



SOCIETY NEWS

THE SOCIETY OF ST. VINCENT De PAUL

Denver Metro Council

Spring 2025



The Society of St. Vincent de Paul (SSVdP), a charitable organization dedicated to the service of the poor was established by French university students headed by Frederic Ozanam in Paris in 1833. SSVdP is active in 151 countries with 800,000 members. The first SSVdP chapter in the United States was established in 1845 in St. Louis, Missouri.

Membership in the U.S. totals more than 98,000 in 4,400 conferences. The national headquarters is in St. Louis. Members of the Society are known as "Vincentians," after St. Vincent de Paul, the patron of the organization. Vincentians are organized into conferences, a group of volunteers who gather together to grow spiritually and offer person-to-person service to those in need or living in poverty. SSVdP activities in Denver began in 1876. Today, the Denver Metro Council includes 28 conferences with 497 members who last year served 27,000 adults and children in six counties. Conferences provided \$2,167,529 in a wide variety of financial aid to households.



Your donations help to fund three important Metro Council conference support programs involving housing, vehicle repair and household goods.

Ozanam Housing Fund Your donations enable the Council to provide one-half of the amount used to assist a household with a mortgage, rent or motel payment up to \$300. For example, if a conference pays \$600 to a landlord on behalf of a neighbor-in-need (NIN), the Council would reimburse the conference \$300. Last year, the Council reimbursed conferences

with \$208,077 which helped 1,100 adults and 865 children.

Nativity of Our Lord SSVdP conference met with a paraplegic man who was in the hospital with many complications, including the possibility of a leg amputation. The neighbor has two daughters, one in middle school and one in elementary school and his brother is paid as his full-time caregiver by the state. When the NIN is in the hospital, the caregiver does not get paid as the caregiver. Unfortunately, this family relies on both the neighbor's Social Security disability income and the brother's caregiver income to pay the rent each month. Our conference was able to work with the SSVdP Council and use the Ozanam Housing Fund supported by donors to pay the month's rent for this family so they could focus on healing and keeping the family intact and in their home. They were very grateful for the rental assistance and as it turned out, he did not have his leg amputated. Our prayers were answered. Thank you, God!

The Ozanam Housing Fund is an incredibly important part of the financial resources the **St. Ignatius of Loyola** Conference draws on to serve our neighbors. Thanks to the Fund we were able to assist a 64 year-old neighbor who is battling stage 4 cancer get caught up on her outstanding mortgage so that she could stay in her home while undergoing treatment. The Fund made it possible for us to provide the security deposit for a single mother of three young children who had been living out of her car for weeks. She got the keys to her new apartment, and got her children settled the day our January temperatures plummeted to below zero!

The Fund allowed us to assist another single mother of three move into a new apartment just a day before her motel voucher was going to run out. Without the Ozanam Housing Fund our ability to assist these wonderful, struggling children of God would have been severely limited.



Vehicle Repair Program Auto repair costs are rising much faster than many household incomes. Using your donations, the Council reimburses conferences for one-half of what they spend on helping to repair vehicles up to \$750. During the 2024 fiscal year, the Council, with help from donors like you, reimbursed conferences with \$29,621.

Julie, a 62 year-old grandmother reached out for help from **Our Lady Mother of the Church** conference. Although she did not live in the area and the conference was low on funds, they decided to help after hearing about Julia's situation. Julia was given custody of three grandchildren aged 18 months, 4 and 6 years old when the parents were incarcerated. Julia stopped working to care for the children and struggled through homelessness and living in a Jeep and a shelter for days. She did manage to get help with several support programs and move into an apartment. Now her problem was the Jeep that needed repairs

Vincetians contacted Christian Brothers who repaired the vehicle and the conference used the Vehicle Repair Program to pay half of the \$549 bill. Thanks to the program and a special discount from Christian Brothers, the conference also was able to provide Julia with a \$100 King Soopers gift card.

Edith contacted our **Holy Name** SSVdP conference in January with a request for help with a repair on her van. She is 56 years old and for the last six months, since separating from her husband, has been living in the van. She receives a disability benefit of \$832 and sells plasma for extra cash. It was clear from our meeting with her that the disability is a mental disorder. We met with Edith and her mother at her mother's apartment – they explained that the mother has a housing voucher and she cannot allow Edith to stay except for a few days “now and then” – and particularly when it is frigid cold. Edith and her mother are trying to find a place for both of them. Meanwhile, Edith lives in the van. She uses the van to take her mother to medical appointments, and it seriously needed brake work. Using funds from the Vehicle Repair Program, we were able to take care of the \$700 brake work so that these two neighbors in need can safely get around.

