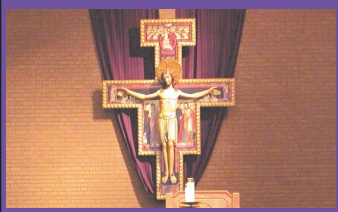


February 1 –
April 30, 2014



ST. VINCENT DE PAUL
CATHOLIC CHURCH

The St. Vincent Voice

A PUBLICATION OF ST. VINCENT DE PAUL CATHOLIC CHURCH

“LOVE ONE ANOTHER AS I HAVE LOVED YOU.”

When Jesus proclaims that we are to love one another, it is a call to a life of both introspective prayer and outward actions of love. This issue of *The Voice* addresses both these dualities.

The upcoming season of Lent is simple and sacrificial in nature, a time to be still in God’s love, to hear His voice. Our own parishioners have shared their Lenten observances on page 3, and there are several resources at St. Vincent’s—speakers, books, retreats—to enrich your personal journey with God as well. How we serve one another, on the other hand, is God’s love in action, it’s the “living out loud” part

of our faith. Suggestions on how to do this abound in the following pages: parish leadership and stewardship opportunities, supporting fundraisers for important causes and even sharing in the memories of loved ones who have passed away.

When we live our lives, both introspectively aware of God’s love and with intentional outward actions of love, we become “the church”—not members of an institution nor worshipers at a particular place—but as the living body of Christ, delighting the Lord as we love one another as He so loves us.

-Kim Lyngen, Editor/Layout Designer and Parishioner

THE UPCOMING 40 DAYS OF LENT

Have you ever felt guilty? You wouldn’t be human if you haven’t...

Judas felt really guilty. Peter felt really guilty, too. Both of them were apostles. Both of them betrayed Jesus...one for money, one out of fear. Guilt does not come from God but from within. How they handled their guilt, however, was quite different.

Judas was so overcome by what he had done that he could not believe in God’s mercy, and he hanged himself. Peter was also overcome by what he had done, but he returned to God in repentance, demonstrated in the bitter tears that he cried over how he had abandoned Jesus.

For a lot of people, the season of Lent is about guilt. That’s too bad...nothing could be further from the truth. Now, Lent can and should cause us to become very aware of our selfishness and sinfulness, and that can be a good thing. We need to take a

“Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.”

John 3:17



moment and recognize the areas in which we need to change our ways. The difference between the way Judas dealt with his guilt and Peter dealt with his, is that Peter used his guilt to draw him closer in relationship with God. God is calling us to look not only at the death of Good Friday, but also the life of Easter Sunday. Lent is really about rebirth. The word “Lent” actually means “Spring”. Because it is about death becoming life.

We begin Lent with Ash Wednesday, the ashes reminding us of the fact that our bodies were originally created from nothing and will, at some point, return to dust when we die. Our physical existence on this earth

Continued on page 2

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

- **Jan. 26-Feb. 1**
Catholic Schools Week
- **February 2**
Presentation of the Lord
- **February 4-April 15**
"Jesus the Rabbi: Following Him Day by Day" LIVE with Jeff Cavins and Small Group Study
- **February 8**
Cana Celebration
- **March 1**
St. Vincent Mobile Pack day with Feed My Starving Children
- **March 5**
Ash Wednesday
Masses at 8:00 a.m., 5:00 p.m. & 7:00 p.m.
- **March 10, 15 & 17**
Faith and Society Series
- **March 25**
Annunciation of the Lord
- **April 13**
Palm Sunday
- **April 17**
Holy Thursday
- **April 18**
Good Friday
- **April 19**
Vigil of Easter
- **April 20**
Easter Sunday

(continued from page 1)

is temporary, but our spiritual existence, our souls, are forever.

Think about that.

What are you living for right now, your body or your soul? That really make me think.

Lent, then, is more than a "church season," it is a journey from death to life. It is a journey designed to help us repent in very real ways. Remember, to "repent" means 'turn AWAY from one thing and turn TOWARDS something else.' For me, that means to turn away from anything and everything that leads me away from God, and turn my full attention back to my Creator, my Lord.

