



**SOCIETY OF ST. VINCENT DE PAUL  
INDIANAPOLIS COUNCIL**

**ORIENTATION HANDBOOK  
FOR VOLUNTEERS**



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

Created 10/26/21



## Welcome

Thank you for taking the time to learn more about the Society of St. Vincent de Paul. I look forward to your service to our mission of spiritual growth through service to our neighbors. As a mission driven non-profit organization, we rely heavily on each of you to assist us in implementing our programs and services. Your gift of time and talent allows us to serve more people at the SVdP Distribution Center and Client Choice Food Pantry and generate more income at our Mission 27 Resale stores. Without you, and hundreds more like you, we would not be able to provide services to tens of thousands of people every year.

When you become engaged with St. Vincent de Paul, you become a part of a community that has been serving Central Indiana for more than 75 years. This long-standing tradition of service makes us one of the oldest organizations in our area. We are humbled by the support we receive and are grateful to everyone who supports our mission.

Again, thank you for participating in our mission and giving of yourself. If I can be of service to you, please do not hesitate to contact me at [painslie@svdindy.org](mailto:painslie@svdindy.org) or 317-529-9156. I would be happy to know about your experience with us and learn how we can better serve you, our neighbors, and our community.

May God Bless,

Paul Ainslie  
President

## Mission & Values

Inspired by Gospel values, the Society of St. Vincent de Paul is an international organization of lay men and women joined together in their spiritual growth, friendship and through the offering of person-to-person service to our neighbors who need assistance.

We endeavor to serve our neighbors cheerfully, listening to them well and helping them to feel and recover their own dignity. We seek to establish relationships based on empathy, trust and friendship, while observing the utmost confidentiality.

Inherent in our work, we strive to promote self-sufficiency. Our mission is to help our neighbors help themselves whenever possible, and to be aware that they can forge and change their own destinies and that of our local community. Learn more about our transformational philosophy in our [Changing Lives Forever Program](#).

The Society is also concerned with identifying the unjust systemic reasons that cause poverty. We are committed to identifying the root causes of poverty and to work toward their elimination. In all of our charitable actions is the search for social justice for all.

## History

The Society of St. Vincent de Paul was founded in 1833 by Frederic Ozanam, a 20-year-old student of Sorbonne University in Paris. Frederic and a group of fellow students began to seek out and visit the poor of Paris in their homes – taking them food and clothing and offering their friendship and concern. This small group adopted, as their Patron, the great French priest St. Vincent de Paul, who alerted the world to social problems.

Similar groups grew in Paris, then to the rest of France, and eventually spread throughout the Christian world with the purpose of visiting those in need as an extension of God's love. Currently the Society of SVdP has approximately 800,000 members in 150 different countries. We have over 1,500,000 volunteers and serve more than 5 million people annually. Frederic Ozanam was declared Blessed in Paris, France on August 22, 1997 by Pope John Paul II and currently under consideration for sainthood.

SVdP has had a presence in Central Indiana since the 1940's. The Society has grown to an organization of 59 conferences associated with Catholic parishes throughout Central and Southern Indiana. The 59 conferences are overseen by six regional District Councils and the Archdiocesan Council of Indianapolis.

