

November 1, 2009 –
January 31, 2010



ST. VINCENT DE PAUL
CATHOLIC CHURCH

The St. Vincent Voice

A PUBLICATION OF ST. VINCENT DE PAUL CATHOLIC CHURCH

TOGETHER WE CAN DO SOMETHING WONDERFUL



As 2009 comes to a close, The St. Vincent Voice focuses on the many, good works of our parishioners. From a story of a man who displays his gratitude of living the Catholic faith by continuing the values he was taught to the volunteers that share their calling to do God's work as liturgical ministers. With attending Mass and reading the Bible, one of the most rewarding ways to expand your faith is to get involved.

"What I do you cannot do; but what you do, I cannot do. The needs are great, and none of us, including me, ever do great things. But we can all do small things, with great love, and together we can do something wonderful." - Mother Teresa

STEWARDSHIP RENEWAL

A Lay Witness Message from a Fellow Parishioner

My name is Bob McCaffrey and I have been asked to share some thoughts as a Lay Witness for our Annual Stewardship Renewal here at St. Vincent's. My membership at St. Vincent's has not been long, only eight months. I am enjoying the parish and feel blessed to be a member. I am seeking opportunities to participate. Presently I am involved in Perpetual Adoration, Men's Spirituality Breakfast, and soon hope to be a Eucharistic Minister.

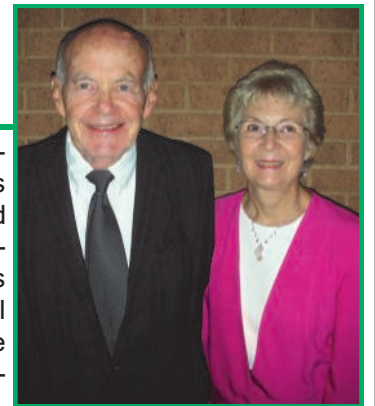
My birth date was October 7, 1929. We lived in Omaha at that time. As a child I had severe asthma and was not healthy enough to attend school until the fourth grade. As an adult, as I reflect on those days, I realize the impact to me, but even more the severe impact to the rest of my family in just trying to cope with my sickness. Today, I consider that this youthful experience has helped me to better understand other people's challenges and difficulties as they struggle with their disabilities, handicaps, and elderly conditions in general.

Much of my character and value system developed during my early teenage years. At age 12 (1941) I joined the Boy Scouts. The Scout Oath and Scout Law were and are major influences on me. Before my teen years my family was somewhat dysfunctional, as a result of not only coping with my illness, but also from severe financial setbacks. Our family did not attend church regularly at the time. After my oldest

This issue highlights some of the celebrations that St. Vincent de Paul offers, such as remembering the Harvest Festival, and the upcoming Christmas Bazaar and Breakfast with Santa. Take note of the great enjoyment the seniors receive at the monthly senior lunch.

We are proud to promote our school's successes including the annual marathon fundraiser and the installation of SMART boards in the classrooms. Our school and faith formation are excited to be able to expand their teaching capabilities by providing such a superior tool in delivering curriculum.

— Lori Hansson, Parishioner



Bob and Susan McCaffrey

brother, Joseph, was discharged from the Military, he was instrumental in getting the family receiving the Sacraments regularly. A priest in his military outfit and a priest at our local church were also the key instruments in getting our family receiving the Sacraments. I am grateful for the love that each of them extended to our family.

In 1946, when I was 16, we moved to Los Angeles for employment reasons. After graduation from high school I became a woodworker by starting a cabinetmaker apprentice program. At this same time I started my social justice involvement in 'South Central Los Angeles'. In 1951, the month after becoming a journeyman woodworker, I was drafted into the U.S. Army during the Korean War. After two years of service, I was discharged from the Army. I attended college to study engineering, since a recession had left few jobs in the construction field at the time. I am grateful for the G.I. Bill which provided me with financial aid that assisted in my education costs. I had hoped to become a designer of toys and prosthetics, but another economic

(Continued on page 2)

