

Radiating Joy Through the Struggle

Thanks to you, Ciera is on her way to stable independent living.



Ciera smiling and enjoying the sunshine.

Ciera's smile and sense of humor radiate joy, even as she describes her difficult past. "I lived in a toxic household," she says of her childhood. She had four siblings, and their parents both struggled with different addictions. "It was a lot of chaos and a lot of fights."

She moved out of her parents' house shortly after high school, and says, "My mom lost her mind when I moved out. I eventually moved back home with my parents. My mom had a lot of health issues and needed financial help."

After her mom passed away, Ciera began using drugs to cope with the stress that her childhood trauma left behind. She struggled with addiction for more than six years. "I was in and out of treatment," she says. "I struggled with getting clean because I

was doing it for others and not myself. When I did it for me, I was able to stick with it."

She ended up homeless due to an unsafe living situation. Her apartment was infested with roaches, and her landlord would not make repairs in a timely manner. She finally had no choice but to leave her housing and come to the shelter.

Because she had struggled with addictions and homelessness in the past, she was recommended to St. Vincent de Paul's supportive housing. Here Ciera has her own place to live in a supportive community. She has stability and space to find healing. Staff offer guidance and encouragement to address day-to-day living responsibilities and help her take steps to secure an independent housing situation.

Ciera has made an impact on staff and residents alike. Her sense of humor and positivity make her a joy to be around. "I constantly joke with staff. I like to keep the mood light," she says, and jokes, "You know what a pinball machine does? That's what my brain does. Sometimes the marbles fall out."

For her, supportive housing has made all the difference. "It's a lot better here," she says. "I've gotten to know the staff well, and I know they care."

Thanks for giving Ciera a place to shine!



From the Executive Director



Through our ministries of the St. Vincent de Paul Society, 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.

Dear Friend of St. Vincent de Paul,

Sometimes I need a reminder that I am a creation. I didn't will myself into being. Though God gave me the awesome gift of free will, God still has plans for me and hopes that I will choose to love – to put others' needs ahead of my desires for myself. Our earthly culture has a different message: free will is freedom to choose what I want, I can thrive by myself, the best life is one of constant pleasures, and my best hope is in the next pleasure I can find.

The Society of St. Vincent de Paul grounds hope in Love itself – God who created us, dwells among us, and 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 sharing our Love with your family and friends!

Yours in Christ,

Michael

Michael E. Vanderburgh,
Executive Director

After a Crisis: Safety and Shelter

Thank you for welcoming people who have nowhere else to go!

Scott worked hard and lived comfortably in the same house for many years. "Life was great," he says, "and then everything that could go wrong, went wrong."

First his income took a hit when his work hours were cut. To get by, he began to sell musical instruments he had collected over the years. He found a new job but began to experience health issues that prevented him from working. Then his 80-year-old father's health also declined, and Scott became his primary caregiver.

They managed to get by until a fire broke out and forced them to leave their home. His father was able to stay with family, but they did not have room for Scott to stay too. "I came to St. Vincent's because I had nowhere else to go," he says. "I am glad I have a place to stay." He continues working with shelter staff to find housing for himself and his father.

Thank you for giving Scott a place to stay when he needs it most!



Scott plays the piano in his free time in the chapel at the Men's Shelter.

Leaving His Old Life Behind

You gave Nicholas a safe place to go.

“I spent years living on the streets,” Nicholas explains of his life before coming to St. Vincent de Paul. “It was dangerous. I would have to hustle up money just to stay at people’s places. When you find a place to sleep, you worry that you are around the right people. The places I was staying were not safe, and I’d be kicked out as soon as one of us ran out of money.”

Finally, he says, “I got tired of being out there, doing drugs, selling drugs, and not having a place to sleep.” He entered rehab and worked for six months to be clean from his addictions.

He knew he could not return to his old life after rehab. “I just had to bite my pride and come to the shelter,” he says. “It was hard, but I’m trying to turn my life around and do what’s right.” While he worked to improve his circumstances, he also dealt with frequent migraines and memory issues from a brain disorder.

He moved to St. Vincent’s supportive housing and has been there for more than three months now. He appreciates his case manager and overall, says, “It has been good. It’s a great place. You can wash your own clothes, cook your own food. They make sure you eat good and take care of yourself. They understand your situation.”

Thank you for loving your neighbors and helping Nicholas continue to move forward, one day at a time.



Nicholas is proud of turning his life around.

Good for the Neighborhood

Tom wants you to know how easy it is to donate a vehicle to St. Vincent de Paul!

“It supports people locally, and it’s an easy process,” he insists. “I just had the title notarized, then left it with the car and they came and picked it up. You could go and trade it in, but you don’t get much money for it. St. Vincent can get more money from it. It’s surprising how much they can get out of an old car!”

He and his wife, Kathleen, know well that St. Vincent de Paul will use their vehicle donation to continue helping neighbors in need, through neighborhood ministries, 24/7 emergency shelters, and supportive housing.

“It’s nice to keep it local and help in your own community where there is a lot of need,” Tom says. “It makes you feel like you’re doing something good.”

Are you ready to do something good with a vehicle that you no longer need? Even if your used car, boat, motorcycle, or RV no longer runs, it can still drive change in our community and make a positive difference in the lives of your neighbors! To start the simple process, please call 937-222-5555 option 3, or fill out our online form at stvincentdayton.org > Donate Goods > Donate Vehicles. Thank you!



When you donate your vehicle to St. Vincent, we will handle the towing!



St. Vincent de Paul

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St. Vincent de Paul Social Services, Inc.

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Dayton, Ohio 45402-2617

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DRIVE DAYTON FORWARD

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

Our mission is to, with Christian purpose, accompany those in need one person at a time by focusing on shelter, food, and clothing.



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