During the forty days of Lent, we are called to become more aware of God, to make concrete decisions that will help us live better lives, to gain the strength to leave behind things that draw us away from God, and to prepare ourselves to live, daily, as better Catholic Christians, as better sons and daughters, friends and co-workers, husbands and wives.

When I was a kid, Lent didn't mean a whole lot. Lent meant substituting a Fillet-O-Fish for the usual Friday happy meal. It meant that the music at Mass got more "serious" and we didn't say the "A" word...you know, (Allelu-). It meant that soon, Easter was coming...meaning Easter egg hunts against my siblings and chocolate-covered Cadbury eggs!

So what's the big deal with Lent and what's the point of sacrifices anyway? How does that translate to our daily lives, especially during Lent? Lent is the Church's "spiritual wake-up call" to you and I to prepare for Easter, and to remind us that we need to DIE to our selves. Dying to ourselves means dying to our own selfish wants, pleasures, desires, etc. to better focus on what God wants for us in our lives.

If you're like me, there are things in your life that occupy A LOT of your time and thought...a lot more than God does. Lent is a great time to reprioritize. For many of us, God can sometimes become just a "Sunday thing" and the world says that's okay. God does not.

God created you and me. God gave us everything we have. He gave us life, our families, our parents, our friends, our talents. So, mathematically (and this is NOT my strong suit), God gave us EVERYTHING, and sometimes we give HIM back only, 1/168 of our week...one hour on Sunday. That does not seem fair.

When we sacrifice anything during Lent, either something we "need" (candy or caffeine), or something we enjoy (meat on Friday), it's the sacrifice that counts. The sacrifice isn't meant to make us miserable, but to help us keep in mind what an incredible sacrifice God made for us atop a stony hill, so many years ago. Just as HE sacrificed and "gave up" His flesh on that Friday, now we honor Christ by abstaining from or "giving up" meat on Fridays during the forty days of Lent.

The ashes on Ash Wednesday are not to be seen as a sign of how horrible we are, or as a sign of guilt, but of humility. It's not just a solemn reminder that we are sinners, but it's an outward invitation to renew ourselves, to turn our whole selves and whole lives back to God.



These ashes are not some weird, outdated custom; they are admitting that we are not perfect, but at least we're trying to get better. They are a sign that we believe in God and are willing and wanting to get to know Him more deeply. They are a sign that no matter what others might say, we are proud to claim our God in today's culture, knowing and trusting that He is proud to claim us as His own.

The next forty days of Lent could be the most profound and most powerful days if we let them.

The question is—will we let them?

-Molly Schorr, Director of Parish Life

TRY SOMETHING NEW FOR LENT THIS YEAR

Below is a collection of the various ways our fellow parishioners observe Lent and use these 40 days to reflect on their relationship with God:



"Instead of giving something up for Lent, I try to take on something new. If I give up bread or caffeine, in the end it will ultimately benefit me with weight loss, better health, etc. But if I spend my time volunteering, I can truly benefit someone else. To me, this is the best way to celebrate Lent." *—Lorie*

"We make a Lenten calendar together as a family." *—Anonymous*

"During Lent I abstain from all social media and reacquaint myself with the still silence where I can better hear the words of God." *—Anonymous*

"I always enjoy learning something new about our faith. For example, learning about the saints for the Lenten season helped me discover St. John of God, the saint for firefighters. My brother is a firefighter and it was really neat to learn more about this and discuss with my family." *—Anonymous*

"We always give something up for Lent and growing up my family would pray the Rosary together." *—Kimberly*

"40 Bags in 40 Days": Each day I purge a different area of the house—junk drawer, bathroom cabinet, closet—and get rid of what we don't need. This opens more space for God to fill our home." *—Carol*

"Each Friday during Lent we attend the St. Vincent's dinner." *—Anonymous*

"On Ash Wednesday, at dinner, we all tell each other what we've given up and/or will do for Lent" *—Joel*

