

Marguerite Naseau

regarded as the first Daughter of Charity

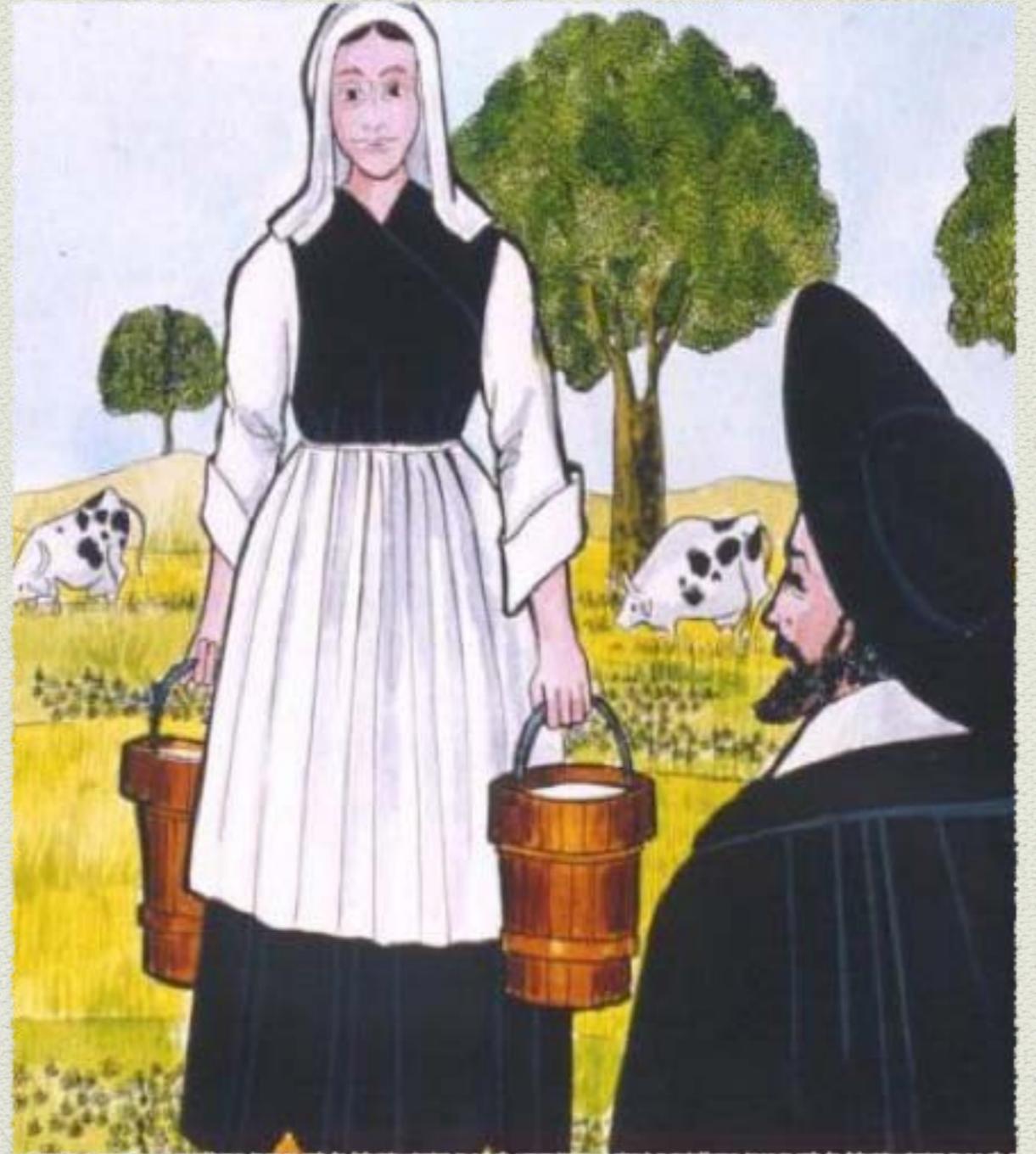
Marguerite meets Vincent

- ◆ Marguerite was the eldest of nine children. She met Vincent de Paul at Villepreux in 1617.



Humble beginnings

- ◆ What is known about Marguerite is from a manuscript of Vincent's written in 1642. According to Vincent, Marguerite was a poor, uneducated shepherdess.



Learning to read

- She asked the parish priest or curate to tell her the first four letters of the alphabet, later asking about the next four, and so on.



