

February — April 2008



ST. VINCENT DE PAUL
CATHOLIC CHURCH

The St. Vincent Voice

A PUBLICATION OF ST. VINCENT DE PAUL CATHOLIC CHURCH

IT'S TIME FOR OUR FIRST PARISH MISSION IN DECADES!

Theme: "The Return of the Prodigal Son"

When: Sunday, Feb. 10th, through Wednesday, Feb. 13th

Where: St. Vincent de Paul Catholic Church

The spiritual package for the forthcoming Lenten season at our parish has something unique and exciting for all of us. We are going to have a four-day "refilling" of our reservoirs of spiritual energy as a community and as individuals. A little glance at history shows that "Parish Mission Renewal" is one event that has not taken place at St. Vincent De Paul Catholic Church for over a quarter of a century. **This is probably why some of us may be wondering what it could be all about. It is ...**

- ✦ A four-day spiritual journey of renewal and reflection.
- ✦ A trigger to a deeper response and commitment to our faith life.
- ✦ An opportunity to listen to powerful life-changing talks, to pray, to relax and to rethink our values.
- ✦ A time to intensify our personal relationship with our Lord Jesus Christ.
- ✦ A pleasant time to share our appreciation for the gift of a wonderful Eucharistic community and spend extra time with one another as a parish.
- ✦ Meant to offer all of our parishioners a retreat-like experience at a local level and at no cost.

Schedule:



There will be series of talks given (in Regan Hall) by Fr. Bob Pierson from St. John's Abbey in Collegeville. There are morning and evening sessions—so that each parishioner can attend at a convenient time. (This is not an all-day retreat.) **There is no registration or RSVP required, and you may attend all the sessions, or just the ones that will work in your schedule.**

Fr. Pierson will also be preaching at all four Masses that weekend. The sacrament of Reconciliation will be held on Tuesday night. This reconciliation service with individual confessions will be your main opportunity to experience God's mercy this Lent.

Note that the supper is FREE, but we will have a free will collection on Wednesday to enable us to cover the cost of the entire mission expenses. Childcare will be provided—please watch the bulletin for details.

Sunday, February 10th

7 pm—8 pm: "There's a wideness in God's mercy." (Dessert follows!)

Monday, February 11th

8:00 am—Morning Mass

9:00 am—10:00 am: "God's mercy in the parables and life of Jesus."

5:15 pm—6:30 pm: Meal

6:30 pm—7:00 pm: Musical prelude

7:00 pm—8:00 pm: "God's mercy in the parables and life of Jesus." (repeat of the morning talk—Dessert follows.)

Tuesday, February 12th

8:00 am—Morning Mass

9:00 am—10:00 am: "The return of the prodigal son."

5:15 pm—6:30 pm: Meal

6:30 pm—7:00 pm: Musical prelude

7:00 pm—8:00 pm: Reconciliation Service with Fr. Pierson (Dessert follows.)

Wednesday, February 13th

8:00 am—School/Parish Mass

9:00 am—10:00 am: "Living in God's love."

5:15 pm—6:30 pm: Meal

6:30 pm—7:00 pm: Musical prelude

7:00 pm—8:00 pm: Mass with Fr. Pierson preaching (Dessert follows)

Let us all look forward to this great event that will energize a great spirit of prayer, repentance and hunger for spiritual growth. The theme "The Return of the Prodigal Son" speaks directly to the "reason for the season." Please, keep Fr. Bob Pierson in your prayers as he prepares to lead our entire parish community through the sacramental experience of the "Wideness in God's Mercy" during these four special days.

