



## Des Moines Council Society of St. Vincent de Paul

# VINCENTIAN VOICE

Third Quarter 2014

Dear Friends and Fellow Vincentians,

The Society's mid-year meeting in May and national assembly in September are always great opportunities to learn and reflect – and our most recent mid-year meeting during the first few days of May was no exception.

Our national president, Sheila Gilbert, is always inspiring in her approach to the conditions that imprison so many people in persistent, grinding poverty. She remains firm in her resolve not just to reduce poverty in the United States but to eliminate it. She knows that results aren't achieved in bold, sweeping moves but will only happen one person, one family and one community at a time.

To accomplish that goal, we have to remove barriers and create real change – not just talk about something but really do something. We need to be a real player," Gilbert said.

She noted that the society is working at the national level with agencies more closely than ever before and discussing what we can do to really end poverty. She also expressed a desire in making poverty an issue in the 2016 elections so that it will be one of the top three or four priorities for the next president.

To end poverty and the human suffering that goes along with it, the society must grow stronger. While our actions speak for themselves, the society's voice must grow louder to influence real change here in Des Moines and across the country.

To do that, we must grow the society at every level, beginning with our conferences -- my conference, your conference, all conferences in the Des Moines diocese.

We need to get more people involved, especially younger people. We're taking steps to make that happen, but you can take action

to make a difference, too. As one of the mid-year speakers noted, "If each one of us just brings one family member or friend to join the society, we would double our size."

Just think about the powerful message it would send if every conference were to bring at least one new person to our July 13 Quarterly Breakfast or September 28 Friends of the Poor Walk. Think, too, of the impact our home visits and other works could have if we were to bring more active members into our conferences.

It is in doing so that we could help our friends and family grow in spirituality, too.

I was unable to attend the most recent Midwest regional meeting that was held in St. Louis June 6-7. However our Executive Director, Eric Woolson, as well as VP Chuck Korte attended. Eric relayed that he was moved by the words of the Most Reverend Edward Rice, Auxiliary Bishop of the Archdiocese of St. Louis. He noted that much has been made by the media about stories of Pope Francis' compassion for the poor as though that focus is something new and novel in the Church.

"I resent it and you should, too," he said. "The Pope hasn't gotten us 'on focus.' We are on focus. The Church has been working with the poor for 2,000 years. What the Pope has done is focus media attention on what we've done for years: corporal works of mercy and spiritual works of mercy. There are a lot of social services agencies out there, The difference with St. Vincent de Paul is divine charity, putting into action the charity of Christ."

Let's work together in Christ's spirit of divine charity to ease the burdens of poverty.

Jim Wachuta  
Council President



Mireya Ramirez, an outreach specialist with Catholic Charities instructor a full classroom of students in basic computer skills on a recent March evening.

### **SVdP Success Story – Collaboration Catholic Charities' Spanish Language Basic Computer Skills Course**

The Catholic Charities' Spanish-language basic computer skills course is a true collaboration success story of the Tom Varilek Education Center. Led by Mireya Ramirez, an outreach specialist with Catholic Charities, separate eight-week courses are offered on Tuesday evenings and Thursday mornings. Each course is two-and-a-half hours long.

Ramirez notes that the education center's location is familiar and convenient for students. "They feel happy that we can provide a place very close. Before, we were at DMACC Success Center at Southwest Ninth and Porter, and that was a little far," she explains.

While most students drive to class, several have relied on DART for their evening transportation and benefited from SVdP on Sixth's location along several main bus routes and proximity to the central transfer station. The Spanish-language course, which has been offered at the education center only since 2013, was attended by 58 students last year and 22 in 2014 year-to-date. Ramirez, who recruits class participants via advertising in the Hispanic community newspaper and has a waiting list for coming sessions, normally has students at all 14 work stations.

Ramirez says that the educational center has solved her challenge of finding a class location. And, she jokes about its technology. "I'm very short so I can't reach the Smart Board but I use the mouse and key-

board for it and students like the big screen and seeing how to use the computer."

On a serious note, she adds, "After they finish the whole eight weeks, they feel more comfortable to continue and sometimes they prefer to continue with English language classes because they know how to use the computer, so they go on to DMACC or other places to obtain their educational goals."

Catholic Charities, a United Way agency, is a 501c3, non-profit, social service organization that serves people of all faiths in central and southwest Iowa. Established in the Diocese of Des Moines in 1924, it is "the official head of all Catholic welfare agencies in the Diocese and the link of cooperation with all other welfare agencies."

### **Volunteer Opportunities**

Volunteers, including Dowling Catholic students in need of service hours, are always welcome at the Society. Council needs include daily office volunteers, store volunteers at 1426 Sixth Avenue and 109 SW 63<sup>rd</sup> Street and assistance in operating our food pantry on the first and third Tuesday evenings of the month.

To learn more, contact Office Manager Mary Beck (office) at 282-8328, Jessica Daab (store) at 282-8328, Ext. 11, and Chasity DeMaranville (food pantry) at 282-8328 ext. 14.

### **Donations Always Needed**

SVdP picks up donations Monday through Friday based on a zip-code route. For details or to schedule a pick-up, please call us at 282-8328.

## **Participants at 23rd Annual Golf Outing Dodge Raindrops, Ensure Successful Event**

A field of 144 golfers, other guests and a team of volunteers dodged several rain showers at Willow Creek Golf Course in West Des Moines on May 13 to ensure that the council's 23rd annual golf outing was a successful event.

Proceeds from the outing, which is the council's largest fundraising event of the year, help fund assistance efforts for people in need in the greater Des Moines community.

