

The Vincentian



ST. VINCENT DE PAUL



A JOURNEY OF JOY

In the back-seat of a small Toyota SUV, Fr. Paul Golden, C.M., rode white-knuckled to visit a Vincentian parish outside Nairobi. "Driving in Kenya is a nightmare," Fr. Paul chuckled. "The roads are rough and, in the Nairobi area, there is so much traffic – cars, trucks, motorbikes, taxis and bicycles. It's quite an experience!"

But Fr. Paul did not travel more than 6,000 miles from Denver, Colorado, to Kenya, East Africa, to survey road conditions. He was there to visit Vincentian parishes and outstations, and to lead strategic planning meetings for the growing Region of Kenya.

(SEE A JOURNEY OF JOY, PAGE 4)

Two-thirds of Nairobi's 3.5 million citizens live in slums, where typical houses consist of one small room with no electricity, running water or sanitation.

FATHER VINCENT AND BISHOP AUGUSTIN

BY FR. RON RAMSON, C.M.

One of the things about Saint Vincent de Paul: he developed relationships with extraordinary people.

One such was Augustin Potier, Bishop of Beauvais, France. He and Vincent had spoken often of the deplorable state of the priesthood; something had to be done for the good of the church and society.

In July 1628, during a carriage ride, Augustin came up with an idea: "Gather candidates for the priesthood in my residence, give them solid instructions on their duties and ministry, and have them do some works of piety." Vincent, the master of organization, bought the idea and went to work.

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FATHER VINCENT AND BISHOP AUGUSTIN
(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

Augustin began the first retreat with a talk on Sunday, September 17. Vincent and three others directed the retreat exercises. Vincent gave instructions on the commandments, and two doctors from the Sorbonne explained the sacraments and the creed. Two others provided insights into the theology of the liturgy. All those to be ordained made a general confession to Vincent.

The retreat was a resounding success. So began the new work of the Congregation of the Mission, still in its infancy: retreats for ordinands.

The retreats lasted only ten to fifteen days – in reality, a crash course coupled with prayer. They proved to be an urgent remedy for a serious laxity in the priesthood. Without these instructions, men would have had little or no training or formation!

A complete program for training and forming priests would require the establishment of seminaries. Vincent would arrive at that ministry in the future, but these ordination retreats were an important, positive step toward a better prepared priesthood.

The immediate efforts of Vincent and Augustin addressed an urgent need, but, in effect, they were contributing to what we know today as systemic change. As the bishop at Saint Vincent’s memorial Mass said, “Vincent all but changed the face of the church.”



“May each and every one of you find signs of hope and new life as together we follow Jesus Christ, evangelizing the poor!”

– Fr. Ray Van Dorpe, C.M.

DEAR FRIENDS,

The seasons of the year come and go. As I write this column, we are still in the cold clutches of winter in the Midwest. By the time you read this, however, I hope we will be seeing the first signs of spring and the promise of new life!

You may already know that “lent” means “spring” – an appropriate word for this season in which we prepare to celebrate Easter and the hope of a new life, an eternal life, in Jesus. As we reflect on the gift of eternal life, I ask you to remember in prayer our confreres who have left this world over the past 12 months and have been granted the fullness of the Easter promise:

Father W. Barry Moriarty, C.M.	March 1, 2017 (entered 1958)
Father Alphonse X. Hoernig, C.M.	March 22, 2017 (entered 1947)
Father Thomas C. Anslow, C.M.	April 28, 2017 (entered 1966)
Brother Matthew J. Teel, C.M.	May 1, 2017 (entered 1948)
Father Richard R. Ryan, C.M.	October 6, 2017 (entered 1962)
Father Lawrence P. Christensen, C.M.	January 1, 2018 (entered 1954)
Father Joseph E. Begue, C.M.	January 9, 2018 (entered 1948)

Each year at this time we ask our friends for their help with our efforts to serve the poor in Kenya and give them hope. Fr. Paul Golden, C.M., visited Kenya in October and in this issue shares his impressions of the work our confreres are doing, in collaboration with many others.

