



SAINT TIMOTHY
CATHOLIC CHURCH



Children's Home Is Looking for Your Assistance in Helping Local Youth

At 13 years old, she's already witnessed too much. Dressed beyond her years and teetering on heels meant for a woman years older, anonymous girls like her find their way to the Children's Home Network perhaps not knowing that its doors will pave the way back to innocence — back to the childhood she deserves.

"She was living with her mother in a very bad situation and had been exploited," says Children's Home Network CEO and St. Timothy parishioner Irene Rickus, explaining the circumstances of a young woman whose name has been kept private. "She's gotten a lot of therapy and support and guidance. Today at 14, she dresses appropriately and talks in a way that's appropriate. You would never know a year ago what she was involved in. We've been able to locate her father who wasn't involved in her life, and now he's going to be able to take her and they're going to have a happy life."

The young woman described is just one example of the multi-faceted approach the Children's Home Network takes to help at-risk children under the age of 18 live full and happy lives. From providing mental health care for abused and neglected children, to family counseling, to foster care and support for families impacted by the opioid epidemic, the Children's Home Network has provided care for tens of thousands of local residents since its inception in 1892.



As a place of refuge and support, the Children's Home Network has provided care for the region's youngest people and their families for more than 126 years. In this photo from the 1890s, children gather in front of the original Children's Home building.

continued on page 2

September 2018

In this Issue

- 3** Christ Becomes One With Us Through the Eucharist
- 4** St. Timothy Conference of the St. Vincent de Paul Society Follows Gospel Call to Service
- 6** A Steward's Guide to Labor Day
We are All Co-Workers in the Lord's Vineyard
- 7** Friendship Community in Faith
Shared Life Experiences Bringing Families Together in Christ

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Children's Home Is Looking for Your Assistance in Helping Local Youth *continued from front cover*

"We're the oldest charity in West Central Florida and we have two primary needs — we need diapers and we need foster parents," Irene says.

While that statement might seem simplistic, Irene, who is a licensed mental health counselor in the state of Florida, says it encompasses the needs she'd most like parishioners at St. Timothy to know about.

"We are in desperate need of more foster homes," Irene says. "There are nights that there are toddlers in Hillsborough County that have nowhere to go. We're looking for families that love children and who can take in a child or a sibling family. They don't have to be perfect, but faith-based families are our best families because they have a support system and they have values and the ability to provide love and compassion to those families. We provide extensive support and training to these families, so if they come to the Children's Home, they're not alone. We'd love to see the members of St. Timothy join our ranks."

As far as the need for diapers go, the network's Adolescents in Motherhood program currently provides residential support for teen moms and their babies until these moms learn skills that will help them live on their own.



Today, the Children's Home Network continues to provide resources for children and families of all circumstances throughout West Central Florida. Parishioner and organization CEO Irene Rickus says St. Timothy members can support the network by considering becoming foster families.

"We're the only support network in probably 90 miles for girls in foster care who have been victims of human trafficking," Irene says. "We've had girls as young as 12 and we take them while they're pregnant or postpartum. We open our doors to these girls and help them get their degree, and restore their mental health. We work to make sure the baby is healthy and to develop a support system around them to make sure they have family to go to. We see a lot of girls that have unbelievable stories."

All children who receive services from the Children's Home Network are treated by a team of licensed therapists, behavioral analysts and mental health professionals. In addition, families who have a child now living with them because a family member has died or is recovering from drug addiction can receive support and counseling regardless of income.

Though the Children's Home Network is a secular organization, Irene says she's still inspired by the Christian women who gathered to start the charity 126 years before. In fact, the Children's Home Board of Directors still uses a prayer written by those women when they meet.

"It gives us faith and hope," she says. "You can't save every child, but you know that the vast majority of your work does good for people and that gets us out of bed every day. Despite the hardship, you know you're making a difference in the hearts of children. You have no idea how you might be influencing a child."

