



Vinnie's Voice

VOLUME 1 ISSUE 3

AUGUST 2018

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- What is this objet?
- Friends of the Poor Walk
- Religious articles go to Goa
- Meet Officer Grant Synder

Reaching Out to Our Homeless and Vulnerable

by Francesca DiPiazza

My automatic reaction to seeing a cop is to feel nervous, so I was very happy to meet Sgt. Grant Snyder when he dropped in on a staff meeting at the Mpls SVDP Thrift Store. Coming across as calm and kind, he's not a nervous-making guy. As of April 2018, Grant became liaison to our homeless and vulnerable population—a new position that was created after a career as a detective working against sex trafficking.

An estimated 4,000 people in Hennepin County don't have secure housing on any given day. Snyder is a police officer, but in his new role he doesn't arrest and prosecute people. Instead, he does person-to-person outreach, seeking to understand how better to serve a population that experiences enormous stress and need. "The deck is stacked against them," he told us. "And they are ours." Or they may even be us, at times in our lives.

Driving his open Polaris vehicle (looks like a

cross between an army vehicle and a golf cart), he travels down back alleys, under bridges, and wherever people hang and camp out. He meets and talks to anyone, homeless or not, about their concerns. He gives out bottled water and food (fresh ready-to-eat salads are a big hit), wet-wipes for washing up, raincoats and sleeping bags, and—highly prized items—fresh socks and shoes. St. Vinnie's provides Grant with some goods from our store and from our Distribution Center (home of the Vinnie's Hope program that collects

and redistributes donated food to 22+ food shelves every week). The day Grant came by, I gave him some rosaries donated to our Religious Articles Ministry.

Grant seeks to understand, advocate for, and take action on issues of homelessness, from mental health to housing. "As a man and a Christian," he said, "I find it impossible to walk away from an individual who is hungry, thirsty, cold, or needs clothes."

Thank you, Officer Snyder, for all you do.



Photos provided by the Minneapolis Police Department

Friends of the Poor Walk

25,000 WALKERS RAISED OVER \$3.1 MILLION IN 2017!

The Friends of the Poor® Walk/Run began as a national program with the purpose of providing local Society of St. Vincent de Paul (SVdP) Conferences and Councils the additional funds to help support their special works projects. Today, that philosophy continues, with Conferences and Councils using the funds from this event to help people living in poverty.

St. Vincent de Paul Thrift Store, 2939 - 12th Ave So, Minneapolis, MN 55407. September 29, 2018 10:00 AM (Registration begins at 9:30 AM). COORDINATOR CONTACT: Nancy Goalen, 612-356-4598.

Can't walk but want to donate? Go to:

<http://www.svdpmpls.org/>



Do you know what this is?



Part of the fun of working at St Vincent's is all the unusual items which are donated. We get lots of souvenirs from people's travels to many different countries. We receive interesting and rare items people collect from the usual to the unique. Stamps, dolls, model cars, spoons, etc. Someone donated his hedgehog collection – made of many different materials, from the tiny to larger than real life. Years ago we received someone's Three Wise Men collections. He gave us almost 50 sets of Wise Men from 2 inches to 2 feet tall. We regularly get items that cause us scratch our heads and say "What the heck is this?" A lot of times we figure it out. We ask other employees and volunteers. We show the item to our customers. We try to look it up on the Internet, and sometime we are still stumped. The item in this photo was purchased from us and the buyer asked a friend about it. The friend thought it might be used for canning food. We even had a book with over 500 pictures of vintage kitchen utensils and this object was not in that book. So I am throwing this out to the readers of the Voice – do you know what this is? Any guesses? Any responses will be in the next newsletter.

Religious Articles Go to Goa

Where do they go, old rosaries, holy medals, and other religious articles?

“As a cradle Catholic, I was taught to bury them,” said Nancy Goalen, volunteer at SVDP. “One day my street was being torn up,” Nancy said. “I took my old rosaries out and asked the workers, ‘Are any of you Catholic?’ A couple were, so I asked if I could bury my rosaries in the trench they had dug. They said, sure, go ahead!”

SVDP offers another, easier option: send your items to the Religious Articles Ministry at our Minneapolis store, which redistributes them far and near. Parishioners take boxes to distribute at churches, schools, and prisons. A thousand rosaries went to Catholic Aid in Haiti. A woman stops in the store to ask for a holy medal for her sister, who is living with cancer. NonCatholics like articles that bear messages of faith, hope, and love too. And this spring, Nancy got a letter from Goa—a state in India whose Christian population is an unusually high 25 percent.

“I am a priest working in a poor village,” the sender wrote. “All these families have strong faith.... I am in need of some Rosaries and other Sacramentals to distribute.”

Nancy packed a box with forty pounds of items, raised money for the \$200 postage from local Society of St. Vincent groups, and shipped it off. At the end of June, an email arrived, with two photos. “Hope you and your members are fine by the grace of God. I have received the parcel and began to distribute it.”

The idea is to treat old religious articles with respect.

But as an article from St. Luke the Evangelist Catholic Church reminds us, something like a blessed candle is not in itself holy. The wax is like a messenger that reminds us of the call to lead holy lives. Even the paper and ink of the Bible are simply “means through which God communicates the Word to us. It is the Word that is holy, not the material.” *

So, no one needs to feel burdened with unwanted religious articles. Feel free to let them go, with due respect.

* <https://stlukesatholic.com/what-to-do-with-worn-or-unwanted-religious-items>





Society of St. Vincent de Paul - Twin Cities
Archdiocese of Saint Paul & Minneapolis

2939 12th Ave. S.
Minneapolis, MN 55407

We're on the web!
www.svdpmpls.org

Vinnie's Voice

Published Quarterly

The Society of St. Vincent de Paul Twin Cities
2939 12th Avenue S. Minneapolis, MN 55407
Phone (612)722-7882, Fax (612) 722-0667

Editorial Staff

Ed Koerner, eeckoerner@svdpmpls.org
Wayne Bugg, wbugg@svdpmpls.org

OUR GOALS

- Promote greater spiritual growth at every level of the Society
- Enhance the image of the Society to become a more visible sign of Christ
- Encourage greater unity at every level of the Society
- Develop greater solidarity with and care for people who are poor
- Build strengthened relationships with the Church, Vincentian Family, and other organizations which serve people in need

To contribute story ideas, or pictures, please email Wayne Bugg at wbugg@svdpmpls.org

Society of St Vincent de Paul

Minneapolis Store
2939 12th Ave. S.
Minneapolis, MN 55407
(612) 722-7882
Wayne Bugg, Store Manager
wbugg@svdpmpls.org

St. Paul Store

461 7th St. W.
St Paul, MN 55102
(651) 227-1332
Julene Maruska, Store Manager

Help Us to Help Others