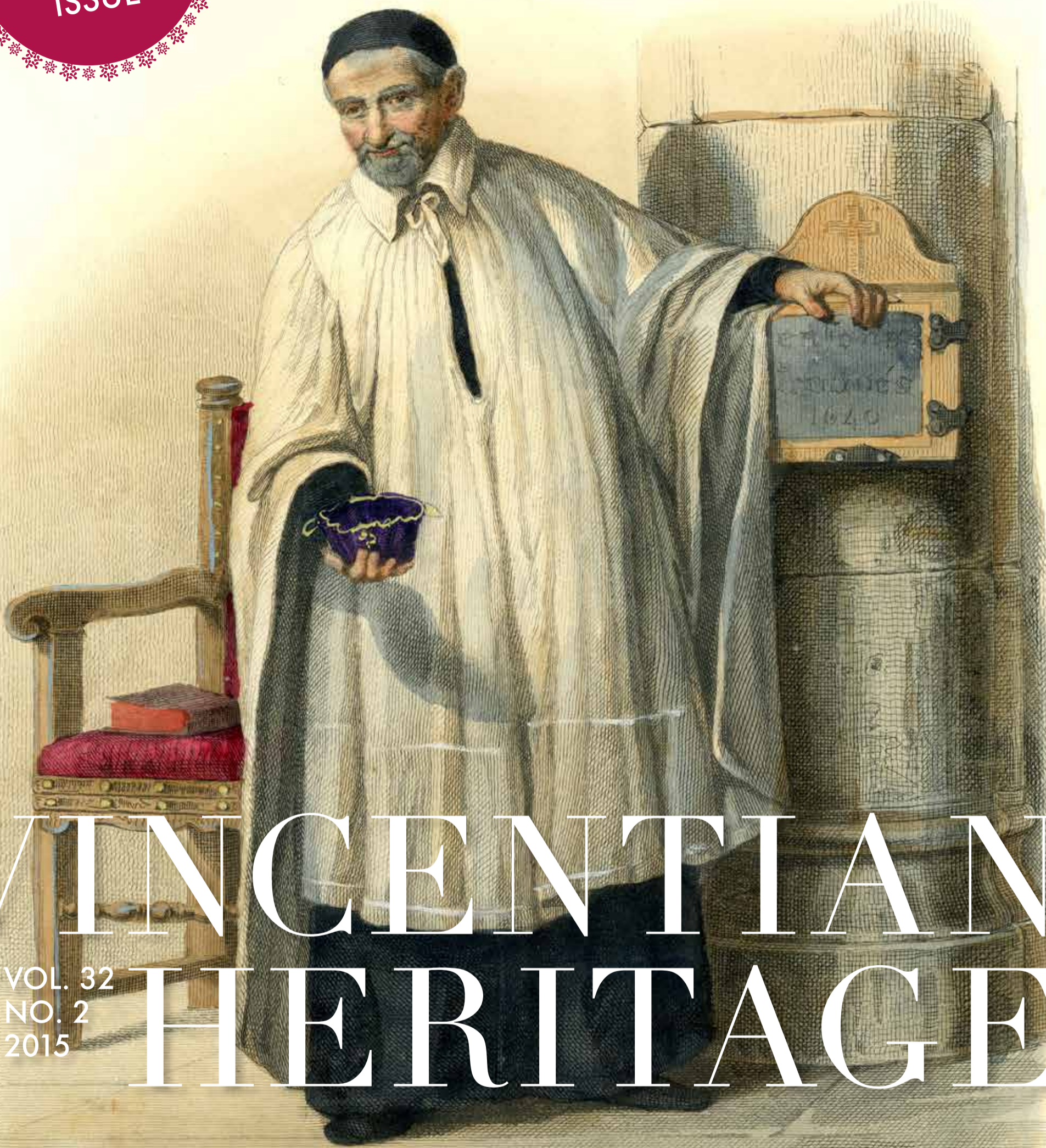


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Vincent de Paul: What Moved Him? And What Moved Him Toward Those Who Are Poor?

THOMAS F. MCKENNA, C.M.

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There are few questions more mystifying than those about motivation: what is it that moves people to do what they do? Things become doubly mysterious when looking at the reasons for the wider patterns that flow through a life. Why go in this direction and not that? With that in mind let us shine a light into the shadow land of motivations that drove Saint Vincent de Paul.

I'll begin by telling you something of my own history that leads into our question. Ever since boyhood, I've been attracted to stories of great people. I remember reading simple biographies of Davey Crockett, Abraham Lincoln, Abigail Adams — then, as the years went by, of Harry Truman, Teddy Roosevelt, George Washington, Catherine the Great and many more. For a long time I could not tell you why I was attracted to the stories of these luminaries. I just knew I liked the accounts of their lives, that I was drawn to and even fascinated by their biographies.

One day I came across a fable that helped me understand this attraction. From the Hindu tradition, it zeroed in on a conversation between a villager who lived in a remote section of India and a traveling holy man. The conversation turned out to be what today we would call a game-changer in the life of the villager.

The holy one had reached the outskirts of the village and settled down under a tree for the night when a villager came running up to him and said, "The stone! The stone! Give me the precious stone!"

"What stone?" asked the holy one. "Last night the Lord Shiva appeared to me in a dream," said the villager, "and told me that if I went to the outskirts of the village at dusk I should find a holy one who would give me a precious stone that would make me rich forever."

The holy one rummaged in his bag and pulled out a stone. "He probably meant this," he said, as he handed the stone over to the villager. "I found it on a forest path some days ago. You can certainly have it." The man looked at the stone in wonder. It was a diamond. Probably the largest diamond in the whole world for it was as large as a man's head.

He took the diamond and walked away. All night he tossed about in bed, unable to sleep. Next day at the crack of dawn he woke the holy one and said, "Give me the wealth that makes it possible for you to give this diamond away so easily."¹

There are two aspects to this tale that I would point out, and a third I would add.

There is the obvious aspect of meeting an interesting character; the traveling holy man has an aura about him. He's not your bland vanilla type; he's interesting.

¹ Anthony de Mello, *The Song of the Bird* (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1982), 182-83.



Vincent de Paul confides a foundling to a Daughter of Charity. Oil on Canvas.
Given to the chapel of Thibouville by the Emperor Napoleon III.

Courtesy St. Vincent de Paul Image Archive Online
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The second thing is that more than just interesting to the villager, he is fascinating to him. The guru's action raises a question in the man's mind — and especially in his heart — that intrigues. His freedom in giving away the priceless diamond makes the villager not only scratch his head in curiosity, but lie awake all night — and then get up and return to him the next day. Who is this holy one and what lets him do what he does? What does he know that I don't and what is he in touch with that lets him be so free?

There is a third aspect to this holy man's actions, one I could well be imposing on him but that speaks to our point. What he does shows a predilection for a certain social class, the ones on the bottom of the ladder. His handing the diamond to the villager demonstrates compassion for people less fortunate, those up against it. Rather than the rich and famous, his action benefits the poor and unknown.

What did this fable tell me about my interest in biographies? That I get hooked on people who are interesting, but especially on those whose lives raise the fascination question. What moves them? What are they in touch with that they can do the out-of-the-ordinary things they do? Or, to put a finer point on it, what is this "wealth" they are motivated by, and why did it take them in the direction it did?

This insight in-hand, we turn to St. Vincent.

Vincent de Paul is surely interesting. Coming from modest means, he wound up mobilizing tens of thousands of people to follow his vision: a world in which the people on the bottom rung of society are singled out, valued, and helped. When the saint died, the preacher at his funeral claimed that he had changed the face of the Church in his time.²

But what of our issue of motivation, the underlying why of his activity? What would be the mainspring for all his activity? What got him moving? The allied question sits there too. Of the roads he could have moved down, why did he take the one that led to "the least of the brothers and sisters," to the poor people of the world?

² For a definitive study of the oration, see Edward R. Udovic, C.M., *Henri de Maupas du Tour: The Funeral Oration for Vincent de Paul, 23 November 1660* (Chicago: DePaul University Vincentian Studies Institute, 2015), 223 pp.

To engage these questions of why and where, we look to a particular time in Vincent's life, mostly through his thirties, which we might call his bridge or awakening years. Hugh O'Donnell, C.M., characterizes them as the transition times between "Vincent 1" and "Vincent 2."³ Vincent 1, the younger man, was likeable, talented, and indeed ambitious. At nineteen, he was ordained a priest and right away set his sights on moving up not only through the ranks of the clergy but also through the layers of society, especially by networking with the upper class. He worked hard, became a credentialed and competent teacher, ingratiated himself with a number of nobility of the day, and before long was well on the way to making his mark — and his fortune. If you had only known Vincent in his twenties, this is how you would have described him.

Coming back ten or so years later, however, you would have found yourself in the company of a markedly different man. He would strike you as somehow deeper, more grounded, with a new and indeed surprising set of interests, another way of looking at the world, a revised estimate of what mattered and what did not, especially in the social realm. If you listened hard, you would begin to pick up the sounds of two new frequencies: God's love, as poured in Jesus Christ; and that same astounding love as it reaches down to the least of our brothers and sisters. This was Vincent 2, matured, a turned-around-version of his earlier self, somebody whose foundations had been re-sunk, so to speak, so that he approached life with a completely new source of energy. What happened to him?

To make sense of it we go back to our fable, specifically to that point in the story in which the action and person of the holy man have their effect on the villager. What occurs there? The villager feels a kind of gravitational pull from the holy man — or more accurately, feels the pull of what was moving him. It is as if that villager stuck his toe in the shallows of a fast moving river, stepped out further and further into its current until he began to feel himself being swept along in the river's direction, held up by its power.

Vincent had a similar experience caught up in a kind of surge over those transition years. Through an intermixture of spiritual counseling with a number of godly people (Pierre de Bérulle, Francis de Sales, André Duval, and others), and an engagement with those mired on the underside of society (the sick-poor in welfare hospitals), Vincent began to apprehend the deeper forces at work in his relationship with God. Prodded by these people and situations, he started to wake to the magnitude of what God has been doing for the entire human race in his Son, Jesus Christ. In a tangible way, Vincent intuits that God is pouring out His own goodness on the world, giving away His very Self to rescue the human race and to have it flourish. As if feeling this for the first time, Vincent knows the fuller warmth, and even fire, of God's love in giving His Son. But more to our point, he becomes fascinated ("drawn," as John's Gospel⁴ would have it) by the overwhelming

³ Hugh F. O'Donnell, C.M., "Vincent de Paul: His Life and Way," *Vincent de Paul and Louise de Marillac: The Classics of Western Spirituality*, John E. Rybolt and Frances Ryan, eds. (New York: Paulist Press, 1995), 13-38.

