

SVdP Serves Program Outline

Mission Statement

In the spirit of St. Vincent de Paul, SVdP Serves offers opportunities for students to be stewards of the faith through education and awareness of the needs of others while creating partnerships within our community.

Goals

1. To organize at least two service projects per year for each grade level with an ongoing alliance through volunteering, prayer and service learning.
2. To conduct biannual all-school service days.
3. To incorporate spiritual mindfulness of our partners during monthly Adoration.

The SVDP Serves Program is designed to inspire and educate our students of the Corporal Works of Mercy, these kind acts by which we help our neighbors with their material and physical needs.

- feed the hungry
- shelter the homeless
- clothe the naked
- visit the sick and imprisoned
- bury the dead
- give alms to the poor

St. Vincent de Paul Feast Day, SVdP Serves Commissioning Day

Overview: In honor of St. Vincent de Paul's feast day, the school will celebrate mass. Following mass, a representative from each agency will visit the appropriate grade to introduce the yearlong partnership. The rep will give a brief overview of the identified population, and if applicable, share information via photos, videos, etc. Each grade Service Coordinator will also explain the program to the students and answer any questions. At the end of the day, the entire school will gather in the gym for a parade of floats representing each grade's partner agency.

Partnering Agencies

- St. Vincent de Paul Parish
- O'Brien School for the Maasai
- Dominican Sisters of St. Cecilia
- Catholic Charities Early Education Centers
- Anchor Center for the Blind
- Mullen House
- Women's Emergency Shelter
- Marisol Services
- Samaritan House
- SVdP Society
- Christ in the City

SVdP Serves Job Descriptions

Committee Job Descriptions

President

- Schedule/Facilitate committee meetings
- Maintain SVDP Serves School Calendar
- Oversee committee activities/members/agency relationships
- Liaison to SVDP Principal/Faculty
- Compile end of year statistics
- Coordinate St. Vincent de Paul Commissioning Day

Secretary

- Take notes at committee meetings.

Treasurer

- Maintain annual record all purchases

Agency Liaison (one per agency when needed)

- Work with agency partner and Service Coordinator to secure dates/activities/supplies and implementation of service learning experience for assigned grade.
- This individual has a history with partnering with the identified agency to maintain continuity over years.

Drive Coordinator

- Oversee execution of annual school drives including Coat/Boot Drive, Toiletries Drive and Mobile Food Pantry
- Mobile Food Pantry
 - Set class schedule for school year
 - Email each grade parent to notify grade of upcoming drive
 - Coordinate with Student Council to deposit/pick up box in assigned class and deliver food to SVDP Pantry

Thanksgiving Food Drive Coordinator

- Work with Mrs. Beth McConaty, 8th Grade Class Parents and Service Learning Parent to organize and execute the drive.

All School Service Day Coordinator (Fall and Spring)

- Identify partner agencies
- Create activities in conjunction with committee members
- Assign committee member roles
- Recruit day of event volunteers

SVDP Serves Communications

- Obtain/Organize photos taken at service projects
- Disseminate photos and news/upcoming events to H&S rep and Parish
- Create end of year slideshow

Non-committee job descriptions

Service Coordinator (One per grade)

Similar to a Room Parent, this volunteer will work in concert with the teacher, parents and students to facilitate two service projects per year, and provide grade support for the two All School Service Days. Each grade level is commissioned to work with one community organization. The partnership between grade level and organization will remain constant from year to year.

The Service Parent responsibilities include:

1. Coordinate details of predetermined project dates with teachers and the agency contact from the partner organization.
2. Procure any supplies required for the projects. Funding provided.
3. Work with teachers to recruit parent drivers or arrange transportation, if applicable, to and from the site.
4. Attend Commissioning Day, the feast of St. Vincent de Paul to meet and greet the agency representative who will then present the service-learning program to the assigned grade.
5. Recruit parent volunteers to participate in our two All-school Service Days, fall and spring.

Note: Teachers will manage permission slips for field trips which will include a request for drivers. Teachers are responsible for debriefing students after a service trip.

