

Recently someone asked me, “Why am I here? Why am I a Vincentian? What’s my personal ‘Why?’”

First and foremost, I’m here because the Society of St. Vincent de Paul puts spirituality first. It’s what makes us different from all other charities.

My mentor and former boss Zig Ziglar used to say, “You’ve got to **be** before you can **do** and **do** before you can **have**.”

Vincentians understand that our call to holiness is a call to perfect union with Christ. Sometimes that call requires **being** with the crucified Christ in moments of powerlessness.

We live in a world where our self-worth is often defined by having a strong, healthy, sexy body able to do things like manual labor and sports with prowess.

As a person with a disability, however, I cannot necessarily **do** such things. Does that mean that my life has less value? I certainly hope not.

We’re human **beings**. Not human **doings**.

As Christians, we believe in the dignity of all people, the value of life, and God as the source of our **being**.

St. John writes in his Gospel, “All things came into **being** through Him and nothing apart from him came into **being**.”

Indeed, there are moments in our life when we cannot **do**. Like right now during this pandemic. Moments when we cannot necessarily help our Neighbor in Need directly. We are powerless. We can only **be**.

Such moments are an open invitation to **be** in intimate union with the crucified Christ, to completely depend on God's love and providence as His child.

Our Rule states, "Vincentians are called to journey together in holiness because true holiness is perfect union with Christ which is central to their vocation and the source of its fruitfulness."

Too often, however, we look to power, profit, passion, prestige, and performance as the sources of our affirmation and value.

If we allow our **doing** to determine our **being**, we're in danger of **being outdone** because the world constantly changes. These sources dry up. When we try to **do** things on our own, we fall short. We burn out. We fail.

But when we follow the journey of holiness, seek union with Christ, depend on His love and providence, our work flourishes!

That's my personal "Why:" To live my life fully, courageously, and humbly so that I maintain trust and dependence on God.

Blessings to all of you. Thank you for everything you do. You're in my thoughts and prayers. And please pray for us, as well.