

Vincentian Spirituality

Fr. Mark Noonan CM



Vincent Desaul

Vincentian Family Worldwide



**8-12
JANUARY
2020**

**AT THE BEGINNING OF
OUR 5TH CENTURY:
THE VINCENTIAN
FAMILY MOVING
FORWARD**

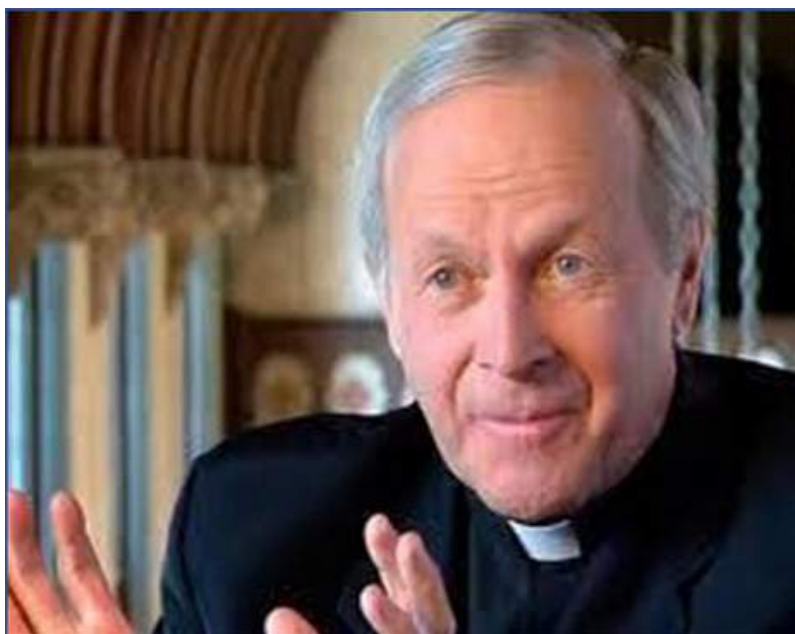
**INTERNATIONAL
LEADERS
MEETING
OF 150
BRANCHES
ROME**



Vincentian Family In Ireland



- Vincentian Fathers
- International Association of Charity (Ladies of Charity)
- Daughters of Charity
- Society of St. Vincent de Paul
- Association of the Miraculous Medal
- Holy Faith Sisters
- Vincentian Partnership for Social Justice (Holy Faith are Partners)
- Depaul International
- Vincentian Lay Missionaries



Under the leadership of Fr. Robert Moloney CM
International Vincentian Family – FamVin
First meeting June 1995 Paris

- Irish Vincentian Family – May 2017
- National Council of the Vincentian Family - NCVF
- Meets monthly - Chairperson Sr. Claire McKiernan DC
- Holy Faith representative - Sr. Veronica Maguire
- The NCVF hopes to:
 - ***Celebrate the charism of St. Vincent de Paul***
 - ***Communicate the charism more widely***
 - ***Develop new projects to alleviate poverty.***

Legacy of St. Vincent de Paul

Love for people living in poverty

Compassion for those rejected by
society – on the margins

Tolerance of difference and a
non-judgemental attitude

Collaboration is key!

The Way of St. Vincent de Paul

Vincent didn't have a spirituality
- he had a WAY

God speaks to us through events,
people and circumstances

Vincent's way is dynamic
- rooted in what is happening

- Providence leading through events,
people and circumstances.

Vincent's Way - 3 Steps

Experiences

The Gospel

Action

Vincentian spirituality is a spirituality
distilled from life.

