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# Introductory Material

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**Vincentian Studies Institute Monographs  
I.**

**The Vincentian Family Tree  
A Genealogical Study**

**Institutes of Consecrated Life  
Societies of Apostolic Life  
Lay Associations  
And  
Non-Catholic Religious Institutes**

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## ***Dedication***

*To men, women, and children oppressed by poverty and injustice throughout the world. May their struggle teach us to discover Jesus Christ in new ways and challenge the followers of Vincent de Paul and Louise de Marillac to refound the Company of Charity for today!*



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The author acknowledges that because of the multilingual nature of the research some of the sources used might contain historical flaws, which were not detected. As far as possible attempts have been made to correct errors, resolve discrepancies, and cite all sources. In some instances documentation about the origins of several institutes was not obtainable, and it was impossible to resolve particular historical questions. In some cases different sources reported conflicting information. In this monograph a distinction is made between the Vincentian Family and the Extended Vincentian Family. The former refers to the Congre-

gation of the Mission and the Company of the Daughters of Charity (the “Double Family of Saint Vincent de Paul”), and the latter to all communities with kinship to the Vincentian charism. May this contribution enhance our living the way of Vincent de Paul and serve as a springboard for collaboration among his disciples who strive to continue his mission of evangelization and charity. May it inspire new scholarship about our cousins in the Vincentian family and the bonds of kinship that unite the communities related to Saint Vincent de Paul in fidelity to his charism.

This monograph is available from the Vincentian Heritage Department at DePaul University Bookstore, Chicago, Illinois 60614.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>DePaul University Bookstore, Vincentian Heritage Department, 2419 North Sheffield Avenue, Chicago, IL 60614 USA. Tel. 1-800-700-8086. FAX: 1-312-325-7701.



Saint Vincent de Paul

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## Introduction

The year 2000 will mark the 400th Anniversary of the ordination of Vincent de Paul (1581-1660) to the priesthood by François de Bourdeilles, bishop of Périgueux, at Château l'Évêque, France, on 23 September 1600. This anniversary calls us to remember the outstanding legacy of charity and evangelization that Saint Vincent bequeathed to his spiritual descendants. This patrimony calls us to celebrate and study the implications of our Vincentian heritage by entering into "a dialogue between the past and the present . . . in an attempt to understand Saint Vincent's charism as it was lived and is lived today."<sup>2</sup> Over the years the extended Vincentian family has grown to include several hundred diverse groups of women and men, laity and religious, Catholics and non-Catholics. Such a record testifies to the ongoing impact of the extraordinary life of this single individual.

### *Vitality of the Vincentian Charism*

The mission, spirit, and rules of Vincent de Paul have been adapted to many cultures since their emergence in seventeenth-century France and have generated a majestic family tree. Its largest branches bear communities with which Vincent de Paul was involved personally, those under his patronage, or those founded by members of his own communities.<sup>3</sup> Another large limb supports the many institutes of women that follow the foundational *Common Rules of the Daughters of Charity*. This rule evolved through Saint Vincent's collaboration for

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<sup>2</sup>John P. Prager, C.M., "The Poor as the Starting Point for Vincentian Studies: A Liberation Hermeneutic," *Vincentiana*, no. 1 (1991): 140-45. See also Robert P. Maloney, C.M., *The Way of Vincent de Paul. A Contemporary Spirituality in the Service of the Poor* (New York: New City Press, 1992).

<sup>3</sup>For an interesting discussion of Pope Leo XIII's 1885 brief designating Saint Vincent de Paul universal patron of charity, see Otto Schnelle, C.M., "100 Jahre Patronat d. hl. Vinzenz," *MEGVIS*, no.11 (1986): 7-8.



Saint Louise de Marillac

more than thirty years with Louise de Marillac. Together they developed it from reflection on their lived reality, the concrete experiences of the original sisters, and their service of the sick poor.<sup>4</sup>

Other large limbs bear communities generated by the impact of the *Common Rules of the Congregation of the Mission*. More than thirty years elapsed between the foundation of the Congregation and the distribution of its rules in 1658 when Saint Vincent began a year long series of conferences to explain them. More branches of the family tree have offshoots of communities that share Saint Vincent's mission—serving

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<sup>4</sup>John E. Rybolt, C.M., "From Life to the Rules: The Genesis of the Rules of the Daughters of Charity," *VH* 12, no. 2 (Fall 1991): 173-99. See also Miguel Pérez Flores, C.M., "The Common Rules of the Daughters of Charity," trans. Stafford Poole, C.M., *VH* 8, no. 1 (Winter 1987): 1-26; Margaret Flinton, D.C., *Louise de Marillac--The Social Aspect of Her Work* (New City Press: New York, 1992), 39; *Vincent de Paul and Louise de Marillac: Rules, Conferences, and Writings*, Frances Ryan, D.C., and John E. Rybolt, C.M., eds. (New York: Paulist Press, 1995).

Jesus Christ in the poor in a spirit of humility, simplicity, and charity.

On 5 July 1651 Louise de Marillac prophetically wrote her friend and collaborator Vincent de Paul that "one of the Company's most urgent needs is to look to the future."<sup>5</sup> Today the vitality of religious life relates directly to how clearly members comprehend their corporate mission in our world and how faithfully they live it out. The Second Vatican Council refocused the Church's attention on the primacy of the corporate mission of religious institutes. Their original charism should remind these institutes, "that loyal recognition and safekeeping should be accorded to the spirit of founders, as also to all the particular goals and wholesome traditions that constitute the heritage of each institute."<sup>6</sup> In their landmark study on "The Future of Religious Orders in the United States," Reverend David Nygren, C.M., and Sister Miriam Ukeritis, C.S.J., advise religious that, "A future marked by significant revitalization will emerge for those communities that are rooted . . . in a spirit of fidelity to their founding purpose."<sup>7</sup>

### *Prototype*

Vincent de Paul told the first Daughters of Charity that they had a unique vocation: "I cannot see anything else like it in all God's Church."<sup>8</sup> They were founded as lay women vowed to apostolic service of the poor in community at a time when religious life for women was limited almost exclusively to the cloister. In 1659, just a year before he died, the founder reminded the early Daughters of Charity that "you are not religious in name but you should be religious in deed."<sup>9</sup> Through

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<sup>5</sup>*Spiritual Writings of Louise de Marillac. Correspondence and Thoughts*, trans. and ed. Louise Sullivan, D.C., (Brooklyn: New City Press, 1991), Letter #315 to Monsieur Vincent, 5 July 1651, 363.

