

LITURGICAL PRAYERS IN HONOR OF SAINT VINCENT DE PAUL

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INTRODUCTION

The Latin expression *lex orandi lex credendi* [“The way of praying is the way of believing”] can be applied usefully to study the liturgical prayers developed in honor of Vincent de Paul. Of all the liturgical materials composed for him, including the many hymns of the Liturgy of the Hours, the collects stand out as the most indicative of the *lex credendi*. This study gathers the texts of these rich and varied prayers and analyzes their content to examine the Church’s ideals expressed in its prayers to honor Saint Vincent.

The earliest prayer (I) mentioning the servant of God Vincent de Paul was one approved by the general assembly of the Congregation of the Mission of 1668. The assembly offered it for the Congregation to pray to preserve this spirit. The official Roman collects¹ developed between the time of his beatification in 1729 (II) and his canonization in 1737 (III, IV), because the Holy See approved liturgical formularies for the new blessed and saint. With his increasing recognition, two other feasts, both with proper collects, were added to the Vincentian calendar. The first commemorated the solemn translation of his relics in 1830 to the new motherhouse (V). The second recalled the papal proclamation of Saint Vincent as heavenly patron of those works of charity that in any way stem from him (VI). One other set, approved in 1903 for use by the Congregation of the Mission, was never introduced (VII). Lastly, in the revised liturgical formularies called for after the Second Vatican Council and approved in 1973, a special collect appeared for the feast of the Conversion of Saint Paul. It marked the day when Saint Vincent preached the first sermon of the Mission in 1617 (VIII).

The other texts (IX), still in use, are based on earlier work, mainly the Vincentian propers of 1741. In addition to these prayers approved by the Holy See, there are six others composed for use in certain dioceses in France (Vb, X, XI, XIIa, XIIb, XIII). Four collects of a private nature have also been included. The first (XIV) was a series approved by the Congregation for use during the Tercentenary of the death of Saint Vincent. Four others (XV, XVI, XVII, XVIII) show how the ideals expressed in liturgical prayers were expressed even privately. A generic prayer taken from the ritual of blessings (XIX) has been added.² Lastly, a modern composition (XX) in use in the Anglican Church has been added, testifying to Vincent’s broad appeal. Another, of a completely different character, tells more about the revolutionary period and the influence of the Enlightenment than it does about Saint Vincent. It appears here only for the sake of curiosity and completeness (note 19).

The collects appear in sense lines for ease in reading; the translations, also in sense lines, are the work of the author where no English translation exists.

Following each text is a brief comment on the contents of the prayer. This is arranged according to what each prayer says about God, about Vincent de Paul, and about the results being prayed for.

Only the texts of those prayers are given that do not appear elsewhere in this compilation. The standard conclusions have been omitted from the prayers.

TEXTS

A. A Prayer for the Congregation of the Mission

I. A prayer for the founder's spirit (1668).³

*Excita, Domine, in Congregatione nostra Spiritum
cui famulus tuus Vincentius servivit,
ut eodem nos repleti
studeamus amare quod amavit,
et opere exercere quod docuit.*

O Lord, arouse in our Congregation the spirit
which animated your servant Vincent,
that, filled with the same spirit,
we may enthusiastically love what he loved,
and practice what he taught.

In this prayer, the early Congregation recognized that the spirit of zeal animated its Founder, the servant of God Vincent. The Congregation prays for the same affective (“love”) and effective (“practice”) charity.⁴

B. Official Roman Collects and Variants

II. Feast of Blessed Vincent de Paul, 19 July (CM Proper, 1729)⁵

Oratio

*Deus, qui ad evangelizandum pauperibus
derelictorum infirmorumque misérias sublevandas,
et Ecclesiastici Ordinis decorem promovendum,
Filii tui spiritum in apostolica Beati Vincentii a Paulo
charitate et humilitate suscitasti:
ejus nobis intercessione concede,
ut a peccatorum miseriis sublevati,
eadem tibi semper charitate et humilitate placeamus.*

O God, to evangelize the poor,
relieve the miseries of the abandoned and the sick,
and promote the dignity of the clerical state
you raised up the spirit of your Son
in the apostolic charity and humility of Blessed Vincent de Paul;
grant us by his intercession,
that removed from the miseries of sin,
we may ever please you by the same charity and humility.

This collect was the first one approved officially, by Pope Benedict XIII. It set the tone for those to come. The text shows that God had three purposes in Vincent's life: evangelizing the poor, promoting the well being of the abandoned and the sick, alluding to the work of the Daughters of Charity, and caring for the clergy. Blessed Vincent exercised the charity of the apostles and humility to accomplish these purposes. The Church prays that it might imitate Vincent's characteristic virtues.

Secreta

*Da nos, Deus, diligere decorem domus tuae
et Agnum inviolatum quotidie, in illa eo zelo ferventes offerre*

*quo Beatus Vincentius ad minora negligenda nulla,
et ad maiora suscipienda omnia Clericalis Ordinis officia exarsit ipse
et suis dociles praeceptis accendit.*

Grant us, O God, that we may love the beauty of your house,
and offer the spotless Lamb in it each day with the same zeal
with which Blessed Vincent himself,
neglecting none of the minor points and fulfilling all the major ones,
brought great fire to all the duties of the priesthood,
and inflamed his students with enthusiasm for his teaching.

The Church prays that its love for the liturgy and daily offering of the Eucharist may be as zealous as Vincent's. Influencing his students by his example, Vincent exercised care for the rubrics. The term "students" likely refers both to his confreres and the members of the Tuesday Conferences. Vincent is not known to have taught classes to seminarians.

Postcommunio

*Vilem sibi, fratribus utilem, tibi gratum, servum tuum Vincentium venerati
gratias tibi, Deus, Eucharistico egimus Sacrificio et convivio:
da, quaesumus,
ut ejus intercessione ac imitatione
referamus hinc dictorum factorumque Christi tui omnium memoriam semper
praesentem,
et opportunam in omnibus expressionem.*

Having venerated your servant Vincent,
contemptible in his own eyes, useful to his brethren, and pleasing to you,
we have thanked you, O God, in this Eucharistic Sacrifice and banquet;
grant us, we beg you, that by his intercession, and by our imitation of him,
we may thus ever keep in mind all the words and deeds of your Christ,
and bring them to a proper expression in all we do.

In this strange text, the Church prays that it might follow the words and deeds of Jesus, putting them into effect. In so doing, it would imitate Vincent, characterized as humble, useful (zealous), pious, and a model for Christian life.

