



# Vincenzian Service Corps-Central

*A Year of Service Makes a Lifetime of Difference*

Spring 2011

VSC-Central

## Truly Life Changing

By Patrick



**Patrick**

First I will first say that when I volunteered to be part of the first group to write their reflections for the newsletter, I didn't think that I would have had such a difficult time putting my experiences to words. The past five months have been truly life changing in both my spiritual and physical habits and I think only great writers have the ability to describe that in words. As I am not a great writer, I find it impossible to fully summarize my experiences. That being said, this would be a pretty boring reflection if I left it at that, so I have decided to write about my greatest challenge. I have found that the single greatest challenge I have faced has been my continuing effort in not only doing my best at my service site, while actively keeping a conscious

focus on the VSC's four pillars (just a refresher, service, social justice, community, and spirituality). Just to make this easier for me, I will take them one by one and talk about how I have either struggled or fulfilled them to some degree.

**Service** – I don't think that there is anywhere I would rather be than serving at De La Salle Middle School this year. I will not sit here and tell you that it is the easiest thing that I have ever done, and at times it can be pretty frustrating. However, I truly love the work that I am doing at the school and generally look forward to the challenges that the day presents. I think that it is there that I am most able to credit my understanding of St. Vincent De Paul and his teachings. It is certainly were I feel closest to him. I work hard, trust in God's providence, and do my best to see the face of Christ in everyone I teach.

**Social Justice** – Social Justice is probably one of the things that attracted me most to this program, and programs like it. I feel that issues of Social Justice are truly a drive in my life. That being said, I could certainly do more work with issues that I feel strongly about. You can ask my roommates and I am sure they will tell you that I am always eager to talk about certain issues until the room clears. However, I feel that I could definitely do more in the action category especially now that I have a better handle on my work schedule. One change that I hope to make soon is to apply myself to doing more for Social Justice then just talking about it.

### VSC MISSION STATEMENT

Responding to the call of the Gospel in the spirit of St. Vincent de Paul, lay women and men of the Vincenzian Service Corps serve those who are poor, while growing in prayer and living in community.

### VSC Advisory Board Members

**Julie Gryskiewicz-Chair**  
**Sr. Julie Cutter, D.C.**  
**Brother Dave Goodman, CM**  
**Liz Foshage**  
**Jason Gray**  
**Gabrielle Hearn**

Vincenzian Service Corps-Central is sponsored by the Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul of the West-Central Province. [www.Daughters-of-Charity.org](http://www.Daughters-of-Charity.org)

Vincenzian Service Corps—Central is a member of Catholic Volunteer Network

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# I Love the Work I Do

By Sarah

There are twenty four hours in a day, that's it. As much as I want to and try as I might, I can't squeeze in any more time than that. I've often wished that I could find a way to be able to function normally without sleep – there are so many things I could be doing with that time. One challenge that I've faced this year is trying to decide how to divide my time between my service site, spending time with my community, keeping in touch with family and friends, working out and taking care of myself, sleeping, etc.

My placement site to serve for the year is at Our Lady's Inn, which is a homeless shelter for pregnant women. I love the work that I do there, but one of the drawbacks of having that placement site is that it is located over 30 miles from our house. That means that there's a lot of time that I spend commuting back and forth. I try to make the most of that time though by listening to the news on the radio and books on tape or catching up on the phone with family and friends.

There's really no "typical day" at my service site and the variety keeps things interesting. I do everything from answering the phones and office work to preparing meals, from childcare to organizing donations, from driving women to their appointments to making copies. One of the ways I can tell that I love my site is that I often willingly stay there well past 5:30pm which is when I'm supposed to be done for the day. I often get caught up in finishing a small project or wanting to stay a little later to give some extra special attention to one of the children who live at the shelter or spending a little more time to listen to one of the moms who may have had a rough day.

I've been amazed to see this year how blessed Our Lady's Inn is with the tremendous gift of time that is given by our many volunteers. Their dedication and commitment make it possible for Our Lady's Inn to run in an efficient and effective manner to best help those in need. One man comes in every week to help us with all of our maintenance needs – he's really invaluable to us and keeps everything in good working order. Another volunteer who is a retired woman has been coming to help out in the office every Tuesday for the past four years.

