

Friday 27 September 2024

St Vincent de Paul



Vincent de Paul was a French Catholic priest who dedicated himself to serving the poor. He was also renowned for his compassion, humility, and generosity.

In 1622 Vincent was appointed a chaplain to imprisoned galley slaves. After some time, he persuaded his order to train priests who would devote themselves to the poor in the smaller towns and villages in France. He was a pioneer in clerical training and establishing seminaries.

He died on this day in 1660 and was canonised in 1737.

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Bible readings © the publishers of the NRSV translation.

Prayers of intercession © The Vincent de Paul Society.

The liturgy assumes the service is Eucharistic.

The prayers of consecration appear at the end.

All the hymns are hosted on YouTube. Please click on the links to hear them.

To see service transcripts from previous weeks, please visit the page,

<http://www.medlockhead.co.uk/resources/index.htm>

Introduction and welcome

HYMN 1 Colours of day

(please click on this link to hear the hymn)

The Welcome

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit

All Amen.

The Lord be with you

All And also with you.

The Preparation

**All Almighty God,
to whom all hearts are open,
all desires known,
and from whom no secrets are hidden:
cleanse the thoughts of our hearts
by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit,
that we may perfectly love you,
and worthily magnify your holy name;
through Christ our Lord.
Amen.**

Our Lord Jesus Christ said:

The first commandment is this:

‘Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is the only Lord.

You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart,
with all your soul, with all your mind,
and with all your strength.’

And the second is this: ‘Love your neighbour as yourself.’

There is no other commandment greater than these.

On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

All Amen. Lord, have mercy.

Christ calls us to share the heavenly banquet of his love with all the saints in earth and heaven. Therefore, knowing our unworthiness and sin, let us confess our sins in penitence and faith, firmly resolved to keep God’s commandments and to live in love and peace with all.

All Almighty God, our heavenly Father,
we have sinned against you
and against our neighbour
in thought and word and deed,
through negligence, through weakness,
through our own deliberate fault.
We are truly sorry
and repent of all our sins.
For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ,
who died for us,
forgive us all that is past
and grant that we may serve you in newness of life
to the glory of your name.
Amen.

Almighty God,
who forgives all who truly repent, have mercy upon you,
pardon and deliver you from all your sins,
confirm and strengthen you in all goodness,
and keep you in life eternal;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All Amen.

The Gloria

All Glory to God in the highest,
and peace to his people on earth.
Lord God, heavenly King,
almighty God and Father,
we worship you, we give you thanks,
we praise you for your glory.
Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,
Lord God, Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world:
have mercy on us;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father:
receive our prayer.

**For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father.
Amen.**

The Collect for St Vincent de Paul

O God,
who for the relief of the poor
and the formation of the clergy
endowed the Priest Vincent de Paul with apostolic virtues:
grant, we pray, that, afire with that same spirit,
we may love what he loved and put into practice what he taught.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.

All Amen.

First reading

A reading from the Book of Psalms

All Blessed the man who fears the Lord.

Blessèd the man who fears the Lord,
who greatly delights in his commands.
His posterity shall be mighty upon the earth;
the upright generation shall be blessed.

All Blessed the man who fears the Lord.

Wealth and riches shall be in his house;
his generosity shall endure forever.
Light shines through the darkness for the upright;
he is gracious and merciful and just.

All Blessed the man who fears the Lord.

Well for the man who is gracious and lends,
who conducts his affairs with justice;
He shall never be moved;
the just one shall be in everlasting remembrance.

All Blessed the man who fears the Lord.

An evil report he shall not fear.
His heart is firm, trusting in the LORD.
His heart is steadfast;
he shall not fear till he looks down upon his foes.

All Blessed the man who fears the Lord.

Lavishly he gives to the poor,
his generosity shall endure forever,
his horn shall be exalted in glory.

All Blessed the man who fears the Lord. *Psalm 112:1bc-2,3-4,5-7,7-8,9*

This is the Word of the Lord

All Thanks be to God.

Second reading

A reading from the First Letter of St Paul to the Corinthians

Consider your own calling, brothers and sisters. Not many of you were wise by human standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. Rather, God chose the foolish of the world to shame the wise, and God chose the weak of the world to shame the strong, and God chose the lowly and despised of the world, those who count for nothing, to reduce to nothing those who are something, so that no human being might boast before God. It is due to him that you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God, as well as righteousness, sanctification, and redemption, so that, as it is written, Whoever boasts, should boast in the Lord.

1 Corinthians 1:26-31

This is the Word of the Lord

All Thanks be to God.