⁴ Jn. 6:44.



Vincent de Paul introduced by St. Francis de Sales to St. Jeanne de Chantal.
Etching by Restout.
Original in church of Ste. Marguerite, Paris.

Courtesy St. Vincent de Paul Image Archive Online
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generosity this “sending” shows.⁵ He wants to be near it, part of it, in it. And thus, dipping his toe in the water, Vincent is swept into the powerful movement of the current.

In Jesus, God is sending His own self out to the edges of creation, or perhaps better in Vincent’s intuition, down to its bottom, to the lowest ranks where the forgotten, unvalued people live and die. God is “commissioning” His Son to bring back the poor and marginalized, to reach out to those who in society’s eyes are farthest from the center and there give them the assurance that they are loved. Looking at it this way — Vincent being bowled over by the sheer goodness of what God does in Jesus, and then becoming caught in the floodtide of this goodness — it is clear why a certain Gospel scene begins to shine through for him.

The scene is in the fourth chapter of Luke’s Gospel, and it pictures Jesus coming back to his hometown and being invited to comment on the Scriptures. Standing there in the synagogue, Jesus opens the scroll and fingers his way to one particular verse from Isaiah: “He has sent me to ...bring the good news to the poor.”⁶ Putting the book down, he announces, “Today, right here and now in this room, this scripture passage is being fulfilled — in me.” To paraphrase, “I am the working, the putting-into-action, the taking-on-flesh of this sheer goodness of God coming to the poor. What is going on inside of God (the cherishing of his creatures, particularly the poorest among them) is going on through me — and indeed in me. I am the bringer of this Best-of-All-News to you: you’re being loved by God.” Or as the gospel words it, “I am evangelizing you;” i.e., I am engaged in the very act of bringing you the Good News.

Probably occurring over a considerable length of time, the scales begin to fall off

⁵ “Observance of the Rules,” 17 May 1658, in Pierre Coste, C.M., ed., *Vincent de Paul: Correspondence, Conferences, Documents*, ed. and trans. by Jacqueline Kilar, D.C., Marie Poole, D.C., Ann Mary Dougherty, D.C., et al., 1-14 (New York: New City Press, 1985-2014, 12:4. Hereafter, *CCD*).

⁶ Is. 61:1-2.

Vincent's eyes and he catches the profundity, the fire, of this passage. "This is what it's all about," he realizes, "God's love and goodness, arriving in His Son to this world and in particular to the poor people in it. This is at the heart of it all. God is pouring out His love and care on humankind, and especially on those of its number who are looked upon as its least members."

Other Gospel passages also resonate for Vincent:

- Philippians, where Jesus is depicted as the one who came down from God and took on the lot of the lowest of the low, a slave — all to bring everyone back into God's loving embrace.⁷
- The scene in Matthew wherein Jesus says he is one with the least of the brothers and sisters.⁸
- The many accounts of Jesus' interaction with society's outcasts, his showering acceptance and forgiveness on sinners, tax collectors, and unbelievers.⁹

Vincent gives talk after talk on treating these so-called unworthy ones with the very love with which God favors men and women.

Recently, a number of writers have focused on this interior experience of Vincent.¹⁰ Rather than look at all the great accomplishments of his life, they raise our motivation question: what happened inside of him that supplied the dynamism to start all of this moving forward, particularly in the direction of people who were poor? Granting there is always a necessary interplay between the outer and the inner (between praxis and prayer), they think this question is a good corrective to the many treatments of Vincent, which paint him mostly as an activist and founder of institutions.

The heading they use is the slippery one of mysticism. While the word has many (mystifying) meanings, here it means simply the lived contact a person has with God. It can bring in such things as visions and ecstasies, but these writers pass over such phenomena and look simply to Vincent's inner experience of the divine. What was its texture, shape, and direction? What was that interchange that so fired up his heart?

Guiseppe Toscani in particular turns attention from Vincent's deeds to their wellsprings, to the fuel in his engine, so to speak: the underlying and mighty fascination that God's love, better, God's loving has for Vincent. Vincent was swept up into the force field of that ever-flowing love. Over time, he became more and more enthralled with the pure giving of God, with what Saint Paul calls the lavish outpouring of God's Spirit.¹¹

⁷ Phil. 2:5-11. Cf. "On Uniformity," 23 May 1659, *CCD*, 12:205; "To A Priest of the Mission in Agen," May 1656, *CCD*, 5:609.

⁸ Mt. 25:31-45. Cf. "Love For The Poor," January 1657, *CCD*, 11:349.

⁹ Cf. "Letter to Anton Fleury," 6 November 1658, *CCD*, 7:356.

¹⁰ Pierre Deffrenes, S.J., published four articles on Vincent's vocation in *Revue d'Ascetique et de Mystique* (1932): pp. 60-86; 164-183; 294-321; 389-411. They have been translated by Hugh O'Donnell, C.M., as *The Vocation of Saint Vincent de Paul: A Study in the Psychology of Holiness*, available from the translator. See, Myles Reardon, C.M., "Climbing the Mountain: Introducing the Writings of Guiseppe Toscani, C.M.," *Colloque* 53 (Summer 2006): 335-42. See also, Guiseppe Toscani, C.M., *The Mystique of the Poor*, with an introduction by Luigi Mezzadri, C.M., trans. by Myles Reardon, C.M. (Commission of Charism and Culture in Asia Pacific, 2011).

¹¹ Rom. 5:5.

To use a still more vigorous expression, Vincent was “drawn into” the Sending that is always radiating out from God. The Father is at all times sending forth, commissioning, giving over His very Self in His Son. In fact, that pouring-out is precisely who Jesus is, the making-present/sacrament of God — more accurately, the presencing of God’s loving. It was this facet within God, the Sending, that so captivated Vincent, and that took him further into God’s own life.

But there is the further note to Vincent’s religious experience. He sees where that love is going. He is taken by its direction, and that is out to the farthest reaches and down to the lowest levels. He comes to appreciate that the divine loving in Jesus is directed particularly to the people on the bottom rungs. And so those who are poor become those to whom Vincent feels especially sent to love. Just as importantly, they are a window to him onto where God’s love is appearing in the world. As the least of the brothers and sisters to whom Jesus is sent, they are the ones in whom the Savior lives.

So, when the fascinated Vincent asks Jesus to “give him the wealth that lets him do all these things,” he feels summoned along Jesus’ own path. As Vincent engages with the downtrodden, he senses being a part of that current of God’s out-flowing love to these men and women. It is this attraction to divine loving that informs Vincent’s intuitions about where to head in life, and how to make his choices.¹²

Toscani uses the expression “mystique of the poor” to drive home the point. Vincent sees the Father, Jesus, the poor, and his own self all caught up together in God’s loving of humanity.¹³ He grasped and was grasped by the pure generosity that is sending the Word to the poor, the Sending to which Jesus gives flesh. The fuel for Vincent’s engine is provided by just this experience of God. His motivation is fed by this fiery lived contact with the divine. Fire enkindles fire.

Writing about the saints, Hans Von Balthasar¹⁴ touches on this point. The most important thing about these holy people is not their heroic, personal accomplishments, but their firm obedience (or listening), coupled together with a total commitment to their mission. He moves on to identify this interplay of listening and commitment as *the* essential ingredient of what many would recognize as contemplation. It is in this contemplative stance that the saints experience what Von Balthasar tellingly terms “a great commissioning,” a growing urge to go out from God to the world. Is this not indeed the case with Vincent? Does he not experience, in Jesus, just that “great commissioning?” And to repeat, there is the direction in which missioning moves — toward the poor people of the world, trying to be God’s love for them, and at the same time finding in them God’s love.

As is clear, it is not an easy thing to find language for a person’s “lived contact with God.” This is so private, so beyond all words. Add to that the difficulty in trying to lay hold of this shifting reality, a conversion as it is happening, a relationship as it is blossoming.

¹² “Go first to the poor and help them. If you can do other things, fine.” “On Uniformity,” November 1657, *CCD*, 10:289.

¹³ “It is His good pleasure that we always remain *in* (emphasis mine) the holy joy of His love.” “Letter to St. Louise,” 9 February 1628, *CCD*, 1:36.

¹⁴ As quoted in Harvey D. Egan, S.J., *What Are They Saying About Mysticism?* (New York: Paulist Press, 1982), 93.



Vincent de Paul with clergy members of the Tuesday Conferences. Oil on canvas. Originally in Toul, France, seminary, now in Crézilles.

Courtesy St. Vincent de Paul Image Archive Online
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That is the challenge of appreciating Vincent's motivations, of coming to know what was moving him inside.

An insight offered by Hugh O'Donnell, C.M., comes to mind regarding an earlier translation in the *Constitutions of The Congregation of the Mission*¹⁵ of the verse from St. Luke's fourth chapter, so revelatory in Vincent's calling. In this first rendition the English read, "[We too are to] ...follow Christ, the evangelizer of the poor." "Evangelizer" was a noun, a descriptor of Jesus as the one who brings the best of all news, that God loves them, to the poor. But Fr. O'Donnell notes that in the final edition the text reads "...to follow Christ evangeliz-ing the poor," the word now transformed into a participle. It describes Jesus' very act of bringing the Good News.

So the disciple of Vincent is called to be not only an imitator of what Jesus did, but more than that he/she is to be swept up into bringing the love Jesus offers, taken into that act of Sending always going on in God. This is to follow Vincent as he follows Jesus Christ, by stepping into the very activity and dynamism of evangelizing the poor. This is to get caught up in that "mystique of the poor," that lived contact with God as God is pouring God's own Self into the world, reaching down to lift up the least of our brothers and sisters.

We began with a story about a master and would-be disciple who became fascinated by the master's motivations: "give me the wealth that makes it possible for you to give that diamond away so easily." Inasmuch as every master wants to lead his disciple to the source of this wealth, Vincent is no exception. Through his writings, his works, and indeed, his spirit alive in present-day followers, he continues to invite others to step into the current. He would take us to the wellsprings of his actions, to the ever-flowing source that shapes his view of how things really are in the world.

¹⁵ *Constitutions and Statutes of the Congregation of the Mission* (Rome: 1984; English Translation, Philadelphia: 1989), 27.

Let Vincent himself have the last word. In a talk on the supremacy of love (loving), he insists: “We really must give ourselves to God to imprint these truths (about loving) on our soul, to organize our lives according to this spirit, and to do the work of this (God’s) love.”¹⁶ Here we see Vincent’s counsel to begin from the inside of God.

