

## Cohort 22

### Homelessness Subcommittee

Hello everyone!

By this time, hopefully, you have read the articles on the who, what, why and where of homelessness and the available resources to help locally.

But I thought you might be interested in knowing that the St. Vincent de Paul Society, an international organization, has a Famvin Homeless Alliance which is a focal point of a global network of charity partnering with the Institute of Global Homelessness. Their mission is to bring together leaders from the world of policy, practice and advocacy to share ideas and best practice. There has been progress on a national level; however, the eastern section of the United States has not been privy to that. And, very sadly, Ocean County still remains one of the few counties in New Jersey without adequate housing facilities.

Having said that, it is our local SVdP Conferences (right here in Ocean County) that continue to work diligently everyday to provide those in need with shelter, food vouchers, clothing to resist the elements and referrals to resources who can help to improve their condition.

So, the following is taken from the Famvin.org website (and condensed!):

This is not an appeal for funds-just prayer! Seriously!

Again, seriously, what do we do when we are especially upset about something? The loss of a job, the health of a relative, a cancer diagnosis, etc. You get the picture! We pray hard, and often, for what touches us a deeply. So, how often do we pray for those who are homeless; not the concept "homeless people", but homeless people themselves. The people we see (or try not to see) in the course of our daily activities...the haggard grandmother on a street corner, the disheveled man at the stoplight holding a makeshift sign, the person fumbling with food stamps at the register, the drunk who reeks of alcohol...

Pray...Prayer of the Vincentian Family

Dear God,

Hear our prayer today for all women and men, boys and girls who are homeless this day.

For those sleeping under bridges, on park benches, in doorways or bus stations.

For those who can only find shelter for the night but must wander in the daytime.

For families broken because they could not afford to pay the rent.

For those who have no relatives or friends who can take them in.

For those who have no place to keep possessions that remind them who they are.

For those who are afraid and hopeless.

For those who have been betrayed by our social safety net. For all these people, we pray that you, God, will provide shelter, security, and hope.

We pray for those of us with warm houses and comfortable beds that we not be lulled into complacency and forgetfulness.

**Jesus, help us to see your face in the eyes of every homeless person we meet so that we may be empowered through word and deed, and through whatever means we have, to bring justice and peace to those who are homeless.**

**Amen.**