

Lord our God,

Blessed are you for your servant Paulin Enfert  
You put inside him the breath of creative love  
You drew him towards you in trusting prayer  
You nourished him with your strength out your life-giving  
Eucharist  
You filled him with your gentleness and your patient humility  
You helped him to make young people understand  
the meaning of joyful commitment to serve the others  
You made his charity inventive to bear the wounded of life

We pray you today for his beatification

Through his intercession, deign, Lord,  
to grant us the graces we ask you with faith.  
Give us the only desire to live with the boldness  
to love you with a heart overflowing with joy.  
Help us to be apostles of your goodness  
and your mercy to the poor you love,  
We ask you insistently, Lord,  
through Jesus Christ your Son, your Beloved.

Amen.

The People, who obtain graces through the intercession of  
God's servant Paulin Enfert, are invited to write to the AAPE.

**Association des amis de Paulin Enfert**

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# Paulin Enfert

1853, July, 5 – 1922, September, 1



And the King will reply:  
“Truly I tell you, what-  
ever you did for one of  
the least of these broth-  
ers and sisters of mine,  
you did it for me.”

(Matthew 25,40)

## **“God's Juggler”**

**As a confirmed Christian, secular, single, Paulin Enfert has dedicated his whole life in educational responsibilities.**

Born on July 5, 1853 in Nevers, France, the second of eight children, he arrived in Paris in 1857 with his parents Urbain, a tanner, and Emelina Lefort from Gien, France. After studying with the *Barnabites* of Gien and then with the *Brothers of the Christian Schools* in his Parisian neighbourhood, he enlisted at the age of 17 as a mobile national guards during the war of 1870. The anticlerical fury during the events of the *Commune* in the 13th arrondissement in Paris led to a missionary vocation which guided his whole life.

As an active parishioner of the Saint-Marcel church in the *Maison-Blanche*, he became involved in the *Société de Saint-Vincent de Paul*. In the 1880s, after the secularization of primary education and the removal of catechism teaching from schools, he undertook the task of catechizing the “latecomers”, those young people aged 13 to 15 who had not yet taken communion.

In addition to giving them religious education, he also devoted himself to the social, cultural and sports training of the children of the neighbourhood. In his free time as an insurance employee, he was a conjurer, actor, man of the theater, and put his talents as an entertainer at the service of young people.

In 1888, with the help of Sister Joséphine Liaud, Daughter of Charity congregation and many benefactors, he founded a Christian education organization in a neighbourhood hostile to religion, the *patronage Saint-Joseph de la Maison-Blanche*. He considered his work at the *Mie de Pain*, a popular soup created in 1891 by the young people of the patronage, as the practical school where they could learn that doing charity is doing the work of God, by love for the poor. Paulin Enfert died in Gien on September 1, 1922.

100 years later, the *Mie de Pain* still implements the inventive charity of its founder. It remains the most important association for welcoming and housing the homeless in Paris.

## **Some thoughts and advice from Paulin Enfert to “his children”**

“My children, my grandchildren... It is only too true, alas, that out of four beggars, one, or two, or even three have placed themselves outside of society and do not deserve much interest... but the fourth, my children, yes the fourth, is a real poor person, a true defeated, a real unfortunate, and that one... my grandchildren... that one... is the Lord himself... and the Lord is waiting for you... and you must not miss the Lord.”

“We are very close to God when we serve his poor, and the prayer we make with them has a great chance of being heard.”

“Our work is a work of faith as much as of charity. If we sometimes bend under the load, these are only temporary weaknesses: courage returns to us because it is the work of the Good Lord that we are trying to do, and the Good Lord abandons neither his works nor those who do them.”

“For us, Christians, it is in our faith that we find the joy that we will become better, because tomorrow is ours, if, by our virtues, we acquire the right to hope for eternal happiness.”