St. Vincent de Paul said, "We should give ourselves to God and wear ourselves out for God." I've thought about that this year as I try to figure out a balance with all of the demands on my time. There are constantly decisions that must be made about how to spend my time – Should I stay a little longer at Our Lady's Inn even though that might cut into time with my community? Should I go spend time with a friend who lives in St. Louis or go workout to get some exercise? When can I find the time to call and keep in touch with my family members and friends who don't live nearby? Would I rather sleep in and read for a while or get up early to go to daily Mass? General wisdom says that you need to take time for yourself to rest and rejuvenate, but part of me feels like St. Vincent would challenge us all to do a little bit more, to give a little bit more. My goal is to continue to keep that in mind as I try to find a way to balance my time the way God wants me to.



Sarah

## Truly Life Changing *continued from page 1*

**Community** – Community living was a tough concept for me to grasp, but I have found that it truly has to be something that is intentional. Your community is only as strong as the effort that you put into it. I will not say that I have been the perfect community member, but it is something that I am consciously working on. I do think our community has grown exponentially in many ways since August.

**Spirituality** – This pillar I find hardest to write about, because of the nature of spirituality. Simply stated, I have certainly grown in that area. To what degree I cannot be sure. I do feel myself closer to God and trusting in her/his providence. I have also committed myself to the concept of simple living not only in my actions but in my philosophy as well. I believe it is something that is going to stay with me for a long time.

So in conclusion, there are certainly things that I have succeeded in, and things that I need to work on. But, everything that I have experienced this year has been worthwhile and I would not change it. It has been excellent, and I look forward to its continuation.

## Many Thanks to Our Generous Donors

We give special thanks to those who have so generously supported the VSC Program through their donations.

Your donation helps the VSC Members in their service to persons who are poor and marginalized.

If you would like to help support the volunteers in their service, please send your donation in the enclosed envelope.

Deborah Bean	Irene & Richard Machuga
Bonnie Brindisi	Tim McCarty
Rose Mary Buck	John Milburn
Del & Teo Bumgardner	Robert & Lisa Porter
Timothy & Theresa Cronan	Kristina Schliesman
DePaul University	Audrey & Edward Schmid
Br. David Goodman	Ken & Jane Schmitz
Sr. Mary Beth Kubera	Br. Matthew Teal
Ruth Lang	Suzette & Nathan Thompson
Mary LoMazzo	Charles & Mary Wheeler



Blessings to you friends of the Vincentian Service Corps!

I hope our newsletter finds you on the cusp of a meaningful Lenten season. The last few months have been joyous and rich for the VSC volunteers. Their co-workers and the children and adults they serve express the impact the VSC have on their lives. The volunteers have become advocates for their schools and organizations, as well as for each other. This mutuality in relationship embodies the Vincentian charism, and with your continued support, we will continue to be **God's love in action** in Saint Louis and around the world.

**Love in action** has certainly been a theme for the last few *very* active months for the Volunteers! Outside of their service sites, they have had numerous formation and fun activities to help foster their spiritually and community growth. Some of those events included:

- Formation on Catholic Social Teaching, Divine Providence, Apostolic Reflection, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton and St. Catherine Labouré
- Dinners with the VSC Advisory Board, Sisters at Veronica House, and the Provincial Council
- Hosted Service Immersion groups from DePaul University and Creighton University
- Advent and Lent discussions/prayer services
- Celebrating the Feast of Christ the King with our Parish family
- Christmas Caroling and Party at the Sarah Community
- A Taizé prayer service at the Provincial House
- Our mid-year retreat in Evansville, IN with Sr. Anne Marie Butler, D.C. on "Vincent & Louise in Friendship"
- Taping a video project for the VSC website, salsa lessons, a St. Louis Blues game
- Trivia nights for Our Lady's Inn and Marian Middle School
- Joint formation sessions with the Gateway Vincentian Volunteers and celebrations with the Jesuit Volunteers

At the center of this abundant **love in action** are a group of gifted young adults who everyday answer "yes!" to God's call, and we are continually grateful. We are grateful as well to you for your prayers and support, and we are grateful to the lay men and women, Daughters of Charity and Vincentians that have shared their time and spirits by facilitating the above mentioned events.

Please hold in your prayers the young adults that are discerning **God's love in action** for the Vincentian Service Corps 2011-2012!

Peace and Blessings to you all!  
In the Spirit of Vincent & Louise,

Kellie Willis, Director-Vincentian Service Corps Central

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Vincian Service  
Corps-Central

A Year of Service Makes a Lifetime of  
Difference



[www.vincentianservicecorps.org](http://www.vincentianservicecorps.org)

Address Correction Requested

## Community Life

Community Life is a very important aspect of Vincian Service Corps—Central.



Signing  
and  
Blessing of  
their  
Community  
Covenant



Enjoying time away during a  
Renewal Weekend

Relaxing  
together at  
dinner

