

# FRIENDS OF THE POOR® WALK

## Strategies From the Field



The following list was compiled by Conferences/Councils that have graciously shared their successful ideas on hosting a Friends of the Poor® Walk/Run, with the hopes others will find similar success.

### Food

- Potluck meal was provided after the Walk.
- Pancake breakfast raised additional funds for a Walk being held in the morning.
- Lunch box meal was donated by local companies — Panera Bread Co., sub shop, etc.
- Knights of Columbus sponsored cookout after the Walk.

### Media

- Made noontime television appearance on news station that focuses on local events.
- Put announcement on the online calendar of local media outlets.
- One Conference asked a local news anchor to host the event, but instead got a 5-minute spot on the FOP® Walk/Run.
- Make sure that day of event is focused on the SVdP mission.

### Involving your Schools/Youth

- Involved local high school students, groups/classes, and those needing community service hours.
- Email blast from school's principal to the parents of students.
- School principal sent letter about FOP® Walk/Run offering a dress down day at \$1/student; money goes to the FOP® Walk, parents are now aware of the event as well.
- One Walk got the schools involved by doing an essay contest among the kids with the topic "Being a Good Samaritan in Today's World," then announced the winner at the event.
- One Walk had a choir sing "God Bless America" at the beginning of the event to incorporate students and their families (same concept can work with school bands).
- One location involved their confirmation group and the church youth group to join as a service project.

### Involving Your Priest and Church

- Email blast sent to head of ministries within the church.
- Email blast from the priest to the parishioners.
- Mass held the week before walk is dedicated to Friends of the Poor® Walk/Run.
- Church website has registration forms and link to FOP® Walk/Run website.

**National Council of the United States, Society of St. Vincent de Paul, Inc.**

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## Fundraising

- Have a “Sponsor a Walker Weekend” at church, where envelopes in pews labeled Friends of the Poor® Walk and make a donation, then either drop it off at the back of church, or bring back the next weekend. One small Walk location raised \$1,108 off just this fundraising method.
- Have a “100 for 100 Campaign” where you will ask your entire parish after every Mass to support your efforts, by having 100 parishioners donate/pledge \$100 each to the FOP® Walk, and in turn supporting your local Conference.
- Prizes for top fundraisers, both personally and as a team.
- Involve Catholic Financial Life as a Walk team and potential sponsor.
- Have walkers utilize social media such as Facebook to make a personal fundraising ask.
- Ask for donations to your walker page instead of a birthday present (also mention this on Facebook).
- Start early by periodically reminding participants about the upcoming Walk and gently encourage them to raise money (reports online will provide their email addresses, then just send one email to all walkers through the blind carbon copy function on your email provider).
- Businesses and/or schools have a “dress down day” or Casual Friday for \$1– \$5/person per day to collect money for the Walk.
- Offer a raffle with donated goods.
- Offer a 50/50 raffle.

## Increasing the Number of Walkers

- Set a goal to increase number of walkers by 30 – 40% from previous year.
- For first-year Walks, set a goal to have at least 100 participants
- Invite clients who have benefited from SVdP services to come and participate.
- Invite Board of Directors, leadership, and parish leaders to participate, walk, and create a team; set a goal for each team to have 8 – 10 walkers.
- Invite a key community leader to be the master of ceremonies.
- Use the Online Reports to contact past year’s walkers to join again.
- Set up booth at local Farmer’s Market with an iPad (can be done with paper registration, too) and have donors use it to donate online and/or sign up as a walker.
- Involve school groups such as Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, National Honor Society, sports groups, Key Club (in one walk location, the National Honor Society alone brought in over \$2,700).
- Booth after Mass, at parish picnic, and other parish events (one Walk location put chalk on the bottom of a boot, and made footprints in church that led to the back where their booth was for the Walk).
- Business cards with FOP® website and your event information on it; hand them out to everyone! This includes the cashier at the grocery store, the waiter at the restaurant, family, friends, neighbors, etc. (Vista Print offers free business cards if you pay the shipping/handling.)
- Have a Vincentian or priest briefly talk about the upcoming FOP® walk after every Mass for the month before the event.
- Have everyone you know take an FOP® walk flyer to their workplace.