CONTEMPLATION **AND** ACTION

- “The life of a missionary ought to be the life of a Carthusian in the house, and an apostle in the countryside” **Monsieur Vincent**
- The work flows from the contemplation. The work leads back to contemplation.
- The work is coloured and enriched by the contemplation. The contemplation is coloured and enriched by the work.
- “Let us all really devote ourselves to the practice of meditation, since through it all good things come to us” **Monsieur Vincent**

CONTEMPLATION **AND** ACTION

– Thomas Merton

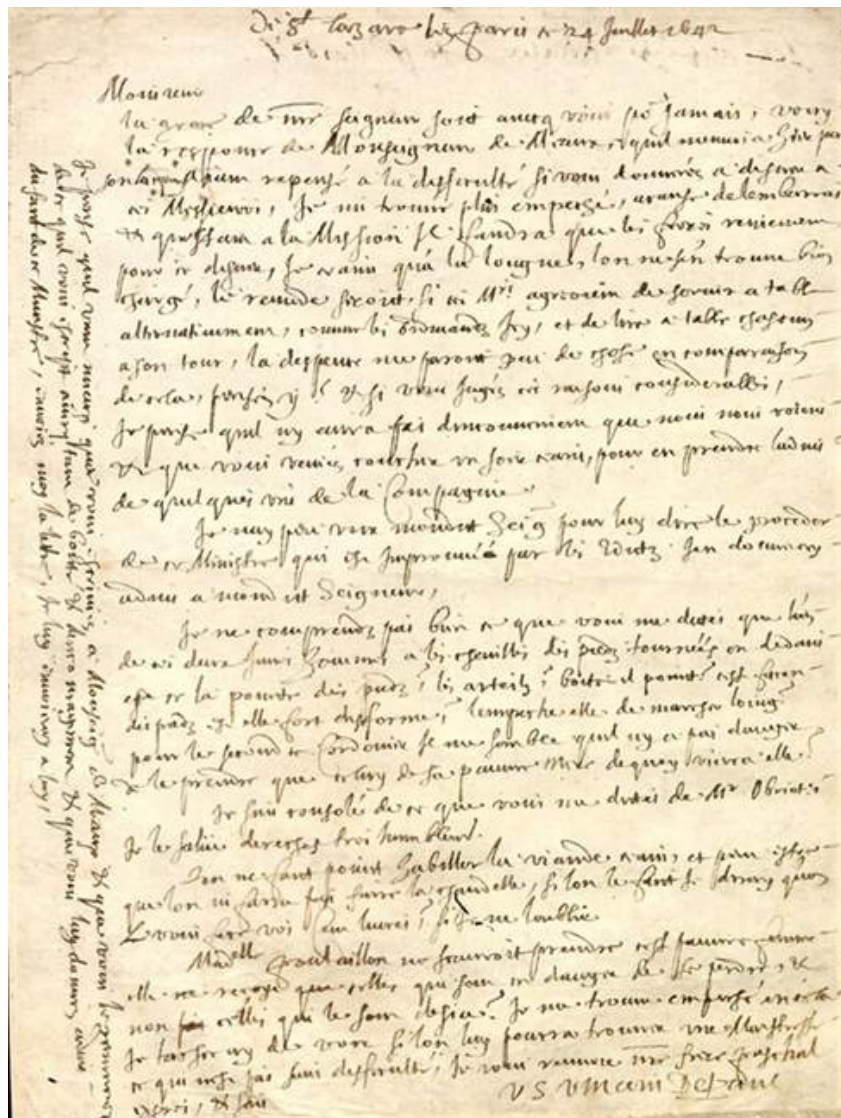
What is the relation of contemplation to action?

Simply this.

Anyone who attempts to act and do things for others or for the world without deepening his or her own self-understanding, freedom, integrity and capacity to love will not have anything to give others.

They will communicate nothing but the contagion of his or her own obsessions, aggressiveness, ego centered ambitions, delusions about ends and means, and doctrinaire prejudices and ideas"

Letter Writing Formation for Mission



Vincent wrote 30,000 letters to the confreres and the sisters, especially Louise de Marillac. We have only about 3,000 in existence at present.

The letters were a way of getting those on mission to reflect on their experience of mission. Letters to Vincent and his reply were a learning for Vincent himself and for those to whom he wrote.

Following Christ as Evangelizer and Servant of the Poor

- the keystone of Vincentian Spirituality

FOR VINCENT DE PAUL, A SINGLE FOCUS INSPIRED
EVERYTHING: THE PERSON OF JESUS.