III. Feast of Saint Vincent de Paul, (Roman Missal, 1741), 19 July⁶

Oratio

*Deus, qui ad evangelizandum pauperibus
et ecclesiastici ordinis decorem promovendum
beatum Vincentium apostolica virtute roborasti:
praesta, quaesumus;
ut, cujus pia merita veneramur,
virtutum quoque instruamur exemplis.*

O God, to evangelize the poor, and further the dignity of the clerical state
you strengthened blessed Vincent with the strength⁷ of the apostles;
grant us, we beg you,
that having venerated his holy merits,
we may also be strengthened by the examples of his virtues.

In this prayer, the purposes which God had in mind for Vincent are reduced to two from the three given in the prayer written after his beatification. They are: to evangelize the poor and care for the clergy. Vincent had apostolic qualities. The Church prays for strength to imitate his virtues.

IV. Feast of Saint Vincent de Paul (CM Proper, 1741), 19 July⁸

Oratio

*Deus, qui, ad salutem pauperum et cleri disciplinam,
novam in Ecclesia tua per beatum Vincentium familiam congregasti,
da, quaesumus;
ut eodem nos quoque spiritu ferventes,
et amemus quod amavit
et quod docuit operemur.*

O God, for the salvation of the poor, and the education of the clergy
you brought together a new family in your church by means of Blessed Vincent,
grant, we beg you,
that inflamed by the same spirit,
we, too, might love what he loved,
and practice what he taught.

[From *The Roman Missal*,⁹

O God, who for the relief of the poor
and the formation of the clergy
endowed the Priest Saint 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.]

This prayer was evidently based on the prayer for the founder's spirit (I). It says that God had two divine purposes: to save the poor, and teach the clergy through a new family in the Church (the Congregation of the Mission). Vincent, alight with God's spirit, was charitable (loving), and a teacher. The Church prays that it may experience both affective ("love") and effective ("practice") imitation.

Secreta¹⁰

*Deus, qui beato Vincentio divina quotidie celebranti
mysteria tribuisti quod tractabat imitari:
ejus nobis precibus indulge;
ut immaculatam hostiam offerentes,
ipsi quoque in holocaustum tibi acceptum transeamus.*
God, you granted Blessed Vincent,
as he was daily celebrating the divine mysteries,
the grace to imitate what he was doing;
grant us by his prayers that,
as we offer the immaculate victim,
we, too, may become a holocaust acceptable to you.

[From *The Roman Missal*:

O God, who enabled Saint Vincent
to imitate what he celebrated in the divine mysteries,
grant that by the power of this sacrifice
we, too, may be transformed into an oblation acceptable to you.]

Vincent celebrated a daily Eucharist, which he imitated in his sacrificial life. The Church prays that it may imitate his self-sacrifice.

Postcommunio¹¹

*Caelestibus, Domine, refecti sacramentis:
quaesumus;
ut ad evangelizantem pauperibus Filium tuum imitandum
beati Vincentii sicut exemplis provocemur,
ita et patrociniis adjuvemur.*

O Lord, as we have been refreshed by the heavenly sacraments,
we beg you,
that being moved by the examples of Blessed Vincent
to imitate your son, evangelizing the poor,
so we may be helped by his patronage.

[From *The Roman Missal*:

Renewed by this heavenly Sacrament, O Lord,
we implore
that, just as we are prompted by Saint Vincent's example
to imitate your Son in his preaching of the Gospel to the poor,
so, too, we may be sustained by his prayers.]

In a significant improvement over the previous version (II), Vincent is proclaimed as imitating Jesus, the evangelizer of the poor. The Church prays that it may experience help from Vincent's patronage in heaven.

Va. Feast of the Translation of the Relics of Saint Vincent (CM Proper, 1836)¹² **Oratio**

*Deus, qui beatum Vincentium Confessorem Tuum,
ut tam multis hominum miseriis subveniret,
admirabilis misericordiae munere decorasti:
concede propitius;
ut in Translationis ejus solemnibus
caritatem illam, quam ejus sacri cineres adhuc spirant,
felici aemulatione appetere,
ac de illius fructibus uberius participare mereamur.*
O God, you adorned Blessed Vincent, your Confessor,
with the gift of an admirable mercy
to come to the aid of the great miseries of so many;
graciously grant us,
that on the solemnity of his Translation,
we may desire to imitate happily that charity
which his sacred remains still breathe forth,
and may merit to share more fully in his fruits.

God granted mercy to the Confessor Vincent, whose effective mercy is still operative. The Church prays that, as it imitates his charity, it may attain heavenly rewards.

Secreta

*Oblata, quaesumus Domine,
in Translatione beati Vincentii Confessoris tui dona propitius respice:
ut spiritus dilectionis tuae quo ipse indesinenter exarsit,
ejus meritis et intercessione,
experiamur augmentum.*

Look down favorably, we beg you, O Lord,
on the gifts offered on the [feast of the] translation of Blessed Vincent, your
Confessor,
that we may experience, by his merits and intercession,
an increase of the spirit of your love, with which he burned continually.

Vincent the Confessor burned continually with divine love. The Church prays for an increase of divine charity.

Postcommunio

*Propitiare, Domine, famulis tuis:
et intercedente beato Vincentio Confessore tuo, concede;
ut perfectionis semitam, ab ipso tam suaviter propositam,
alacri semper gressu percurrere valeamus.*

Be merciful to your servants, O Lord,
and grant by the intercession of Blessed Vincent, your Confessor,
that we might be strengthened to run with ever firmer step
in the way of perfection, which he so gently set forth.

Vincent the Confessor exemplified a way of perfection. The Church prays for its own journey on the way to perfection.

Vb. Feast of the Translation of the Relics of Saint Vincent (Paris Proper)¹³

Oratio

*Deus, qui beatum sacerdotem Vincentium,
ut tam multis hominum miseriis subveniret, misericordiae visceribus implevisti;
excita in Translatione corporis eius quam adhuc spirant sacri cineres caritatem,
ipsiusque precibus eamdem in cordibus nostris benignus infunde.*

O God, who filled the priest Blessed Vincent
with great mercy to come to the aid of so many human needs,
grant on the [feast of the] translation of his body,
that charity which his sacred remains still breathe forth;
and graciously pour out the same into our hearts in answer to his prayers.

God granted Vincent, a priest, mercy to help others. His effective charity still breathes forth, and the Church prays for the same charity.

Secreta

Oblata munera in Translatione sancti Vincentii,

*quaesumus, Domine, propitius suscipe;
 eaque viscera caritatis quae beato sacerdoti tuo infundisti,
 fac nos perpeti eius suffragio persentire.*

O Lord, graciously accept, we pray, the gifts offered on the [feast of the]
 translation of Saint Vincent;
 may we always experience in answer to his prayers
 the charity with which you filled your blessed priest.

God endowed Vincent with great charity. The Church prays that it may experience today Vincent's great charity. The meaning is nearly the same as the official text of 1949 (Va).

