

**Saying
“Thank You”**

Your golden
opportunity!

Donors are significantly more likely to make another gift to an organization when they are thanked properly.



It costs much more to acquire new donors than to keep your old ones!

Saying "thank you" in meaningful ways develops strong relationships, even by mail!

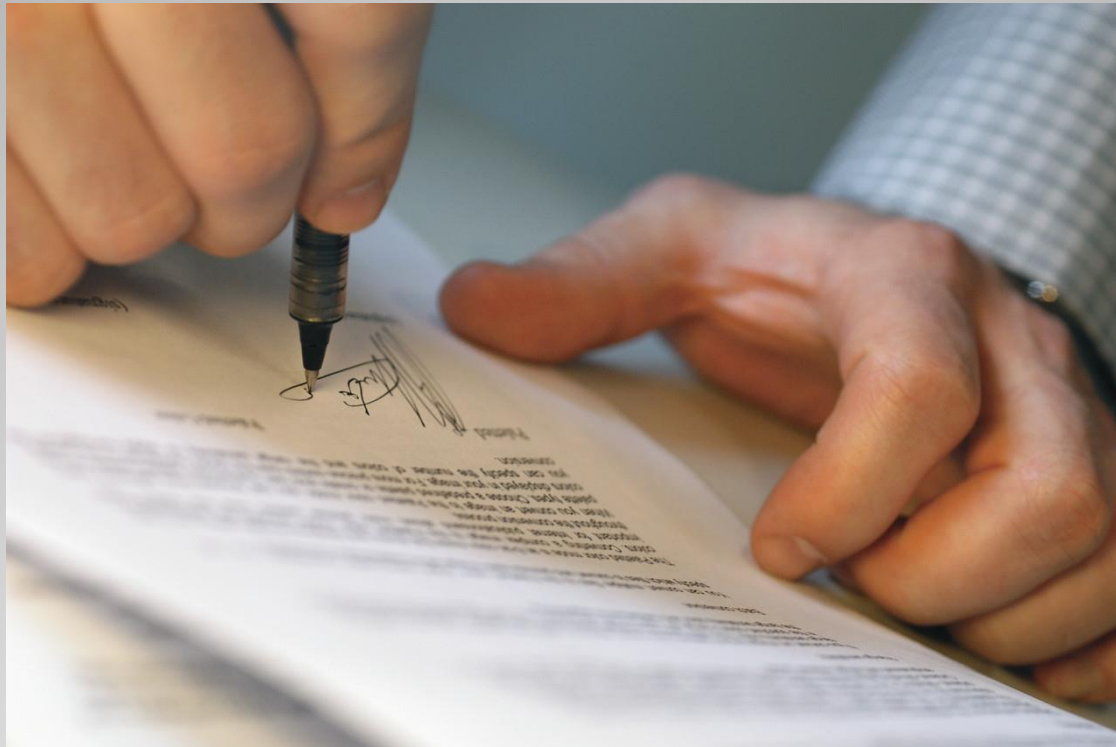
Each time a gift comes in:

Your thank you letter should be updated every two weeks. It is your no-cost, up to the minute and personalized newsletter, just for that donor.

Keep it fresh and current. Tell your stories.

There is always a gap to be filled. Talk about the gap.

Every letter is hand signed and includes a personal note.



Dear [Short Salutation](#),

Thank you for your donation of [Received](#) to the St. Vincent de Paul Society of Marin County. Your gift will be used **immediately** to provide practical and caring assistance to Marin's struggling citizens.

This month, the topic of "shelter" is on our minds, as we end our REST (Rotating Emergency Shelter Team) program for the season. This program shelters up to 40 homeless men and 20 homeless women per night, from mid-November to mid-April. Since there is no funding beyond the winter season, we must once again leave people with no place to go and without any alternative plan. This is a painful reality for all; our REST volunteers grieve for the people they've grown to care about very much; our shelter staff is now, once again, out of work; and our REST participants must once again "go it alone" without the nightly meal, companionship and shelter provided by the REST program. Simply stated, there is nothing "good" about this news.

So we move forward, increasing our efforts for a better, more humane solution. Can we count on you for support? At the Society, we will spend the next 6-12 months working hard to advocate for a "better way" to do emergency shelter in Marin. We have some ideas and we have the passion to make them happen, but we will need your continued commitment. We will keep you updated as events unfold. Until then, please know that your loyal support--in all its forms--continues to make a profound and critical difference in the lives of our most vulnerable neighbors in Marin.

