

DePaul University Newsline > Sections > Campus and Community > DePaul announces task force to address the Vincentians' relationship with slavery

DEPAUL ANNOUNCES TASK FORCE TO ADDRESS THE VINCENTIANS' RELATIONSHIP WITH SLAVERY

By Task Force Communications Subcommittee / December 9, 2021 / Posted in: CAMPUS AND COMMUNITY / [Twitter](#) / [Facebook](#)



As promised in the [Aug. 26 statement](#) from President Esteban and Fr. Memo Campuzano, C.M., what follows is an update on further developments. The statement addressed the legacy of Bishop Joseph Rosati, CM, (1789-1843). His ownership of enslaved people and active participation in the slave trade in the 1830s has led many in St. Louis to reconsider the use of his name for area schools. As Rosati was also honored at DePaul with his name on the library's Rosati Room and attached to the archives of the Vincentians of the Western Province that are housed at DePaul, the university decided to remove Rosati's name from these locations. Soon after the statement was released, work began.

On Sept. 10, as part of the Society of Vincent de Paul Professors Committee on Global Justice's teach-in on social justice, a panel chaired by Don Opitz invited Fr. Campuzano, Valerie Johnson and Euan Hague, to discuss the university's statement, the renaming of the Rosati Room in Richardson Library, and to ask the Vincentian question: What must be done?

In the wake of this and other conversations about the situation, including at Faculty Council in early October, President Esteban and the Cabinet created the DePaul Task Force to Address the Vincentians' Relationship with Slavery. The task force is charged with leading the renaming of the former Rosati Room, identifying learning initiatives, documentation and research to educate our community, as well as giving space to the community to express their concerns around related issues of equity at DePaul in the present time. As the task force is not intended to be a long-term group, its work is being planned and executed with a strong connection to the ongoing initiatives led by Liz Ortiz, vice president for institutional diversity and equity.

Faculty Council, Staff Council and the Student Government Association were each invited to choose a representative for the Task Force. Several members of the DePaul community also were invited to join the group given the areas in which they worked or their areas of expertise.

The task force held its first meeting on Thursday, Nov. 11, and created four subcommittees to pursue the multiple aspects of this work. The Engagement and Communications Subcommittee will continue to report out to the institution about the Task Force's progress. The History and Research subcommittee will focus on matters related to research, curriculum and educating the community. The Race and Space Subcommittee will address room renaming and explore other facilities-related issues. The DEI subcommittee will focus on how the task force's work ties to mission, other equity-related matters and how to sustain its short-term work over time.

The following are members of the task force:

- Fr. Memo Campuzano, C.M., task for liaison
- Min. Jené Colvin, Division of Mission and Ministry
- Magoli Garcia, Student Government Association
- Euan Hague, Department of Geography and School of Public Service
- Stephen Haymes, International Studies program
- Valerie Johnson, Department of Political Science and Presidential Faculty Fellow
- Morgen MacIntosh Hodgetts, DePaul University Library
- Julie E. Moody-Freeman, Center for Black Diaspora
- Jamie Nelson, DePaul University Library
- Don Opitz, School of Continuing and Professional Studies
- Liz Ortiz, Office of Institutional Diversity and Equity
- Lori Pierce, Department of African and Black Diaspora Studies
- Vicky Privert, Black Student Union
- Maria De Moya Traveras, College of Communication and Faculty Council
- Leyfane Thomas, School of Continuing and Professional Studies and Staff Council

Related content:

[DePaul addresses the painful history of slave ownership within the Congregation of the Mission](#)

Newsline

1 E. Jackson Blvd.
Chicago, IL 60604
(312) 362-8591

newsline@depaul.edu

[About Newsline](#)