

Hope: Stability, Motherhood, and a Second Chance

You provided guidance for Rebekah and Baby Hope to find freedom and stability.

Rebekah was 33 when she came to St. Vincent's Shelter for Women and Families with her young daughter Hope.

Rebekah grew up in Dayton, in a home with love but also with alcoholism and abuse. Reaching young adulthood, she found herself living with her four children in an even more abusive, physically violent situation.

She remembers, "I was getting beaten up physically and emotionally. To deal with it, I got addicted to opioids. Eventually my kids got taken away. By then I felt so lost and alone that I took even more drugs."

Eventually, feeling hopeless but aching for something better, she pulled herself from the daily violence, moved back into her father's house, and enrolled in a drug rehabilitation program.

By early 2019, she was struggling financially, but she was also free from drugs and about to welcome a new baby girl. "I named her Hope, because at that time in my life, it felt like she was the only thing I had."

Shortly after giving birth, when the situation at her father's house became intolerable, Rebekah and Hope entered the SVDP Shelter for Women and Families for the first time. For the next year they volleyed back and forth between the shelter and her father's house. The final time they entered the shelter, in August of 2020, she knew something was different. "My mindset was different. I felt stronger."

With the help of her shelter case manager, after a few months Rebekah and Hope found housing at Kettering Commons — one of St. Vincent's supportive housing ministries. In addition to having their own apartment, they also have a case manager helping them maintain their newfound freedom and stability.

Of her new apartment, Rebekah says, "I love it. It was furnished, but now I'm working to get more things. And maybe paint a little. It is two bedrooms. But my favorite part is just being stable. Not being worried about where we're going to stay. Hope loves it. She has her own room."

"This has changed our future for the better. It makes me feel good that even though we've been through a lot, we are both resilient. Most days lately I think of myself as strong, and I am determined to keep succeeding. The donors are a gift from God. There really are no words other than that. Without them, Hope and I would have had nothing."





From the Executive Director

Dear Friend of St. Vincent de Paul,

This issue of The Vincentian focuses on our housing ministries, where many of our shelter guests have an opportunity for stable, long-term housing with full-time support from our St. Vincent case managers. Our housing ministries include seven sites scattered across Montgomery County, where over 150 men, women, and children can fully participate as citizens of their neighborhoods and students in school.

We assist our residents with managing daily household activities, relationships with teachers, employers, and medical providers. Volunteers (like you!) share their time and talent in friendship with our tenants.

None of this is possible without your financial support! Thank you for supporting these ministries!

As we cautiously enter this next phase of the coronavirus pandemic, we all yearn to see maskless faces once again — revealing each unique, unrepeatable likeness of God in one another. This past year has unfortunately introduced new habits of isolation and avoidance for many, disconnecting us from one another. Please resolve with me to intentionally reconnect the bonds of community that only physical presence and thoughtful tenderness of personal interaction can bring.

Let's all rejoice in the splendor of spring and its promises of renewed life!

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Michael

Michael E. Vanderburgh,
Executive Director



Through our ministries of St. Vincent de Paul, our very humanity is celebrated every time we reach out to a hurting neighbor, a stranger with nowhere else to turn, or a child without clothing, food, or safe shelter. Together we show God's love through our care and accompaniment of over 100,000 people in the Miami Valley each year.

A Life Remembered

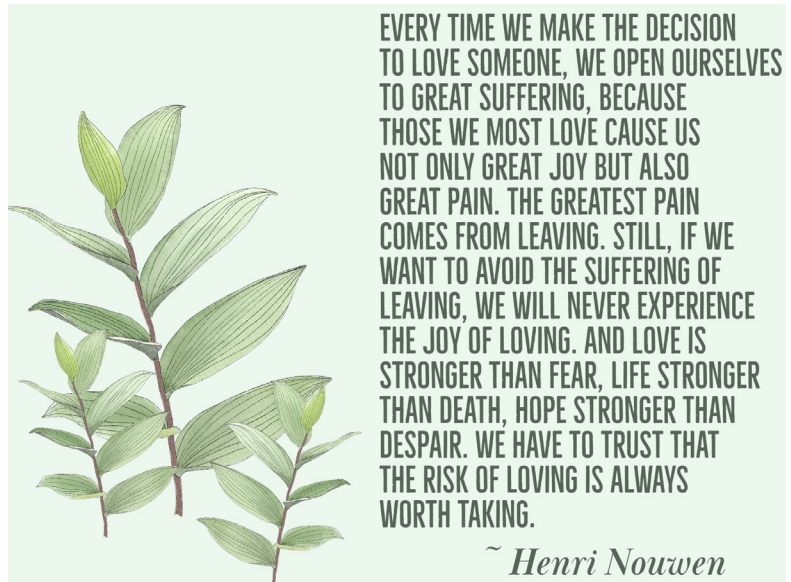
Donald "Donny" Hastings
July 11, 1968 – February 17, 2021

Donny was a resident of Key Terrace — our supportive housing ministry for chronically homeless adults — since the day their doors opened. Throughout his 52 years, these three and a half years were the longest he had ever lived in one place.

His honesty, work ethic, sense of humor, and humility impressed those who knew Donny.

