

MIRACULOUS MEDAL ASSOCIATION AUSTRALIA

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THE VINCENTIAN FAMILY

On September 27th we celebrated the Feast of St Vincent de Paul. Vincent died on 27th September 1660. We thus thought it a good thing to focus in this issue on the Vincentian Family and on Vincentian Spirituality. First of all we look at the seven Principal Members of the Vincentian Family and then look at what we might call Vincentian spirituality, and then some further thoughts on the Vincentian Family.

International Association Of Charity

Associations of Charity founded by St. Vincent de Paul.

An Association of women who commit as a team to alleviate all forms of poverty and injustice and give women an active and recognised social role in a spirit of solidarity.

1617



Congregation of the Mission

Founded by St. Vincent de Paul.

Missionary priests and brothers, called Lazarists or Vincentians who imitate Jesus by evangelizing the poor with simplicity, humility, gentleness, mortification and apostolic zeal.

1625



Daughters of Charity

Founded by St. Vincent de Paul and St. Louise de Marillac.

Totally given to God for the service of Christ in those who are poor, in community for mission, with an evangelical spirit of humility, simplicity and charity.

1633



Society of St Vincent de Paul

Founded by lay persons including Blessed Frederic Ozanam.

A group of lay Christians who live in the world today, wanting to contribute their time, effort, willingness, generosity and commitment to social justice, to alleviate the difficulties and needs of others.

1833



Vincentian Marian Youth

The blessed Virgin's wish,
manifested to St Catherine Laboure
and carried out by Fr Aladel, CM

1847



Miraculous Medal Association

Founded by Pope Pius X on July 8th, 1909.
It took its roots from the apparitions
to St Catherine Laboure in 1830 (Paris)

1909



Lay Vincentian Missionaries

Lay Christians with charism of St Vincent
who volunteer for Vincentian missions.
It took its origins when some Marian Youth
were sent by Spain to Honduras.

1984



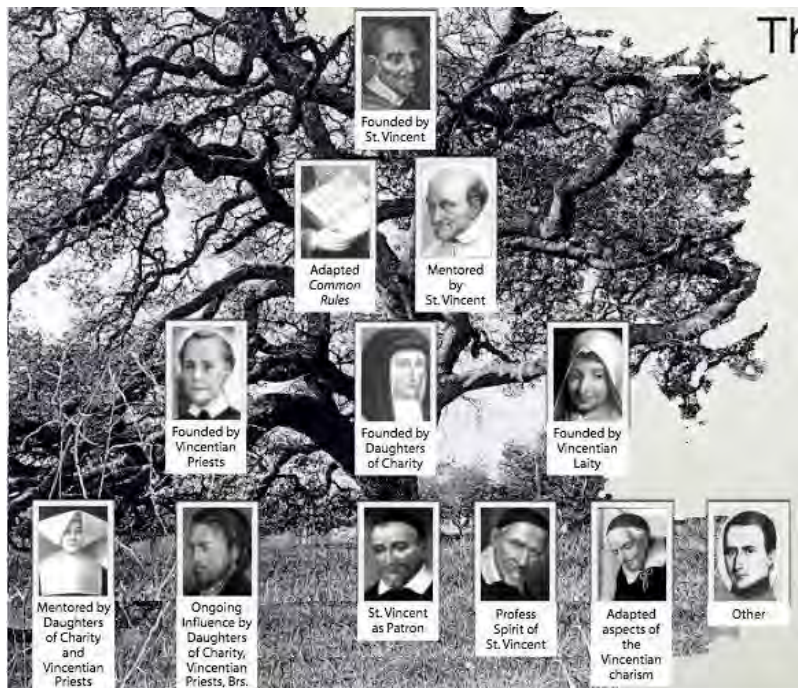
Everyone in all ages
and in any vocation
can pray and/ or act
with a group of the
Vincentian Family

VINCENTIAN SPIRITUALITY

Fr Pat Collins, CM, a Vincentian from the Irish Province, says this of spirituality: "Firstly, genuine spirituality involves religious experience. It enables a person or a group to go beyond thought and talk about God to have a direct awareness of the One who is paradoxically the beyond in the midst of our everyday lives. Conscious experience of this kind is what energises our lives giving them a sense of depth and meaning." Some prefer to use the expression 'experience of God' rather than 'religious experience', experience of God being any experience of the mysterious other we call God, moments of mystery, wonder, insight, God with us in those experiences of weakness, vulnerability, sinfulness, in times of conversion. Fr. Collins then describes Vincentian spirituality as involving "a distinctive kind of 'religious experience' (or 'experience of God') which is influenced by the charism we have inherited from St. Vincent de Paul, St Louise de Marillac and Blessed Frederic Ozanam." We recognize these three great saints because of the communities, those members of the Vincentian family, that they founded.