"We've been truly blessed with so many wonderful sponsors who are committed to the cause of helping the needy and support the council's efforts to walk with them on the path to self-sufficiency," said Carol Weyer, Golf Outing Committee Chair. "I can't say enough good things about those golfers who believe in this event year in and year out. I've heard all the stories about golfers who don't care what the weather does, but this year's participants really did show their true colors by braving the elements."

She added, "As always, our volunteers on the golf committee members were outstanding as they put in a number of hours to make sure the event ran without a hitch. And, I'd be remiss if I didn't thank Dan Clark at Willow Creek and his entire staff for all their hard work and warm hospitality."

Event winners included:

Men's low team: Mark Hummel, Perry Hummel, Kevin Hummel, Gordy Hanan (64)  
Women's low team: Betty Wines, Kathy Van Sloun, Sylvia Lenz, Dixie Harms (72)  
Mixed low team: Ken Shaffer, Ray Svac, Terry Price, Lisa Altes (67)  
Longest drive: Dean Safris, Jane O'Halloran  
Longest putt: Scott Robert, Chris Korte

Raffle winners included:

\$50 Casey's gift certificates: Denny Westover, Andy Flynn (twice), Bob Watts, Rebecca Buchholtz, Tom Davis, Jan Busby, Elizabeth Christensen, Marjorie Rohlf  
\$100 Merle Hay Mall gift certificate: Tammy Linn  
\$100 Valley West Mall gift certificate: Fr. John Bertogli

\$100 Jordan Creek Town Center gift certificate: Mickey Myhre  
Garnet necklace: Bill Curoe  
Principal Charity Classic tickets: Steve Rinker, Frank Lenzini, Tom Davis, Denise Kurovski; Karen Halls  
Four Iowa Barnstormers tickets: Alice Clabaugh  
\$25 Cinemark gift certificate: Rose Mary Hicks  
\$25 Tacos Andreas gift certificate: Tom Knebel  
\$25 Trophy's Bar & Grill gift certificate: Jean McPherson  
Two Des Moines Playhouse tickets: Debbie Mihlhop  
42-inch plasma television: Patricia Piziali  
Two \$35 haircuts at Elements Salon & Studio: Leigh Vennard; Patricia Piziali  
\$50 Chuck's Pizza gift certificate: Nora Calhoun, Larry Ballard  
Kitchen Select 3-crock pot slow cooker: Magic Chef food dehydrator: Mary Dobson

## **Chasity DeMaranville Assumes Duties as DM Council's Social Services Director**

Chasity DeMaranville, who served as the second person on the council's social services staff and assumed responsibility for the department when Fern Klemm resigned on Feb. 28 to move to Missouri, has been named director.

"Fern was well known for her unique mix of compassion, resourcefulness and common sense. Clearly, God's hand was at play in bringing Chas to us at the right time. She was not only here at the right time but she was also in the right place as she had just moved a few months earlier from our store staff to work with Fern," said Executive Director Eric Woolson. "She not only learned the department's ins and outs from Fern but their approach to problem solving and care for those in need is absolutely uncanny."

## **Education Center Update**

We have had a change in leadership in the Tom Varilek Education Center with the recent departure of Felipe Gallardo. Darsi Johnson, who has been on the TVEC staff, is assuming responsibility for day-to-day activities. Working with Des Moines Area Community College and other agencies, we are in the process of restructuring the center's class offerings.

Complete details will be available in the fourth quarter newsletter.

### Contact Us

We welcome your suggestions to improve our services. Feel free to contact us:

President Jim Wachuta:  
[president@svdpdsm.org](mailto:president@svdpdsm.org)

Executive Director Eric Woolson:  
[ewoolson@svdpdsm.org](mailto:ewoolson@svdpdsm.org) or 282-8328 ext. 12

Office Manager Mary Beck:  
[secretary@svdpdsm.org](mailto:secretary@svdpdsm.org) or 282-8328  
Social Services Director Chasity DeMaranville:  
[socialservices@svdpdsm.org](mailto:socialservices@svdpdsm.org)  
or 282-8328, ext. 14

Education Center Director Darsi Johnson:  
[djohnson@svdpdsm.org](mailto:djohnson@svdpdsm.org)  
or 282-8328, ext. 17

Retail Operations Director Jessica Daab:  
[storemanager@svdpdsm.org](mailto:storemanager@svdpdsm.org)  
or 282-8328, ext. 11

### Dates to Remember

July 1, 2014	Evening Food Pantry 1426 Sixth Avenue	5:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.
July 13, 2014	Quarterly Breakfast St. Ambrose Cathedral, 601 High Street, Des Moines Diocesan Center, 601 Grand Avenue, Des Moines	Following 8:30 a.m. Mass
July 15, 2014	Evening Food Pantry 1426 Sixth Avenue	5:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.
August 5, 2014	Evening Food Pantry 1426 Sixth Avenue	5:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.
August 19, 2014	Evening Food Pantry 1426 Sixth Avenue	5:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.
August 21, 2014	Presidents Meeting/Executive Board Meeting 1426 Sixth Avenue	5:30 p.m.
September 2, 2014	Evening Food Pantry 1426 Sixth Avenue	5:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.
September 16, 2014	Evening Food Pantry 1426 Sixth Avenue	5:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.
September 18, 2014	Presidents Meeting/Executive Board Meeting 1426 Sixth Avenue	5:30 p.m.
September 24-27, 2014	National Assembly Atlanta, Georgia	
September 28, 2014	Friends of the Poor Walk Pete Crivaro Park Des Moines	Noon to 3:00 p.m.
October 7, 2014	Evening Food Pantry 1426 Sixth Avenue	5:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.
October 12, 2014	Quarterly Breakfast Our Lady's Immaculate Heart Church 510 East First Street, Ankeny	Following 8:30 a.m. Mass