



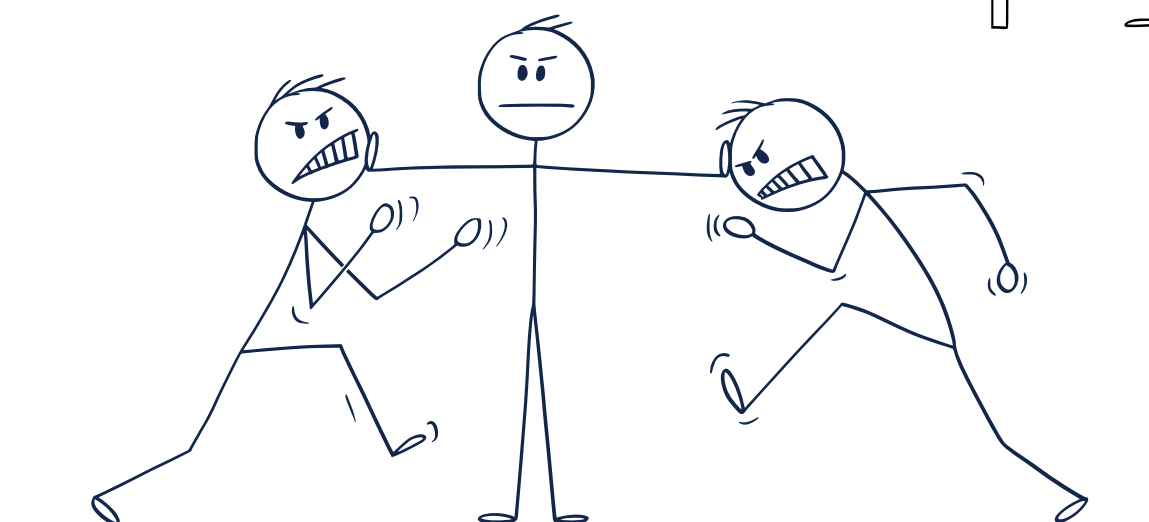
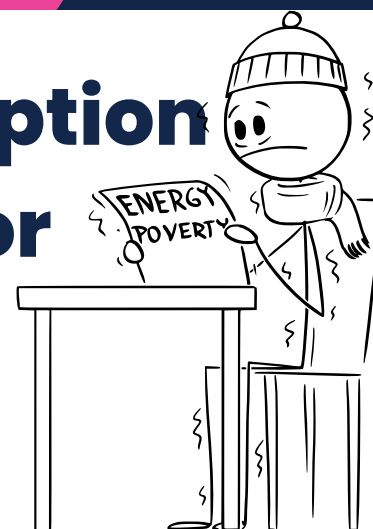
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# CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING

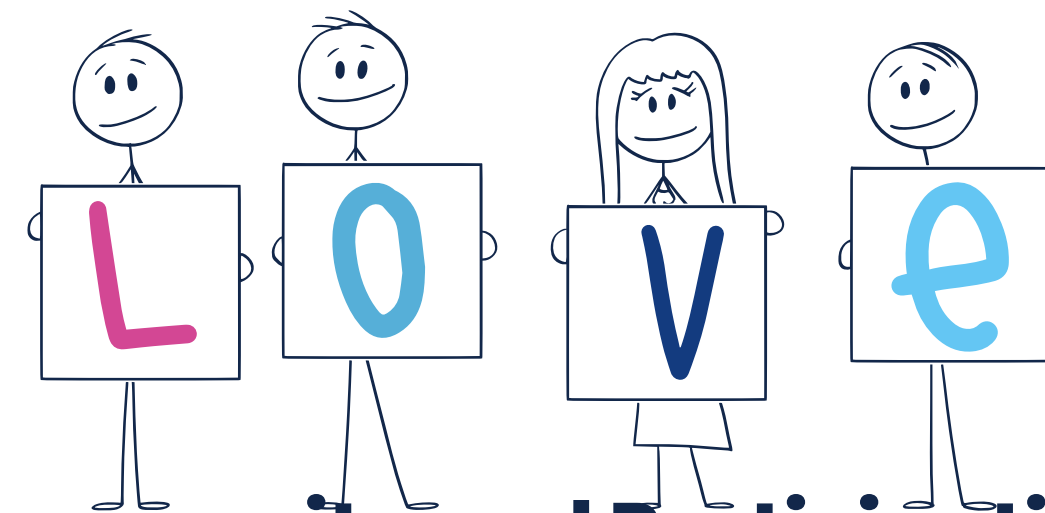


**Human  
Dignity**

**Preferential Option  
for the Poor**

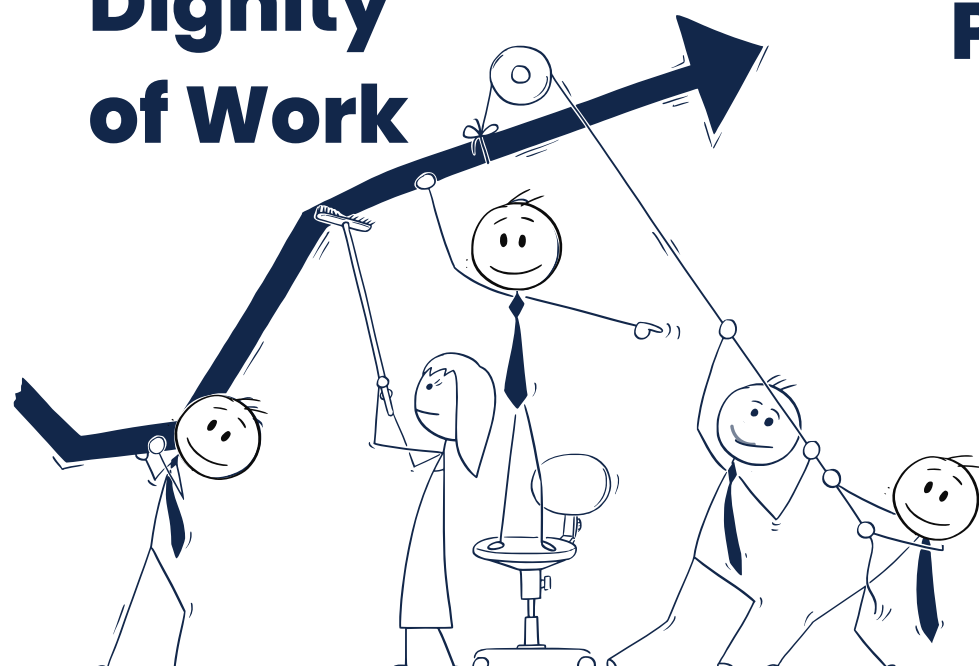


**Peace & Reconciliation**



**Community and Participation**

**Dignity  
of Work**



**Solidarity**



**Care for  
Creation**





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## Case Study: A letter of Thanks

Dear St Vincent de Paul

3 years ago I had nothing; no roof over my head, no money, no friends and no hope.

I slept in an empty wheelie bin in a church car park. You helped me find a home, you gave me someone to talk to, and you treated me like a human being.

The training in your café helped give me skills, confidence and I am now working again. I dread to think where I would be today if I hadn't walked into St Vincent's. I genuinely believe you saved my life.

**David, Café Volunteer**







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## Case Study: Recycled furniture & fresh starts

*'Some years ago I found myself in hospital. The doctor told me. "Give up the drink, or you will be dead within three months." I went into the rehab clinic. I had lost my partner, my friends and my self-esteem, but was still supported by my family. On leaving rehab I had got a flat, but needed some furniture. I was told about the St Vincent de Paul Furniture Store in Sheffield and made an application. At the time I had only a two-seater and my bits and pieces and was looking at four walls. I felt the need, after some time, to give back to society. I approached the Coordinator at the Furniture Store and volunteered my services. I had reservations as to whether I'd be suitable, but she told me to come along for a day and try it out. On my first day I told the senior driver a little about my history. He said, "Nobody is judgemental here mate, just do your best. You've even got your first promotion, you are number one tea maker!" I now do two days a week. I keep the warehouse tidy, stack furniture and load the vans. Having been given a house or a flat, people often need the basics. The Furniture Store gives them a start, just as they did for me. The opportunity of working for the SVP Furniture Store was a Godsend. I'm finally putting something back into the community.'*

**A client & volunteer, Sheffield Furniture Store**





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## 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**



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## Case Study: Working together to make a change

When Darren's relationship broke down, he found himself homeless, jobless, and sleeping on the streets. But when he heard from other homeless people about the local SVP community centre, his life began to turn around. "Meeting and speaking to other homeless people in a safe place was great. I loved the feeling of comradery between everyone."

It was there he met Emma, who was also homeless after leaving an abusive relationship. The SVP team supported both Emma and Darren in getting off the streets and moving into permanent accommodation. Now they live in their own flat and volunteer for the SVP together. "Being part of this SVP community has helped me a lot and I now have my life back."







