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WELCOME TO FAMVIN NEWS!

We invite you to email us your news of events, projects, successes, photos, or small videos (for Famvin.org) that illustrate your work. We also encourage Letters to the Editor.

You may suggest a feature story to us or a person of interest for our Q and A section. The Q and A can be a member of FamVin or a person whose life has been enriched and improved through Vincentian ministry.

We hope you enjoy this issue! Tell us what you think. We welcome recommendations for improvement.

Vincentian Family Communications Commission

TO CONTACT US OR TO SUBMIT EDITORIAL MATERIAL, EMAIL: NEWS@FAMVIN.ORG
In my fifteen years of distributing Miraculous Medals, even up to this very day, I still get amazed with the influx of testimonies and the many people who come back to share their miracle stories which they attribute to the Blessed Mother and the sacramental she had gifted us hundreds of years ago in the Medal of the Immaculate Conception, which later came to be more popularly known as the Miraculous Medal. We wear sacramentals such as these - particularly the Miraculous Medal - to remind ourselves of our consecration to Mary. It reminds us of our true identity and mission as Christians. The call to mission and challenge of the times to us as Christians is to become Christians with credibility and strong convictions. However, we may only be able to do this if we ourselves firmly believe in what we stand for and proclaim our faith with much love. It is only in this way that we may be able to allow God to fill us with His Spirit, that we may become effective and loving proclaimers of the faith.

It is saddening how at times, we only become zealous in our faith when we learn of, see, or experience miracles. We become too engrossed with the extraordinary, while we forget Him from whom all these graces come. A true miracle happens when, as we come closer to Mary and our Lord Jesus, her Son, we learn how to be more patient and understanding of our sisters and brothers. When we learn how to put the needs of others ahead of ours, when we learn to give and forgive, and love like He loves us - that is a true miracle.

May we, like Mary conceived without sin, be reminded that we are first blessed and loved by God. Before there came original sin, there had already been original grace. We were loved and blessed first. We were gifted by God, thus there is so much that we can give and share. This is the image of Mary in the Miraculous Medal - on the Medal, we see the image of someone full of grace. Her outstretched arms and hands open signify a readiness in giving and sharing the blessings that come from God. Like Mary, may we be active hearers and doers of the will of God - propagating the faith and Good News of Jesus here and now. May we, ourselves, learn how to become the Good News to others, especially the Poor, rather than passively waiting to receive the Good News. May we be the Good News to our sisters and brothers.

May we be the Good News to our sisters and brothers.

This is the message and the miracle the Miraculous Medal brings. If Mary - a human being like us and one with us - became an instrument to bring Christ to this world, may we too, like her, bear and bring Christ the Good News to the world at this very moment. As we grow deeper in our love and devotion to Mary, may it also inspire us and challenge us to be better Christians - credible, true to our word, active listeners and doers of the Word of God, here and now.

O Mary conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to you!
Vincentian visit to needy families; to play with children who had nothing. It was shortly after his death that I joined the Conferences.

Q. How did you approach this reality? Was there an episode, a particular meeting, that decisively influenced your choice?

A. I have been a member for 31 years now, but I have always been involved in the Conference's tasks of evangelization and social assistance to marginalized groups, and I have also carried out some service assignments at the national level. I am currently National President of Spain. Yes, there was a meeting that influenced my decision. It happened shortly after my appointment as president of the International Historical Commission, which forced me to read a lot about Federico Ozanam. My interest in Frederick, for his studies at the Sorbonne, for being the precursor of the Social Doctrine of the Church, for everything he wrote on social justice, for being the one who best reinterpreted the teaching of St. Vincent for the laity, is what made me fall in love with this reality.

Q. The Society of St. Vincent de Paul is among the oldest known Catholic charitable organizations in the world: what does it mean to be its President? And what does it mean to you personally?

A. The Society of Saint Vincent de Paul is a civil association made up of lay Catholics, founded in 1833 in Paris. It was in 1845, with a Brief of Gregory XVI, that the Holy See granted it recognition.

The General President personifies the unity of the Society in the world. Leading with a spirit of service an organization of lay people present in 155 countries, each with its own culture and particularities, requires an effort, not only from the General President, but from the entire team, to maintain unity in a community which is a sign of the love of Christ. To do this it is necessary for our confreres to feel part of a single Conference of friends, which extends throughout the world.

Personally I remember my father, who will see me from Heaven, from whom I learned as a child to experience the

Q. Let's talk about your action program as President: is “Growing together in faith” one of the initiatives you have included in view of the canonization of Blessed Ozanam? What is it about?