Postcommunio

*Propitiare, Domine, populo tuo;
 et intercedente beato Vincentio sacerdote,
 perpetuae misericordiae afflictis omnibus impende subsidium*
 Be merciful to your people, O Lord,
 and by the intercession of the priest, Blessed Vincent,
 grant the reward of eternal mercy on all the afflicted.

The Church prays, through Vincent's intercession, that all the afflicted may enjoy eternal happiness as a recompense for their sufferings. The text differs slightly from the official collect by simplifying it.

VI. Patronage of Saint Vincent de Paul, 20 December (1903)¹⁴

Oratio

*Domine Jesu Christi, qui in corde beati Vincentii
 ad omnigenas hominum aerumnas levandas
 mirum caritatis ardorem accendere voluisti,
 concede, ipso intercedente,
 ut quicumque ejusdem patrocinio gloriamur,
 quotidie in tua et proximorum dilectione crescamus.*
 Lord Jesus Christ, you wished to enkindle a wonderful fire of charity
 in the heart of Blessed Vincent, to come to the aid of all sorts of human ills;
 grant through his intercession
 that all of us who glory in his patronage
 may grow daily in love for you and our neighbor.

This prayer is addressed to Jesus and not to God the Father—not a common style for Roman collects. Jesus granted the gift of charity to Vincent, who exercised it to alleviate human ills of all sorts. The Church prays for growth in affective and effective love.

Secreta

*Suscipe quam tibi offerimus Domine
 ad honorem beati Vincentii hostiam salutarem,
 immensae tuae in homines pignus dilectionis.*
 Lord, accept the saving victim we offer you in honor of Blessed Vincent,
 as a token of your great love for us.

This prayer is a generic collect.

Postcommunio

*Salutaribus repleti mysteriis fac nos, quaesumus Domine,
ita famuli tui Vincentii caritatem aemulari,
ut ad caelestem mereamur gloriam pervenire.*

Having been nourished by saving mysteries, we beg you, O Lord,
that by imitating the charity of your servant, Vincent,
we may merit the attainment of heaven's glory.

Vincent was charitable. The Church prays that by imitating his charity it may be rewarded with heaven.

VII. All Vincentian Saints (1906, 1908)¹⁵

Oratio

*Deus, cuius essentia charitas,
per intercessionem beati Vincentii, sanctorumque omnium,
qui eo duce pauperum saluti se devoventes,
ad Te pervenire meruerunt:
da nobis famulis tuis,
ita eorum sequi vestigia,
ut assequamur et praemia.*

O God, whose essence is charity,
by the intercession of blessed Vincent, and of all the saints
who, under his leadership, devoted themselves to the salvation of the poor
and merited to come to you,
grant to us your servants
that as we follow in their footsteps,
we may also attain their rewards.

Vincent exercised leadership in charity. The Church prays that it may imitate the charity of Vincent and his followers in the salvation of the poor, and attain heavenly rewards.

Secreta

*Maiestati tuae, Domine, Agnum immaculatum offerentes:
quaesumus,
ut corda nostra ignis ille charitatis accendat,
quo beatus Vincentius sanctique filii eius in salutem flagrabant animarum.*

As we offer to your majesty, O Lord, the spotless Lamb,
we beg,
that It might enkindle in our hearts the flame of charity
with which blessed Vincent and his holy sons burned for the salvation of souls.

Vincent and his followers were inflamed with charity. The Church prays that it may have the same charity.

Postcommunio

*Caelesti alimonia satiati,
da nobis quaesumus Domine,*

*supereminentem Christi scientiam appetere:
ut exemplo beati Vincentii sanctorumque filiorum eius,
nil magis scire cupiamus nisi Iesum Christum et hunc Crucifixum.*
As we are filled with heavenly food,
grant us, we beg, O Lord,
to long for the surpassing knowledge of Christ,
so that, after the example of blessed Vincent and of his holy sons,
we may desire nothing more than to know Jesus Christ and him crucified.

Vincent and his followers led Christ-centered lives. The Church prays, in words that echo the Pauline epistles and the Common Rules, that it may imitate their example.

VIII. Feast of the Conversion of Saint Paul, Anniversary of the Founding of the Congregation of the Mission, 25 January (CM Proper, 1973)¹⁶

Oratio

*Deus, humanae vocationis principium et corona,
qui beatum apostolum Paulum in sua conversione eligisti
ut nomen tuum portaret in mundum
et zelo beati Vincentii spiritalem familiam evangelizandis pauperibus
hodierna die providenti consilio suscitasti,
da nobis
vocatione qua nos vocasti in Ecclesia fideliter ambulare,
et, Apostoli Gentium labores aemulantes
Evangelium veritatis et pacis nuntiare fidenter.*
God, our Father, the beginning and the end of human vocation,
you chose Saint Paul the apostle at his conversion
to spread your name throughout the world.
On this day also you brought forth through the zeal of Saint Vincent
a spiritual family to preach the Gospel to the poor.
May we walk faithfully in the way of our vocation;
as we imitate the work of the Apostle of the Gentiles,
may we preach confidently the Gospel of truth and peace.

This prayer joins the two commemorations: of Paul the Apostle and the founding of the Congregation. The prayer bears little resemblance to that used in the Roman missal for the feast. The church acknowledges that God, the source of vocation, called Paul, Vincent, and his spiritual family. Vincent was zealous, and founded a family to preach the Gospel to the poor. The Church prays that it may imitate Paul faithfully in preaching the Gospel.

IX. Feast of Saint Vincent de Paul, 27 September (CM Proper, 1973)

Oratio

*Deus, qui ad salutem pauperum et cleri institutionem
Beatam Vincentium presbyterum
apostolicis virtutibus imbuisti,
praesta, quaesumus,
et, qui eius sectamur documenta vitae,
ad Filii tui missionem perpetuandam in mundo
iugi caritate urgeamur.*

Good and gracious God,
 you filled the holy priest Vincent de Paul
 with apostolic courage
 for the salvation of the poor
 and the formation of the clergy.
 May we who follow his example
 be compelled by his constant charity
 to continue the mission of your Son in the world.

This collect, currently in use, continues the form of emphasizing the two divine purposes of Vincent: the salvation of the poor and the formation of the clergy. It nicely connects them with the continuing mission of Jesus, a reference to the Congregation of the Mission. This collect was composed before the present Constitutions of 1984, which focused exclusively on Jesus, the evangelizer of the poor.

Secreta (Super oblata)

*Deus, qui beato Vincentio divina celebranti mysteria
 tribuisti quod tractabit imitari,
 concede, ut, huius sacrificii virtute,
 ipse quoque in oblationem tibi acceptabilem transeamus.*
 Loving God,
 you helped the holy priest Vincent
 to imitate what he celebrated in these mysteries.
 By the power of this sacrifice
 may we become an acceptable gift to you as well.

