



The Contributions of the Vincentian Charism to the Mission of the Church: A Formation Journey

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“The poor evangelize us”

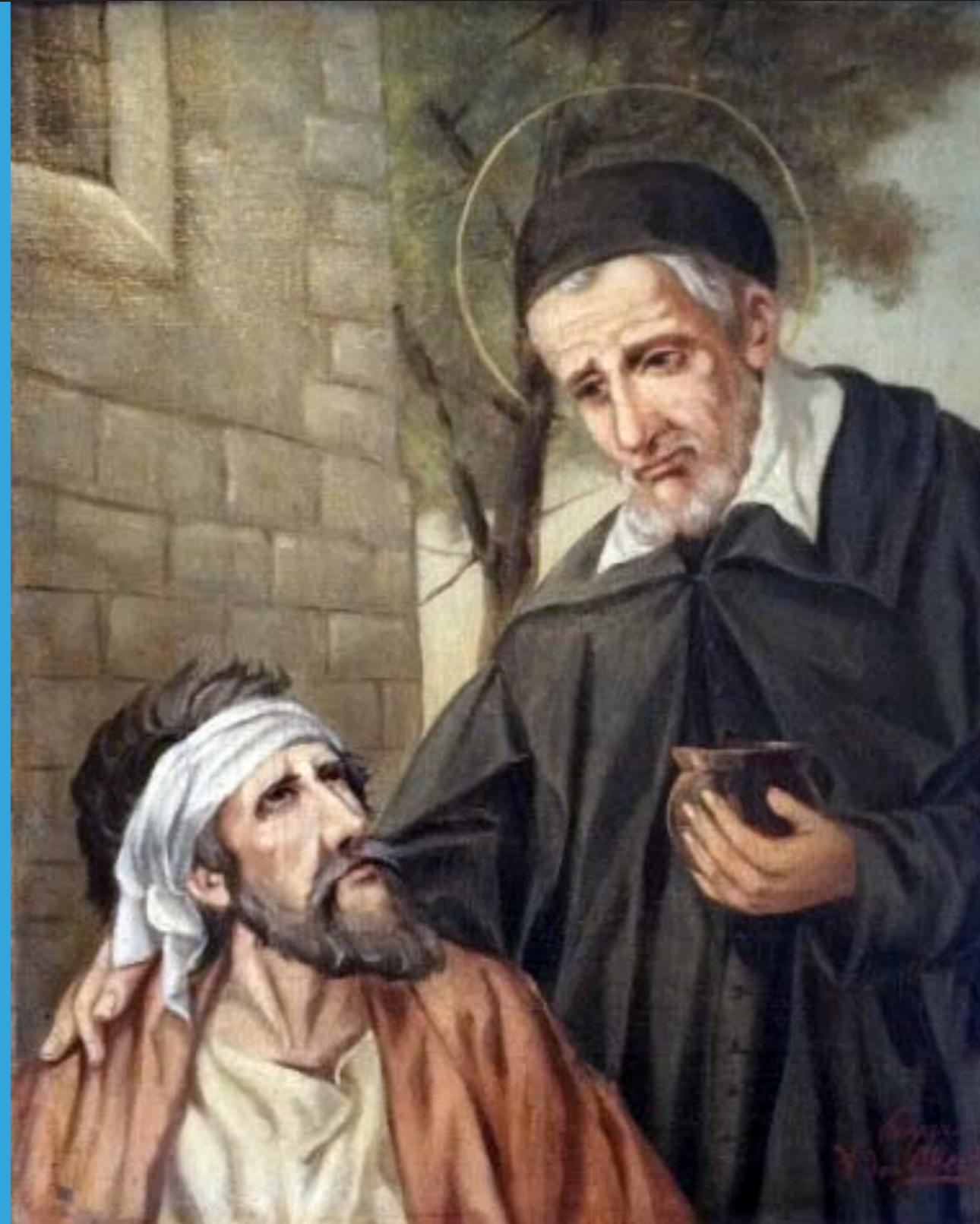


This is one of the most significant teachings that Vincent learned from being at the side of the poor.

The poor are our teachers

St. Vincent affirmed that the poor are our teachers and that true religion is lived and practiced especially by the poor, the humble and the peasants.

They are teachers of the faith because they have cultivated a series of fundamental Christian virtues and attitudes.



"What I retain from my experience of this is the discernment I have always made that true religion --- true religion, Messieurs, true religion --- is found among the poor. God enriches them with a lively faith; they believe, they touch, they taste the words of life. (CCD:XII:142).



For St. Vincent:

Jesus was in the person of the poor

there, St. Vincent discovered Jesus

there, St. Vincent awaited the definitive encounter when he would be embraced by the One who had given him his mission.





“Poor men and women enable us to encounter God, enable us to hear God, and God speaks to us and exhorts us and warns us. As we encounter the poor in the very midst of systems of marginalization, our eyes are opened and we come to a clearer understanding of the meaning of God, Christ, the Church and the demands of scripture. The poor give us God and in the person of the poor we serve God.”

Barquin - The Poor: the theological perspective of the Vincentian charism



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“...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.”

(1 Corinthians 1:27-28)