Another sign of Easter hope is the work of Depaul International. Fr. J. Patrick Murphy, C.M., works with this great branch of the Vincentian Family and wrote our feature article on their work for and with the homeless. May each and every one of you find signs of hope and new life as together we follow Jesus Christ, evangelizing the poor!

In St. Vincent,

Fr. Ray

Fr. Ray Van Dorpe, C.M.
Provincial Superior

DEEP VINCENTIAN ROOTS

SINCE CHILDHOOD, THE ESSELMANNS HAVE FOLLOWED THE ‘VINCENTIAN WAY’

Growing up, we attended the novena every Monday night at the Shrine of the Miraculous Medal,” Rita Esselmann recalls. “Our faith and the Vincentian ‘way’ were central to our family life – I wanted to pass it on to our children.”

Born and raised in Perryville, Mo., Rita and her future husband, Eugene Esselmann, knew Vincentian priests and brothers since their early childhood days. Eugene worked at the local newspaper and, in his free time, helped to publish the seminary paper, *The DeAndrein*. Rita was active in the parish and school, and worked as a full-time mother – instilling a solid prayer life and good Christian values’ in her children.

“The Vincentian priests and brothers made a wonderful impression on our family and our community,” Eugene Esselmann says. “In addition to the seminary, shrine and local parish, the Vincentians founded a library at the school and a museum that was very popular.”

While they love reminiscing about their time in Perryville, the Esselmans still have a close connection to the Vincentians of the Western Province. Their son Tom, after attending St. Vincent School and The Cape, was ordained in 1981. Fr. Tom has been blessed with more than 35 years of priestly ministry and service.

“The Vincentian priests and brothers made a wonderful impression on our family and our community.”

– Eugene Esselmann

“I remember when Tom came to us and said he thought he had a vocation to the priesthood,” says Eugene. “We were just delighted,” Rita adds. “It took some effort to get him ready to enter the seminary, but we were very excited and proud of him.”

Rita and Eugene thank God for their son, who has taught in seminaries, pursued advanced degrees, developed a distance-learning program for theology students and even moved to Kenya to serve as formation director for more than ten years. “His ministry is a great gift for our entire family.”

Fr. Tom Esselmann, C.M., has played a central role in growing the Vincentian mission in Kenya and developing new programs for the seminarians studying at DePaul Centre in Nairobi. He continues to use his scholarly training and spiritual experience to shape the future pastors who will serve in the Region of Kenya.

Eugene and Rita were married in 1951 by Fr. William McKinley, C.M., at St. Vincent Church in Perryville. The couple now live in Quincy, Il., and enjoy spending time with their eight children, twelve grandchildren and six great-grandchildren. They are faithful supporters of the Vincentians of the Western Province.

Fr. Tom Esselmann, C.M., (far right) together with his fellow Vincentians and the local bishop, celebrates the ordination of Vincentian priests and deacons.





VINCENTIAN TRIVIA

1. After 28 years, Depaul International has extended its reach to seven countries, now serving more than _____ homeless people each year.
A. 5,500
B. 13,000
C. 19,500
D. 22,000
2. A major achievement of the students of St. Mary's of the Barrens was the regular publication of their student newspaper, which began as a typewritten, hand-illustrated piece in 1928. In 1930, the format changed and the journal was renamed _____.
A. *Vincentian Heritage Journal*
B. *The De Andrein*
C. *Our Mission*
D. *The Lazarist*
3. Which of the following is *not* a Vincentian-led ministry in Kenya?
A. Parish Missions
B. Campus Ministry
C. Nursery School in the Kibera Slum
D. Woodworking Apprenticeship
(answers on page 7)

A JOURNEY OF JOY

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

“Our mission in Kenya is vibrant,” Fr. Paul explains. “We are ordaining many priests, educating and training many seminarians, and more men enter formation every year.”

After a 20-kilometer trek from Nairobi to Thigio, Fr. Paul visited parishioners, volunteers, the Daughters of Charity and others at Holy Cross Parish. Fr. Nicholas Kaloki, C.M., the pastor, drove him down the Rift Valley to visit one of the mission churches of the parish. It is a large, half-finished structure made with simple cement blocks. When more funds are available, the church will be completed.

“The Vincentians and Daughters are doing incredible work with the local poor and sick.” – Fr. Paul Golden, C.M.

