



September 2020 – AIC Training

Texts of the videos produced for the Feast of Saint Vincent de Paul

Simplicity ***Sr. Marge Clifford, DC***

So let's talk about St Vincent de Paul and how he lived the virtue of simplicity. But what's a virtue? If we look it up, it's called a behavior, a way of living, how we want to act. And so what's simplicity? It is defined as being direct, uncomplicated, simple – part of its own word – and straightforward most of all. And this we know, from reading some authors, was St Vincent's favorite virtue.

St Vincent was born of a peasant family, farmers, in the south of France. So how did the son of peasant farmers become the bekown saint nowadays? First of all, you could tell in his own writings, and the conferences that were passed on to us, that he often didn't go around talking around the issue at hand, but was very straightforward. If he wanted to draw attention to the person he was talking to, in many of the conferences, at least handed down to us, he referred to the sister by the window, the brother taking notes, or the confrere over doing whatever he was doing. St Vincent didn't talk around, but he was directly involved with what it was to be done. His mission most of all was in serving the poor, and so he enabled, he engaged, he collaborated, he went directly to those he thought could assist him in this mission.

Most of all, we can see that in his writings, it reflects his life. He says to us about simplicity, "*Jesus the Lord expects us to have the simplicity of a dove. This means giving a straightforward opinion about things in the way that we honestly see them, without needless reservations. It also means doing things without any double-dealing or manipulation, our intention being focused solely on God*" (CR II, 4). So in serving, in being simple, in following St Vincent's simplicity, we too can serve the poor simply by going straight forward and directly, keeping in mind that we do always in the name of God. Amen.