This collect was reworked from the text of the Vincentian proper of 1741 (IV), which emphasized the saint's devotion to the Eucharist.

Postcommunio

*Caelestibus, Domine, refecti sacramentis,
 supplices deprecamur,
 ut ad imitandum Filium tuum pauperibus evangelizantem
 sicut exemplis beati Vincentii provocamur,
 ita et patrociniis adiuvemur.*
 Loving God,
 hear the prayers of those you have renewed
 with your heavenly sacraments.
 May the example and prayers of Saint Vincent
 help us to imitate your Son
 in preaching the good news to the poor.

Like the Prayer over the Gifts above, this collect is a reworking of the Vincentian proper of 1741 (IV). In this case, it continues the tradition, now fixed in the Constitutions of 1984, of Jesus the evangelizer of the poor.

C. Diocesan Propers

X. Feast of Saint Vincent de Paul, (Lyons) 19 July¹⁷

Oratio

*Deus, qui ad evangelizandum pauperibus
infirmorum misérias sublevandas,
et Ecclesiastici Ordinis decorem promovendum,
Beatum Vincentium à Paulo suscitasti:
concede,
ut eadem semper tibi caritate et humilitate placeamus.*
O God, to evangelize the poor
alleviate the miseries of the sick,
and promote the dignity of the clerical state
you raised up Blessed Vincent de Paul,
grant,
that we may ever please you by the same charity and humility.

This prayer reworks and simplifies the CM proper of 1729. It also uses his family name, contrary to Roman usage.

Secreta

*Nostrae servitutis hostiam, quaesumus, Domine, placitam tibi esse concede,
qui durae captivitatis sacrificio beati Vincentii à Paulo sacerdotii primordia
consecrasti.*
Grant, we beg, O Lord, that the sacrifice of our service might be pleasing to you,
who consecrated the beginnings of the priesthood of Blessed Vincent de Paul
by the sacrifice of a harsh captivity.

God used Vincent's captivity to consecrate the beginnings of his priesthood. The Church prays that its service might be as acceptable as a sacrifice, like Vincent's. This understanding of the effect of his captivity is unique to this prayer.

Postcommunio

*Oblatis majestati tuae sacrificiis, quaesumus, Domine, plebs tibi devota
gratuletur,
quae per beati Vincentii à Paulo presbyteri ministerium
verbum vitae suscepit,
et providae ejus caritatis consolatione etiam num se sentit adjutam.*
We beg, O Lord,
that the people devoted to you may rejoice in the sacrifices offered to your majesty.
As they received the word of life from the ministry of the priest, Blessed Vincent de
Paul,
may they also rejoice in the consolation of his provident charity
when they feel the need of it.

Vincent exercised priesthood and provident charity. The Church prays that it may experience joy in offering the sacrifice of the mass and in Vincent's charitable help in time of need.

XI. Feast of Saint Vincent (Cahors), 19 July (1746)¹⁸**Oratio**

Domine Deus, qui ut Cleri renovares splendorem

*et meritis universis corporis et animae praeberes auxilia,
humilem et apostolicum sacerdotem beatum Vincentium a Paulo suscitasti,
ejus meritis, et intercessione concede
ut eadem tibi charitate humiliter servientes in terra
cum ipso post mortem exaltati regnemus.*

Lord God, to renew the splendor of the Clergy,
and, by your universal merits, to furnish help for body and soul,
you have raised up the humble and apostolic priest, Blessed Vincent de Paul.
By his merits and intercession, grant
that by humbly serving you on earth with this same charity,
we may, raised up after death, reign with him.

God had two divine purposes—the renewal of the clergy, and bodily and spiritual help for others. The priest Vincent was humble, apostolic, and charitable. The Church prays that it may imitate his charity and share his rewards.

XIIa. Feast of Saint Vincent (Paris, 1762?), 19 July¹⁹

Secreta

*Suscipe, quaesumus, Domine, propitius,
quas tibi offerimus hostias,
eoque domus tuae zelo nos accende
quo beati Vincentii sacerdotis tui cor inflammasti.*
O Lord, we beg you to graciously receive the gifts we offer you,
and to enkindle in us the same zeal for your house
with which you inflamed the heart of your priest, Saint Vincent.

The prayer emphasizes Vincent's zeal for the liturgy, a theme taken up in Secreta II. "Zeal for your house" is a citation from Ps 69:9.

Postcommunio

*Nobis, quaesumus, Domine, amoris tui sacramento refectis concede,
ut exemplo et intercessione beati Vincentii,
tibi indefessa caritate famulantes,
aeternam laborum nostrarum mercedem percipere mereamur.*
O Lord, we beg you to grant to us, now fed with the sacrament of your love,
that, through the example and the intercession of Saint Vincent,
and serving you with tireless charity,
we may deserve to receive the eternal reward of our works.

This prayer emphasizes Vincent's tireless charity, and the Church prays that it may imitate this.

XIIb. Feast of Saint Vincent (Paris, 1850)²⁰

Oratio

*Deus, qui beatum sacerdotem Vincentium misericordiae visceribus implevisti;
quaesumus
ut quem pauperum patrem tua gratia effecisti,
benignum pro nobis intercessorem jugiter esse largiaris.*
O God, who filled the blessed priest Vincent with a profound mercy,

we beg that,
as you made him the father of the poor by your grace,
you may likewise grant him to us as a kindly intercessor.

God granted mercy to the priest Vincent, who became father to the poor. The Church prays that it may find in him an intercessor.

XIII. Feast of Saint Vincent (Toulouse), 19 July (1774)²¹

Postcommunio

*Per haec mysteria, quaesumus, Domine,
eum in nobis accende caritatis ardorem,
quem sancto sacerdoti tuo Vincentio
pro salute animarum et pauperum levamine inspirati;
ut digne vocatione nostra ambulantes,
promissum bene operantibus mereamur praemium obtinere.*
O Lord, we pray that through these mysteries,
you would enkindle within us, the fire of charity
that burned in your holy priest Vincent,
and that we would be moved to [work for] the salvation of souls
and the relief of the poor;
in this way, walking worthily of our vocation,
we will deserve to obtain the reward promised to those who work for good.

The Church prays that it would be as charitable, both spiritually and corporally, as Vincent de Paul was.

D. Private Collects

XIV. Collects for the Tercentenary (1960)²²

Oratio

*Pater Omnipotens, cuius sapientia attingit a fine usque ad finem fortiter,
et disponit omnia suaviter:
eadem reple sapientia eos qui nostram curam agunt,
ut roborati spiritu consilii et fortitudinis
tute nos ducant in via arcta sed suavi
quam sequuntur electi.*
Almighty Father, whose wisdom reaches mightily from end to end,
and which sweetly disposes all things,
fill with that same wisdom those who have care of us,
and strengthened in the spirit of counsel and strength,
may they safely lead us along the narrow but sweet way followed by the elect.

