

## To Hold Hope in Her Arms

You gave her a place to start over.



Years of trauma and uncertainty, a life of abuse and neglect, and now Angel holds hope—in her arms and in her heart. With her baby boy just a few weeks old sleeping sweetly in her arms, and the prospect of moving into her own apartment in the next day or two, she remembers coming to the St. Vincent shelter: “I was scared. When I was standing out front, I actually wanted to turn around, but it worked out. I should have come here a lot sooner.”

Life has not been easy for Angel. Her childhood was difficult, with little guidance and, sadly, much neglect and abuse, mostly by close family members. “I used to be really mad about it,” she explained, “but I don’t blame them too much anymore. The things they were put through themselves can only explain their behavior. Not that it excuses it, it just explains it. I understand better now.”

She became one of the first members of her family to graduate high school, and she did so two years early. Without much support, however, and with the added anxiety and depression that comes with being a victim of abuse, her first relationship as an adult was riddled with domestic violence.

Fleeing that relationship, her life was extremely unstable for several years. She bounced around from place to place, couch surfing and constantly starting over. There were times she got ahead and thought things would start to improve, but then circumstances would change and things would get bad again. She started looking for help and resources to be able to start over.

“I was sad because entering St. Vincent’s Women and Families Shelter was the only option that I had. It does hurt not having a stable or welcoming family, and I don’t have either. It was scary, but once I got settled, I was relieved. I felt I could let go of a lot of that trauma and fear.” She explained that by having her basic needs met, she was able to take steps forward to build a new life. The staff cared and listened to her. She received the kind of guidance that she never had before, guidance toward resources to take better care of herself and her baby.

“My depression was really bad until I had him,” Angel says. “Then things kind of evened out and I’ve got more hope for what’s coming. I’m really thankful for my time here.”



## From the Executive Director

Dear Friend of St. Vincent de Paul,

War, famine, natural and manmade disasters, pandemics: History's drumbeat reveals countless sufferings. Most seem so far away that we understand them as unfortunate byproducts of a fallen world, a world that is otherwise full of beauty and optimism for ourselves and our families. But some sufferings are so close and personal that they seal us off from any glimmer of hope unless we get help from friends or family – or a loving community like St. Vincent de Paul.

Many of our homeless friends find themselves sealed off, sometimes from bad choices and sometimes from bad circumstances. For those of us with already fragile family and community bonds, the path to isolation and homelessness is often short and swift. You can help us reveal for them a glimmer of hope.

The Society of St. Vincent de Paul grounds hope in a radical faith in Love itself – God who dwells among us, who teaches us to tenderly accompany each other through every pain and suffering. We were made for Love, and our neighbors in need help us grow our faith in Love.

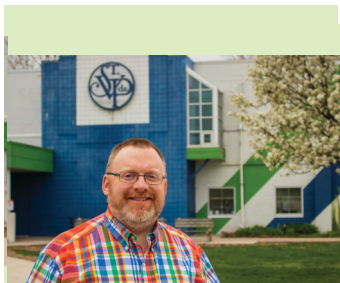
In this issue you will read stories of broken relationships, and how your support of our mission helps love persevere through it all.

Thanks for your prayers, financial support, material support, volunteering, and by sharing the good news of St. Vincent de Paul Society with your family and friends!

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.*

## It's Personal, Not Business

### Scott's old car has new life supporting St. Vincent's Mission.

"You've made us an offer we can't refuse," Scott told his godfather, who had just offered to sell him his car for only half of what it was worth. His godfather responded, "That's what godfathers do."

This is not the first time that Scott and his wife have received an incredibly generous deal on a vehicle. "We are truly humbled by the generosity, love, and support we constantly receive from our family and friends. We know that not everyone has that kind of support, and we want to be able to pay it forward in whatever way we can."



Even though they could get some extra cash by selling their used cars, they prefer to donate them. They want to follow the examples of personal generosity they've been shown, rather than make another business transaction. They knew that St. Vincent de Paul accepts—and needs—donations of cars, boats, RVs, and motorcycles. The proceeds from vehicle sales are used to fund the many ministries of St. Vincent.

