

## Social Ministry

St. Francis Parish Helps the Poor!

### Our Parish St. Vincent de Paul Society

*Provides transportation option  
for the needy*

Our parish St. Vincent de Paul conference organized another successful car transfer this spring. Four times a year, conference members (or Vincentians, as they are called) get to know a person identified by local aid organizations as being in need of independent transportation. The needs vary some candidates have medical appointments in areas without bus service, some families have children whose activities require frequent shuttling, others have work schedules or locations not served by public transportation. While these candidates have room in their budgets for insurance and upkeep on a vehicle, they cannot afford to buy one.

After interviewing the candidate, SVdP places a brief summary of his or her needs in the Parish Bulletin FORUM. Each time a case has been publicized in this way, a St. Francis Parishioner has stepped forward to address the need. St. Vincent de Paul Society picks up the donated vehicle, takes it to a mechanic for inspection, and holds it while the recipient acquires an insurance policy. Then SVdP signs the title over to the new owner.

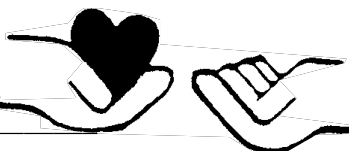
This spring we facilitated the transfer of a 1994 Ford to the Ann Arbor mother of a teenage son. Now she has one less obstacle preventing her from maintaining regular employment.

Our SVdP continues to grow in its ability to serve those in need, **person-to-person**. Visit: [stfrancisa2.com/socialministry/stvincentdepaul.htm](http://stfrancisa2.com/socialministry/stvincentdepaul.htm)

Thanks, *Chris Kempton*

St. Francis Parish,

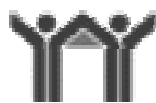
St. Vincent dePaul Chairperson



### Thank You for Tax Assistance

The Tax Assistance Program at St. Francis of Assisi offers assistance with the preparation of tax returns to the residents of the area. Volunteers from the parish help prepare the various Federal and State returns and associated schedules, and are responsible for returning thousands of dollars to the Ann Arbor area and surrounding communities each year. The program is held each year on Saturday mornings from early February to Mid-April.

St. Francis Parish is grateful for the work of our 2004 volunteer TAX VITA Program Coordinators: Dick Miller & Julie Soyer and their associate volunteers for the tax help they provided during tax season. In 2004, approximately 78 people in the greater Ann Arbor area were served by our 10 volunteers: Stephanie Gittins, Don LeClair, Joseph McCadden, Julie Soyer, Nancy Moore, Stephanie Gelderloos, Dick Miller, Daniel Simonelli, Chris Simmons, and Pat To.



### The First ACCESSIBLE HABITAT HOUSE

This year, Habitat for Humanity of Huron Valley (HFHHV) assigned us (the Catholic House group) the task of building the first ACCESSIBLE Habitat House in Washtenaw County. To help us with this task we have partnered with the *Ann Arbor Center for Independent Living* and *Eisenhower Center* to bring this job to fruition, to help us raise funds for this project and to help spread the news to the community about the need for more affordable, accessible housing.

In keeping with our Catholic House mission "*Providing social service & knowing the social teaching of the Church is an essential part of Catholic faith...*" our Catholic House group is now planning, fund raising, and building the 2004 Catholic Habitat House, located at 65 Westover Street, Ann Arbor. We started building in May 2004. Visit [www.stfrancisa2.com/habitat](http://www.stfrancisa2.com/habitat)

### St Francis Hosts Homeless Shelter

This year's Homeless Shelter, at St. Francis School Gym, was a wonderful experience!

There were 20 men every night and they were all so nice and friendly! It was wonderful to talk to them all and to let them know that if they still need us next year, we will still be here! Thank you to everyone for making it a rewarding experience not just for our guests, but also for the volunteers!

God Bless, *Sara Uyttingco*



### Jail Ministry

My name is Robert Boone and I am pleased to say that my wife and I have been members of St. Francis church for more than 20 years. When Scott Wright, director of Christian Social Ministry at St. Francis, asked for members to get involved in jail ministry, I remembered the bible saying *we should feed the poor, clothe them, and visit fellow brothers and sisters in jail*.

A group of St. Francis church members visit Washtenaw County Jail on a regular basis. Catholic mass is said every other Saturday and lay people conduct services the other Saturdays. Prisoners at the jail are short-term inmates, one year or less, or people awaiting trials for capital crimes. Some of the prisoners are Catholic, or Protestants interested in the catholic faith, but many of them are people who grew up with little or no religion.

Separate services are conducted for the men and women and some of them meet with church members to prepare for baptism. Volunteers will meet with the prisoners when they are released to help them fit back in society.

One man, in his fifties, said that being sent to jail for six months was the best thing that happened to him in his lifetime because he found God. He was too busy before, having a good time, and he never married. His mother and father and sister have all died, and so he has no family, and, he realizes how alone he is. He said, that he wants to be the best Christian he can be and never wants to see the insides of a jail again.

