



## **Reasons a Parish should have a St. Vincent de Paul Conference**

The Society of St. Vincent de Paul (SVdP) has been rooted in simplicity, kindness and Christ-like love since it began as the “Conference of Charity” in Paris in 1833. For more than 180 years, SVdP groups have spread throughout the Christian world. Its goal is to meet the needs of God’s most beloved... the less fortunate.

Personal spiritual growth and participation in Christ’s vision of service to the poor calls for generosity, warmth and meaningful sacrifice. These traits can only be effectively nourished, sustained, formed and regulated within the structure of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul that works beyond the parish walls.

The following reasons point out why, over a long period of time, SVdP has significant advantages over other groups that may operate only at the parish level.

### **Advantages:**

1. SVdP’s structure is an international network of members that have the same vision of their work with those in need in the name of Jesus, but whose main focus is service in the parish area.
2. SVdP emphasizes the spiritual growth of members in a group setting and offers a way to help members grow closer to God through service to those in need.
3. Parish SVdP Conferences are linked to other SVdP groups through the global SVdP network. The SVdP District Council and Diocesan Council, thrift stores, the National Council of the U.S and other social service agencies work in collaboration to help those in need.
4. Numerous resources and opportunities are available to SVdP members to aid in ongoing spiritual formation and education for more effective ministry to those in need.
5. The SVdP diocesan-wide reporting system offers simple yearly reports that allow members to give witness to the world that Christ’s message has been recognized.

### **Additional Reasons for a Parish to have a SVdP Conference**

1. Conferences show Catholics and non-Catholics alike our Christian love, which can be inspiration for further good works and generosity.
2. SVdP Conferences can offer aid to help with problems that do not fit neatly into other programs. No work of charity is foreign to the Society.
3. A SVdP Conference will stimulate awareness of poverty and other issues that the Society deals with on a regular basis.

### **Conclusion:**

A SVdP Conference brings its members, the parish and the person it serves true fulfillment through prayerful union and personal service. The Society delivers social service by engaging in home visits as its primary ministry. Its members are united in an international society of charity by their spirit of poverty, humility and sharing. They bring the love of Christ to those in need because in the poor, Vincentians see the face of Christ.