—Okey Anyanwu, Pastoral Minister

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

- Feb. 6:
Ash Wednesday
- Feb. 10-13:
Parish Mission
- Mar. 8:
Auction for Education
- Mar. 9:
Daylight Savings Time
Begins
- Mar. 16:
Palm Sunday
- Mar. 20:
Holy Thursday Mass
at 7 pm
- Mar. 21:
Good Friday Liturgy
at 7 pm
- Mar. 22:
Holy Saturday Vigil
at 8 pm
- Mar. 23:
Easter Masses at 7:30,
9 and 11 am

The St. Vincent Voice Newsletter Committee

- **Tim Huston,**
Parishioner
- **Eric O'Link,**
Parishioner
- **Melanie Otto,**
Parishioner
- **Renee Paske,**
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- **Marci Siers,**
Pastoral Council Member
- **Nikelle Morris,**
*Editor/Designer,
Parishioner*

For information on
joining the committee,
contact Renee Paske at
763-425-2210.

**WE WOULD LOVE TO ADD
A FEW MORE MEMBERS!**



ASK FATHER

Fr. Jack Answers a Parishioner Question

Q. I always thought priests were required to say Mass every day. Is this true? Why, at some parishes, is Mass only offered a few times a week? I am glad St. Vincent's has one every day.

A. Actually, priests are not required to say Mass every day—in fact, Canon law states that priests are usually limited to celebrating *only* one Mass each day. The exception is that we are allowed two on Sundays or Holy Days, or three if one of the Masses is the anticipatory Mass on Saturday evening or on the eve of a Holy Day. Priests may also celebrate two Masses on weekdays in special circumstances. For instance, a priest may celebrate a daily Mass, then a funeral, wedding, nursing home, or school Mass. If for some reason a priest has more than 2 Masses in a day, he needs permission from the chancery. I recall one Friday when I needed to preside over 2 funerals and a wedding. Therefore, I had to schedule a Communion service instead of the usual daily Mass.

Why is it that we are limited to celebrating one Mass a day? One reason is that, years ago, the money for the Mass Intentions went to the priest as his salary. (Have you noticed in the bulletin that we list the times of each Mass, and who the Mass Intention is for? People come into the office and pay \$7.00 for a Mass Intention. The intention is for a person—usually deceased—and the money is for the priest.) The rule to limit Masses was instituted so that priests were not saying more than one Mass per day and receiving the money. By the way—Fr. Tom and I do not pocket that money any more. It usually goes into the coffers of the parish. However, when we have an excess of intentions, we send them to the missions where the mission priest relies on that money as his income.

A good rule of thumb is to take the number of priests assigned to a parish and subtract one to find the number of daily Masses scheduled. At my previous parish, before I had a retired priest join me, Mass was celebrated only on Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays. I know that limiting the number of Masses can be an inconvenience for those who attend daily Mass, but luckily our culture has become very mobile so that people might travel to other parishes for Mass. If that were to happen here, I would dialogue with our neighboring parishes and coordinate with them on when and where the daily Mass would be. (I found it interesting that the people in Hopkins who complained the loudest about having to drive to a neighboring parish for Mass were also the ones who wouldn't think twice about driving to the Mall of America if Ridgedale didn't sell a particular item!)

Another good reason for this rule is that the Sunday celebration is to be the primary liturgy that the priest celebrates each week. Nothing is harder for a priest than to celebrate the Sunday liturgies—which are to be the summit and source of our prayer each week—if he has already celebrated numerous liturgies during the week. I knew a retired priest who boasted that he said 15 Masses in one week. Unfortunately, that was reflected in his Sunday celebrations.

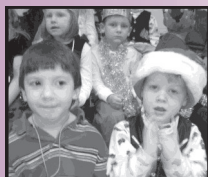
I enjoy presiding at Mass. I usually have Thursdays free from celebrating the liturgy, but that evens out during the week with the extra Masses that are often needed. I would feel remiss if I came to the Sunday Mass unprepared, or tired or bored with the event. That attitude is reflected in how the priest celebrates. If there is no fire in the pulpit, there will be no fire in the pew.

Submit Your Question!

If you have a
question, mail it to:
**The St. Vincent
Voice Editor** at the
church, or e-mail it to:
editor@saintvdp.org

REMEMBERING ...