"A daily prayer journal—just a spiral notebook really—is where I "talk" to God about our relationship and what my Lenten journey looks like this year." *—Anonymous*

"My kids are getting to an age where they need to stop being so focused on themselves. I'm looking forward to them learning more about Jesus and hopefully getting a better understanding of our faith and sacrifices." *—Timothy*

"My favorite is the Stations of the Cross through the eyes of Mary." *—Anonymous*

"I create a Lenten table. It has a copy of the Stations of the Cross, our bible, our family devotional for Lent, a giving-box for almsgiving, an empty bowl to represent fasting, and a bare tree branch to represent death before life. At Easter it "blooms" and becomes our Egg Tree." *—Mary Jo*

ADULT FAITH FORMATION

All adults have the responsibility to continue learning and experiencing more of their Catholic faith throughout their lives. It is important to have an adult understanding of your faith if you are an adult and not try to rely on a child's or teenager's understanding of our faith.

During Lent of 2014 why not do something to deepen your adult faith? At St. Vincent de Paul we will be having a **Book Fair on the weekend of March 1 & 2 after all Masses, just before Ash Wednesday on March 5th.** Pick up something to enhance your prayer life or to increase your understanding of our wonderful Catholic faith.

We will be offering a **Faith and Society Series on March 10, 15 & 17** to bring our faith to real life issues in our world.

An **adult retreat will be held on Sat., March 15 from 9 am to 12:00** which will feature a **DVD presentation by Fr. Robert Barron, one of the great spiritual teachers of our time,** plus some prayer, quiet reflection and discussion.

Our parish will have its third annual **Lenten Evening of Reflection on March 24, 7-9 pm, with Fr. John Paul Erickson** who always has an inspiring and practical message to share.

—Chuck Pratt, Director of Faith Formation

Rediscover™

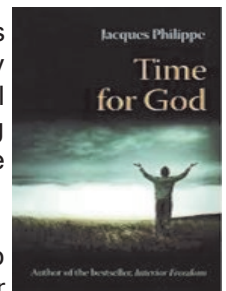
• Meaning, Belonging, Strength, Freedom,
• Peace. *Find it in your Catholic faith.*



Faith is truly a journey, and along the way, you may face many questions. You may also feel the deep desire to find meaning in life, or a sense of belonging to something greater than yourself.

Rediscover: is designed to do just that: to help you strengthen your connection with God, and with one another. Rediscover: invites you to find meaning and purpose in life, a sense of belonging, inner peace and strength, and true freedom through the depth and beauty of our Catholic faith, through just a few simple steps.

Connect with your friends at St. Vincent de Paul: Be a part of helping your fellow parishioners rediscover the depth and beauty of our Catholic faith by forming your own Catholic Book Study group. We want to encourage you to reach out to your own family and friends. We will provide all of the discussion material, all you have to do is provide the people! Meet in your homes, during hockey practice or while waiting for your kids in Faith Formation...whatever works best for you! We also have a group that meets at the parish on Monday mornings after the 8a.m. Mass.



"Finding True Happiness" by Fulton Sheen and **"Time for God"** by Jacques Philippe will be the two study books offered this spring. If you want more information on how to start your own book study, please contact Molly Schorr, Director of Parish Life, at 763-425-2210 or by email at mollyschorr@saintvdp.org



Connect Online: Those burning questions you have about the Catholic faith, but never knew how or who to ask? On www.rediscover-faith.org find answers to many questions you may have about your faith, as well as resources to help you know God personally. You'll find more resources from **Rediscover:** on Facebook, Twitter and YouTube.

Connect with the Local Church: Throughout the year, you'll have the opportunity to join other Catholics here and from our surrounding parishes for the **Rediscover: Faith Speakers Series**. The spring series starts in February, and each event is 90 minutes of engaging, multimedia-driven talks that will challenge you to ask yourself: What can I rediscover about my Catholic faith? Dates and locations are listed below:

Rediscover: faith™ 2014 Speakers Series

This Spring's speaker series will focus on the topic of Prayer.