<sup>6</sup>John P. Wilkinson, C.M., "Vincentians and Daughters of Charity, The Same Charism?" *Vincentiana*, no.1 (1986): 68-77. "Perfectae Caritatis" in *Vatican Council II. The Conciliar and Post Conciliar Documents*, ed. Austin Flannery, O.P. (New York: Costello Publishing Company, 1975), 2b, 12.

<sup>7</sup>David Nygren, C.M., and Miriam Ukeritis, C.S.J., "Future of Religious Orders in the United States." *Origins*, 22 (24 September 1992): 270. The full sentence reads: "A future marked by significant revitalization will emerge for those congregations that are rooted in their relationship with God and, in a spirit of fidelity to their founding purpose and responsiveness to absolute human need, confront the current gap between the Gospel and culture."

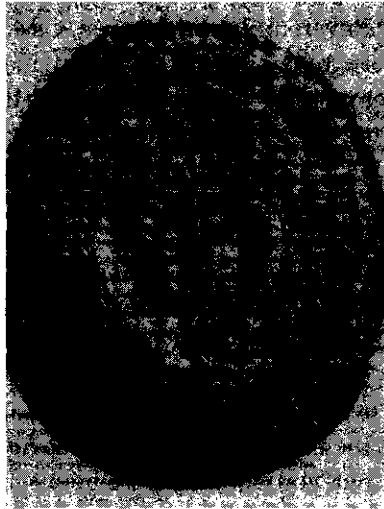
<sup>8</sup>Conference to the Daughters of Charity, 25 December 1648, *The Conferences of Saint Vincent de Paul to the Daughters of Charity*, trans. Joseph Leonard, C.M., 4 vols. (London, 1938), 2: 84; CED, 9: 455.

<sup>9</sup>Conference to the Daughters of Charity, 24 August 1659, *Conferences of Saint Vincent de Paul to the Daughters of Charity*, 4: 261; CED, 10: 658. See also Miguel Pérez Flores, C.M., "Society of Apostolic Life," *Echo*, nos. 8-9 (August-September 1991): 328-33.



Vincent de Paul and Louise de Marillac the Holy Spirit created a revolutionary prototype for new forms of religious life.<sup>10</sup> Today, the Church canonically classifies such institutes as societies of the apostolic life.

Vincent de Paul himself testified that the Little Company was “not of human institution, but of God’s” since neither he nor Saint Louise (Mademoiselle LeGras) had planned it.<sup>11</sup> “There can be no doubt whatever that it was God who established you. It was not Mademoiselle Le Gras, she never thought of doing so. As for me, alas! The idea never occurred to me. . . . God Himself brought you together in a most mysterious manner.”<sup>12</sup>



Seal of the Company of the Daughters of  
Charity of Saint Vincent de Paul

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<sup>10</sup>“God is your founder. . . . I never thought of it . . . and neither did Mademoiselle Le Gras. . . . My daughters, you should not think that communities come into existence all at once. . . . Nobody has ever seen the sick poor nursed in their own homes.” Conference 13 February 1646, *Conferences to the Daughters of Charity*, 1: 216; CED, 9: 242-43.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid. See also A. Paul Dominic, S.J., “Charism, Charisms, and Faddism,” *Review for Religious* 53, no. 1 (January-February 1994): 43-57. On 5 February 1613 Louise de Marillac married Antoine Le Gras (d. 1625). Since he was not a noble, the only class at that time whose wives were called Madame, she became known as Mademoiselle Le Gras, and Vincent de Paul frequently referred to her simply as Mademoiselle. *Correspondence*, Letter #12, Vincent de Paul to Saint Louise de Marillac, 30 October 1626, 1: 23, note 1.

<sup>12</sup>Conference 25 December 1648, *Conferences to the Daughters of Charity*, 2: 84; CED 9: 455-56.

## *Secular Identity*

When writing to Reverend Jacques de la Fosse in February 1660, Saint Vincent explained that the Daughters of Charity “are not religious but women who come and go like seculars.”<sup>13</sup> Saint Vincent gave his daughters, priests, and brothers a formation that would equip them to deal with the challenges and opportunities inherent in their mission.<sup>14</sup>

As they [the Daughters of Charity] are more exposed to the occasions of sin than religious bound to enclosure, having only for a convent the houses of the sick, . . . for a cell a hired room, for a chapel their parish church, for a cloister the streets of the city, for enclosure, obedience, with an obligation to go nowhere but to the houses of the sick, or places that are necessary to serve them, for a grille, the fear of God, for a veil, holy modesty, making use of no other form of profession to assure their vocation than the continual confidence they have in Divine Providence and the offering they make to God of all that they are and of their service in the person of the poor, . . . [therefore] they should have as much or more virtue than if they had made their profession in a Religious Order, and hence they shall strive to conduct themselves in all those places with at least as much reserve, recollection, and edification as true religious manifest in their convents.<sup>15</sup>

## **Development of the Vincentian Tradition**

Saint Vincent is honored as the patron of many communities who wish to emulate his example of charity.<sup>16</sup> Many founders have either adopted the *Common Rules* of Vincent de Paul or adapted them for their institutes.

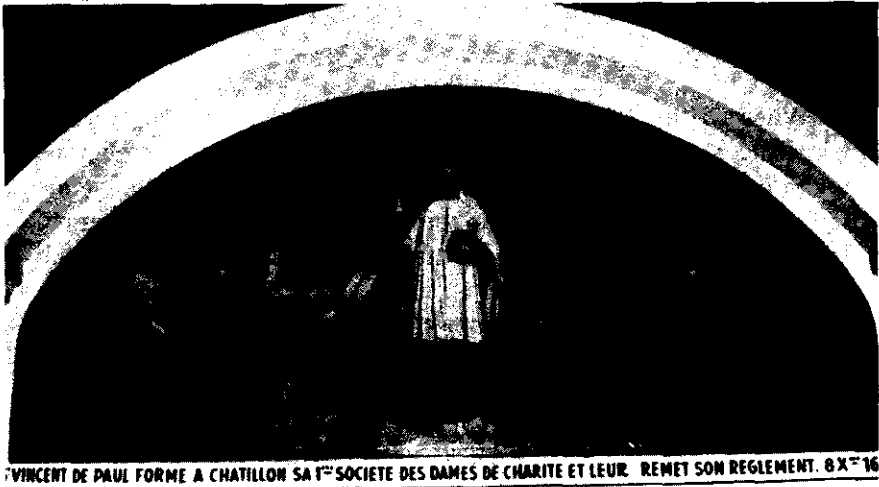
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<sup>13</sup>The original French text uses the word *filles* which has usually been translated literally into English as “girls.” Contemporary usage would more appropriately refer to Vincent’s daughters as *women*. See also Letter # 3077, Vincent de Paul to Jacques de la Fosse, C.M., 7 February 1660, CED, 8: 237.