HYMN 2 Brother, sister, let me serve you ([click on this link to hear the hymn](#))

Gospel reading

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew

Jesus went around to all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the Gospel of the Kingdom, and curing every disease and illness. At the sight of the crowds, his heart was moved with pity for them because they were troubled and abandoned, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, 'The harvest is abundant but the labourers are few; so ask the master of the harvest to send out laborers for his harvest.'

Matthew 9:35-38

This is the Gospel of the Lord

All Thanks be to God.

Sermon

St Vincent de Paul was best known for his work with the poor and the mission statement of the Society that bears his name is: 'Motivated by the guiding principle of Christian charity, we seek to find those in need, to help them in a spirit of justice and to tackle poverty where we can'.

In today's Gospel, Jesus goes around the towns and villages and sees a huge amount of need. People come to him for healing and comfort and he sees crowds who are 'troubled and abandoned, like sheep without a shepherd'. His response is to preach, teach, heal, and comfort, and he calls his followers to do the same.

When we look at our world—or even at our own community here in Oldham—we see overwhelming need. Food banks and food pantries that can't keep up with the demand from those who can't afford to feed their families. Lack of affordable housing; and rental properties that are damp and falling to pieces. Unemployment, and jobs that don't pay a living wage. The return of diseases like TB and rickets that we haven't seen in the UK for decades. And people in power who are more interested in making the rich richer and in lining their own pockets than in helping those in need.

How can we possibly meet these needs? We are just a small church. The harvest is indeed abundant, but the labourers are so very few.

First of all, we have to remember that we are not responsible for saving the world. Jesus has already done that. Our job is to follow him to the best of our ability, asking him for strength to keep going. Each of us has something to contribute, however small it may seem to us. Huge tasks get done when lots of people get together.

Watching the Queen's funeral last week, we saw a massive state occasion, choreographed to the last detail, with every item and person in the right place at the right time. What we did not see was the veritable army of cleaners, security staff, administrators, caretakers, drivers, caterers, dressmakers, rubbish collectors you name it, who made it happen. Somebody cleaned the toilets for all those people, somebody collected their litter, somebody washed the cups and saucers.

So our role in addressing the huge needs might be a very small one, but if we don't do it, there will be a gap where we should be.

What is your gift? Teaching? Praying? Encouraging? Cooking? Cleaning? Simply being there in case you're needed, knowing that most of the time, you won't be, but if you don't stay there, you won't be in the right place when you actually are needed?

Every one of Jesus' followers has a role. If we want the sheep to find their Shepherd, if we want to get that harvest in, we need to make sure we know what our role is, and we need to make sure we fill it.

Secondly, we need to remember that, like the *Society of St Vincent de Paul*, we are working in a spirit of justice.

Our society is largely built on the idea that the rich should feel the pangs of conscience and give charity to the poor. Jesus is asking for something more radical than that. He is asking, not for charity from rich and noble benefactors giving to poor, needy people out of the goodness of their hearts, but for a just society, where everyone has what they need. Nobody has too much, and nobody has too little.

If we want to build God's Kingdom, we have to model a way of life that sees the redistribution of wealth as a matter of justice, not one of choice. We do not exercise charity because we want to feel good about ourselves, we do it because it is God's command. If we are hugely richer than our neighbours, we are holding onto riches that are not ours by right. If we love God, we have to love our neighbour, and that means putting our money where our mouth is.

If we want those sheep to find their Shepherd; if we want that harvest to come in, we have to live as members of a Kingdom that defies the values of this world.

Are we prepared to do that today?

The Creed

Do you believe and trust in God the Father,
the source of all being and life,
the one for whom we exist?

All We believe and trust in him.

Do you believe and trust in God the Son,
who took our human nature,
died for us and rose again?

All We believe and trust in him.

Do you believe and trust in God the Holy Spirit,
who gives life to the people of God
and makes Christ known in the world?

All We believe and trust in him.

This is the faith of the Church.

All This is our faith.

**We believe and trust in one God,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.**

Prayers of intercession

May there be peace within.

May you trust God that you are exactly where you are meant to be,

May you not forget the great possibilities born of faith,

especially the vocation of being a member of the St. Vincent de Paul Society.

May you use those gifts that you have received, and passion on the
love that has been given to you...

We ask this prayer in the name of Jesus.

All Amen

Lord, teach us to be generous;

To give without counting the cost;

To return good for evil;

To serve without expecting some reward;

To draw closer to those whom we find repulsive;

To do good to those who cannot reciprocate;

To love generously;

To work without being concerned about rest;

To be solely concerned about giving;

To give our whole self;

To give to those who need us,

Hoping to receive only You, Lord, as our reward.

