



St Vincent
de Paul Society

England and Wales

Turning Concern into Action

SOLIDARITY





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Being in solidarity is recognising others as our brothers and sisters and actively working for their good. From the food we eat and the clothes we buy, to the news we read and the websites we browse, we are connected to people and places all over the world. It is about recognising others as our brothers and sisters and actively working for their good. In our connected humanity, we are invited to build relationships and to understand what life is like for others who are different from us.

The SVP response

Social justice campaigning is a cornerstone of our grassroots approach to tackling poverty and inequality. We seek to raise awareness of issues brought to light through our frontline encounters, which are increasing. 'We believe in giving practical assistance to anyone who needs it – the lonely, the hungry, the homeless, the sick, anyone, without judging them. All of us work together to achieve this as effectively as possible ... Inspired by St Vincent de Paul, we are fired up to feed those in need, clothe them, befriend them and fight for them. Anyone who, to use Pope Francis' word, is 'indignant' about the suffering in the world should consider joining the SVP, working in solidarity to make a difference – brothers and sisters all.'

Helen O'Shea (National President 2018–22) on 'Fratelli Tutti'

Vincentian Spirituality

Be kind and love. For love is the first gift to the poor. They will appreciate your kindness and love more than all else you can bring them.

-Blessed Rosalie Rendu-



1 Peter 3:8

Finally, all of you, have unity of mind, sympathy, brotherly love, a tender heart, and a humble mind.



Case Study: Helping and speaking out

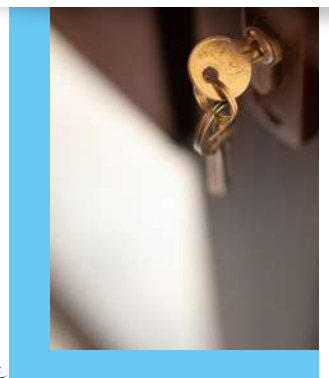
An SVP conference in the south of England, are finding a problem that is affecting lots of people: people are being rehoused in flats and houses, where the property is completely stripped out, including carpets, curtains, all furniture. So although a person or family is housed, they then have to find all the items they need to live. Just to kit a house out with the basics for one person is £1500, and a great deal more for a family.

Robert, is a young man, who has been in care for much of his life. Once he left care he ended up homeless. The council eventually rehoused him, in a property with hardly any furnishings. The local SVP were able to find some second hand items, and found money for a new cooker and floor coverings.

The local SVP are also now lobbying councillors and social services about this, as it is a serious issue, affecting people's wellbeing and dignity, and jeopardising the stability of people who have often already suffered a great deal in life.

'The unity of the human family has very real repercussions for our life. It means that we commit ourselves to a new solidarity, a new relationship, the social solidarity of all'

Saint Pope John Paul II (1987)



Question Point

- What does St Paul mean when he wrote, 'if one member suffers, all suffer together?'
- How does the SVP show practical ways we can be in solidarity with people in need?



DEFINE SOLIDARITY:

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QUOTE:

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THE SVP RESPONSE:

Social justice campaigning is a cornerstone of our grassroots approach to tackling poverty and inequality. We seek to raise awareness of issues brought to light through our frontline encounters, which are increasing. Inspired by St Vincent de Paul, **we are fired up to feed those in need, clothe them, befriend them and fight for them**. Anyone who, to use Pope Francis' word, is 'indignant' about the suffering in the world should consider joining the SVP, working in solidarity to make a difference – brothers and sisters all.'

BIT OF BIBLE:



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CASE STUDY: Helping and speaking out

An SVP conference in the south of England, are finding a problem that is affecting lots of people: people are being rehoused in flats and houses, where the property is completely stripped out, including carpets, curtains, all furniture. So although a person or family is housed, they then have to find all the items they need to live. Just to kit a house out with the basics for one person is £1500, and a great deal more for a family. Robert, is a young man, who has been in care for much of his life. Once he left care he ended up homeless. The council eventually rehoused him, in a property with hardly any furnishings. The local SVP were able to find some second hand items, and found money for a new cooker and floor coverings.

CONCLUSION:

At the heart of everything the SVP does is 'solidarity' and 'dignity'. Creating community where people support each other is the principal way the SVP offers support to those in need. Not simply by providing items that benefactors may need, but by getting to know them, and supporting them like family, and not just service users

We see with Robert an example of how the SVP step in get involved and walk alongside. He needed practical help and he needed a network of support. He now has a whole community of practical support, and his story is being heard by those who have the choice to make things better in the future through the SVP members.