<sup>14</sup>Luigi Betta, C.M., “Riflessioni sulla identità della Congregazione della Missione,” *Vincentiana*, nos. 5-6 (1977): 255-62.

<sup>15</sup>Conference 24 August 1659, *Conferences to the Daughters of Charity*, 4: 264. Coste, CED, 10: 661.

<sup>16</sup>Raymond Chalumeau, C.M., records that the Sisters of Charity of Saint Charles Borromeo, instituted at Maastricht (The Netherlands) in 1837, were first called the Sisters of Charity of Saint Vincent de Paul. When they sought approval in 1850 from the Vatican, they were told: “If you would like to be Sisters of Saint Vincent de Paul, unite your community to that of Paris.” An American and an Austrian community did unite with Paris that year. See Chapter 2, “Findings,” note 12. In order to maintain their independence, the institute took Saint Charles Borromeo as principal patron but retained Vincent de Paul as secondary patron. See ACMP, Raymond Chalumeau, C.M., *Communautés Religieuses*, “Soeurs de la Charité de Saint Charles Borromeo,” unpublished notes (n.d.).



Saint Vincent de Paul presents the rule to his first foundation at Châtillon-les-Dombes  
(now Châtillon-sur-Chalaronne)

### *Initiatives, Involvement, and Impact of Vincent de Paul*

Vincent de Paul first organized the laity of Châtillon-les-Dombes into a parish based Confraternity of Charity (1617), then the more elite Ladies of Charity of the Hôtel-Dieu of Paris (1634). He established the Congregation of the Mission (1625), and cofounded with Louise de Marillac (1591-1660) the Company of the Daughters of Charity (1633). In addition, Saint Vincent had working relationships with several other founders<sup>17</sup> including: Jean Jacques Olier (1608-1657; Sulpicians, 1641), Pierre de Bérulle (1575-1629, later cardinal; Oratorians, 1611); and

<sup>17</sup>Some additional examples include the Daughters of the Inner Life of the Most Blessed Virgin (also called Daughters of the Holy Virgin) founded in 1660 at Paris by Madame Anne Campet de Saujon who had Saint Vincent for her counselor. Anne de Saujon to Saint Vincent, 24 August 1660, Letter # 3224 in *CED* 8: 393-96, note 1. Campet collaborated with Alexander de Bretonvillers for this foundation. The establishment of this institute was also a dream of Jean Jacques Olier (1608-1657), founder of the Company of the Priests of Saint Sulpice (1641), who had recently died. See Coste, *LW*, 3: 269-70. Likewise Saint John Eudes (1601-1680) founded the Sisters of Our Lady of Charity of Refuge in 1641 at Caen (based on the original rule of Francis de Sales for the Visitation). Eudes participated in the Tuesday Conferences and knew Vincent de Paul. See *DIP*, "Giovanni Eudes, santo" 4: 1271-73; "Gesù e Maria, Congregazione di (Eudisti)" 4: 1140-42.

Pierre Lambert de La Motte, (1624-1679, Paris Foreign Mission Society, 1663).<sup>18</sup> Saint Vincent became a consultant to religious orders such as the Daughters of the Cross of Paris (1640) and the Daughters of Providence (1641). Prior to their official establishment, he also drafted the rule for the Daughters of the Holy Family (1662), directed the nuns of the first Visitation monasteries in Paris (1622-1660), and served as mediator in resolving internal problems of other orders.<sup>19</sup>

Among the first to follow his model of charity was the young widow Madame René Thulard (1654-1735, née Perrine Brunet), who founded the Sisters of Charity of Our Lady of Évron (1682, France). She adopted the mission, spirit, dress, and formulated apostolic principles for her institute based on the rule of Vincent de Paul's Daughters of Charity.

The Family Tree Project conducted its study as comprehensively as possible. Yet, the charism of Vincent de Paul as a spiritual leader and his extensive sphere of influence so permeated the life of the Church of seventeenth-century France that its lasting impact eludes precise classification. Circumstances shaped the role Saint Vincent assumed with priests, bishops, monastic orders, women religious, and lay associations. At times he instigated change as a reformer, and at other times he effected reconciliation as a mediator. Often Saint Vincent served as a consultant to those seeking to respond more effectively to pressing social needs, and mediated negotiations between communities to foster collaboration and even union. Reverend Christophe d'Authier de Sigsau (1609-1667), for example, founded an institute of priests in 1634 for popular missions and had the idea of a possible union between it and

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<sup>18</sup>The first seminary of the Paris Foreign Mission Society was founded in 1663 by François Pallu (1626-1684) (later vicar apostolic of Tonkin, North Vietnam) and Bishop Pierre Lambert de la Motte (1624-1679), (later vicar apostolic of South Vietnam) who also founded the religious institute called the Lovers of the Holy Cross. Lambert was a member of the Company of the Blessed Sacrament and had made a retreat at Saint Lazare before going to the Indies (southeast Asia). Pallu wanted the new recruits to have solid pastoral experience to form them for their missionary apostolate so he collaborated with Saint Vincent to allow his recruits to work with the Congregation of the Mission throughout the province of Île-de-France, preaching missions in the Vincentian style. Madame Miramion, the Duchess d'Aiguillon, and the Ladies of Charity greatly supported this endeavor. *DIP*, s.v. "Pallu, François" 6: 1090-91; "Società per le Missioni estere di Parigi" 8: 1654-61. See also Coste, *LW*, 3:289-90.

