

Catholic Apostolate & St. Vincent

Different Calls, One Mission



St. Vincent was convinced that all are called to apostolate; that is why he speaks of the Catholic Apostolate and today the Church speaks of the “universal call to holiness.” This was the message he was inspired to preach. Vincent wanted each person to become a “savior of the People of God.” He encouraged everyone to work for the Salvation of Souls, the Destruction of Sin and the Infinite Glory of God.

The Apostolate of Priests

Vincent, saw the role of priest as that of another Christ. He felt that priests ought to be holy and learned, and have the same thirst for souls as Christ had. Vincent urged holiness of life as fundamental to everything else; the mannerisms, speech, appearance and behavior of a priest should be visible signs of the virtues. The “priest must preach the Word, not himself.”

Vincent recommended an “uninterrupted and habitual preparation and thanksgiving for the sacrifice of the Mass. He recommended the practice of a life of prayer. He recommended zeal for souls in the sacrament of Penance. He directed others along the path toward holiness.

Vincent desired priests to always be involved in searching for God and saving souls by making all of their activities meaningful.

The Apostolate of Religious

Religious Brothers and Sisters through their prayerful lives are able to increase vocations, convert sinners and spread the Faith. A “good word suggested at an opportune moment and trusting in God’s help could convert a person.”

The apostolate of Religious must be first of all an apostolate among their own. Vincent stated that the primary apostolate of religious is to the members of one’s own community. There are many occasions and varied opportunities for apostolic action within a religious community. There are the sick to be cared for; there are those burdened by work and oppressed by anxiety; there are those suffering spiritually, due to temptations or from any other reason; and there are those in need of formation and education. The apostolate of

charity, either spiritually or materially, can be implemented there very efficiently. The spirit of pleasing and aiding all will help you to be the compassionate person Jesus desires you to be.

Vincent was also very clear that his Consecrated men and women were to be about the spiritual and corporal mercy, the human and spiritual needs of all.

The Apostolate of the Laity

According to Vincent, the apostolate is a universal obligation, binding all, something that the Second Vatican Council confirmed. The laity in performance of his apostolate should be activated in their services by interior motives, avoiding personal gain or seeking satisfaction of their own ambitions. Their daily good example, actions, material help and especially their prayers can become powerful means of spreading the Faith and saving one's neighbor.

All, young and old, healthy or sick, prisoners or free, can somehow do some apostolic work. And all are rewarded according to the intensity of their zeal, rather than the activity pursued. Any human activity engendered by the right apostolic intention, can become a means by which the salvation of men is achieved and a growth in holiness is attained.

Pallotti and His Zeal for Souls

Vincent wrote:

“Let us save souls made in the image of God, purchased by the most precious blood of Jesus and destined one day to be partakers of heaven.”