“The Vincentians and Daughters are doing incredible work with the local poor and sick,” Fr. Paul says. “I was amazed by the joyful spirit of everyone I encountered – the teachers and cooks in the nursery school, patients in hospice care, the elderly, handicapped children and others who come for a hot meal.”

On another excursion, Fr. Paul visited a parish in Katali on the west side of Kenya. There he experienced a community on fire with faith in Jesus. “Mass takes hours and is filled with singing, dancing, preaching and prayer,” Fr. Paul recalls. “The liturgy is a beautiful expression of joy for Christians and non-Christians alike.”

After Mass, Fr. Paul was greeted by hundreds of people walking by as they returned to their homes. “Everyone was so welcoming and their faith is vibrant,” says Fr. Paul. “You cannot sing the way they do without really believing in Jesus deep in your heart.”

DEPAUL INTERNATIONAL: IGNITING A CHARITY LIKE A GREAT FIRE

BY FR. J. PATRICK MURPHY, C.M.



MARK
MCGREEVY

An interview with Mark McGreevy, Depaul Group Chief Executive, in 2017, highlighting the work of Depaul International and its subsidiaries. The following is an edited transcript.

What is Depaul International?

Depaul started as a partnership within the Vincentian Family. Our services for the homeless are cradle-to-grave, including mother-and-baby service in Ukraine, caring for street drinkers in Ireland, teens on the streets in the U.K., people striving to find their way back into society in the U.S., and hospice care for elderly who are homeless in Slovakia. We intend to follow Vincent, sending us to the poorest of the poor.

What are the distinctive features of Depaul?

The first thing I say to new staff is, “You’re not part of a 27-year-old charity, you are part of a 400-year tradition.” The heart of everything good at Depaul is the values inherited from our Vincentian tradition. We offer the Vincentian Values Course, now in its 12th year. Every year, 13 to 15 staff members from around the world visit Paris, where we walk the Vincentian Heritage Trail. We follow up by spending several days teaching leadership modeled on Vincentian values, including leader as servant, visionary, catalyst and mentor. We take the course to the U.S. and Ukraine. We choose to be strongly Vincentian.

What has Depaul accomplished so far?

We have grown from a very small charity in North London, supported by Princess Diana in 1990, serving around 40 homeless young people. Today we are a charity working in seven countries—the U.K., Ireland, U.S., Slovakia, France, Ukraine and Croatia—working with over 22,000 homeless people. In size and scale, Depaul International has grown to over 800 full-time staff and 1,500 volunteers.

Service to the poor and homeless is central to the mission of Depaul International. More than 1,500 volunteers serve people in need in seven countries.



What is next for Depaul?

We just opened a charity in Croatia. Currently there are three or four other countries under consideration. Most interesting perhaps is the founding of the Famvin Homeless Alliance. How do we bring together all the projects across the Vincentian Family under one umbrella as a movement?

In size and scale, Depaul International has grown to over 800 full-time staff and 1,500 volunteers.

How does the Congregation of the Mission fit with Depaul?

The C.M.s have been tremendous, especially in the United States. They provided office headquarters to start up in Philadelphia and our existing headquarters at DePaul University. They serve on our boards of governance. They help deliver values training globally. For what the Congregation of the Mission has already given, we are grateful.

▶ Read more at vincentian.org/depaul-international.



MEMORIALS AND TRIBUTES

In prayer and gratitude, we lift up those who have made gifts between October 26, 2017, and February 4, 2018. We apologize for any names inadvertently omitted or misspelled.

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VINCENTIAN TRIVIA

- 1. The correct answer is **D**.
- 2. The correct answer is **B**.
- 3. The correct answer is **B**.



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join us in prayer and offer your support. Visit us online at vincentian.org.

THE SPIRIT AT WORK IN KENYA

For more than 30 years, Vincentian priests and brothers have ministered in Kenya, East Africa. They are serving at parishes and outstations, schools and seminaries for future priests.

Your support of the Vincentians of the Western Province will help the growing Church in Kenya meet the spiritual and material needs of the poor. Please make a gift to support our Kenya mission. To learn more, visit vincentian.org/your-support.

