

# The Confraternity of Charity (1617)

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- St. Vincent proposed that the **women** of the parish in Châtillon-les-Dombes join together for organized charity
- It was the **first institutional expression of the Vincentian charism**
- It involved **lay leadership for social action**
- Both the **Daughters of Charity** (1633) and the **Ladies of Charity** (1635) arose from confraternities



## In St. Vincent's Words

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"When I was living near Lyons, in a small town to which Providence had called me to act as parish priest," he said to the Daughters of Charity one day, "on a certain Sunday just as I was vesting to say Mass, a person came to tell me that, in an isolated house a quarter of a league away, the whole family lay ill, so that not a single one of them could come to the assistance of the others, and they were in such dire straits as cannot be expressed. It moved me to the depths of my heart. I did not fail to speak feelingly about them during the sermon, and God, touching the hearts of those who were listening, caused them all to be moved to compassion for the poor afflicted people."



# In St. Vincent's Words

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"After dinner, a meeting was held in the house of a good lady in the town to see what help could be given and every single one of those present was quite prepared to go and see them, to console them by talking to them and to help them to the best of their ability."



# In St. Vincent's Words

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"When I arrived, I visited the sick and went to look for the Blessed Sacrament for those who were in most urgent need. [...] So then after hearing their Confessions and giving them Holy Communion, the question arose as to how we could help them in their need. I suggested to all these dear, good people whose charity had induced them to visit the family, that they should take it in turn, day by day, to cook for them, and not only for them but also for other cases which might arise. That was the first place in which the Charity was established."