All Amen

O God you are a God of justice,
mercy and compassion support us
your servants of the poor,
as we endeavour to bring your love and compassion
to people who are homeless and in need of your love.
We pray that we will see you, our all-loving God in each homeless
person we encounter and in our service for those in need.
May we do all in our power to support each person reach
their potential, so they experience the fullness of life.
We ask this prayer through Jesus Christ Our Lord.

All Amen

Open my eyes that I may see the deepest needs of men, women and children
Move my hands that they may feed the hungry;
Touch my heart that it may bring warmth to the despairing;
Teach me the generosity that welcomes strangers;
Let me share my possessions with people in need;
Give me the care that strengthens the sick;
Help me share in the quest to set prisoners free;
In sharing our anxieties and our love,
Our poverty and our prosperity;
We partake of your divine presence.

All Amen

All prayers by Vincent de Paul

Merciful Father,

**All accept these prayers
for the sake of your Son,
our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.**

The peace

Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and his name shall be called the
Prince of Peace.

The peace of the Lord be always with you,

All And also with you.

HYMN 3 Behold the lamb

(please click on this link to hear the hymn)

The liturgy of the Communion Service appears below

The Dismissal

Christ the Son of God, born of Mary,
fill you with his grace to trust his promises and obey his will;
and the blessing of God the Almighty:
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
be with you now and remain with you always.

All Amen.

HYMN 4 Cast your eyes upon Jesus

[\(click on this link to hear the hymn\)](#)

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

All In the name of Christ. Amen.

The Liturgy of the Sacrament

Eucharistic Prayer (prayer E)

The Lord be with you

All and also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

All We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All It is right to give thanks and praise.

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,
always and everywhere to give you thanks,
holy Father, almighty and eternal God, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

And now we give thanks, most gracious God,
surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses
and glorified in the assembly of your saints.

The glorious company of apostles praise you.

The noble fellowship of prophets praise you.

The white-robed army of martyrs praise you.

We, your holy Church, acclaim you.

In communion with angels and archangels,
and with all who served you on earth and worship you now in heaven,
we raise our voice to proclaim your glory,
for ever praising you and saying:

**All Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

We praise and bless you, loving Father,
through Jesus Christ, our Lord;
and as we obey his command,
send your Holy Spirit,
that broken bread and wine outpoured
may be for us the body and blood of your dear Son.

On the night before he died he had supper with his friends
and, taking bread, he praised you.

He broke the bread, gave it to them and said:
Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you;
do this in remembrance of me.

When supper was ended he took the cup of wine.
Again he praised you, gave it to them and said:
Drink this, all of you;
this is my blood of the new covenant,
which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins.
Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.

So, Father, we remember all that Jesus did,
in him we plead with confidence his sacrifice made once for all upon the cross.

Bringing before you the bread of life and cup of salvation,
we proclaim his death and resurrection
until he comes in glory.

Great is the mystery of faith:

All Christ has died.
Christ is risen.
Christ will come again.

Lord of all life,
help us to work together for that day
when your kingdom comes
and justice and mercy will be seen in all the earth.

Look with favour on your people,
gather us in your loving arms
and bring us with Vincent de Paul and all the saints
to feast at your table in heaven.

Through Christ, and with Christ, and in Christ,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
all honour and glory are yours, O loving Father,
for ever and ever.

All Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

As our Saviour taught us, so we pray

**All Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and for ever.
Amen.**

Breaking of the Bread

We break this bread to share in the body of Christ.

**All Though we are many, we are one body,
because we all share in one bread.**

**All Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world,
have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world,
have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world,
grant us peace.**

Draw near with faith.

Receive the body of our Lord Jesus Christ
which he gave for you,
and his blood which he shed for you.

Eat and drink in remembrance that he died for you,
and feed on him in your hearts
by faith with thanksgiving.

All We do not presume
to come to this your table, merciful Lord,
trusting in our own righteousness,
but in your manifold and great mercies.
We are not worthy
so much as to gather up the crumbs under your table.
But you are the same Lord
whose nature is always to have mercy.
Grant us therefore, gracious Lord,
so to eat the flesh of your dear Son Jesus Christ
and to drink his blood,
that our sinful bodies may be made clean by his body
and our souls washed through his most precious blood,
and that we may evermore dwell in him,
and he in us.
Amen.

Communion is distributed.

Prayer after Communion

Merciful God,
who gave such grace to your servant Vincent de Paul
that he served you with singleness of heart
and loved you above all things:
help us, whose communion with you
has been revealed in this sacrament,
to forsake all that holds us back from following Christ,
and to grow into his likeness from glory to glory;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All Amen

All Almighty God,
we thank you for feeding us
with the body and blood of your Son Jesus Christ.
Through him we offer you our souls and bodies
to be a living sacrifice.
Send us out in the power of your Spirit
to live and work
to your praise and glory.
Amen.