



SOCIETY OF SAINT VINCENT DE PAUL, DENVER METRO COUNCIL

Newsletter, Spring 2026

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THE QUEST FOR AN ENDOWMENT BY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, ELIZABETH KENDRICK

As I enter my eleventh month of service here at the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul, I often tell friends and family how much I am learning, how much I enjoy working here, and how inspired I am daily by our Vincentians, church staff volunteers, and Denver Metro Council leaders. All of these individuals work tirelessly to further the cause of helping the most vulnerable members of society, striving to stabilize unstable situations.

With gas and grocery prices consistently and dramatically increasing, more and more families face financial pressures. Some fall behind on rent, instead having to pay for gas to get to work, or utility bills to keep the lights on, or groceries to feed their families. Housing assistance has been, and remains, the number one request we receive. While the Society helps tens of thousands of individuals stay housed every year, we cannot always help everyone in all the ways they may need, and doing so is challenging for the Neighbor in Need, the Conference, and us here at the Council.

Because of these dynamics, what we think about a lot here at the Denver Metro Council are the people we may not be able to help as much as we want to, almost always due to a lack of funding. The Council has a very important program for housing and rental assistance called the Ozanam Housing Fund. You will read more about that fund and its impact later in this newsletter where we share our annual impact report. This program reimburses Conferences 50% of the housing assistance paid for a Neighbor in Need, up to \$300 per case. This fund opens, historically, inconsistently, month to month, based

on the available funding. That means Conferences cannot guarantee that Ozanam Housing will be open, and this inconsistency drives uncertainty, and anxiety, at a Conference level. It also decreases the number of people they can serve because knowing some funds used will get reimbursed allows them to plan and take on more cases than they could otherwise handle.

These interconnected forces got us musing. How can we find a way to fund our Ozanam Housing program, consistently, every month? The program, fully funded, costs \$30,000 - \$35,000 each month to fulfill all requests in our region. We had been working (and continue to work) on several large dollar grants, and as we analyzed the situation, we realized that even with an incredibly generous grant of \$100,000, we would only be able to fund the housing program for three and a half months.

And then it hit us – we need an endowment! Hospitals, universities, parish churches, and many other organizations use endowments to ensure their long-term sustainability. We asked ourselves, why can't we do the same? Raise an endowment that generates \$30,000 - \$35,000 per month, and then the Council can fund the Ozanam Housing program in perpetuity. We grabbed our calculators, and working back into that math, calculated that we would need to raise a substantial, reliable endowment to generate consistent funding. There sat the solution, emerging clearly out of the problem itself.

We met as a Board and shared the ideas and modeling. Our President and the Board all agreed that this approach can indeed help us to solve this problem we face every month in the expensive Denver housing market. Now, with their blessing, we embark on this journey to raise an endowment and ensure that we can always, consistently, help as many people as possible stay housed, in perpetuity. We are partnering with the Catholic Foundation to build this endowment in the best manner, with expert advice and oversight. We ask for your counsel, your thoughts, your support, and your prayers for this important cause. In perpetuity is a long time, and we believe, with the power of our Lord and Savior, we can do it! We will keep you all updated during this journey.

We find it vital to share with our donors the measurable, quantifiable impact the Society has each year. Each Spring, we share a read-out on how donated dollars got deployed directly, and effectively, to support our Neighbors in Need. We are pleased to share this read-out for the fiscal year October 1, 2024, to September 30, 2025, in this newsletter. Overall, the Denver Metro Council, and its twenty-eight conferences provided **\$2,468,224** in financial assistance across its footprint. In doing so, the Society assisted **22,129** individuals, work that got completed through **11,725** home visits delivered by the **485** Vincentian volunteers who generously give of their time and effort to help those in need.



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These numbers hold significance for many reasons. First, \$2.46M in financial assistance provided food, clothing, household goods, housing, utility, and vehicle repair assistance to more than 12,000 families. That means, these individuals and families remained housed, and they then returned to stability after being supported through a difficult time by the Society and its Conferences. Second, Vincentians often engage with Neighbors in Need at a fragile time in their lives, spending two to three hours in sensitive and important dialogues, gathering information, and learning how best we can help. According to the Do Good Institute, each volunteer hour donated to a charity equals \$36.14. That means that Vincentians provided the equivalent of **an astounding \$1,271,224.50** in services, 100% as unpaid volunteers. Their value cannot be put into dollars, but when we look at this industry standard, we really feel what a gift the 485 volunteers give to society as a whole, and to the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul in particular. And finally, behind all these numbers and statistics sit real people, real humans, with real stories, and very real challenges. It can be hard to quantify the enormous gift of time and attention Vincentians provide by listening attentively to these stories, and offering empathy, support, very real assistance, and prayers in times of grave hardship.

