Christmas Program 2009 1-2

“I Have Faith” 2

Annual Report 2008-09 2

From the President’s Pen 3

Meet our Volunteers: Katherine Scherrer 3

Two Sides of Tempe 4

Thanksgiving Food Drive 2009

We would like to thank all of you who contributed to our Thanksgiving Food Drive. Your donations of food items allowed us to provide **Thanksgiving Food Boxes to 300 families** in our community. Many parishioners volunteered their time on Saturday, November 21. With so many helpers, distributing these boxes took less than two hours. Delivering the food boxes to needy families was a fulfilling and often eye-opening experience to those who took time out of their busy schedules.

We also appreciate the dedication of the **Cub Scouts** who collected nearly \$1,600 for the food drive. In addition, as part of the **Million Can Crusade**, students at **Corona del Sol High School** in Tempe conducted a food drive on October 26th and collected 36 boxes of canned food for the OLMC SVdP conference.



SVdP volunteers Don Garvey (l.), Mike Garvey, and Brandon Kral accepting a food donation from parishioner Dennis Ricardo (r.)



Corona del Sol High School students who participated in the Million Can Crusade

Adopt-A-Family 2009

The OLMC conference of St. Vincent de Paul continues to maintain a flourishing Christmas “Adopt-A-Family” Program. Under the direction of **Mike Murphy**, we hope to again be able to make Christmas brighter for about 100 families. It is not too late to sign up as a **sponsor**. Please pick up

a brochure at the back of OLMC church.

One of last year’s sponsors described her experience in this way:

“I am a single mother with two children, ages 8 and 5. I really wanted my children to experience the true meaning of giving. Not just money, but time as well. We met our

Continued on page 2

Adopt-A-Family 2009 *(cont. from p. 1)*



family on the 23rd, and it was the best experience for my children and me. The family was very grateful. The mother, a lovely young woman, wrapped us in her arms and cried so hard. Back in the car, my daughter said this is something that she wants to do every year. This was our best Christmas ever and most assuredly the best gift we have ever received. Merry Christmas, and God bless you for all you do for these families.”

“I Have Faith”

(by Adelheid Thieme)

Before visiting families to provide a food box or financial assistance, we usually call from the St. Vincent de Paul office to see whether they will be home. When I called Rita, who had requested food and help with her electric bill, she responded in a friendly voice, “I will certainly be home. I don’t go anywhere these days. The door will be wide open.”

It was getting dark when we arrived at Rita’s home, a humble trailer in a mobile home park. The door was indeed wide open, and the only light in the trailer was a dim night lamp. Lying on a couch, Rita asked us to come in and apologized for being unable to get up and help us bring in the food boxes. She then told us her story.

As a result of Arizona’s budget problems, she had lost her job after working as a Family Support Specialist for CPS for 27 years. Rita was not sure if and when she would find another job. In addition to the problems caused by her unemployment, she had developed a medical problem that had required major surgery. She had depleted her savings, but

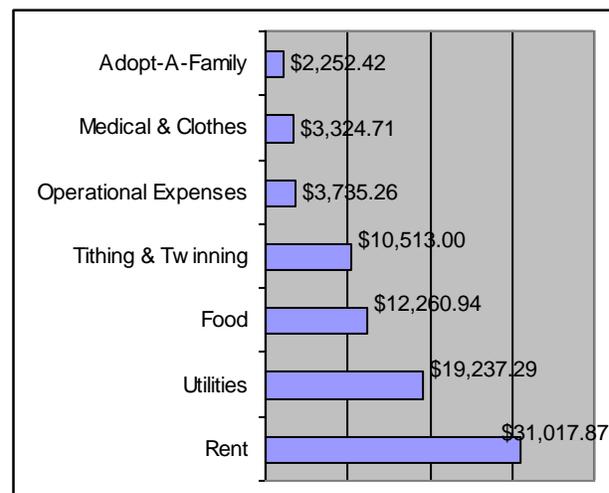
her son, a student in the Business School at ASU, managed to partially support the family through his part-time job. Then there were her two adoptive sons, ages 15 and 16, whom she had met through her job and to whom she had given a permanent loving home. Money was tight, and she could not afford air conditioning. Therefore, she usually left the door wide open to have air circulate through the trailer.

Even though she was still in pain after the surgery and spent her days immobilized on the couch, Rita sounded cheerful as she said, “I cannot complain. I am glad that I am still alive, and I have three wonderful sons who take good care of me. They cook for me and keep me company as much as possible. I have been blessed throughout my life, and I have faith that the Lord will see me through.”

We paid her electric bill so that she would have one less worry on her mind. When we left, we felt truly blessed.

Annual Report 2008-09

(for fiscal year ending on Sept. 30, 2009)



Total: \$82,341.49

From the President's Pen



My name is **Albert Marquez**. Together with my wife, **Susana Marquez**, I was recently elected to be the new co-president of the St. Vincent de Paul

Society at OLMC. My wife and I look forward to serving the many needy families in our parish and hopefully continuing to receive the support of our donors who have helped us faithfully for many years.

Part of St. Vincent de Paul's mission is not only to help the needy, but also to ask for the Lord's guidance in our work. I like to pray and meditate when I walk. The purest form of prayer, I feel, is to give thanks for the work we are allowed to do in His name and ask our Lord to help us serve our clients with respect and humility.

Perhaps the hardest part of our ministry is to find the right words when we need to explain to our callers that our resources are insufficient to meet their needs. At first, my prayers were to ask for the right words to explain why we could not help. Later, it occurred to me that the proper prayer is to ask for the right words to assist them and to help them find additional resources.

Even though we often cannot solve all of their immediate problems, we make a home visit, discuss ways of helping, and pray with them. Our simple visit lets them know that someone cares. We include our donors in our prayers because our clients are well served through them.

Meet our Volunteers



Katherine Scherrer, our new **Treasurer**, is not a stranger to serving the poor. For many years, prior to joining our St. Vincent de Paul conference at OLMC and responding to phone messages from our clients, she used to be a member of Paz de

Cristo and deliver food to migrants. "I have always felt a strong connection with the homeless and needy," she says. "Knowing that I am doing my part to relieve suffering fills me with peace."

As Treasurer, Katherine will be using the skills she has developed throughout her professional career. After taking a series of accounting classes at Mesa Community College, she served as comptroller for a franchise corporation. She is now working with her husband, Michael, a Certified Public Accountant.

In her spare time, Katherine enjoys visiting with her three adult children and joining her eight grandchildren in their activities. Attending football, soccer, and basketball games keeps her busy, but she still finds time to be part of the "Iron Maidens" at OLMC, who take care of altar linens. She also enjoys crocheting and reading spiritual literature.

We are grateful that Katherine has agreed to serve as Treasurer. It is a time-consuming job that requires a lot of attention to detail. Her background in accounting will be invaluable as she will record and monitor the finances of our conference over the next three years.



Two Sides of Tempe, AZ

The pictures on the left side of this page represent what most of the residents of Tempe perceive our city to be: beautiful condos and apartments around the Town Lake and expensive homes in the south Tempe area.



Compare those dwellings with what those of us who volunteer for St. Vincent de Paul see on the right side: crowded trailer parks, unkempt apartments and small single family houses that are often without air conditioning or heating.



The right side continues to need our help. There is a great need, especially now in the present-day economy, for help with utilities, rent, and emergencies.



Will you help?

