NATIONAL CATHOLIC REPORTER
Published on *National Catholic Reporter* (https://www.ncronline.org)

# Happy birthday, St. Vincent de Paul

Tom Gallagher | Apr. 24, 2014 NCR Today

Thursday was the anniversary of the birthday of St. Vincent de Paul [1], who was born April 24, 1581, in Pouy, France, to a poor peasant family. He was ordained a priest on Sept. 23, 1600. Vincent devoted himself entirely to the alleviation of the sufferings of the poor. He created the Confraternities of Charity, later known as the Ladies of Charity. In 1625, he founded the Congregation of the Mission (commonly known as the "Vincentians"), his community of priests and brothers. With St. Louise de Marillac, he co-founded the Daughters of Charity in 1633. He died Sept. 27, 1660, in Paris and was canonized in 1737. Pope Leo XIII declared him a patron saint of all works of charity. His feast day is Sept. 27.

It's impossible to calculate the amount of good Vincent accomplished during his lifetime and through these hundreds of years since his death.

Many parishes and universities have been named in his honor (e.g., DePaul University [2]). St. John's University [3] in New York City is run by the Vincentians.

The work of the Daughters of Charity in the U.S. alone is immense. The Daughters of Charity's health system is now a part of Ascension Health Alliance [4]. Last year, the system provided $1.3 billion in care of people who are poor and in community benefit programs last year and is the nation's largest Catholic and nonprofit health system. Ascension Health Alliance employs more than 150,000 associates serving in more than 1,500 locations in 23 states and the District of Columbia. In fact, today, Daughter of Charity Sr. Carol Keehan [5] is the highly respected president and chief executive officer of the Catholic Health Association.

The Society of St. Vincent de Paul [6] has done tremendous amount of good on behalf of the poor all over the world. It serves in over 144 countries on 5 continents with over 750,000 members. In the United States, the Society of St. Vincent de Paul has more than 60,000 members.

For NCR stories about the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, you can click on these links:

Aid for Hurricane Sandy victims [7]

The U.S. leadership of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul here [8], here [9] and here [10].

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**Links:**
[1] https://mission.depaul.edu/VincentianIdentity/Documents/Vincentbib.pdf
[2] https://mission.depaul.edu/AboutUs/Pages/MissionStatement.aspx
[3] http://www.stjohns.edu/about/our-mission
[4]

http://www.ascensionhealth.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=31&Itemid=144
[5] https://www.chausa.org/about/leadership/president's-page
[6] http://www.svdpusa.org/SVdP/MissionofSVdP.aspx
[7] http://ncronline.org/blogs/ncr-today/society-st-vincent-de-paul-accepting-donations-hurricane-sandy-victims
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