Prayer:

These evenings are a unique opportunity to experience *Cor Jesu*, meaning "Heart of Jesus", as we worship Christ in community with the Church through Eucharistic adoration, confession, praise, benediction and fellowship.

- | Why Pray? | How to Pray | |
|---|---|---|
| • Monday, February 3: <i>Holy Name of Jesus, Wayzata</i> | • Monday, February 10: <i>Holy Name of Jesus, Wayzata</i> | |
| • Tuesday, February 4: <i>St. John Neumann, Eagan</i> | • Tuesday, February 11: <i>St. John Neumann, Eagan</i> | • Tuesday, March 11: <i>Cathedral of Saint Paul, St. Paul</i> |
| • Monday, February 24: <i>Our Lady of Grace, Edina</i> | • Monday, March 3: <i>Our Lady of Grace, Edina</i> | • Tuesday, March 25: <i>St. Hubert, Chanhassen</i> |
| • Tuesday, February 25: <i>St. John the Baptist, New Brighton</i> | • Tuesday, March 4: <i>St. John the Baptist, New Brighton</i> | • Tuesday, April 8: <i>All Saints, Lakeville</i> |

More information: www.rediscover-faith.org

LEADERSHIP AND COMMISSIONS, VISIONS AND GOALS

HOW THEY STRENGTHEN OUR PARISH

February is the kick-off of SVDP's annual discernment process—an opportunity to join the leadership at SVDP. Yet, didn't we just hear about all of the various ministries and groups at St. Vincent's? Weren't there just recently exhibits after Mass with tables showcasing all the opportunities to get involved in the parish? You aren't crazy...last fall SVDP's Stewardship Committee put on a ministry fair where you were invited to learn more by visiting after Mass, and you also were invited to complete a Time and Talent interest form that listed all of the ministries.

So what's the difference from the *leadership* groups and the *ministries* at SVDP? In a simple context, the leadership works to *develop the parish vision* while the ministries work to *act on the vision*. Leadership aspires to share a common sense of purpose, recognizing that our ministries are serving our church-wide purpose. Each leadership team (commission) establishes and operates under a plan that, in concert with their ministry, contributes toward the fulfillment of our parish-wide vision. Our annual discernment process invites you to learn more.

Why do we use *vision & over-arching goals for planning*? We hear it being used all the time for business and political planning. Most organizations incorporate goal setting which is directly related to visioning ideas. Yet, there seems to be ambiguity between goals and vision. What is the difference anyway?



As it turns out, not much! Most folks in the know describe a vision as a goal, but in the abstract. So an example of a vision might be, living more like Jesus, while a goal would be to pray twice a day or work at a food shelf twice a week—something more measured and tangible.

So, if all of these differing functional groups use a process of visioning and goal-setting as techniques for achieving success, shouldn't we in our faith journeys? While we all share a common long-term vision of going to heaven, the ultimate goal, shouldn't we have some shorter term visions and goals? And, what about a vision for our parish? For our own lives as individuals? What's your vision as a Catholic or Christian, much less your goals?

If you find yourself not having answers to these questions, you are not alone. In fact most of us likely do not (if you do - congratulations!) and even many parish level organizations don't have commonly shared visions and common goals. But there's good news in this deficiency! As it turns out, working on the vision and goals of our community

lends itself to similar vision and goals we have of ourselves as individuals too. Not surprising, given we *are*, our community. So, if we can work on our community's vision - we might just end up having one ourselves!

What's the leadership structure and the timeline for learning more? Our "leadership" is led by our wonderful pastor and staff here at SVDP. Yet, beyond this, we also involve the laypeople (that's you and me) and we do this with some structure. We have six groups, and we refer to them as *Commissions* and *Pastoral Council*.

While many of us have likely heard or seen Pastoral Councils used in parish leadership, many may not be accustomed to *commissions*. SVDP has 5 defined commissions, and are organized to align and work directly with staff and their various ministries & programs. Commissions are focused in formulating the goals and vision that supports SVDP's overarching mission, goals, and vision. These groups are the working arms of the Pastoral Council and are key to its effectiveness. The commissions increase the effectiveness of the ministries by reaching out to more people for support and fulfillment. They help to determine the goals and directions and involve a larger number of people to thereby increase the coordinating effort.