<sup>19</sup>One case involved the Religious of Saint Elizabeth who underwent a reformation (c. 1634) at Paris. They received their first rule from Charles Fauré (1594-1644), superior of the abbey of Saint Geneviève (later known as the Congregation of France). The rule had been agreed upon by Saint Vincent and Charles de Condren (1588-1641), the second superior general of the Oratory. Saint Vincent resolved a conflict between this institute and the penitent religious of the Third Order of Saint Francis, who were their spiritual guides, by defining the rights and duties of each party. *DIP*, s.v. "Fauré, Charles" 3: 1422; "Canonici regolari, della Congregazione di Francia" 2: 85-89. Coste, *LW*, 2: 243-67. For a discussion about Saint Vincent and the reform of the clergy see Coste, *LW*, 1: 254.

the Congregation of the Mission because of their similar goals. In 1647 Pope Innocent X renamed d'Authier's new institute the Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament for the Direction of Missions and Seminaries. The proposed union did not occur.<sup>20</sup>

*Male Monastic Orders.*<sup>21</sup> Saint Vincent's involvement with male monastic orders included the roles of reformer, mediator, advocate, and provider of other direct services. He supported reform efforts by the Benedictines (Maurists), Augustinians, Abbey of Sainte-Geneviève, Congregation of Chancelade, Order of Grandmont, Franciscans, Dominicans, and the Congregation of Saint Louis. The Minims and the Knights of Malta benefited from his direct services and assistance. As a mediator, he facilitated general chapters that effectively restored internal concord. At other times, Saint Vincent mediated disputes between religious houses. He also was a consultant and spiritual director for individual religious. In fiscal affairs, he advocated for justice, such as obtaining overdue rents and necessary funding.<sup>22</sup>

*Women Religious.*<sup>23</sup> Saint Vincent tried to preserve internal discipline for women religious in the face of threats against it and to rejuvenate it when necessary. He also supervised elections of superiors to assure the canonical correctness of procedures. He opposed the contemporary practice by which the king appointed religious superiors for life, and he persistently pressed for triennial elections when the rule required them. He arranged for official visitations. Saint Vincent served convents in this way, including the Franciscans, the nuns of Saint Elizabeth of Paris, the penitent religious of the Third Order of Saint Francis, and the Carmelites.<sup>24</sup> The Daughters of Saint Martha at Reims served the needs of domestic workers, and Saint Vincent also became involved with their apostolic work when the safety of young women was at risk during times of war because of the presence of soldiers.<sup>25</sup>

*Consultant to Bishops.* In 1652 Saint Vincent counseled Blessed Alain de Solminihac, (1593-1678, beatified 1981) about developing a pastoral plan that would be effective to care for victims of the plague in his diocese of Cahors. Besides providing concrete organizational details, Saint Vincent exhorted Solminihac to maintain a broad ecclesial vision.

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<sup>20</sup>See also letters from Vincent de Paul to Bernard Codoing in *Correspondence* 2, Letter #580, 1 April 1642, 2: 276, n.1 and Letter #602, 11 July 1642, 2: 307, n.12.

<sup>21</sup>CED, 2: 237-54; VDP, 2: 336-45; 390.

<sup>22</sup>Saint Vincent was exceptionally solicitous about the welfare of hospitals at the frontier of France. See VDP, 2: 336-45; 390; Coste, LW, 2: 237-54.

<sup>23</sup>VDP, 2: 385-93.

<sup>24</sup>Coste, LW, 2: 253-54.

<sup>25</sup>VDP, 2: 339; CED, 5: 95.

A bishop finding himself in these circumstances should keep himself ready to provide for the spiritual and temporal needs of his entire diocese during this public calamity. He should not confine himself to one place nor busy himself with any work that might deprive him of means of providing for others, especially since he is bishop not only of that place but also of his entire diocese. . . . But in order to do this, it is absolutely essential that you do not close yourself in.<sup>26</sup>

*Collaboration with Clergy.* The Tuesday Conferences may be among the most renowned contributions made by Saint Vincent to the formation of the clergy since they had a ripple effect that was felt throughout France and beyond. These weekly gatherings, inaugurated in 1633, provided ongoing priestly formation and spiritual renewal, and functioned as a support group for the participants.<sup>27</sup>

In Vincent's lifetime at Angers, Bordeaux, Metz, and throughout Italy "similar associations and conferences were formed to [sic] the example of the one in Paris."<sup>28</sup> Antoine Godeau (1605-1672), bishop of Grasse (1636-1638), wrote in 1636, "You shall be the model upon which I shall strive to form good priests."<sup>29</sup> In 1642 the priests of Pontoise asked Saint Vincent for input and collaboration in their formation.<sup>30</sup> The conference of priests at Angoulême (1644) claimed Saint Vincent as their grandfather "since it [was] one of your children whom God has used to bring it [the conference] into existence."<sup>31</sup> Saint Vincent's ecclesiastical, social, and political influence was so extensive that it defies facile depiction. Its vitality helped to energize the Church of France.

*Company of the Blessed Sacrament.* Saint Vincent was a member of the Company of the Blessed Sacrament. In 1617 Henri de Lévis (1596-1680), duke of Ventadour, first envisioned this organization as an association for laity and ecclesiastics who wished to "embrace zealously all sorts of good works and to procure the glory of God in every possible way."<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>26</sup>CED, 4: 520-23; 528; Letter #1573, Alain de Solminihac, bishop of Cahors, to Vincent de Paul, November 1652, *Correspondence* 4: 503. See also Letter #1576 to Saint Vincent de Paul, 21 November 1652, *ibid.*, 4: 508.

<sup>27</sup>VDP, 1: 144-47.

<sup>28</sup>VDP, 2: 227; CED, 7: 155-56.

<sup>29</sup>VDP, 2: 228.

<sup>30</sup>VDP, 2: 227; CED, 7: 155-56; Coste, *LW*, 2: 148.

<sup>31</sup>VDP, 2: 227; CED 2: 455; Coste, *Documents*, 2: 501; Coste, *LW*, 2: 148.