A. The principle of the Conferences is friendship and the dual purpose for which they are created is to be useful to our brothers and to ourselves. After the act of faith came the act of charity.

Sometimes we are caught up in the affairs of the Conference and we tend to secularize ourselves, to measure ourselves by the kilos of food or clothes we distribute and not by the spiritual help we give. As our founder in Spain, Santiago de Masarnau, said: “If we measure ourselves with this, the Conferences will disappear, not in the eyes of men, but in the eyes of God.” The future canonization of Ozanam should be a spiritual stimulus and continue his thought for all his brothers.

I commissioned a program in this sense to the religious advisors of the General Council, Father José Francisco Orozco CM and Father Andrés Motto CM.
Q. Among your other proposals is the establishment of an International Vincentian Day, celebrated from time to time in different countries. How do you imagine it?

A. Being present in so many countries gives us a great opportunity to make ourselves known and also obtain human and financial resources to support our social works.

An annual international event, faithful to our founding principles, through art and culture as a universal language, is a perfect meeting point to give greater visibility to everything we do.

Q. Young people are important to you. Your program includes various activities dedicated to them and also funds to support initiatives in their favor. What is the face of Vincentian youth today from your point of view? And what could be done to bring more and more young people closer to the Vincentian reality?

A. The 2017 International Youth Day in Salamanca allowed me to personally see the reality of young people; 120 young people from different countries came to Spain. Talking to them, among other concerns, they told me that they needed small resources to carry out their social works. For this reason I would like to strengthen Vincentian Youth Day, July 4th, the feast of Pier Giorgio Frassati, to promote a special collection among all the countries of the Confederation for the benefit of young people. Furthermore, I want to promote international exchanges.

In our national Spanish magazine and also in the Ozanam Network, we have a permanent section for young people, where they talk about their experiences and you are truly amazed by the love, faith and spirit of service with which they act.

I think that young people need concrete projects and certain resources to develop their Vincentian mission. The value of friendship is essential for the Conference to continue and grow.

Q. An interesting chapter of your program refers to the Rule of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul which says: “The Society constantly strives for renewal, adapting to changing world conditions.” How do you think you can implement this?

A. It is very important to explore new creative forms of financing, to address the changing types of poverty we face. This is a general requirement.

THE OBJECTIVE OF EXCELLENCE IN EVERYTHING WE DO

Likewise, I will appoint a person in charge who will deal with the Laudato Si’ international twinning projects, to try to contribute to resolving the dramatic consequences of environmental degradation in the lives of the poorest in the world.

There are other themes, such as the objective of excellence in everything we do, the promotion of training, the improvement of communication, the modernization of our processes and the gradual digital transformation of the Superior Council.

All this, to continue to provide a quality service to the Councils and Conferences, so that they can continue to maintain close and personal attention to those who suffer, addressing the shortcomings of both their material and spiritual poverty.

Q. Finally, I would like to ask you to share a passage or a phrase with the readers of our newsletter; something that you identify with in your Vincentian journey.

A. This reflection by Frederic Ozanam that he made in Pisa in 1853, when he was fatally ill, moved me, because it is the essence, the pillars, of the foundation of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul: “Although they speak different languages, their hands always meet with such fraternal warmth that they could easily recognize us by the same sign by which they recognized the first Christians: ‘See how they love each other!’”

THERE’S AN APP FOR THAT!

BY BETH NICOL

Vincent was a great believer in the power of communication. He wrote many, many letters. He stayed in contact with others. And now there is a new way to stay in touch and up to date with news and reflections for the Vincentian Family: FAMVIN is now an app!

The FAMVIN App keeps you up to date with our latest news and reflections. The display is optimized for easy reading on a mobile device, and it offers easy access to the Vincentian Retreat materials and information on upcoming events. The FAMVIN App can notify you of updates for Spanish and English news and reflections as they are released. News in French is also available.

Communication is a two-way street. With the App you can easily submit news stories and images to our editors for inclusion on the website.

The FAMVIN App is simple to install. It is available via the Google Play Store and the App Store (Apple) as a free App. To get yours, you can go to the Play Store (Android) or the App Store (Apple) and search for “FAMVIN.” Or you can use the QR codes below.

FAMVIN NEWS
Lazio, Campania, Calabria, Sicily... and then Puglia and Basilicata, Tuscany and Liguria, Piedmont, Lombardy, Emilia-Romagna and Triveneto... No, it is not the stages of a cycling race, but a pilgrimage: the Italian national pilgrimage of the statue of the Virgin of Miraculous Medal. This initiative, organized by the Vincentian priests of Italy, began on November 11, 2020 in the Vatican, with the blessing of Pope Francis to commemorate the 190th anniversary of the apparitions to Saint Catherine Labouré and looking forward to November 27, 2030, when we will celebrate the bicentenary of the apparitions. To date, around 200 parishes have been visited and the number is constantly updated.

