



St Vincent
de Paul Society

England and Wales

Turning Concern into Action

HUMAN DIGNITY





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We are all brothers and sisters, knowing this means we must respect, value and uphold a common dignity for ourselves and each other. As human beings we are created in the image and likeness of God so therefore we have an inherent worth and distinction.

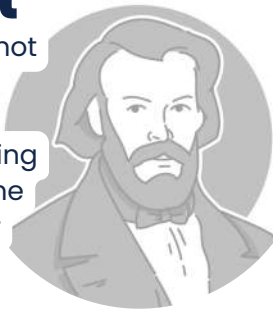
The SVP Response

The SVP responds to the need of those in the community who need support without judgement or question. The homeless, the elderly, prisoners, struggling families, people who are sick and lonely are amongst some of those they work alongside.

Founders Thought

Knowledge of the poor and needy is not gained by pouring over books or in discussions with politicians, but by visiting the slums where they live, sitting by the bedside of the dying, feeling the cold they feel and learning from their lips the causes of their woes.

-Blessed Frédéric Ozanam-



Jeremiah 1:5

"Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart; I appointed you as a prophet to the nations."



Human persons are willed by God; they are imprinted with God's image. Their dignity does not come from the work they do, but from the persons they are.

The Hundredth Year (Donders translation), #11

Case Study: Cake and a Chat

The SVP works with individuals with dementia, but also with their carers, who are often under immense stress. Pamela is one of the lovely ladies regularly visited by the volunteers of the Dementia Befriending Programme run by St Vincent's Southend-on-Sea. She hasn't been out of her house since her husband died last year and is now frightened to go out. "We talk regularly on the phone, and she proudly talks about her life and how she managed several restaurants in the town. She loves cake, but she isn't able to cook now, so she really appreciates it when we deliver a homemade piece of cake," says one of the dedicated team of Dementia Befriending Programme volunteers. For people like Pamela, loss of human interaction is one of the most serious problems facing older people. As a grassroots organisation, the SVP has always seen befriending as one of the most important things we, as Vincentians, can do for someone who needs our help. It demonstrates unity, kindness and compassion. Simple acts of kindness such as a chat over the phone, delivering a puzzle book, a jigsaw, some craft materials, or, like Pamela, a piece of cake, make a huge difference to their lives. We should nurture and appreciate our older generation for their knowledge and wisdom.

**Dementia Befriending Programme
St Vincent's Southend-on-Sea**



Question Point

- How would you explain the idea of dignity?
- In what ways did the SVP celebrate human dignity in the case study?



DEFINE HUMAN DIGNITY:

We are all brothers and sisters, knowing this means we must **respect, value** and uphold a common **dignity** for ourselves and each other. As human beings we are **created in the image of God** so therefore we have an inherent worth and distinction.

THE SVP RESPONSE:

The SVP responds to the needs of those in **their community who need support without judgement** or question. The homeless, the elderly, prisoners, struggling families, people who are sick and lonely are amongst some of those they work alongside.

QUOTE:

'Knowledge of the poor and needy is not gained by pouring over books... but by visiting the slums where they live, sitting by the bedside of the dying, feeling the cold they feel...' **-Blessed Frederic Ozanam-**

BIT OF BIBLE:



Jeremiah 1:5
"Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart; I appointed you as a prophet to the nations."

CASE STUDY: Cake and a Chat with Pamela

One of the ways the SVP demonstrates its value of 'Human Dignity' is in its **Dementia Befriending scheme**, caring for those individuals with Dementia, as well as their carers who often need support too.

Pamela is a Lady from Southend, who rarely leaves her house since her husband died last year. One of the volunteers from Southend's Dementia Befriending Scheme says, "We talk regularly on the phone, and she proudly talks about her life... She loves cake, but she isn't able to cook now, so she really appreciates it when we deliver a homemade piece of cake." For people like Pamela, loss of human interaction is one of the most serious problems facing older people.

CONCLUSION:

The way that the SVP in Southend help Pamela through befriending and sharing some homemade cake is a good way of expressing Human Dignity. This demonstrates Human Dignity by caring for the person, and seeing the other person as a **unique and valued person**. So when we help them, we help them with their uniqueness in mind, and in a way that **makes them feel valued and cared for**.