SVDP Serves Drive Program

Drives:

| Name of Drive | Partner Agency | Description | Time of year | Responsible Grade |
|----------------------------|---|---|------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Coat&Shoe Drive | Marisol Family (formerly GHP) Denver Rescue Mission Samaritan House | SVdP collects gently used children's shoes and winter coats | Oct. 1-15 | SVdP Serves |
| Thanksgiving Food | Community Ministry The SVdP Society | A tradition for nearly 40 years, SVdP collects and distributes food items for identified families in need. | Oct. 15-Friday before Thanksgiving | 8th |
| Diaper Drive | Gabriel House, Catholic Charities | SVdP collects diapers and distributes to multiple Gabriel Houses | Lent | 7th |
| Book Drive | Catholic Charities Early Childhood Education Programs | The 5th grade collects gently used books for children ages 3-5yo. | Fall | 5th |
| Toiletries Drive | Christ in the City | SVdP collects sample size shampoo, conditioner, toothpaste, brushes and delivers to Christ in the City | January | SVdP Serves |
| Mobile Food Pantry | SVdP Society | Container travels from grade to grade every week. Student will be invited to bring in canned and dried food donations | January -May | SVdP Student Council |

SVDP Serves Our Neighbors Kindergarten

Partner: Neighbors living within the boundary of our car line, between Mississippi and Louisiana and Josephine and Columbine.

Overview: In an effort to be compatible and friendly neighbors, kindergarteners will reach out to our neighbors with good will messages.

Touchpoints:

1. Back to School
 - Students will create a flyer or cards greeting neighbors as the school year commences.
 - Students will walk the neighborhood and deliver the messages to neighbors or leave them at the door.
2. May Day
 - Students will create simple May baskets with flowers at the beginning of May.
 - Students will walk the neighborhood leaving the May baskets on doors.

SVDP Serves Parish Seniors 1st Grade

Partner: St. Vincent de Paul Parish

Overview: St. Vincent de Paul first-graders will adopt the seniors of the SVDP parish as their outreach partners.

Touch points:

- 1) Birthday cards to seniors of the parish
 - This is a continuation of a wonderful program already in existence and coordinated by the first-grade teaching staff. Everyone in the parishioner database aged 65 and older receives a birthday card made by a first-grader, in the month of the birthday.
- 2) Participation in at least 2 of the luncheons with seniors. The 3rd Thursday Lunch Bunch is a monthly luncheon held in the cafeteria. Although all parishioners are invited, the majority of attendees are seniors.
 - The first-graders could make laminated placemats from artwork or other table decorations (which can be taken home by the seniors from the lunch).
 - Attend the luncheon, say the grace, sing a song or recite a poem.
 - Invite the seniors to attend all-school adoration, ask for prayer requests, or another appropriate activity.

NOTE: Since COVID, the 'Lunch Bunch' luncheons have been canceled. Potential opportunity is to also serve the South Valley Post Acute Rehabilitation Center.

SVDP Serves O'Brien School for the Maasai 2nd Grade

Partner: O'Brien School for the Maasai
Agency Contact: Heather Bacon

Overview: The O'Brien school's mission is to bring an empowered future to a Maasai community and others within the Hai District by offering a high standard, primary education with an emphasis on moral character formation for the children, as well as entrepreneurial skills-building programs for women. Our goal is to inspire the next generation to become the leaders of Tanzania, Africa, and the world. <https://www.obrienschool.org>

Touchpoints:

- Artwork/Video Exchange - Students from SVdP and O'Brien School can exchange artwork, (i.e. bookmarks) and exchange videos singing faith-filled songs.
- Walking to the Well
- Blessing Bracelets

SVDP Serves Dominican Sisters of St. Cecilia
3rd Grade

Partner: Dominican Sisters of St. Cecilia
Agency Contact: Sister Dominic

Overview: There could be many fruits from the Dominican Sisters interaction with 3rd graders, who will receive Sacraments of Reconciliation, Confirmation and Holy Eucharist in the 3rd grade.

Possible Touchpoints:

- Fall Clean-up of the Convent premises
- Students will record Christmas songs in their music class with the music teacher.
- Students will pray the Novena leading up to the Feast of St. Cecelia on November 22nd, in conjunction with with the Sisters. Celebration of the Feast of St. Cecelia. Students decorate table and provide dinner for the Sisters.
- In the spring, students will plant vegetable seeds and flowers (CO sun and heat-resistant) at the convent. (Option: Students could seed the vegetables in class and plant the vegetable plants once grown to a viable size.)

SVdP Serves Anchor Center for the Blind
4th Grade

Partner: Anchor Center for the Blind

Overview: Anchor Center for Blind Children provides early education and intervention services for children birth to five years old who are blind or visually impaired. Their collaborative team approach to education, therapeutic and family support services ensures lifelong success. Everyone matters in the life of a child.