The men I talked with said, many of them are scared and very afraid of the future and they do appreciate us sharing our Christian faith with them.

"Be Not Afraid!" Join a ministry team! Jesus was incarcerated during his life, and he can still be found in the jail. Come and see for yourself. Contact: Scott Wright at 821-2121. "Go Directly to Jail!" On the Web: [www.stfrancisa2.com/socialministry/](http://www.stfrancisa2.com/socialministry/)

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## **Business Manager's Report to the Parish**

### **May 2004**

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Since my last report to you in November 2003, the number of capital projects undertaken has increased, but they have typically been smaller-sized projects. One such project included some additional cabinetry, window, and sign work for our new Parish Library, which was part of the Church renovation project of 2002-2003. That project is largely finished now, with the exception of a handful of lighting and electrical issues needing resolution. We are hopeful that we can finally close the book on this project before the end of our fiscal year in June. We continue to hear many favorable comments about the changes that were made to the Church, and once again, would like to thank everyone for their financial and spiritual support.

Additional projects undertaken around the Church included foundation work in the Choir Room on the lower level in order to eliminate a small water problem. This work appears to have been successful, although, as this is written, we need some heavier rains to give it a better test. Once we are satisfied that the repairs were successful, we will undertake the upgrading of that room, which is also used for a variety of parish meetings, with new paint and carpeting. Upon completion, the Choir Room will join the Chapel and Nursery across the hall as "finished" rooms on the lower level.

A second project around the Church included the repair or replacement of damaged or deteriorated concrete. Winters wreak significant havoc on our outside facilities, and the freezing/thawing cycles of the last several winters seem to have resulted in greater concrete damage than we had experienced in previous years. We hope that the recently finished work lasts longer so that we aren't looking at extensive additional work in the near future.

We have also done our annual tree pruning, which this year resulted in the removal of two trees which were deemed severely diseased and dying. Tree growth around our facilities remains a continuing issue, and we try to have them trimmed regularly to enhance their beauty while removing any situations which might be potentially dangerous to parishioners or our buildings.

In the PAC, we extended data (computer) lines from the School in order to facilitate the use of computers there. We discovered during our Ministry Fair last September that this was a worthwhile goal, and it was not difficult to accomplish.

Upgrades in the School itself include the addition of a new light to the 4/5 hallway study area, the repiping and related work on the steam heat system servicing the K/3 building, the addition of air conditioning to the K/1 level of the School (facilitated by the generous support of the ESP Program parents), and the addition of motors to the Gym bleachers (facilitated by the generous support of the St. Francis Boosters Club).

Additional work which we hope to accomplish before my next report to you includes improved lighting in the PAC for Masses and other functions, such as School programs, the addition of air conditioning to the Middle School level of the School, and replacement of another section of roofing over School classrooms. And, ultimately, we will need to address the replacement of our back-up hot water boiler (servicing the Church and the 4/8 School building), which we were able to postpone replacing during the past heating system, but there is comfort in having that back-up.

While we have been successful in negotiating attractive pricing on many of the projects undertaken, our ability to complete additional projects is directly related to your continued support of the Parish. Sunday Collections have improved about 4% over last year's level, but this puts them back at the level they were at in fiscal-year 2001-02. Unfortunately, our costs (in particular, School and Staff salaries and benefits, and Utility expenses) have continued to escalate, putting added stress on our ability to finance necessary maintenance and facility improvements.

We are most appreciative of your continuing financial support of our Parish, but ask you to prayerfully consider increasing that support in 2004. At the current level of support, we may not be able to fund one or more of the aforementioned facility improvements. We hope that you agree that we have been good stewards of your financial resources in the past, and that the facility improvements, whether visible or behind-the-scenes, have been justified, and handled in an appropriate, cost-effective manner. As always, please feel free to call or e-mail me should you have any questions or comments.

*Dave Barera*, Parish Business Manager  
734-821-2111 or <dsbarera@catholicweb.com>

Parish youth and young adults will journey to Cologne, Germany in August, 2005 to celebrate

## *World Youth Day 2005*

### *World Youth Day Pilgrims ~ St. Patrick's Day Potato Supper Fundraiser*

World Youth Day Pilgrims helped the parish celebrate St. Patrick's Day with a baked potato supper on March 14th. The twenty-two pilgrims baked hundreds of potatoes, and prepared the topping bar for nearly one hundred people. A wonderful group of parishioners came to enjoy potatoes topped with chili, cheese, broccoli, bacon, and more.

We plan to repeat the event next year as it was a successful fundraiser,



and was enjoyed by the many people who came for the food and company!

The Pilgrims would like to thank everyone who came to support them.

**Keep your ears and eyes open for more  
World Youth Day preparations and activities!**



Our hostesses, Anya & Sam  
sporting Youth Retreat t-shirts

