



# NATIONAL COUNCIL OF THE US SOCIETY OF ST. VINCENT DE PAUL

## Contemplation: Fully and Creatively

“Love,” St. Vincent taught, *“is inventive even to infinity.”* Vincent’s example in this observation was the ultimate example of both love and creativity, the institution of the Eucharist by Jesus, who recognized that *“His absence could cause some forgetfulness or cooling off in our hearts”*, and so He ensured His continued presence among us. [\[CCD XI:139\]](#) Throughout time, we are regularly invited to partake of Him, to join with Him physically and spiritually; to be in communion.

This communion unites us with Christ’s entire body, the body of the church, comprised of all the faithful. Communion unites us with Jesus and with each other. Blessed Frédéric reflected on this effect of the sacrament, saying to one friend that *“when I have not been able to be with you...I have found you at the altar. I believe firmly that when I am receiving, I am in close touch with my friends, all united to the same Savior.”* [\[Baunard, 381\]](#) When we receive Communion, we are never alone – we are in communion.

Yet, our friends and family here on earth do not comprise the full body of the church. As St. Louise explained, *“Holy Communion with the Body of Jesus Christ causes us truly to participate in the joy of the Communion of Saints in Paradise.”* [\[SWLM, A.15\]](#) As Frédéric recognized, that *“mysterious connection that the Church calls the communion of saints”* reminds us *“that our beloved dead do not forget us any more than we forget them, that they think of us, love us, pray for us, that perhaps they walk with us as invisible guardians.”* [\[1353, to La Perrière, 1836\]](#)

After the death of his mother, he said that when receiving Communion, *“it seems to me that she follows Him into my poor heart... Then I firmly believe in the actual presence of my mother by my side.”* [\[Baunard, 158\]](#) Indeed, the Catechism teaches that *“The communion of saints must be understood as the communion of the sacraments.... the name ‘communion’ can be applied to all of them, for they unite us to God.... But this name is better suited to the Eucharist than to any other....”* [\[CCC, 950\]](#) In turn, the Eucharist compels us to share ourselves generously with the neighbor, just as Frédéric did, visiting the homes of the poor after Mass. *“He thus returned to Our Lord,”* his biographer wrote, *“in the person of His suffering poor, the visit which he had just received from Him in the Holy Eucharist.”* [\[Baunard, 209\]](#)

Our Rule, explaining our journey together towards holiness, especially notes our “devotion to the Eucharist”. [\[Rule, Part I, 2.2\]](#) How could it be otherwise? We are the body of Christ, and in receiving the body of Christ in the sacrament, we are united in faith, united in love, united in the sacraments, united with the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and finally, we are united with the ones Christ came especially to serve and to bless, so that we, too, may devote ourselves to them fully and creatively.

### Contemplate

How often does my Conference receive the Eucharist together?

### Recommended Reading

[Mystic of Charity](#)