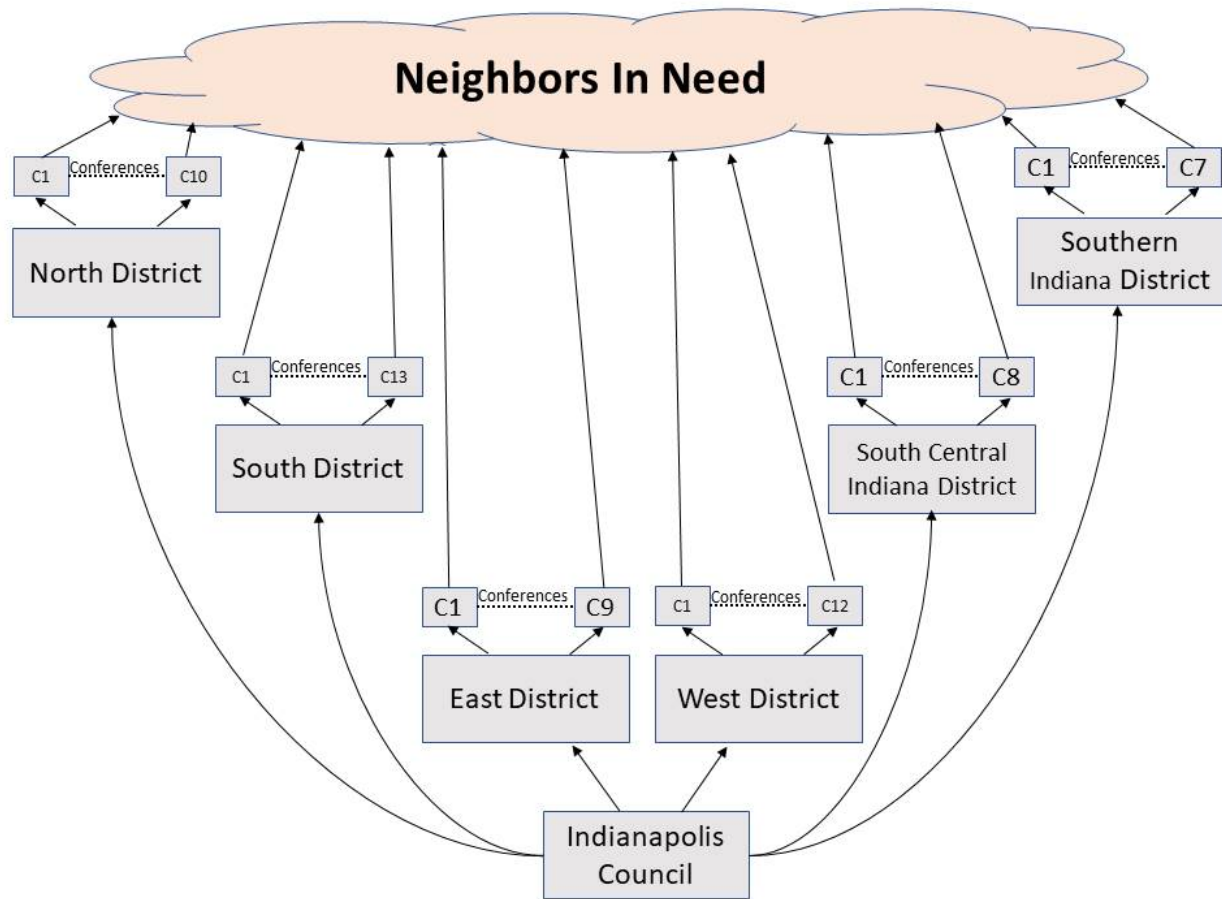
## Core Focus

We all strive to grow spiritually by offering person-to-person service to our neighbors. The Society of St. Vincent de Paul directly serves the marginalized in Central and Southern Indiana by providing food, clothing, furniture, household goods and rent and utility assistance. In addition to material needs, SVdP offers support through its self-help programs: Changing Lives Forever, Ozanam Free Legal Clinic, and Gennesaret Free Walk-in Clinic. The work of the Society is performed by our staff and our nearly 4,000 volunteers.

SVdP performs its work in the community through direct access to our neighbors at our Pratt-Quigley Food Pantry, Distribution Center, Mission 27 Resale stores and Boulevard Place Food Pantry. The community at large is involved in our mission as well through their volunteerism, material, and financial donations and by their patronage of our Resale stores. Donations to our Mission 27 Resale stores not only provide the goods needed for direct assistance to those in need, but also valuable merchandise for resale. The profits from our Mission 27 stores are used to fund our Changing Lives Forever Program and to supply healthier food to those we serve.

## Structure

The Society of St. Vincent de Paul-Indianapolis Archdiocesan Council, Inc. consists of 59 Parish Conferences. The Conference is the local, neighborhood-based outreach of the Society and this is where the strength of the Society lies. The mission of the Conference is the mission of the Society: to join together in a bond of friendship and to grow spiritually by offering person-to-person service to our neighbors. The Conferences are associated with one or more Catholic parishes to provide its members with opportunities to minister to our neighbors through home visits and to serve in its special projects. The Conferences have a goal of creating “Neighborhoods of Hope” by caring for their neighbors. Conferences often collaborate with other religious denominations and community organizations to support the local community. Each Conference has a President and a slate of officers.