“The ‘Three days with Mary’ (Tre giorni con Maria) mission we carry and live within the parish communities is an experience of grace. Even if short, it is an experience that comes into contact with people’s emotions. It is an experience that is aimed at the parish community, a community that experiences an encounter with the Lord every day or on Sunday,” explains Father Mario Sirica, C.M., member of the Three Days with Mary Commission. He continues, “It is a proposal that revives devotion to Mary through catechesis, the sacrament of reconciliation, spiritual dialogs: when we reflect on Mary everything leads to Jesus. It is an experience of grace also for the parish priests who invite us. I have often noticed the surprise of the parish priests in seeing the great turnout on the occasion of the ‘Three days with Mary’ in this time where we read that the turnout in our churches is very low.”

At the invitation of the parish priest, a missionary team puts itself at the service of the parish for “three days” of catechesis, confessions, moments of prayer, listening and sharing for the growth in faith of the Christian community.

“WHEN WE REFLECT ON MARY, EVERYTHING LEADS TO JESUS

At the school of Mary, the perfect believer, the “three days” help us rediscover our being: called to the Christian faith; indwelt by the Holy Spirit; sent to be witnesses of the Gospel.

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Three Days With Mary, continued from page 5

Sr. Ivana Ranieri, D.C., 39, a member of the team of missionaries who prepare and carry out the Three days with Mary explains: “I realized that the moment the pilgrimage begins, and therefore there is arrival of the Madonna in a community, it is as if there was a change. I don’t know how to define it well, but it is truly a time of grace. I realize that people are usually tense about organization and emotion but as soon as we start with the presentation of the mission, with the arrival of the Madonna, enthusiasm arises, we see there is a vitality that is deepened, born within the reality in which we go. I realized that in addition to this moment of tension, all the capabilities of the community also come to the fore: the gifts, the desires to participate.”

To contact the Three Days with Mary Commission, use the e-mail address: tregiorniconmaria@gmail.com
Famed American modern dancer and choreographer Martha Graham (1894-1991) once said: “Nobody cares if you can’t dance well. Just get up and dance.” Her words might describe the success of the international performing arts group Gen Verde that sprinkled its magic on 350 attendees to the North American Vincentian Family Gathering in Chicago, October 26 to 29. Dancing, regardless of talent, can unite people of various backgrounds.

FAMVIN NEWS

CHICAGO GATHERING REVEALS SONG, DANCE AND RESPECTFUL DIALOGUE LEAD TO HARMONY IN DIVERSITY

BY ROSEMARY LALEVÉE CARROLL

Famed American modern dancer and choreographer Martha Graham (1894-1991) once said: “Nobody cares if you can’t dance well. Just get up and dance.”

Her words might describe the success of the international performing arts group Gen Verde that sprinkled its magic on 350 attendees to the North American Vincentian Family Gathering in Chicago, October 26 to 29. Dancing, regardless of talent, can unite people of various backgrounds.

Held at DePaul University-Lincoln Park, the conference offered participants two different tracks for following the theme of “Harmony in Diversity, Working for Social Justice and Fostering a Culture of Encounter through the Arts.” The two tracks were performance and conference.

For over 50 years, Gen Verde has traveled the world bringing disparate groups together in harmony through music and shared talents. Engaging strangers in theater, percussion, dance and singing creates camaraderie to build bridges instead of walls and to propose dialogue instead of intolerance. It also generates new friendships.

“At first I was just standing there with everyone, wondering what am I doing,” said one student from St. John’s University. “Then the music started, and we began to sway and move and then we all just started dancing. And laughing. And talking to each other. It was awesome!”

Rodrigo Rivera, a senior international student from Peru studying foods and nutrition at St. Elizabeth University in New Jersey, and business major Michael Cadavid of Paterson (NJ), also a student at SEU, were lending their voices to the Gen Verde choir. “It’s a lot of fun,” said Rodrigo. “I didn’t know I could be part of a singing group.” Both students are active in campus ministry. “I came to learn more about St. Vincent de Paul,” said Rodrigo. “This program is intriguing.” Michael agreed. “We plan to take what we learned here back to campus.”

Participants in the conference track were asked to reflect on and discuss: How might I better live a culture of encounter in my relationships and my work? What kind of support might I need to stay faithful to this? The facilitator reminded the group that the Spirit creates diversity and also unity and harmony.

