

September 27, 2024

Daily Reflections



Center for Spiritual Development

BLESSED ARE THE MERCIFUL

By Julie Mussché

A Quote

“Charity is greater than any rule. Moreover, all rules lead to charity.”

ST. VINCENT DE PAUL

Reflection

No doubt you may have encountered the Society of St. Vincent de Paul through some means or another. Perhaps through your parish, or maybe by donating to or shopping at one of the many thrift shops. Today is St. Vincent de Paul's Feast Day.

Born in southwestern France in 1581, Vincent grew up in a world that was decidedly classicist. His family were farmers and Vincent was selected at an early age to attend the seminary. During this period, being a member of the clergy was seen as a “rank up” from poverty and a subsistence way of life. Vincent faced considerable challenges finishing the seminary and, once

ordained, his life appeared to have been fairly unremarkable. One story has it that Vincent was sold into slavery by pirates on a trip to Marseille and was held captive for two years. Once freed, he is thought to have continued his studies and eventually served as a tutor in an aristocratic household.

It was during this time that Vincent encountered the poor who lived on the property where he tutored; the dying confession of one of the poor who lived on the estate opened Vincent's eyes to the needs of the destitute. From that transformational moment, he dedicated his life and mission to care for those in need. "In 1619 he became chaplain to the convicts in the galleys, and many were converted by his kind words and his efforts to relieve their physical suffering." (Mitch Finley, *The Patron Saints Handbook*, Kindle, 62) Vincent subsequently founded Vincentians and the Confraternities of Charity, and with St. Louise de Marillac, founded the Daughters of Charity. The Society of St. Vincent de Paul has been active since 1833, helping people and communities in need in a variety of corporal and spiritual ways. Amen to that!



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For Pondering

- Who are the saints that inspire you to contemplative action?
- What are the qualities, values, or virtues of these formative figures that you desire to live into?

For Prayer

Open my eyes

Open my eyes that I may see the deepest needs of men, women and children;

Move my hands that they may feed the hungry;

Touch my heart that it may bring warmth to the despairing;

Teach me the generosity that welcomes strangers;

Let me share my possessions with people in need;

Give me the care that strengthens the sick;

Help me share in the quest to set prisoners free;

In sharing our anxieties and our love,

Our poverty and our prosperity;

We partake of your divine presence.

Amen.

<https://vincentians.com/en/prayers-for-the-st-vincent-de-paul-society/>

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