The Denver Metro Council runs four major programs that provide assistance: the Ozanam Housing Fund, Vehicle Repair Assistance, ARC Thrift Store gift cards (for purchase of clothing, household goods, furniture, etc.) and Utility assistance via the Energy Outreach Colorado program. These four vital programs supplement and support the parish Conferences, and combined with the Conference fundraising activities, exponentially increase the impact in their communities, allowing the Society to help more people.

Ozanam Housing Fund Program: in the fiscal year 2024-2025, this Council fund provided \$138,948.05 in housing assistance. This fund reimburses Conferences 50%, up to \$300 per case, for housing assistance provided. This support helped 531 families, comprised of 730 adults and 584 children. Keeping families housed remains a key focus of the Society so that both adults and children can have a home base, work, attend school, and remain stable during an unstable time. Every dollar donated to this fund serves a very noble and worthy cause.



Vehicle Repair Reimbursement Program: in the fiscal year 2024-2025, this fund provided \$20,026.40, to reimburse 50% of the expense to the Conference. That means that, in fact, the total amount of Vehicle Repair assistance provided between the Metro Council and the parish Conference was double that figure, coming in at \$40,052.80. Often Conferences partner with automotive repair shops to negotiate more favorable pricing, making these dollars stretch even further. This support kept 46 families, comprised of 68 adults and 41 children, mobile. Mobile adults can go to work, bring their children to school, and take families to important appointments such as the doctor and dentist. As such, this program does

tremendous good for the Neighbors in Need in particular, and society as a whole.



ARC Thrift Store Gift Card Program: in the fiscal year 2024-2025, this program provided \$24,400 in ARC Thrift Store gift cards to Neighbors in Need. The Council purchases ARC Gift Cards at a 50% discount on their face value. That means that \$24,400 in assistance cost the Council \$12,200, again maximizing the impact of assistance while being responsible stewards of the monies donated. These gift cards helped 117 families, comprised of 154 adults and 178 children, secure much-needed shoes, clothing, housewares, furniture, and other necessities. These gift cards especially help in prison release ministry work and for those transitioning from homelessness, shelters, living in their cars, or out of sobriety housing into permanent, stable apartments. We greatly appreciate our partnership with ARC.

Utility Assistance via Energy Outreach Colorado: in the fiscal year 2024-2025, this program provided an astounding \$565,419.89 in utility bill assistance to 758 families, comprised of 2,172 occupants. Through this program, the Society partners with EOC to keep Neighbors' in Need homes heated, cooled, and hooked up to electricity and natural gas. The program also provides other forms of energy support such as supplying propane, firewood, and oil for certain types of furnaces. In the extreme temperatures of both winter and summer, we are grateful for this excellent program.



Save the Date:
2026 Friends of the Poor Walk
Saturday, September 19, 2026, 9:00AM
Clement Park, Littleton, CO, Shelter O
Join us for fun, family-friendly activities, children's goodies, games, and facepainting. Bring your children, pets, and neighbors! We will have great door prizes, refreshments, and a raffle! To register and for more information, visit www.svdpen.org.



**ENERGY
OUTREACH
COLORADO**



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2026 Friends of the Poor Walk© Raffle

Win two front-row tickets to attend a Colorado Avalanche game during the 2026-2027 Season! Enjoy all food & beverages, and valet parking, at the UMB Reserve Lounge. One ticket for \$5, or five tickets for \$20. Ticket purchasers do not need to be present to win. To purchase raffle tickets, visit www.svdpdn.org.

“Love is inventive to infinity.”
--Saint Vincent de Paul
Dollars in Action: Success Stories from Saint
Vincent de Paul DMC Conferences

As always, we are grateful for your support of our mission. Your financial and material donations continue to have a life-changing impact on our Neighbors in Need, and your prayers sustain and inspire us.