The Society of St. Vincent de Paul Indianapolis Archdiocese Council

Each Conference is assigned to a District depending upon its geographic location: Indianapolis North, South, East, and West, in addition to South Central and Southern Indiana. Each District has a District President.

The District Presidents and leadership members of the Council comprise the Board of Directors, the governing body of the Society. Councils across the United States are associated with the National Council based in St. Louis, MO.

## Funding

St. Vincent de Paul receives its funding through personal contributions, grants, Mission 27 Resale Store revenue and other fundraising efforts as well as special events (for example, our annual **Struttin' Our Stuff** gala and our **Love Your Neighbor 5K Run/Walk**).

## Section I - General Information

### Physical locations:

**Pratt-Quigley Food Pantry**

3001 East 30<sup>th</sup> Street  
Indianapolis, IN 46218

**Distribution Center**

1201 East Maryland Street  
Indianapolis, IN 46202

**Boulevard Place Food Pantry**

4202 Boulevard Place  
Indianapolis, IN 46208

**Mission 27 Resale Store**

132 Leota Street  
Indianapolis, IN 46202

**Mission 27 Resale Store**

1618 Shelby Street  
Indianapolis, IN 46203

**Pratt Quigley Food Pantry:** Our food pantry strives to manifest God’s love by providing a selection of food to our neighbors in an atmosphere of dignity and respect and is the largest choice -driven food pantry in the Midwest. Choice means our neighbors can shop in our pantry and select the items that fit the needs of their families, much like shopping at a retail grocery store. There is no charge for the groceries offered at either of our food pantries. Pratt-Quigley serves over 3,000 families each week in addition to delivering food to 360 homebound individuals each week.

**Distribution Center:** This is the hub where all material donations are received. Appliances, furniture, bedding, household items and clothing are collected at this facility. Donations are dropped off at the loading dock, received at over 40 blue drop boxes across Indianapolis or picked up from residences at a scheduled time. Donations are either given away to our neighbors, sold in one of our Mission 27 Resale Stores or repurposed for use overseas.

**Boulevard Place Food Pantry:** This food pantry is located in the Crown Hill and Butler-Tarkington areas and serves neighbors who live within the boundaries of its five supporting parishes: St. Thomas Aquinas, St. Joan of Arc, Christ the King, St. Luke and Immaculate Heart of Mary.

**Mission 27 Resale Stores:** Our stores are filled with the generous donations from the community received at our Distribution Center. Our customers can feel good about shopping with us as every purchase goes toward funding nutritious food at our pantries and supporting our Changing Lives Forever Program (see below). St. Vincent de Paul’s feast day is September 27 and our mission supporting our Resale Stores are named in his honor.

## Leadership Staff Directory:

**Paul Ainslie**

**President**

[painslie@sudpindy.org](mailto:painslie@sudpindy.org)

**Wendy Harlow**

**Philanthropy Director**

[wharlow@sudpindy.org](mailto:wharlow@sudpindy.org)

**Andrea Leadford**

**CLF Director**

[aleadford@vdpindy.org](mailto:aleadford@vdpindy.org)

**Skip McCulley**

**Director of Operations DC**

[smcculley@sudpindy.org](mailto:smcculley@sudpindy.org)

**Darlene Sweeney**

**Director, Volunteer Services**

[dsweeney@sudpindy.org](mailto:dsweeney@sudpindy.org)

**Lynne Tromble**

**Chief Financial Officer**

[ltromble@sudpindy.org](mailto:ltromble@sudpindy.org)

**Mark White**

**Director, Retail Operations**

[mwhite@sudpindy.org](mailto:mwhite@sudpindy.org)

**Bob Williams**

**Director of Operations, FP**

[bwilliams@sudpindy.org](mailto:bwilliams@sudpindy.org)

**Peter Zubler**

**Executive Director**

[pzubler@sudpindy.org](mailto:pzubler@sudpindy.org)

## Section II – Programs

### Changing Lives Forever

When life is spinning out of control and assistance is needed in learning how to regain control, our Changing Lives Forever Program helps participants lift themselves out of poverty. The materials used educate our neighbors on the rules of social classes and other skills needed to become economically self-sufficient. Some graduates of the program have found employment, been able to continue their education, and overcome addictions, while others have significantly transformed their own lives. These 18-week programs are held in various parishes around the city, are free to participants, and run solely by trained volunteers.

