



FRIENDS OF THE POOR® WALK/RUN SOCIETY OF ST. VINCENT DE PAUL



Friends of the Poor® Walk St. William Conference – Fundraising Case Study

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. They started a “100 for 100” campaign, where a Vincentian gets up after every Mass for a weekend, and tells 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 (this will be their 11th Friends of the Poor® Walk), they have approached a nearby Catholic Financial Life chapter, which donates lunch and water bottles for their 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. Then, before the walk begins we announce all the sponsors. This is all in addition to printing the sponsors names on the back of the agenda (which is given to each walker).
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 the first year.
7. On the weekend immediately prior to the walk, St. William hosted a “sponsor a walker” event, where after Mass they ask parishioners who aren’t able to attend, or weren’t planning on walking, to sponsor a walker or make a general donation to the Conference.
8. They are sure to put the walk information in the bulletin, and always thank them for their support. At the end, they include the amount of donations raised from the event.
9. An important part of this event is that they send a “thank you” letter to sponsors, including companies and individuals. They are also sure to ask all walkers who received donations to thank their donors.

Special thanks to Ruth Anne White for providing this information!