<sup>32</sup>Coste, *LW*, 3: 271-85. According to *DIP*, the Company of the Blessed Sacrament, was a pious association for spiritual and apostolic purposes, founded 1629 by Henri de Lévis, the duke of Ventadour (1596-1680). *DIP*, s.v. "Società per le Missioni Estere, di Parigi" 8: 1663-67. Among those associated with establishing the Company of the Blessed Sacrament were Brother Philippe d'Angoumois, O.F.M. Cap.; Father Jean Suffren, S.J.; Reverend Charles de Condren of the Oratory; and Henri de Picher, one of the king's stewards. See also note 2, Letter #1435 to Achille Le Vazeux, 21 December 1651 in Coste, *Correspondence*, 4: 294.

Lévis collaborated with several individuals to develop the organization and to recruit members deemed reliable, prudent, and resourceful. The charities of Saint Vincent received support from the Company, and he influenced its decisions. The Company accomplished great apostolic good because of its wealth and spiritual influence, yet the secrecy surrounding its activities made it a threat to ecclesial and civil authorities, and eventually, even in Italy, it was disbanded by the government.

### *Missionary Evangelization*

Vincentian missionaries first went to China in 1692 during the generalship of Reverend Edme Jolly (1622-1697, superior general 1673-1697). Louise de Marillac sent her daughters to Poland and Vincent de Paul sent his sons into Poland, Ireland, Scotland, (the Hebrides), and Madagascar. Members of the Vincentian family established native communities in missionary lands in later centuries.<sup>33</sup> These included the Sisters of the Holy Faith (Ireland, 1867) and the Little Sisters of Mary Immaculate (Madagascar, 1934), which united with the Daughters of Charity of Paris in 1963. The Sisters of Charity of Saint Vincent de Paul of Satu-Mare (1842, Romania) established a mission in the United States that became two diocesan institutes: the Vincentian Sisters of Charity (1902, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; 1928, Bedford, Pennsylvania.) Reverend José Vilaseca, C.M., founded in Mexico the Hermanos Josefinos (1872) and the Hermanas Josefinas (1877), to fill the gap left by the expulsion of foreign clergy and religious from the country. Reverend Vincent Lebbe, C.M., created the Congregation of Saint John the Baptist (1928, China) and the Little Sisters of Saint Theresa of the Child Jesus (1929, China). These institutes provided indigenous clergy and religious who preserved the faith in China despite communism.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>33</sup>Gerard van Winsen, C.M., "Saint Vincent et les Missions Étrangères," *Vincentiana*, no. 3 (1978): 150-82.

<sup>34</sup>Lebbe created waves in missiology which have had a ripple effect that includes several institutes in addition to his own foundations. The International Catholic Association (Lay Auxiliaries of the Missions or Catholic International Women Auxiliaries) was founded 1937 in Belgium by Reverend Andrew Boland (1891-1940) and Yvonne Poncelet (1906-1955), with the collaboration of Reverend Vincent Lebbe, C.M., to support foreign missionary efforts. Poncelet became its president. Members are lay women who wear no habit and go wherever there are women to be taught or helped. In 1986 this institute gave rise to the Epiphany Covenant Community. (Generalate: 84, Rue Gachard, Brussels, Belgium.) *DIP*, s.v. "Poncelet, Yvonne" 7: 83-84; "Società Missionaria delle Ausiliarie Internazionali Cattoliche" 8: 1631-32. Vincent Thoreau, *Le Tonnerre Qui Chante Au Loin. Vie et Mort du Père Lebbe L'Apôtre des Chinois 1877-1940*. [Brussels: Didier Hatier, 1990]; E. Hanquet, ed., *Vincent Lebbe 1877-1940. Être de Son Temps* [Brussels: Society of Auxiliaries of the Missions, 1990].)

Other establishments according to the Vincentian charism in missionary areas include the Sisters of the Immaculate Conception (1901, China), Daughters of the Sacred Heart (1914, China), Daughters of Saint Anne of Kanchow (Ganzhao) (1920, China), the Vincentian Congregation (1927, India), the Daughters of Mary, Mother of Mercy (1961, Nigeria), the Missionary Sisters of the Poor in Christ (1978, Philippines), and the Missionary Sisters of the Presentation (1987, El Salvador) plus others that are now serving in the Church of silence.

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The example of the Confraternities of Charity and Louise de Marillac's "little schools" motivated many founders to replicate this model, infusing it also with their own unique charism for service of the poor.<sup>35</sup> Such was the case of Blessed Marie Poussepin who established the Dominican Sisters of Charity of the Presentation (1696, France) after she had served for years as treasurer in the Confraternity of Charity at Sainville in France.

The gospel imperatives have no boundaries—the love of Christ has also urged others to bring good news to the poor.<sup>36</sup> Over the years numerous founders have visited the sons and daughters of Saint Vincent to experience and observe the way of Vincent de Paul before creating their own institutes.<sup>37</sup>

Through the ages to the present day, many founders have embodied the gospel values inherent in the Vincentian charism in a variety of expressions.<sup>38</sup> Saint Louis Marie Grignon de Montfort (1673-1716,

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(1847-1857), arranged for Saint Antonio María Claret (1807-1870), founder of the Missionary Sons of the Immaculate Heart of Mary (Claretians), to give missions in his diocese as early as 1848.<sup>43</sup>

Saint Charles Joseph Eugène de Mazenod (1782-1861, canonized 1995), later bishop of Marseilles, founded the Oblates of Mary Immaculate in 1816 to renew the faith in France through popular missions.<sup>44</sup> Not only is their end similar to that of the Congregation of the Mission but so too is their community motto. For his institute Mazenod chose: "The poor are evangelized: to preach the Gospel to the Poor he has sent me," which closely resembles that of the Congregation of the Mission.

Saint John Bosco (1815-1888, canonized 1934) adapted Vincentian principles to the mission of the Society of Saint Francis de Sales which he founded.<sup>45</sup> After the first general chapter of the Society of the Divine Word, founded in 1875 by Blessed Arnold Janssen (1837-1909, beatified 1975), Reverend Ferdinand Medits, C.M., (1841-1915) was invited to Steyl, Holland, to conduct the first novitiate course for clerics and the brothers.<sup>46</sup>

In our own century, Mother Teresa of Calcutta (Teresa Bojaxhiu, b. 1910) acknowledged how much Saint Vincent had influenced her life and how the *Common Rules of the Daughters of Charity* had inspired her when writing a rule for the Missionaries of Charity which she founded

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<sup>43</sup>Stafford Poole, *History of the Congregation of the Mission, 1625-1843* (Santa Barbara, 1972), 79.

