

Saint Celebration: St Vincent de Paul

Word of the Week Mark 9: 30-37

They went on from there and passed through Galilee. And he would not let anyone know it for he was teaching his disciples saying to them, "The Son of Man will be delivered into the hands of men, and they will kill him; and when he is killed, after three days he will rise". But they did not understand him. And they came to Capernaum, and when he was in the house, he asked them. "What were you discussing on the way?" But they were silent, for on the way they had discussed with one another who was the greatest. And he sat down and called the Twelve and said to them, "**If anyone would be first, he must be last of all and servant of all**". He took a child and put him in the midst of them and said, "Whoever receives one such child in my name receives me, and whoever receives me, receives not me but him who sent me".

How did Vincent de Paul put the Word of the Week into action?

Vincent de Paul was born in 1581 in Pouy, France. He grew up in a poor farming family. Vincent de Paul was educated for the priesthood and was ordained a priest in 1600. Early in his ministry, he was captured by pirates and taken to Tunisia as a slave for two years. Eventually, he managed to escape and returned to France, but this experience shaped his deep empathy for the poor and the oppressed.

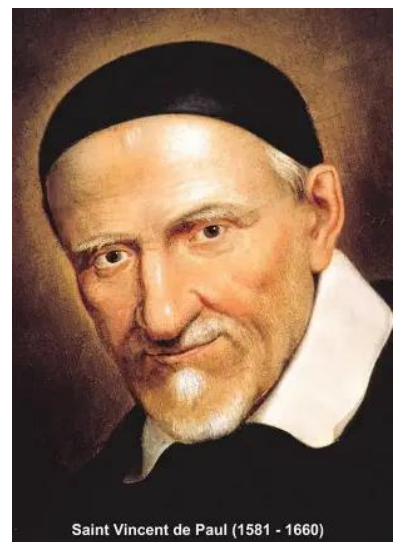
In the early years of his priesthood, Vincent was a popular preacher and held various roles in the Church. However, a key turning point in his life occurred around 1617 when he began to witness firsthand the extreme poverty and suffering of the peasants in rural France. As Vincent de Paul walked through the streets of Paris everywhere he looked he saw homeless people, he saw hungry people. He saw children and elderly men and women who were neglected. He saw sick people without health care. He saw refugees who had fled war. He saw people who were without hope. Vincent de Paul was not happy with what he saw because he knew it wasn't how the world was supposed to be, it wasn't how God had created the world to be.

He turned his sense of frustration and dissatisfaction into an urgent faith-filled desire to do as much good as he could, as well as he could, to reach out to improve the lives of the people who were suffering. His encounter with these hardships sparked a deep desire to dedicate his life to the service of the poor. He shows us how to put others first and ourselves last. He showed us how to be servants of all, and his work continues today throughout the world, in schools, in churches, on the local high street through the Saint Vincent de Paul society (SVP and Minnie Vinnies).

SVP club
Monday
Lunchtime
Room 24

Actions to complete this week:

- Volunteer your time to help a classmate, a teacher or a family member.
- Do a small act of service e.g. hold a door open for someone or do a chore at home without being asked.
- Donate some old clothes to a local charity.
- Don't be boastful – instead celebrate other people achievements.
- Greet a stranger with a smile.
- Start a kindness challenge in your school.
- Listen deeply to someone who feels invisible.



Saint Vincent de Paul (1581 - 1660)

Prayers for the week ahead.

Nobel St Vincent de Paul,

Beloved servant of the poor, may we follow your example and do good works amongst those whom society has abandoned and forgotten.

Inspire us to feed the hungry, provide comfort to the sick, clothe those who need clothes, and offer hope to all who need it.

Pray for us to our beloved God, that we may commit ourselves selflessly to doing the same charitable acts that you did all your life, and intercede with him that we may have the favour of his guidance, strength and love upon this important and meaningful work.

Amen

Dear Lord,

Give us the eyes of Saint Vincent— to see the hurting, the lonely, and the lost.

Give us his hands— to serve without hesitation.

And give us his heart— to love without limits.

May we be your light in the shadows, your voice in the silence, and your hope in the chaos.

Amen.

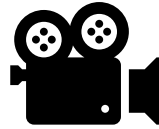
Dear Lord,

Help us to carry St Vincents mission into our own time.

In a world of inequality and division, make us builders of bridges and healers of wounds.

Let us challenge injustice not with anger, but with love. Let us serve not for recognition, but for transformation.

May our lives echo his legacy, and may our hearts never grow weary of doing good. Amen



Saint Vincent de Paul – The Apostle of Charity

"It is not sufficient to give soup and bread. This the rich can do. You are the servant of the poor, always smiling and good-humoured. They are your masters, and the more difficult they will be, the more unjust and insulting, the more love you must give them."

Reflection points

Be still and reflect on what you have been blessed with.

Are you listening to your friends, or are you self-absorbed?

Do you stand up for others or do you flee from difficult situations?

Do you pray for others or only for yourself?

Do you encourage others and try to keep them motivated?

Core Virtues and Teachings:

Charity and Compassion: Vincent's life was a testament to the power of selfless service. He saw Christ in everyone, especially the poor and the needy.

Humility: Despite his great influence, St. Vincent remained humble and always focused on the needs of others rather than his own.

Prayer and Devotion: Vincent was deeply prayerful and grounded in his faith. He encouraged others to dedicate time to prayer, recognizing that one could not serve others effectively without spiritual strength.

Commitment to Education: Vincent believed education was key to lifting people out of poverty and worked to ensure that both the clergy and the laity had proper formation to serve those in need.