“JESUS CHRIST IS THE RULE OF THE MISSION”

HE UNDERSTOOD HIS VOCATION WAS TO
CONTINUE THE MISSION OF JESUS IN HIS TIME.
OUR VOCATION IS TO CONTINUE THE MISSION OF
JESUS IN OUR TIME.

**“WE STRIVE TO PROCLAIM, BY WORD AND ACTION,
THE LOVE AND TRUTH OF JESUS TO THE PEOPLE
OF OUR DAY”**

(HOLY FAITH CONS. 2)

CHRIST THE EVANGELIZER AND SERVANT OF THE POOR



St. Vincent de Paul
Pray For Us

“He scarcely had a human face in His Passion, and passed for a madman in the mind of the gentiles and a stumbling block in the mind of the Jews. With all that, he describes himself as the Evangelizer of the Poor: ‘to preach the good news to the poor he has sent me’.”

Vincent’s spirituality flows from contemplation of this Christ. This Christ was the driving force that generated both the incredible activity and the daily prayer of Vincent de Paul. He urged his followers to contemplate this Christ again and again.

“He sends us, like the apostles, to bring the fire everywhere, to bring this divine fire, this fire of love...”

LOVE OF CHRIST AND LOVE OF THE POOR ARE ONE

Vincent urged his followers not just to act, but to pray, and not just to pray but also to act.

Some followers questioned the importance of giving time to pray when there was so much work to be done.

“We have to sanctify those activities by seeking God in them....We make our primary concern the interior life.... Once we’re grounded in seeking God’s glory in this way, we can be assured the rest will follow”

LEAVING GOD FOR GOD



“Whenever necessity or obedience calls them to the service of persons who are poor and other duties, these must always be preferred to their devotional practices, and reflect that in so doing they are leaving God for God”

“If the good pleasure of God were that you should go on a Sunday to nurse a sick person instead of going to Mass, even though it is a matter of obligation, you should do it.”

(Vincent de Paul to the Daughters of Charity)

VINCENT'S TRUST IN DIVINE PROVIDENCE

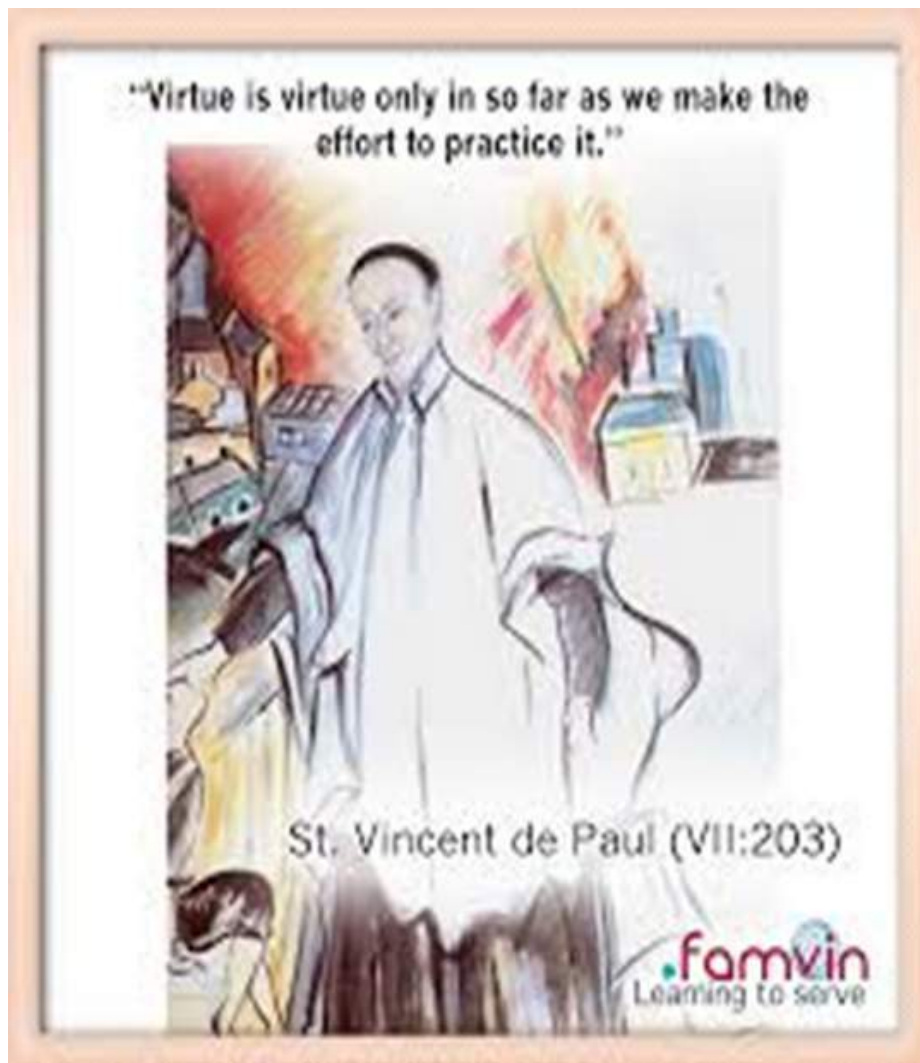
God is here present in events, persons and circumstances.

