



SOCIETY of ST. VINCENT de PAUL OMAHA

*Supporting our neighbors in need through spirituality, friendship and service;
providing food, clothing and financial and in-kind assistance since 1868*



Easter 2023

Dear Society of St. Vincent de Paul Friends,

It's pretty easy to know something is drastically wrong when you see a young mother and two little children walking along a highway outside of Omaha one recent morning. A very kind husband and wife farm couple driving by stopped to offer assistance. They saw a woman with a cut over her eye and two terrified children.

In tears, Michelle told her story.

The day before, her abusive husband had told her to pack up the car with everything – they were moving from their apartment in a small north Texas town. Apparently, he had lost another job, got drunk, and then decided that it was time to move. They drove all night; he would stop for booze and gas but wouldn't let Michelle get any food for the kids.

Without warning, he started to argue and smack her around in the car. The kids were screaming in fear. At this point, he pulled over and ordered everyone out of the car – and sped away.

The couple took a trembling Michelle to their nearby farm and for the first time in a long time, Michelle and the children were safe. Being familiar with our work and services, the couple called the Society of St. Vincent de Paul's helpline, asking what could be done to assist this little family.

The Society paid for three nights' stay in a hotel for Michelle and her children. We also were able to help her secure an apartment near our downtown thrift store and pantry – covering the deposit and the first month's rent. We also assured Michelle that her husband was not going to find her and the children.

In speaking with Michelle, more of her story came out. **Years of terror - living with a bully and brute of a man who used her as a punching bag for his drunken rages.** She was unable to protect herself and wondered how long it would be before he started to hit the children. The daily torture would usually start about 2 hours after the bars closed and last until he passed out. There was hardly any money for food or clothes and, God forbid, if one of the kids got sick – this would make her husband mad.

What could be next for Michelle and her children? She finally found the courage never to return to the beatings and life of fear with her husband – a mother's instinct to protect her children had taken over. Our volunteers and staff are incredibly grateful to be able to help make sure that that remains the case.

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In addition to helping Michelle secure her apartment, we also provided her with vouchers to our thrift stores, where she was able to obtain free clothes and all of the household items she needed. We continue to be in touch with Michelle to make sure she has plenty of food for her family from our pantry – as well as the comforting assurance of the sustained prayers of support from everyone here at the Society.

Michelle could not have been more grateful to the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, as she continually thanked our volunteers and staff for providing her and her kids with a place to call home, food and clothing. You may be interested to know that Michelle was initially worried about not being able to pay back all that she'd been given. We told her not to worry because generous and caring people had sacrificed to send gifts in order to care for her and the kids. **She said to tell you "thanks".**

Will you please send an Easter gift to the Society of St. Vincent de Paul Omaha to help us care for so many families, like Michelle and her kids? On your behalf, we are grateful to provide our critical services to this little family when they needed them the most. Please use the enclosed envelope and send your check today. You can also donate securely online at SSVPOmaha.org or by scanning the QR code, below.

Please know how thankful we are to you for helping the Society of St. Vincent de Paul Omaha serve those in need, when they have nowhere else to turn. Our programs are only possible because of your generous financial support, as nearly all contributions come from compassionate members of our community, like you. In addition to helping the Society provide our life-giving services to so many families who turn to us in crisis, your gift will also provide them hope for a brighter future this Easter Season.

Thank you and God bless you for your gift. I wish you a blessed Easter.

Gratefully,



Jill Lynch-Sosa
Executive Director



P.S. Please accept and keep close the enclosed Easter prayer card. I feel fortunate to have been able to snap this unplanned photo right outside my office. This homeless woman – like so many of our homeless neighbors – was taking great solace next to the statue of Jesus which graces the front yard of our Holy Family Community Center. It is my wish that this prayer card provides you with similar hope-filled grace and comfort this Easter Season.

Gifts to the Society of St. Vincent de Paul Omaha are used to care for the people who turn to us during their hour of need and are greatly appreciated. All of our services are provided at no cost, and all gifts are tax deductible to the full extent of the law. Our donor information is kept in strict confidence. Our donor lists are never rented, shared or exchanged with other organizations. The stories in our letters are real. Identifying details have been changed to protect the privacy and therapeutic interests of those we serve. For more information about SSVPOmaha, or to include us in your estate planning, please contact our ED, Jill Lynch-Sosa, at (402) 779-8499.