



St. Vincent de Paul Ministry Thanks You!

Our dedicated volunteers and our neighbors in need thank you for your generous donations of \$5,743 during the recent 5th Sunday collection. Your kindness and generosity will allow us to continue to help the poorest and the most desperate amongst us on behalf of our parish community.

As we venture into a second year of the pandemic we are continuing to meet with as many as 16 struggling families each week who are having difficulty feeding their children and paying their rent. Many have lost their jobs or are working fewer hours. Many are not eligible for unemployment. As a result, the families that come to us for help are really hurting and have not been able to pay their utilities and rent for the past several months.

We meet with needy families and individuals over-the-phone to provide food cards, gas vouchers, and rent assistance. Our volunteers maximize your contributions by assisting our neighbors with applications to partnering organizations, such as Catholic Charities, Seasons of Sharing and the St. Vincent de Paul Hope conference, a separate branch of the society of St. Vincent de Paul of Contra Costa County. The time spent helping our neighbors with these applications is rewarding, especially when we can help families like Veronica, her husband and their three children and five grandchildren stay in their 2-bedroom apartment.

Since the pandemic began in mid-March of 2020, our St. John Vianney ministry has been able to provide hope and assistance to 3487 neighbors in need with more than \$51,400 in food and gas assistance, and \$90,800 in rent assistance from our conference and from partnering agencies

Our patron, St. Vincent de Paul was profoundly influenced by the description of the Last Judgement in Matthew 25:40, where God tells the righteous person, "Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me". St. Vincent made it his mission to not only help the poor, but to see Christ in the poor. And it is through your generosity that the volunteers of the St. Vincent de Paul ministry can be God's hands and see the face of Christ in the poor.

If you have a heart for helping the poor, we invite you to consider joining this wonderful ministry. Here are some of the ways you can help us serve our community:

We meet with needy families and individuals over-the-phone to provide much needed assistance. Our SVdP retail stores in Pleasant Hill, Pittsburg and Brentwood are in desperate need of volunteers to help sort and tag donated merchandise. We are always on the look-out for serviceable used cars. Please consider donating your next 'trade-in' or the car you no longer need to us.



If you are interested in helping with any of these activities, please contact Kathy Dasso at katdas9@aol.com for more information.



Activities and Resources for Lent

Check out our own St. John Vianney website for our recipe sharing page for meatless soups <https://sjvianney.org/lent-easter>

While we can not safely gather for our Simple Soup Suppers right now we can share our favorite recipes with each other. If you have a recipe to share email to staff@sjvianney.org or put a copy of your recipe in the mail slot of the Parish Office and we will add it to the website. You can scan a recipe card or type your recipe. Call us if you need assistance 925-939-7911 x0

Did you know that pretzels are considered a food for Lent? The Church used to have much stricter fasting rules and pretzels, made of a simple mixture of water, flour and salt, were an ideal food to consume during Lent, when Catholics fasted from all types of meat, dairy and eggs.

Next weekend February 28th, stop by the Faith Formation parking lot after the 7:30 & 9am Mass or from 10-11am to pick up some homemade pretzel dough to take home and make pretzels. All are welcome to stop by.



Lenten Retreat, March 1, 7pm-8:30pm on Zoom

Lent is a time of Metanoia. Metanoia is a Greek expression which means 'a complete change of heart.' Turning our hearts back to the Lord is at the center of our Lenten spirituality. We invite you to explore this notion of Metanoia by joining us for a retreat entitled *The Woman at the Well: An Experience of Metanoia*.

This retreat will be offered via Zoom on **Monday, March 1 from 7 - 8:30 pm**. Registration available by emailing Liz Rogers at lrogers@sjvianney.org