

Serving in Hope and Mercy



Monday Morning Memo



When I was 13 years old, my aunts took me on a Franciscan Retreat to Washington D.C. We traveled from New York City by bus and it was one of my first trips outside the metropolitan area. I was very excited, but really had no idea what this retreat had in store for me. Going to Washington seemed to be a great adventure. Never having been on a retreat I did not realize that I would be praying the rosary many times each day as we traveled toward our destination. Arriving in Washington it was apparent that almost all stops included visits to local churches and Mass and more rosaries. I was feeling very holy, although a bit confused. I thought we were going to see the sights of the city! Where's the Lincoln Memorial and the Washington Monument?

The most memorable part of this trip was the visit to the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception. The year was 1959, and it had just been dedicated after decades of construction. It was still not complete, but open for all to see and even in its unfinished state it was magnificent. Being a New Yorker, I had been to St. Patrick's Cathedral a number of times and although impressed by its grandeur, the National Shrine took my breath away.

Fast forward to the Spring of 2017, I had occasion to be in Washington and was again able to stop at the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception. It was now almost complete; the final piece, the dome, was being dedicated on December 8, 2017. Quite a long road from its groundbreaking on April 20, 1924, 95 years ago.

Needless to say, I have a fondness for the Basilica and would have loved to have been there yesterday when the Society held a Mass in honor of the 175th Anniversary of St. Vincent de Paul in the United States. In addition to the Mass a new mosaic of our founder, Blessed Frederic Ozanam was dedicated in the Vincentian Chapel which features statues of St. Vincent de Paul and St. Louise de Marillac. Quite impressive.

Timing did not work out for me to see the Mass live on Sunday, but I do hope to watch the tape on ETWN this week. I hope some of you got to see it live. Please let me know if you did. Any of you who actually attended the Mass and dedication in Washington, please do share your experience with the rest of us who will be very envious of your opportunity to attend this historical event.

Have a blessed week and thanks for all you do,

Judy

Conferences Work to Keep the Homeless Warm

Solving the homeless problem is a complicated issue that is a concern for most major cities across the United States. Our local conferences cannot resolve this critical problem alone, but many have found ways to assist their neighbors in ways that can get them through the winter months when living out in the elements becomes dangerously cold and wet. Throughout the Sacramento Diocese local St. Vincent de Paul Conferences are coming up with innovative ways to provide warm clothing and protection to those living on the streets. Just two of many are spotlighted below with their projects.

St. Mary/St. Joseph Conference in Vacaville

Conference President Pat Bosworth shared their successful project targeting help for the homeless in Vacaville. Two weeks ago, St. Mary/St. Joseph Conference collected new sleeping bags, blankets, and tarps for the homeless after each Mass.

The only advertising they did for this project was posting their request in the Sunday Bulletin. As a result, they collected a total of 32 new sleeping blankets, 33 tarps, and 40 blankets. These donations are earmarked for Vacaville homeless. They will be distributed through local Navigation Centers which provide basic services for the homeless. Here's another good idea that easily obtained many donations and will go a long way to keeping our most vulnerable neighbors a little warmer this winter.



Through the overwhelming generosity of their parishioners, Holy Spirit Conference had a very successful drive for coats, jackets, sweaters, hats, gloves, scarves, and socks. The clothing was distributed on Tuesday January 21st in front of the Cathedral. With the donation of 353 pairs of socks the recipients were able to double up on socks which is one of the most coveted items for those living on the streets.

Conference President Dot O'Connor said, "it was heartwarming to watch our sheltered and homeless friends being able to have a bit of control over their lives as they picked out warm clothes for themselves."



"A tree is known by its fruit; a man by his deeds. A good deed is never lost; he who sows courtesy reaps friendship, and he who plants kindness gathers love."

~ St. Basil the Great

"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."

~ Mission Statement

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**St. Vincent de Paul
Sacramento Diocesan Council**

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