At one discussion table Matt, Michele, Michael, Aiden, Paula and Jim agreed “we need to check the ego at the door and focus on the mission at hand. Matt said “that behavior creates fellowship and unity of purpose. That’s how to achieve results.” Matt reminded the table that “when one or more are gathered in God’s name there is love.” Jim said “we need to get out of our safe places and welcome the input and knowledge of others. We need to accept support as much as we give it, to learn as much as we teach.”

Attendees to the gathering left Chicago with a new song and dance, and a way to engage respectful discourse among others where they live, work and minister. All embraced the Vincentian mission to create a culture of encounter with hospitality.

Every year at Christmas, Christians worldwide witness an inner revelation. It’s the story of our unshakable belief in the miracle of the Christ Light, the universal language of love, the universal arm hugging us all. For Vincentians, Christmas is more than a day, it’s a frame of heart. A frame of Vincentian heart.

**WITNESS**

**BY VALERIE ARRABITO**

In May of 2016, I was diagnosed with Triple Negative Breast Cancer. It was a very scary time in my life. The only thing I remember the doctor saying was that this cancer was “rare and aggressive.” I had four children, one with special needs, and all I was able to think about was who will take care of them? At the time, my brother-in-law, Elio, was visiting Lourdes, France where the Blessed Mother appeared to Bernadette. He brought me back water from the spring and a Miraculous Medal.

From the moment I put on the medal, I felt that the Blessed Mother was with me, I was no longer afraid. I knew, wholeheartedly, that she would be by my side through the chemo, the surgery and the radiation. The Sisters of Charity of St. Elizabeth and The Seton Associates kept me in their prayers, which sustained me. However, I am certain, our “Miraculous Mother” walked with me through my journey granting me strength and healing grace through it all. She answered all of our prayers. Today I am cancer free and continue to wear my Miraculous Medal, the Blessed Mother’s protection, everyday! Yes, she was with me through my illness, but I know she is with me always, in every step I take.

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**VINCENTIAN CHRISTMAS MEDITATION**

**THE MIRACLE OF THE CHRIST LIGHT**

**BY ROSEMARY LALEVÉE CARROLL**

Every year at Christmas, television stations around the world offer the old Hollywood movie, “Miracle on 34th Street.” It’s the story of a little girl’s unshakable belief in Santa Claus. A famous line from the movie is “Christmas isn’t just a day, it’s a frame of mind.”

Christmas to us is the unending miracle of Divine Presence, the grace that is God, the Light that is Christ. We are reminded each year of this precious gift and called to renew our willing welcome to the Baby of Bethlehem who was, is, and remains forevermore our best friend on our journey. Christ, the Godman taught us how to live and, more important, how to love. Christ, whose very light shines within us, shows us the way through all the vagaries of life, especially through our darkest moments.

The Miracle of the Christ Light is that it shines within us and from us. We find our true selves and it illuminates the needs of people where we live, work and minister. It spotlights the hungry, homeless, lonely, sick, frightened, often desperate people existing on the margins. It is a beacon to those in need drawing them toward us trusting in our heartfelt response to them. Saint Vincent de Paul reminds us that when we welcome Christ we also welcome those who are mentally ill, fanatics, and poor, just as Jesus did.

Saint Paul tells us the Charity of Christ impels us (2 Cor. 5:14.) His words are the motto of many members of the Vincentian Family. It is the Christ Light that literally pushes us to serve those in need. Now.

Christmas is the one holy day felt by people worldwide. We Know that Christ is the Christmas Spirit that turns Scrooges into benefactors and encourages giving and loving in others. It reminds us that there is something bigger than ourselves. And that maybe this year there can be peace on earth.

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The FAMVIN Digital Network

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Ligia Farráez, coordinator of the FAVILA Council 2019-2023, says that “Initially we thought of developing the process on the figure of guilds, applied in its primary intuition to lawyers. But, reality was setting the pace and invited us to change the course and direction of the bases. The word ‘Guild’ had to be substituted due to the suggestions from most of seven regions in FAVILA is strategically divided in Latin America. The request was clear, because in many places or countries this word has a negative connotation and not a happy one; so it was decided to replace it with CONFRATERNITY.”

The work of the group, the development and accompaniment of the Vincentian Confraternities in the different professions and groups that share the same gifts “is a commitment of the Vincentian Family of Latin America. All this happened by the work and grace of the Holy Spirit.”

The idea of the Confraternities was included in the work plan of the FAVILA Council and this work plan was shared with the National Councils of all Latin American countries, the Vincentian Family Office (VFO) and members of the Executive Board of the International Vincentian Family.