<sup>44</sup>Annibal Bugnini, C.M., "Rome: Un Hôtel illustre de Saint Sylvestre au Quirinal: Mgr. Mazenod," *ACMFC*, 112-113 (1947-1948): 465-70. See also Herménégilde Charbonneau, O.M.I., *My Name is Eugène de Mazenod*, trans. Francis D. Flanagan, O.M.I. (Boston: Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate, 1976), 82-86.

<sup>45</sup>In 1872 at Turin in Italy Saint John Bosco established the Society of Saint Francis de Sales to support and instruct poor, working children. Bosco also founded the Institute of Daughters, Mary Help of Christians and in 1876 a lay group known as the Salesian Cooperators. See André Dodin, C.M., *Vincent de Paul and Charity*, trans. Jean Marie Smith and Dennis Saunders, ed. Hugh O'Donnell, C.M., and Marjorie Gale Hornstein (New City Press: New York, 1993), 72; Eugenio Valentini, S.D.B., "Don Bosco and Saint Vincent de Paul," *Vincentiana*, nos. 4-5 (1979): 243-64.

<sup>46</sup>The Society of the Divine Word, founded 1875 at Steyl in The Netherlands, by Blessed Arnold Janssen, S.V.D., was established as an institute of German secular priests to labor in foreign missions. Mary Quinlan, D.C., to Betty Ann McNeil, D.C., 19 February 1992, Marsfield, Australia; NCE, s.v. "Divine Word, Society of" 4: 923-24; see also Fritz Bornemann, "Arnold Janssen, Founder of Three Missionary Congregations 1837-1909," *Analecta VDP*, (Rome, 1975), 181-84. *DIP*, s.v. "Società del Divino Verbo" 8: 1601-08.

in 1950.<sup>47</sup> Her contemporary mission to the most destitute mirrors the spirit of Saint Vincent in seeing Jesus Christ in the person of the poor.<sup>48</sup>



Mother Suzanne Guillemain, D.C.

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<sup>47</sup>The Missionaries of Charity were founded in 1950 by Mother Teresa of Calcutta to love and serve the poor, in whom the sisters find Jesus Himself. Members take a fourth vow of compassion: to share the life of the abandoned poor and work exclusively with the destitute. Mother Teresa also established the Brothers of Charity in 1963 with a similar mission. *DIP*, s.v. "Bojaxhiu, Teresa" 1: 1499-1500; "Missionarie della Carità" 5: 1515-16. Another example is the Sisters of Mary of Banneux founded in 1964 at Pusan, Korea, founded by Reverend Aloysius Schwartz to serve the poor in the name of Christ. Schwartz instituted annual vows for his sisters, a fourth vow of service to the poor, and the concept of serving Jesus Christ in the person of the poor. Their book of spirituality and constitutions contains numerous quotes from Saint Vincent de Paul. Aloysius Schwartz, *Book of Spirituality, Sisters of Saint Mary*, (Rockville Maryland: Government Institutes, 1991).

<sup>48</sup>"It has just come to my mind that Mother Teresa has always said she was very influenced by Saint Vincent de Paul. In fact, she told me that herself. I remember it well." Personal communication Julia Denton, D.C., to Betty Ann McNeil, D.C., 28 December 1993, Emmitsburg, Maryland; Estela Morales, D.C., to Betty Ann McNeil, D.C., 7 May 1994, interview, Washington, D.C.

## *Emergence of Family Groups*

Several family groups in the extended Vincentian Family are especially noteworthy. Among the oldest is the line emanating from the Sisters of Charity of Strasbourg (1734, France). Dispersed during the French Revolution, some of its spiritual descendants, formed a federation under the patronage of Vincent de Paul.<sup>49</sup> In 1971 some German, and Austrian communities joined together in the Vincentian Federation.<sup>50</sup>

The Sisters of Charity of Graz (1841, Austria) sprang from the Strasbourg root through a branch at Munich and later united to the French Daughters of Charity in 1850. Sister Leopoldine de Brandis, D.C., became their first visitatrix (provincial superior) and in 1878 founded a lay group of visiting nurses, the *Krankenjungfrauen*, to assist the sick.<sup>51</sup> It developed into the *Marienschwestern*, an institute of women religious named the Sisters of Mary of the Miraculous Medal. In 1964 Mother Suzanne Guillemin, D.C., received seventy-nine sisters from the Austrian province of the *Marienschwestern* institute into the Daughters of Charity of Paris.

After reading the *L'Esprit de Saint Vincent de Paul* by André Joseph Ansart, Clemens Droste zu Vischering, vicar general of the diocese of Münster and future archbishop of Cologne, was so inspired that he founded the *Clemensschwwestern* or Sisters of Mercy of Münster (1808, Germany) to serve the poor, the sick, and the needy. The bishop incorporated Vincentian concepts into the rule he compiled. It became a model for other founders, especially Johannes Zwijsen, later bishop of 's Hertogenbosch and archbishop of Utrecht, who began several communities in the Netherlands from this root. Reverend Pierre Joseph

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<sup>49</sup>One of its descendants is the Sisters of Charity of Saint Vincent de Paul of Zams which provided three sisters to the German Sisters and Brothers of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Jerusalem in 1841 at the request of the Archduke Maximilian and Peter Rigler, a moral theology professor known as the "angel of Tirol." They aimed to rejuvenate an ancient institute and adapt its spirituality during a resurgence of religious orders from the Middle Ages (1837-1841). Originally this order had been established in 1161 at Saint-Jean d'Acre in the Kingdom of Jerusalem (formerly Ptolemais, Phoenicia, now Acre, Israel). After its renaissance in Austria it became a cooperative society for hospitals and social works and in 1929 the Vatican changed it into a religious order. The Holy See approved its rules in 1977. Vincent de Paul has a special place of honor in the institute's spirituality.

<sup>50</sup>In 1971 ten German and Austrian communities descended from the Strasbourg foundation became a federation under the name of the *Föderation Vinzentinscher Gemeinschaften* (Vincentian Federation). See Alfonsa Richartz, D.C., "Affiliation," *Echo*, no. 1 (January 1995): 43.