*Our Sunday School
Pre-Schoolers at their
Christmas Concert.*



LIVING THE COMMANDMENTS

A Continuing Series on Living the Commandments in Modern Life

This continuing series reviews the 10 Commandments revealed to the Israelites (as well as the 2 Great Commandments given to us by Jesus) in the context of the life of a modern-day Catholic. With this series, we seek to provide a few basic ideas and challenges in hopes of inspiring readers to reflect anew on God's Commandments—and how to live in a way that honors them.

#1: I am the LORD your God. You shall have no other gods before me.

The First Commandment may be a simple statement, but its implications for your life are tremendous. It reminds you that there is only one God, and all that is good flows from God—so you are commanded to glorify and worship the one true God in the way you choose to live your life.

Jesus reinforced this when he said, "In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven." (Matthew 5:16) So, if you live in the spirit of this commandment, then an observer should be able to easily see that God comes first in your life, and that you seek to glorify and honor God in all your words and deeds.

Here are some questions that might challenge whether that is true for your life:

- ✦ Do you give God the best of what you have to offer, or only the leftovers?
- ✦ How much of your time is spent building your relationship with God?
- ✦ How much of your spending money is donated to charity or to the church? (For example—which is more...your monthly cable (or cell phone) bill, or your monthly donations?)
- ✦ If asked, would your family members, co-workers and friends easily identify you as a Catholic Christian? (Does your light shine before them?)

Consider what small steps you could take in your own life to ensure that you are living to glorify God.

This Commandment also warns us against our tendency to try to comprehend God on human terms, or allow our "own judgment" to supersede the judgment of God. God tells us that we cannot reach Him when we focus on worldly things, and we cannot try to make Him into an image of ourselves. When we do, it takes us further

from the joy of a relationship with Him. For the modern adult—it can be difficult to accept the fact that we cannot fully understand God, but we are still called to obey His will. We want answers and predictability. But God tells us that we have to admit that we don't always know what's best for us, because God's ways are not our ways. This is why Jesus taught us to call God "Our Father"—and to remember that we are his children. Similarly, human parents sometimes make rules and decisions that their children do not understand or want to accept. But good parents make these decisions out of love, and a desire to protect their children from consequences they cannot anticipate in their limited understanding and life experience.

However, though we may not be able to comprehend God—we can be daily witnesses to the effects of his greatest gift to us, which is love. Love is the reason we are willing to worship a God we cannot understand. Love itself is one of God's mysteries—but it is one that we can experience, and we know its effects. God created us with free will—it is up to each of us to choose whether we will accept his loving dominion over our lives.

#2: You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain.

You are certainly familiar with the implications of this for our language—one should not use the name of God as a swear word. But you should also consider the following commentary from Your Nail pamphlet:

"The Name of the Lord was given to you in your Baptism. There God claimed you as his own child, a member of the Royal Family. With that great honor comes also great responsibility. Wherever you go and whatever you do, you take the Name of the Lord with you. Wherever you go and whatever you do, God's reputation is at stake, for you are God's representative who bears the Name.

God's Name is hallowed when we believe his holy Word and live according to it. God's Name is dishonored whenever our actions do not correspond with what God has named us to be. How have you 'taken' that name? ... faithfully ... or 'in vain'?"

—Nikelle Morris, Parishioner & Editor

OUR PASTORAL COUNCIL IS SEEKING NEW MEMBERS THIS SPRING!

**Pastoral Council
members
function as representatives of our parish
to our pastor.**

The Council meets at 7 PM every 3rd Tuesday of each month for 1 1/2 hours (excluding the months of December and July). The Council consists of nine parishioners who are voting members, and three non-voting members (our pastor, our parochial vicar, and our business manager). Each member serves a term of three years and may serve up to a limit of two full terms.

The current parishioner members are: Tom McMullen, Jim Merickel, Marci Siers, Rose Kahneke, Jeff Bjstrom, Judy Randall, Janice Gabrick, Nancy Moorman, and Betty Bartos.