In the same conference Vincent warms up this advice, so to speak, with another Lucan verse in which Jesus declares, “I have come to set the earth on fire, and how I wish it were already blazing.”¹⁷ Vincent then challenges his listeners: “So our calling... is to do what? It is to set people’s hearts on fire, to do what the Son of God did. He came to set the world on fire to inflame it with His own love... If our calling is to go throughout the world and spread the divine fire...how I must burn with this same fire!” Here, again, Vincent is not only moving in a current or sharing a wealth, but is burning with a spark of the same fire as burns in God.

St. Vincent de Paul is not only interesting. He is fascinating. We honor him in opening ourselves to the same wealth that came to fascinate him — that fathomless and fiery love flowing from the heart of God in the person of his Son, sent to bring the Wonderful News of just that love to all of us, especially to persons who are poor.

¹⁶ Conference 207, “On Charity,” May 1659, *CCD*, 12:214-5.

¹⁷ Lk. 12:49.





Vincent de Paul confides a foundling to a Daughter of Charity.
Oil on Canvas.
Given to the chapel of Thibouville by the Emperor Napoleon III.

Courtesy St. Vincent de Paul Image Archive Online
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*B. Vincentius à Sancto Francisco Salesio
'Monialibus' Visitationis proficitur*



Vincent de Paul introduced by St. Francis de Sales to St. Jeanne de Chantal.
Etching by Restout.
Original in church of Ste. Marguerite, Paris.

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Vincent de Paul with clergy members of the Tuesday Conferences.
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Originally in Toul, France, seminary, now in Crézilles.

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The Ecological Spirituality of Elizabeth Ann Seton

Based on Elizabeth Bayley Seton: Collected Writings, Volume One

SUNG-HAE KIM, S.C.*

* I am grateful to Regina Bechtle, S.C., Judy Metz, S.C., Gertrude Foley, S.C., and Betty Ann McNeil, D.C., who read this article and offered valuable suggestions.



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Introduction

We are living in an unprecedented age wherein ecological concern is rising to be the most critical issue for humanity and all living creatures on Earth, the home which we share. The ecological movement and almost forty years of academic study have clearly demonstrated that it is not a lack of scientific knowledge or technology that makes environmental problems so difficult to solve, rather it is human arrogance or spiritual pride concerning the place of our species in the global ecosystem. Some ecologists, therefore, have asked that religious traditions establish and incorporate models for a healthy and harmonious relationship between nature and humanity, as well as amongst human beings. These models would contribute to the formation of more advanced environmental ethics based on the reinterpretation of traditional texts with ecological insights. To that end, in this paper the writings of Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton (1774-1821) will be interpreted from the perspective of contemporary ecological philosophy.¹

Some people may object to this attempt to gather ecological insights from Elizabeth Seton. Indeed, Elizabeth never used the term 'ecology,' which was first coined in 1866 by Ernst Haeckel, a German biologist.² Understandably Elizabeth did not share the same ecological concern as that of our contemporaries because the crisis of climate change, and an understanding of water and air contamination, and the resultant destruction of the soil and many species, was not of her lifetime. Nevertheless, we find an amazing, constant insight in her writings that the natural and human world are interwoven in the life, order, and beauty of God, the Creator. She saw an inseparable interconnection between nature and human life, and she perceived both life and death as the necessary cycle of creation. She was convinced that we humans have a special calling, like the corals in the ocean, to be transformed by sufferings and hardships, through which we learn to trust God and attain the freedom of heart or the state of holy indifference.³ Thus, Elizabeth Seton's ecological sensitivity will enrich our understanding of providential interdependence between nature and our human life.

¹ Arne Naess defined ecological philosophy thusly: "The study of ecology indicates an approach, a methodology which can be suggested by the simple maxim 'all things hang together.' This has application to and overlaps with the problems in philosophy: the placement of humanity in nature, and the search for new kinds of explanation of this through the use of systems and relational perspectives. The study of these problems common to ecology and philosophy shall be called *ecophilosophy*.... The word 'philosophy' itself can mean two things: (1) a field of study, an approach to knowledge; (2) one's own personal code of values and a view of the world which guides one's own decisions...When applied to questions involving ourselves and nature, we call this latter meaning of the word 'philosophy' an *ecosophy*." Arne Naess, *Ecology, Community and Lifestyle: Outline of an Ecosophy*, trans. by David Rothenberg (Cambridge University Press, 1989), 36.

² Roderick Nash, *The Rights of Nature: A History of Environmental Ethics* (The University of Wisconsin Press, 1989), 55.

³ Sung-Hae Kim, S.C., "Indifference as the Freedom of the Heart: The Spiritual Fruit of Apostolic Mysticism – Christian, Confucian, and Daoist Cases," *Vincentian Heritage* 30:2 (2010): 27-46. Elizabeth also talked about abandonment and indifference as the most desired state of complete trust in God's providence. See *Elizabeth Bayley Seton: Collected Writings*, ed. by Regina Bechtle, S.C. and Judith Metz, S.C., 3 vols. (Hyde Park, N.Y.: New City Press, 2000-2006), 2:78, 103, 140, 156. Hereafter cited as CW.



Mrs. William Magee Seton.
Engraving by Charles Balthazar Julien Fevret de Saint-Mémin, 1797.

Courtesy, Daughters of Charity Province of St. Louise
Archives, Emmitsburg, MD



We are indebted to Hans-Georg Gadamer for his vision that it is through the continual fusion of the classical horizon of the past (in our case that of Elizabeth Seton), and the contemporary horizon of the present (the modern-day philosophers of ecology) that we come to a more universal understanding of the truth.⁴ Therefore, our ecological interpretation of Elizabeth Seton's writings will not only offer us a new awareness of the ecological dimension to her spirituality, but also will contribute to the Christian endeavor of trying to find more examples of ecological saints — those such as Francis of Assisi and Hildegard of Bingen.⁵

Our primary source, *Elizabeth Bayley Seton: Collected Writings*, consists of three volumes, each of which we will analyze separately as each has a different focus. Volume One presents her writings both as a married woman and then a widow with five children; Volume Two contains her life as a school mistress and religious founder living in community; and Volume Three is a collection of other various types of her writings. Volume One, from which this paper draws her ecological insights, is a collection of Elizabeth's correspondence and her journals from 1793 to 1808, when she left New York for Baltimore in order to respond to her calling as a religious. The volume reveals the personal life of a woman in love with her fiancé, and shares her intimate communications with family members and lifelong friends such as Julia Sitgreaves Scott and Eliza Craig Sadler. It also includes a journal to her sister-in-law Rebecca Seton, written during Elizabeth's journey to Italy. The journal manifests how much Elizabeth loved nature, and how she found strength and consolation in it during the darkest period of her life in the quarantine San Jacopo Lazaretto. Finally,

⁴ Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Philosophical Hermeneutics*, tr. and ed. by David Linge (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976); *Truth and Method*, 2nd rev. edition, tr. by J. Weinsheimer & D.G. Marshall (New York: Crossroad, 2004). The fusion of two horizons is the third among Gadamer's four processes of human understanding through hermeneutical interpretation. The first is the present prejudice that a person holds; the second is accepting the challenge of a new horizon through reading a text; then, thirdly, in fusing two horizons one reaches a more universal understanding; finally, one starts the process of hermeneutical understanding again by asking a new question.

⁵ On 5 July 1821, six months after her death, Simon Bruté wrote of Elizabeth that "I believe her to have been one of those truly chosen souls who, if placed in circumstances similar to those of St. Teresa, or St. Frances de Chantal, would be equally remarkable in the scale of sanctity." Simon Gabriel Bruté, *Mother Seton: Notes by Rev. Simon Gabriel Bruté* (Emmitsburg, MD: 1884), 81. I propose that Elizabeth Seton can be numbered among Christian ecological saints.

this volume illustrates Elizabeth's struggle before her conversion to Catholicism, and her life as a poor widow in New York, a city hostile to Catholics.

In her writings from age 19 to 34 the following four characteristics emerge as constitutive elements in her ecological spirituality: first, the beauty of nature was the space wherein her encounter with God and friends always took place; second, when she felt abandoned, Elizabeth identified herself with the surrounding natural environment and therein experienced consolation and God's mercy; third, Elizabeth saw God's equity in nature and learned ecological balance that accepts both life and death, joy and suffering; and fourth, while recognizing the rhythm of time in nature, Elizabeth realized the importance of living in the present and learned to be content in all situations by acquiring the virtues of moderation and harmony. These four constitutive elements of Elizabeth Seton's ecological spirituality can be seen through an analysis of her writings.

I. Nature as the Space where Elizabeth Encountered Friends and God

It is clear in her letters to friends and family members that Elizabeth found happiness in the beauty of nature — sunrises and sunsets, the peaceful flow of a river, clear air, and singing birds.

A. Elizabeth's Letters to Eliza Craig Sadler

On 18 June 1797, facing the East River at her Long Island summer home, Elizabeth wrote to Eliza, the wife of Henry Sadler: "The mild, peaceful flow of the river before our dwelling, always inspires me with ideas of you, and increases the melancholy of regret which thoughts of absent friends inspire..."⁶ Looking at the river's slow movement, Elizabeth missed her friend and was reminded of life's passing.

In the summer of 1799, Elizabeth's infant son Richard Seton was taken ill and she had to nurse him for several months. Elizabeth wrote to Eliza, "I am a bond woman, and you are free. — You must come to me..." She then expressed her delight in nature in this confining situation: "...but I have had some sweet *lonely* walks while the little friend was sleeping and discovered many beauties that quite escaped *us*. Last Sunday morning before breakfast I retraced the honey-suckle walk and to my great astonishment found those bushes with buds on them which grow near the honey suckle and in great quantities in other places, bear the sweetest flower you can imagine with the great profusion. Its fragrance is beyond any wild flower I ever saw... — Oh how it would delight me to send you a branch of it..."⁷ Here Elizabeth expresses her love of Eliza through the fragrant wild flowers she gathers.

In July of 1800, while with her father at Staten Island and after giving birth to Catherine, Elizabeth wrote to Eliza: "The air is clear, Father singing, the Birds singing,

⁶ 1.11, "To Eliza Sadler," Long Island, 18 June 1797, *CW*, 1:14. Volume one contains 32 of Elizabeth's letters to Eliza, among which quotations from four letters will be introduced. Elizabeth frequently referred to her as Sad.

⁷ 1.57, "To Eliza Sadler," July or August 1799, *Ibid.*, 1:86-87. In Elizabeth's original writing the first letter of each sentence is frequently lower case; for the sake of making it easier to read I have capitalized them.

Nature refreshed, and above all my Seton restored—yet in looking at the opposite shore bright with the setting sun, I cannot help sending forth a long sigh to the one who would so much value and enjoy the blessing which seems unpossessed by any one. Every window is closed all looks solitary, and what are you doing dear Eliza—thought cannot trace you but if peace is your companion the whole beautiful universe can bestow nothing more precious—”⁸ With a new born baby, clear air, singing birds, and the setting sun, Elizabeth perceives the whole universe as refreshed. But she also longs for her friend with whom she can enjoy the beauty of nature, wishing her peace as the most precious gift.