Parishioners who are interested in serving as foster families can call 813-864-1403 to get information. Donations currently needed at the Children's Home include diapers, sheet sets, pillows and towels that can be dropped off any time at their Tampa location. For more information, please call 813-855-4435 or visit childrenshomenetwork.org.

A LETTER FROM OUR PASTOR

Christ Becomes One With Us
Through the Eucharist

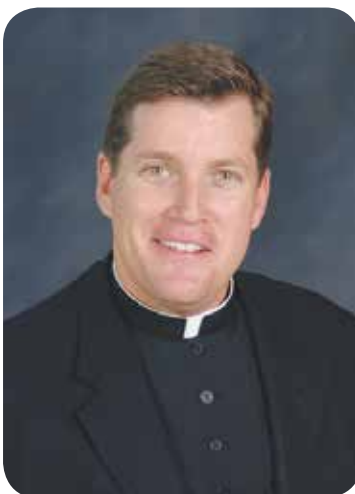
Dear Friends in Christ,

Any of us who are old enough to remember the tragic events of Sept. 11, 2001, had to have been marked by that experience. As I reflect on this solemn date in our country's history, I also faithfully reflect upon our celebration of the Eucharist. As Catholics, we are offered the Eucharist to keep it alive by consciously being bread broken and wine poured out for others each day of our lives. We are called to become what we receive.

Throughout the calendar year, certain dates are commemorated to inspire us to remember and honor those who may have been lost. These kinds of days — like 9/11 — are testimony to the reality that we, as human beings, are consciously connected to one another. There are unfortunately some who would have us believe that we are independent, separated from those around us.

For us as Catholics, the reception of the Eucharist is the most intimate union with God Himself on this earth. It is through the Body of Christ that we are unified to God and one another, and reminded that we are invited to be bread broken and wine poured out for our world.

We gather as a community around the table of the Eucharist. We receive the gift of Christ's Body and Blood so that we may become the embodiment



of God's love among us. As we receive Christ, we should recommit ourselves to following in Jesus' footsteps and reaching out to those around us with mercy, encouragement and compassion. By doing that, we reaffirm our identity as disciples and our Baptismal commitment to be His body and blood given for others.

Unfortunately to some, the Eucharist has been diluted to the point that it is viewed as merely a ritual or a symbol. As Catholics, we know that it is Christ's real presence among us — we

are to accept that gift and personally become Christ's presence everywhere we go and in everything we do.

The very word "Eucharist" means "thanksgiving." When we live a Eucharistic life, it has everything to do with gratitude. Let us be thankful for the Eucharist and thankful for one another, and let us demonstrate that through the love that pours out of us.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Rev. Kenneth J. Malley".

Rev. Kenneth J. Malley
Pastor





St. Timothy Conference of the St. Vincent de Paul Society

As Catholic Christians, we are called to bring the light and love of Christ to all those we encounter. In the Gospels, the parables and commands of Jesus make it clear that we are asked to come to the aid of the less fortunate. So,

what exactly does it mean to serve “one of these least,” as we are told in Matthew 25:40? Obviously, this kind of service can come in many different forms according to the needs of our brothers and sisters in Christ. Quite often, what people

in our community need is a simple hand up in the face of poverty or a particular life challenge. In our parish, we are blessed to be able to serve many of these people through the St. Timothy Conference of the St. Vincent de Paul Society.



Eighth-graders from Mother Teresa of Calcutta Catholic School help sort Christmas toy donations for the St. Vincent de Paul Society.



Nick Frega, last year's ECHO student from Notre Dame, helps with food collection for the St. Vincent de Paul Society.



Our parish food pantry run by the St. Vincent de Paul Society was named for past President Angela Kent following her passing in 2017.

The St. Vincent de Paul Society extends a vast array of services to local individuals and families in need — running a food pantry, providing financial assistance or helpful resources to those facing a financial crisis, visiting prisoners, coordinating the “Adopt a Family” program at Christmastime — and the list goes on!

Cindy Vinal, current President of the St. Timothy conference of the St. Vincent de Paul Society, feels blessed to be part of such an amazing organization. When she retired as our Parish Manager last year, she had no idea that God would invite her to this form of service, but she is certainly glad that she listened to His call!

