

The Quarterly Informer

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St. Vincent de Paul Society
Our Lady of the Mountains Conference

Whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me. Matthew 25

ST. VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY Our Lady of the Mountains Conference

2016-2017 Annual Financial and Activity Report

The 2016-17 fiscal year continued to reflect more than usual homeless situations. In addition, we are getting more requests for help from clients who have applied for disability assistance, and since approval takes from 18-24 months, given that the client even qualifies, they find themselves needing financial help in the interim. During the period, we helped 818 people, representing 386 families.

Total receipts during the period were \$148,505, which includes receipts for direct aid, the Family Uplift Program, and the Head Start Christmas Party Fund. OLM parishioners contributed \$77,804 of total receipts, primarily for direct aid (\$76,136). The remainder of the funds came from the Community Thrift Store Grant, Big Canoe Benevolence and Women's Guild, a family foundation, and some private donations.

Spending for the year totaled \$136,832. Of this amount, direct aid totaled \$128,643, the main portion being \$53,555 for utilities and \$37,398 for rent/mortgage. We provided \$3,812 to homeless families for temporary lodging at a local motel. The balance of direct aid spending went for transportation-related expenses of \$7,322, clothing/food of \$5,061, and miscellaneous in the amount of \$6,500.

We ended the year with three participants in the Family Uplift Program. Expenses for the year totaled \$10,383, with most of the expense going for rent (\$7,777).

Finally, the 2016 Head Start Christmas party received \$1,668 from parishioners and an additional \$6,475 from local merchants (\$1,775 was left over and will be used for the 2017 Party). The event cost a total of \$4,610, which included a donation for school supplies and equipment.

Operating expenses totaled \$8,089 which is made up primarily of solidarity payment to Council (\$5,210), phone and office supplies (\$1,671), and miscellaneous expenses (\$1,308). The thirty or so Society volunteers from Our Lady of the Mountains also provided countless hours and drove numerous miles to serve our clients. Without their commitment and dedication, the works of the Society in Pickens County would not exist.

As always, the Society is grateful to all who make this charitable mission possible. Special thanks to OLM parishioners and organizations, the anonymous donor (providing matching funds), the Community Thrift Store, a family foundation, Big Canoe Chapel Benevolence, and OLM Men's Club and the Women's Guild for their support during this year.

MATCHING DONATION CONTINUES!

From this Thanksgiving through Christmas, donations to the St. Vincent de Paul Society (OLM Conference) will be matched up to \$7,500. The Society is grateful for the generosity of our anonymous donor. Thanks in advance to all who donate to meet the match.

KROGER COMMUNITY REWARDS PROGRAM AND YOU

You can enroll in the Kroger Community Rewards program so that any time you make a purchase at Kroger using your Kroger Plus Card, a small portion of the purchase will be awarded to the OLM Conference of the St. Vincent de Paul Society. To enroll, go to the website, krogercommunityrewards.com and follow the instructions. The number for the Society is 37841. Kroger Community Rewards makes fundraising easy...all you have to do is enroll, shop at Kroger, and swipe the Plus Card!

2017 HEAD START CHRISTMAS PARTY

Planning and fund raising for the 19th annual Head Start School Christmas party has begun. The party is scheduled for December 21st at the Head Start School. Donations from OLM parishioners and local business contributions make this an event the children will long remember. Thanks to Georgia Neel, a Society volunteer, for visiting local businesses, requesting and obtaining their financial support. The funds raised not only pay for the wonderful gift bag each student receives from Santa, but also provides funds to purchase much needed school supplies and equipment.

Cathy Tucker, another volunteer, will purchase the gifts and coordinate assembling the gift bags on December 19th. Cathy also arranges for Santa and his helper to be at the event and provides a picture of each child with Santa. Our thanks to Cathy for this huge effort that makes such an impact on these young lives.

HELPING FAMILIES OVERCOME HOMELESSNESS

We are being contacted by more and more homeless families seeking assistance. Since there is so little available housing in Pickens County, this has become a real problem. However, we did manage to help one family recently.

A client and her teenage daughter came to an intake in desperate need of a place to live, bringing with them three plastic bags of clothing and some toiletry items. The client had lost her husband four years ago and was living on disability income of \$700 per month. With this limited income, she had not been able to pay her rent and related expenses, and had been evicted. She wanted to stay in Pickens County so that her daughter could continue to go to the same school and not start all over somewhere else. Complicating the matter, the mother suffered from epileptic seizures and was released from her part-time cleaning job due to the risks involved that the employer could not assume. Because of their homelessness, the Department of Family and Children Services was considering taking her daughter and placing her in foster care (needless to say, mother and daughter very much wanted to stay together). All of these difficulties had the client totally stressed out and in tears.

We contacted Jasper Housing Authority, Action Ministries, and North Georgia Community Action to see if they knew of any available, affordable housing in Pickens County, and if additional funding could be found. Eventually, a rental property was found for \$450 per month (including all utilities!) which, along with Food Stamps and visits to the CARES food pantry, made it possible for the mother and daughter to stay together. North Georgia Community Action paid the first month rent (\$450) and the Society covered the security deposit (\$450). For the moment, their situation is stabilized and they have hopes for the future.

TIME AND TALENT WEEKEND

The weekend of November 11th-12th is Time and Talent Weekend at Our Lady of the Mountains. The Weekend will provide an opportunity for OLM parishioners to sign up for parish organizations in which they wish to volunteer. The St. Vincent de Paul Society will have a table staffed by Vincentians who will distribute literature and answer questions regarding the works of the Society and its volunteers. Please consider being a part of a group whose actions respond to the needs of the poor in our community.

CHRISTMAS TOY ASSISTANCE FOR PICKENS COUNTY

Many families in Pickens County need assistance in providing Christmas gifts for their children. They can get help through Pickens County Toys for Tots (PCTOT) and the Jasper Lions Club. They can pick up PCTOT applica-

tions at the Pickens County Sheriff's Office at the County Jail beginning November 1st. They can get Jasper Lions Club applications until December 10th at any of the Pickens County elementary/middle schools, or at a DFCS office. Make inquiries early and do not wait until the last minute, as the toys go fast. If you know of a family in need of this type of help, please pass along this information.

PLEASE REMEMBER THE SOCIETY

You can provide the Society significant financial support by remembering us through memorials, gifts, and/or including the Society in your will or trust. As always, your prayers are most welcome, not only for the success of the Society, but for all those we serve.

Mail donations to:

St. Vincent de Paul Society
Our Lady of the Mountains Conference
1908 Waleska Highway 108
Jasper, GA 30143



St. Vincent de Paul

If you or someone you know is in need of emergency financial assistance, please call 706-692-7604. Leave your name, number, and a brief message, and someone from the Society will call you back.