The first of a series of prayers to the Trinity, for the superiors of the Congregation. The role of superiors is regarded as guiding their inferiors in strict observance.

Oratio

*Domine Iesu Christe, qui dixisti apostolis tuis:
“Euntes docete omnes gentes”:
da fratribus nostris in dissitas orbis partes profectis ut,*

*optabili suo munere digni, se ipsos sanctificantes,
ad exemplum sancti Patris nostri Vincentii,
evadant animarum venatores strenue.*

Lord Jesus Christ, who said to your apostles “Go and teach all nations,” grant to our brothers who have gone to distant parts of the world that, being worthy of their desirable responsibility, they may be sanctified, following the example of our Father Vincent, and become mighty hunters of souls.

The second prayer to the Trinity for the sanctification of missionaries in distant lands (computed from Europe apparently.)

Oratio

*Illuminator Spiritus, infunde nobis et omnibus fratribus
vocationis nostrae gratiam et amorem,
cum simplicitatis et humilitatis spiritu,
atque mansuetudinis et mortificationis virtute,
animarumque salutis studio;
et concede ut Vincentii filii et numero et meritis augeantur,
et quocumque eos miseris, ibi vigeat in clero disciplina,
et in populo fides morumque sanctitas. Amen.*

O light-giving Spirit, fill us and all our brethren with the grace and love of our vocation, with the spirit of simplicity and humility, the virtue of meekness and mortification, and zeal for the salvation of souls. And grant that the sons of Vincent may increase in number and merits, and wherever you send them, may there flourish in that place discipline among the clergy and in the people faith and holiness of life. Amen.

The third prayer to the Trinity, begging the Holy Spirit for an increase in the “five virtues” of the Congregation and good results from its traditional works of education of the clergy and evangelization. Even in 1959 there was no mention of the service of the poor among these works.

Oratio

*Gratiam tuam concede mihi, o Iesu,
ut sim ad instar sancti Patris nostri Vincentii Deo iugiter intentus,
cunctis affabilis, ac mihi semper constans:
simplex, rectus, humilis:
ab honoribus, divitiis ac deliciis semper abhorrens,
et cui nulla res placeat praeter quam in te, o Iesu.*

V./ *Sancte Vincenti, spiritu Christi vivens, ora pro nobis:*

R./ *Ut et nos eodem spiritu vivere valeamus.*

Oremus. Excita, Domine, in Congregatione nostra...

Grant me your grace, O Jesus, to be, like our holy father Vincent, ever devoted to God, cheerful to all, and constant in myself: simple, upright, humble, ever rejecting honors, riches and comforts, and taking pleasure in nothing but you, O Jesus.

V./ Saint Vincent, living in the spirit of Christ, pray for us:

R./ That we may be strengthened to live in the same spirit.
 Let us pray: O Lord, arouse in our Congregation ...

A prayer for the interior spirit of Saint Vincent, begun in the first person and concluded with a versicle and response in the third person. The Vincentian ideal is traced in a few words.

XV. Collect of unknown origin²³

Oratio

*Deus, qui ad animarum salutem, Beatum Vincentium Confessorem tuum,
 omnibus omnia factum esse voluisti,
 concede propitius,
 ut charitatis tuae dulcedine perfusi [=perfrui] ejus dirigentibus monitis,
 ac suffragantibus meritis,
 aeterna gaudia consequamur.²⁴*

God, you wished that your Confessor, Blessed Vincent,
 become all things to all for the salvation of souls,
 grant, we beg,
 that we may be filled with the sweetness of your charity, and
 by his admonitions which direct us, and his merits which intercede for us,
 we may attain eternal joys.

God granted gifts to the Confessor Vincent. He exercised and exercises universal care for souls as teacher and intercessor. The Church prays that it may be charitable, and attain charity's eternal rewards.

XVI. Collect of unknown origin²⁵

Oratio

*Deus humilium Celsitudo,
 qui Beatum Vincentium Confessorem tuum Sanctorum tuorum gloria sublimasti
 tribue, quaesumus,
 ut ejus meritis et intercessione
 promissa humilibus praemia feliciter consequamur.*

God, the height of the humble,
 you raised Blessed Vincent your Confessor to the glory of your saints;
 grant, we beg,
 that by his merits and intercession
 we may happily receive the rewards promised to the humble.

God exalted Vincent the Confessor, who because he was humble, is now exalted. The Church prays that it may imitate Vincent's humility and attain humility's eternal rewards.

XVII. Collect of unknown origin²⁶

Oratio

*Deus, qui Beatum Vincentium Confessorem tuum
 evangelicae praedicationis gratia sublimasti
 tribue, quaesumus,
 ejus nos semper et eruditione proficere
 et oratione defendi.*

God, you raised up Blessed Vincent, your Confessor,
by the grace of the preaching of the gospel;
grant, we pray,
that we may always be instructed by his teaching
and defended by his prayer.

God raised up Vincent the Confessor for gospel preaching. The Church prays that it may be instructed and defended by him, as the ignorant were during his life.

XVIII. Collect of unknown origin²⁷

Oratio

*Deus totius Consolationis, cuius miserationum non est numerus,
qui Beatum Vincentium in patrem pauperum elegisti,
concede, ut eius intercessione,
gratiam misericordiae tuae consequamur.*

God of all consolation, whose mercy is limitless,
you chose Blessed Vincent as a father of the poor;
grant by his intercession that we may attain the favor of your mercy.

God raised up Vincent as a father of the poor. The Church prays that it may be shown mercy through Vincent's intercession, as the poor received mercy from him during his earthly life.

E. From the Ritual of Blessings

XIX. Blessing of the Water of Saint Vincent for the Sick (1882)²⁸

Oratio

*Domine sancte, Pater omnipotens, aeterne Deus,
qui benedictionis tuae gratiam aegris infundendo corporibus,
facturam tuam multiplici pietate custodis,
ad invocationem sanctissimi nominis tui benignus assiste;
ut, intercedente beato Vincentio Confessore tuo,
famulos tuos ab aegritudine liberatos
et sanitate donatos dextera tua erigas,
virtute confirmes, potestate tuearis,
atque Ecclesiae tuae sanctae cum omni prosperitate restituas.*

Holy Lord, Father almighty, eternal God,
by pouring out the grace of your blessing on the bodies of the sick,
you preserve your creature by your manifold love;
help us in your mercy as we invoke your most holy name,
that, by the intercession of blessed Vincent your Confessor,
you would lift up by the power of your right hand
and return to health your servants freed from illness,
strengthen them by your power, shield them by your might,
and return them to your holy Church in all well-being.

