



Society of St. Vincent de Paul, 420 W. Watkins Road, Phoenix AZ 85003

Media Advisory

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Sept. 20, 2006

“FEAST ON THE FEAST”

The Society of St. Vincent de Paul honors the Patron Saint of Charity

On Sept. 27, the Society of St. Vincent de Paul will celebrate its Patron Saint with a “Feast on the Feast” in honor of his work to serve the poor, the sick, the abandoned and anyone in need.

SVdP, which has served the homeless and working poor in Metropolitan Phoenix for 60 years, will serve a special meal in each of its five dining rooms throughout the Valley. Needy guests who attend the celebration Sept. 27 will receive a holy card of St. Vincent de Paul that communicates the dignity and worth of every human being.

Saint Vincent de Paul’s vow to serve the poor and the inner-peace he found after making his commitment to God is directly reflected in the mission of SVdP to help volunteers grow spiritually through person-to-person service to those in need.

St. Vincent de Paul is the Patron Saint of Charity, but he was not born devoted to serving others. During his early years in southern France he was preoccupied with social influence and financial rewards. The son of a peasant farmer in the late 16th century, St. Vincent enjoyed farm work, but the fields brought endless toil and few rewards. He sought the priesthood as a means to a comfortable lifestyle and was given his Holy Orders in 1600. Even after 15 years of prayer and study where he tried to come to terms with his desires, St. Vincent only found short-lived peace before he fell into a four-year depression. It was only after he made a vow to God to serve the poor that he finally seemed to awaken from his slump.

He rebuilt parishes, helped poor Catholics to once again find their faith, worked to educate the clergy and comforted the men who were forced into service on French battleships. He established the Daughters of Charity and assembled priests to form the Congregation of the Mission, bringing services to the poor throughout France and Europe.

In the 1600s, France was ravaged by both a religious war between Protestants and Catholics and later, a civil war. It was during this period that St. Vincent de Paul established shelters where he clothed and fed the homeless refugees driven from their homes in the country. He brought medicines to the ill and created orphanages for abandoned children.

Even in last moments of life, the words of St. Vincent de Paul embody the mission of the Society named under his patronage. When asked by France’s Queen Anne, what was left for him to do after he had fed the hungry, clothed the naked and comforted the afflicted, he simply replied: “More.”

St. Vincent de Paul died in 1660. His charitable works were recognized by the Catholic Church and he was canonized a Saint in 1737.

Today, SVdP mirrors the passion, the hope and the love of the Saint who lived more than one hundred years before its formation. In Metropolitan Phoenix alone, SVdP has five dining rooms, six thrift stores, a shelter for single men and women 55 years and older and special ministries that provide basic care and job assistance to the homeless and the working poor.

WHAT: “Feast on the Feast” in honor St. Vincent de Paul

WHEN: Sept. 27th

WHERE: **Phoenix**

Henry Unger Dining Room

119 South 9th Ave.

11 a.m. 12:45 p.m.

Family Evening Meal

420 West Watkins Road

5 – 6 p.m.

Sunnyslope

Chris Becker Memorial Dining Room

9227 North 10th Ave.

5 – 6 p.m.

Mesa

Wayne Unruh Memorial Dining Room

67 West Broadway

9:30 a.m. – 11:30 p.m.

El Mirage

Santa Teresita Dining Room

14016 N. Verbana Street

10 a.m. – 11:45 a.m.

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Throughout his life, St. Vincent de Paul was a friend to the poor, the homeless, the orphans, the incarcerated, the mentally-ill and to those in need. For nearly 200 years, SVdP has carried his passion forward into 130 countries. The Phoenix Diocesan Council serves those in need in central and northern Arizona.