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

- November 1: All Saint's Day
- November 3: Election Day
- November 5: Guest Speaker -The Church
- November 14: Women's Retreat
- November 21: Men's Spirituality Breakfast
- November 21: Zamyia Theatre
- November 26: Thanksgiving Day
- November 29: First Sunday of Advent
- December 5 & 6: Christmas Bazaar
- Tuesday, Dec. 8: Immaculate Conception (Holy Day of Obligation)
- December 10: Guest Speaker -Church History
- Saturday, Dec. 12: Breakfast with Santa & Our Lady of Guadalupe
- December 25: Christmas Day
- Friday, Jan. 1, 2010: Mary, Mother of God (Holy Day of Obligation)
- January 3: Epiphany of the Lord
- January 12 & 13: Social Justice Guest Speaker
- January 19 & 26: St. Therese of Lisieux Movie/Discussion

(Continued on page 3)



ASK FATHER

Fr. Vang Answers Parishioner Questions

Q. Father, I'd like to know more about the meaning of the Feast of Epiphany. Who were the wise men (magi) and what is the significance of the gifts they presented to the infant Jesus? Are there any traditions associated with the feast that are practiced by Catholics? – Submitted by Tammy Peterburs

Epiphany is a Greek word meaning manifestation, especially of a deity. So this feast means that God manifests Himself in the baby Jesus to the nations represented by the three wise men called the Magi, a Median tribe and a priestly class of the Persian Empire. The Magi were good and holy men who sought for truth. The Bible did not tell us their names but legend gave them the following: Caspar, Melchior, and Balthazar. Caspar brought the gift of Frankincense representing the priest; Melchior brought the gift of gold representing the King; and Balthazar brought the gift of myrrh representing the one who is to die. So Jesus is the perfect High Priest, the true King, and the one who is to die to save mankind.



One of the traditions associated with this feast practiced by Catholics is the blessing of the home at Christmas. Since the priest cannot go to bless every home, he blesses chalk. Then families will bring the blessed chalk home and write on the lintel of their door the year and the initials of the three Magi like this: 20+C+M+B+10. The home is then blessed and the people who live there enjoy health in body and protection of soul.

STEWARDSHIP RENEWAL

(Continued from page 1)

recession led me to enter the aerospace field. As a result I ended up designing and testing rockets, ordnance, and fixed wing aircraft for the next 35 years.

In 1965 I met Susan, my wife-to-be on the slopes of Vail. Our first child, Tom, was born in 1968. John, our second child, came in 1970. Our third, Mary, was born in 1975. In 1968 after moving to Orange County, I became a Confirmation teacher in the CCD program for the 7th, 8th and 9th grade public school children. I eventually became its Chairman. Our policy was to aid young people to discover their godliness within themselves through small group interactive activities. The young people formed their own youth groups and became a vital element in the congregation of Blessed Sacrament Church in Westminster, California. Our staff of fifty teachers and teacher-aides followed the principle of viewing the young teenager as a diamond - chipping away the rough and unsightly exterior is often necessary to see it shine.

Events in life have taught me to "live in the moment", to be open to God's grace, and to understand the extraordinary power of prayer. Fr. Jack in his homily the weekend of September 12 and 13 asked us to look more closely for God's grace operating in our lives. I consider that wise advice.

Think of it. To be thankful costs nothing, well, nearly nothing. It's free. However, its dividend is enormous to others, as well as to us. It can change your life as well as the lives of others. So remember, don't pass up even one opportunity to give thanks, no matter how trivial it may seem. Cicero said, "Gratitude is not only the greatest of virtues, but is the father of all virtues."

John Wesley said to, "Do all the good you can, to as many folks as you can, in as many ways as you can, every day if you can, with as little noise as you can."

Our family considers tithing as a personal choice in sharing our blessings from the Lord. We believe the promise in Malachi 3:10. By doing so we are relieved of fear and doubt, since the Lord has promised to shower us with His blessings.

Please do not consider my opinions and ideas as preaching. They are simply my thoughts as a Lay Witness.

My personal belief that inspires me, is that the Lord provides godly happiness with awesome peace and joy when I realize that **gratitude** turns the key that unlocks the door to a joyous life when living for the Lord. God Bless You.

— Bob McCaffrey, Parishioner

OUR LITURGICAL MINISTERS

Why Do They Feel Called to Volunteer?

If you're like me, you wonder how a lector has the nerve to stand up and read in front of the congregation; how someone has the knowledge to teach our children in faith formation; why does an usher take control and tell people where to sit; or, how did the people who distribute communion get holy enough for that position?

Why do these people do these things? We asked some of the liturgical ministers in our parish these questions and the answers may surprise you.



