



September 2020 – AIC Training

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

Charity

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I am Suzanne Johnson, a Vice President of AIC.

In 1617, St. Vincent de Paul founded the confraternities of charity in Chatillon, France, by organizing laywomen in the parishes to *“honor Our Lord Jesus Christ and His Holy Mother and to assist the poor spiritually and corporally”*.

Vincent called us to serve those in need with effective and affective love. Affective in that our love comes from the heart. As we are loved by God, we share that love with those we serve. We cannot act with true charity unless we ourselves recognize God’s love for us and for each other. Effective in that we are called to be in solidarity with those in poverty – to work together in achieving the goals of the other. Sometimes these acts of Charity call us to go beyond filling the immediate needs and work for change in the society which keeps those persons in poverty: systemic change. St. Vincent de Paul worked continuously to change the systems which kept people in poverty, and he said, *“There is no act of Charity that is not accompanied by justice or that permits us to do more than we reasonably can.”*

Vincenian followers love affectively and effectively with compassion, respect, and devotion.

Vincenian followers love in solidarity with the poor – they are called to be with the poor.

In conclusion, I would like to say a prayer adapted from a Conference of St. Vincent de Paul, in 1659:

“O infinite Love, I pray that the final effect of Charity is to bear witness to love. May I show that I love others from the heart. May I take the lead with others, offering them my service and my desire to accommodate them. Having charity in my heart and words is not enough. My deeds must give witness to my love. When my love produces love in the heart of another, I know that my love is perfected. I know this kind of love wins everyone. I ask this grace in the name of Jesus, my brother. Amen.”