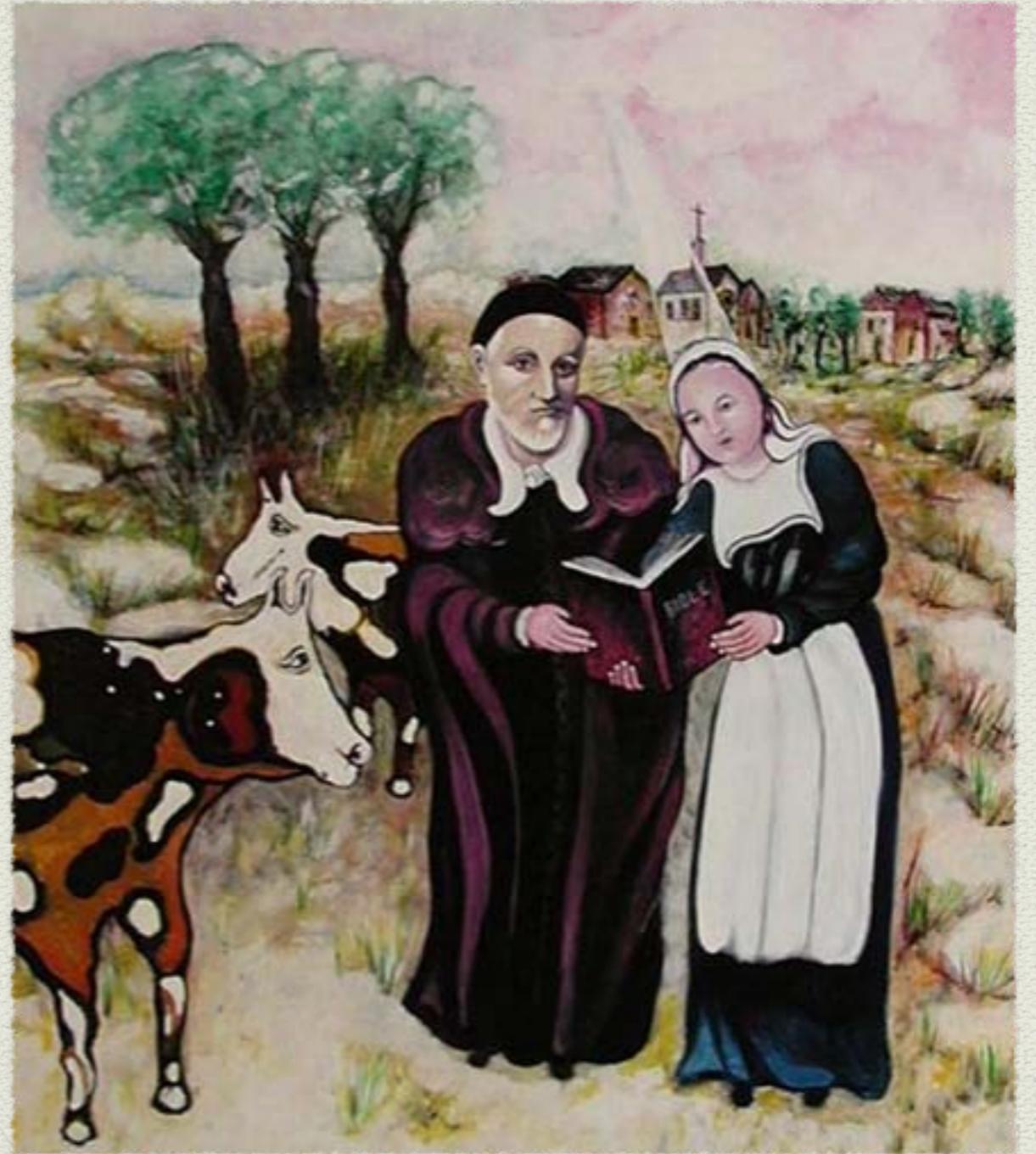
Determined to learn

- ◆ She also asked those she met on the roads about letters and words. She studied while she tended sheep.



“Paying it forward”

- ◆ Marguerite taught herself to read and began to teach other girls in her village. She decided to take with her two or three girls whom she had taught and with them go from village to village teaching children to read. Her goal was for girls of all ages to learn to read.



Her wish to serve the poor

- ◆ Marguerite had become interested in the Confraternity at Villepreux. When he was at Villepreux for a mission, Marguerite went to Vincent for confession and told him of her wish to serve the poor.



Opportunity to serve

- ◆ Vincent brought her to Paris. There he placed her under the care of Louise de Marillac. At that time the first confraternity in Paris at Saint Savior was composed of women of rank who were looking for a maid to carry soup to the sick.



Serving in the Confraternity

- ◆ Louise met with Marguerite and asked her what she knew, where she had come from, and if she was willing to serve poor persons. Marguerite readily expressed her desire to serve in the Confraternity.



