

St Vincent de Paul Society (SVP) Awareness Month

September is SVP (St Vincent de Paul Society) Awareness month when parishes throughout the UK highlight this organisation. We have a small but active SVP group in our St Paul/St Lawrence parish. The parish give the SVP tremendous financial support from cake sales, coffee mornings, charity lunches and the annual collection on the last Saturday/Sunday in September. The SVP is a Christian organisation that tackles poverty and helps the disadvantaged when they are in need of help.

How does the SVP work? When someone contacts the SVP local members will visit/contact them and assess their needs. The main purpose of the contact is to extend the hand of friendship. More specific practical assistance can be given depending on the nature of the help required and the capacity of the membership. As well as friendship SVP members can sometimes give limited help towards the cost of essential items such as food, clothing, furniture and utilities in emergency situations. When they understand the nature of the problems facing people they can help them access relevant SVP projects, state services or other agencies who may be able to provide on-going support and assistance. Each case is decided on an individual basis but in generally any financial support is strictly limited. Above all, SVP members offer people the hand of friendship, practical help and total confidentiality.