### Food Deliveries to the Homebound

We have neighbors who are homebound and unable to come to the Food Pantry. Each Wednesday, volunteer drivers pick up two bags of groceries (one perishable and one non-perishable) for each neighbor to deliver to 5-7 people on their route. The homebound consist mainly of seniors and/or physically disabled people who have no way to shop for themselves. Many of the homebound are isolated and socially removed and the food delivery from a friendly SVdP face is a welcome sight indeed. This program is totally volunteer run.

## Material Goods/Financial Assistance

- **Helplines** - Neighbors can contact SVdP for clothing, household goods, furniture, appliances, and financial assistance by phoning either our English or Spanish helplines or by submitting a request form from our website. Volunteers receiving these requests forward the information to the parish conference located in the neighborhood where the neighbor lives. Upon receipt of the request, a **Home Visit** is made (see below).
- **Home Visits** - When a request is received at the parish conference level, a home visit is made with the neighbor either in person or via telephone. Together, the home visitor and the neighbor determine the nature of their needs. If the need is financial, the parish conference determines if they can assist. If the need is material goods, a referral form is completed and submitted to the **Referral Desk** at the Distribution Center.
- **Referral Desk** – When the Referral form is received at the Distribution Center, the current inventory is reviewed, a determination is made regarding which items can or cannot be supplied and an appointment scheduled for the neighbor to come to the Distribution Center to pick up available items.

## Neighbors Without Homes

- **Beggars for the Poor** – Each Saturday morning a SVdP truck is loaded with a hot meal, clothing and other necessities and parked at Roberts Park Methodist Church for distribution to our neighbors without homes.
- **Bicycles** – Any and all bicycles donated to SVdP are distributed to our neighbors without homes. When a neighbor receives a bicycle, they also receive a helmet, bicycle lock and a backpack filled with necessities. This bicycle provides transportation often, leading our neighbors to a job and housing.
- **Vincentian Room** – Each Wednesday and Saturday morning, our neighbors come to the Distribution Center for a hot meal, clothing, bedding, reading glasses and hygiene necessities. Assistance is also available for jobs searches and housing.

## Ozanam Free Legal Clinic

The Frederic Ozanam Free Legal Clinic serves neighbors in need of legal advice. Volunteer attorneys from around the community offer needed support to our neighbors who have no other resources for legal concerns.

## Gennesaret Free Clinic

This Clinic provides our neighbors with quality healthcare services. Taking its services to remote locations, Gennesaret has teamed with the Pratt-Quigley Food Pantry. Medical services are provided on a weekly basis.



## Section III – Volunteer Information

### We Value Our Volunteers

Volunteers are the lifeblood of the organization. Without the hundreds of volunteers we would not be in a position to fulfill our mission to the neighbors we serve. There are a variety of volunteer opportunities available within the Society for both individuals and groups. During your orientation, we will work with you to identify the best volunteer placement for you that caters to your skills and talents and our needs. Once you are assigned to a particular volunteer position, you are counted on to fulfill that responsibility. Our Directors will check in with you from time to time to ensure your satisfaction as a volunteer. If at any time you are uncomfortable with or need to change your assignment, please contact the Director of Volunteer Services or the Director of Operations at the Food Pantry or Distribution Center.

### Opportunities – Contact Darlene Sweeney [dsweeney@svdpindy.org](mailto:dsweeney@svdpindy.org)

#### Distribution Center:

- Sorters: clothing, shoes, linens, housewares, knick-knacks, cleaning supplies
- Appliance and furniture repair
- Dock workers
- Truck drivers
- Building and grounds maintenance

#### Food Pantry:

- Sorting donations
- Repackaging bulk foods including meat
- Stocking product carts and totes
- Assist on the shopping line
- Load groceries in neighbors' vehicles
- Homebound Deliveries
  - Fill grocery bags
  - Make deliveries
- Truck drivers
- Building and grounds maintenance

#### Mission 27 Resale Store (Shelby Street Location)

- Assist customers
- Cashier, bag purchases
- Replenish and organize merchandise on sales floor
- Pricing and marking merchandise
- Clean display shelves and merchandise
- Sweep floors

