

## **Article Regarding the Saint Brendan SVdP Conference**

### **St Vincent DePaul Society**

Inspired by Gospel values, the Society of St. Vincent de Paul group at St. Brendan's has about 18 active members who meet monthly on the 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday of each month in the Carter Conference room to pray, reflect upon the Gospel, and then get down to the business of serving those in need. Meetings conclude with prayer and then the making of 300 sandwiches which are then delivered to St. Lawrence Haven Soup Kitchen in downtown Columbus. Members gather for this monthly meeting, but they may also spend time throughout the week working with different clients who have contacted the parish for help.

So what does "serving those in need" look like in our parish community? In the past year, the St. Vincent de Paul group of St Brendan's has responded to over 200 cases of people in need of "emergency assistance". Most of those cases have been located right here in our Hilliard community, although a few needs from the greater area have been brought to the group's attention. St. Vincent de Paul provides assistance for food, rental payments, utility payments, clothing, household items, baby/toddler supplies, prescription payment, gasoline, or other emergency short term needs. They group also makes referrals to various public assistance agencies for situations that might require long term help. The group can also make referrals for counseling or other professional guidance. The financial help normally comes in the form of gift cards purchased from SCRIP in amounts of \$300 or less. The even greater gift of personal support and reassurance for our neighbors in need comes from our own parish members of St Vincent de Paul who are able to see the face of Christ in the clients they serve.

Jason Thomas is the current ministry leader for our local St Vincent de Paul society. Compelled by the Trinity, the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul, the Order of the Malta and his conscience to serve the poor and the sick, Jason has "grown in holiness and increased my virtues". Jason graduated from St. Brendan's in 1989, however he fell away from his faith during college and his young adult years. He's been back in the church for about 5 years and felt God calling him to serve those in need. Saying "yes" to leadership of the St Vincent de Paul group has been more rewarding than he anticipated, and he enjoys working with the priests, parish staff, and other ministry leaders to serve the poor of Hilliard.

St. Vincent de Paul funds its services through the generous donations from parishioners during our 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday collections. The group averages \$4,500-\$7000 per collection 4 times a year. In addition to the financial donations, the St. Vincent de Paul group also collects items in the green bin in the gathering space for JOIN and the Hilliard Food Pantry. Every item donated makes a difference. Please be generous in your donations for our upcoming Thanksgiving Food Drive for the Hilliard Food Pantry.

If you feel God calling you to be more active in serving the needs of the poor through the work of the St. Vincent de Paul Society, please contact Jason via the parish office, visit the group at a monthly meeting, donate items in the green bin in the gathering space, and most importantly pray for our neighbors, community, and Saint Vincent de Paul Conference