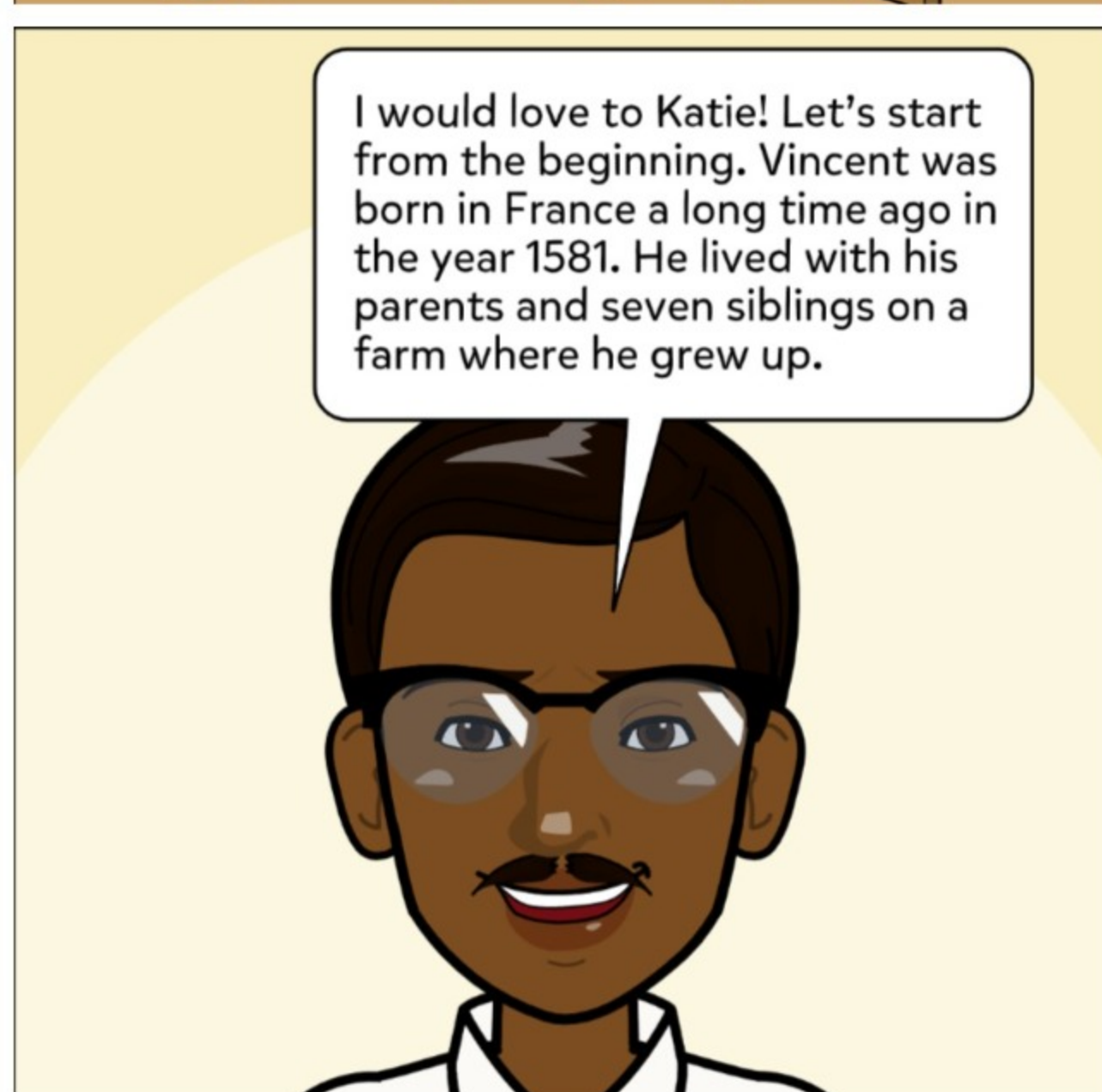
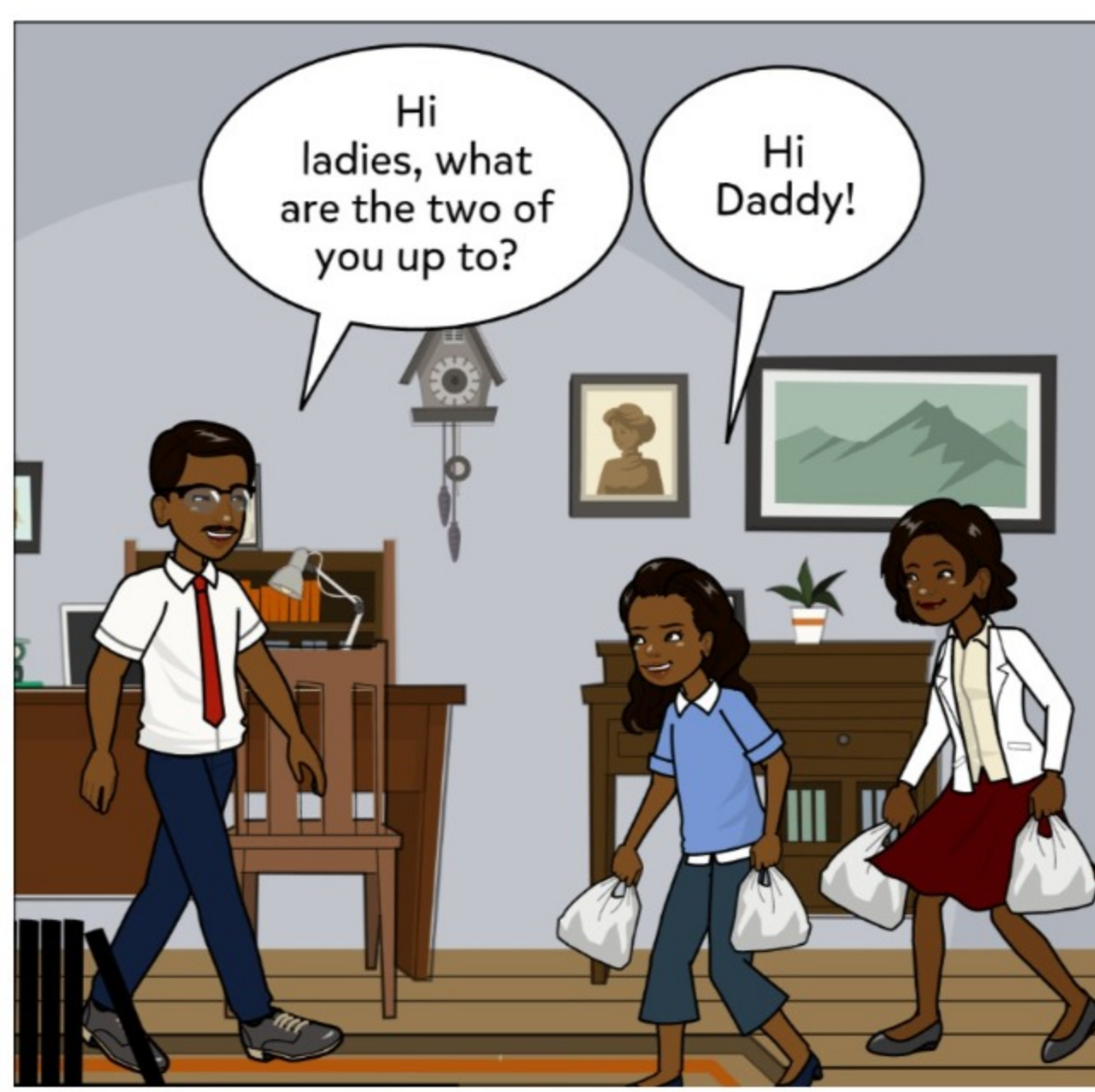