“We cannot better ensure our happiness than by living and dying in the service of the poor.” - St. Vincent de Paul

The process of choosing first coordinators of the Confraternities was carried out by direct contact with people known to the members of the FAVILA Council. Thus, little by little, the first 11 Confraternities were born.

The first one was the ‘Confraternity of Biblical Reflection’. Then, the Confraternity of Vincentian Radio Broadcasters; the Confraternity of Educators; the Confraternity of Lay Advisors; the Confraternity of Psychologists; the Confraternity of Graphic Designers and Publishers; the Confraternity of Lawyers; the Confraternity of Musicians; the Confraternity of Translators; the Confraternity of Alumni and the Confraternity of Indigenous People were formed. Some months later, the Confraternity of Poets and the Confraternity of Vincentians in the Border/Diaspora were added, forming up to then 13 Confraternities.

It is worth mentioning that, in the process of developing the Confraternities, there were two events that drew our attention: one is that in March 1832, a plague epidemic broke out in France, affecting the lives of twenty thousand people.

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In June of that same year, the Daughters of Charity received the first 2,000 medals of the Immaculate Conception, which they began to distribute among the sick, who began to heal and the pandemic began to diminish. For this reason, people began to call it the Miraculous Medal and the name remains until today. Another event is that, on August 23, 1617, St. Vincent organized the first group of pious women of the town, encouraged them to create an association, and commissioned them to take care of the sick in their homes. For this purpose, he gave them a very important rule: “to assist the poor spiritually and corporally.”

It is important to mention these details because precisely on August 23, 2020, in the midst of the Coronavirus Pandemic, which in March of the same year had confined to homes all over the world, the first virtual meeting of the first 13 Confraternities took place; uniting in Vincentian spirit men and women, consecrated and lay, from 10 countries, 3 continents and 3 different languages; who, guided by the Holy Spirit, decided to put their talents in the service of the most needy, and who have as their main motto the call of St. Vincent: “We cannot better ensure our happiness than by living and dying in the service of the poor.” This first meeting inspired more people to join and form other Confraternities that today serve everyone who, looking for help, knocks on the doors of the Vincentians in any part of Latin America.

At this moment, there are 25 Confraternities, 2 of which were born during the IX Latin American Meeting of the Vincentian Family that took place in the Dominican Republic from March 14 to 19, 2023; where the New Latin American Council of the Vincentian Family was also elected continuing the commitment of accompanying the Confraternities.

Accepting St. Vincent’s invitation to “Let us allow our Lord to work; it is his work, and as he wished to begin it, let us be sure that he will finish it, in the way that is most pleasing to him... Keep up the spirit; trust in our Lord, who will be our first and our second in the undertaken endeavor, to the proper task he has called us to.” (SVP). Each Confraternity has invested their talents into the different calls they have received and they work serving God in the person of the poor “by the sweat of their brows and the strength of their arms,” covering different areas of the needs of humanity.

“Let us allow our Lord to work; it is his work, and as he wished to begin it, let us be sure that he will finish it, in the way that is most pleasing to him... Keep up the spirit; trust in our Lord, who will be our first and our second in the undertaken endeavor, to the proper task he has called us to.” (SVP).

CONFRATERNITY OF PSYCHOLOGISTS: It is made up of members who live in different countries. Its objective is to open channels of communication for people from all over Latin America who are looking for emotional support and who can find it and receive the assistance of a Vincentian psychologist. Its mission is to propose actions of welcoming, listening and emotional assistance to members of the Vincentian Family and to people in general; which they have been doing since the time of the Covid-19 pandemic. In Bolivia, they have given courses on how to manage anxiety and emotions; and, they have initiated a process of sharing experiences of social works regarding the intervention in the psychological area.

CONFRATERNITY OF INDOGENOUS VINCENTIANS. It is made up of indigenous and non-indigenous missionaries. It aims to be a space for sharing and mutual support in the living out of the Vincentian charism among the different indigenous people. Their mission is to walk together in fraternity and solidarity, from the richness of the plurality of our indigenous identities, in the following of Jesus Christ in the Vincentian way; and their vision is to be recognized as a source of conversion and life, showing with hope and gratitude the indigenous face of the Vincentian Family, with a prophetic demand: “another world is possible.” Currently, they are preparing the First Meeting of Indigenous Vincentians of Latin America and the Caribbean to be held in Ecuador in April 2024.