While Cindy has long been a helping hand in the St. Vincent de Paul Society, serving as President has given her an even closer look at the great generosity of our parish.

“We’re blessed that our parishioners give so much,” she says. “When you ask for anything, they give you 10 times what you expect, so we are continually able to go outside of our own boundaries with what we can offer. And we believe in sharing where it’s needed, so we have a list of other agencies that we are able to help, as well.”

Paul Society Follows Gospel Call to Service

Our parish's conference has about 30 active members who attend the monthly St. Vincent de Paul meetings and have a regular presence in the group. However, as Cindy is quick to point out, countless parishioners are constantly stepping up to help out with specific needs and projects that may arise. In addition to the food drives — last Christmas, the parish donated over 7,000 pounds of food — parishioners often find other ways to lend a hand.

"We were doing a coat and blanket drive last winter," Cindy says. "When we were loading the truck, people leaving Mass just stopped in their tracks to help us load. People want to be involved and we want to give them the

opportunity, because there are always people who need help.

"I can't emphasize enough the generosity of the parishioners," she adds. "It's great to be in a place where people can send me what they have, and I will find where it's needed. God points me in the right direction. It's just an incredible feeling to be able to do this."

In addition to the spirit of giving demonstrated by our parishioners, Cindy is also thankful for the invaluable support of our priests, the church staff and the maintenance staff. This important service work is truly a group effort here at St. Timothy!

Reflecting on the role of the St. Vincent de Paul Society in our parish and community, Cindy

sees parishioners' participation in the organization as a welcome opportunity to fulfill our Gospel call to serving all those facing poverty, exclusion or adversity of any kind.

"What you do for the least of my people, you do for me' — those are Jesus' words," Cindy says. "And the St. Vincent de Paul Society gives us the opportunity to do for His people. We are blessed — each of us at different levels and at different times — and I think it's important for us to give back as individuals. Now that I've retired, I'm on a more limited income, so it's my time I can offer. So, it's wherever you are in your season of life, but it's important to give back. Our parish is just so blessed."



Volunteers help sort the food donations received by the St. Vincent de Paul Society.



The St. Vincent de Paul Society collects food for the needy.

Interested in learning more about the St. Timothy Conference of the St. Vincent de Paul Society? We are always looking for more parishioners to answer Christ's call to service! There are many different ways to serve — whether it be for a one-time project or longer commitment — so we are sure to find something just right for you!

Email Cindy Vinal at svdp@sainttims.org or call 813-968-1077, ext. 261 for more information.



A Steward's Guide to Labor Day

We are All Co-Workers in the Lord's Vineyard

Each Labor Day, most of us enjoy relaxing and having a good time with friends and family. And of course, who doesn't like a day off? But as we celebrate the unofficial "last day of summer," we rarely take the time to think about the origins and meaning of Labor Day. And what does the holiday mean to us as workers of the Catholic faith?

Labor Day is a creation of the labor movement, and is dedicated to the social and economic achievements of American workers. It constitutes an annual acknowledgment of the many contributions that workers have made to the strength and prosperity of our country. It was in accordance with the plans of Central Labor Union that the first Labor Day celebration took place in New York City on Sept. 5, 1882.

As devoted Catholics continually searching for the best way to follow Christ in our daily lives, it is good for us to consider the spiritual significance of Labor Day.

We are all co-workers in the Lord's vineyard, called to the noble mission of serving God and others. When we are working at our individual places of employment, we can always do a diligent and honest job, no matter what it takes. When serving in parish ministries, we can be punctual, kind, generous, and faithful to the teachings of the Church. When at home with our families, we can teach our children how to work hard and feel proud of a job well done. We can also take the time to thank those who work hard on our behalf. And when we acknowledge the hard work performed by so many mail carriers, and retail and food service workers, we show our respect for God's gift of work in our lives.

