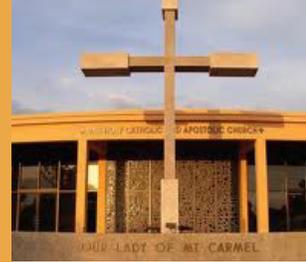




THE Vincentian

Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Conference December 2015



visit us online at <http://olmctsvincentdepaul.weebly.com>

Thanksgiving Food Drive 2015



The Abeyta family came to celebrate Thanksgiving by helping others and to give thanks for their deceased mother, Sabina, who supported the SVdP conference during her life.



The Ricciardi family participated in the SVdP food drive to pay forward the blessings God has given to their family.

Contents

- 1 Thanksgiving Food Drive 2015
- 2 A Life Saver for Greg, David, and Abraham
- 3 Annual Financial Report
- 3 In Memory of Paul Kelley
- 4 Partnering with the United Food Bank

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As in previous years, the parishioners of OLMC came together on **Saturday, November 21**, to take turkeys and food boxes to 230 families in our community who would otherwise have a hard time affording a festive meal. The joy of helping others can be clearly seen in a slide show accessible on our website at

<http://olmctsvincentdepaul.weebly.com/photos.html>

Here is what some of our parishioners shared about this experience:

- I will get the satisfaction of helping out families who need food. (D.D.)
- Great experience for our girls to learn the lesson of giving, helping, and appreciating all the wonderful gifts in their lives. (R.D.)
- We love to serve and meet people. (D.V.B.)
- To honor my mother who supported her local food bank in Chattanooga. Today would be her 85th birthday. (C.R.)

A Life Saver for Greg, David, and Abraham

On a recent Monday afternoon, when we were doing home visits, we encountered three men who were in similar situations: **Greg, David, and Abraham** were working full time, yet they were in immediate danger of homelessness because they were unable to pay their full rent.

Greg

Greg, a man in his early thirties, had been suffering from epileptic seizures that prevented him from keeping a physically challenging job. Fortunately, his medical treatments successfully restored his health so that he could find suitable employment. He found a job in a call center that did not require any physical exertion. Having used up most of his savings during his unemployment phase, he was counting on his first paycheck to cover his rent. However, on the day when he was to receive his first paycheck, he was in for a big surprise: The call center no longer existed. The door was locked, all furniture had been removed, and the phones had been disconnected. There was no number or person whom he could contact. Cheated out of his wages, he would be evicted, unless he received the remainder of his rent within the next few days. The financial assistance from the St. Vincent de Paul Society was a real blessing for him.

David

David was a landscaper who lived with his disabled adult son in a humble trailer in a mobile home park. At age 67, he had recently developed glaucoma and had trouble performing his work to his customers' satisfaction. His social security check, combined with the money he earned by taking care of his customers' yards, typically covered his living expenses. However, after having paid for medication and the glasses that his optometrist had prescribed, he was short of money for the rent. He took out his wallet and counted his money. With a check from the St. Vincent de Paul Society, he would be able to come up with the full amount of the rent. He was very thankful when, in addition to the financial assistance, he received two food boxes.



Abraham

Abraham was a 25-year-old veteran who had found employment shortly after returning from his recent deployment. He was skilled at office work and impressed us by his professional demeanor. However, his first paycheck had not been sufficient to pay for suitable work clothes, food, bus fare, and rent, so his landlord had taken him to court. Abraham was between the proverbial rock and a hard place. If he missed a single day of work, he would lose his job; if he did not go to court, he would be held in contempt of court. He was hoping the court would offer him a payment plan that would allow him to stay in his apartment, so he decided to go to court. He had paid everything but the last 100 dollars. If he did not pay this last portion of his rent by the time the management office closed at 5:00 pm, the sheriff would change the locks of his apartment on Tuesday morning.

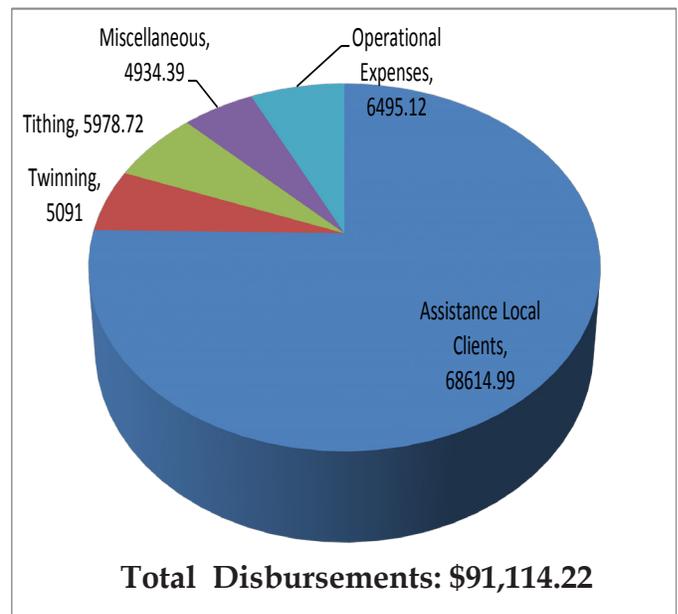
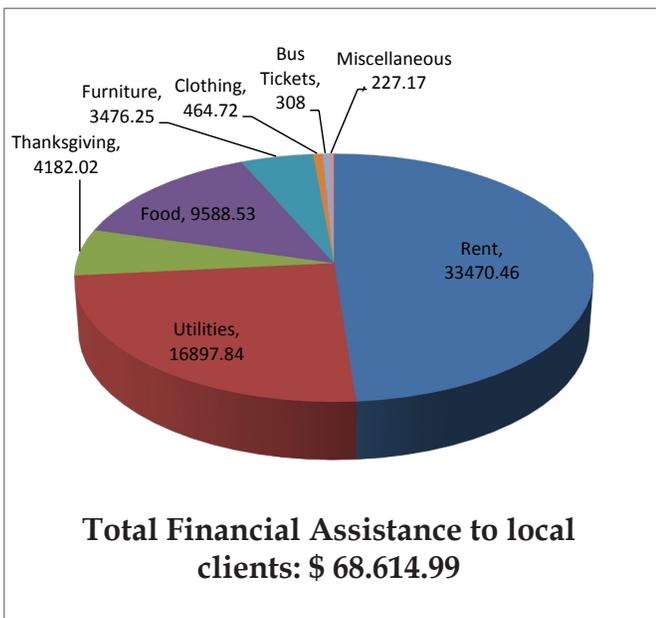
When we arrived at Abraham's place, it was 4:45 pm. By the time we had discussed his situation, it was five minutes to five. His relief was indescribable when his apartment manager picked up the phone and assured him that she would be willing to wait for our mailed check. "You cannot imagine what this means to me," Abraham said. "I have been praying all these days and asking God to help me. This is a lifesaver."