Later, on 27 March 1798, Elizabeth wrote to Eliza about the death of the husband of their mutual friend, Julia: “The last time I wrote you... I meant to have had a letter ready for whatever opportunity presented, but Fate orders all things, and since that time has ordered the *Husband* of my poor little Julia Scott, to the regions of Peace—I have not left her night or day during the excess of her Sorrows and such scenes of terror I have gone thro’ as you nor no one can conceive—”⁹ It is noteworthy that Elizabeth used the term ‘Fate’ here. In later years when her son William mentioned ‘fate’ Elizabeth corrected him saying: “You say *tide of fate*, my beloved son, and so the poet says, but I say *tide of providence* which is as infinite goodness....”¹⁰ It is beautiful to see how Elizabeth slowly grew into total confidence in the merciful providence of God.

B. Elizabeth’s Letters to Julia Sitgreaves Scott

Elizabeth’s sense of security was upended when William Seton, Sr., her father-in-law, upon whom the family greatly depended, fell on some ice in January of 1798. His health quickly declined and he died in June. On the 3rd of June, Elizabeth wrote to Julia, mindful of the losses both had had to endure: “So you see, dear Julia, the debt we pay for this beautiful creation and the many enjoyments of this life, is to be borne in some degree by us all. Human life and sorrow are inseparable—”¹¹ Elizabeth knew that loss, uncertainty, and sorrow are indispensable parts of our life, just as we also enjoy the beauty and bountiful gifts of nature.

Elizabeth spent the summer of 1801 on Staten Island with her father and wished to share the sea breeze with Julia. “I am sure no consideration should make you neglect the thing that would conduce to your health which can only be mended by exercise and fresh air—how I wish you could share the sea breeze I now enjoy, dear, dear Julia, farewell—”¹² On 5 September 1801, she recounted a delightful evening spent with her father before his

⁸ 1.88, “To Eliza Sadler,” July 1800, *Ibid.*, 1:125. ‘My Seton’ refers to Catherine Seton, Elizabeth’s fourth child born on 28 June 1800.

⁹ 1.14, “To Eliza Sadler,” 27 March 1798, *Ibid.*, 1:20-21. Julia Scott was a native of Philadelphia who moved to New York when she married Lewis Allaire Scott, becoming a good friend to Elizabeth. After the death of her husband in 1798, Scott returned to Philadelphia yet remained a faithful confidante and benefactor to Elizabeth.

¹⁰ 7.150, “To William Seton,” March 1818, *Ibid.*, 2:540.

¹¹ 1.21, “To Julia Scott,” New York, 3 June 1798, *Ibid.*, 1:33.

¹² 1.127, “To Julia Scott,” *Ibid.*, 1:170-71. The date on the outside of the letter is 20 June 1801.

sudden death from yellow fever: “On the 10th August—in the Afternoon My Father was seated at his Dining room window composed, cheerful and particularly delighted with the scene of shipping and maneuvering of the Pilots etc., which was heightened by a beautiful sunset and the view of a bright rainbow which was extended immediately Over the Bay — ...He called me to observe the different shades of the sun on the clover field before the door and repeatedly exclaimed ‘in my life I never saw anything so beautiful’ —”¹³ It must have been a great consolation for Elizabeth to remember the delight she and her father shared in observing the different shades of the sun reflected on the clover field.

During her trip to Italy this same appreciation of nature is vividly depicted in Elizabeth’s letter to Julia on 28 October 1803: “My Seton is daily getting better, and... little Ann and myself are well—If I dared indulge my Enthusiasm and describe as far as I could give them words my extravagant Enjoyment in gazing on the Ocean, and the rising and setting sun, and the moonlight Evenings, a quire of Paper would not contain what I should tell you—but one subject you will share with me which engages my whole Soul—the dear the tender the gracious love with which every moment has been marked in these my heavy hours of trial—”¹⁴ We see how sensitive Elizabeth was to the orderly changes of nature in the ocean, sun, and moon, and the consolation she found in perceiving the love of the Creator in them.

C. Elizabeth’s Letters to her Family Members

Elizabeth found the same consolation in nature when faced with her husband’s financial difficulties. On 1 March 1801, she wrote to her father: “—the blossoms and Zephyrs of Spring the gentle but animating colors of Nature heightened by the converse and smiles of ‘her love’—that is one side of the scene, the other I dare not look at.”¹⁵ In spite of her family crisis, Elizabeth sees the beauty of spring flowers and the loving smile they bring, and then juxtaposes these scenes of life-giving nature to the horrible storm descending upon the family.

In September of the same year, after the death of her father, Elizabeth wrote to her sister Mary about the uncertainties of human life. “—But now whether standing on the rock watching the passing waves which picture the passage to eternity, wandering in the woods, or pouring tea for the ladies, all is uncertain—and the sinking Sun behind the mountain—calls thoughts away to the scene where all uncertainties shall be made clear—”¹⁶ It is noteworthy that Elizabeth finds certainty through her faith in eternity, which becomes her life’s anchor and the vision from which she values everything.

¹³ 1.141, “To Julia Scott,” New York, 5 September 1801, *Ibid.*, 1:185. Elizabeth continues with a description of how her father fell sick from fever the next morning, from which he would not recover. She remembered his last words before he passed away, holding her hand, “I would cover you more, but it can’t always be as we would wish.” (p. 186.)

¹⁴ 2.3, “To Julia Scott,” 28 October 1803, *Ibid.*, 1:245. Elizabeth made it clear in the following sentence that the gracious love she mentioned was divine love: “—you will believe because you know how blessed they are who rest on our Heavenly Father—”

¹⁵ 1.107, “To Dr. Richard Bayley,” New York, 1 March 1801, *Ibid.*, 1:149.

¹⁶ 1.143, “Draft to Mary Bayley Post,” September 1801, *Ibid.*, 1:188-189.

Similarly, in her sister-in-law Rebecca Seton, Elizabeth found a kindred spirit with whom she shared her deepest thoughts. In 1800, when Elizabeth and her children arrived at her father's home on Staten Island to spend the summer, she revealed her heart to Rebecca: "I cannot tell you how well how happily we made our Voyage yesterday. We found dear Father at the Wharf with such a welcome as dispelled all the gloom of my heart and made me only wish that you were present... —the House so neat... —the Birds the little garden—every thing so cheerful— Holy Nature was the first thing required— ...just as we were going to tea a great Punch bowl of garden strawberries...crowned the feast the sweet setting sun too—how the heart did melt before him the giver of all—"17 The elements that constitute Elizabeth's happiness are a welcoming heart, a clean house, tea and fresh strawberries; the garden with its trees, the birds, and the sunset lead her heart to the Giver of all.

On 7 June 1801, Elizabeth wrote to Rebecca that "with all this wide and beautiful creation before me the restless Soul longs to enjoy its liberty and rest beyond its bound."18 Elizabeth repeatedly expressed to her, "How much I wish you were here to enjoy this beautiful sunset";19 and again, "—a sweet afternoon with a sunset in peace and elegant light, red clouds over my head at the back door—a quiet Evening... —but 'mercy's in every plan' and I hope you have your share too of comfort."20

Elizabeth's love of nature also extended to a concern for all creatures' happiness, as seen in an anecdote she shared with Rebecca. "You would have enjoyed the last half hour past as much as I have—imagine a young robin in a cage, its mother on the top which she never left but to fetch it food, and the male chipping on a tree near it. Nelly was its owner and I *coaxed* her to make them happy and open the cage-door, and the moment it was done, out went the little one with both the old ones after it."21 We perceive that Elizabeth's happiness is not complete until the creatures around her are also happy, because she knows that sharing love is the basis of all happiness.

It is amusing to read how Elizabeth tried to transmit her love of nature to her young daughter Anna Maria, passing along a copybook of her poetry: "This book was began [*sic*] when I was *fifteen* and written with great delight to please my Father— ...those even that examine the beautiful order of creation are more suited to fill the mind that is making acquaintance with their great Author— ...I must leave it to *you* my love to finish what I have begun—and recollect it as a Mother's entreaty that you <spend> give some time in every day if it is only half an hour to devotional reading—which is as necessary to the

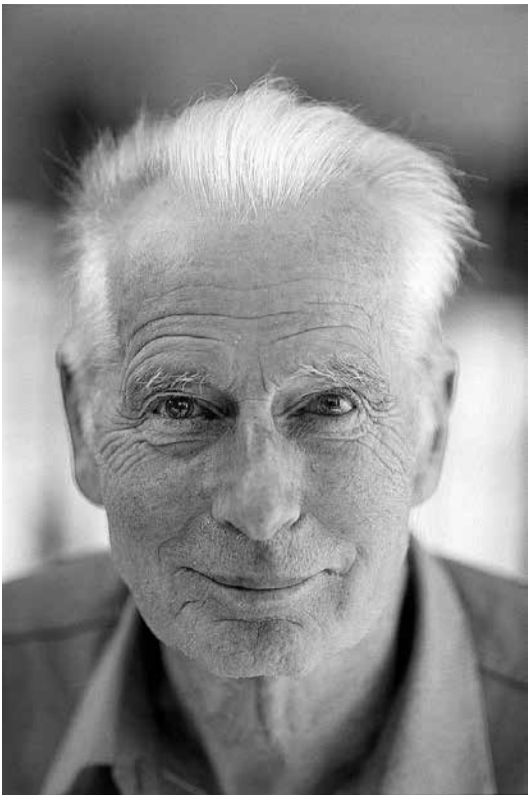
17 1.84, "To Rebecca Seton," 1800, *Ibid.*, 1:123. The date is not specified, although the time is: "6 o'clock—thought it was 7." William Magee, Elizabeth's husband, remained in New York City during the summer.

18 1.115, "To Rebecca Seton," 7 June 1801, *Ibid.*, 1:157.

19 1.123, "To Rebecca Seton," 1801, *Ibid.*, 1:164. On 24 July 1801, Elizabeth wrote Rebecca: "My own Rebecca's heart will rejoice when I tell her that the Setting Sun of last evening and the Glory of this morning were both enjoyed with Dué—" See *CW*, 1:178. Elizabeth connects with friends by sharing her experience of happiness in nature.

20 1.116, "To Rebecca Seton," 1801, *Ibid.*, 1:158. This letter was written on a Thursday morning.

21 1.123, *Ibid.*, 1:164.



Portrait of Arne Naess (1912-2009).

