



The

# Vincentian

Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Conference

September 2011

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## CONTACT

St. Vincent de Paul Society  
2121 S. Rural Road  
Tempe, AZ  
85282

Phone:  
480-966-1974

Email:  
adelthieme@a.com

## Ice Cream Social July 2011

(by Ben Picone)



The **Montoya Family** -- Nadine, Robert, Noah, Isaiah and Mariah -- enjoying ice cream and treats at the St. Vincent de Paul Ice Cream Social

Approximately 800 parishioners enjoyed themselves at the St. Vincent de Paul Ice Cream Social in McCready Hall on July 17, 2011. The event was sponsored by members of the St. Vincent de Paul conference at Our Lady of Mt. Carmel. **No monies donated to SVdP for assistance to the poor went to pay for the ice cream, cookies, etc.** The conference felt that the Ice Cream Social was a good way to show appreciation for all the support we have received from our parishioners.

## Lights Out?

(by Adelheid Thieme)



"Please visit ASAP. Client is desperate, has \$3.20 left on M-Power account," read the yellow sticky note affixed to a client's request for help with utility assistance. It was 4 o'clock in the afternoon, and it was 110 degrees outside. We wondered if the client still had electric power by the time we got there.

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## Lights Out? (continued from p.1)

The client, a mother of three young children, was eagerly awaiting our arrival. When we introduced ourselves as Vincentians from OLMC, she gave a sigh of relief. A few weeks ago, she had lost her unemployment benefits, and whatever money was available went towards rent and food. She had no money to spare for electricity, and she could easily imagine the family's misery if the power was to be disconnected: sleepless nights without air conditioning, dark evenings with only a flashlight, peanut butter sandwiches instead of home-cooked meals, warm water from the refrigerator, no computer or TV.

We dialed a special number at the utility company and guaranteed payment on her account. Our help did not come an hour too early.

## From the Presidents' Pens

(by Albert and Susana Marquez)

Members of our SVdP conference visit the homes of clients who request financial aid for rent, utilities, and other needs. Prior to issuing a check, we evaluate the clients' needs. By doing so, we are being good stewards of the money donated to our conference. We also refer clients to other sources of assistance and invite them to pray with us.

Susana and I recently visited a single mother who requested utility help. When scheduling the appointment, we told her that, during our home visit, we would need to obtain some information from her to see how we might be able to assist her. The lady was very forthcoming with information, and we were able to offer help. As we were about to leave, she asked us if we were going to inspect the apartment. She told us that she had cleaned her place thoroughly in anticipation of us checking it out.

We could not help smiling and reassured her, explaining to her that the purpose of our visit was not to check for cleanliness, but to evaluate her needs. We told her though that the little we saw was sparkling clean and smelled very nice.

## The Hands and Feet of Jesus

(by Debbie Corte and Adelheid Thieme)



"Christ has no body on earth but yours, no hands but yours, no feet but yours." ~Saint Teresa of Avila

When we called Jessica to announce that we would bring her a food box and see if we could help her with her rent, she said, "Oh my God, I cannot believe you are calling me back. I was just about to call you again. I have contacted so many agencies, and I have left messages with all of them, without any success. And here you are calling me." Then she broke down and cried. Having regained her composure, she continued, "I am totally out of food except for some dried pinto beans, which I don't know how to cook, and I have no milk and fruit for my 5-year-old son. I am embarrassed that I have to ask for food, but I am so glad you are coming."

We took a quick look at the food boxes we had loaded into the car. There were beans, carrots, rice, pasta, tomato sauce, corn, soup, cereal, chicken - but no milk and fresh fruit. So we decided to quickly stop by a store and pick up the items that Jessica was hoping to find in her food box.

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## The Hands and Feet of Jesus *(continued from p. 2)*

When she opened the door, she was obviously nervous, but helping us carry the boxes inside definitely eased her discomfort.