Jeanette and Andrew Rem and their three children, Carly, Josh and Nicklaus, are all active in volunteering at St. Vincent de Paul. "We look forward to the various activities for which we volunteer," said Andrew who is a lector. "We're not just going through the motions; we are an active part of the church community."



Carly & Jeanette Rem All three of the Rem children are altar servers, something that was encouraged by their father. Carly says, "At first I volunteered because my parents made me. But once I got involved I found that it was enjoyable. I get more out of Mass and enjoy being able to help the younger servers." The children all help at the Harvest Festival each year and have also helped with Vacation Bible School.

The Rem family is a good example of how each family member can be involved in some way with volunteering at church. Each of them has found a niche they like and their work helps to make St. Vincent de Paul an even better parish community.



On most Sundays you'll see Pat Brink working as an usher, while on other Sundays he is a lector. Other times Pat teaches Confirmation class and this past summer

he, along with Fr. Wehmann, taught the class "Theology of the Body for Teens."

"My parents set the volunteering example for me," says Pat. "My mother was involved in the Women's Guild and my father was a lector at St. Patrick's in Edina." With four brothers, the Brink boys were often seen on the altar as servers.



Pat Brink

"God has been working through me, through my parents and through my children to give me the strength I need to live my life day to day. As the Prayer of St. Francis of Assisi says, "...for it is in giving that we receive..." I know that I receive far more than I give in my volunteer activities.

"My volunteer efforts have helped me better understand my faith. I know that when I pray and listen to God that I will be taken care of and will know "God's plan" for me.



Kevin Ahlers leads by example. His parents taught him the importance of giving and volunteering and he is installing that same sense of responsibility in his three sons.

Kevin says he is much more knowledgeable about Mass and the various parts of the Eucharist and takes doing God's work seriously. "There is a pride of service no matter what the task is that needs to be accomplished, I'll do whatever needs to be done."

"Many times you never know what impact that little action you've made has on the person you helped or someone who saw it," says Kevin. "I'm just happy that God works through me to help others."

His volunteer work as both an usher and a Eucharistic Minister has deepened his faith



Kevin Ahlers

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

(Continued from page 2)

- **January 23:** Men's Spirituality Breakfast
- **January 23 & 24:** Mission Trip Presentation by Larry & JoAnn Lawinger
- **Sunday, Jan. 31:** School Open House / Catholic Schools Week

WE NEED YOU!



We are still looking for a few more parishioners to join the committee that puts together this newsletter. You don't need to be a writer—just a person who cares about the Catholic faith and our parish.

The time commitment is minimal—about 6-10 hours per issue. (We publish four issues/year.) We generally meet in the early evenings at the church and also share ideas and articles via e-mail. We want our committee to represent the parish. Do you have the time, talent and interest to be part of our volunteer editorial team? If so, please call Chuck Pratt at (763) 425-2210 for more information about this opportunity!

(Continued on page 4)

**The St. Vincent
Voice Newsletter
Committee**

- **Lori Hansson,**
Parishioner
- **Rebecca Keran,**
Parishioner
- **Lisa Price,**
Parishioner
- **Marci Siers,**
Pastoral Council Member
- **Chuck Pratt,**
Staff Member
- **Tammy Peterburs,**
*Editor/Designer,
Parishioner*

For information on joining the committee, contact Chuck Pratt at 763-425-2210.

**NEWSLETTER
SUBMISSION
DEADLINES**

Please 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.

We don't need the full article by the deadline—just the basic idea for the article to be developed.

The Newsletter Committee will determine the final content of each issue.

OUR LITURGICAL MINISTERS

(Continued from page 3)

and has led him to seriously consider becoming a Deacon.



Rebecca Keran is not one who enjoys being in the spotlight. "I hate it, but I do it anyway." She volunteers as a faith formation teacher, Eucharist Minister, is a member of the parish newsletter committee, and brings



Rebecca Keran

food for funeral lunches because she believes she has been called by God to be of service.

"Being able to distribute the Body of Christ at Mass as a Eucharist Minister is so humbling. For me to stand there and give communion to others who I feel are more worthy of God's love, is an honor," said Rebecca.

Her husband Pat and four children are a part of her volunteer efforts. "My husband is very understanding and supportive of the time commitment I make to the church," said Rebecca. "My kids are the same way; they know that what their mom does is important."