Over the coming weeks you will hear and read more about SVDP's annual discernment process which concludes on April 6th with a prayer-filled ceremony. There will be informational presentations and materials available along the way, and the process invites you to pray and seek out the Holy Spirit in discerning your contribution to shape the path here at SVDP. We invite you to watch for more information, pray and discern to join our *leadership* effort.

-Pete Thoresen & Bob Clark, Pastoral Council

THE ST. VINCENT VOICE WANTS TO HEAR FROM YOU!

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?

Send to: Attn. St. Vincent Voice Editor, St. Vincent de Paul, 9100 93rd Ave N, Brooklyn Park, MN 55445. **Or you may email** your feedback to: editor@saintvdp.org.

GROUP DYNAMICS

THE 'MIRACLE' OF BECOMING CHURCH



It happens in every parish: someone has a new project in mind—a religious education program for teenagers, a Thanksgiving dinner for the poor, a food drive or clothing collection for the local shelter. The parishioners are approached to help out. It's a tough sell: people are very protective of their time; they're not sure this is something they want to do or are comfortable getting involved with; they doubt they have the abilities and patience necessary for this kind of work. But, eventually, a group of volunteers comes together.

And then, without fail, the remarkable happens. Once the group sees the importance of what they are doing and the potential good they can do, they are transformed by that realization. Their reluctance gives way to fresh optimism and enthusiasm; their doubts disappear in a new spirit of "anything is possible". Holding back at the beginning, they are ready to devote whatever time and skills and resources necessary to see the project through. The volunteers are caught up in the joy of doing good.

They have become a community.

They are Church.

This is what happens in the story of the feeding of the five thousand in the Gospel of Mark (Mark 6:34-44). It is an experience of Church. Jesus transforms a gathering of many different people who become one in their need, one in the bread they share, one in the love of Jesus who has brought them together. Taking the few pieces of bread and fish they can collect, Christ works a miracle.

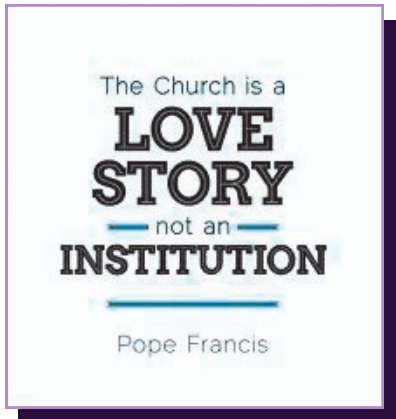
Christ empowers each one of us to perform our own miracles of creating community when we give of our time, talent and treasure to take on the work of the gospel: feeding the hungry, caring for the sick, seeking out the

lost and forgotten, teaching to all the good news that God is our loving Father. In doing so, we are creating the "miracle" of becoming Church.

That is what Stewardship is all about. Using our God-given gifts to not only help others, but in doing so to build community. Thank you for all that you do to help St. Vincent de Paul be the incredible witness of Christ and thank you for continuing to make Stewardship a way of life!

(adapted from The Daily Reflections for Advent and Christmas by Jay Cormier)

—Molly Schorr, Director of Parish Life



The St. Vincent Voice Newsletter Committee

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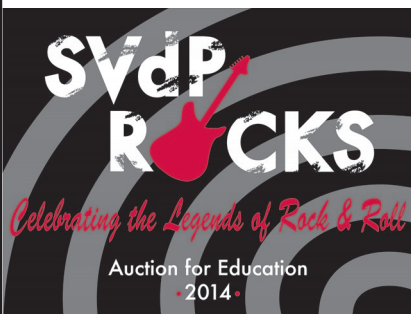
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Director of Parish
Life

Marci Siers,
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SAVE THE DATE!

