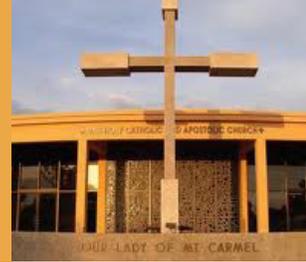




THE Vincentian

Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Conference June 2014



The Joy of Helping Others: OLMC Daisies and Brownies Volunteering with SVdP

(by Janet Kovach)



Father Camilo de Villa with OLMC Daisies and Brownies donating Girl Scout Cookies for our clients

On Saturday, April 12, a gaggle of girl scouts and their parents volunteered at the pantry. Under the leadership of Simonne Steele, the Girl Scouts were engaging in a service project to earn their religious medallions. First, they did a quick tour of the pantry and all the food storage, and then they broke into action. Those girls packed 26 boxes -- enough for 13 families -- in under 2 hours. They made sure that every box was properly filled using the checklist.

Once the home delivery staff arrived, the girls helped personalize the boxes for each family. Boxes going to homes with kids got the "good" cereals and cookies. The girls picked out what they liked and made sure the families had well-rounded meals. The leaders and the girls had fun and realized the need in our community. We talked about how they could help with summer food or personal care product drives. Plans are in the works to pair girls with delivery teams so they can see how the whole system works, start to finish.

A couple of weeks later, the Daisies and Brownies stopped in and delivered boxes of Girl Scout cookies to be added to our deliveries. These smiling girls were also given a tour of the pantry and asked tons of questions. This the start of a beautiful relationship.

Locked Out

(by Lisa Blevins)

Being a Vincentian has become one of the most rewarding ministries in my life. Every family and every home we visit has a life journey that is unique to each and every one of our brothers and sisters. And not a moment goes by that we don't see God's hand working in their lives as well as my own.

This story is about a Spanish speaking family of seven. It was a few days before Christmas, and my partner, David, and I were blessed to be the ones on this day to deliver the family some food boxes. The family had been struggling to pay the month's rent in full, and the community management had locked them out of their home. By the grace of God and the goodness of a friend, they had a place to stay.



During this time, they received a call from one of our delivery teams asking if they would be home in order to receive their food boxes as well as some Christmas gifts provided through our Adopt-A-Family program. They were in desperate need of the food, and the children were looking forward to receiving gifts for Christmas. But they also knew they could not go into their home without getting a ticket.

So, they decided to wait outside on their porch for our delivery team. Meanwhile, the children were asking their mom if they should cover up the red "Eviction Notice" sign on the front door that said they were locked out until they paid the remaining rent. The children were looking forward to celebrating Christmas in their home and didn't want the sign to stop that from happening. *(continued on p. 4)*

I Have Faith

(by Adelheid Thieme)

It is amazing what the Lord can do if several people listen to His voice and are willing to work towards a common goal.

Shana (not her real name) was in a desperate situation. When she called the St. Vincent de Paul office, she stated that she was on the verge of eviction, together with three young children, ages 3, 9, and 11. She was the mother of the three-year-old, and just three weeks prior she had taken into her home the other two children, who were from her deadbeat ex-husband's previous relationship. She was facing eviction, and she needed help - fast. It was Tuesday afternoon, and she had been informed by her apartment manager that she would need to come up with \$1,133 by Thursday at 6:00 pm.

Shana invited us into her neatly kept and tastefully decorated apartment. She was working as a billing specialist for an insurance company that had recently gone through a restructuring process. A few months ago, she had received a loan from her company, and she had faithfully abided by the terms of paying it back in installments of 100 dollars per month. However, due to the changes that her company had undergone, she had been forced to pay back the entire remainder of the loan. This was the amount that she had budgeted for this month's rent. She currently had no more than ten dollars to her name, not even enough to put food on the table for the next couple of days. The government agency that provided rental assistance was out of funds. She was going to ask her brother for help, but she was not very hopeful in that respect.