## **Other Opportunities – Contact individual listed**

**Boulevard Place Food Pantry – Contact Cindy Brown - [cbrown@sudpindy.org](mailto:cbrown@sudpindy.org)**

**Changing Lives Forever – Contact Andrea Leadford - [aleadford@sudpindy.org](mailto:aleadford@sudpindy.org)**

- Facilitators
- Mentors
- Administrative

## **Helplines**

- Phone (English) Contact Pat Rapp – [prapp1949@comcast.net](mailto:prapp1949@comcast.net)
- Phone (Spanish) Contact Susan Colgan – [colgans@myips.org](mailto:colgans@myips.org)
- Online – Contact Paula Light – [paula.light@att.net](mailto:paula.light@att.net)

**Homebound Food Deliveries – Contact Mary Shanley – [loreann79@sbcglobal.net](mailto:loreann79@sbcglobal.net)**

## **Neighbors Without Homes**

- Beggars for the Poor – Contact Ken Schutt – [ken.schutt72@gmail.com](mailto:ken.schutt72@gmail.com)
- Bicycles for the Homeless – Contact Maureen McLean – [mmclean1940@gmail.com](mailto:mmclean1940@gmail.com)
- Vincentian Room – Contact Linda Clodfelter – [Indac1117@gmail.com](mailto:Indac1117@gmail.com)

## **Individuals**

Individual volunteers should sign up through our SignUp Genius for the day, time and facility where you would like to volunteer. Go to: <https://www.sudpindy.org/i-want-to-help/#time>. Under each location you will find various opportunities. Click on the opportunity you are interested in and sign up for your desired time slot.

## **Regular Individuals**

Regular volunteers are those individuals who have committed to volunteer on a regular basis (once a week, etc.). Regular volunteers are required to complete a volunteer application. Information supplied on the volunteer application will be entered into our Volunteer Database. A volunteer name badge/barcode will be issued which the regular volunteer will scan when signing in and out.

## **Occasional Individuals**

Occasional individuals are those individuals who volunteer on a non-regular basis and are not required to complete a Volunteer Application (groups, students, etc.).

## **Groups**

Group volunteers should contact the Director of Volunteer Services Darlene Sweeney [dsweeney@sudpindy.org](mailto:dsweeney@sudpindy.org) to check availability and schedule.

## Youth

Volunteers age 12 and older are welcome at St. Vincent de Paul. Volunteers ages 12-14 (7<sup>th</sup> -8<sup>th</sup> grade) must be accompanied by a parent or other responsible adult while they are volunteering. Groups of student volunteers, under the age of 16, are required to have one adult volunteer/sponsor for every four students. Volunteers under the age of 12 may be used for special projects (mailing, etc.) depending upon need at the discretion of the Volunteer Director and must be accompanied by an adult(s).

## Sign In/Sign Out

All volunteers are asked to record the hours worked for St. Vincent de Paul. Permanent volunteers will be issued a name badge/bar code. It is important that the bar code be scanned at the beginning and end of each volunteer shift. Occasional volunteers are requested to sign in and out on the paper sign in/sign out sheet provided.

## Conference Participation

If you are interested in getting involved with your parish conference, please contact the president of your conference at your parish. The list of conferences can be found on our website [www.svdindy.org](http://www.svdindy.org).

## Section IV – Guidelines and Responsibilities

Our Intention at St. Vincent de Paul is to provide our team members with a place to share their talents, abilities, and life in service with others. Our policies are the foundation for a positive, life-enhancing experience.

### Communication

The St. Vincent de Paul Society uses many avenues to communicate with team members including phone, text, email, newsletters, and the website. ([www.svdindy.org](http://www.svdindy.org)). Prospective and current employees and volunteers are encouraged to visit the SVdP website and connect with us on social media for news and information.

### Confidentiality

As a team member of St. Vincent de Paul, it is expected and required that you keep confidential any and all personal information with which you may interact. All data, materials, knowledge, and information originating from, or having to do with St. Vincent de Paul and its team and neighbors is to be considered privileged and confidential and not to be disclosed. If you would like to use your SVdP experience for a paper, article, or journal, you must change the names and identifying information of the neighbors and seek approval in writing from the Executive Director.