# Saint Vincent de Paul

by Paula de Rushe - Quintal

Saint Dunstan's Catholic Church  
Toronto, ON



AFTER YEARS OF THEOLOGICAL STUDIES AT UNIVERSITY, VINCENT WAS ORDAINED A PRIEST AT THE YOUNG AGE OF NINETEEN. VINCENT WAS INTELLIGENT, CHARMING AND HAD A GOOD SENSE OF HUMOUR. HE HUNG OUT WITH THE RICH AND WAS WELL LIKED. ONE OF THEM EVEN GAVE HIM SOME PROPERTY. VINCENT QUITE ENJOYED HAVING STATUS AND WEALTH.



ONE DAY WHEN RETURNING HOME BY SHIP, LIFE SUDDENLY CHANGED. VINCENT WAS CAPTURED BY PIRATES. THEY TOOK HIM TO AFRICA WHERE HE WAS SOLD AS A SLAVE.



AS TIME WENT ON, VINCENT CONVERTED HIS MASTER. HE WAS ABLE TO GET BETTER LIVING CONDITIONS FOR THE SLAVES AND CRIMINALS.





EVENTUALLY VINCENT WAS FREED. HE ESCAPED FROM AFRICA AND WENT BACK TO FRANCE TO SERVE IN A RURAL CHURCH. IT WAS A WAKE UP CALL FOR VINCENT TO SEE THE SUFFERING OF THE PEOPLE. MANY DIED FROM STARVATION BECAUSE THEY COULD NOT FIND WORK.