With appreciation,

Christine Paquette
Director of Development
415-454-3303 ext. 12

Per IRS regulations, no goods or services were provided to you for this donation. You may want to retain this letter for tax purposes. Our Federal Tax ID is: #94-120-7701. We never sell, trade or share our donor database with anyone.

Be proactive! During the holidays, each donor receives a thank you letter, personally signed. But then...





Patricia L. Zentner
45 Graceland Dr
San Rafael, CA 94901-1921

Dear Patricia,

You made it happen! During the holidays, you helped the St. Vincent de Paul Society of Marin County to be ready for some of our most important challenges for 2013! *Your recent holiday support means so much to us!*

What does this good news mean?

- Three thousand children in Marin County **will escape the trauma of homelessness** because your donation will help their **families get off of the streets** and into safe housing, or help their families **avoid eviction** and stay securely in their homes.
- We'll serve 250,000 hot meals this year, our biggest year ever. Your gift will feed veterans, the disabled, the unemployed and many others. Thanks to you, we have a **strong head start and renewed faith** that we can serve everyone who needs us this year.
- Your donation will help support a network of 200 volunteers who bring food boxes into the homes of low-income families, helping to feed hungry children and stretch family budgets. We see **families thriving with this extra help, thanks to you.**
- Our award winning **Community Court** will keep its doors open, providing alternative sentencing for people who receive "lifestyle violations" as a result of their homelessness (tickets for sleeping outside, sleeping in their cars, etc.). Your **compassionate holiday gift gives this "second chance"** to those who desperately need it.

You are creating these positive impacts. It is your generosity which keeps vulnerable people **healthy, fed, protected and respected**, even in these very difficult times. As we begin the new year, please know that your gift is working each day to help your struggling neighbors **overcome hardship**, one person at a time.

In gratitude,

Christine Paquette

Christine Paquette
Director of Development



The Great Debate:

Do you add a return (remit) envelope to this thank you letter?

Yes! I want to help. Enclosed is my donation or pledge payable to **St. Vincent de Paul of Marin.**

Your Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Email where we may contact you _____

Phone _____

In memory of In honor of: _____

Please send appropriate acknowledgement to:

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Thank you for Helping Us Help Others

I will make a pledge of \$_____ per month on my credit card (enter info. below).
(Pledging saves us money, saves the environment, and helps us all year long.)

Enclosed is my check payable to St. Vincent de Paul Society of Marin.

Charge \$_____ to my Visa/MC (circle one) No. _____ Exp. _____

I can make a donation of an auto, truck, boat or other vehicle type.

I have a donation of stock, IRA funds, or other funds and want to be contacted.



In a five year span, our February “thank you” returned 1,356 gifts from people who had just given! We raised \$108,000 without asking for money!

Code your appeals!

“SPR 2012”

When a donor is responding to a specific appeal, tie your thank you letter directly to that appeal. Your thank you becomes a follow up to your original story, extending it and starting a conversation with your donor.

Code your thank you inserts! Then track them.

Over the last five years, we have received 2,469 gifts and \$239,010 with these “thank you” envelopes.

Let people know that your goal was achieved. It is important for donors to know that we can achieve great things with their help.

Tell your donors how their money is being spent, in detail. All donors want to know where their money is going!



It's always helpful to let your donors and parishioners know what the future holds for your conference. What ideas are you exploring to help more people in need? Who have you engaged recently who may help you accomplish your goals?

The postscript to the thank you letter can give one final look at the work the donor is accomplishing, and can include a "teaser" to promote interest in your next piece of scintillating correspondence!



Current events do matter.

You can say “The high price of gasoline is hitting San Rafael’s working poor particularly hard this year. Just last week we helped three families who are forced to choose between getting to work and feeding their families.”

Right now, the future of food stamps is in jeopardy. Let your donors know the facts and how this event may impact your work and those you serve.



If you can relate a donation amount to a problem solved, all the better.

With a \$100 gift, write "Thank you, Jim! You fed 50 hungry people today!"



The power of "You"
not "We".

Always credit your donor, not yourself.

Be specific when acknowledging memorial/honor gifts. Was it in memory or honor? Who was notified of the gift? Notice if it is a spouse who is memorialized and update your database immediately.

Say thank for “no reason at all.” Send a personal note with an “update”, a photo of a family you helped, or a newspaper clipping with a thank you post-it, just “because.”



Involve your board in thanking.
All of these tips are great ways to get your
board involved with raising money!

