

Giving Back to One Who Served and Sacrificed

You helped a veteran get back on his feet.



Lukas smiling outside St. Vincent de Paul.

“It wasn’t as bad as some kids have it,” Lukas says of his difficult upbringing. His father was an abusive alcoholic, and the family moved dozens of times before Lukas was even ten years old. “I had food, and a place to stay, but I couldn’t make friends because we moved so often.”

Without much direction in his life, he found himself heading down a path after high school that he did not want to continue on. “I realized I had to do something with my life,” he says, “so I joined the Army.”

He spent several years on active duty as a helicopter mechanic, including a one-year tour in Iraq. He injured his back while serving, which affected his ability to keep his HVAC job after his service. He went to school and earned an associate degree in computer science with the goal of getting a tech job.

Around this time, his father’s health was beginning to deteriorate. Lukas cut down his work hours, finding a part-time job. He moved into an apartment with his father so he could take care of him. They soon learned that the apartment had leaky pipes that the landlord refused to fix. When the pipes burst, the landlord blamed it on them and evicted them.

Lukas and his father lived in a tent for a while until they saved enough money to buy a camper. Lukas continued to care for his father, but eventually, Lukas says, “I knew I couldn’t keep up with his medical issues. He needed more help than I could provide.”

He reached out to St. Vincent de Paul’s Supportive Services for Veteran Families. Despite his eviction, they were able to find him an apartment. They helped him find a job through a temporary agency and assisted with his rent until he found a full-time position. He also receives disability from the Army for his back injury, which he says helps him pay his bills. Just one year after being homeless, he recently prequalified for a home loan and is looking for a house.

“It’s a giant accomplishment going from being homeless with bad credit to being prequalified for a home loan,” he says. “A lot of the change in my life just came from reaching out for help. This has gotten me back on my feet. I am so thankful for everything that was done for me.”

And we are so thankful to Lukas and all veterans for their service and sacrifice!



From the 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.

Soon we will share the beautiful reflection of gratitude that Thanksgiving brings, a wonderful prelude to the season of Advent. It is a time of waiting in expectation – hope for God’s Word made flesh, dwelling among us in our anxieties, fears, weaknesses, and poor choices. Advent can help us welcome Love itself into the manger of our hearts at Christmas, through our own rich choices of vulnerability and generosity toward one another – particularly the stranger and powerless.

God is Love. We were made for Love, and our neighbors in need help us grow our faith in Love – if we remember to turn to God when we face suffering.

We need you now more than ever – in prayer and in deed. Thanksgiving and Advent always inspire me to try loving more deeply and giving more freely; I hope the same for you! Come pray in our beautiful St. Vincent de Paul Chapel at our Apple Street Shelter for Women and Families! Nearly every week, Monday through Friday at 10:00 a.m. we have a Holy Hour with Deacon Mark Danis, including praying the Rosary.

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

Have a great Thanksgiving, Advent, and Christmas.

Yours in Christ,

Michael

Michael E. Vanderburgh,
Executive Director

A Place to Find Rest

On Giving Tuesday you can give a weary guest a comfortable place to sit.



A broken chair at the Men’s Shelter.

This year, Giving Tuesday is November 28, and we are asking for your help to raise \$10,000 for new chairs in our shelters! A number of the chairs used by guests have seen better days. With the wear and tear of everyday use, many are breaking, like the one pictured here.

We want to ensure the more than 500 men, women, and children staying in shelter each night have a safe and secure place to sit. Will you give a shelter guest a comfortable chair where they can rest in the midst of unimaginable hardships?

Last year, your generous support on Giving Tuesday provided shelter guests with new underwear, the number one needed personal item. With your help again this year, we know that we can match our Giving Tuesday goal for new seating and ensure everyone has a place to sit!

Happy, and Hopeful for the Future

You gave Larry a place to go and hope for the future.

“I have worked ever since I was 16 years old,” Larry says. “I worked for over 30 years, but these days, I don’t work due to the back pain I am in.”

Several years ago, he had back surgery to address scoliosis and other spinal issues. He was prescribed opioids to help with the pain. Over time they stopped helping his pain, so he began to take more and more. He spiraled into a full addiction. He is thankful to now be four years sober, but his constant pain prevents him from working like he used to.

He lost his home and spent several months living on the street and staying in abandoned properties. Finally, he says, “I had nowhere to go so I went to shelter.” He spent more than a year in shelter, working when he could and attending recovery groups twice a week. He worked well with staff and now has his own home.

“Being in my own home is absolutely wonderful,” he says. “I feel better about myself. It feels great to have a place. I’m happy where I am at. I am thankful for the shelter; they did a wonderful job. I couldn’t be where I am without their help. I am hopeful for the future.”



Larry relaxing in his own place.

Putting the Pieces Back Together

You helped Angela find community and support.



Ashley smiling outside Safe Haven.

When Angela needed to escape unhealthy family relationships, she turned to St. Vincent de Paul for help while she looked for a fresh start. Unfortunately, when she came to the shelter, her mental health was in crisis, and she struggled with an eating disorder.

As it turned out, the medication she was taking for her mental health was causing severe side effects that disabled her. Thankfully, the shelter staff recognized that her medication was hurting rather than helping her. They worked with her to advocate for a new medication.

“I give thanks to the glory of God for the staff of St. Vincent de Paul for advocating for me to switch medications,” Angela says. “The new meds help me focus. This has helped me put the pieces back together.”

She transferred to Safe Haven supportive housing and has been there for the last several years finding healing and wholeness. With the help of case managers and staff there, she found employment through Goodwill. “It feels great having the community here where I can grow and accomplish goals,” she says. “I have grown in my self-confidence. Out here, they are helping me build myself back up.”

Thank you for being part of a community that helps Angela and others like her rebuild their lives.



St. Vincent de Paul
 ASSISTANCE • SHELTER • HOPE
 St. Vincent de Paul Social Services, Inc.
 124 West Apple Street
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DRIVE DAYTON FORWARD

The Vincentian Newsletter - Fall 2023



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 Society in your will.

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

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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.