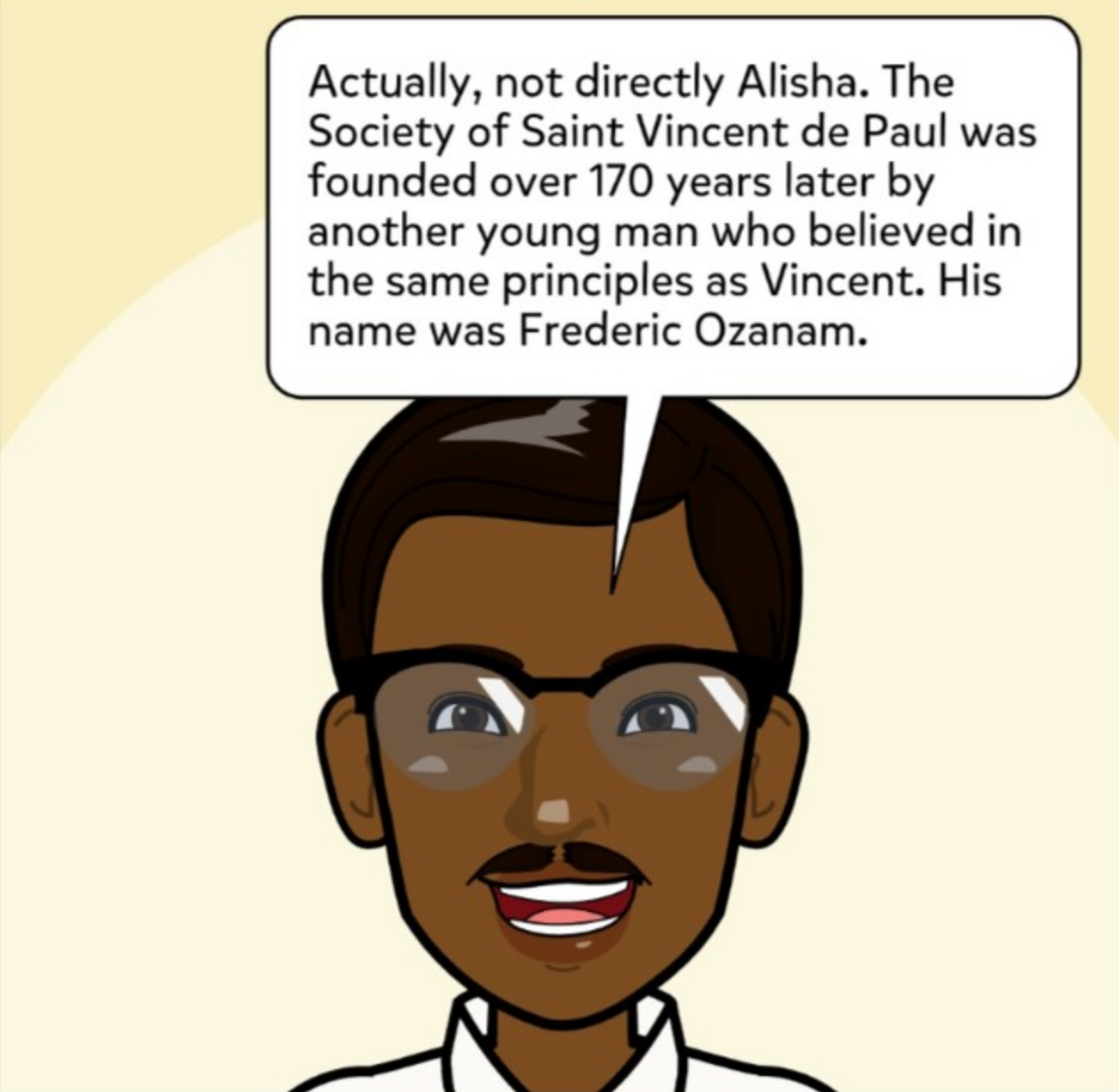
VINCENT APPROACHED HIS WEALTHY FRIENDS FOR FINANCIAL HELP AND DONATIONS OF FOOD, FURNITURE AND CLOTHING. EVENTUALLY HE WAS ABLE TO PULL TOGETHER AN ENTHUSIASTIC GROUP OF MISSIONARIES TO HELP THE POOR. THEY FIRST STARTED WORKING IN SMALLER VILLAGES THEN EXPANDED THEIR WORK THROUGHOUT FRANCE.