Every March, we offer two evening Pastoral Council Information Nights.

Any parishioner may attend, and learn more about the Council. Please watch the church bulletin in February for the dates and times for the Information Nights. Final decisions about new members are made in May, as the terms for current members expire in June. Every year approximately 1-3 terms expire for current council members.

CELEBRATE YOUR MARRIAGE AT THE CANA DINNER!



Spend a special evening together and join our annual Cana celebration on **Saturday, Feb. 16.**

We will begin with an evening prayer service at 6:30 pm in the church to renew our commitment to each other. This will be followed by a Social Hour, Catered Dinner, and Dance.



Please consider joining us for this wonderful evening to honor the Sacrament of Marriage.

Take time for the two of You!!!



View previous issues online:

To view past issues of The St. Vincent Voice, visit our parish web site at:
www.saintvdp.org/parish/parish_newsletters

LIFT YOUR BURDENS AND YOUR SPIRIT

Fr. Tom Discusses the Benefits of the Sacrament of Reconciliation

What is the Sacrament of Reconciliation all about, anyway?

Well...consider what happens when we enter the confessional. We kneel down behind the screen or sit across from the priest. We begin the Confession with the sign of the cross, marking ourselves as belonging to God. Next, we begin to confess our sins to God—openly and honestly—through His earthly representative, the priest.

What we are really doing is sharing ourselves at our very worst. We share with God—through the priest—our worst moments. Times when we have been mean, selfish, self-centered, dishonest, or unfaithful (these types of things).

And if the priest is really good, when we share ourselves at our very worst, as God's representative, the priest will confront us with how much God loves us. God's love is unconditional, and there is absolutely nothing we could ever do that could stop Him from loving us. His love is beyond our comprehension.

Being confronted with God's love, moments after we have shared ourselves at our very worst, can have a deep healing & strengthening impact.

We learn to trust in God's love and mercy more deeply. Psychologically, this can be a very healthy way to unburden ourselves of the sins we don't need to hang on to. God certainly does not want us to hang onto them. And as we know, it is very healthy spiritually as well.

However, with this forgiveness and love comes a profound responsibility and obligation to be as good as we can be. Remember, we are all called to become saints! You are called to become a saint, and it is hard work! But, if we are willing to practice our faith, learn to put God first in our life, and really practice the virtues (patience, kindness, gentleness, honest, chastity, generosity, etc.), we can do it. We are made in God's image and likeness, the children of God—so when we strive to be good, we are simply being the way God



*It is a gift you give to yourself...
an opportunity to be reconciled with God*

created us to be. And this makes us happy inside.

Certainly, God wants us to be happy. Sin weighs us down, makes us sad and miserable. Virtue makes us light, happy, playful. Remember—the purpose of life is to go to heaven when we die. Jesus gave us the blueprints to eternal life, and they are contained in the Gospels.

Prayer, fasting, and almsgiving are three pillars of our faith. Develop a consistent prayer life,

fast or offer little sacrifices, and give money to the poor or to the Church. The more we live these three pillars of our faith, profoundly, genuinely, and authentically, the more we can open our hearts to God's love, His grace, and His presence in our lives. We can actually bring a little piece of heaven down here on earth, and the love that God gives to us is to be shared with those around us.

This is what it means to spread the Kingdom of God here and now. And why not? This world is only a temporary place. Why not be as good as we can, and influence many people around us to choose God and heaven? When we get there, there will be thousands of people thanking us for our generous response to God's grace in helping them. There will be a great celebration with lots of joy!!!

At the end of your confession, the priest will give you a penance followed by absolution. What a beautiful, healthy and holy way to prepare ourselves during Lent for Easter, the Resurrection of Christ from the dead opening the gates for all of us to share eternal life with Him.