CONFRATERNITY OF BIBLICAL REFLECTION. It was the first Confraternity to be formed. They began this experience under the coordination of St. Vincent de Paul School of Theology (ETSVIP), which each week is responsible for preparing, conducting and implementing each of the Sunday Bible readings, from the remote preparation perspective, using the Vincentian Method: Nature, Motives and Means.
Vincentian Confraternities, continued from page 10

Currently, they have the Biblical Reflection based on the Secular Character in Spanish and English. Priests of the Congregation of the Mission, members of MISEVI (Vincentian Lay Missionaries), of the ETSVP (Escuela de Teología San Vicente de Paúl) and of the New Evangelization, from such countries as the United States, El Salvador, Nicaragua and Venezuela, have joined this mission.

CONFRATERNITY OF LAWYERS. With Frederic Ozanam as an example, St. Vincent de Paul as their patron and because of their profession, they decided to form part this Confraternity to attend the command “Let’s go to the poor!” So that they can reach Social Justice through Procurement, Counseling, and Legal Accompaniment free of charge (pro bono). They have members in Mexico, Guatemala, United States, Peru, Dominican Republic, Colombia, Ecuador. There are already three countries that have managed to gather the necessary number of lawyers to form an Association. Another of their objectives is to form an ‘International Bar Association of Vincentian Lawyers’. For now, they are planning a meeting with St. John’s University, New York, USA to form the U.S. Bar Association and share different actions together.

MINUKIDS CONFRATERNITY. The Confraternity of Vincentian Children is made up of parents, teachers, Vincentian friends, girls and boys from various countries of Latin America and the United States. This project of online evangelization for children was born in Casa Maria del Caminante, the community of the Daughters of Charity in Miami, USA following the request of some mothers from Ladies of Charity – AIC Miami, who have received from the Daughters of Charity a one-minute video with the reflection of the Gospel of the day daily. They asked for something similar for their children, since the pandemic had forced to close the catechesis courses. This is how Minukids was born, which means ‘Minutes’ to talk about God to the ‘Kids’. Its mission is to evangelize through short, 3-5 minutes videos, created by children from different countries for children, with a specific theme. It is coordinated by Sister Fanny Amanda Mora, D.C. They have their own communication channel where they publish the catechesis by the children for the children, which can be watched visiting the following link: youtube.com/@UnminutoconElQueVive

CONFRATERNITY OF VINCEN–TEENS. They are young people who get together for their formation and to support the MINUKIDS by creating material and short videos on the Word of God. Like the Minukids, the VicenTeens use digital media to evangelize other young people.

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CONFRATERNITY OF WRITERS AND JOURNALISTS. They share materials, writings and stories. Its objectives are: To announce Jesus the Evangelizer to every interested reader; to promote both Vincentian literature and authors; to be a space for Church and social reflection based on Vincentian spirituality; to share testimonies and anecdotes; to be a means for the revision and editing of what has been written by different Vincentian authors. Each member commits to write a biweekly article and thus achieve the goal of sending one per week to the Community.

CONFRATERNITY OF VINCENTIANS IN THE BORDER/DIASPORA. It originates from the raw experience of marginalization, dispossession and resistance, without wanting to stay deaf to the hopeful cry of the moment in when they can meet, shape and share the beautiful adventure of starting the Confraternity of Vincentians in the Border / Diaspora. It is managed mainly by 100 experienced volunteers, men, women and youth coming from various backgrounds, with the aim to build, empower, lead and uplift the marginalized and oppressed. As members of the body of Christ, the group works to implement the organizations’ project and core Vincentian values of solidarity, serving in hope. They have accomplished a great feat in successful community projects for immigrants, street sleepers and engaged in meetings with the Causas Raíz Organization, collaborate in projects and support migrant brothers and sisters in every step of their journey. They are committed to acquiring skills, empowerment, promoting self-dignity and addressing material needs. Their mission is: To alleviate the suffering of the poorest of the poor; to improve the quality of life; to promote human dignity and empower the vulnerable. Their vision is to unite all in the love of Christ with the core values of humility, simplicity, meekness, gentleness, zeal and temperance.

CONFRATERNITY OF GRAPHIC DESIGNERS. It was created to help design web pages, logos and everything that members of the various branches of the Vincentian Family need or may need. With all this they have put their talents at the service of those who are in need. In addition to being in charge of publishing, thanks to them, many of the Confraternities already have their own logo and are still working on it.

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CONFRATERNITY OF VINCENTIAN MUSICIANS. After the First Festival of the Vincentian Song (Spanish version), the idea was to continue the initiated adventure and develop it in order to continue the festival in different languages (English, French, Portuguese, etc.), as well as a wide range of specific options that could be assumed with all the members of this confraternity. They work in areas that, undoubtedly, promote the presence of Vincentian music and musicians in the media. They share their compositions and the work they do. They are currently developing virtual music courses. They have conducted two Festivals of Vincentian Music (2019 and 2023). They created the Hymn of the MINUKIDS (Confraternity of Vincentian boys and girls).

