The Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul will have a special Mass in honor of the 400th anniversary of the birth of their founder, St. Vincent de Paul. The Mass is scheduled for 11 a.m. Sunday, Sept. 27 in St. John's Cathedral. Msgr. Alexander O. Sigur, pastor of Our Lady of Fatima Church, Lafayette, and Vicar of the Lafayette City Deanery, will be principal celebrant and homilist.

Friends of the Daughters and the general public are invited to the Mass. Also especially invited are members of the St. Vincent de Paul Societies in Lafayette and area church parishes.

“We just wanted to say thanks for all we have received through the years,” says Sister Leah Marie Holzun, D.C., local superior.

The Daughters of Charity came to New Orleans 151 years ago and to Lafayette in 1938 to staff the recently opened Charity Hospital.

At one time, there were as many as 11 sisters on the staff of Charity, but now the local community numbers six and only two of these work at Charity, the others are involved in the social ministry and religious education as well as nursing.

St. Vincent de Paul, the founder of the Daughters of Charity was born in France in 1581 and as Pope John Paul II wrote, in a letter to the superior general of the Vincentian Fathers, “The fourth centenary of the birth of St. Vincent de Paul is truly an occasion for the religious families born of his charism, as for the Christian people, to meditate on the marvels effected by the God of tenderness and mercy through a man who gave himself to Him without reserve in the irrevocable bonds of the priesthood.”

Pope John Paul also noted “The vocation of this genial initiator of charitable and social action still illumines today, the path of his sons and daughters, of the laity who live of his spirit, of youth who seek the key to an existence which is useful and radically consumed in the gift of self.”

St. Vincent de Paul is remembered not only as the founder with St. Louise de Marillac, of the Daughters of Charity, but he also founded the Congregation of the Mission (Vincentians) and Conferences of St. Vincent de Paul (St. Vincent de Paul Societies).