Touchpoint:

Students assisted the preschool teachers with setting up different stations around their facility. The stations were specific to sensory experiences for the children with impaired vision. The stations included: water pads, fishing for rhyolite pearls, parachute waving, bowling, rocket launching, hopscotching, frisbee throwing and scooter riding. The Anchor Center children walked around the facility and stopped to play at whichever station they wanted. After the first half hour, 4-1 left and went across the street to eat lunch at the park while 4-2 class took over manning the Anchor Center stations. Students then assisted with clean up and went on to eat lunch at the park too.

SVdP Serves Early Childhood Education Programs 5th Grade

Partner: Catholic Charities Early Childhood Education Programs

Overview: Catholic Charities ECE Programs provide affordable early childhood education at 4 Denver Metro Area locations. The centers offer services to improve school-readiness for low income children, including physical, dental and developmental screenings, daily meals and mental health and disabilities services for special-needs children. There are 2-3 Headstart classrooms per ECE with 16 children (ages 3-5) per class.

Note: It will be important to check if they have full enrollment and plan for a day they expect to have most children present while planning the visit.

Touchpoints:

1. Book Drive and Read Aloud (2 visits, Fall and Spring, preferably 9-10:15 am) The 5th grade will collect used books from their grade. Once the books are collected, the students will visit two ECE sites, distributing HALF of the books in the fall and half of the books in the spring.
2. During their site visits, SVdP will break up into small groups of 5 and visit the classrooms of the Headstart children (sometimes the Toddler room (as needed)). SVdP students will be paired with ECE children. The students will play outside, read the books together, work together on drawing and coloring and/or work with children in centers. The books will be left with the teachers at each site and will be distribute the books to the students at the end of their day.

SVdP Serves Mullen Home for the Aged 6th Grade

Partner: Mullen Home for the Aged

Overview: Mullen Home for the Aged sits on ten acres in the historic district of Highlands, just north of downtown Denver. For over 90 years the Little Sisters of the Poor have maintained Mullen Home as a highly regarded and caring full-service facility for Denver's elderly poor. The mission of the Little Sisters of the Poor is to offer the neediest elderly of every race and religion a home where they will be welcomed as Christ, cared for as family and accompanied with dignity until God calls them to himself.

Possible Touchpoints (2 site visits):

1. Fall visit - Halloween, October 31st
 - Students visit Mullen House in costume and parade down the halls (possible trick or treating).
 - Students will do a Halloween craft and/or game with the residents.
2. Valentines Day Party - February 14th
 - Sixth grade students celebrate Valentines Day party with the residents at Mullen Home.
 - Students send an invitation to Mullen Home prior to the party.
 - We bring refreshments (sign up genius) including lemonade or punch, cookies and tea sandwiches as well as plates, napkins and cups. We also bring supplies to make a Valentine.
 - Students sing two or three songs they are familiar with from music class. Students in Junior Great Books read a selection of poems from their reading list. (Entertainment can be adapted as seen fit.)
 - Students help residents make a Valentine to hang on their door.
 - Sixth graders serve refreshments and enjoy with residents.

Mrs. Papich has been instrumental in developing this outstanding program. It would be a good idea to meet with her right away to get details. The Halloween program last year involved dressing up as historical characters and having the residents guess who they were. The students then stayed for Mass with the residents. The students also brought placemats they made about their character and set them on the lunch tables. Valentine's Day celebration has involved poetry readings, songs, making a Valentine, snacks. Last year it included a Mardi Gras celebration because Ash Wednesday was on Valentine's Day.

SVdP Serves Family Services
7th Grade

Partner: Catholic Charities

1. Women's Emergency Shelter, Family Floor, Samaritan House
2. Marisol Family (formerly known as Gabriel House) - This ministry serves pregnant women and mothers of small children by offering emotional, spiritual and material support, including free diapers, toiletries, food and baby equipment. Nine Gabriel Houses are located on parish properties in Denver, Aurora, Lakewood and Boulder and at Centro San Juan Diego, the center of Hispanic Ministry for the Archdiocese of Denver. Gabriel House handles over 7,000 yearly visits from women and their children who receive goods and services, including over 100,000 diapers!
3. Marisol Health - offers low-cost and free services for those who demonstrate need. Medical care including gynecology services, delivery and post-partum care, confidential counseling, outreach to the abortion-minded, treatment and education.