CONFRATERNITY OF POETS AND STORYTELLERS. They take advantage of the potential of reasoning, weaving ideas under the wisdom of the Holy Spirit, to be the voice of those who have no voice and make the maxims of the Gospel their raison d'être and the ink of their words. They are committed to the teachings of St. Vincent de Paul, to reach Christ by seeking Him in the most needy. Since they belong to the various branches of the Vincentian Family, they wanted to make a concrete commitment to put their writings, ideas and words at the service of the most needy and impoverished in all regions and countries. They are few, but they are creative and very persevering. They are trying to make a digital book with their poems.

CONFRATERNITY OF VINCENTIAN TRANSLATORS (CONTRAVIC). Its main objective is to create a solid group of professionals who can provide linguistic service to the worldwide Vincentian Family, since communication is essential in the expansion of the charism. More and more documents and events have to be translated into more languages than ever before. The nature of this confraternity is to unite members of the different branches of the Vincentian Family who are willing to contribute their linguistic knowledge on behalf of all members of the movement worldwide, providing support with simultaneous translations when required. And, also, translations of formation documents. The translators are available speaking Spanish, English, French, Portuguese, Italian, Polish, Slovak, German and Creole and let’s hope the number will be growing.

CONFRATERNITY OF VINCENTIAN HOMEMAKERS. They are homemakers of various professions, who support migrant women in the United States. The mission of this confraternity is focused on empowering women, through courses and virtual training workshops, in Spanish and at no cost, inspired by the Word of God and whose facilitators are professionals in the areas of administration, economy, psychology, entrepreneurship, business, personal finances and Ecology (techniques of environmental care from the homes), who offer orientation in each area providing the necessary tools for their optimal performance and thus achieve the necessary empowerment for personal and family fulfillment. Among the work it has done is the Charity project, helping children in vulnerable conditions in Guatemala, which consists of a campaign to donate sports equipment to the Children’s Soccer School.

VINCENTIAN CONFRATERNITY AT THE SERVICE OF PEOPLE LIVING ON THE STREETS. The objective of this Confraternity is to unite efforts as a Vincentian Family, to offer a better material service and integral evangelization of the poor, through communication and common projects. Through this union they seek to follow Christ, evangelizer and servant of the poor; to develop a profoundly missionary spirituality; to enrich the Vincentian Charism; to guarantee its living out in future generations and to unify the forces of the Vincentian Family for the benefit of the service to our brothers and sisters who live on the streets. They do an extraordinary job. They share their experiences of the work they do in providing material and spiritual help to the homeless. They develop formation themes in their meetings.

CONFRATERNITY OF SOCIAL WORKERS. The Social Worker always seeks change, responds to it and uses it as an opportunity. They have members in the United States, Chile, Peru, Colombia, Guatemala and Puerto Rico. Their purpose is to create alliances for systematization, to show the projects carried out by the Vincentian Family in Latin America. They express the great value that means the beautiful vision of expansion to the whole world, on the certain commitment that everyone can be the voice of the vulnerable, who personify the most beloved of the Father. The participation of the social workers makes the Confraternity acquire a greater impact in favor of the most disadvantaged.

CONFRATERNITY OF VINCENTIAN RADIO AND TV. It is formed by radio and television professionals from different countries in Latin America and the United States. Through the broadcasts of their respective radio and television channels, they disseminate the Vincentian values, spirituality and charism. They share spaces to produce Vincentian material, testimonies and publicize the work of FAVILA.

CONFRATERNITY OF PROGRAMMERS. As computer professionals, they put their talents to help the Vincentian Family in everything related to that field. Now, they are working on the migration of the database to a friendlier or simpler system.

CONFRATERNITY OF AGROECOLOGY AND SOLIDARITY ECONOMY. Because they have points in common, they have united with the Confraternity of Producers. Together they are sharing knowledge and efforts to put their skills at the service of those who need them in the field of agriculture and produce. Although they are few, they have a big heart and they are working to find sponsors to collaborate in a project called ‘33 dollars for a dignified life’; which is born from the simple sharing with a humble woman, who comes to ask for something to eat, with her children still young and her husband who, because of a serious illness and lack of medicines to stabilize his health, no longer can work. Although it is one of the newly created confraternities, it has a promising future. They are still working on the points that will decide their mission and vision. In the first meeting they had, they were studying the essential concepts of agroecology.

