

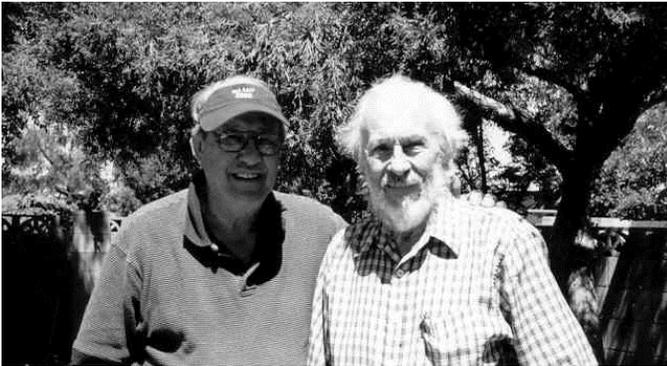
THE VINCENTIAN

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of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul

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Member of Msgr. McCready District 12

Spotlight on ...



John Reigelsberger (l) and Ed Kittock (r), our
Tuesday morning delivery team

Ed Kittock, who will turn 90 in August, is one of the founding members of our conference and currently its oldest active member. Even though he is no longer in perfect health, he faithfully delivers food every Tuesday morning together with John Reigelsberger. John calls him his “model” and a true source of inspiration.

After retiring from his 42-year long career in the postal service, Ed became active in serving the poor. In the late seventies, needy families would come to the rectory asking for assistance. Father McCready, who was pastor at that time, felt the need for a pantry. Under his direction, Ed and some other parishioners cleaned out a room in the southwest end of the parish hall. Ed vividly remembers the tiny room, which was full of junk and also held a casket that was used on Halloween. Ed and his friends installed shelves, collected food, and delivered it to the families who requested assistance.

Ed’s ongoing commitment to the work of the conference is greatly appreciated. His gentle

demeanor and his genuine kindness certainly make a difference in the lives of all the people he serves.

John Reigelsberger has been an active member of our conference since the early 1980’s, contributing to the conference in a variety of ways: delivering food, sorting food at the Food Bank, helping out at the Thrift Store, serving as Secretary and Treasurer, and representing the Elder Care Committee.

After working for 27 years as a Claims Supervisor in the Claim Management Department of the Workers Compensation Fund for the State of Arizona, he retired in 1991. He enjoys the outdoors – he and his family spend a fair amount of time in their house in the forest north of Payson – and sports. He is also an avid reader. As a member of the “Friends of the Tempe Public Library,” he devotes himself to collecting used books for resale and donating the sizable proceeds to the Tempe Public Library.

On Tuesday mornings, before delivering food, John attempts to attend mass and includes the families he will visit that day in his prayers. He derives great personal satisfaction from maintaining strong relationships with his fellow Vincentians and helping the needy. “Serving as a Vincentian,” he says, “is a small sacrifice with a tremendous payback.” The conference sincerely appreciates John’s warm personality and his admirable dedication to the work of the society over more than twenty years.

Financial Report (April/May 2004)

Food boxes delivered	325
Food purchased	\$1,317.00
Rents paid (32 families):	\$4,591.84
Utilities paid (9 families)	\$1,103.45
Transportation/clothing vouchers:	\$577.38

Potluck Extravaganza

(by Julie Hessinger)

Our **Potluck on May 5th** was a great success. 40 members of our conference were present and had a tremendous time. We had great food prepared by the lovely ladies of our St. Vincent de Paul conference: Lasagna, Sloppy Joe, barbecued ribs, chili, potato salad, fruit salad, pies, cakes, and cookies. There were door prizes and much more -- sangria, punch, coke; whatever was missing was not missed. The tables were covered with tablecloths, and there were flower arrangements on every table. What a wonderful way to celebrate Vincentian fellowship and friendship!



Julie Hessinger and Bob Erickson preparing sangria

Sangria Plus

(Julie Hessinger's favorite recipe)

1 bottle red wine
½ cup cognac
½ cup sugar
1 bottle lime soda or ginger ale
1 sliced orange
ice cubes

Pour wine into pitcher, add cognac, sugar, soda (or ginger ale). Slice orange into thin slices. Fill pitcher with ice cubes and stir with wooden spoon.

Daniel MacLean

We are grateful for the monies that were donated to our Conference **in memory of Dan MacLean**, our long-time benefactor. He will be remembered in our prayers.

Helping Hand

(by Adelheid Thieme)

For the past eight years, my friend, Ela, and I have delivered food every Wednesday afternoon. We were recently discussing why we have kept going all these years. We realize that we are doing God's work and that we are not alone.

On several occasions, we have driven to the pantry, wondering how we would manage to find the time required to do the home visits assigned to us for that afternoon. Oddly, on these days, the office staff operator had given us no more than two home visits, which we could easily complete within our limited time. Now, whenever we are in a time crunch, we rely on getting an easily manageable assignment, and it **always** works.