<sup>51</sup>The term "visitatrix" refers to a provincial superior in the Company of the Daughters of Charity. The Congregation of the Mission uses the term "visitor" for that office.

Triest also wanted to recreate the spirit of Vincent de Paul, so he founded three religious institutes in Belgium to serve the poor.

Seeking to preserve the faith among Catholic peoples by engendering a missionary spirit within the faithful, the Trinitarian family established in the United States by Reverend Thomas A. Judge, C.M., (1868-1933), includes the Missionary Cenacle Apostolate (1909, New York, New York), the Missionary Servants of the Most Blessed Trinity (1912, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania), the Missionary Servants of the Most Holy Trinity (1929, Mobile, Alabama), and a recent lay branch, the Blessed Trinity Missionary Institute (1964, New York, New York), which is seeking approval as a secular institute.

From the beginning the role of the laity has been pivotal for the Vincentian mission. At both Folleville and Châtillon-les-Dombes the laity revealed the needs of the poor to Vincent de Paul. Today the number of laity who actively collaborate in ministry with the Vincentian family is increasing. As one response to Vatican II some North American institutes that are united in the Elizabeth Seton Federation sponsor lay associate programs. Sometimes referred to as Charity Associates, these opportunities for ministry enable the laity to collaborate with vowed members of apostolic institutes in serving the poor and the Church in the Vincentian tradition.<sup>52</sup>

The call of the charism of Vincent and Louise continues to be heard. Members of the Vincentian family have been actively involved in innovative roles to accompany and form indigenous vocations such as among the Amyran women of the Andean Altiplano, Bolivia, in South America. Similar examples also exist in the Cameroon and elsewhere, especially in the mission *Ad Gentes*. These new expressions of religious and apostolic life are sources of vitality for the Church. Through them Providence reminds us of the presence of the Spirit in today's world inviting the Vincentian family to creative fidelity in giving life to new expressions of the enduring charism of Vincent de Paul and Louise de Marillac.

*Votre très humble serviteur*  
*Vincent de Paul*  
*supérieur général de la Mission*

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<sup>52</sup>Charity Associates is an informal coalition of lay associates from at least eight communities in the Elizabeth Seton Federation. At a 1994 family reunion, approximately 400 associates were serving in twenty-six states in the United States. Further information can be obtained from Susan McMahon, (Halifax), 420 77th Street, Brooklyn, New York 11209, or Sisters of Charity Center, 6301 Riverdale Avenue, Bronx, New York 10471, United States of America.

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(1847-1857), arranged for Saint Antonio María Claret (1807-1870), founder of the Missionary Sons of the Immaculate Heart of Mary (Claretians), to give missions in his diocese as early as 1848.<sup>43</sup>

Saint Charles Joseph Eugène de Mazenod (1782-1861, canonized 1995), later bishop of Marseilles, founded the Oblates of Mary Immaculate in 1816 to renew the faith in France through popular missions.<sup>44</sup> Not only is their end similar to that of the Congregation of the Mission but so too is their community motto. For his institute Mazenod chose: "The poor are evangelized: to preach the Gospel to the Poor he has sent me," which closely resembles that of the Congregation of the Mission.

Saint John Bosco (1815-1888, canonized 1934) adapted Vincentian principles to the mission of the Society of Saint Francis de Sales which he founded.<sup>45</sup> After the first general chapter of the Society of the Divine Word, founded in 1875 by Blessed Arnold Janssen (1837-1909, beatified 1975), Reverend Ferdinand Medits, C.M., (1841-1915) was invited to Steyl, Holland, to conduct the first novitiate course for clerics and the brothers.<sup>46</sup>

In our own century, Mother Teresa of Calcutta (Teresa Bojaxhiu, b. 1910) acknowledged how much Saint Vincent had influenced her life and how the *Common Rules of the Daughters of Charity* had inspired her when writing a rule for the Missionaries of Charity which she founded

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<sup>43</sup>Stafford Poole, *History of the Congregation of the Mission, 1625-1843* (Santa Barbara, 1972), 79.

<sup>44</sup>Annibal Bugnini, C.M., "Rome: Un Hôtel illustre de Saint Sylvestre au Quirinal: Mgr. Mazenod," *ACMFC*, 112-113 (1947-1948): 465-70. See also Herménégilde Charbonneau, O.M.I., *My Name is Eugène de Mazenod*, trans. Francis D. Flanagan, O.M.I. (Boston: Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate, 1976), 82-86.

<sup>45</sup>In 1872 at Turin in Italy Saint John Bosco established the Society of Saint Francis de Sales to support and instruct poor, working children. Bosco also founded the Institute of Daughters, Mary Help of Christians and in 1876 a lay group known as the Salesian Cooperators. See André Dodin, C.M., *Vincent de Paul and Charity*, trans. Jean Marie Smith and Dennis Saunders, ed. Hugh O'Donnell, C.M., and Marjorie Gale Hornstein (New City Press: New York, 1993), 72; Eugenio Valentini, S.D.B., "Don Bosco and Saint Vincent de Paul," *Vincentiana*, nos. 4-5 (1979): 243-64.

<sup>46</sup>The Society of the Divine Word, founded 1875 at Steyl in The Netherlands, by Blessed Arnold Janssen, S.V.D., was established as an institute of German secular priests to labor in foreign missions. Mary Quinlan, D.C., to Betty Ann McNeil, D.C., 19 February 1992, Marsfield, Australia; NCE, s.v. "Divine Word, Society of" 4: 923-24; see also Fritz Bornemann, "Arnold Janssen, Founder of Three Missionary Congregations 1837-1909," *Analecta VDP*, (Rome, 1975), 181-84. *DIP*, s.v. "Società del Divino Verbo" 8: 1601-08.



in 1950.<sup>47</sup> Her contemporary mission to the most destitute mirrors the spirit of Saint Vincent in seeing Jesus Christ in the person of the poor.<sup>48</sup>



Mother Suzanne Guillemain, D.C.