—Fr. Tom Balluff, Parochial Vicar



RECONCILIATION AT ST. VINCENT'S

This is one of the Confessionals at our church. You may choose to confess behind the screen, or sit across from the priest for a face-to-face experience.

THE "JUSTFAITH" PROGRAM...

... Arrives St. Vincent de Paul Catholic Church

JustFAITH

Empowering People of Faith to Develop a Passion and Thirst for Justice.

"For not only do people need food, they also need the touch of a hand, the sound of a voice. For food lasts but for a day, but love is for always." —Mother Theresa

As a recent African immigrant to the United States, my inevitable drive to know more about American History and Church life has led me to some interesting pages in history books—outside of the usual boring "required" reading assignments of graduate school life. It is quite notable that in the history of American empowerment initiatives, the quest to free American society from the shackles of oppression enjoys a pride of place—especially in relation to slavery, children's labor laws, women's suffrage, and the civil rights movement. It was even more striking to realize that all these initiatives had overt religious motivations and undertones.

The flip side of this encouraging historical reality is that most adult Catholics feel very uncomfortable and ill-prepared to be part of any discussion that is related to Social Justice in terms of the needs of the less privileged in our world today. We seem to be comfortable with Mother Theresa's allusion to providing "food" for the hungry and the "touch of a hand," but the sound of our voices is not audible enough to ensure a collective impact on our society. **We seem to be in dire need of a practical spirituality of compassion. The JustFaith program has arrived to address this need.**

According to the published overview of this program, its aim is to "enable people of faith to develop a passion for justice and to express this passion in concrete acts of social ministry." JustFaith is a life-giving and challenging journey of faith and compassion for its participants. Considering the very impressive success of our charitable programs here at St. Vincent's, there cannot be any better fertile ground for a program that leads its participants into the world of the suffering, the poor, and the marginalized. **As a result, they can learn who they are as individuals, who God is, and what is to be done.**

Upon completion of this program, this small group of parishioners will be equipped with the education, experiences, and ability to better understand and discuss Social Justice in the context of Catholic teachings, and—hopefully—the passion to take action to transform their own lives and the lives of those around them.

Our parish will also benefit, as we will now have a group of parishioners who can share their new experiences and knowledge with others in their circle of influence. Many past participants have also been inspired to begin new initiatives within their own parishes. We hope to offer this program annually at St. Vincent's, so that over time our group of "graduates" will grow and continually provide new enthusiasm and commitment to Social Justice action within our parish community.

It is a transformational program that provides its participants with an opportunity to explore the demands of the Justice tradition of the Church with emphasis on the relationship between our faith, human dignity and the common good. This exploration is punctuated by lively readings, visuals, discussions, fervent prayer, and memorable experiences on a weekly basis following a prepared syllabus. The syllabus usually covers topics such as: the scripture imperative for justice; the Church's preferential option for the poor; the U.S. Bishops' statements on justice; the causes of world poverty; consumerism, racism, etc.

Summary of Participants' Commitment

- Duration: 30 weeks (Sept. 2008–May 2009)
- Two weekend retreats, usually scheduled in October and May—beginning Friday night and ending on Saturday—for discussion, reflection and prayer.
- Border crossing experience (*Note: this does not usually involve the crossing of an actual border—although that is possible, if the participants decide to do so at their own expense. Instead it typically involves a visit to a local location where it is possible to dialogue with people who have experienced poverty or injustice.*)
- Enrollment expenses will be covered by St. Vincent's.
- Application period is from now until August 1st.
- Interviews will follow the application process.
- Membership is limited to 15 registrants.
- Cost of materials is \$125 per person (scholarships and installment payment options are available.)

Mark your calendar: The next JustFaith informational session at St. Vincent de Paul is scheduled for **Saturday, March 8th at 6 pm in the West meeting room (immediately after the 5 pm Mass).** A good number of past graduates of the JustFaith program from all over the Archdiocese will be sharing the experiences of their faith life before, during and after the program. For registration and/or inquiries, please call Okey at the parish office (763-425-2210) or email: okey@svdp.org.