Last summer, during the monsoon season, we were delivering several times during a thunderstorm. It was raining "cats and dogs" until we arrived at the clients' homes. As soon as we pulled into the parking lot, the rain stopped briefly. We never got wet.

A month ago, Ela hurt her back and was unable to carry heavy food boxes. During our four visits that afternoon, we did not have to move a finger to get the food delivered. At the last stop, where we had three heavy food boxes for a woman who was recovering from surgery and was unable to do any lifting, two strong men, who happened to be in the parking lot, volunteered to bring the food upstairs.

Are these experiences just a coincidence? What do you think?

The Power of Prayer

(by Rita and Pat Malafronte)

A few weeks ago, Rita and I arrived at the office for our weekly food delivery. The office staff operator had scheduled two clients for assistance. As a matter of routine, we proceeded to call each client to see if they were home. Neither client answered the phone. The office staff operator said she had a client scheduled for the following day, but

suggested we call and see if she was available. This time we were lucky.

About an hour later, we arrived with several food boxes. A young woman and two of her children greeted us with broad smiles. As we were leaving, she thanked us several times and then confided to us what had happened earlier in the day.

It began when she called our St. Vincent de Paul office and asked for our assistance. She was advised that we would help her and her five children and that she would be scheduled for the very next day. She thanked the operator and hung up. It was at this time that she began to cry. She had little food in the house for her children. A short while later, her aunt came to visit, and she told her aunt about her circumstances. Her aunt said to her, "Let's sit down at the kitchen table and together pray for God's help." They had just finished their prayer when the phone rang. IT WAS US TELLING HER THAT WE WOULD BE THERE WITHIN THE HOUR.

Rita and I were grateful and humbled that she had shared these thoughts with us, and it reinforced our belief in the "Power of Prayer."

Father Pedro

(by Bart and Valerie Nigro)

On April 1, at Resurrection Church, Father Pedro, the Vincentian Chaplain of the Southwest Region, gave a presentation on "Taking Jesus out to the Poor." Mt. Carmel was represented by about 15 conference members, all of whom were inspired and captivated by the experiences, wisdom and wit that Father Pedro so delightfully shared with us that evening. Hopefully this brief summary will do justice to Father's inspiring talk.

Father Pedro began by discussing the Vincentian spirituality of our founder, Blessed Frederic Ozanam, and our patron, St. Vincent de Paul. He pointed out that a GOOD person works for God, but a SAINT gives his self to God, as did both of these men. Then he told us that our first duty as Vincentians is to become friends with the members of our group, and to help each other grow in faith as was done by the followers of Blessed Frederic.

According to Father, visiting our clients' homes is our most important work. In this way, we allow them greater dignity, as we are "in their hands." When we make a home visit, we must not take for granted that we already know the family's needs. To illustrate this point, Father told us what he experienced early in his ministry. After becoming aware of a needy family in his parish, he gave a wonderful talk one Sunday morning, requesting food for them. Many, many people responded, not realizing that there was no refrigerator in the home. The perishables spoiled and could not be used. If he had first visited the family, he said, he could have better evaluated their needs.

It is clear that, in his public life, Jesus identified with the poor and had great compassion for them. In the beginning of the Galilean Ministry, while teaching in the synagogue, Jesus read the passage of Isaiah, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me because he has anointed me to bring glad tidings to the poor." Then he said to the people, "Today this scripture passage is fulfilled in your hearing" (LK, 4: 14-18, 21).

Then, two years into his ministry, Jesus expressed his "political platform" in the Sermon on the Mount, MT, 5: 1-12, and in the Sermon on the Plain, LK, 6, 20-26. Here, in the Beatitudes, he refers to the poor as blessed, and regards them with compassion and love. God's love for each person and the dignity of each person are great.

Jesus also relates himself to the poor when he says, "Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me." These were his words as he portrayed the final judgment of the Nations in MT, 26: 31-46.

Jesus came to bring good news to all, but he knew that he would leave the world, so he founded his Church, in which his members would continue his work. Within his Church, we feel comfortable, secure and joyful in our ministries. But Jesus came to minister and bring the good news and his love to those OUTSIDE the Church, often times the poor. Father Pedro concluded that we, as Vincentians, must have the goal of "walking" the love and compassion of Jesus out of the comfort zone of our church and into the homes of the poor.

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Inner Strength

(submitted by Valerie and Bart Nigro)

- If you can start the day without caffeine,
- If you can always be cheerful, ignoring aches and pains,
- If you can eat the same food every day and be grateful for it,
- If you can understand when your loved ones are too busy to give you any time,
- If you can take criticism and blame without resentment,
- If you can ignore a friend's limited education and never correct him,
- If you can resist treating a rich friend better than a poor friend,
- If you can face the world without lies and deceit,
- If you can conquer tension without medical help,
- If you can relax without liquor,
- If you can sleep without the aid of drugs,

Then You Are Probably The Family Dog!