"It is so cool that what I may consider as simply a salad I prepared for a funeral, joined with other efforts, makes such a positive impact on other families."

— *Pat Brink and Rebecca Keran,*
Parishioners

GIVING THANKS

Being Grateful for Our Blessings at Thanksgiving and Every Day

Thanksgiving is a perfect opportunity to give thanks to God for the blessings he has given us. Every year at our Thanksgiving meal, my family goes around the table and everyone says something for which they are thankful.

Hearing what each person is thankful for is a gift unto itself. I'll never forget the Thanksgiving after my dad had a heart attack. He said he was thankful just to be alive and be there with all of us. That made me realize...when was the last time I stopped and took a moment to appreciate all the blessings in my life? What am I truly thankful for and have I expressed that gratitude to God?

Perhaps when your family sits down for Thanksgiving dinner this year, you can start

a new tradition by asking everyone to say one thing they are thankful for. Then make it a daily ritual. At dinner or prayer time each evening, offer thanks for something good that has happened to you or something for which you are grateful. What a wonderful habit to practice.

And don't forget to make the words "thank you" a standard in your vocabulary. It's amazing the power those two little words can have on everyone around you.



Giving thanks is an integral part of our Catholic faith. The Scriptures are filled with passages urging us to give thanks for the gifts God has given us. "Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good, for his mercy endures forever" (Psalm 118:1). Giving thanks to God is something we should do every day.

— *Tammy Peterburs,*
Editor & Parishioner



REMEMBERING...



1,547
pieces of
chicken
served

11,285
inflatable slides,
climbs, jousts, trips
and rebounds



5,489
children's
games played

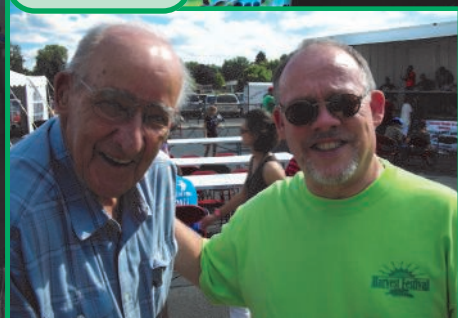


5,172
bingo cards
played



35,940
raffle tickets
sold

5,662
pull tabs
pulled



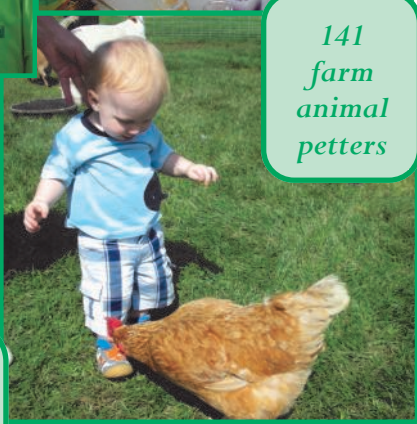
141
farm
animal
petters



82
faces
painted



2,247
volunteer
hours to
make it all
happen



REMEMBERING ...

SVDP School Marathon Fundraiser



Thanks to Diane Pawlik and Stephanie Boucher for chairing this event, and to all of our families for participating. We are hoping to reach our goal of \$72,000.



CATHOLIC SCHOOLS



Mark your calendars for our Catholic Schools Week Kick-off Celebration and Open House, coming up on Jan. 31, 2010. All parishioners, current and prospective students and families will be invited to visit the school to learn more about St. Vincent de Paul's Catholic School, its students and staff, and their contributions to our parish and local communities. The students will also be presenting their Science Fair projects. Stop by and check it out!

SMART BOARDS

Transforming the Way Our Students Learn

In schools all across the world, SMART Boards, interactive white boards with unlimited technological possibilities, are transforming the way teachers teach and the way students learn. And now St. Vincent de Paul School has a SMART Board in each classroom. This teaching tool, the number one choice among primary and secondary school educators in more than 75 countries worldwide, engages students and sustains their interest in nearly every subject they learn. SMART Boards are motivating kids to want to learn more and to be active in their pursuit for knowledge.

SMART Boards have a touch-sensitive display and are about the size of a standard whiteboard; they are hooked up to a computer and projector, creating a giant-like computer screen that students and teachers simply touch to operate. Using their finger or a pen as a mouse, teachers and students can access and control any computer application, file or multimedia platform, including the Internet, CD-ROMs and DVDs. They can also write over appli-

cations in digital ink, then save their work for future study and review.