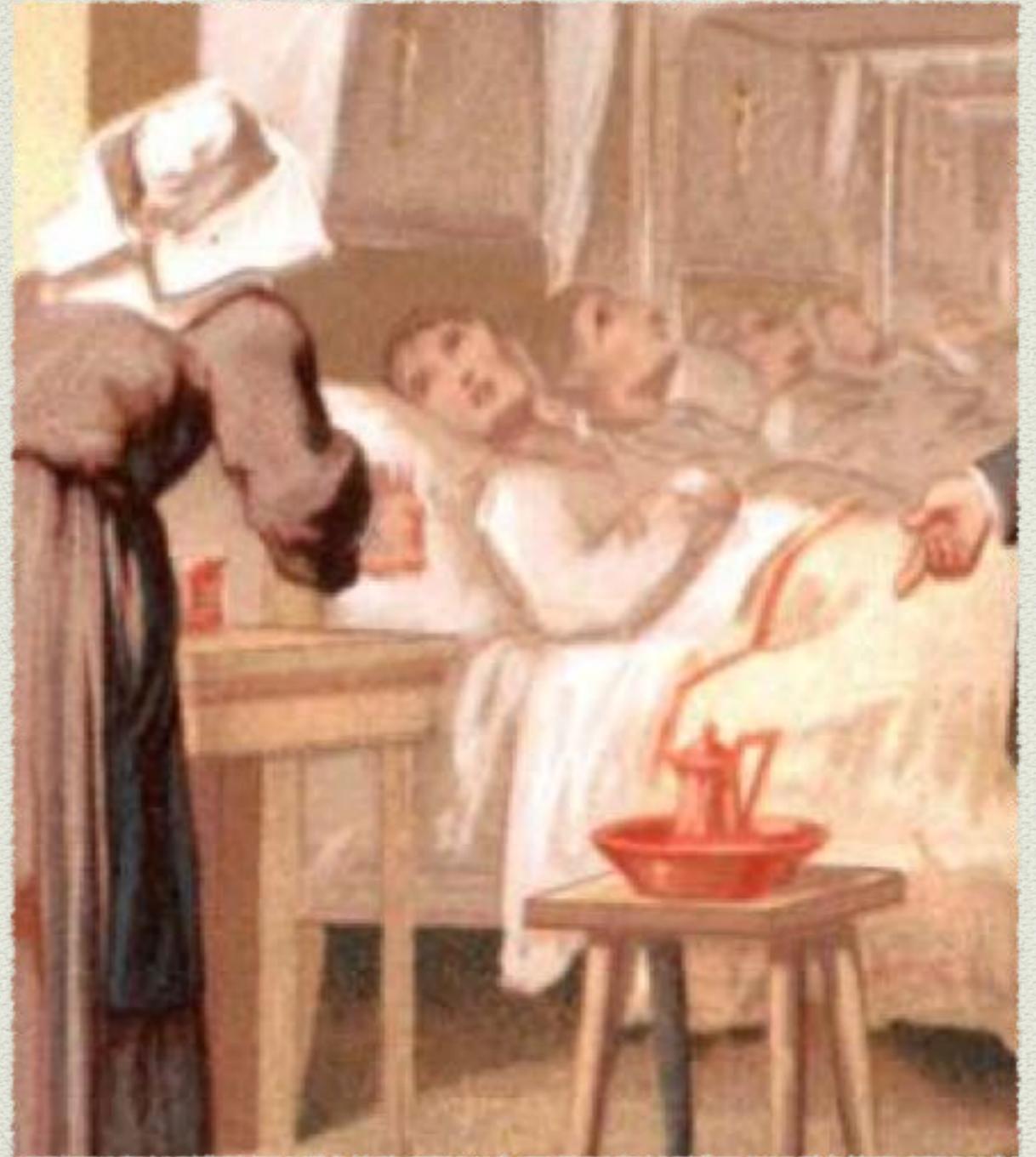
Servant of the poor

- ◆ After Louise had interviewed Marguerite, she placed her in the parish of Saint Savior where she served effectively as a servant of the poor for the Ladies of Charity.



Learning to serve

- ◆ She was sent to the confraternity in the parish of Saint Savior where Dr. Levesque, of the faculty of Paris, taught her how to administer medicines and render whatever nursing services were necessary.



Sent to another Confraternity

- ◆ Next Louise sent her to the Confraternity at Saint Nicholas-du-Chardonnet (also located in Paris). Marguerite worked there with the Ladies in the Confraternities for about three years.



Last days

- ◆ Marguerite caught the plague from a girl whom she had nursed. She went to the Hospital of Saint Louis on the outskirts of Paris and died there, “her heart filled with joy and conformity to God's will.”



Text: from [an article on the website](#) of
the Daughters of Charity, Ireland

Images: [Depaul.edu Image Archive](#)

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