This is a generic prayer having nothing specific to say about Saint Vincent, apart from mentioning his name.

F. Anglican, Common Worship (1992, 1996)²⁹

XX. Collect

Merciful God,
 whose servant Vincent de Paul,
 by his ministry of preaching and pastoral care,
 brought your love to the sick and the poor:
 give to all your people a heart of compassion
 that by word and action they may serve you in serving others in their need.

This composition weaves together two strands of Vincent's mission work ("preaching") and alludes to his founding of the Confraternities of Charity at the conclusion of the missions ("pastoral care"). The emphasis here is not, however, on his mission to the clergy nor the centrality of the imitation of Jesus.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

What the Church believes about Saint Vincent, *lex credendi*, shows a shift in emphasis from the earliest official collects to the present. The earliest collect (II) mentioned three divine purposes or goals, probably as these were known from the biographies of Blessed Vincent: evangelization of the poor, care for the abandoned and the sick, and care for the clergy. These three goals, however, did not follow the enumeration as given in the Common Rules: personal perfection, evangelizing the poor country people, education of the clergy. The collect published at the time of his canonization (III) reduced the number of goals to two: to evangelize the poor and care for the clergy. The proper Vincentian collect (IV) also presents two divine purposes, but changes the perspective slightly: the salvation of the poor and the education of the clergy, to be accomplished through a new family in the Church (the Congregation of the Mission). The same two goals were presented in one of the diocesan collects (XI), but with the focus reversed: renewal of the clergy comes first, and then bodily and spiritual help for others, presumably for the poor, since they needed this help. The most modern collects (VIII, IX) emphasize the single goal of preaching the Gospel to the poor, and have nothing to say about the clergy. This shift from three goals to one also parallels the development undertaken in the Congregation of the Mission. It shows, however, that the Congregation, in the Church, was not always so clear about its purposes.

Throughout the collects, Vincent de Paul is called servant, priest, and confessor, the traditional category. These prayers also emphasize his affective and effective charity. They point to his apostolic, external, qualities, that is, his virtues (humility, zeal, charity), and to his personal piety (such as love for the liturgy, daily celebration of the Eucharist, focus on the words and deeds of Jesus as the evangelizer of the poor.) Only one collect mentions his captivity.

For the Church at prayer, the result sought in these collects generally involves, in one way or another, imitation of Vincent's love for God and charity to the neighbor, and an experience of Vincent's intercession, leading to eternal happiness.

The relative conciseness and sobriety of the Roman collect preclude lengthy development in them of the attributes of God and the saints. Yet, as can be easily seen, some of the collects were lengthy. A few exhibited somewhat farfetched ideas (*secreta*, IX), or were even ugly in the original Latin (*postcommunio*, II). The two collects in most general use, in the Roman Missal and the proper for the Congregation of the Mission, are, however, models of the classic style. To be noted, as well, is the expression which anticipates the adoption of

the formula in chapter one of the 1984 Constitutions: “to follow Christ evangelizing the poor,” (*evangelizantem pauperibus Filium tuum*) in the postcommunion, IV.

It is hoped that this collection of prayers might lead to a deeper understanding of Vincent de Paul as the Church presents him in its prayer, and to a wider choice of prayers in his honor, at least for informal use. Perhaps, too, this material might spur others to develop creative energies in this same direction.

APPENDIX

Other collects and prayers

XXI. A prayer to be said at the 1737 canonization celebrations at St. Lazare, Paris³⁰

*O Dieu, qui pour faire annoncer l'évangile aux pauvres,
soulager les misere[s] de ceux qui sont abandonnez [et] au malades
avez fait eclater l'esprit de votre Fils
dans la charité et l'humilité du B. Vincent de Paul
accordez nous par son intercession
qu'étant délivrés des misères de nos pechés
nous vous soyons toujours agreable[s]
par la même charité et la même humilité
par N.S.J.C. Ainsi soit-il.*

O God, to announce the Gospel to the poor,
to remedy the miseries of the abandoned, and to the sick,
you caused the spirit of your Son to shine forth
in the charity and humility of Blessed Vincent de Paul.
Grant us through his intercession
that delivered from the miseries of our sins,
we may be ever pleasing to you
through the same charity and humility,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Charity and humility are the key virtues mentioned here in connection with the ministry of Vincent de Paul. The prayer is for the same virtues.

XXII. A prayer to St. Vincent³¹

*Grand Saint, nous nous mettons sous votre auguste protection,
et vous prions d'intercéder pour nous auprès de Dieu tout-puissant,
afin qu'il écoute favorablement nos humbles prières, et
qu'en considération de vos mérites,
il nous accorde un jour la grâce de prendre place à vos côtés
dans le royaume des cieux. Ainsi soit-il.*

Great Saint, we place ourselves under your august protection,
and we beg you to intercede for us before almighty God,
to hear favorably our humble prayers,
and, in consideration of your merits,
to grant us one day the grace of taking our place at your side
in the kingdom of heaven. Amen.

The prayer focuses on the saint's intercessory powers.

XXIII. A prayer from the Society of St. Vincent de Paul³²

*Clementissime Jesu,
qui Beatum Vincentium flagrantissimae charitatis tuae apostolum
in Ecclesia suscitasti,
effunde super famulos tuos
eumdem charitatis ardorem,
ut amore tuo libentissime in pauperes impendant sua,
et seipsas superimpendant,
qui cum Deo ...*

Most merciful Jesus,
You raised up in your Church Blessed Vincent,
the apostle of the most ardent charity.
Pour out upon your servants the same fire of charity,
that in your love they may devote their goods freely for the poor,
and give themselves wholeheartedly.
You live and reign with God ...

Vincent de Paul, called here an apostle, is a model of charity, the gift of one's goods as well as of oneself.

XXIV. Prayer to the Patron of Works of Charity³³

*O gloriose Sancte Vincenti, omnium caritatis societatum Patrone,
omnium qui miseri sunt Pater,
qui nulli unquam ad te venientium opem negasti,
vide quot et quantis malis laboremus et perpetuo nobis succurre praesidio.*

*Per tuas preces indulgeat Deus
auxilium pauperibus, infirmis levamen, afflictis solacium.
Per te, largiente Domino, spiritum caritatis habeant divites;
convertantur a viis malis peccatores;
ferveant studio animarum sacerdotes;
pacem Ecclesia, tranquillitatem populi, salutem omnes obtineant.*

*Ita Pater, pro tua pietate et potentia,
esto nobis largus et beneficus,
ut per angustias hujus vitae, manu tua ducti et roborati,
tecum in caelo congregemur,
ubi non erit amplius neque luctus, neque clamor, sed nec ullus dolor;
verum et gaudium et laetitia et felicitas in perpetuum. Amen.*

O glorious Saint Vincent, heavenly patron of all charitable associations
and father of all who are in misery,
whilst thou wast on earth thou didst never cast out
any who came to thee;
ah, consider by what evils we are oppressed and come to our assistance!