Public Domain



well ordering of the mind as the <careful> hand of the gardener to prevent the weeds destroying your favorite flower.”²² Here Elizabeth compares the cultivation of mind with nurturing a beautiful flower garden according to the order of creation. In fact, the primary characteristic of Elizabeth Seton’s ecological spirituality is her constant love of nature’s beauty, something that enabled her to meet her friends and her God more deeply.

D. The Ecological Value of Elizabeth’s Love of Nature

We have seen that Elizabeth Seton’s writings reveal her sensitivity to and enjoyment of nature, her observance of a sunset, river, flower, and bird, ultimately finding in them the caring love of the Creator. Now we should address the ecological meaning found in Elizabeth’s love of nature and view her writings in the light of Arne Naess (1912-2009), a Norwegian philosopher and founder of the Deep Ecology Movement.²³ Naess believed that direct experience of nature-as-beautiful offers the foundational basis for our ecological way of life. “Human beings can perceive and care for the diversity of their surroundings. Our biological heritage allows us to delight in this intricate, living diversity. This ability to delight can be further perfected, facilitating a creative interaction with the immediate surroundings.”²⁴ He emphasized that we all have the ability to delight in nature, though

²² 1.171, “To Anna Maria Seton,” 1803, *Ibid.*, 1:219. The date of this letter, presumed 1803, means Anna would have been eight years old. To read the entire copybook, see “Elizabeth Bayley Seton’s Commonplace Book of Poetry: Archives, St. Joseph Provincial House, Rare Book 31,” Transcribed and Introduced by Ellin M. Kelly, Ph.D., *Vincentian Heritage* 29:1 (2009): 35-131. Available for download at: <http://via.library.depaul.edu/vhj/vol29/iss1/>

²³ Naess coined the term “deep ecology,” meaning we have to learn and gain insight striking at the core of ecological problems. He thought that “shallow ecology,” built on short-term technological fixes designed to benefit human beings in advanced countries, would not solve the problem. “The Shallow and the Deep, Long-range Ecological Movement, a Summary,” *Inquiry* 16 (1973), 95-100.

²⁴ Naess, *Ecology, Community, and Lifestyle*, 23.



The Lazaretto at Livorno, Tuscany, Italy. Panoramic view.
Color etching by P. Lapi (1824).

Wellcome Library, London. Wellcome Images: <http://wellcomeimages.org>



this innate ability has to be nurtured through appreciative experiences.

Naess further developed the platform of the Deep Ecology Movement based on the principle that all creation has the “equal right to live and blossom.” He held that for those who love nature this was an intuitively clear and obvious value. “This quality depends in part upon the deep pleasure and satisfaction we receive from close partnership with other forms of life. The attempt to ignore our dependence and to establish a master–slave role has contributed to the alienation of man from himself.”²⁵ Since we can control and sacrifice ourselves only when we love and find joy, it is imperative that we have direct experiences of nature as beautiful, and ultimately realize that nature is indispensable to our happiness. Elizabeth would have agreed with Arne Naess that human beings are not the center of the world, but that everything on this earth is interconnected as “the relational, total-field”²⁶ of life flowing from God. Therefore, the happiness of a robin family affects our human happiness as an integral part of the whole. Both Elizabeth Seton and Arne Naess encourage us to spend time in nature and to learn to be sensitive to its seasonable changes, so that its beauty might change our arrogant view toward other living creatures on Earth.²⁷

II. Elizabeth’s Experience of Unity with Nature in Her Abandonment

During her experiences of abandonment, Elizabeth identified herself with the natural environment that surrounded her and learned to trust in the mercy of God. Through this identification with nature she found the consolation and energy to rise up and pierce through the value of suffering, a transformational act both in the natural and human world.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 28. Through his own experience of living in a mountain hut, Naess was convinced that we have to learn humility and moderation from nature. He stated that only those who experience “exuberance in nature” understand its true value and richness. The eight formulations of his platform are found in the same book, 29-31.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 28. Naess rejected the image of “the man-in-environment” as anthropocentrism and proposed the image of “the relational, total-field” as the basis of deep ecology.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 104-178. When he retired from the University of Oslo in order to commit himself to the ecological movement, Naess proclaimed “I wanted to stress the continued possibility for joy in a world faced by disaster.” See *Ibid.*, 2.

A. Elizabeth's Italian Journal

In her Italian Journal to Rebecca Seton, Elizabeth's experience of unity with nature is vividly manifested by its powerful energy to heal and console. While passing through a group of islands on the southeast coast of Spain, Elizabeth wrote of how much she was moved by the beauty of nature, "Can I ever forget the setting sun over the little Island of Yivica."²⁸ At the same time she expressed mixed feelings of trust and fear during an unavoidable storm at sea: "A heavy storm of thunder and lightning at midnight—My Soul assured and strong in its almighty Protector, encouraged itself in Him, while the knees trembled as they bent to him."²⁹ Her joy in listening to the ringing of the bells of Ave Maria as the ship *Shepherdess* arrived at Leghorn turned to deep sorrow as William, Anna, and Elizabeth herself were taken to the Lazaretto quarantine. Here, because of William's sickness, they were quarantined for a month from 19 November to 19 December, 1803. In Elizabeth's Journal at the Lazaretto we find her soul's struggles as she faced the unexpected frustrations and hardships which would hasten her husband's death.

On the first night in quarantine, Elizabeth graciously accepted the mattresses, dinner, and other necessities from the Filicchi family, and wrote, quoting Anna, "'Mamma if Papa should die here—but God will be with us'—God is with us—and if sufferings abound in us, his Consolations also greatly abound, and far exceed all utterance—"³⁰ However, awakening the next morning, Elizabeth struggled with her own disappointment and the temptation to revolt against this seemingly unjust situation:

The Matin Bells awakened my Soul to its most painful regrets and filled it with an agony of Sorrow which could not at first find relief even in prayer—In the little closet from whence there is a view of the Open Sea, and the beatings of the waves against the high rocks at the entrance of this Prison which throws them violently back and raises the white foam as high as its walls, I first came to my senses and reflected that I was offending my only Friend and resource in my misery and voluntarily shutting out from my Soul the only consolation it could receive—pleading for Mercy and Strength brought Peace—and with a cheerful countenance I asked William what we should do for Breakfast.³¹

This journal entry reveals that, in shutting down and dwelling on the "painful regrets" of having traveled to Italy in hopes of curing her sick husband, Elizabeth soon came to understand that she was voluntarily closing the door to the source of her grace. She likens the state of her agonizing, struggling soul to the violent beating of the waves

²⁸ 2.5, "Journal to Rebecca Seton," Gibraltar Bay, 8 November, *CW*, 1:247. This journal entry to Rebecca Seton was written in 1803. Simon Gabriel Bruté wrote a short explanation about the location of this island (see note 3).

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 1:247-8. This journal entry is dated 15 November 1803.

³⁰ 2.7, "Journal to Rebecca Seton," 19 November 1803, *Ibid.*, 1:253.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 1:254. It is recorded as the 20th Sunday morning, 1803.

against the rocks, flinging white foam as high as the quarantine's walls. However, instead of wallowing in self-pity and blaming others for her situation, she pleaded for God's mercy and strength, which brought her peaceful resignation.

In Elizabeth's journal on 29 November, after a ten day stay in this miserable situation, she writes of the family's daily life in the Lazaretto:

After breakfast read our Psalms and the 15th Chapter of Isaiah to my William with so much delight that it made us all merry—He read at little Anna's request the last chapter of Revelation, but the tones of his voice no heart can stand—A storm of wind still and very cold—Willy with a Blanket over his shoulders creeps to the old man's fire—Ann jumps the rope, and Maty [notation: name for herself] hops on one foot five or six times the length of the room without stopping—laugh at me my Sister, but it is very good exercise, and warms sooner than a fire when there is a warm heart to set it in motion— Sung Hymns—read promises to my Willy shivering under the bed clothes—and felt that the Lord is with us—and that he is our All—³²

Despite her husband's worsening condition, his weakening voice, the bed shaking with his shivering breath, Elizabeth leads her family to find consolation in God's promise by reading the Scriptures aloud.

Although every page of Elizabeth's journal at the Lazaretto is inspiring, it is in the journal of 1 December 1803, after two weeks of soul-searching purification, that we find a classical example of nature mysticism. Elizabeth recalls how strongly she experienced God in a beautiful spring day at New Rochelle, New York. It was 1789, her father having traveled to England for medical research and leaving her feeling abandoned. In juxtaposing the two dark situations, the Lazaretto and New Rochelle, Elizabeth reaffirms how she met God so intimately in the bounteous beauty of God's creation. As it reveals the important place of nature in her encounter with God, this rather long quotation must be read in its entirety. She describes her present situation, her experience in New Rochelle as a 15 year old staying at her uncle's home, then marries past to present:

Arose between 6 and 7, before the day had dawned the light of the Moon opposite our window was still strongest—not a breath of wind—the sea which before I had always seen in violent commotion now gently seemed to creep to the Rocks it had so long been beating over—every thing around at rest except two little white gulls flying to the westward toward my Home— ...At ten o'clock read with W[illiam]. and Anna—at twelve he was at rest—Ann playing in the next room—alone to all the World, one of those sweet pauses in spirit when the Body

³² *Ibid.*, 1:261. Entry dated 29 November. Chapter 15 of Isaiah talks about wailing, tears, and the weeping of the remnant of Israel. The last chapter of Revelation portrays the river of the water of life and the tree of life, where God will be their light. Both mirror the situation and hope of the Seton family in the Lazaretto.

seems to be forgotten came over me—in [sic] the year 1789 when my Father was in England I jumped in the wagon that was driving to the woods for brush about a mile from Home[.] The Boy who drove it began to cut and I set off in the woods—soon found an outlet in a Meadow, and a chestnut tree with several young one[s] growing round it, attracted my attention as a seat, but when I came to it found rich moss under it and a warm sun—here then was a sweet bed. the [sic] air still a clear blue vault above, the numberless sounds of Spring melody and joy—the sweet clovers and wild flowers I had got by the way and a heart as innocent as a human heart could be filled with even enthusiastic love to God and admiration of his works—still I can feel every sensation that passed thro’ my Soul—and I thought at that time my Father did not care for me—well God was my Father—my All. I prayed—sung hymns—cried [sic]—laughed in talking to myself of how far He could place me above all Sorrow—Then layed [sic] still to enjoy the Heavenly Peace that came over my Soul; and I am sure in the two hours so enjoyed grew ten years in my spiritual life...