We told her that we had two big food boxes in the car for her and that we would be able to pay a sizable portion of her rent, but not nearly close to what she needed. We promised

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Spotlight on SVdP Volunteers Vito and David Valdez

(by Adelheid Thieme)



Vito Valdez and his son, David Valdez, joined our St. Vincent de Paul conference in November 2012. When they heard that volunteers were needed to deliver food to needy families during our annual Thanksgiving Food Drive, they were “hooked.” “I wish we had been with St. Vincent de Paul sooner,” Vito says.

For the past 14 years, Vito has been working as a machinist in a metal shop that manufactures parts for machinery used to build industrial diamonds, and he also has experience in carpentry and upholstery. During the week he is busy, but every Saturday morning he makes it a point to deliver food boxes with Dawn Bigelow-Ingram. Often the clients they visit talk to them about additional needs. Vito says, “We try not to ever say ‘no’, but ‘We will find resources and see that we can get services for you.’” Just recently, he arranged for a walker for an elderly lady and a bed for a lady suffering from sickle cell anemia who had absolutely no furniture in her apartment. “It makes you feel so good when you help people,” Vito says. *(continued on p. 4)*



SVdP Ice Cream Social Sunday, July 13

(after 7, 9, 11 am Masses in McCready Hall)



All are welcome to celebrate the work of the St. Vincent de Paul Society and learn more about our ministry.

**(All expenses are paid by active members of the Society.
No donations are used for this event.)**

Locked Out

(cont. from p. 1)

Thanks to the generosity and good works of many people, they were able to celebrate a nice Christmas. Someone helped them pay their rent just in time for Christmas, and they had Christmas dinner in their home with the food provided by St. Vincent de Paul. The children asked their mom, "Why do other people have more than we do?" She told them it was important for them to work hard and get a good education. Even though they don't have much, she was grateful for the people who do have more and are willing to help those who don't.

"For it is in giving that we receive" ~Saint Francis of Assisi

I Have Faith

(cont. from p. 2)

that we would refer her to another agency in downtown Phoenix that provides emergency assistance to families, and we advised her to contact the Salvation Army as well. Shana said, "I am grateful for everything you can do. And I am not giving up. I have been on my knees praying that the Lord will provide for me, and I have faith that He will take care of me and my children."

On Thursday afternoon at 3:00 pm, I was checking my email one last time before I would leave for the airport for a weekend trip. That is when a message from the Phoenix agency came in, informing me that, if this agency, the Salvation Army, our St. Vincent de Paul conference, and Shana's

brother pooled their resources, Shana would have the money that she needed to avoid eviction. It was, however, necessary for our check to be there within the next three hours.

I quickly checked my watch. If I rushed to the St. Vincent de Paul office, picked up a check, and dropped it off with Shana's apartment manager, I would be able to get our check to the management office and make it to the airport just on time.

It is thanks to you, our generous donors, that we are able to help hardworking, responsible, and generous mothers like Shana. I am also sure that Shana is not the only person whose faith has been renewed.

Spotlight on SVdP Volunteers Vito and David Valdez (cont. from p. 3)

His son, **David**, has inherited his dad's practical talents. David spends approximately 10 hours a week as a Co-Pantry Manager, stocking shelves, preparing food boxes, and maintaining a clean and orderly pantry. Once a week, he also delivers food boxes with Lisa Blevins.

"Team Valdez," as Vito and David are lovingly called by their fellow Vincentians, are also in charge of organizing the Ice Cream Social that our conference puts on once a year to thank our generous parishioners for their support.

In his spare time, David enjoys watching dinosaur shows and playing multi-player video games. Vito likes to hunt deer, quail, and dove. Together, they attend all the concerts of Vito's youngest daughter, who has played the violin at Westwood High School for several years and is currently auditioning for the Mesa Community College orchestra. Vito's favorite music style is rock 'n roll by bands such as AC/DC, Def Leppard, and the Scorpions. Going to concerts is often a family affair. He is looking forward to a Kiss concert that he plans to attend with his 5 children and 3 grandchildren.

We are fortunate to count Vito and David among our members. They truly care about the poor, and there is no job too big or too small for "Team Valdez."