These positive attributes were noticed by the employers who would often commend him on his work, the workers with Miami Valley Housing Opportunities who knew him while he was on the streets, and the staff at St. Vincent de Paul's Safe Haven house and Key Terrace who had the opportunity to work with him.

He will be deeply missed. And yet, in our loss there is a rebirth; his struggles in this life are now shed.



EVERY TIME WE MAKE THE DECISION TO LOVE SOMEONE, WE OPEN OURSELVES TO GREAT SUFFERING, BECAUSE THOSE WE MOST LOVE CAUSE US NOT ONLY GREAT JOY BUT ALSO GREAT PAIN. THE GREATEST PAIN COMES FROM LEAVING. STILL, IF WE WANT TO AVOID THE SUFFERING OF LEAVING, WE WILL NEVER EXPERIENCE THE JOY OF LOVING. AND LOVE IS STRONGER THAN FEAR, LIFE STRONGER THAN DEATH, HOPE STRONGER THAN DESPAIR. WE HAVE TO TRUST THAT THE RISK OF LOVING IS ALWAYS WORTH TAKING.

~ *Henri Nouwen*

Will you join Thelma as a Steadfast Friend?

For \$32 you can provide food, shelter, and clothing for a guest for one day.



“When I get paid,
St. Vincent’s gets paid!”

Thelma became a Steadfast Friend seven years ago after volunteering with her church at our Women and Families Shelter. As a volunteer, she saw the work at St. Vincent firsthand and her decision to support the mission financially was reaffirmed.

She is one of more than 200 Steadfast Friends — donors who are committed to making monthly gifts to help those in need. Steadfast Friends like the ease of an automatic donation. And they know their monthly gifts will add up to create a great difference for their neighbors in need.

Thelma gives monthly through her credit union because it’s easier than writing a check and sending it through the mail. It is easy to change the amount of the monthly gift at any time.

Setting up a monthly donation has allowed her to give to the shelter in a way that works with how she gets paid – it syncs up with the pattern of her monthly income and the bills she needs to pay.

“The satisfaction it gives me to know that I am helping people who really need help. It makes me feel like I am doing something I am supposed to be doing. It’s a little drop in the bucket but I’m glad that I can do it.”

With a gift of \$32 a month, you can provide a homeless guest with one night of food, clothing and shelter – giving them the stability and assistance they need.

Will you become a Steadfast Friend?

Please go to stvincentdayton.org and “How to Donate” to sign up today!

You Gave Larry a Roof Over His Head and Peace of Mind

When the bottom of the bucket fell out, he found stability at St. Vincent.



66-year-old Larry Dudley is a resident of St. Vincent’s DePaul Center and a man of few words. “There isn’t very much to talk about. I was born in New York, and I grew up in Dayton. I had a very rough childhood. Then, a few years ago I had a rough patch, and I lost everything.”

His “rough patch” resulted in him becoming homeless. “My mom, my dad, grandma, and grandpa all passed away. When moms and grandmas pass away, people go their own ways. They are the ones that hold the family together. The bottom fell out of the bucket. Then my own stupidity and ignorance kicked in – you hang out with the wrong crowd and the wrong things start happening.”

“I lived on the street for about five years. It is hard to explain what it is like. There is no easy part about it at all. Eventually I got pneumonia real bad. I didn’t want to go to the hospital, but someone got me to go.”

After discharge from the hospital, instead of returning to the streets, he went to the SVdP Men’s Shelter. After about three months in the shelter, Larry moved into DePaul Center — one of St. Vincent’s supportive housing ministries.

When asked what the best part of no longer living on the streets, he reports, “I’m still alive. I’m still breathing. That’s number one. I don’t have to be on my toes 24/7. Out there you got to watch your back. I have privacy and peace of mind.”

To the supporters of SVdP, Larry says, “It’s God’s blessing that you still have some good people in the world. They put a roof over my head and got me stability. I’m no better than no one. But I’m no less than no one. Some things you just have to go through in life, but if you hang in there, you’ll be all right. I’m just trying to hang in there.”



St. Vincent de Paul
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DRIVE DAYTON FORWARD

The Vincentian Newsletter - Spring 2021



WHAT HAPPENS TO YOUR GIFT OF GOODS?

We regularly use the household items you donate to help the people we serve. Shelter guests receive donated clothes and toiletries, and families moving into their new homes need furniture and appliances. Would you please make sure your furniture, appliances and household items are in clean and usable condition before donating? Thank you!

DONATION DROP-OFF

Donation of goods can be made any time to our 24/7 donations dock at 120 W. Apple Street. If you or your organization would like to host a collection drive, please visit stvincentdayton.org

FURNITURE PICK UP

Please call 937.425.0592.



Please remember St. Vincent de Paul in your will.

Please call Michael Vanderburgh at (513) 257-6266 if you need assistance.

The Vincentian is published quarterly by St. Vincent de Paul, Dayton District Council.

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The Dayton District Council of St. Vincent de Paul, growing in spirituality and friendship, provides Christ inspired, person-to-person support in an empowering effort to improve the lives of those in personal, spiritual, or material need.

