

SVDP and God's Providence

Now all glory to God, who is able, through his mighty power at work within us, to accomplish infinitely more than we might ask or think. Glory to him in the church and in Christ Jesus through all generations forever and ever! Amen - Ephesians 3:20-21 (NLT)

There is always some degree of reliance on God's providence involved in St. Vincent de Paul work. From its founding in 1833 the Society has mandated that conferences must not hoard or save for "a rainy day." We trust that when we give what we have this month, the next month's needs will be provided for then.

Over the last month with it's moratorium on evictions, we have had fewer requests for help with rent, but quite a few requests for items we don't usually get. One mother of six wanted baby items including a swing and walker for her 10 month old daughter and for a small child with developmental delays she is also caring for. Within the week a Vincentian was offered baby items from parishioners of Good Shepherd, including a swing and even more than the woman had asked for. How delighted she was to get them!

A single mom called because she had no refrigerator - no means to store perishables beyond one day. This was brought up in a meeting, and a fellow Vincentian's family member had a refrigerator that he had planned to give away. When the Vincentians delivered it, they saw that there was no table or other furniture in the kitchen/living room. A couple of days later he got a call from still another Vincentian that a neighbor was getting rid of a bunch of furniture including a table set, a chair, and and kitchen items. These were taken to the woman, who was so very grateful!

We had 2 requests for stoves within the month. One stove was donated by a fellow Knight and we were able to purchase one. Having just delivered our last mattress, our mattress program had ordered a supply of one queen and 5 twin mattresses when we got a bed request from a man with an ongoing medical condition. He came out of the hospital and was sleeping on a sofa until we took a twin bed to him. Then a previously homeless man called that he had no bed in his new living quarters, and he got a twin mattress with springs and a bed frame.

Another home visit revealed that a single mother with 3 children had no beds and all four of them were sleeping on the floor . The woman was told that 3 mattresses would be delivered to her apartment the next week. She pointed out that the children's bedroom was so small it did not have room for 2 twin beds. She asked if it might be possible to get a bunk bed so the youngest could sleep on the bottom and the older child on the top. Our finances did not allow for buying a bunk bed frame, but the visiting Vincentian said he would see what he could do. Two days later he was attending a K of C meeting, when out of the blue a member asked him, "I have a bunk bed I don't need - could SVdP use it?" A Rotarian friend donated a queen sized bed frame and box springs. And it just happened that pillows and sheets were also donated for her.

One thing I love about being a member of St. Vincent de Paul Society is that I get to witness big and little miracles of God's Providence.

A story from June, 2020, during the pandemic