## Dress Code

Team members should be casually attired when helping at St. Vincent de Paul. We do request that clothing be appropriate, modest and without messages which might be considered offensive or demeaning. We ask that you dress appropriately for the type of service you are going to perform. Everyone should wear comfortable clothes and appropriate shoes. Flip flops, Crocs, clog type shoes and open toed sandals are prohibited for safety reasons. During the winter months, layers are advised.

## Driving

If you will be driving your own vehicle during your work with SVdP, your vehicle must be covered by insurance as required by state law. If you will be driving a SVdP vehicle while conducting your work, you must submit a copy of your valid Driver's License. The use of mobile phones is not allowed while operating a vehicle or power equipment for St. Vincent de Paul.

## Language

It is the goal of St. Vincent de Paul to create an atmosphere that is attractive, pleasant, and enjoyable for volunteers, employees, and the neighbors we serve.

- Offensive Language - We prohibit offensive, abusive, and derogatory language that degrades others or reinforces negative stereotypes. Verbal communication will be free of cursing, swearing or aggressive sarcasm.
- Gossiping - St. Vincent de Paul Society has a zero tolerance for gossiping. Gossiping is an activity that can drain, corrupt, distract and downshift our everyday work life. It has the potential to destroy an organization or an individual person. Most people involved in gossip may not intend to do harm, but gossip can have such a negative impact as it has the potential to destroy a person's life and ruin an organization's credibility.

Any team member of St. Vincent de Paul who is proven to participate in offensive language and/or instigate gossip about a team member of St. Vincent de Paul could result in the loss of the privilege to work for St. Vincent de Paul.

## Parking

Parking for team members is available at each of our locations.

## Personal Belongings

All team members will be provided a secure place to store their belongings while on SVdP premises. Please leave your valuables at home or locked out of sight in your vehicle. SVdP cannot be held responsible for lost or stolen items.

### **Sudden Illness**

In the case of sudden illness of any team member or neighbor, please seek immediate assistance from any available staff member.

## **Section V - Health and Safety**

### **Accidents/Injuries**

If you are injured while at SVdP, please report the injury to a person in charge immediately. Staff will provide first aid as appropriate and complete an incident form for insurance purposes and contact emergency services. All accidents involving a SVdP vehicle will require a drug screen within 24 hours.

### **Assumption of Risk**

Every team member will be required to sign a release form during their orientation process. This form will release St. Vincent de Paul from all liability during the volunteer's service. In addition, volunteers are asked to sign a photo and video release for promotional purposes.

### **Background Checks**

St. Vincent de Paul reserves the right to do a background check on team members or potential team members at their discretion. Background checks are a condition of employment.

### **Drug Free – Alcohol Free**

St. Vincent de Paul is a drug-free and alcohol-free organization. The use of these items on premises is strictly forbidden. We reserve the right to request a team member or neighbor to leave the premises in the event that either is detected on their person.

### **Emergency Information**

You will be asked to provide emergency contact information during your orientation. This information is kept confidential and only used in the event of an emergency. If your emergency contact information changes, please alert your Director.

### **Emergency Procedures**

Procedures for building evacuation or shelter in place in the event of an emergency are posted at all locations. Please become familiar with the evacuation procedures at the location that you volunteer.

### Harassment Policy

It is the goal of St. Vincent de Paul to provide all team members with an experience free from harassment. If you feel you have been the victim of harassment, report it to your Director immediately. Any report received will be carefully reviewed and investigated. If it is determined that harassment has taken place, appropriate disciplinary measures will be taken. If a team member has been found to have committed an act of harassment, it could result in the loss of the privilege to work or volunteer for St. Vincent de Paul.

### Illness or Planned Absence

If you are ill and cannot complete your shift as scheduled, please contact your Director and cancel your signup through Sign Up Genius (if applicable).

### No-Show Policy

We understand that circumstances may arise and you may not be able to fulfill your commitment at the last minute. Please make every effort to contact your Director as soon as possible if this occurs as we count on our team members to provide necessary services to our neighbors. Please be respectful and honor your commitment with St. Vincent de Paul. Dependability is key to our success. Everyone counts on your being present on your designated day and at the designated time.

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We sincerely hope you have found this Orientation Handbook helpful and informative. Please complete the attached Orientation Handbook Acknowledgement and return it to your Director. Should you have any questions or concerns, please contact Darlene Sweeney, Director of Volunteer Services.

Thank you and welcome to the St. Vincent de Paul team. We are pleased to have you on board!

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