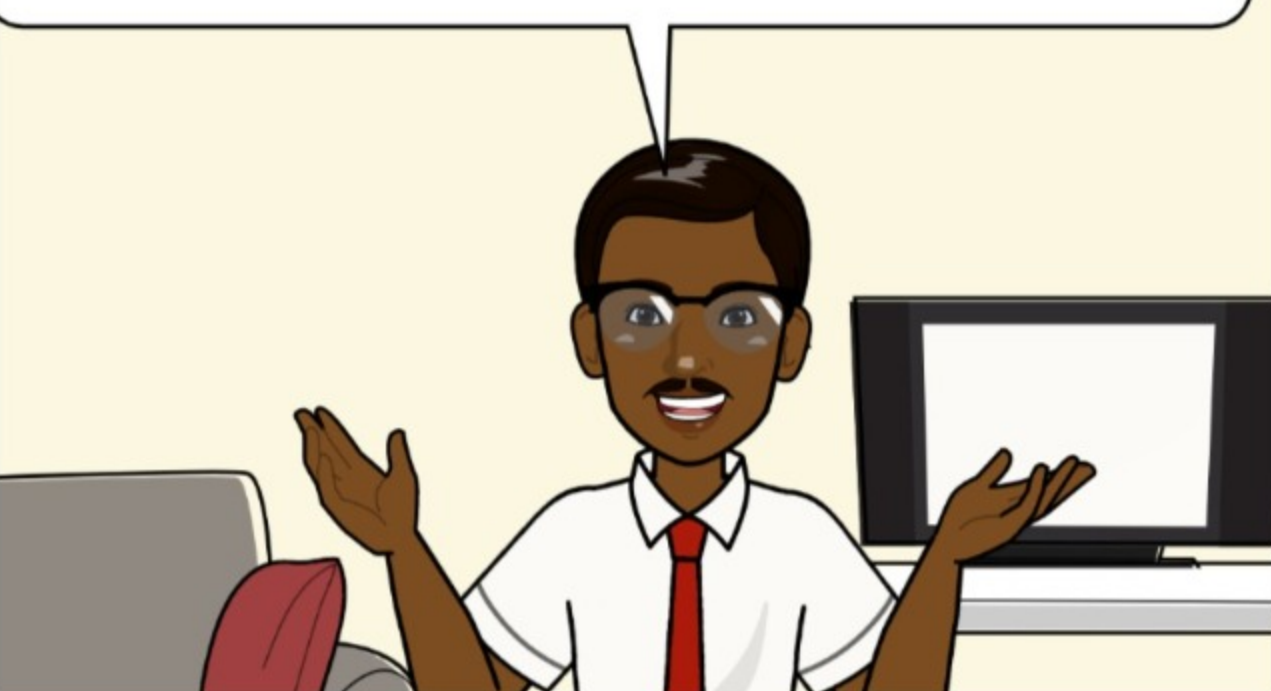
THE MISSIONARY PRIESTS MADE VOWS OF POVERTY, CHASTITY AND OBEDIENCE IN SERVICE TO THE POOR. LOUISE DE MARILLAC AND THE SISTERS OF CHARITY JOINED THEM AND DID MUCH OF THE DAILY WORK OF ORGANIZING AND VISITING THE POORHOUSE AND PRISONS. THE SISTERS WERE ORIGINALLY MADE UP OF WEALTHY WOMEN WHO SINCERELY WANTED TO HELP THE POOR. LATER ON, NURSES, WIDOWS AND PEASANT GIRLS WERE ALSO TRAINED TO ASSIST.



THE SISTERS EVENTUALLY BECAME A RELIGIOUS ORDER AND TOOK VOWS. VINCENT ALSO HELPED ESTABLISH SEMINARIES FOR TRAINING THE CLERGY. HE FIRMLY BELIEVED THE CHURCH HAD TO CARE FOR THOSE WHO NEED HELP THE MOST - THOSE AFFECTED BY SICKNESS, PROVERTY, IGNORANCE OR CRUELTY. VINCENT DIED QUIETLY IN HIS CHAIR IN 1660. THE FEAST DAY OF SAINT VINCENT DE PAUL IS CELEBRATED ON SEPT 27.



Frederic Ozanam was devoted to Saint Vincent, so he named the society after him. The members were called Vincentians and became established worldwide in 130 countries including Canada. These volunteers continue the legacy of service to Christ, through our neighbours in need, with love, respect and joy. We have a small group of Vincentians serving within our parish here at Saint Dunstan's.



Parishioners are encouraged to join our local SSVP Conference here at Saint Dunstan's Church. Just leave a message on our Help Line (416-698-0044) and a member will be happy to provide more information. You can also learn more about the Society on the Central Toronto website at <https://svdptoronto.org>

# Saint Dunstan's

ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