But we might find it helpful to consider the Vincentian family as we see it today, and to realize that there are more Saints and Blesseds within the Vincentian Family as well as these three great saints.





THE VINCENTIAN FAMILY

“Since 1617, the extended Vincentian family has grown to include several hundred diverse groups of women and men, laity and religious, Catholic and non-Catholic. Such a record testifies to the ongoing impact of the extraordinary life of a single individual ”

“a majestic family tree has developed because his mission, spirit and rule, have been adapted to many cultures since emerging in seventeenth-century France.” (Betty Ann McNeil, ‘Genealogical Development of the Vincentian Family’, ‘Vincentiana [1997], 43)

More than 400 years ago, St Vincent de Paul began, in France, the adventure of serving and evangelizing the poor to which, he gathered, invited, and motivated men and women of his time. He invited them to leave themselves and go and find the poor and cure their needs, convinced, in faith, that by ‘serving the poor, you are serving Jesus Christ’ (SV IX, 252.)

First, he started with a small group of women under the name of the ‘Confraternity of Charity’ to help with the basic needs of the poor. Later, other priests joined him, and he founded the ‘Congregation of the Mission’ to evangelise the poor. He completed his work with lay women, the ‘Daughters of Charity’, who were consecrated for life to the service of the poor. His work is carried on in many countries of the world where his charism (a particular way of following Jesus) is present and entrusted to many associations and congregations.

In the many branches of the Vincentian Family there have been great saints, Vincentians, Daughters of Charity, laity...everyone in love with the mission of Jesus Christ, and his kingdom of the poor.”

The above includes extracts from an article entitled “The Vincentian Family” (Fr Manuel Ginete, CM ‘Vincentiana, July-August, 2006). Perhaps in our next issue we might speak of some of the other Vincentian Saints and Blesseds ,apart from St Vincent, St Louise and Blessed Frederic Ozanam, whom we know so well.

The AMM is an important member of the Vincentian Family, and this coming month of November, delegates of the many associations throughout the world gather in Rome for an important General Assembly (November 3rd-9th). I am pleased that we have made sure that our AMM here in Australia is going to be represented. Giovanna Tesoriero (a member of our Core Group) and myself will be attending this gathering. Please pray for the success of this Assembly and that both of us will truly and adequately represent all of our members. I can assure you all of our prayers for you during these days in Rome, and when I visit Paris and the Miraculous Medal Shrine in the days after the Assembly, you will all be very much in my thoughts and prayers.

Fr. Kevin Canty, CM National Director.

Important date for our members living in and around Sydney.

Saturday November 29th at 10.00 am: St Anthony’s Church, Marsfield. Eucharist to celebrate the Feast of Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal, followed by morning tea in the parish hall.

Association of the Miraculous Medal Retreat (Natovi Fiji)

On the 23rd of August we the enrolled members of the AMM set out for our first Retreat, which was in St John the Apostle Parish, Natovi, another Vincentian parish just outside of Nausori town

The scene was beautiful, calm and peaceful, not to mention the beautiful sunny weather that we were blessed with.

It was also my first retreat; I always thought that a retreat was just a long day of quiet meditation; apparently it wasn't.

When we arrived we were warmly greeted by their Parish Priest, Fr Joseva Tuimavule CM. We were then taken to the former residence of the Daughters of Charity for a little bit of something to munch, before we had our first session with Fr Lario Nacola, CM (assistant Parish Priest).

He took us back to the beginning of Mary's journey, the Annunciation right through to the foot of the Cross. To be honest, I was in awe, to hear that this fragile figure had the strength and courage of a million men. Being put into groups with questions to answer, it really touched me, just listening and sharing with other's views and how they would just pour out their hearts to Mary.

After our lunch break we watched a documentary on St Catherine Laboure and the Miraculous Medal. It was amazing to learn that at such a young age St Catherine dedicated herself to the Church and tried all her life to emulate Our lady. I was challenged by this, because my baptismal name is Catherine, but now I can only depend on Mary as she did.

Personally, it was an experience of a lifetime, and I'm definitely looking forward to the next retreat. My sincere gratitude goes towards Sr Celine and Sr Anna for giving me this awesome experience.



Thank you, and may the good Lord continue to bless us all.

Leona-Talei C. Ramuima (year 13)

At right, some photos from this AMM Retreat day at Natovi. Our thanks for this reflection from Talei and for the photos. Ed.