These days we are probably best known for helping families to avoid eviction and to keep the lights on. However, our Vincentians are ready to step in to meet people where they are, no matter the circumstances and challenges. Our Vincentian prayer calls us to be “responsive to the Christian calling to seek and find the forgotten, the suffering, or the deprived so that we may bring them God’s love.” We are called to go the extra mile to find ways to improve the quality of life for those whom we serve. Below we share some recent examples of assistance provided by our parish Conferences. We hope these stories inspire you as much as they inspire us! Elaine Murphy, President, Denver Metro Council

Guardian Angels, Mead, Colorado, Conference:

Below appear some examples of recent assistance:

- A bicycle for a gentleman who needed transportation to and from his job.
- A loan payment for a woman with terminal cancer so that she could pay for needed therapies.
- Rent and emergency food for a single mom with six children.
- ARC gift cards for a woman with multiple illnesses who recently moved to the area and needed to purchase a bed and dresser.
- Steady guidance, encouragement, and practical resources tailored to a retired man who could no longer work and sustain his current living status.

Saint Gianna Beretta Molla Conference:

“A man who had lost a leg several years ago uses a wheelchair to get around on buses and through the streets, all while burdened by ostomy bags. His mental health issues disqualify him from many forms of aid or employment. When we met him, his wheelchair was in shambles, and he desperately needed his bags. We were talking about ordering a chair and bags when two parishioners offered two chairs, slightly used, totally customizable, and ready to go. The supply of bags came a week later. The ways and timing of the Lord through the intercession of Saint Vincent de Paul are amazing.”

Saint Vincent de Paul Parish Conference:

“A man who had recently left prison and had successfully completed his parole wished to return to his family in Wisconsin. Thanks to all the donations, we were able to reunite him with his family. We spoke with his father, who was so happy to welcome him home.”

Saint Ignatius of Loyola Conference:

“A patron of our food pantry had been traveling from fifteen miles away, and spending up to four hours, because of traffic and wait time at the pantry. Once a volunteer discovered that the man, whose English was limited, had not asked about closer options, she provided a list of food pantries that were within three miles of his home, along with all the details about the other pantries’ hours, location, accessibility, etc. She also helped him to complete the Food Bank of the Rockies enrollment form. He was very, very appreciative of our help to simplify his path to food access!”

Queen of Peace Conference:

“We offered assistance to a young couple whose nine-month-old baby was born with nephrotic syndrome disease and needed surgery to repair a hole in his heart. Due to the baby’s many hospital stays and emergency room visits, the baby’s father lost his job with Amazon. The baby’s mother was unable to work because of the amount of dialysis and close care that the child required. Medical bills were mounting. In response, the mom enrolled in a short-term certified nursing assistant program, graduated, and now receives a full-time wage to care for her own child. The dad consequently was able to take on a maintenance job in the couple’s apartment complex, thus reducing their rent and providing some income. The rental assistance provided by our conference along with copays from other conferences provided some relief for this family as they moved toward stability.”



Saint Mary’s Conference:

“We assembled 125 blessing bags for our neighbors who are homeless and stand on the street corner looking for help. In the blessing bags were hand warmers, bottles of water, sunscreen, lip balm, snacks, gloves, combs, stocking hats, and many more essential items for those living on the streets. All the items were donated personally by conference members. No conference funds were used. As we say, ‘God bless’ to them, we often get a ‘God bless’ in return. We truly see the Face of Christ in these individuals.”

Our Vision

A major focus of our mission to the poor has always been to address their immediate physical and spiritual needs, but we also recognize that we must adapt our work to meet the challenges of a changing world. To that end, the Vincentians of the Denver Metro Council have attempted a deep dive into the impediments that most impact our neighbors as they strive for financial sustainability, peace of mind, and stability. Elaine Murphy, President, Denver Metro Council

We would like to share with you our action plan:

Teaching people to “fish”:

- Teaching families how to budget, identify local resources, and apply for assistance.
- Steering families toward appropriate job support programs and/or to the certification/apprenticeship programs of local community colleges and technical schools.
- Steering neighbors without computer access or skills to agencies that can help them to apply for services.
- Identifying free, or low-cost, child-care programs for working parents.
- Finding free rebuilt computers so that single parents may be able to work at home.
- Soliciting the help of financial mentors and life-skill coaches.

Addressing the needs of neighbors with special challenges:

- Identifying mental health resources for victims of domestic abuse and violence.
- Identifying resources for senior citizens and veterans.
- Identifying resources for people who are homeless.

Addressing the needs of neighbors in our linguistically diverse community:

- Enlisting the help of volunteers who speak other languages, primarily Spanish.
- Giving access to translation and interpretive services and identifying agencies which provide services in other languages.

WE COULD USE YOUR HELP IN REACHING OUR GOALS



Please let us know if you can volunteer to provide any of these services:

- Financial mentorship
- Job support mentorship
- Pro bono legal help
- Pro bono dental or vision services
- Free, or reduced fee, vehicle repair

Thank you to our donors, supporters, partners, and volunteers. To contact us:

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