Well, all this came strong in my head this morning when as I tell you the Body let the Spirit alone. I had both Prayed and cried [sic] heartily which is my daily and often hourly Comfort, and closing my eyes, with my head on the table lived all these sweet hours over again, made believe I was under the chestnut tree—felt so peaceable a heart—so full of love to God—such confidence and hope in Him... in the Bond of Peace, and that Holyness [sic] which will be perfected in the Union Eternal—The wintry storms of Time shall be over, and the unclouded Spring enjoyed forever—”³³

In the first paragraph Elizabeth describes feeling alone with God. In this still moment, the light of the moon, the tranquil sea, and two little white gulls flying westward form a natural background for her experience of God. In the second paragraph she recalls the beautiful spring day she went to a meadow, lying for hours on rich moss under a chestnut tree, feeling the warm sun, listening to the sounds of a spring melody, breathing the clear air, and looking up at a blue sky. Here she prayed, sang hymns, cried, and laughed, convinced that God would care for her even though her father had abandoned her. Her comment “I am sure in the two hours so enjoyed grew ten years in my spiritual life” is very significant. In fact, we find similar affirmations from many mystics who had direct experiences of God.

Consider Ignatius of Loyola who had an intellectual vision/enlightenment at the river near Manresa, where he stayed for around one year learning from God like a child from a schoolmaster. In his autobiography, or Original Testament, Ignatius recorded his story in the third person:

³³ *Ibid.*, 1:263-265. Entry dated 1 December 1803.

One day he was on his way out of devotion to a Church, named I think after St. Paul, just a little more than a mile from Manresa. The road to it runs along beside the river. On the way, occupied with his devotions, he sat down for a little while with his face turned towards the river, which flowed down there below him. As he sat there the eyes of his understanding began to open. It was not that he saw a vision but he came to understand and know many things, as well about spiritual things as about matters of Faith and secular learning, and that with so strong an enlightenment that all things seemed quite new to him.... It was such that if he were to put together all the helps God had given him, and all the many things he had learnt in the whole of his sixty-two years, all these taken together would not, he thought, amount to what he had received on that single occasion.³⁴

In his famous book *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, William James described how these mystic experiences imprint on saints the invincible conviction and courage to carry out demanding tasks. "Saint Ignatius was a mystic, but his mysticism made him assuredly one of the most powerfully practical human engines that ever lived."³⁵

In the third paragraph in her journal entry Elizabeth applies her initial experience of God's goodness to her present abandonment at the Lazaretto. Closing her eyes she lives all those sweet hours at New Rochelle over again, assured the wintry storms of time will end and that she will enjoy unclouded spring forever. Throughout her life Elizabeth saw spring as a symbol of life — the time when God's mercy and goodness manifest itself through the life energy of creation. It is noteworthy that in the Lazaretto she wrote that when God is our portion, there is no prison, nor bolts. "For this freedom I can never be sufficiently thankful."³⁶

Later in Elizabeth's Italian Journal we find that whenever Elizabeth remembers significant moments of her life she links them with descriptions of nature, thus portraying an environment filled with divine presence:

- "This evening standing by the window the moon shining full on Filicchi's countenance he raised his eyes to heaven and showed me how to make the Sign of the CROSS."³⁷ Here the full moon provides an atmosphere of solemnity to this significant occasion.
- "This mild heavenly evening puts me in mind when often you and I have stood or leaned on each other looking at the setting sun, sometimes with silent tears and

³⁴ Peter Du Brul, S.J., *Ignatius: Sharing the Pilgrim Story: A Reading of the Autobiography of St. Ignatius of Loyola* (Inigo Text Series 6, Leominster: Gracewing, 2003), xxxiii-xxxiv.

³⁵ William James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, The Gifford Lectures delivered at Edinburgh in 1901-1902 (A Mentor Book from New American Library, 1958), 317.

³⁶ 2.7, *CW*, 1:265.

³⁷ 2.14, "Journal to Rebecca Seton continued," 18 April [1804], *Ibid.*, 1:296. Elizabeth was strongly affected by making the first sign of the cross, writing to Rebecca: "The Sign of the CROSS of Christ on me—deepest thoughts came with me of I know not what earnest desires to be closely united with him who died on it—"



The Right Reverend John Henry Hobart (1775-1830), 3rd Episcopal bishop of New York.

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sighs for that HOME where Sorrow cannot come.”³⁸ Two days before her departure from Italy, a beautiful sunset brought Elizabeth’s heart to happier times when she and Rebecca shared their faith.

- “Mrs. Filicchi came while the stars were yet bright to say we would go to Mass and she would there part with her Antonio... The last adieu of Mrs. Filicchi as the sun rose full on the balcony where we stood and the last signal of our ship for our parting—will I ever forget—while I gave dear Amabilia thoughts to that hour when the Sun of Righteousness would rise and reunite us forever.”³⁹ Here is Elizabeth’s sensitivity to nature in the progression of time, the stars, the rising and then bright sun under which she and Amabilia embrace in a final farewell. It is noteworthy that Elizabeth immediately connects the glorious sunlight to the Sun of Righteousness, making clear that she not only encountered her friends in nature but also found God.

B. Elizabeth’s Return Journey from Italy

On 23 April 1804, en route home and looking at the natural beauty of the Pyrenees Mountains, Elizabeth expressed her hope that God’s providence was leading her to a new path.

We have passed this day opposite the Pyrenees. Their base, black as jet, and the dazzling whiteness of the snow on their tops, which were high above the clouds that settled round there, formed a subject for the most delightful contemplations, and spoke so loudly of God, that my soul answered them involuntarily in the sweet language of praise and glory. The gentlest motion of the waves, which were as a sheet of glass reflecting the last rays of the sun over the mountains, and their

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 1:297.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 1:298-299. This was the last parting of Amabilia and Elizabeth, although they continued to correspond. Elizabeth wrote her journal of the conversion for Amabilia.

rising moon on the opposite shore—and more than all, that cheerful content in my soul that always accompanies it when it is faithful to its dear Master, has recalled the remembrance of precious hours, and makes me incessantly cry out, my God! my God!”⁴⁰

Interestingly enough, in her delightful contemplation Elizabeth was communicating with nature, awed by the dazzling snow on the mountain tops while attuned to praise God. The gentle motion of the waves, the last rays of the sun, and the rising moon fill her heart with cheerful contentment.

Also during this journey from Italy, using an analogy of ocean coral, Elizabeth depicted the transformation or divinization of a human being. On 12 May 1804, while on the ship, Elizabeth wrote: “The coral in the ocean is a branch of pale green, it is almost a rock. Its tender color is changed to a brilliant red: so too we, submerged in the ocean of this world, subjected to the succession of the waves, ready to give up under the stress of each wave and temptation. But as soon as our soul rises, and it breathes toward heaven, the pale green of our sickly hopes is changed into that pure bright red of divine and constant love. Then we regard the disruptions of nature and the fall of worlds with an unshakable constancy and confidence.”⁴¹ Elizabeth saw a mystery of transformation in the coral, weak and pale in the ocean water but once out changed into a solid and brilliant red jewel. She realized how the human soul, also, can be strengthened and made beautiful through rising above all human attachments, thereby breathing in heavenly values. Elizabeth’s Italian journey, begun with agony, was to conclude with a new-found hope and vision of faith.

C. Elizabeth’s Internal and External Struggles in New York

We know that Elizabeth’s own soul was transformed, like a coral, through the purifying struggle of her conversion experience and her continuing hardships as a poor widow in New York. She gave up all her former relationships; for example, with Episcopal minister John Henry Hobart, her former spiritual director, who objected to her conversion, and with her wealthy Protestant relatives, who would have offered the financial support she sorely needed. It is no wonder that after returning home Elizabeth consistently emphasized ‘patience’ as the most important virtue. “Patience says my soul He will not let you and your little ones perish and if yet your life is given in the conflict at the last he will nail all to his cross and receive you to his mercy—”⁴²

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 1:301. Dated 23 April.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 1:304. Dated 12 May 1804. See note 17, which explains that Elizabeth’s return journal from Italy was sent to Madame Hélène de Barberey, who was writing the first biography of Elizabeth Seton, and never returned. The quote, then, is the translation from Madame de Barberey’s French biography, *Elizabeth Seton et les commencements de l’église catholique aux États-Unis* (Paris, 1868).

⁴² 3.15, “To Antonio Filicchi,” 13 December 1804, *Ibid.*, 1:339. In this letter I was struck by the frequency and importance Elizabeth has placed on the virtue of patience. Other instances of when Elizabeth mentioned patience after returning to New York can be found in Volume One at: 351, 362, 383, 404, 438, 439, 442, 445, 460, 468, 485, 489, 512, 514, 516, 519, 525, 529, 530, and 543 (where she illustrated the fruits of patience).

Elizabeth endured not only external persecution, ostracization, and poverty, but also interior doubt and agony. The spiritual uncertainties which assailed the deepest part of her soul left her completely abandoned and without comfort. In a letter to Filippo Filicchi, who had strongly encouraged her conversion, Elizabeth vividly portrayed her circumstance: “If you knew the pitiable situation to which my poor Soul has been reduced, finding no satisfaction in anything, or any consolation but in tears and prayers, but after being left entirely to myself and little children, my friends dispersed in the country for the Summer season, the clergy tired of my stupid comprehension, and Antonio wearied with my Scruples and doubts took his departure to Boston; I gave myself up to God and Prayer encouraging myself with the Hope that my unrighteousness would be no more remembered at the foot of the Cross, and that sincere and unremitted asking would be answered in God’s own time.”⁴³ Once she resolved to enter the Catholic Church, Elizabeth’s patience, waiting for God’s time, was well rewarded by the peace that filled her heart, an unwavering confidence in God despite repeated failures and social alienation.⁴⁴

Elizabeth wanted to be purified by emptying herself completely. In her “Spiritual Journal to Cecilia Seton” she used the image of ‘a rotten tree’ to portray the deep roots of our selfishness: “—imagining the corrupted heart in Thy hand, it begged Thee with all its strength to cut, pare, and remove from it, (whatever anguish it must undergo) whatever prevented the entrance of Thy Love—again it repeats the supplication and begs it as Thy greatest mercy—cut to the center, tear up every root, let it bleed, let it suffer anything, every thing, only fit it for Thyself, place only Thy Love there, and let Humility keep centinal and what shall I fear— ...Lord, I am dust—”⁴⁵ Elizabeth is asking God for self-annihilation in order to live completely in God. It is an image reminiscent of the prophet Isaiah’s proclamation of God’s holiness, using the analogy of the stump when the forest was burned for purification: “Even if a tenth part remains in it, it will be burned again like... an oak whose stump remains standing when it is felled. The holy seed is its stump.”⁴⁶

This same attitude of dying to self is found in the writings of St. Teresa of Avila. “Bear in mind. Friends: the silkworm must die. This death is at your expense. But union with the Beloved reveals that a new life is about to unfold, and this glimpse helps tremendously with your dying... I confess that killing the silkworm requires inordinate effort, but it’s worth it; if you succeed, your reward will be manifold.”⁴⁷ While Teresa of Avila used a silkworm to illustrate the mystery of transformation, Elizabeth Seton chose a rotting tree that has to be cut and rooted out in order to safeguard the space for a new life. It is significant that

⁴³ 3.17, “Draft to Filippo Filicchi,” after 1/6/1805, *Ibid.*, 1:341.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.* Elizabeth’s letter to Filippo Filicchi in 1805. Also refer to pages 421 [4.27, “To Bishop John Carroll”] where she talks about trust, and 435 [4.33, “To Julia Scott”] where she confesses how she reached a cheerful, contented state of heart.