—Okey Anyanwu,
Social Justice Coordinator

A Testimonial from Sara Kamlay, JustFaith Participant

"Exposure, engagement and expansion best describe what has happened to me as a result of my JustFaith experience. Exposure to the living conditions of those in Third World countries; to the complicated reasons for the existing disparity; to the concealed nature of our complicity in the continuance of this disparity; to the complexities involved in actually trying to address these issues in my own life, as well as that of our nation as a whole; to the difficulty of interpreting the call of our faith (to serve the poor) within the context of the reality in which we find ourselves. And this exposure to a larger view of God's creation led me to engagement in the building of God's Kingdom and the expansion of my heart and my faith."

Acknowledging the
Presence and Gifts of
Single Men and Women in
Our Parish Community

The pastoral team of St. Vincent de Paul is committed to reaching out to groups in our worshipping community. While we thank God for being so richly blessed as a parish with good outreach ministries to seniors and young families, our new ministry to the single men and women in our parish is a pastoral idea whose time has come. The aim of this ministry is to provide a variety of programs that will create a sense of community for singles, and a place where they can experience new beginnings.

Some have never been married, and others are single again—because divorce or the death of a spouse are realities of life that sometimes turn married people into single adults. We know that single adults still go through some of the same challenges that married people experience, and most often go through them alone. Be that as it may, it is important to note that this ministry is not going to follow a support group format. Members will primarily be encouraged to grow in their relationship with Christ and others, and to reach out in service with their time and talents to our parish community and beyond. It is meant to provide a healthy environment for social interactions through exciting social activities. It will remain a valuable opportunity for great fellowship.

If you are in the process of divorce or have recently lost a spouse, we also recommend the transitional support that our divorced/separated support group or Grief and Bereavement support ministries offer. Please contact the parish office at 763-425-2210 for more information.

—Okey Anyanwu, Pastoral
Minister

FAMILY CORNER

Faith Formation Helps You to Guide Your Children on Their Journey to God

Faith Formation can help you do just that, with a variety of Faith Formation options. Registration forms for all formal faith formation classes are mailed out in July to all registered parishioners with children. Once classes have begun, only new parishioners may enroll children. (Presuming the children have been attending faith formation elsewhere.)

You have the opportunity to register for preschool classes (ages 3-5) held during the 9 am and 11 am Masses. Preschool classes are generally held from the end of September through the week-end before Mother's Day. Preschool accepts children at any time during the year. Preschool is not a requirement, but it is a nice way to introduce Jesus to your children in a social context.

Elementary Faith Formation guides children in levels one through six on Tuesday and Wednesday evenings at 5 o'clock and 6:45 pm sessions. We prefer to use the term level instead of grade because faith formation is not a matter of age, but a matter of where children are on their faith journey. Children are expected to attend every year and levels missed are expected to be made up. Classes usually begin the end of September and go through the end of April.

First Reconciliation and First Communion are usually celebrated during second level faith formation. These are parish celebrations so there are enrollment sessions held in the fall for First Reconciliation and in the winter for First Communion. In order to celebrate these sacraments, children must be concurrently enrolled in evening classes or in a Catholic school.

Seventh through 10th level (grades) classes are held on Sunday evenings at 5 pm and 7 pm sessions. Classes begin at the end of September and go through

March. Junior and Senior High J-zone activities are community-builders, and another way for teens to continue to grow in their faith, but J-Zone does not replace formal classes.

Confirmation is celebrated in the 10th level. Teens must have completed Level 9 Faith

Formation classes and be enrolled in Level 10 classes. The actual celebration is usually held at the Cathedral of St. Paul.

You may have noticed first and second grade children leaving during Mass. They are leaving to celebrate the Liturgy of the Word at a child's level. There is no registration or fee for this. All

first and second graders are welcome to join the group. This does not take the place of class instruction and formation, but it is a great way for the children to celebrate Mass.