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## Case Study: We all need a helping hand sometimes

Holly, is a 999 phone operator. She contacted the SVP in tears saying that she had not eaten in two days and had resorted to stealing food from the office fridge. The SVP were able to provide her with a food parcel. It also became apparent that Holly was struggling to pay her electricity bill and as a result was in debt. This had created a vicious cycle for Holly: she was unable to pay for food as well as her gas and electricity bills. She had also been saving money by showering at work instead of at home. Holly was shocked that she was struggling to make ends meet on her salary which she had previously managed to live on. She is not alone: with the cost of food items rising sharply, and UK food prices inflation at 12.4%, we are seeing more and more people use our services, many of whom had never relied on foodbanks before.



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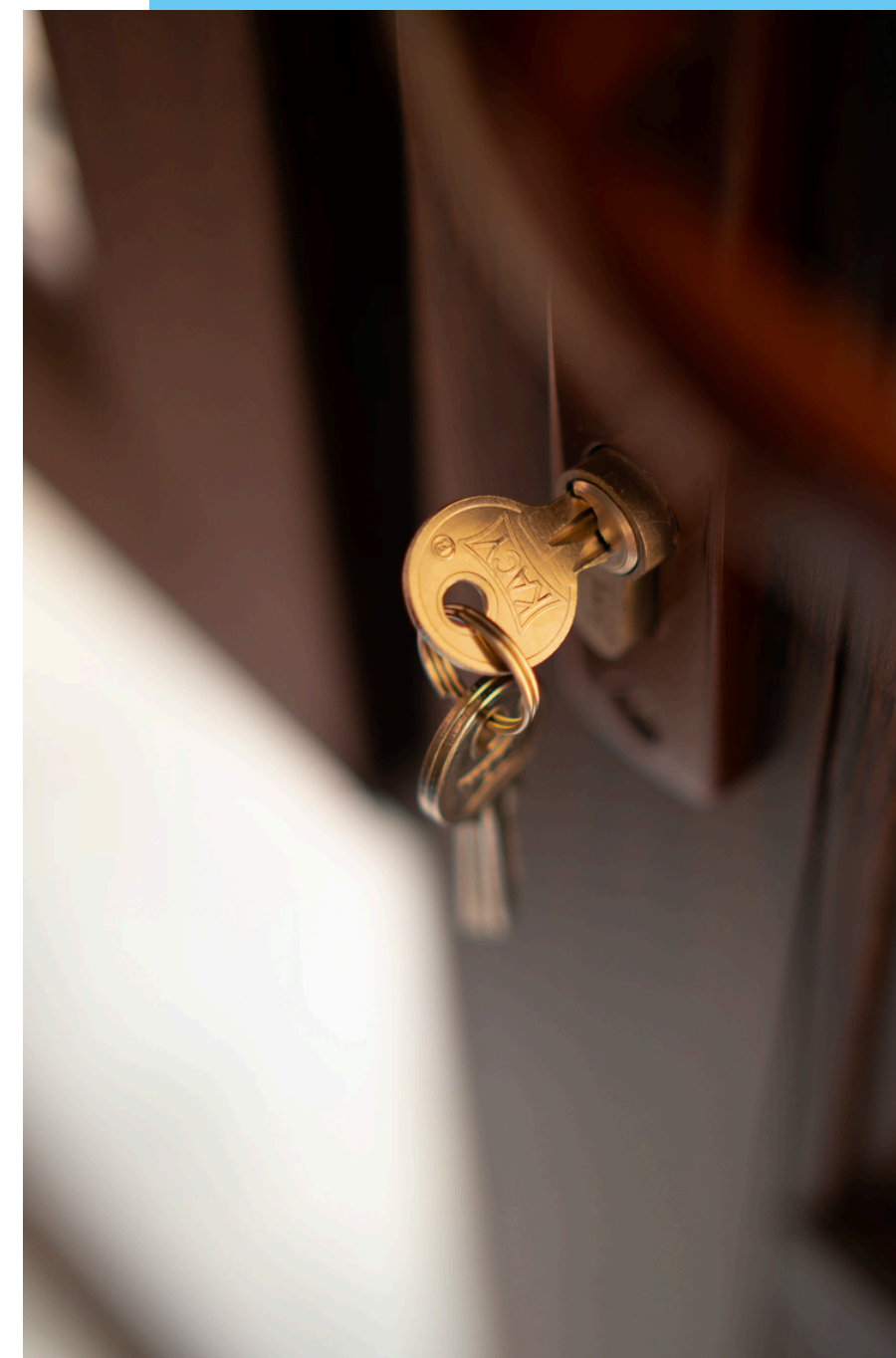
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## Case Study: Helping and speaking out

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.

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.





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## Case Study: Restorative Justice and becoming the person I can be

Connor from Cardiff came to the SVP Ely Bridge Centre whilst on probation. **Here** he tells his story in his own words.