**Peace and Justice Ministries**

**St Vincent de Paul Society (SVDP) Food Pantry**

The St Vincent de Paul society is an international society that was founded in 1833. The US website says it is “a network of friends, inspired by Gospel values, growing in holiness and building a more just world through personal relationships with and service to people in need.” In our parish, it began in the mid-1960s when a small group of kind men would gather after coffee shop and discuss needs and requests, often pulling needed funds from their pockets.

For many years, our main outreach has been the food pantry which is open Tuesdays and Thursdays from 4-5 pm. Many volunteers come together to help those in need in our community. Volunteers prepare the food given out working from 3-5:15 on distribution days. Others are needed to unload deliveries and stock shelves on Tuesday mornings beginning at 8:30. Still others pickup bread from our generous local businesses (Panera and St Joseph IGA) and others repackage the bread for distribution. It is a ministry that offers a social outlet as a side benefit while doing outreach and helping those in need.

Other SVDP activities include the Thanksgiving food distribution which takes place the Saturday before Thanksgiving. Through the generosity of parishioners in both their time and financially, we have provided food for a Thanksgiving meal to 225-260 families in the Champaign-Urbana area.

The Friends dinner was a popular event before Covid. This is an evening where parishioners serve dinner to our pantry guests and socialize and get to know them on a more personal level. With interest from parishioners, it could be reinstated. This historically has taken place in early fall.

With the help of our generous supporters and because there is a continual need of people in our community, SVDP has taken on providing limited financial assistance to those in the community who find themselves in financial need on a case-by-case basis. Assistance in responding to calls and making these difficult decisions is another avenue to volunteer and help on a more informal basis.

For more information or questions, email Sally at stpatfoodpantry1@gmail.com or text to 708-252-3550

**SVDP Garden**

Volunteers with a green thumb tend the garden at Meadowbrook Park. The food pantry guests enjoy the fresh produce all summer. For more information, please contact Anna Fedders via email or call the church 217-367-2665 and leave a message in the food pantry mailbox.

**Environmental Stewardship**

There are several parish efforts to promote stewardship of the Earth and responsible use of the Earth’s resources. If you have an idea for additional ministries or projects, contact Stan Yanchus at stpatpeaceandjustice1901@gmail.com.

Parishioners plant and maintain an organic garden that provides fresh produce for clients of the St. Vincent de Paul Food Pantry. annafedders@gmail.com

**Housing & Homelessness**

Maintaining or obtaining affordable housing is a challenge that residents in the Champaign-Urbana community face. Our parish supports efforts to ensure that t housing needs are met for the poor and vulnerable members of our community.

**Immigrant & Refugee Support**

There are several parish efforts to provide support for the resettlement of immigrants, refugees, or those seeking political asylum in the Champaign-Urbana community. Support is needed to help individuals and families in their transition from dependency to self-sufficiency. Support needs include legal assistance, transportation, housing, healthcare, job development, education, and community support. Parishioners from St. Patrick Church along with other faith-based and community groups offer support to immigrants & refugees through ISCU Immigrant Services Champaign-Urbana

Luis Cuza, luis@cusa.us

**Meals on Wheels**

Twice a year, for one week at a time, St. Patrick’s parishioners assist in bringing hot mid-day meals to people living in the Champaign-Urbana area through a program called Meals on Wheels.

Prepared by University nutritionists at the Illini Union, the meals are picked up by volunteers who deliver them to designated recipients.

Kevin Martindale

rewirek@sbcglobal.net

**Unemployed Support Group**

The Unemployed Support Group at St. Patrick offers support for those suffering the loss of employment.

CHARITY BRIDGE:

UNEMPLOYED?  FEELING ISOLATED, REJECTED OR HOPELESS?  NEED SOMEONE TO TALK WITH ABOUT THE STRUGGLES?  A STRANGER IN THIS COMMUNITY?  YOU DON’T HAVE TO  STRUGGLE ALONE!  JESUS GIVES US THE GIFT OF HOPE!  Charity Bridge explores how faith can be a source of healing as it was for Deacon Cliff Maduzia and Chris Washo, a practicing Catholic and licensed Clinical Social Worker.

 Contact: cwashotherapy@sbcglobal.net  239-1547 cmaduzia1@gmail.com  791-1264.

**Advocacy for Justice**

Collaboration and online resourcing with ﻿ Catholic Relief Services (CRS), Catholic Campaign for Human Development (CCHD), and Catholic Charities USA, provide Advocacy for Justice and ensure that St. Patrick’s parishioners are kept up-to-date on social justice issues that invite a response and call for action by our legislators.  Indicate your interest by asking to be added to the email list.

Mary Long, mlong@stpaturbana.org

**Interfaith Outreach**

Interfaith Outreach focuses on improving dialogue, relationships, and activities with other faith communities, secular and governmental organizations, and individuals in our region. Interfaith programming reaches beyond our parish into the community and serves to encourage collaborative relationships with other houses of worship, with the goal of promoting peace in the world. For more information, contact Susan Nagele at nagelesusan@gmail.com.

**Respect Life**

The Respect Life program was established to study, pray, and plan activities that foster reverence for the whole of life, from conception to natural death. St. Patrick co-sponsors an ecumenical memorial prayer service annually in January on the anniversary of the Roe v. Wade decision and participates in community respect-life activities as well as in raising legislative alerts.

Mary Long, mlong@stpaturbana.org