

September is a special month for SVP members as we celebrate the feast days of Blessed Frédéric Ozanam and St Vincent de Paul on September 9 and 27 respectively.

Our parish SVP group is appealing to all parishioners for help. You were more than kind earlier in the summer when we appealed for help to run the Funday & Lunch project for struggling families at Manningford Hall – which has been a great success. I'll put a full report on this on the parish website and in the next edition of "Window". However, as well as this we've recently:

- Been working with residents in the Women's Refuge: mostly young women who are fleeing from domestic abuse - often from different parts of the country; moved by the police and social services for their safety. They usually arrive with very little. We have firstly provided bags of food, toiletries and other essentials. Then, depending on needs, we have organised – for instance -bus passes and help with rent. Where they have been found more permanent accommodation, we've provided, for example, bedding or an advance rent payment;
- Enabled an asylum seeker who had come into the country with no proper papers to register her name with Deed Poll;
- Provided food parcels, a phone and a pair of girl's school shoes for a young woman whose husband had gambled all their money away, and plunged her into serious debt;
- Supported a woman with learning difficulties with clothes, food and necessities for independent living and alerted Social Services to her vulnerability and wide-ranging needs;
- Provided school uniforms (in one case for a family with 5 children) to struggling families who needed uniforms for the next school year;
- Provided cookers, fridges and washing machines to families where, for example, they've moved from furnished to unfurnished accommodation;
- Provided bags of groceries to families whose Universal Credit has been delayed, or run out.

Needless to say, this has had quite an impact on our finances.

And we're looking at potentially an increase in hardship – and a need for our help – with, for example, the end of the furlough scheme and the imminent reduction by £20 a week of Universal Credit. As well as hoping that, for Christmas, we can again provide "Christmas Dinner in a Bag" to families who are finding things tough.

So, in this Awareness Month, we'd first of all very much welcome new members to help us in our work

In addition, if you could make a donation that would be a huge help. If you're able to donate regularly to the work of the SVP by standing order that would be even better. Our Conference account details are:

SS Dunstan & Jude SVP. Sort code 60-60-04. Account 46082956

Or catch me or John Oakley after 10.30 Mass on a Sunday or put your donation in an envelope labelled "SVP" and pop it through the presbytery letterbox.

To learn more please phone me on 07855 824434 or email me at andygudge@blueyonder.co.uk.