

## **The Gift - A Story About Much More Than Mattresses and Furniture**

In visiting in the homes of people who have called Holy Spirit's SVdP for help, we have gone into dwellings with little or no furniture and found that whole families were sleeping on the floor. In fiscal year 2018, St. Vincent de Paul spent \$3,344 for 36 new, discounted mattresses.

Not too long ago a social worker called us and asked us to visit a family living in a trailer. It was basically gutted and empty except for a sofa and one twin mattress on the floor. We met a couple that loved and did their best to care for their three children. The father had a minimum wage job, and they had just recently bought the trailer. They had been visited and told by DHR that they had just one week to provide the children with beds or the children would be taken from their family and put into foster care. Everyone in the family was distraught as they had no savings. We brought them three single captain's beds with drawers underneath the mattresses to store their clothes, and 2 sets of linens for each bed. On the first visit we had noticed that there were no toys in the house or yard, and so, along with the beds we brought toys from the SVdP thrift store donations. They were all delighted and so very thankful! One of the little girls arrived home from a school field trip that day very excited about 3 pretty stones she got on the trip. She showed them around to everyone, extolling their awesome beauty. Then she presented one to her mom and one to each Vincentian saying, "This is all I have to give to you." As Vincentians, we believe that everyone has something to give to make the world a better place for someone. Some of us are privileged to be able to donate food or money for the less fortunate, but all of us are able to give something: a smile, a kind word, forgiveness to a rude driver, time to listen to another's concerns, or even a pretty stone. And because we believe that giving ultimately benefits the giver, our Vincentians accepted the offered stones with great gratitude.

Mark 12:44 "...but she, out of her poverty, gave all that she had..."

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As Vincentians, we see again and again that we are the ones who are receiving great blessings!