Obtain from thy Lord help for the poor,

relief for the infirm, consolation for the afflicted, protection for the abandoned, a spirit of generosity for the rich, the grace of conversion for sinners, zeal for priests, peace for the Church, tranquility and order for all nations, and salvation for them all.

Yea, [Father,] let all men prove the effects of thy merciful intercessions, so that being helped by thee in the miseries of this life, we may be united to thee in the life to come, where there shall be no more grief, nor weeping, nor sorrow, but joy and gladness and everlasting happiness. Amen.

An individual prayer, in which the petitioner appeals to the saint's experience, asks for his intercession for various intentions, and hopes to join Vincent de Paul in heaven.

NOTES

¹ A “collect” is the short form of liturgical prayer characteristic of the Roman Rite. These prayers are addressed directly to God the Father or to Jesus Christ, and not to the saints. The term is also applied to the Prayer over the Gifts (or “secret,”) and the Prayer after Communion (or “postcommunion.”) Here, the names of the prayers are given in Latin: Oratio (Collect), Secreta (Prayer over the Gifts), Postcommunio (Prayer after Communion).

² A similar study might be done of the proper sequences and prefaces, as well as the numerous hymns prepared at various times for different parts of the Liturgy of the Hours. Vincentian litanies, although not officially liturgical, also offer avenues to explore.

³ *Recueil des principales circulaires des supérieurs généraux* . . . 3 vols. (Paris 1877-79), I, p. 96. This and other prayers were also offered for use during the tercentenary celebrations of the saint’s death. (“Aliquot preces quae per annum trecentenarium recitari possunt,” *Vincentiana* no. 22 [1959] 157-58.) Slightly different versions are found in *Devotio communis*, an unofficial compilation for which the compiler(s) used a certain liberty in drawing up new collects for devotional use: *Excita, quaesumus, in Congregatione nostra, et in cordibus nostris spiritum.* . . (p. 162); *Excita, quaesumus Domine in nobis spiritum charitatis quo Sanctum Vincentium Confessorem tuum replere dignatus es, et concede, ut cujus pia merita veneramur, per ejus ad te exempla gradiamur.* (p. 167) (*Devotio Communis Sacerdotum et Clericorum Congregationis Missionis pro majori commoditate in unum Collecta et Reimpressa* [Warsaw, 1826].)

⁴ This prayer was taken from the collect for the octave of the feast of Saint Lawrence, 17 August. *Excita, Domine, in Ecclesia tua Spiritum cui beatus Laurentius Levita servivit; ut,* etc.

⁵ *Office pour la feste du Bienheureux Vincent de Paul. A la messe et à vespres, selon l’usage du diocèse de Paris* (Paris, 1729). Benedict XIII later approved this oration for the office and mass. It was reprinted (in French translation) as the official commemorative oration for Vincent’s canonization, undoubtedly before the official oration after the canonization was approved by the Holy See. Various French dioceses adopted this prayer for their particular liturgies. For example: *Breviarium Suessionense* [Soissons] (1742, dated, erroneously?, 29 July); *Breviarium Tolosanum* [Toulouse] (1770; *Missale* 1774). The different liturgical celebrations in various French dioceses led to some lack of uniformity in the houses of the Congregation. For a general bibliographical listing, see “Essai de bibliographie des Offices de Saint Vincent de Paul (1729-1900),” *Annales de la Congrégation de la Mission* 102 (1937) 772-76. See also Pierre Coste, *The Life & Works of Saint Vincent de Paul*, trans. Joseph Leonard, 3 vols. (Westminster, Maryland: Newman Press, 1952), 3:462ff. The feast had been originally foreseen for 27 September but was transferred to 19 July.

⁶ *Missale Romanum*. French diocesan liturgies generally adopted this standard collect. For example, in chronological order: *Missale Bellovacense* [Belley] (1756), *Breviarium Claramontense* [Clermont] (1774), *Missale Parisiense* [Paris] (a proper mass, 1777), *Missale Aniciensis* [Annecy] (1783; breviary, 1837), *Breviarium Aeduense* [Autun] (1823/24), *Breviarium Auscitanum* [Auxerre] (1827), *Breviarium Versaliense* [Versailles] (1828), *Breviarium Bellovacense* [Belley] (1829), *Breviarium Lingonense* [Langres] 1830, *Breviarium Albiense* [Albi] (1830), *Breviarium Bisontinum* [Besançon] (1831), *Breviarium Atureense* [Aire] (1847), *Missale Olomucense* [Olomouc, in Czech Republic] (1852), and the diocese of Coutances-Avranches (1859). The text adopted in the *Breviarium Trecense* [Troyes] (in an undated supplement) changed *Beatum* [“blessed”] to *Sanctum* [“Saint”], the only text to do so, although the term *Beatus* often referred not to the canonical state of a person but to his or her blessedness in heaven, and hence it was another term for Saint. Even

though this formulary was proper to the Congregation of the Mission, some French dioceses adopted this collect for their own use; for example: Breviarium Andegavense [Angers] (1737), Missale Carnotense [Chartres] (1782), Missale Turonense [Tours] (1784). The secret (prayer over the gifts) and postcommunion were taken from the Mass *pro confessore non pontifice*.

⁷Or: virtue.

⁸*Officium S. Vincentii a Paulo, Congregationis Missionis fundatoris* (Paris 1741; Urbino, 1742, etc.); on 10 April 1741 Benedict XIV approved its use. Jean Richon, assistant of the Congregation, had probably prepared it. Although proper to the Congregation of the Mission, some French dioceses adopted this collect for their own use (such as Poitou, 1856, Saint-Flour, 1858). This same collect was also used for a time on 27 September for the feast of the “Depositio S. Vincentii a Paulo” [the Death of Saint Vincent de Paul], approved 15 June 1822. (See *Missae Propriae Congregationis Missionis et Societatis Puellarum a Caritate* [Tours, 1949; Vatican City, 1961].)

⁹*The Roman Missal*, 2011.

¹⁰The Roman Missal adopted this prayer over the gifts after the Second Vatican Council for general usage.

¹¹The Roman Missal adopted this postcommunion prayer after Vatican II for general usage. What is perhaps an earlier form appears in *Devotio Communis: In tua miseratione confisi suppliciter te deprecamur Domine, ut ad. . . Vincentii Patris nostri, sicut. . . adjuvemur* (p. 152). The usage of Lyons kept the expression “beati Vincentii Patris nostri”.