And don't forget that St. Vincent de Paul school and other Catholic schools are available to help you guide your children in the faith. They don't replace your guidance, but enhance it.

Often there are waiting lists for Catholic schools, so check out the school's registration policies.

As you can see, guiding your children in the faith and following Christ requires time and effort on your part. You and your child may have to sacrifice in other areas of your life in order to give time to God. Are you still on the journey?

— Renee Paske, Staff Member



1st Graders wave the "palm leaves" they have colored, as they act out the arrival of Jesus in Jerusalem during a Wednesday night Faith Formation class.



1st and 2nd Graders learn the Children's' version of the Liturgy of the Word during Sunday Mass

STATIONS OF THE CROSS

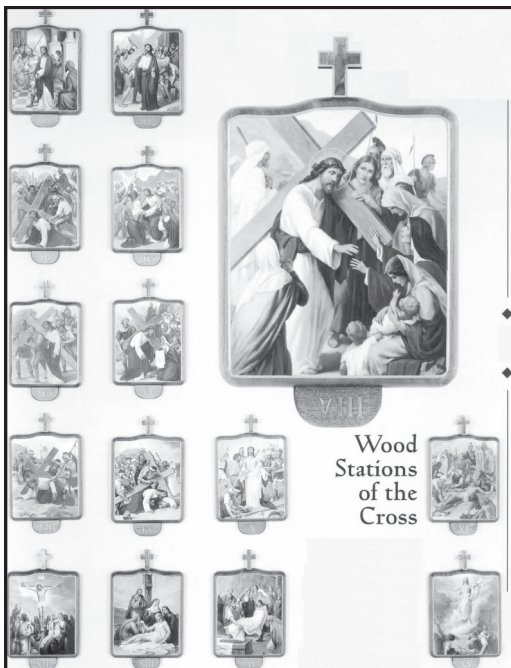
Tracing the Steps of Jesus

During Lent, Jesus asks us to pray and walk with him as we trace his steps in The Way of the Cross.

The Stations of the Cross are an exercise honoring the Passion and death of Jesus. The Way of the Cross, as it is also known, originated through imitation of the practice in early times in Jerusalem. People would perform the devotion at the scene of the Passion and Jesus' death by standing or gathering at 14 different places while meditating or praying on the Passion.

The Franciscans promoted the practice and devotion during the 14th century, so that it became common by the 15th, even though the number and type of Station varied. The Franciscan St. Leonard frequently preached on this devotion in the 18th century. Guidelines were established by Pope Clement XII, fixing the number of Stations at 14 to the events in the Gospel and from early traditions.

Usually, the Stations are found on the interior walls of a church, but they may be placed outdoors. During Stations of the Cross, readings are made at each Station, to which some vocal prayers are added. Meditation on the Passion and Death of Christ is required at each Station before moving to the next. The Stations must consist of 14 wooden crosses, to which are added pictures or images representing the Station. If those gathered cannot move readily from Station to Station, the presider does.



The Stations of the Cross:

1. Jesus is condemned to die.
2. Jesus carries his dross.
3. Jesus falls the first time.
4. Jesus meets his Mother.
5. Simon helps Jesus carry his cross.
6. Veronica wipes the face of Jesus.
7. Jesus falls the second time.
8. Jesus meets the women of Jerusalem.
9. Jesus falls the third time.
10. Jesus is stripped.
11. Jesus is nailed to the cross.
12. Jesus dies on the cross.
13. Jesus is taken down from the cross.
14. Jesus is laid in the tomb.

The Way of the Cross is not a sad devotion. Yes, the Passion of Christ is a way of pain—but it is also a path of hope leading

to certain victory. As Christians, the shadow of the cross is always at the corner of our vision. The wounds of Jesus' hands, feet, and side do not disappear with his Resurrection.

