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# Seasoning the Seasons™

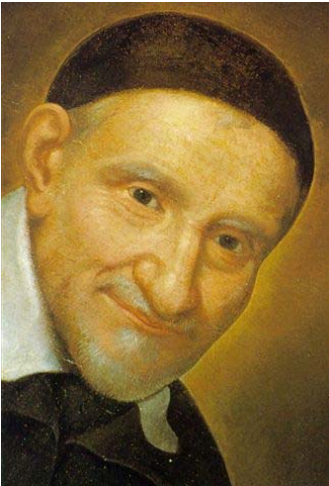
The Institute for Christian Formation, Inc.

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Feast of Saint Vincent de Paul

## Saint Vincent de Paul: September 27

Have you ever bought food for a canned food drive or donated clothing to a clothing drive? Helping others in this way is charity. Charity is a Christian virtue. We are called to love God, and to love others as we love ourselves. Saint Vincent de Paul is the Patron Saint of charities.



Vincent was born in France around the year 1580. He was one of six children born to his parents, who were peasant farmers. Vincent was intelligent, and his parents sacrificed much to see that he received a good education. He eventually studied to be a priest, and was ordained at age twenty.

Originally Vincent had great ambitions to be successful and lead an easy life, but he soon recognized the great difference between the rich and the ordinary, poor people in France. His heart was opened to help others. He saw the need for spiritual care for not only the wealthy and the townspeople, but also for the peasants and the villagers. Vincent became the pastor of a small country parish. He began to organize his parishioners to help provide for the needs of the poor.

Eventually, Vincent de Paul founded an order of priests, the Congregation of the Missions, to work with peasants in villages. Called the Vincentians, today there are over 4,000 members of this religious order. Vincent also assisted Saint Louise de Marillac in founding the Sisters of Charity, an order of women religious who served the poor in the world, rather than living a cloistered life.

Vincent de Paul constantly reminded the rich that they needed to share their resources with those less fortunate. During his life he founded homes for orphans, and

those who were handicapped, and the elderly. He also helped free galley slaves from North Africa, and assisted prisoners. Vincent himself, at one point in his life, had been captured by pirates and sold into slavery in North Africa, until he was eventually freed.

Vincent de Paul died in Paris, France on September 27th, 1660. He was canonized a Saint of the Church in 1737 by Pope Clement XII. We celebrate the Memorial of Saint Vincent de Paul each year on the anniversary of his death, September 27th.

Saint Vincent de Paul is the Patron Saint of charities, hospitals, prisoners, volunteers, Madagascar, the Saint Vincent de Paul Society, and the Diocese of Richmond, Virginia.

In 1833, Blessed Frederic Ozanam, who was a great admirer of the life and work of Saint Vincent de Paul, founded the charitable organization, the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul. Today there are Saint Vincent de Paul chapters all over the world, which exist to serve those in need of material assistance. Does your parish have a St. Vincent de Paul conference?

To help us remember the good work of Saint Vincent de Paul, and that we are all to treat our neighbors as ourselves, we continue to do good deeds and pray for our brothers and sisters who need our assistance. In this manner we always practice the Christian virtue of charity, and live as Jesus wants us to live. We know that whenever we do good to someone else, we are doing good to Jesus.

