

FACT FILE

Saint Vincent de Paul

Date of birth: 24 April 1581

Place of birth: Pouy, France

Died: 27 September 1660

Canonised a Saint: 16 June 1737

Feast Day: 27 September

“Love the poor. Honour them, my children, as you would honour Christ himself”

Vincent de Paul was born in the small southern French town of Pouy (later renamed Saint Vincent de Paul in his honour) on 24 April 1581 and ordained as a priest in 1600 at the age of 19.

As a young man he ministered to the wealthy and powerful. However an appointment as chaplain to a poor parish, and to galley prisoners, inspired him to a vocation of working with those most marginalised and powerless.

Vincent urged his followers to bring God’s justice and love to people who were unable to live a full human life: *“Deal with the most urgent needs. Organise charity so that it is more efficient...teach reading and writing, educate with the aim of giving each the means of self-support. Intervene with authorities to obtain reforms in structure... there is no charity without justice.”*

Vincent de Paul died in Paris on 27 September 1660 at the age of 79. He was canonised on 16 June 1737 and, in 1883, the Church designated him as the special patron of all charitable associations.

The Society was named after Saint Vincent de Paul and follows his teachings and compassion for people in need. Saint Vincent de Paul is the international patron of the Society.