SVDP Rocks! Celebrating the Legends of Rock & Roll

Breakfast and Silent Auction: Sunday May 4, 2014

Live and Silent Auction: Saturday, May 17, 2014

The Auction for Education is held every spring and has become one of the major fundraising events at St. Vincent de Paul for Catholic education. It consists of a family-friendly breakfast and silent auction on a Sunday in the Spring and the following Saturday, an adults-only live and silent auction with a fabulous dinner centered around a specific theme. The proceeds benefit more than 1,400 students throughout our parish and school. If you have any questions about this exciting event, please email: auction@saintvdp.org



OUR CEMETERY IS ALIVE WITH MEMORIES A PLACE OF REMEMBRANCE AND SHARING

Why is St. Vincent the final resting place of my grandparents, parents, aunt and uncle, and nephew?

My family, including both sets of grandparents, were raised in north Minneapolis and attended St. Bridget's church. We lived just a hop, skip and a jump from Crystal Lake Cemetery. Yet, when my grandparents Edmund and Helen O'Neill passed away, they took the long journey out of the city to be buried in St. Vincent's cemetery. I was in grade school and never challenged the idea.



Next was Uncle Donald Powell, who also took the long journey out of the city when I was twelve. Mom and Dad, Arthur and Elizabeth Roehl, were next, but by then I was living in Brooklyn Park and welcomed their nearness to my home. Nephew Brett Owens left us while he was in his thirties and it did seem so unfair, but again, he found his final resting place in St. Vincent's. The most recent, but surely not the last, to find St. Vincent as her final resting spot was my aunt Catherine Roehl Powell, whom I was named after.

I do not know "why" they all ended in St. Vincent Cemetery, but I very happy to have them so close now that I live in Maple Grove and attend St. Vincent de Paul Church.

- Cathy Roehl Peterson, Parishioner

Do you have a short story to share? We'd love to hear it!

Send it to Tess Eiden at the church office or to: tesseiden@saintvdp.org

St. Vincent de Paul Cemetery has been in existence, along with its cooperating church, for over 150 years. Over the years the cemetery has quietly grown from one section in the northwest corner of the cemetery to 12 sections. There are about 4,000 gravesites, of which about 3,500 are occupied. Watch for exciting details in the upcoming months as we celebrate the opening of the Garden Expansion!

It's almost time to start thinking about...



BARGAINS AND BEYOND!

2014 Sale dates:

Thu, June 12

Fri, June 13

Sat, June 14

*Start that
Spring Cleaning!*



Pre-sale Donation Drop-Off Saturdays

Watch the bulletin for the dates and times in April, May and June for early donation drop offs.

Please note: When putting things aside for donations, remember that clothing must be clean, unstained and in good repair.

Items that will NOT be ACCEPTED: Computer equipment, TVs, Large exercise equipment, Mattresses, Cribs, Christmas trees, Car seats, Tires, Encyclopedias, & Magazines older than 2 years.

If you have any questions or would like to volunteer with the sale, please call Betty at (763) 315-4158.



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.

The St. Vincent Voice

A Publication of
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CATHOLIC UNITED FINANCIAL RAFFLE

SUPPORT OUR SCHOOL AND YOU COULD WIN FANTASTIC PRIZES!



Catholic Schools week begins January 26 and there is no better way to celebrate than by purchasing a raffle ticket to win prizes including a 2014 Honda CR-V (or \$25,000 cash), dream vacations, VIP tickets to the 2014 Basilica Block Party, and MORE!

St. Vincent de Paul school is one of only 85 schools in the Midwest invited to participate in this raffle sponsored and funded by Catholic United Financial. **Every cent of our sold raffle tickets go directly to our school!**

Tickets are only \$5 and will be available after all Masses on the following dates:

Grand Prize



2014 Honda CR-V
or \$25,000 cash
One Winner

Saturday & Sunday, February 8th -9th

Saturday & Sunday, February 22nd -23rd



Dream Vacation
Two Winners

Or you may contact the school at 763-425-3970 to purchase your tickets.

Raffle prize drawing ceremony is March 13th, 2014.

Visit www.catholicunitedfinancial.org for more prize information!



2014 Basilica Block Party
VIP/Skybox Tickets for 2
One Winner