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January 15, 2016

St. Vincent Pallotti (1795-1850)

Founder of the Union of the Catholic Apostolate

Vincent Pallotti was born on April 21, 1795. His life belongs to an era of radical change. In these difficult times, Pallotti was educated and carried out his priestly ministry.

From his boyhood years he sought personal perfection with an extraordinary fervor, but did not isolate himself from the world. He gave generously of his help and presence wherever needed, especially to young people.

He was ordained a priest on May 16, 1818. For Pallotti, priestly life was a full-time task and a humble service. He was best known as a preacher and a confessor. During parish missions he touched many who had minimal contact with the Church. Many who listened to him began to live a more coherent Christian life, and it was not long before he became known as the "Apostle of Rome."

Despite his numerous activities, Pallotti never lost sight of the untold needs of people. He could be found pleading for support in the villas of the rich. He frequently came with aid to the poor. He gave comfort to the sick and dying. He visited prisons and without hesitation was a companion of the condemned, even to the place of execution. For abandoned children, he opened residential homes and evening trade school for adults.

There were so many needs to be met, which was such an enormous task that he invited the help of priests, religious and lay people to participate in these endeavors. For him, it was imperative to unite every available source to help in the effort to revive faith and promote the love of God and neighbor.

It was with this intent, that in 1835 Vincent Pallotti founded the Union of the Catholic Apostolate. There were to be no distinctions made because Pallotti was convinced that each, the faithful, each in his or her own role in life and each according to personal ability, can be an apostle and can cooperate to further the growth and deepening of faith and love.

Vincent Pallotti died on January 22, 1850. In 1950 Pope Pius XII proclaimed him "Blessed" and in 1963 Pope John XXIII formally declared him a saint.