St. Teresa of Calcutta encouraged the faithful to "do small things with great love." This month, as we celebrate Labor Day, try driving to work with a rejuvenated, grateful attitude. You can also love God as you work hard at your job, allowing joy to come

into your heart. This will allow you to increase your dignity as a person, and discipline your being – thus sanctifying your soul for the glory of your Creator.

St. Joseph, patron of workers, pray for us!

We can take the time to thank those who work hard on our behalf. And when we acknowledge the hard work performed by so many mail carriers, and retail and food service workers, we show our respect for God's gift of work in our lives.



Friendship Community in Faith

Shared Life Experiences Bringing Families Together in Christ

Our faith ties us to our brothers and sisters in Christ, and our closest friendships often come from this community. Over the past 20 years, a tight-knit group of friends — Jose (Joey) and Sara Busquets, Margarita and Eric Matos, Alma and Gustavo (Gus) Julia, Aida and Ricardo Ferrer, Lyzette and Angel Cintron, Margarita and George Steinbarger, and Ivette and Francisco (Frankie) Rivera — have become like family. In the wake of their shared cultural background, military life experience and Catholic faith, they have forged an unbreakable bond.

“Our husbands are all retired Army, between 20 and 25 years of service,” says Sara Busquets. “We met each other through the military. We not only have the friendships based in supporting each other throughout military life, but we also share the belief that through prayer, God shows His mercy through us and our families.”

Throughout their time with the Army, many of the couples crossed paths and forged friendships on their various assignments, including Texas, Maryland and Panama. After retirement, they all moved to the Tampa Bay area.

“A couple of us retired here, and the others followed afterward,” Sara says. “One day, we were at the Base Exchange at MacDill Air Force Base, and we saw Margarita and Eric. We asked where they lived, and they said they were in Lutz. We had just bought a house in Lutz, and we asked them where

they went to church. That’s how it all started. It took maybe a year or two for us to become friends, but once we found each other and came to St. Timothy, we stuck together like glue.”

The couples also share a cultural background — all were born and raised in Puerto Rico.

“We all left Puerto Rico when we got married and went into the military life,” Sara says. “When you find people with the same cultural background, with the same faith, and at the same stages of life, it creates a bond of understanding. We went through the same

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Over the years, St. Timothy has become a second home for these friends. By serving the parish, and by practicing their faith together, these friendships have continued to grow and deepen.



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Friendship Community in Faith *continued from page 7*

things — our kids lived the same lives, and our faith has bound us together. We don't feel like foreigners here because we've been living here for 40 years, but these friendships bring back the parts of us that we miss — the language, the food, the traditions."

To this day, the couples and their families remain close. From beaches and boating, to life events and milestones, the friends are always there to laugh and spend time together.

"Our kids have been friends for a long time," Sara says. "They have been at each other's weddings and kids' Baptisms and First Holy Communions. My husband and I are going on our ninth grandchild, so we bought a minibus for our family — and we use that minibus to take all our friends out! We go to the beach, and three couples have boats. We go out and take turns with everyone in the three boats. We like to go to dinner and find new restaurants, we exercise and walk together almost every day."

Over the years, St. Timothy has become a second home for these friends. By serving the parish, and by practicing their faith together, these friendships have continued to grow and deepen.

"Our strong faith has kept us together," Sara says. "We do a lot of things at church, and we pray together — when we have special intentions for each other, or each other's families, we pray Rosaries together. It's so important to have that undying and unending support — especially when there have been illnesses in our families or if one of our kids have been in trouble. We were there for Margarita and Eric when he went through a stroke — and now, after three years, he's walking and doing great. My son went into the military and he was in the Iraq and Afghanistan Wars, and they went through what I went through and prayed with me for his safety. They were there for me — I didn't have to call anyone, they were just there."

• *Mass Schedule* •

Saturday Vigil: 5:30 p.m. • Sunday: 7:30, 9, 11 a.m. & 5:30 p.m. • Daily: Mon-Sat 9 a.m., Wed 6:15 p.m. • Holy Days: 9 a.m. & 7 p.m. Vigil: 7 p.m.