⁴⁵ 4.55, “Spiritual Journal to Cecilia Seton,” *Ibid.*, 1:476. Dated 18 September 1807.

⁴⁶ Isaiah 6:13.

⁴⁷ St. Teresa of Avila, *The Interior Castle*, New Translation and Introduction by Mirabai Starr (New York: Riverhead Books, 2003), 139. This death to self happens in the fifth dwelling. It is interesting to note Simon Gabriel Bruté’s remembrance of Elizabeth: “Saint Theresa [Teresa of Avila]’s liberty of spirit with her directors, her gayety, her contempt of what people called her sanctity and extraordinary graces, accorded more with Mother’s own turn of mind.” Bruté, *Mother Seton*, 86-87.

both saints perceived the mystery of transformation through nature, be it a silkworm or a rotting tree.

D. Contemporary Communicative Ethics and Elizabeth Seton

Elizabeth Seton spontaneously understood the reciprocity she shared with nature, she communicated with beauty, with the mountains, sunrise and sunset, calling to her friends and surrounding creatures to praise God. Elizabeth found consolation and strength in unifying experiences to elements, such as the roaring waves of the ocean, or a sunny spring day in the forest. Natural life forms, like the coral or the rotting tree, taught Elizabeth about human destiny transformed through complete change.

In much the same way, Anthony Weston, a post-modern ecological philosopher, tried to lead us beyond the anthropocentric worldview with which we are so accustomed to discover a space where the possibility of reciprocity between humanity and the rest of nature can be safeguarded. Weston proposed a new 'communicative ethics' repositioning the familiar one-species monologue to a multi-polar dialogue with the natural world.⁴⁸ In order to open up reciprocity we must safeguard a space not wholly permeated by humans, and also create "space" that is conceptual and experiential, as well as literal/physical, where we feel the seasonal changes, the wind, see the stars, hear silence, and even bird songs.⁴⁹ He described a biotic community which is far more tolerant and inclusive. "The crucial thing is that humans must neither monopolize the picture entirely nor absent ourselves from it completely, but rather try to live in interaction, to create a space for genuine encounter as part of our ongoing reconstruction of our own lives and practices. What will come of such encounters, what will emerge from such sustained interactions, we cannot yet say."⁵⁰

Of course, Elizabeth's communication with nature was not intentionally drawn from communicative ethics, but, as she herself wrote, spontaneously she heard the loud praise of the Creator in magnificent nature and she responded to it in praise of God. Most probably she was trained to a communicative understanding of the universe by her continual reading and reflection on the psalms, particularly those that summon all creation to praise God.⁵¹

⁴⁸ Anthony Weston, "Multicentricism: A Manifesto," *Environmental Ethics* 26:1 (2004): 38; "Before Environmental Ethics," in *Postmodern Environmental Ethics*, ed. by Max Oelschlaeger (Albany: State University New York Press, 1995), 230. Also refer to John Dryzek, "Green Reason: Communicative Ethics for the Biosphere," *Environmental Ethics* 12:3 (1990): 95-110.

⁴⁹ Weston, "Before Environmental Ethics," 234.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 237. Even though Weston argued it as something that will come in the future, he recognized Henry David Thoreau demonstrated in his own person "how a human being can meet the evening, between the squirrels and the shadows, or how to look at a lake." See Weston, "Beyond Intrinsic Value: Pragmatism in Environmental Ethics," *Environmental Ethics* 7:4 (Winter 1985), 335.

⁵¹ Herman Gunkel categorized the psalms into eight categories. The first category is Hymns with a liturgical pattern of initial invitation, illustrating the reasons of praise, and conclusions with final praise of all creation (psalms 8, 29, 33, 46, 47, 65, 76, 84, 87, 93, 100, 104, 111, 113-4, 117, 122, 129, 134-6, 139, 145-50). *All Creation Sings: Praying the Psalms with St. Elizabeth Seton*, selected and edited by Regina Bechtle & Margaret Egan (Sisters of Charity of New York, 2009), contains the psalms that Elizabeth loved throughout her life.

III. Elizabeth's Awareness of Ecological Balance

Contemporary biology recognizes that everything on Earth participates in a vast process which involves a continual breaking down, changing, and emergence into a new form. With this knowledge we understand that death is an integral part of the life cycle. "When death is recognized in a broader perspective as transformation in a larger system, it can be seen to be an essential aspect of elegant patterns that are orderly as well as beautiful."⁵² If there is no death, the ecosystem cannot be maintained. A problem arises when we apply our ethical concepts to death, a natural phenomenon. We should talk about ethical good or evil only when we discuss intentional human acts.⁵³ A result of the decline of Christianity, and the influence of modern hedonism, we have come to equate suffering with evil, negating the value of suffering. That said we must revive the Christian perspective that suffering and death not only are a part of life, but are also able to purify and transform us into the image of God. Elizabeth Seton is a wonderful guide for us in regaining this perspective. Elizabeth's letters to her friends and family members, in their loss and misfortune, reveal how she saw God's equity in nature, and understood the place of suffering in the wholeness of creation.

A. Elizabeth's Letters to Julia Scott

On 16 May 1798, Elizabeth wrote to Julia who, having lost her husband, returned to Philadelphia. "All I wish for you is that nature may take its course, and Affliction be allowed its advantages, as it certainly has the power of giving the mind a Peaceful course, and procuring future tranquility—" ⁵⁴ Elizabeth consoled Julia that it is best to learn from afflictions and wait for natural healing. Around four months later, Elizabeth shared her conviction that suffering is a common experience. "Dear Julia consider the lot of Humanity is to *suffer* and bow with me in patient submission to our All-Wise Director.—I am in extreme pain while I write occasioned by a boil on my arm therefore must say Adieu."⁵⁵

Elizabeth kept her balance during the misfortune of her family bankruptcy, writing to Julia: "I write only to wish you a happy New Year—and to tell you if the news of our Misfortunes has reached you that you must do as I do, *Hope the best...* —dear dear Julia how long I have been tired of this busy scene, but it is not likely to mend, and I must kiss Dick and be thankful for what remains from the ruins of Wall Street ...Heaven grant you all a happy *century* if it is but a happy *one*."⁵⁶ She repeatedly reminded Julia that "a passing

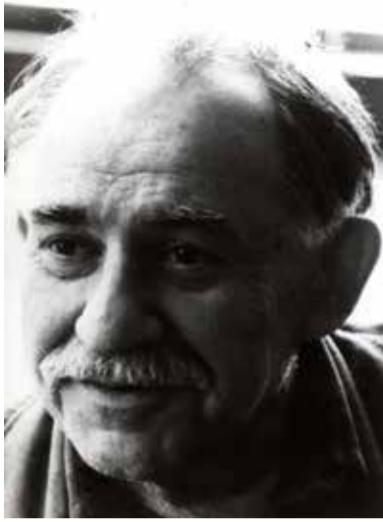
⁵² Paul Shepard, *Encounter with Nature: Essays by Paul Shepard*, ed. by Floren R. Shephard (Washington, D.C.: Island Press), 69-70. This understanding was well developed by Zhuangzi, an ancient Chinese philosopher, who taught that the Dao (道), as the great transformer, gives life to all living beings through the natural cycle of prosperity and disease (chapter 6).

⁵³ Nathan Edward Kowalsky, "Beyond Natural Evil" (Dissertation, Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, 2006). He states that "to equate suffering with evil is hedonistic, and hedonism is variously anthropocentric." (Abstract)

⁵⁴ 1.19, "To Julia Scott," New York, 16 May 1798, *CW*, 1:30.

⁵⁵ 1.27, "To Julia Scott," Bloomingdale, 28 September 1798, *Ibid.*, 1:45.

⁵⁶ 1.74, "To Julia Scott," 3 January 1800, *Ibid.*, 1:108-109.



Murray Bookchin (1921-2006).

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scene of natures suffering will lead to happiness,”⁵⁷ and that we should be ready to be “happy in life and Death.”⁵⁸ Elizabeth trusted that there is divine providence in everything, and that we should be able to find its wisdom and harmony in the darkest moment. “As in every other instance now too, I look up in silent acquiescence adoring that dear hand which will one day shew [*sic*] every apparently dark and mysterious event in the most beautiful and perfect perspective of Wisdom and Harmony—”⁵⁹ She was certain harmony would be achieved in a mysterious way, despite our inability to penetrate the depth of providence.

B. Elizabeth’s Letters to Rebecca Seton and Eliza Sadler

Facing the financial breakdown of the family’s mercantile firm Seton, Maitland and Company, Elizabeth revealed her healthy worldview to Rebecca Seton, one which sustained her hope even in the darkest of situations. “As I said before we must Hope the best, for Myself I fear nothing but tremble at the hold these crosses take on Williams Spirits—for one entire week we wrote till one and two in the morning and he never closed his eyes till daylight and then for not more than an hour—but when things are at the worst they must grow better, and since he has arranged the Statement of his Accounts etc. his mind is more composed, tho’ his is really very unwell—”⁶⁰ Elizabeth was well aware of what her family would soon face, but she believed that everything under the sun was changing, and when it reached bottom it was bound to rise again.⁶¹

Seeing the queen’s country palace and the elegant apartments in Florence, Elizabeth wrote: “Solomon’s vanity and vexation of spirit was all the while in my head.”⁶² Elizabeth

⁵⁷ 1.118, “To Julia Scott,” 11 June 1801, *Ibid.*, 1:160.

⁵⁸ 4.67, “To Julia Scott,” 8 March 1808, *Ibid.*, 1:498.

⁵⁹ 4.43, “To Julia Scott,” 20 July 1807, *Ibid.*, 1:450. This letter to Julia was written after the sorrowful death of Mary Gillon Hoffman Seton, the wife of her brother-in-law, James Seton.

⁶⁰ 1.75, “To Rebecca Seton,” 3 January 1800, *Ibid.*, 1:110.