This means that 2nd graders learning about certain animals can see close up (sometimes even live) pictures of the animals, map their geographical location, and hear their sounds and "language". Math teachers can use the board for math games as the class learns a new skill set. Fr. Jack and faith formation instructors, in teaching religion, can instantly access Bible verses, timelines, and biblical diagrams, display them for the entire class, and even make notes on these images.

The possibilities are endless. We are excited to see what our teachers and students can achieve and discover as these SMART Boards capture their imaginations.

— Kim Lyngen, School Librarian



MAKE A DIFFERENCE

St. Vincent de Paul Scrip Program

Scrip is an easy way to help families save money on their tuition and help our school at the same time! Scrip is a painless way our school can generate additional revenue without conducting a traditional fundraiser. Scrip is simply a word that means "substitute money" - in other words, Scrip is gift certificates from national and local retailers. They're the same gift certificates that you buy at the store. Many popular retailers participate in our Scrip program including Cub Foods, JCPenney, The Gap, Wal-Mart/Sam's Club, SuperAmerica, Holiday Station Stores, Domino's Pizza, Red Lobster, Barnes & Noble, AMC Theatres and many, many others.

You're probably asking yourself how these stores help us raise money. It's simple -- **Scrip participating retailers agree to sell gift certificates to our organization at a discount. Families and parishioners buy the certificates for full face value, they redeem them for full face value, and the difference is revenue for the school.** The revenue can even be split between a designated family's tuition account and the general school fund. And with Scrip, everybody wins:

- Our school gets a regular source of revenue...
- The retailer gets cash up front and repeat business...
- School families can accrue credit to reduce their family's tuition...
- Our school gets a powerful fundraising alternative that involves no selling.

The beauty of Scrip is that you put your regular household shopping dollars to work. You earn money for our school while spending money you would spend anyway. Just spend your regular shopping dollars with Scrip gift cards at the stores that par-



"Scrip is such an easy way to do a fundraiser. It doesn't cost me anything more than I'm already spending. All I need to do is plan ahead a little bit and remember to use gift cards instead of cash. And once I got started, I found it was an easy way to help me stay within my budget."

ticipate in the Scrip program! And Scrip can be used for just about any household purchase including food, clothing, entertainment, gasoline, gifts, dining out, office supplies, hotels, and even travel.

One school parent commented, "Scrip is such an easy way to do a fundraiser. It doesn't cost me anything more than I'm already spending. All I need to do is plan ahead a little bit and remember to use gift cards instead of cash. And once I got started, I found it was an easy way to help me stay within my budget."

Orders are generally placed twice a month on Friday with the gift cards ready for pick-up on Wednesday. (See the school website or weekly church bulletins for upcoming order dates). Online ordering and payment is available or you can simply fill out an order form and bring it in with your payment.

For more information about Scrip, go to the Scrip page of the school website at www.saintvdp.org/school/scrip, e-mail us at scrip@saintvdp.org, or call our message line at 763-425-2981 ext. 114.

—Tammy Peterburs, Scrip Coordinator

Watch for Scrip at upcoming Parish Donut Sundays.

A limited supply of gift cards will be available for on-site purchase and orders can be placed for additional retailers. Come find out more about Scrip!

VOCATIONMATCH.COM
Begin your search here to find your life's path

Many people use the word *vocation* (from the Latin *vocare*, meaning "to call") in reference to the call to be a priest, sister, or brother. However, the Catholic understanding of vocation is much broader: every baptized person has a vocation--a call--to love and serve God.

VocationMatch.com is a unique discernment tool provided by VISION Vocation Guide to help men and women considering religious life focus their options and narrow their search for the right vocation and community. After completing a series of questions about interests and spiritual orientation, the participant's answers are matched against the profiles of hundreds of religious communities, institutes, and organizations in the VISION database. The discernor receives the results of potential good fits and may choose to send a personal profile on to them.

VocationMatch was featured on the CBS Evening News with Katie Couric and in [Time](http://Time magazine) magazine and has helped thousands of discerners narrow their search for the right vocation.

To find out more, visit VocationMatch.com or VocationGuide.org.



