Young and old, families and friends are encouraged to lace up their sneakers and enjoy some fresh air and exercise for a worthwhile cause. Parking is free. To participate in the Cleveland walk, register online at http://www.svdpusa.net/pledgathon/public/index.php .

Join the Society of St. Vincent de Paul Cleveland in its First Annual Friends of the Poor Walk on September 29

CLEVELAND – In an effort to meet an increasing demand for food and other emergency relief services for the region's needy, the Society of St. Vincent de Paul Cleveland (SVDP) will host its ***First Annual Friends of the Poor® Walk*** on **Saturday, September 29** from **10:30 a.m. to noon** at the **Cleveland Metroparks' Brookside Reservation**, adjacent to the Cleveland Metroparks Zoo. The fundraiser will allow community members from all walks of life to participate in a simultaneous, nationwide event to increase awareness of the numerous challenges faced by the poor in our region, and generate significant funds earmarked for direct assistance to the needy. The walk is fun, there are no administrative fees and ***all monies raised locally will be utilized to help Northeast Ohio low-income residents.***

The local fundraiser is part of a national event that is now in its fifth year, the *SVDP USA Annual Friends of the Poor® Walk*, which was held at approximately 200 locations across the country in 2011. It attracted some 18,000 participants of all ages and backgrounds, and raised more than $1.4 million.

Young and old, families and friends are encouraged to lace up their sneakers and enjoy some fresh air and exercise for a worthwhile cause. Parking is free. To participate in the Cleveland walk, register online at http://www.svdpusa.net/pledgathon/public/index.php . For more information, contact the Society of St. Vincent de Paul Cleveland at 216.696.6525, ext. 3150.

We would like to thank our proud sponsors to date: Merrill Lynch; Home Works LLC; Mazzella Companies/Sheffield Metals; SVDP Assumption Conference; Knights of Columbus #14406; Cleveland Catholic Charities; Great Lakes Construction Co.; Sherwin Williams; Coach & Collision Automotive; Roetzel & Andress; GlassDoctor; Hal & Barb Leitch; WJ Flaherty Co. Inc.;

KCH Design, LTD; Unlimited Ink, Inc.; Menyhart Plumbing; Bizooki.com; Early Stage Partners; State Farm Insurance; Four Gable Management Co. Inc.; MaryAnn Boyer, CPA; Mary Ellen Brzytwa; and Chris & Carlinne Isabella.

Since 1865, the Society of St. Vincent de Paul Cleveland (SVDP) has been providing immediate, temporary, person-to-person emergency assistance to Northeast Ohio's poor. Thanks to a network of dedicated volunteers from SVDP's participating parishes ("Conferences"), the organization helps low-income individuals and families with food, clothing and furniture donations, utility assistance and more, regardless of their race, ethnicity or religious affiliation. Last year alone, approximately 167,000 individuals within the Diocese of Cleveland's eight-county area received more than $3 million in aid.