CONFRATERNITY OF VINCENTIAN PHYSICIANS. It has just been born and is a fruit of the IX Meeting of FAVILA. Its purpose, among others, is to bring together Vincentian Medical Doctors of different specialties, worldwide, who wish to share the Vincentian charism to provide support to the most needy; to produce and share informative material on health issues, aimed at other...
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confraternities to collaborate with their programs to support the poorest; to promote spiritual growth in the Vincentian charism in their own Confraternity, coordinating formation programs with other confraternities.

CONFRATERNITY OF SOCIAL NETWORKS (CONVIREDES). During the meeting when the first 13 Vincentian Confraternities were presented and inspired by the Holy Spirit, the idea was born to create a confraternity that would be dedicated to use modern communication media to make the work of other Confraternities known to the world in order to evangelize, promote and share how the Vincentian Charism works for and with others... this is how the CONVIREDES Confraternity was born. Its mission is to support the Confraternities and the Vincentian Family in general, sharing on social networks, the work they do within the Vincentian Family and in favor of the most needy. In this way, as St. Vincent de Paul used to say, making the Gospel effective.” Currently, they have pages on Facebook, Instagram, TikTok and Twitter.

CONFRATERNITY OF VINCENTIAN ASSESSORS. From the experience of the Vincentian Lay Formation Schools in Latin America and recognizing their valuable curriculum and content, the idea and need to create this confraternity has arisen. Its function is to support FAVILA with formation, as well as to advise the planning processes. Its vision is to link and gather all the Vincentian experiences and radiate the potential towards Latin America, taking into account Central America, Colombia, Brazil, etc. as a first impulse. Lay Vincentian Formation for the entire Vincentian Family – articulation, sharing, generation, etc. - is the broad spectrum of its raison d’être.

CONFRATERNITY OF VINCENTIAN TEACHERS (CEVAL). It is a very large Confraternity and part of the work of the Consortium of Vincentian Schools. It is composed of members from different Vincentian branches such as: Congregation of the Mission, Daughters of Charity, Society of St. Vincent de Paul, FAVILA (Latin American Vincentian Family), AMAVI (Association of Vincentian Teachers), Vincentian Marian Youth, and others; as well as from different countries like Argentina, Dominican Republic, Honduras, El Salvador, Colombia, Puerto Rico, Bolivia, Guatemala, Nicaragua, etc. Its mission is: to strengthen the educational work and to unite Vincentian criteria towards education; to know the educational reality of Latin America and how to respond from the perspective of the charism; to create a space for meeting and reflection, from the experience as Vincentian educators; to strengthen each other as Vincentian Teachers from the opportunity to share the gifts that the Our Lord and the Virgin Mary have entrusted to them; to share methodologies and teaching strategies in the Vincentian Charism.

“Respect and love for others, joy in the mission, personal contact with the needy, humility and empathy.” SVP

CONFRATERNITY OF FORMER STUDENTS. The former students of the Vincentian educational centers are guided by the basic desire to serve Christ in the poor. Inspired by the charism of St. Vincent de Paul, St. Louise de Marillac and others, they serve Christ in the poor through their professions and works. Their solidarity actions are focused on supporting the Educational Centers that once gave them the bread of teaching and that today need support in the different activities and projects they carry out, helping to cover the needs of the impoverished boys and girls that make up the educational establishment. During the pandemic, they carried out a good project to get sponsors for underprivileged children in schools run by the Daughters of Charity. The Pilot Plan was implemented in the Dominican Republic and also in Guatemala, providing tablets, mobile phones and funds to pay for internet so that the children could connect to their online classes.

It is worth mentioning that, thanks to the joint work started by the Confraternities of Vincentian Assessors, Teachers and Alumni, the idea of forming a World Consortium of Vincentian Schools’ arose, taking into account that in Spain alone there are more than 200 schools that would be added to the rest that already exist in other countries of the world.

Members of each Confraternity have monthly meetings to follow up on their projects. From 2020 to date there have been monthly webinars organized by each Confraternity and four meetings of coordinators have been held.

Either individually or linking with each other, the Confraternities are working on different projects that are opening doors and building bridges that lead us to cover, even a little, the needs of those who come to receive the help offered. It would take a long time and a lot of space to talk about and describe all the work the Vincentian Confraternities have been doing up to now. That work is a pinpoint in the infinite space of the needs of the poor and marginalized who cry out for help around the world.

May this report serve as a call to all those who have something to offer in favor of others, and also as an encouragement of hope for the suffering Christ who lives in every needy person. May God help us to put our gifts and talents to work with “respect and love of neighbor, joy in mission, personal contact with the needy, humility and empathy.” Let us not get tired of “making the Gospel effective.”

If you want to be part of one of the Confraternities or form a new one, you can send an email to: conviredes@gmail.com.