- ♦ But if we forget about Jesus' journey to the
- ♦ Cross, we are in danger of diminishing the triumph of Jesus' Resurrection; we are forgetting what it means to be Christians. Everyone is invited to take in the Stations of the Cross every Friday during Lent at 7 pm at St. Vincent's, as a reminder that we are all part of Jesus' death and Resurrection through our baptisms.

Jesus reminded his followers that they must take up their crosses and follow him. We are given the promise of eternal life, but also the burden of embracing the cross.

We need to feel its weight and its strength, for it empowers us to

act in Jesus' name.

Here at St. Vincent's, we pray a variety of Stations, including the Way of the Cross—with text from the Scriptures and Saint Alphonsus Ligouri's Way of the Cross. On one of the Fridays, the Knights of Columbus read the Way of the Cross. And the St. Vincent de Paul Youth Group does a wonderful job of acting out our Stations of the Cross—don't miss it.

— Sean Curtan, Deacon

NEWSLETTER SUBMISSION DEADLINES

Did you know that this is already our tenth issue of The St. Vincent Voice?! Since our first issue in November 2005, the Newsletter Committee has always striven to create a publication that will be fun, educational, and relevant for all parishioners.

Now that the Newsletter has become an established part of the parish culture, we are pleased to find that some parishioners and parish groups have begun to suggest ideas for articles in upcoming issues. We encourage this, because it helps us to address the issues, questions, and events that most interest our readers.

You can submit your ideas to our committee by e-mailing them to: editor@saintvdp.org, or by mailing them to the church, to the attention of "The St. Vincent Voice Editor." Please note the following deadlines to submit ideas, so that the Newsletter Committee can consider them at our planning meetings:

- By Nov. 15 for the Feb. 1—Apr. 31 issue
- By Feb. 15 for the May 1—July 31 issue
- By May 15 for the Aug. 1—Oct. 31 issue
- By Aug. 15 for the Nov. 1—Jan. 31 issue

Keep in mind—we don't need all the details by the deadline, but rather the basic idea for the article to be developed. The Newsletter Committee will determine the final content of each issue.



The St. Vincent Voice

A Publication of
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Please give us some feedback on The St. Vincent Voice. We want to create a publication that will serve the needs of our parishioners.

- ⇒ *What topics would you like to see addressed in this newsletter?*
- ⇒ *How can this newsletter most benefit you as a parishioner?*
- ⇒ *What questions do you have about the Catholic faith that we might address?*

Thank you! Please send your feedback to: Attn. St. Vincent Voice Editor, St. Vincent de Paul, 9100 93rd Avenue North, Brooklyn Park, MN 55445

Or e-mail your feedback to: editor@saintvdp.org

FACES OF ST. VINCENT DE PAUL

Meet Fellow Parishioner Kevin Ahlers

How long have you been a parishioner at St. Vincent de Paul?

16 years

What brought you to our parish?

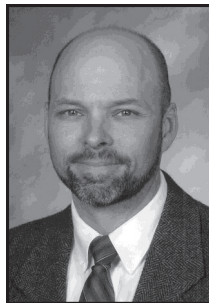
We liked the church, and it was close to home.

Tell me about the groups you belong to at our parish.

I am an active member of the Knights of Columbus, a Eucharistic Minister and an Usher. I've also taught Faith Formation (9th & 10th level) for the last eight years, and I was chairperson for the Harvest Fest the last three years.

Can you think of a favorite memory at St. Vincent's?

Cooking the pork dinner outside at the Harvest Fest a few years ago.



What has been the biggest key to help you to feel "at home" at St. Vincent's?

Being active and taking ownership in the parish.

Tell us about your favorite event at the parish.

Harvest Fest, because it brings the community together for a social event.

Tell us about a meaningful spiritual experience that you've had at our parish.

The confirmation retreats, because you get to reach out to young adults and tell them about the church and its teachings.

Also, being a Eucharistic Minister and participating in the Memorial Mass have been quite meaningful.