

SVdP Email update from November 25, 2023

Good morning to all. I hope Thanksgiving was a time enjoyed by you and your family

We have the following updates:

- 1) We received another 1500 men's jackets, blankets, sweatpants, and tee shirts from Farro's Tees. We have been able to help many individuals due to this additional, extremely generous, donation. Several representatives from other churches helped us to deliver the clothing items to different areas of Toms River and Lakewood, and Father Michael and Kathleen have offered extra storage space within the church to store additional clothing as we continue to distribute each of the times.
- 2) The Community Comfort and Fellowship dinner will be this coming Thursday, November 30th. We have been contacted by approximately 30+ people that they will be attending the dinner, therefore we will put some of this new clothing out to share with them that evening.
- 3) Just recently Father Michael gave us the okay to have a fundraiser next fall which is going to be a performance by a very talented magician. The date as of now is October 11th. Details to follow, and other fundraising will be discussed after Christmas.
- 4) Susan DeMillio needs additional volunteers to help with the **toy distribution**. The dates are for Mondays and Fridays in December. There will be two shifts, which Susan will explain to each volunteer. If you have not signed up with Susan as yet, and can help with this event, please contact Susan at 732-942-0520 or email medcareaj@yahoo.com
- 5) Our **Christmas luncheon** is on December 15th at 1:00 PM in the parish center. At this time we have a sufficient number of desserts, however we would appreciate a few more appetizers. If you can help out it would be great! We need an accurate number for whom will be attending the luncheon. Please contact Joann Palmieri at 908-907-4665 or email jd palmieri8@gmail.com or Barbara Jobin at 732-505-8913 or email bajobin@msn.com to let them know you will be joining us. We will have a hot meal, music, games, and prizes. Our Social committee, which also includes Mary Jo Phillips and Annette Avena have continued to be a great support for our luncheon and other event and remember Debbie Weingroff is in charge of the wine
- 6) There is a **Food donation delivery** on Dec. 5th (late morning). If you can help out for about an hour, please contact Vic Melillo at melillovictorsr@gmail.com
- 7) The following letter was dropped off to our office on Monday, November 20th.

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"Dear members of St. Vincent de Paul at St. Luke's.

This letter should have been written and sent to you much sooner than this, but sometimes life gets too busy. I am writing this letter because when I was at work the other day someone had asked what I am most thankful for this year. Of course, I am thankful for my health, my family, and my children, but what I truly am most thankful for this year is the relationship I have come to have with your parish.

I am thankful for everyone at SVdP. You have helped my family with food, clothing, shelter, and a car. I don't know where my children and I would be if it wasn't for your kindness, compassion, and generosity. When I first came to you my life was turned upside down, and it all happened so fast. I went from having a beautiful home to being homeless in months not knowing sometimes where my life would end up. I tried to keep my faith positive and keep a positive attitude. There were days when it was extremely hard but meeting you, and seeing what you do everyday to help others without ever expecting anything in return changed my life. You opened my eyes to so many things I may not have been aware of and hadn't paid much attention to. All of these experiences showed me not ever to take life for granted. Even if you work hard and do the right things, sometimes situations are just out of your control. **You have restored any faith I may have lost along the way these past few years of my life. You make me want to be a better person.**

I find myself doing things I may not have normally done as far as taking a few minutes to pray each day, or showing someone in hard times that they aren't alone - there are people who truly care about others. I am extremely grateful and blessed to feel like I am a part of your family at SVdP and for everything you have done to help my family, and me, get back on our feet and moving forward. We have so much more now than I would have expected.

I would love to help out with SVdP now and in the future. The acts of kindness you do everyday are truly appreciated by so many. From the bottom of my heart, I truly thank you. Happy Thanksgiving.

Sincerely, Maria Rufasto and family.

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I thought this letter would make your heart happy. Enjoy your day, Gemma