It was an easy decision for Scott and his family. "We are happy to be able to donate our car to St. Vincent de Paul. It's an organization that we know will make the best use of it to help our neighbors in need."

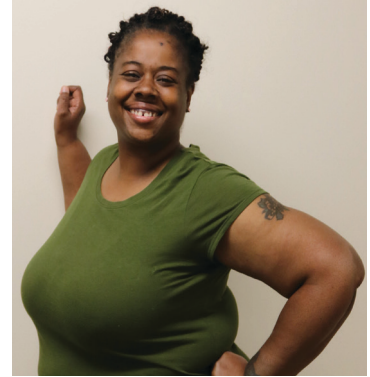
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## A Fresh Start: A Mother's Determined Love

You gave them shelter and structure while they searched for a fresh start.

"I never would have thought I'd see myself in a shelter, because I've always worked hard," Michelle says, "but life happens." The pain in her eyes at having to bring her son to the shelter on his 11th birthday is evident, but so is the strong, determined love she has for him and his two grown brothers.

Becoming a mother to her oldest son at the age of 14 compelled her to learn responsibility and hard work early in life. When her youngest son was born prematurely with several medical conditions, his father was not supportive. The challenges took their toll on Michelle's mental health. She completed her education and began working at Johns Hopkins at the age of 20 as a Certified Nursing Assistant and was there for 20 years.



When her son's father became abusive, she knew it was time for a fresh start. She and her son moved to Dayton to stay with family until they found their own place. They were put on a waiting list that seemed endless, due to the current shortage of affordable housing in the area. After several months of waiting, staying with family was no longer an option. She made the difficult decision to bring her son to St. Vincent's Women and Families Shelter.

The transition to shelter was challenging, but she is thankful they had a place to stay that offered support. She continued working hard until she finally found an apartment with the help of her case manager. Its affordability will allow her to work part-time to make ends meet and still have time to focus on her son's special needs and her own mental health.

"Initially I was beating myself up, but I've been humbled. God sometimes uses these things to slow us down. It made me focus on paying more attention to my son's needs. My goal is to become a homeowner so that I can continue to provide him with the care he needs and have a place to welcome my other sons and their children."

## Waiting for a Place to Call Home

You are providing Giovannis with security and support while he waits to find housing.

"I felt ashamed," says Giovannis when describing his return to St. Vincent's Men's Shelter, "but I knew I had to go somewhere where I felt safe. I swallowed my pride and came back." That was in December of 2021, and he is still waiting for housing. The average stay for men in shelter waiting for housing is 72 days, but it can be much longer for special requirements that provide accessibility and independent living.

He came to St. Vincent for the first time in 2017. He had been caring for his ailing mother at home, but when she had a stroke, he had to move her into a nursing home. At the same time, his landlord doubled the rent. St. Vincent helped him find rehousing in an apartment that he kept for four years.

However, after being hospitalized in 2020 with Covid complications, he spent extensive time at a rehab facility to recover from severe memory loss and inability to use his legs. He was there so long that he was unable to renew his lease in 2021. He bounced around staying with friends for a little while, but he knew he needed the stability that St. Vincent would provide.

"It's difficult because the housing process is slow," he says. "It's hard to find housing." With rapidly rising rental rates and low availability of affordable housing in the Dayton area right now, the waiting list for rehousing is extremely long. His case manager has been diligently working to help him apply for housing, even coming in on a holiday to fill out an application.

He is currently on disability while he continues to struggle with both mental and physical health issues. He says of St. Vincent de Paul, "They have been keeping me sane." Thank you for your support in keeping our guests safe and in improving health as they wait for a new home of their own.





St. Vincent de Paul

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St. Vincent de Paul Social Services, Inc.  
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The Vincentian Newsletter - Spring 2022



### 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](http://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.**

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### PRIVACY STATEMENT

Your privacy is very important to us. We do not sell, rent, loan, or in any other way share your personal information with anyone.

### MISSION OF ST. VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY, DAYTON DISTRICT COUNCIL

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.



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