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<sup>47</sup>The Missionaries of Charity were founded in 1950 by Mother Teresa of Calcutta to love and serve the poor, in whom the sisters find Jesus Himself. Members take a fourth vow of compassion: to share the life of the abandoned poor and work exclusively with the destitute. Mother Teresa also established the Brothers of Charity in 1963 with a similar mission. *DIP*, s.v. "Bojaxhiu, Teresa" 1: 1499-1500; "Missionarie della Carità" 5: 1515-16. Another example is the Sisters of Mary of Banneux founded in 1964 at Pusan, Korea, founded by Reverend Aloysius Schwartz to serve the poor in the name of Christ. Schwartz instituted annual vows for his sisters, a fourth vow of service to the poor, and the concept of serving Jesus Christ in the person of the poor. Their book of spirituality and constitutions contains numerous quotes from Saint Vincent de Paul. Aloysius Schwartz, *Book of Spirituality, Sisters of Saint Mary*, (Rockville Maryland: Government Institutes, 1991).

<sup>48</sup>"It has just come to my mind that Mother Teresa has always said she was very influenced by Saint Vincent de Paul. In fact, she told me that herself. I remember it well." Personal communication Julia Denton, D.C., to Betty Ann McNeil, D.C., 28 December 1993, Emmitsburg, Maryland; Estela Morales, D.C., to Betty Ann McNeil, D.C., 7 May 1994, interview, Washington, D.C.

## *Emergence of Family Groups*

Several family groups in the extended Vincentian Family are especially noteworthy. Among the oldest is the line emanating from the Sisters of Charity of Strasbourg (1734, France). Dispersed during the French Revolution, some of its spiritual descendants, formed a federation under the patronage of Vincent de Paul.<sup>49</sup> In 1971 some German, and Austrian communities joined together in the Vincentian Federation.<sup>50</sup>

The Sisters of Charity of Graz (1841, Austria) sprang from the Strasbourg root through a branch at Munich and later united to the French Daughters of Charity in 1850. Sister Leopoldine de Brandis, D.C., became their first visitatrix (provincial superior) and in 1878 founded a lay group of visiting nurses, the *Krankenjungfrauen*, to assist the sick.<sup>51</sup> It developed into the *Marienschwestern*, an institute of women religious named the Sisters of Mary of the Miraculous Medal. In 1964 Mother Suzanne Guillemin, D.C., received seventy-nine sisters from the Austrian province of the *Marienschwestern* institute into the Daughters of Charity of Paris.

After reading the *L'Esprit de Saint Vincent de Paul* by André Joseph Ansart, Clemens Droste zu Vischering, vicar general of the diocese of Münster and future archbishop of Cologne, was so inspired that he founded the *Clemensschwwestern* or Sisters of Mercy of Münster (1808, Germany) to serve the poor, the sick, and the needy. The bishop incorporated Vincentian concepts into the rule he compiled. It became a model for other founders, especially Johannes Zwijsen, later bishop of 's Hertogenbosch and archbishop of Utrecht, who began several communities in the Netherlands from this root. Reverend Pierre Joseph

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<sup>49</sup>One of its descendants is the Sisters of Charity of Saint Vincent de Paul of Zams which provided three sisters to the German Sisters and Brothers of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Jerusalem in 1841 at the request of the Archduke Maximilian and Peter Rigler, a moral theology professor known as the "angel of Tirol." They aimed to rejuvenate an ancient institute and adapt its spirituality during a resurgence of religious orders from the Middle Ages (1837-1841). Originally this order had been established in 1161 at Saint-Jean d'Acre in the Kingdom of Jerusalem (formerly Ptolemais, Phoenicia, now Acre, Israel). After its renaissance in Austria it became a cooperative society for hospitals and social works and in 1929 the Vatican changed it into a religious order. The Holy See approved its rules in 1977. Vincent de Paul has a special place of honor in the institute's spirituality.

<sup>50</sup>In 1971 ten German and Austrian communities descended from the Strasbourg foundation became a federation under the name of the *Föderation Vinzentinscher Gemeinschaften* (Vincentian Federation). See Alfonsa Richartz, D.C., "Affiliation," *Echo*, no. 1 (January 1995): 43.

<sup>51</sup>The term "visitatrix" refers to a provincial superior in the Company of the Daughters of Charity. The Congregation of the Mission uses the term "visitor" for that office.

Triest also wanted to recreate the spirit of Vincent de Paul, so he founded three religious institutes in Belgium to serve the poor.

Seeking to preserve the faith among Catholic peoples by engendering a missionary spirit within the faithful, the Trinitarian family established in the United States by Reverend Thomas A. Judge, C.M., (1868-1933), includes the Missionary Cenacle Apostolate (1909, New York, New York), the Missionary Servants of the Most Blessed Trinity (1912, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania), the Missionary Servants of the Most Holy Trinity (1929, Mobile, Alabama), and a recent lay branch, the Blessed Trinity Missionary Institute (1964, New York, New York), which is seeking approval as a secular institute.

From the beginning the role of the laity has been pivotal for the Vincentian mission. At both Folleville and Châtillon-les-Dombes the laity revealed the needs of the poor to Vincent de Paul. Today the number of laity who actively collaborate in ministry with the Vincentian family is increasing. As one response to Vatican II some North American institutes that are united in the Elizabeth Seton Federation sponsor lay associate programs. Sometimes referred to as Charity Associates, these opportunities for ministry enable the laity to collaborate with vowed members of apostolic institutes in serving the poor and the Church in the Vincentian tradition.<sup>52</sup>

The call of the charism of Vincent and Louise continues to be heard. Members of the Vincentian family have been actively involved in innovative roles to accompany and form indigenous vocations such as among the Amyran women of the Andean Altiplano, Bolivia, in South America. Similar examples also exist in the Cameroon and elsewhere, especially in the mission *Ad Gentes*. These new expressions of religious and apostolic life are sources of vitality for the Church. Through them Providence reminds us of the presence of the Spirit in today's world inviting the Vincentian family to creative fidelity in giving life to new expressions of the enduring charism of Vincent de Paul and Louise de Marillac.

*Votre très humble serviteur*  
*Vincent de Paul*  
*unique patron de la Mission*

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<sup>52</sup>Charity Associates is an informal coalition of lay associates from at least eight communities in the Elizabeth Seton Federation. At a 1994 family reunion, approximately 400 associates were serving in twenty-six states in the United States. Further information can be obtained from Susan McMahon, (Halifax), 420 77th Street, Brooklyn, New York 11209, or Sisters of Charity Center, 6301 Riverdale Avenue, Bronx, New York 10471, United States of America.