The mission of the St. Vincent de Paul Society is to "feed, clothe, house, and heal." Thanks to our donors, these three men felt the love of God and had their hope restored.

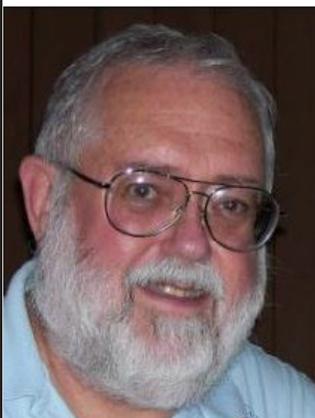
Annual Financial Report (October 1, 2014-September 30, 2015)

We are grateful for the support of our donors in the fiscal year 2014/15. Due to the generosity of our parishioners and funds generated by special groups (e.g. Fitness Ministry, Rosary Groups, OLMC School), we were able to help many local families with rent, utilities, food, clothing, furniture, and transportation. We also twin with two poor conferences in our diocese and tithe to our central SVdP facility that provides a major portion of food items in our pantry (see charts below).

The need is great, and we appreciate any donation that you can afford to give. Please use the enclosed envelopes or the blue envelopes at the back of the church. Place them in the collection baskets at all OLMC masses or drop off your donation in the rectory. May God bless you for your generosity.



In Memory of Paul Kelley



With sadness and gratitude, we remember **Paul Kelley**, who passed away on November 21, 2015. Paul was a man whose greatest passion was tending to the needs of the poor, and he was an inspiration to all who had the privilege of working with him. Together with his beloved wife, **Mary Helen**, he served as Co-President of our SVdP conference for six years. Paul focused on public relations, encouraging parishioners to become involved in this ministry by donating their time, talents, and funds.

One of the major achievements that would not have been possible without his enormous commitment and persistence is the opening of a large pantry in our parish. He was relentless in his pursuit to obtain the space and the resources for one of the largest SVdP pantries in the diocese. He later decided to become more involved with training new and current Vincentians as he was working full-time for Vincentian Support Services in Phoenix. Paul's teaching was informed by his vast knowledge and his deep faith. May he rest in peace.

Partnering with the United Food Bank



Rayna Palmer, CEO of the United Food Bank, with SVdP-OLMC President, Julian Natividad

Rayna Palmer, Chief Operations Officer of the United Food Bank, recently attended one of our SVdP conference meetings to offer insights into the work of this organization. The United Food Bank is one of our partner organizations that provides a huge portion of non-perishable food items to our pantry.

Founded in 1983, the United Food Bank maintains a food distribution warehouse that serves food insecure individuals in Arizona. The organization provides nutritious food to people in eastern Maricopa, Gila, Pinal, southern Navajo and southern Apache counties (19,608 square mile service area).

Unfortunately, poverty in Arizona is widespread, as we can see from the following **2015 Hunger Facts:**

Poverty in Arizona	Food Insecurity in Service Area	Scope of Service (annually)
1 in 4 Children 1 in 5 Adults 1 in 7 Seniors	225,598 Individuals 93,525 Children 84,493 Household	203 Community Partners 535,745 Emergency Food Boxes 20,967,287 Pounds of Food 17,480,239 Meals

About three fourths of the food distributed to needy individuals is supplied by private donors (the other fourth is provided by the Food Distribution Programs administered by USDA's Food and Nutrition Service). The United Food Bank maintains a fleet of trucks that pick up expired food items from stores such as Kroger and Costco. Many of these "expired" items (e.g. bread, cereals, fresh produce) that would otherwise be discarded are taken to the warehouse and then made available to community partners like the public dining rooms and the St. Vincent de Paul Society.

The United Food Bank has a "BackPack" program that provides needy children with basic foods that tide them over the weekend when schools are closed and do not provide free breakfasts and lunches. These children often come from families that need to choose whether they will purchase food or pay for other essentials such as rent, utilities, and medication. Many children would go hungry if it were not for these backpacks filled with food that they take home over the weekend and return empty on Monday mornings.

Volunteers perform work critical for the success of the United Food Bank. They help sort food, pack emergency food boxes and backpacks, organize food drives, collect non-perishable food, and advocate for ending hunger. More information about volunteer activities is available at <https://unitedfoodbank.org>. Everybody is needed and welcome to help ensure a brighter future for Arizona residents.