

Vincent de Paul: Servant of Poor Persons

Call to Prayer Leader: "Give yourselves to God to live as true Ladies of Charity, which is to say, as Ladies who love God and the neighbor."

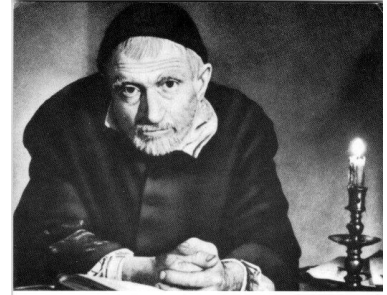
Correspondence, Conferences Vincent de Paul Coste, Vol.13b, #194, Perseverance in Good Works, p. 420

Leader: O God, come to our assistance

ALL: O Lord, make haste to help us.

Leader: Glory be to the Father and to
the Son and to the Holy Spirit,

ALL: As it was in the beginning, is now and
ever shall be world without end. Amen.



Hymn "Song of St. Vincent" Jeff Paterson, Niagara University *(Sing or recite, please.)*

Refrain: Let us love God, not with words alone,
with the strength of our arms and the sweat of our brow.
For love is creative and love is enduring,
even to the end of time, even to the end of time.

Verse 1: The poor have much to teach us. We have much to learn from them.
The poor are as our masters. We are as their servants. (refrain)

Verse 2: To bear the name of Christian, we must weep with those who mourn.
We suffer with the wounded. We extend our service. (refrain)

Verse 3: Our service must be gentle, patient and compassionate.
In this we bear God's mercy. Patience is demanded. (refrain)

Reading: Remarks of Vincent de Paul to the Ladies of Charity (1657)

(Rotate remarks, please. Each read by a different participant, with a slight pause between each.)



"O Ladies, how you should thank God for the attention He has had you give to meeting the needs of those poor sick persons; for corporal assistance to them has produced grace ..." (p. 427)

"God be praised, Ladies, for granting you the grace of clothing Our Lord in His poor members, most of whom had nothing but rags to cover them. (p. 428)

"... your Company is a work of God and not a human work. I have said this before; human persons would be unable to achieve it, so God Himself became involved in it." (p. 431)

"God never calls anyone to do some task unless He sees in her the appropriate qualities to carry it out, or which He plans to give her. Therefore, it is He, by His grace, who has called and united you." (p. 431)

"Ladies, loving those who are poor is to love [Our Lord] ...; serving poor persons well is to serve Him well; and imitating Him is to honor Him ..." (p. 434)

Leader: "...what good reason we have to be spurred on to continue these good works and to say right now in the depths of our hearts,

ALL: 'Yes, I give myself to God to take care of those who are poor and to maintain the works of charity on their behalf. I will help, love, and respect them, and, after the example of Our Lord, I will love those who console them and show respect to those who visit them and bring them relief.'" (p. 434)

Coste, Vol.13b, #198, Report on the State of the Works, pp. 426 – 34, July 11, 1657

Personal Reflection and Sharing

How is St. Vincent inviting me to be of service to others today?

How does my service as a Lady of Charity enrich my life?

Response ALL: **When we have done all that we were commanded, let us say, "We are unworthy servants; we have only done what was our duty."** Lk. 17:10 (ESV)

Prayers of Thanks Leader: We lift our voices in gratitude to God as we pray:

Response ALL: Loving God, we praise and thank you.

Leader: For all who give you a face by spreading your love in the world ...
For all who give you hands by giving themselves in service to others ...
For all who give you a mouth by defending those who are oppressed ...
For all who give you eyes by seeing your presence in their neighbor ...
For all who give you a heart by being available to people living in poverty ...
For all who reveal you by reflecting your beauty in their lives ...

(Please, add your own prayers of gratitude and praise.)

ALL: Strengthen and enlighten us, O God, to make you present in our world.

Our Father *(All pray in unison, please.)*

Prayer Leader: "... Ladies, let's thank God for this meeting. Let's ask Him to accept the new offering we're going to make Him ..., by giving ourselves to His Divine Majesty with all our hearts to receive from His infinite goodness the spirit of charity. Let's also ask Him to grant us the grace of corresponding in this spirit to the plans He has for each of us in particular and for the Company in general, and to inspire everywhere this spirit of fervor for the charity of Jesus Christ, in order to merit that He may shed it abundantly on us and, by helping us to produce the effects of it in this world, may make us eternally pleasing to God His Father in the next. **ALL: Amen.**"

Coste, Vol.13b, #198, Report on the State of the Works, pp. 440, July 11, 1657

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Prayer Texts

Luke 4: 16-21 The Spirit of the Lord is upon me ...

Luke 7: 36-50 ... because of her great love.

John 13: 1-17 What I just did was to give you an example ...

I Corinthians 1: 16-31 God singled out the weak, ...
chose the world's lowborn ...