

Vinspiration

St Vincent de Paul

About Vincent ...

St Vincent de Paul was born on April 25, 1581, a mile or two from Pouy, the nearest village in the south west of France. Pouy is now named Vincent de Paul in his honour. The family lived off the land, and all family members helped to work the farm. Vincent was considered a good scholar, and was sent to the Franciscan boarding school in Dax. He then moved on to the University of Toulouse to study theology after which he was ordained to the priesthood in 1600.

During his priesthood he went from parish priest to chaplain to Philippe Emmanuel de Gondi (Captain of the galleys), and Spiritual Director to Madame de Gondi. During this time Vincent established the Congregation of the Mission in 1625 to help him give missions to the spiritually poor peasants. At Chatillon-les-Dombes Vincent established the Confraternity of Charity, a lay institution, Ladies of Charity (International Association of Charity). As the Ladies of Charity grew, Vincent came in contact with Louise de Marillac and together they founded the Company of the Daughters of Charity in 1633. They took on the work of ministering to the sick, poor and abandoned children. Vincent died on 27th September, 1660.

Feast Day
27th September



... DID YOU KNOW ...

The Anniversary of the foundation of the Congregation of the Mission is January 25.

The Congregation of the Mission

PURPOSE

- The Congregation of the Mission (or the Vincentians) were founded by St Vincent de Paul in 1625 to follow Jesus Christ, to evangelise the poor, and for formation of the clergy.
- They are a Society of Apostolic Life comprising priests and brothers.
- Vows taken are not religious as St Vincent wanted them to have the flexibility and mobility of an apostolic society. This is accomplished by:
 - making every effort to put on the spirit of Christ himself,
 - working at evangelising the poor, especially the more abandoned,
 - help the clergy and laity in their formation, so that they too may work to evangelise the poor.



SPIRIT

- Preference for the apostolate among the poor
- Attention to the realities of the present-day society
- Some sharing in the condition of the poor
- Genuine community spirit in all apostolic works
- Readiness to go to any part of the world
- Striving to live in a state of the continuous conversion (Rm 12:2)

... DID YOU KNOW ...

In some places of the world the Congregation of the Mission are also known as the Lazarists.

Take the time to learn more about the life of St Vincent de Paul.

What does Vincent's life and message mean for us in the world today?

The Patron Saint of Charity ... St Vincent de Paul -

The Church is for all God's children, rich and poor, peasants and scholars, the sophisticated and the simple. But obviously the greatest concern of the Church must be for those who need the most help - those made helpless by sickness, poverty, ignorance or cruelty. Vincent de Paul is a particularly appropriate patron for all Christians today, when hunger has become starvation, and the high living of the rich stands in more and more glaring contrast to the physical and moral degradation in which many of God's children are forced to live.

<http://www.americancatholic.org/Features/SaintOfDay/default.asp?id=1151>



How do we make a difference in our world today to better the future for all God's children? How will St Vincent guide us?

*Apostolate means
Mission*



Web Resources

www.vincenter.org
www.scretariadojmv.org
www.famvin.org
www.vincentians.org.au

Writings of St Vincent de Paul

To be consumed for God, to have no goods nor power except for the purpose of expanding them for God. That is what our Saviour did himself, he who was consumed for love of this Fath

(Documents, vol.13, p.179)

The Confraternity of Charity of the servants of the parochial sick poor... O Mon Dieu! What a lovely title and what a beautiful description!... Servants of the poor, that is just the same as to say Servants of Jesus Christ, for he regards as done to himself what is done to them, and they are his members. And what did he do whilst on earth to serve the poor?

(Documents, vol.1, p.355)

Love is inventive, even to infinity...

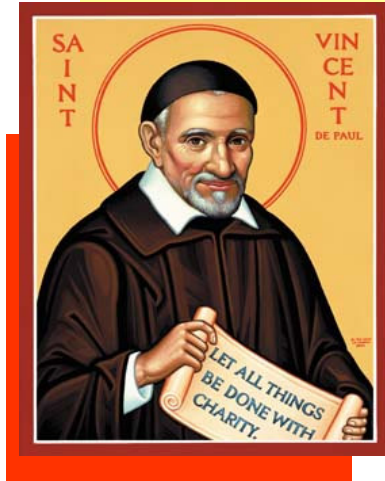
(Documents, vol.11, p146)

Do not worry yourself overmuch...

Grace has its moments.

Let us abandon ourselves to the providence of God and be very careful not to run ahead of it.

(Documents, vol.2, p.453)



Give me a man of prayer and he will be capable of anything. He may say with the apostle, "I can do all things in him who strengthens me."

(Documents, vol.11, p.83)

Aren't the poor the suffering members of our Lord? Aren't they our brothers and sisters?

If priests abandon them, who do you want to look after them?...

We should assist the poor in every way and do it by ourselves and by enlisting the help of others...

To do this is to preach the gospel by words and by work.

(Documents, vol.12, p.87)

I should not judge poor peasants, men or women, by their exterior nor by their apparent mental capacities.

All the more is this so since very frequently they scarcely seem to have the appearance of or intelligence of reasonable beings, so gross and offensive are they.

But turn the medal, and you will see by the light of faith that the

Son of God,

whose will it was to be poor, is represented to us by these people.

(Documents, vol.11, p.32)

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.

- o Do I allow myself to preach the Good News to the poor? Can I accept Vincent's invitation to undertake this mission?
- o What prejudices, possession, or relationships will I need to let go to spread the Good News?
- o How can I make God known to my co-workers through words and acts of charity?
- o How do I react when I meet a poor person? What feelings arise in me? Am I aware of God's presence in this encounter?
- o How are God's poor treated by the media? Am I influenced by these treatments? Is my view that of Christ's or of the world?
- o This week, have I loved God through actions of justice and love?
- o Have there been any situations that have moved me to feel deep compassion, but about which I have taken no action?
- o What about myself do I find most difficult to be "true" about?
- o Right now, what sets me on fire? Can I recognise if this enthusiasm comes from God or from the self? Does this energy fill me with love for God, or does it come from my own sense of self importance?
- o Who and what challenge my patient gentleness?
- o Who do I know that best integrates compassion and strength?

Bibliography

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Let us Pray ...

Lord Jesus, teach me by your example...
 Make me, through the vigour of my efforts, set the world around me on fire. I want to give myself to you, body and soul, heart and mind and spirit so that I may always do what gladdens you. In your mercy, grant me the grace to have you continue in me and through me you saving work.

(Documents, vol.11, pp.74-75)

Prepared by:

FAMVIN World Youth Day Office

PO Box 1114 Ashfield 1800 NSW Australia

Ph: +61 2 9716 4166

Email: wyd@cmaustralia.org Web: www.vincentians.org.au/wyd

VINCENTIAN
 FAMILY
 CELEBRATION

July 9th -13th 2008