ARC Gift Cards The Council, using donations, purchases ARC gift cards at a 50% discount and then



provides cards to conferences seeking to help NIN purchase household goods including mattresses, bed frames, dishes, clothes, and other household items. Last year, the Council provided conferences with ARC gift cards valued at \$45,000.

Our conference at **St. Vincent de Paul** parish really appreciates all of the Metro Council programs designed to help us help our NIN. However, we especially appreciate the ARC Gift Cards program. Last year around Christmas, one of our volunteers was working with a social worker, Jean, at McMeen Elementary to get gifts for some of their families. We learned that McMeen had taken on 500 new students from migrant families. Jean mentioned that the families had nothing and related how hard it was to see children coming to school in a blizzard in only tee shirts and jeans, no coats, nothing warm. We asked if ARC gift cards would help and were assured that they would. Thanks to your donations to the Metro Council, we were able to obtain ten \$50 gift cards. This year, Jean enthusiastically thanked us and told us what a difference the gift cards had made for those families

One of the volunteers accompanying the women shared two consistent themes throughout this process: the first was the gratitude that people expressed for the assistance that they were given and secondly, no one took more than they thought was essential and sufficient. Welcoming the stranger entails more than the initial greeting. It is accompanying people and enabling them as they struggle to be “at home” in a new and foreign land. The Metro Council of St. Vincent de Paul has been present throughout this journey.

The **Blessed Sacrament** SSVdP conference distributes ARC gift cards to our NIN on a regular basis. These cards are purchased by the Metro Council with donations they receive. We can apply for up to \$300 per request, which goes a long way at ARC. And, on Saturday, everything in the store is 50% off.

Exactly what can ARC cards accomplish? Close your eyes. Imagine that you are homeless – perhaps living with friends or relatives, perhaps staying in a shelter, perhaps even living in your car. Now, after applying for some time, you can move into an apartment of your own. A few pieces of furniture have been donated, but there are no sheets, blankets, towels, pots, pans, silverware, dishes or many other

items necessary to maintain a home. Children may not have toys or books. Families may need clothes, shoes, and coats, especially if they came from a warm climate to Denver.

PLEASE HELP US HELP OTHERS

Make a check out to:

Denver Metro Council – SSVDP
2830 Lawrence St.
Denver, CO 80205

or go to:

<https://svdpden.org/donate>

Patrick L. Hanafee, President
Erin Hice, Executive Director



No Act of charity is foreign to the Society

RULE Part I: 1.3

The Marshall Fire destroyed and damaged homes and businesses valued at \$2 billion in December 2021. Over 40 Vincentians from 16 conferences immediately began working with 54 Marshall Fire survivors and provided a wide range of assistance, particularly in the first few weeks following the fire.



Scene of Marshall Fire in December 2021

Council president Patrick Hanafee
with check for recipient Laura.

While the Society provided thousands of dollars in assistance during the first year, requests for help began to wane since that time and the Council still had some restricted funds that had to be used for survivors.

Recently, a dishonest contractor was found guilty of stealing \$3.8 million from four families affected by the fire. He entered into contracts with the families

although he was not qualified to do the work but kept the money. He was apprehended, found guilty and sentenced to ten years in prison. The Boulder County District Attorney's office helped us to connect with one of the families. A Council check using the remaining restricted funds was delivered to the family to help offset their large monetary loss.

Another time, we represented an immigrant before a small claims court when the landlord refused to return a deposit even after declining to repair a hot water heater that had not worked for months. When the sheriff showed up with an order to appear in court, the landlord quickly settled out of court.

When a donor offered us a new wheelchair, we assembled it and delivered it to one of the nursing centers where Vincentians make weekly visits with residents. Earlier, a Vincentian repaired and delivered a donated electric wheel chair for one of the residents.





**Society of St. Vincent de Paul
Denver Metro Council
2830 Lawrence Street
Denver, CO 80205**

Got a vehicle you no longer want?

- *Donate it to us*
- *Get a tax reduction*
- *Help us help others*

Go to svdpUSA.cars.com or call 1-800-322-8284



The company handling donated vehicles for the Society will provide instructions and will work with you on a pickup date and time. Be sure to tell them the proceeds from the sale of your vehicle should go to the Denver Metro Council.

Questions? Call us directly 303-690-9163

HELP US HELP OTHERS BY NOT PAYING TAX ON YOUR IRA REQUIRED MINIMUM DISTRIBUTION (RMD)
Rather than take a RMD and pay income tax, use the IRA charitable rollover to support our ministry. Ask how by reaching out to our trusted partners at The Catholic Foundation by calling Deacon Steve Semper, Lisa Kukura, or Joshua Gideon at 303-468-9885 or visit <https://thecatholicfoundation.com/>.