Then we sat down and talked; she told us about her cancer surgery (which led to her losing her job), her inability to find a new job as an artist, her worries about keeping her son, and the sexual abuse she had recently experienced. She showed us a portfolio that showcased her work, and we were impressed by her artistic skills.

Our food boxes and rental assistance were without a doubt important to Jessica, but they only satisfied part of her needs. "Thank you for listening and restoring hope in me," she said as we left her with a comforting hug.

## Meet our Volunteers

(by Adelheid Thieme)

This month, we are featuring **Darami Lam**, one of our most faithful younger members of our conference.



Q.: Darami, you have delivered food boxes for many years. When did you join the St. Vincent de Paul Society?

**Darami:** I joined the conference in 1999 when I was a senior at Tempe High School. I first helped

out in the SVdP dining room in Mesa, but I was looking for something more regular and permanent, so I started delivering food to needy families. For seven years, I have been delivering food together with my brother, Tony, who is currently finishing up his Bachelor's degree in Business Administration at Northern Arizona University. His goal is to be a firefighter.

Q: Delivering food boxes is quite a time commitment for students and professionals like you. What do you do for a living?

**Darami:** After graduating from Arizona State University with a Bachelor of Science degree in Mechanical Engineering in December of 2005, I started working for Peri Formworks System, a company that designs concrete structures for commercial buildings and bridges. As a Lead Designer Engineer, I now work at the Chandler office where I do computerized drafting of concrete slabs, walls, and girders.

Q: What do you do in your spare time?

**Darami:** I am a member of the Knights of Columbus Council # 9482 in Chandler. I also like to work out and play a variety of sports: basketball, ultimate Frisbee, football, and tennis. I also spend a lot of time with my fiancée, of course. We will get married next year in April.

Q: Congratulations! We are very appreciative of your longtime commitment to our conference. What motivates you to keep volunteering with St. Vincent de Paul?

**Darami:** So many people are in need, and I want to help them and serve God. I want to live the Gospel.

Q: We wish we had more younger people like you who are dedicated to the ministry of the St. Vincent de Paul Society and will be able to carry on our service to the needy in the next generation.

# DOWNTOWN SVdP FAMILY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

(by Albert and Susana Marquez)

Sometimes during home visits we will find a family in a financial situation that will require financial assistance beyond our ability to help. The situation is often caused by a totally unexpected and devastating event, such as the loss of a job, a cut of work hours, a medical emergency, or a sudden automobile repair. We evaluate the client's needs and determine if the client meets the requirements of the St. Vincent de Paul Family Assistance Program located in the SVdP diocesan center.

There are certain criteria that must be met in order to qualify. There has to be an income in the home, children under the age of 18 living in the house, a proven crisis, and the family has to reside in Maricopa County. Also, the family needs to be referred by a SVdP conference. The help can only be used for rent or utility bills.

One family we recently visited was a couple with two young children ages one year and 10 months. The father had lost his job, but the mother was still working. However, due to an unexpected medical expense, the family was going to be evicted. The Family Assistance Program accepted our clients and paid \$750 towards their rent while we paid the remainder of \$71.



**Barbara Pawlak**  
(1936-2011)

## Dear Vincentian Family,

Thank you for the lovely flowers and for your prayers and support for us, **Barbara Pawlak's** children. Mom was very proud of being a member of SVdP. Her greatest joy was saying a prayer with food box recipients before she left.

Geno, Kathy, Kevin,  
Stevie

**P. S.:** Thanks to all of you who made a donation in Mom's name.

## Prayer of the Vincentian Family

Lord Jesus, you who willed to become poor, give us eyes and a heart directed toward the poor; help us to recognize you in them- in their thirst, their hunger, their loneliness, and their misfortune.

Enkindle within our Vincentian Family unity, simplicity, humility, and the fire of love that burned in St. Vincent de Paul.

Strengthen us, so that, faithful to the practice of these virtues, we may contemplate you and serve you in the person of the poor, and may one day be united with you and them in your Kingdom.

Amen.