

SVdP Email update from September 2, 2023

Good morning to all. I hope you were able to enjoy the months of summer with some very pleasant days and some new adventures.

Although there is much to share with you, I first want to remind all members that our **general meeting is on September 15th at 1:00 PM** in the parish center. Many of our new members will be joining us for the afternoon, and it will be a pleasure to introduce them. Our social committee is organizing a **light lunch** to be served at 1:00 PM along with dessert, coffee and tea.

Online store: https://stores.farrotees.com/st_vincent_depaul_society/shop/home

As we discussed in the spring we had several goals for the summer, and it is a pleasure to share with you that each goal was accomplished. Through both the time and effort of our member Kathy Minton we are now able to purchase SVdP clothing on-line. There are shirts, vests, blouses, sweatshirts, etc. We will present all the necessary information during our general meeting, and if you would like to make a purchase, we have some members who will help you order. This is not a fundraiser, and all purchases will be by credit card. Steve Weingroff has offered to pick up the purchases at *Farro's Tees* each month which will eliminate the cost of shipping on any purchase.

New Website: <https://www.svdpstluke.org/>

Kathy Minton and Owen MacCarrick have continued to enhance our website with current information, pictures, etc. Therefore, the clothing that will have the SVdP logo will help to raise awareness to the needs of others in our community, as will the website.

Monthly Dinner – Community Comfort and Fellowship:

We have coordinated our efforts during the past two months with our pastor Father Michael, and our business administrator, Kathleen Muzzio, to begin having monthly dinners for those who would enjoy a dinner and fellowship with others within our community. There are many parish members, and several SVdP members, who have offered their time to help organize, serve, cook, etc. for the dinners. We are calling our night of "parish dining" *Community Comfort and Fellowship*. At this time Marie Alfano has come forward to coordinate this new ministry. The first dinner will be held on September 28th and the response has been heart warming in every aspect. Our invitations have been extended to those who come to the food pantry and Helping Hands, and our plan is expand the monthly dinners as we become more proficient

Garden:

Due to the dedication of Meg Othy, and all the master gardeners, our garden is bursting with delicious vegetables. The vegetables look so healthy and the choice of vegetables has been a special treat for our guests who come to the food pantry. The number of pounds of vegetables being harvested each week is remarkable! This was an exceptionally hot summer and our members never swayed from their efforts of doing something so important for the community.

Fundraising:

Fundraising continued through the summer months. In addition, Charlie Rott has prepared and will be handing out (or sending by mail) the information regarding the **Boscovs** event which has always been a successful fundraising venture. In returning your donation there is an envelope in the food pantry marked for the donations. Your response can be in cash, a check made out to cash or a check made out to SVdP. Charlie will also review all that has been accomplished regarding the Celebration Garden. Pavers will go on sale again in October and volunteers will be needed to help, both before and after the parish masses, with the sale of the pavers.

Donations received:

We have recently been given several large financial donations, along with consistent food and clothing donations from local businesses. John Connelly has continued to design and make certificates to present to each donor as a way for us to express our gratitude for the caring support of the mission and goals of SVdP. Recently, we were the recipients of a new van for our use donated by *Fulfill*, and John has taken on the responsibility of selling our old van. He will keep us up to date on his progress.

Home Visits:

The need for home visits has been constant and Joe Damato and Michelle Jones will present an overview of what has transpired during the summer months. Due to the dedication of our members, we have been able to hold off, or stop, home evictions for several families. Yet, no matter the amount of effort by all the *faith communities* in Ocean County, the suffering from being homeless is endless. We have been able to help find new homes for some families with the support from local agencies, help with rent expenses, and in some cases eliminate utility payments and medical expenses. Through a lengthy process, Causeway Ford donated a car to help a family in need, allowing a young, single mom to get to work each day so she could continue to independently support her family. Often our home visitors give days worth of time in supporting those who have contacted SVdP for assistance. Our home visitors not only help with resources, they take their time to help guide our guests on how to move forward in life. We have received several letters of gratitude because of this commitment to help others in need which will be shared at the meeting. During home visits the necessity for furniture becomes apparent, and Paul and Pat Capelli have taken on that aspect of our ministry. They do all that is possible to ensure that financially struggling parents receive the furniture needed to help make a home for their children.

Food Pantry & Helping Hands:

The numbers of those in our community who are coming to the food pantry and to our Helping Hands has far exceeded last year. Kathy Catron (food pantry) and Christine Cotgreave (Helping Hands) along with all the volunteers of these two ministries give endless energy to make sure our guests have the food and clothing needed, along with making sure our guests are treated with dignity and care. The members of the parish of St Luke's remain remarkably generous to SVdP and our treasurer, Tom Jones, will explain our financial status during the meeting.

Sunshine Fund:

Our Sunshine Fund is an important aspect of SVdP; it connects and supports our members and enhances our fellowship and friendship. Karen will give an overview of the Sunshine Fund at our meeting,

Spiritual Advisor:

Our spiritual advisor, Debbie Weingroff, will begin our meeting at 1:15 PM with prayer and reflection. Debbie will also review with the membership our upcoming recommitment service that is being held during the 10:00 AM mass on **September 24th**. Having the recommitment service during mass gives us an additional opportunity to share our commitment in helping our neighbors, and that we are able to accomplish so much due to our parishioners caring and generosity.

Thank you:

And in ending this update, so I do not forget at the meeting, please ask our secretary, Jill Bradley, about the fish that did **not** get away!

Looking forward to being with you on the 15th.

Warmest regards, and many blessings to each of you and your families.

Gemma