"Let us abandon ourselves to the Providence of God and be on our guard against anticipating it"

The Providence of God is to believe in the attentive presence of a personal caring God who knows us even in the extremes of human living: abundance and poverty, light and darkness, love and hate, grace and sin, plan and disruption, peace and violence, health and sickness, life and death.



“We will therefore not send sisters to Champigny because no one seems in favour of it. I fear however that you did not allow Providence a free hand but attempted something Providence didn’t want. My God, Monsieur, how good it is to trust Providence on these occasions without wanting to anticipate her orders!”



VINCENTIAN VIRTUES

Congregation of the Mission:
Humility, Simplicity, Meekness,
Mortification, Zeal for souls

Daughters of Charity
Humility, Simplicity, Charity

Holy Faith Sisters
Faith, Humility, Simplicity, Charity

SIMPLICITY

Being Passionate for the Truth

“Simplicity is the virtue I love the most, I call it my gospel”

- Vincent called his passion for the truth “simplicity”
- In Vincent’s eyes, **Jesus is utterly simple**, he **speaks the truth, says things as they are**. His intentions are **pure**, referring all things in life to God
- Simplicity means **genuineness, transparency**.
- Vincent would say to us:
“Have passion for the truth. Be true. Be simple”

Humility

Having an overriding Confidence in God

“It is the foundation of all evangelical perfection”

“It is the core of the spiritual life. If a person has it every good thing will come along with it”

For Vincent, humility entailed the recognition that all good comes from God. We must acknowledge our own limitations and sinfulness and have confidence in God’s faithfulness and goodness.

Living in simplicity, humility and charity is liberating!

“Those detached from a love for worldly possessions, from the greedy desire for pleasures and from their own will, become the children of God and enjoy perfect freedom, for that’s to be found in God alone.”

COMMUNITY FOR MISSION



His followers live his charism not simply as isolated workers but as brothers and sisters who channel their common energy, their common love, their common creativity towards practical service of the poor.

Collaboration is key - Ní neart go cur le ceile!

SECRET OF VINCENT'S SUCCESS

- He put God first – he prayed for an hour every day.
- He was a man of great love. He loved people living in poverty
- He saw the need and brought great organisational skills to remedy the need.
- He was able to delegate, let people make mistakes and to learn from them.
- He kept in touch with projects through letters.
- He was a bridge builder equally at home in palaces or hovels.
- He combined a practical Christianity with a certain mysticism – enabled him to see Christ in the poor.

St. Vincent de Paul was very ordinary and very human – yet, “He just about transformed the face of the Church!”

Reflective Questions:

What inspires me from this presentation of Vincentian Spirituality?

What do I find most helpful in the presentation?

How does the presentation challenge me?

What action might it call me to take?

Can I see a link between St. Vincent de Paul's 'Way' and our own Holy faith mission priorities?

[Faith Formation](#) | [Support for Struggling People](#) | [Care for the Earth](#)

How could this Vincentian Spirituality help us in our preparation for General Chapter?