Overview: The 7th grade's service learning experience will have three components, partnering with three Catholic Charities agencies who address women's needs. Students will visit Marisol Family Centers and the Women's Emergency Shelter while offering spiritual support to Marisol Health through prayer.

Touchpoints:

1. Fall Visit - Women's Emergency Shelter (Fall site visit) - Students will visit Holy Rosary women's shelter. During their visit, the students will play a game with staff in which the

students are placed in mock family units, they are given Monopoly money and have to create a budget and manage their expenses including housing, transportation and other costs. Onsite, they will also decorate the shelter with prayer flags, make bag lunches for the residents and decorate lunch bags. SVdP will provide lunch supplies to make bag lunches.

- a. Option 1: Students can make cookies at home and bring to the shelter to pack in lunch bags.
 - b. Option: 2 The students with their parents can return the following morning at 6:30 am to hand out lunches. This would be volunteer only and not organized by SVdP.
2. Marisol Family (Spring visit) - 7th grade students will conduct a school wide diaper drive. The 7th grade will collect the diapers and deliver to several of the 12 Marisol Family sites located in Denver. Once onsite the students will sort and stock the diapers.
 3. Marisol Health - The 7th grade will keep Marisol Health in their prayer intentions for the unborn and their mothers/fathers.

SVdP Serves Homeless and Low income Families 8th Grade

Partner: Christ in the City, <https://christinthecity.org/aboutus/>
Partner: Community Ministry, SVdP Society, Archdiocesan Housing

Overview: The Thanksgiving Food Drive has been nearly a tradition for nearly 40 years at SVdP. Originally, the food drive supported migrant families in Fort Lupton. A few years ago, Father Dan asked us to focus efforts in the metro area so SVdP partnered with Community Ministry and the SVdP Society, and in most recent years SVdP has support senior residents of Archdiocesan Housing. The food drive is conducted from November 1st through the Thursday before Thanksgiving. On the Friday before Thanksgiving the boxes are packed and the food boxes are delivered on the Monday of Thanksgiving week. We have committed to providing food for 20-25 families at Community Ministry in the past in addition to meeting the needs of the residents of Archdiocesan housing, and SVdP Society's approximately 15 families.

Touchpoints:

1. Thanksgiving Food Drive (Fall) - 8th grade students will organize, the school wide food drive. They are responsible for collecting, sorting and delivering the boxes.
2. Spring site visit to Christ in the City
 - Students distribute blessing bags (collected during January Toiletries Drive) at Lunch in the Park, engaging with people experiencing homelessness.

All School Spring Service Projects

Program Overview: Students, paired with their buddies, will spend an hour doing various service projects benefiting community organizations twice a year; in the fall, prior to Thanksgiving and in the spring, prior to Easter.

Timeline:

8:10am Mass
9:10 Volunteers meet in Conference Room to review project assignments.
9:15 Students pair with buddies and go to assigned rooms.
9:30 - 10:30 Agency overview, Project activity, Clean-up.
10:30 Students return to their classrooms. Teachers lead reflection.

Sample Project Descriptions:

Fall

Agency: Jewell Care Center of Denver - nursing home in Denver that accommodates 100 residents.

Project: Students will be creating holiday door decorations to hang on the residents doors during the month of December.

Agency: Mount Saint Vincent - residential treatment center serving children who have experienced the trauma of long-term physical abuse, sexual abuse, chronic neglect, or mental illness.

Project: Students will be creating table centerpieces for the holidays.

Agency: Father Woody's Haven of Hope is to provide food, shelter, clothing, counseling, rehabilitation and hygienic services to the homeless and indigent men and women in Denver.

Project: Students will decorate small Christmas trees for Father Woody's annual Christmas lunch.

Agency: Christ in the City is a Catholic non-profit dedicated to forming missionaries, volunteers and communities in knowing, loving and serving the poor.

Project: Students will be packing blessing bags, decorating cards and making wristlet rosary beads.

Spring

Sample projects:

Door decorations for Senior Living Centers
Decorated flower pots for A Little Help
Birthday Boxes for Mount St. Vincent and Kinship Care
Decorate paper bags for Angel Heart
Clean the SVDP church/school pick-up
Blessing bags and rosaries for Christ in the City