

Vinspiration

St Justin de Jacobis

Justin the Man...

Justin de Jacobis, a Vincentian missionary with a great gift of holiness and understanding, learned from his founder St Vincent de Paul, one basic conviction: to follow God's Providence.

*"God chose him to be a teacher even more by example than by words."
(Bishop Massia)*

*"...one chosen out of thousands, and the most eminent of the missionaries of our day."
(Bishop Massia)*

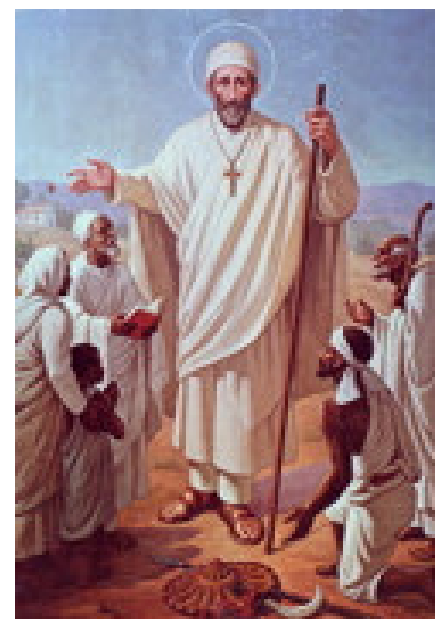
*"...the model and the master whom God has given me, and whom I propose to imitate as far as I have the power."
(Bishop Massia)*

*"...God sent into Abyssinia a living book, a true copy of the Gospel; He sent them a true apostle, image of Jesus, meek and humble of heart; he has made this poor people know...the true idea of the Christian life..."
(Bishop Massia)*

Observations by unknown persons

"Dressed like the local inhabitants, with baggy trousers, a long tunic and a cloak over his shoulder, he wished to travel in their fashion."

"He reached the point of never pronouncing any cutting word or anything insulting."



FEAST DAY
30th July

BEATIFICATION
June 25 1939
by Pope Pius XI

CANONISATION
26 October 1975
by Pope Paul VI

Justin's Words ...

"...we are expecting from one moment to the next the arrival of the executioners.... I protest that I die only to give witness to the Catholic, Apostolic and Roman faith..."

"The monks are my eyes, my mouth, my ears, my hands, my feet. They can do what I cannot do, and they do it much better than anything I can do myself."

"As we teach the catechism to our people, we are seated on the ground, with our legs crossed; all the while we have to twist and turn, as our hearers do also, in order to dislodge the insects which assail us from all sides and pursue us without respite. We conclude by reciting the Rosary, the acts of Faith, Hope and Charity..."



http://www.filles-de-la-charite.org/en/st_justin_de_jacobis.aspx

"...I shall spend all my life for you. If you are afflicted, I shall come to comfort you in the name of Jesus Christ. If you are naked, I shall give my clothing to cover you; if you are hungry, I shall give my bread to feed you; if you are ill, I shall visit you. If you want me to teach you what I know, I shall be happy to do that."

"I no longer possess anything in this world: no father, mother, no native land. Only on thing is left to me: God and the Christian people of Ethiopia."

"As you are priests, so am I. As you are confessors, so am I. As you are preachers of the Gospel, so too am I. Therefore if you permit me to celebrate the Mass, I will. If you permit me to hear confessions, I will. If you let me preach the Gospel, I will. But if you do not want me to, I will not do it."

"To judge by appearances, my spiritual children would be taken for savages, but considered with the eyes of faith, they are the adoptive brothers of Jesus Christ, and coheirs of His eternal kingdom."

"You are my friends, you are my family, you are my sister, you are my father, you are my mother."

To learn all trades, you need only come to Abyssinia... The missionary finds his own firewood in the forest and cook his own stew; he must cut the stones and mix the mortar which he will use in his building. We are butchers, cooks, masons, carpenters; a moment later, we are professors of grammar and of theology..."

Inculturation is a term used in Christian missiology which refers to the adaptation of the way of the Gospel is presented for the specific cultures being evangelised. The Gospel needs to be expressed in terms familiar to people so that Christianity does not come across as being foreign and irrelevant to their lives.

The missionaries do not bring Christ. The encounter is between the Good News and the people. To make the Gospel flesh and blood of a people can only be the task of the people themselves, and the "foreigner" has to be cautious, careful, and respectful.

Living There: Getting to know the land, culture, environment by living in a particular culture. Jesus was born and grew up in Israel and experienced the social justice issues of that time.

In the Temple, Asking Questions: We read Jesus in the Temple with the priests listening to them and asking questions (Luke 2:45-46, 49-50). Inculturation is about going to the heart of a particular culture, and there sitting down and asking questions of the people in order to listen to what God wants of the people.

Speaking With the Leaders and Prophets: By learning the local language to learn about the culture to begin the process of listening and questioning. It is important to read the writings, the story of the people. Jesus spoke with Moses and Elijah during the Transfiguration (Matthew 17:2), the great leaders and prophets of the Jewish people.

Walking With and Breaking Bread With the People: The journey to Emmaus shows Jesus first listening to the two disciples and then speaking to them about their history. As a result Jesus is invited to share the breaking of bread. The missionary is invited to sit down with the people; listen to their story that contains both pain and joy, bread together, share their stories and values, and recognise the loving presence of Jesus.

Something to think about ...

Reflect on the questions below ... share your thoughts with others ... or take some time to write down your thoughts and offer them to God.

1. How do I answer Jesus' call to go out to the whole world and spread the Good News?
2. What do I mean by "missionary"? What does it mean to be missionary today?
3. How do I understand the Church's invitation to the laity to be part of the mission of Jesus?
4. How do I give witness to my faith?
5. Do I support others who have the courage to witness to their faith?
6. In conversation do I impose my faith and beliefs on others of another faith?
7. Am I able to listen to and acknowledge the presence of God in other faiths?
8. Are there any significant missionaries in our times that have inspired me? In what way?
9. Where in my life am I called to be missionary?



Let us Pray ...

O God, you gave to Justin de Jacobis the grace to become one with the people of Ethiopia and Eritrea for the spread of the gospel.

May we become more zealous in serving our sisters and brothers and proclaim your love through the constant witness of our lives.

We ask this in Jesus' name.

Bibliography

St Justin de Jacobis CM Hero of Ethiopia D.F. Bourke CM, 1975
The First Justin de Jacobis Biagio Falco CM (www.famvin.org)



Web Resources

www.famvin.org
www.filles-de-la-charite.org
www.secretariadojmv.org