



St. Vincent de Paul Sacramento Diocesan Council

Serving in Hope and Mercy



Monday Morning Memo



Rain is a good thing, especially in California after years of drought. But I have to admit, as we approach Memorial Day Weekend, I am a bit tired of the wet, gray weather. Lucky for me I am off to the Western Region Meeting on Thursday in Phoenix, Arizona where the temperatures will be in the 80's and I can wear my sandals rather than my boots!

I am looking forward to meeting my fellow Vincentians, getting re-acquainted with old friends and meeting new ones. For those of you who have never attended a regional or national meeting it is a few days packed with new information, workshops, spirituality, and often a special excursion to see a new places. In Phoenix we will get a tour of the SVdP Campus which includes Homeless Ministries, their new Medical and Dental Clinics and much more. I have been looking forward to seeing this Campus since I first heard about it and can't wait to share my visit with you next week.

Have a blessed week and thanks for all you do,

~ Judy

Volunteer Appreciation Day Our Divine Savior Conference

It has been more than 6 months since the devastating Camp Fire in Paradise California. Within a week of the fire, the closest conference to the fire, Our Divine Savior in Chico set-up a station at the Disaster Recovery Center (DRC) and began doing intake interviews with the victims.



Vincentian Suzanne Roden remembers those beginning days right after the fire and says, "We started doing Intakes on opening day of the DRC in the old Sears building on Friday, November 16, just eight days after the Camp Fire started. Fr. Mike Ritter championed the cause and encouraged his parishioners to volunteer for training and shift work at the DRC. We trained over 100 volunteers from both St. John the Baptist and Our Divine Savior parishes who were ready to do three or four hour shifts. Often times, we had 12 or more volunteers at a shift doing intake, giving out gift cards, and listening to the stories that our Camp Fire friends needed to share. We felt the Lord at our side as we supported our friends as best we could. In the end we did over 4,300 intakes and gave out about \$125,000 in gift cards. Donations came from SVdP Disaster Services Corporation, St. John the Baptist and Our Divine Savior parishioners, Catholic Charities, individuals, businesses and many of the SVdP conferences in the Western Region."

After such an intense time of recovery work, the Chico Conference wanted to thank the volunteers for their dedicated and ongoing efforts with the victims of this disaster. On Wednesday, May 15 the conference hosted an Volunteer Appreciation Breakfast at *Youth With A Mission Conference Center* at Richardson Springs, which is just north of Chico.

Deacon Steve Schwartz from St. John the Baptist Church led the group in prayer and reflection. All enjoyed a delicious breakfast prepared by Our Divine Savior conference members. About 40 volunteers attended the breakfast and along with the expression of thanks it was also a time to learn about next steps in this long process of disaster recovery.



Fatima Aguirre, recently hired case manager, was on hand to meet the group and tell them about what has taken place so far and what the long-term recovery phase will encompass. Activity to date, includes responding to survivor phone calls, doing home visits, referral and resource assistance, case consultation, and volunteer recruitment and training.

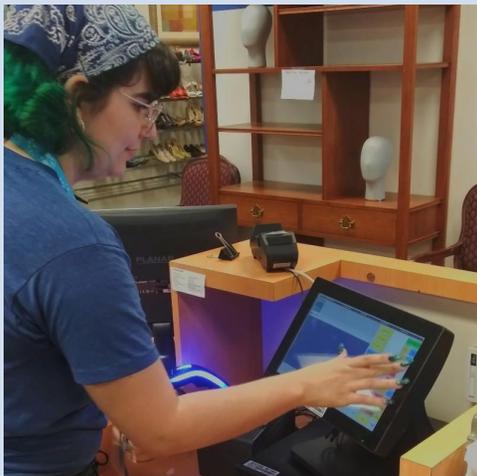
We welcome Fatima and hope to add the assistance of more case managers as resources allow.

Check Out What's New at the Thrift Store!

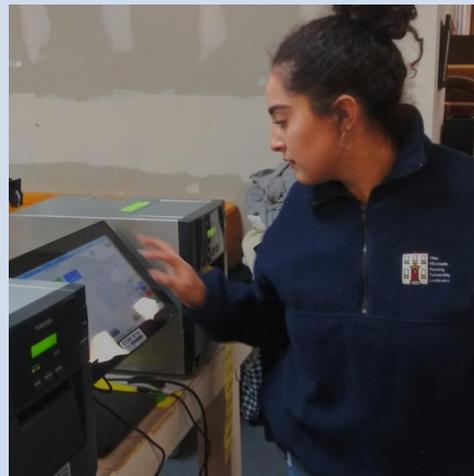


We have a new vendor at the Store, Gateway Mattress Co., and you can see and try out these beautiful new mattresses which are displayed in the Store. The prices, which are right on the beds, are not to be believed! Go see for yourself.

There is a mattress of each size and quality on display, twin, full, queen, and king. Some are even pillow top. They are new mattresses, which can be ordered by conferences for those they serve, and are also available at very low cost to the public.



A new POS System (Point of Sale) was installed last week and with the help of Lori Bedwell, Director of Stores Support. The system is up and running and the staff is fully trained. The staff is very excited about having these new registers and computers in the Store. The new front registers have touch screens and the items are scanned for prices. Very hi-tech!



In the back of Store where production takes place, there are more computers which are pre-loaded with prices and turn out the barcoded price tags. No more handwritten tickets!

This makes the production department much more efficient and enables staff to get items on the floor much more quickly.



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Homeless in America

The Fox News channel did a week long series on homelessness which focused on the West Coast. As most of you know, California has the largest population of homeless people in the nation. As I was watching on Thursday my ears perked up when I heard St. Vincent de Paul mentioned in the report on Eugene, Oregon. It was described as having a very successful shelter which is both "simple and cheap."

Executive Director Terry McDonald was interviewed and noted that the goal is to keep people off the streets and get them into recovery programs and ultimately into permanent housing. This was one of the only bright spots in the entire series in which a solution was created, working, and the goal being systemic change. **Here is the link to the video.**

"Let us serve with hearts filled with the pure love of God which enables us always to love the roses amidst the thorns."

~ Louise de Marillac

"A network of friends, inspired by Gospel values, growing in holiness and building a more just world through personal relationships with and service to people in need."

~ Mission Statement

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St. Vincent de Paul
Sacramento Diocesan Council



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