Prayer of Blessing For Your Home Advent Wreath

Lord, our God, we praise you for your Son, Jesus Christ: He is Emmanuel, the hope of all people, he is the wisdom that teaches and guides us, he is the Savior of every nation.

Lord God, let your blessing come upon us as we light the candles of this Advent wreath. May the wreath and its light be a sign of Christ's promise to bring us salvation.

We ask this through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

— CatholicMom.com

Share Your Story with Us!

What a blessing it is when parishioners are willing to write about their experiences for our newsletter.

Would you be willing to be a newsletter contributor, too?

If you have a story to share, please e-mail it to editor@saintvdp.org, or send it to the parish office to Attn: St. Vincent Voice Editor so that we can consider it for an upcoming issue.

GIVING TREE

Helping Others With The Spirit of Christmas

Every year around Christmas time, there is a special tree that can be found in the foyer of St. Vincent de Paul. This tree is adorned with tags requesting one or two special Christmas gifts. Each tag is hung with one particular person in mind; a mother, father, son or daughter, man or woman, in our community. This is our Giving Tree.

Have you ever wondered about the people represented on the giving tree? Who they are or where they come from? Well, after having an opportunity to speak with the leader of the giving tree effort for St. Vincent de Paul, I was able to answer these questions and more. Doug Tigner has been leading the giving tree efforts with his wife Diane for four years and took the time to share with me some stories about the families that are blessed through the giving tree efforts.

First, where do the individuals and families come from? Well, about 80% of the families that are serviced through the program come from our local community and have their stories brought forward by our fellow St. Vincent de Paul parishioners. In addition to this group, Doug also looks to organizations such as CROSS Food Shelf and local social workers from area schools to find other families that are in dire need. Each year, approximately 2,500 tags are placed on the tree throughout the season and upwards of 250 families are served through the efforts of Doug and the parish. The Giving Tree program focuses on providing, first and foremost, the basic necessities that a family may lack. Coats, mittens, hats, boots and clothes are requested first. After that, 1-2 "wish" items such as toys and gift cards are fulfilled all through the generous giving of the parish.

Through the years, Doug has witnessed many Christmas wishes come true and has taken the time to share a few of these stories with me. Just last year, the Giving Tree efforts were able to assist a single mother of five children whose husband had re-

cently left the family. In order to keep her family afloat, she took a night job to bring in whatever income she could while a neighbor was able to watch her children. Through the efforts of the Giving Tree, we were able to provide this family with Christmas gifts. Another family, whose father was dealing with severe medical issues that had impacted them financially, had no beds for the children to sleep on, forcing them to sleep on the floor. The strength of our parish shone brightly as multiple parishioners were able to work together to provide this family with the beds and mattresses they so desperately needed.

These are just a few of the many stories that embody the spirit of the Giving Tree program. Through the generous efforts of Doug and the Giving Tree volunteers, many families will receive Christmas blessings. When providing the gifts to those in need, Doug has expressed, "It's a gratifying experience that really makes you appreciate what you have. Most people are shocked and do not know what to say. They ask who I am and why I did this. I just tell them, these gifts are from the parish of St. Vincent de Paul and wish them a Merry Christmas. Many times, I get a hug."

Thanks to the hard work of the participants in the Giving Tree program, many of these stories are able to have a happy ending during the Christmas season. Hopefully, now, you understand the Giving Tree is so much more than just little pieces of paper.

Thank you, to all of you, who have participated in The Giving Tree program. Your generosity is greatly appreciated!

— Lisa Price,
Parishioner



Doug & Diane Tigner



Congratulations!

We proudly congratulate
our parishioner
Larry Lawinger
2009 Recipient of the
Leading with Faith Award
from *The Catholic Spirit*



To read the article online, go to www.thecatholicspirit.com
and search Larry Lawinger.

Save the Date:

Breakfast with Santa



Breakfast with
Santa
is coming
up on
Saturday,
Dec. 12
from 9 am
until Noon.

Watch the bulletin in the next few weeks
for information on how to buy your tickets,
and more details about the event.

**HO-HO-HOPE
TO SEE YOU THERE!**



Plan to Come to the St. Vincent de Paul

Christmas



Bazaar



Come and have a cup of cheer!



*Proceeds support
faith formation
programs in our parish.*



DECEMBER 5: 9 AM—5 PM
DECEMBER 6: 8:15 AM—12:30 PM

Featuring...

