

Community Help, Community Love- Becca's Story

Because of my lack of employment, I had fallen on hard times to pay my bills and purchase food for my son and myself. I had never been in the position to reach out for financial help in a community like Grafton whose residents seldom require economic assistance. I was so intimidated to do so. I reached out to St. Vincent de Paul and was immediately connected to the St. Joseph's Parish Conference. After meeting with two Vincentians to discuss my most urgent needs, I was given assistance with a car payment, a WE Energies bill as well as provided with vouchers for the St. Vincent de Paul Thrift Store for "new" clothes for my son and me. This experience was incredibly profound for me. No mother wants to admit that they are unable to provide for their child. Even though I had a steady income working in Special Education at a local elementary school, the summer months proved to be challenging as the job I had planned on working for the summer fell through and I was unable to find adequate income until the beginning of the new school year. The Vincentian visitors made me feel so blessed by reminding me that sometimes people struggle and accepting assistance was nothing to be ashamed of.

Even though my religious background was different from the domination of their church, they never made me feel like an outsider. They assured me that the help St. Vincent de Paul provides to community members is spiritually motivated. These wonderful people taught me that the strength of a community exists in the support and uplifting gestures of its members to all. I was able to finally get caught up with my finances and as a result, my confidence was heightened as well. I decided to return to the University of Wisconsin Milwaukee and pursue my degree in Community Education. What better way to give back to my community than to encourage others not just to accept help, but hopefully inspire them to cultivate the best versions of themselves. It is this revolving process that helps a community rotate with constant love and acceptance for all.