

Preface

“It must be held as an indubitable principle that in proportion as we labor for the perfection of our own interior, shall we be more capable of producing fruit on behalf of our neighbor.”

St. Vincent de Paul

One day, having only recently come to DePaul to serve as Director of Vincent on Leadership: The Hay Project, I sat across from one of my colleagues at the School of Public Service talking about the mission of The Project and Vincent. Suddenly, my colleague raised his head, grabbed hold of me with excited eyes, and with great passion and energy proclaimed, “You ARE the legacy of St. Vincent de Paul.”

“Really?” I thought, giving no outward indication to him of how taken aback I was by his statement and enthusiasm. “How does THAT work?”

Despite my efforts to deflect my colleague’s statement in the days following our conversation, the implications of his piercing comment remained. I continued to ponder how I am the living legacy of Vincent de Paul. Slowly it came to me. Vincent lived in a time of terrible social crises. He responded with compassion, by thinking outside the box, and by engaging and supporting others in responding to the needs of the poor and marginalized. Vincent’s life example challenges us today to continue his legacy.

In this year, the 350th anniversary of the deaths of Vincent de Paul and Louise de Marillac, it is our pleasure to offer to the Vincentian Family this book of reflections on *Leading in the Legacy of Vincent de Paul*. It is our hope that the reflections in this book demonstrate the continuation of Vincent’s legacy, modeling for us the leadership, values, and vision of today’s Vincentian leaders. Furthermore, as Vincent suggests in the quote above, we hope the questions at the end

of each reflection provide an opportunity for you to deepen your inner sense of self, as someone who today is a living legacy of Vincent de Paul, bearing fruit through your own works of service.

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Leadership Approach

The reflections in this book illustrate the Vincentian Leadership Model developed by researchers at The Project. Vincentian leadership emphasizes connection with the mission, valuing the individual, and developing leadership competencies and skills that reflect Vincent's extraordinary management abilities and align well with organizational cultures and leadership challenges in contemporary times.



Leadership is a relationship.

Leadership is self-development.

Leadership is everyone's business.