- Santa Claus
- Over 60 Crafters
- Kid's Crafts on Sat. 9 am-3 pm
- Lunch
- Gourmet Coffee at Java Joe's
- Raffle
- Live Musical Performances
- A Slice of Heaven Bakery – Delicious cookies, bars, breads, candy, lefse and more. All prepared in the St. Vincent de Paul kitchen.
- Volunteer Opportunities
- Parish Fellowship



*The Christmas Bazaar is sponsored
by the St. Vincent de Paul
Council of Catholic Women (CCW.)*

FRIENDS AND FAMILY AT CHRIST- MASTIME

Ways to Keep Connected Through God

- Remember that we are always in the holy presence of God.
- Keep in mind that each one of us is God's creation and therefore are deserving of the dignity and respect that He has intended for us.
- Remember what Christmas is all about. Jesus has come into the world to bring us the hope of salvation.
- Patience, Patience, Patience.
- Pray together. Say grace before meals.
- Attend mass together.
- Keep a good sense of humor.
- Forgive one another.
- Go out of your way to help one another.
- Count your blessings every day and thank God for these.

— Marci Siers,
Parishioner

Page 10

ASK THE BIBLE GEEK

Advice for Teens for a More Focused Prayer Life

Q: I get distracted easily, not just in my prayer life, but in my spiritual life as well; how can I help myself get back on track when I lose sight of God?

Remember that story of Hansel and Gretel? The two kids who leave a trail of bread crumbs behind them, only to end up the *main course* for some little forest hag witch, with an empty stomach and some bad intentions? Wow...what a screwed up story that is for kids. But that's a different discussion. You might be wondering, "*What does Hansel and Gretel have to do with my question?*" Well, follow me on this one...



Distraction is a part of life. We can't control the things that happen around us any more than we can control all the things that happen to us. There are ways, however, to take ourselves "out of the path" of distraction and place ourselves more in the path of grace (of God). That **does not mean** that all distractions will be eliminated...the devil wants to distract you and will use any means possible to do so (1 Pet 5:8), to keep you from God. There are things you can do, however, to better direct and focus yourself in your prayer life and spiritual life, as a whole. If (distractions) are not from the devil, take that as a sign that God wants you to pray about (the situation).



Here's a quick list of suggestions:

1. Create a prayerful environment

Quiet is essential for maturing in your prayer life. If you can't learn to pray in silence, you won't learn in the midst of noise.

2. Offer up distractions for God's glory

If you find your mind "wandering" constantly while you pray, offer up those distractions to God.

3. Utilize guided prayers and meditations

You have the *Our Father* as the ultimate prayer. In addition, you have the *Hail Mary*

which, if prayerfully recited, will take you to deep levels of meditation, unlock amazing insight and bring great grace.

4. Manage your time more effectively

The further ahead we "schedule" prayer, the more disciplined we will become. Create a "prayer schedule" where you can set times and forms of prayer in stone over the course of the week.

5. Find a prayer partner

The old cliché is that prayer is like working out...if you're not used to it, it's good to have an accountability partner to keep you dedicated to it, daily.

6. Become an intercessor

Spend more time as an "intercessor", let your prayers be intercessions for others. You can't change people, but never underestimate the power, by God's grace, for others to change.

7. Keep your Bible within reach

We'll never grow in the Word until it's close enough at every minute that we can hold it and be challenged by it.



Now, you're probably wondering what any of this has to do with **Hansel and Gretel**, as I mentioned at the beginning. Notice that Hansel and Gretel set out to explore, traveling far from home...they put forth the effort, they moved out of their comfort zones, and took a different path than they were used to. That shows initiative. Notice, too, that *the bread* was supposed to lead them back home. When all else fails in your prayer and personal devotions, realize that (at the very least) you *always* have Christ with you, in His **true presence in the Eucharist** (John 6:52-58). You don't have to say a word if you don't want to. To stay "on the right track" you need two things...to remember where you came from (God) and to know where you are going (back to God).

