



Fundraising Case Study: St. William Conference

St. William Conference in Waukesha, WI has grown their Friends of the Poor® Walk over the last several years, recently bringing in over \$30,000 for their Conference. These are some of the ideas that they implemented.

1. The Conference started a “100 for 100” campaign. After every Mass for a weekend, a Vincentian shares a touching story about the work of the Society, explains what the Society of St. Vincent de Paul does for those in need in the community, and then asks for 100 parish families to donate \$100. Their goal seemed lofty at \$10,000, but they ended up with 156 parishioners giving \$100 or more!
2. For the last 10 years, they have approached a nearby Catholic Financial Life chapter, which donates lunch and water bottles for the Walk.
3. After Mass at the parish, the Walk begins in the parish parking lot, and goes for two miles along sidewalks. Some of the parishioners who were attending Mass end up also staying for the Walk.
4. Retired priests are asked to attend, and whoever is the celebrant gets a gift card, which is paid for by the Vincentians, rather than their general treasury.
5. Vincentians make personal contacts with potential company sponsors, and ask that they donate a minimum of \$200 to have their names printed on the back of the t-shirts and on the back of the agenda given to each walker. All sponsors are announced before the Walk begins.
6. 2017 marked the first year of a raffle, made from donated items. Tickets are sold in the weeks leading up to the Walk, in addition to the day of the event itself. This raffle raised an additional \$1,000 in its first year.
7. On the weekend immediately prior to the Walk, St. William hosted a “Sponsor a Walker” event. After Mass, parishioners who aren’t able to attend, or weren’t planning on walking, are asked to sponsor a walker or make a general donation to the Conference.
8. Walk information is included in the church bulletin, and along with thanks to the parish for their support. At the end, another bulletin announcement includes the amount of donations raised from the event.
9. An important part of this event is sending a thank you letter to sponsors, including companies and individuals. All walkers who received donations are also reminded to thank their donors.