¹²*Missae Propriae Congregationis Missionis* (Tours, 1949). This feast, celebrated on second Sunday after Easter, received papal approval 12 March 1836. On 15 December 1911 the date of celebration was changed to 26 April.

¹³This proper is undated; *Office de Saint Vincent de Paul* (Tours, n.d.)

¹⁴*Missae Propriae Congregationis Missionis* (Tours, 1949). This formulary was transferred to 27 September in the edition of the proper masses published in 1961. The notice of the founder’s being named “special patron before God of all societies of charity existing in the whole Catholic world, and which in any way stem from him” by Leo XIII in 1885 was added to the Martyrology and Breviary in 1894. The texts for the feast were approved by Pius X, 7 September 1903.

¹⁵“The Commemoration of Saint Vincent de Paul and all His Holy Disciples and Daughters Whose Names Are Written in Heaven”, “Sacra Rituum Congregatio. . . Congregationis Missionis Concessionis et Approbationis Officii et Missae. . .” (Rome, n.d., but 1906); a second approval is dated 1908. This was intended as an All Saints Day for Vincentians and Daughters of Charity, as some other congregations had done for their members. It was to be celebrated on the Sunday within the octave of All Saints Day. Probably because of work on the new rubrics issued for the Roman Breviary under Pius X, (“Divino Afflatu,” 1 November 1911), the feast was never formally inaugurated, nor was it noted in the deliberations of the general council nor published officially in *Annales de la Congrégation de la Mission*.

¹⁶*Missae Propriae Congregationis Missionis et Societatis Puellarum a Caritate* (Rome, 1973).

¹⁷Missale Lugdunense [Lyons], 1771; in the style of Lyons, the feast was celebrated on 26 September, the closest date available to his death. These collects continued in use; as can be seen in *Dévotion à S. Vincent de Paul, Dans l’Église Métropolitaine de Lyon, où repose son Coeur; Avec des Méditations pour une Neuvaine en son honneur* (Lyons: 1807.) A note inside the cover of the copy in the archives of the Mission, Paris, says that this volume was composed for the reception of the heart of Saint Vincent in Lyons. The collects in the Missale

Lugdunense, clearly based on previously written materials, were prepared locally for the proper usage of Lyons. The Missale Vapincense [Gap] (19th century) adopted this same text, but left out “à Paulo.”

¹⁸Breviarium Cadurcense, 1746.

¹⁹ Taken from Missale Parisiense, 1762, but from an undated supplement. The Oratio is III. This missal offered only a set of commons “In Natali Presbyteri,” (“On the birthday of a priest,” i.e., the anniversary of his death, or birth into heaven.)

²⁰ *Offices Propres de l’église Paroissiale de Saint-Eustace à l’usage des fidèles, Avec renvoi au Paroissien de Paris pour l’office commun* (Paris, 1850). This contrasts significantly with the sterile and godless prayer from the “Anniversary Mass for Vincent de Paule [sic], Fénelon, L’Épée, Franklin, Ganganelli, Monthyon, Liancourt, Belzunce, Hoche, Desaix, Lafeuillade, and all those humanitarians who consecrated their lives for the good of humanity.” (A.-B. Saint-Estève, *Réforme Radicale. Nouvel Eucologe à l’usage de l’Église Catholique Française* [Paris, 1834], p. 246.)

Oratio

*Toi, qui rendis la charité si douce aux cœurs généreux,
et qui fis de la bienfaisance le plaisir le plus délicieux et le plus complet!
daigne approuver le souvenir qu’aujourd’hui nous consacrons aux Philanthropes
auxquels tu donnas cette sagesse et cette bonté simple et touchante
qui les rendit si chers aux générations contemporaines,
e[t] leur mérita de vivre éternellement dans la mémoire des générations futures.*

You, who have made charity so sweet in generous hearts,
and have made beneficence the most delicious and most complete pleasure,
deign to approve the memorial that we consecrate today to the humanitarians
to whom you have given this wisdom and this simple and touching goodness
which made them so dear to their own time,
and which merited for them to live eternally in the memory of future generations.

²¹ Taken from the Missale Tolosanum, 1774. The other prayers for the feast are Collect II, and Secreta IV.

²² “Aliquot Preces,” pp. 157-58. These were authorized by the Congregation for the use of its members.

²³ Taken from *Devotio Communis*. Collects XII, XIII and XIV were made part of a Little Office in honor of Saint Vincent. This office mixes approved collects and others, with selections from psalms and hymns in his honor.

²⁴ *Devotio communis*, p. 156. A variant begins: Deus, qui ad Ecclesiae decorem et animarum salutem. . . .” (pp. 163-64.)

²⁵ *Devotio Communis*, p.160.

²⁶ *Devotio Communis*, p. 165.

²⁷ *Regole Della Compagnia della Carità secondo l’istituto di S. Vincenzo de Paoli* (Benevento, 1744), p. 118, to conclude a novena in honor of the saint, composed for members of the Confraternity of Charity. Its author is unknown.

²⁸ *Vade Mecum* (Mechlin, 1927) p. 49. (Approved for the Congregation of the Mission, 16 March 1882 by Leo XIII.) This same text is found in *L’Eau Bénite de Saint Vincent de Paul Pour les Infirmes* (Paris, n.d.)

²⁹ For September 27. Source : *Common Worship. Collects and Post Communions*.

<http://www.cofe.anglican.org/worship/liturgy/commonworship/texts/collects/contemp/septem>

[ber.html](#). (accessed 03 May, 2006) The text was developed by The European Province of the Society of St Francis, an Anglican religious order. Another version, in traditional language, was also prepared: O merciful God, whose servant Vincent de Paul, by his ministry of preaching and pastoral care, brought thy love to the sick and the poor: grant to all thy people a heart of compassion, that by serving the needs of others they may serve thee in word and deed.

³⁰ Poorly printed and proofread advertising card, a possible sign of haste. The origin is unknown. Original in Vincentian Archives in Paris.

³¹ Found among the Images d'Epinal, early nineteenth century popular images. Original in Vincentian Archives in Paris.

³² Henrion, baron, *Histoire générale des Missions Catholiques depuis le xiii^e siècle jusqu'à nos jours*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1847), 2: 324, cited from *Petit mémorial de la charité de Saint Vincent de Paul et de ses œuvres offert à la société de Saint-Vincent-de-Paul*, par l'abbé T.R. (Le Mans, 1845.)

³³ *Vade Mecum*, pp. 37-38, appendix to Noël Aubry, *Manuale Christianorum*, 7th ed, (Mechlin, Belgium, 1913). English translation: *The Raccolta, or a Manual of Indulgences...*, ed. Joseph P. Christopher, Charles E. Spence, John F. Rowan (New York, Bengizer Brothers, 1952), p. 398.