Have a good journey.
The Bible Geek

(Ask the Bible Geek is an online resource from www.lifeteen.com)

SENIOR LUNCHEON AT ST. VINCENT'S

Food, Fun and Fellowship

Exactly at noon the Osseo whistle blows and it is time to open the doors of Regan Hall for the monthly senior lunch. Since January of 2000 St. Vincent's has invited



not only senior parishioners, but others from neighboring churches to join in on the best meal in town, a couple of fun jokes by Pastoral Minister, Margaret Schauer, and Volunteer Co-

ordinator, Kathleen Pomerleau and a chance for wonderful fellowship. It was organized in response to the fast growth in the area and the need for seniors to find ways to be involved and welcomed. At the very first luncheon 60 people attended and now the numbers have almost tripled and at times we have to turn people away.

On occasion there is entertainment such as a mini children's piano recital. A favorite is the children of St. Vincent's singing Christmas songs. Kym Chase and the catering department put a lot of time and thought into not only the wonderful meal but also the decorating which is done by Vicki Oberg. A favorite is Thanksgiving time and then again at Christmas where

the white linens are used. It takes many volunteers to help out with setting up and tearing down each month and many are the seniors themselves! If you are a senior and have not attended, you are missing out on the best deal in town.



The luncheon is held on the third Tuesday of the month. You can make your reservation by calling the church office by the Friday before the luncheon each month at 763-425-2210.

— Kathleen Pomerleau, Volunteer Coordinator



PLEASE GIVE US SOME FEEDBACK ON THE ST. VINCENT VOICE.

We strive 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?

Please send your opinions to:
Attn.: St. Vincent Voice Editor
St. Vincent de Paul Catholic Church
9100 93rd Avenue North, Brooklyn Park, MN 55445

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

Thank you!



The St. Vincent Voice

A Publication of
St. Vincent de Paul Catholic Church
9100 93rd Avenue North
Brooklyn Park, MN 55455
(763) 425-2210
www.saintvdp.org

The mission of our newsletter is to provide all registered parishioners of St. Vincent de Paul Catholic Church with an interesting and engaging publication that includes detailed articles about the people and events of our parish, education about our Catholic faith, and inspiration to deepen their relationship with God and the Church.

Inside this issue:

Stewardship Renewal	Pgs 1 & 2
Mark Your Calendar	Pgs 2 & 3
Ask Father	Page 2
Our Liturgical Ministers	Pgs 3 & 4
Giving Thanks	Page 4
Remembering the Harvest Festival	Page 5
Remembering the School Marathon	Page 6
Catholic Schools Week	Page 6
SMART Boards	Page 6
Make A Difference—SVDP Scrip Program	Page 7
VocationMatch.com	Page 7
Giving Tree	Page 8
Breakfast with Santa / Christmas Bazaar	Page 9
Friends & Family at Christmastime	Page 10
Ask the Bible Geek	Page 10
Senior Luncheon at St. Vincent's	Page 11
Symbols of Faith—Liturgical Colors	Page 12

SYMBOLS OF FAITH

A Cycle of Color in the Liturgical Year

From the first millennium, there was no fixed cycle of colors for the seasons of the church year, although white was always central. Through the Middle Ages, most dioceses in western and central Europe developed customs that associated certain days and certain colors. These traditions led to Roman authorities issuing universal rules as part of the Tridentine reforms about 1570. This progression of seasonal colors forms a backdrop of not only the moveable decorations in the environment but also imparting mystical images while providing the seasonal contrast and mood.



White. (Purity, Virginity, Victory, Joy, Innocence) Used on all occasions of the joyful and glorious mysteries of our Lord, of Mary, and of saints who were not martyrs. Used for Baptisms and Funerals.

Violet. (Sorrow, Penitence, Preparation) Used during seasons of Advent and Lent. Often called purple, the varia-

tion in hue allows for the use of redder shades in Lent and bluer shades in Advent.

Rose. (Subdued Joy) May be used on Gaudete Sunday (Advent III) and Laetare Sunday (Lent IV).

Red. (Sacrifice, Charity, Zeal, Holy Spirit) Used on commemorations of our Lord's passion (Passion Sunday, Good Friday), the apostles, evangelists, martyrs for the faith, and Pentecost.

Green. (Hope, Growth, Life, Immortality, Fidelity) Used on Sundays in Ordinary Time.

Black. (Death, Mourning, Despair) May be used for Masses for the dead as well as violet and purple.

Gold and Silver. Increased use of vestments with Gold, Silver, or other precious materials in ornamentation is possible on solemn occasions.

— Stephen Barnhart, Director of Worship

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