⁶¹ This is the worldview that Qoheleth taught in Ecclesiastes. It is also the wisdom the Book of Changes taught, and with which for centuries East Asian people accepted the ups and downs of life with tranquility of heart. See *The Classic of Changes: A New Translation of the I Ching as Interpreted by Wang Bi*, trans. by Richard John Lynn (Columbia University Press, 2004), 602 pp.

⁶² 2.10, “Florence Journal to Rebecca Seton,” January 1804, *CW*, 1:284.

agreed with the wise words of Qoheleth, who observed the vanity of all things and announced “there is nothing new under the sun.”⁶³ She also trusted in the providence of God. “I know that whatever God does endures forever; nothing can be added to it, nor anything taken away from it; God has done this, so that all should stand in awe before him.”⁶⁴ Elizabeth possessed the same humility before the mystery of God as the wise man of ancient Israel. “Just as you do not know how the breath comes to the bones in the mother’s womb, so you do not know the work of God, who makes everything.”⁶⁵ She urged Rebecca to maintain hope,⁶⁶ and gratefully accepted her father’s invitation to a Christmas party and received his New Year presents. Because of her faith in the providential care of God, Elizabeth did not allow herself to wallow in extreme emotion and she preserved a balanced outlook throughout her life.

In a letter to Eliza Sadler on 6 October 1807, Elizabeth more clearly articulated what might be considered a worldview of ecological balance. After writing about the illness of Anna, her sister Mary’s miscarriage, her own tedious ague, her half-sister Helen’s fever and tending to her during a several-day bedside stay, she states: “—Well dearest—so we go—the wheel goes round—precious inestimable privilege,—may [we look] up all the while—”⁶⁷ Elizabeth perceived that suffering, illness, and death are an inescapable lot for us, yet also precious privileges once we learn to bear them. The wheel of joy and suffering goes round with equity, maturing and transforming us. Yet, how many of us will proclaim, as did she, that suffering is a “precious inestimable privilege”?

C. Elizabeth’s Spiritual Journal to Cecilia Seton

Dated from 10 August to 16 October, 1807, Elizabeth’s Spiritual Journal to Cecilia Seton, her sister-in-law, is, unlike her Lazaretto Journal to Rebecca Seton, without obvious attraction and beauty, revealing a soul that soars above the storm. However, it does illustrate something integral to her spiritual progress as a new, fervent convert to Catholicism, leading Cecilia Seton down a similarly strict spiritual path. Elizabeth was clearly looking for a unity that could not be destroyed by separation and death. “—Divine Communion which neither absence nor Death (except the eternal) can destroy, the bond of Faith and Charity uniting All—”⁶⁸ In this journal she records her happiness when Anna made her First Communion: “—the bonds of nature and Grace all twined together. The Parent offers the Child, the Child the Parent and both are United in the source of their Being—and rest together on Redeeming Love—May we never never leave the sheltering wing but dwelling

⁶³ Ecclesiastes 1:9.

⁶⁴ Ecclesiastes 3:14.

⁶⁵ Ecclesiastes 11:5.

⁶⁶ 1.75, *CW*, 1:109. It is interesting to read that Elizabeth also gave medical advice to Rebecca (see 1.146, *Ibid.*, 1:191), as this indicates Elizabeth was proficient with the treatment of ordinary people in need.

⁶⁷ 4.54, “To Eliza Sadler,” 6 October 1807, *Ibid.*, 1:467.

⁶⁸ 4.55, *Ibid.*, 1:470. Dated 14 August 1807.

now under the Shadow of His Cross we will cheerfully gather the thorns which will be turned hereafter into a joyful crown—”⁶⁹ Here again Elizabeth expressed her faith that suffering will lead to transformation.

In a letter to Cecilia Seton dated 3 September 1807, Elizabeth affirmed that God’s equity in everything was a source of consolation for her. “Look up sweet Love—‘God is wonderfully adorable in his ways and as I am persuaded they are all founded in equity and that Salvation is alone his work, I submit to whatever trials he may please to expose me’ —”⁷⁰ Elizabeth’s reading of Hannah’s prayer⁷¹ and Mary’s Magnificat⁷² probably helped her in forming this vision of equity, as she quoted 1 Samuel 2:1 in her journal at the Lazaretto.⁷³ After Hannah, who had been afflicted by her barrenness, offered Samuel to the Lord, she expressed her experience of God’s equalizing hands: “The Lord kills and brings to life; ...The Lord makes poor and makes rich; he brings low, he also exalts. He raises up the poor from the dust; he lifts the needy from the ash heap....”⁷⁴ The songs of these two biblical women represent the vision biblical writers had that divine providence embraces the whole of creation, and that salvation comes from self-emptying love and enduring patience. Elizabeth knew of, and also embodied, this biblical vision. Trials and suffering fundamentally equalize all human beings whatever racial background, social class, or material wealth they might possess. God’s equity ultimately destroys any kind of hierarchy that human cultures have built.⁷⁵

The ecological depth of Elizabeth’s conviction that God deals with every human being and every creature with equity becomes transparent when we compare her thoughts to those of contemporary ecological thinker, Murray Bookchin.

D. Elizabeth’s Insight on Equity and Balance in Light of Bookchin’s Social Ecology

Murray Bookchin (1921-2006) thought that the root of our ecological crisis is the concept of hierarchy, a root of discrimination and oppression in human history, and he promoted a social ecology that demolishes all concepts of said hierarchy. He was convinced that hierarchy is not only a social condition, but also a state of consciousness sensitive to all our various experiences. “By hierarchy, I mean the cultural, traditional and political system to

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 1:473. Dated 23 August 1807.

⁷⁰ 4.51, “To Cecilia Seton,” 3 September 1807, *Ibid.*, 1:464. The quotation is from Michael Hurley, O.S.A., one of the Monks of St. Augustine.

⁷¹ 1 Samuel 2:1-10.

⁷² Luke 1:46-55.

⁷³ 2.7, *CW*, 1:255. Dated 20 November 1803. She also quotes the first verse of Magnificat, recalling David’s and Solomon’s offerings to the Lord. See 2.10, *Ibid.*, 1:286. Elizabeth made notes beside 1 Samuel chapters 1-2. See *Elizabeth Seton’s Two Bibles*, ed. by Ellin M. Kelly (Our Sunday Visitor, Inc., 1977), 64.

⁷⁴ VV. 6-8.

⁷⁵ Elizabeth probably learned the concept of God’s equity from her reflection on the Scriptures, for the Pentateuch clearly states that all land belongs to God, and humans are only tenants (Lev. 25:23). The prophets defended the rights of the poor, and the wisdom in the literature of Israel warned not to trust in riches (Proverbs 11:28), and asserted that the same lot of death comes to everyone without exception (Ecclesiastes 8:16-9:10).

which the terms class and state most appropriately refer.”⁷⁶ His social ecology attempts to overcome hierarchy in the human community first, thereby building a dynamic harmony wherein nature and humans live together in peace: “A distinct human natural community, the social as well as organic factors that interrelate to provide the basis for an ecologically rounded and balanced community.”⁷⁷ In other words, the aim of social ecology is to achieve freedom in human society, which will naturally lead to our reconciliation with nature. Bookchin thought that in a true ecology of freedom, social freedom and natural freedom support each other.⁷⁸

Despite an apparent common goal, Bookchin is very different from Elizabeth in that he proposed a completely rational ecology, criticizing religious faith as the snare that limits human freedom. For Elizabeth, it was God’s equity in nature and human experience that equalizes everything and offers freedom. Although Elizabeth and Bookchin represent two fundamentally different worldviews in our contemporary age, it is consoling to know that at their core, their social goals converge. Both agree that we should work for the equitable distribution of resources on this earth among all living beings, enabling all of us the freedom of life that a balanced, interdependent community affords. However, Elizabeth’s ecological spirituality is based on her faith in God, the creator and savior, who extends our vision to eternity.

IV. Elizabeth’s Focus on the Present, Moderation, and Harmony

A. Importance of the Present/Now

Elizabeth called the present “God’s Blessed Time.” She understood that each of us meets God in the present moment. When on 9 June 1798, William Seton, Sr., passed away at the age of fifty-two, Elizabeth faced financial difficulties as well as an increased responsibility for her husband’s younger siblings. During these hectic days of readjustment in their family life, including a move from their Wall Street house to the Stone Street family house, Elizabeth wrote a candid letter to Julia, dated 21 October 1798: “—but this is a subject it is vain to Indulge, for who shall dare to look into futurity—how different were my prospects in the last year, from the present, and if I now plan the futurity it may never be realized, and if it is, the causes for apprehension may be lessened—perhaps removed—therefore to intend the best, and be thankful for the present, is the only plan I can resolve on—”⁷⁹ It is clear that Elizabeth was not just enduring this situation; indeed, she was “thankful for the present.” It was in the present, after all, that she was able to receive the grace of the moment that comes in difficult challenges.

One week later Elizabeth wrote another letter to Julia: “—I resign the present and the future to Him who is the author and conductor of both—but most certainly I have

⁷⁶ Murray Bookchin, *The Ecology of Freedom: The Emergence and Dissolution of Hierarchy*, 3rd edition (AK Press, 2005), 68.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 87.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 415.

⁷⁹ 1.29, “To Julia Scott,” 21 October 1798, *CW*, 1:48.



Aldo Leopold (1887-1948).

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no enjoyment so great as to induce me to remain Here one moment longer—⁸⁰ With a full heart Elizabeth welcomed both the time and place in which she was situated. Several months later, in a letter to Julia, Elizabeth further developed how present and future are connected: “Acting well our part in present difficulties is the only way to insure the Peace of futurity.”⁸¹

Elizabeth wrote Lady Isabella Cayley, William’s aunt living in Britain, concerning how the couple had tried their best in the year after the death of her father-in-law. She reported that although she was only 25 years old, it felt as if both William and she had grown ten years older. “All my leisure hours have that aim [honorable old age]; and if the point anticipated is never reached, it certainly occupies the present moment to the best advantage, and if ‘their memory remain,’ it will be a source of the greatest pleasure.”⁸² Here, again, Elizabeth focused on the importance of the present moment, in which she continued to find consolation.

On 25 October 1805, when she wrote to Antonio Filicchi about her unstable situation in New York, Elizabeth described the importance of time as something primarily belonging to God. “Some proposals have been made me of keeping a Tea store—or China Shop – or Small school for little children (too young I suppose to be taught the ‘Hail Mary’ —) in short Tonino, they do not know what to do with me, but God does — and when His blessed time is come we shall know, and in the mean time he makes his poorest feeblest creature Strong— Joy will come in the morning —”⁸³ Trusting that each moment was all she had, and doing all she could with it, Elizabeth knew it was best to wait for that time wherein God would disclose her mission in life.

⁸⁰ 1.30, “To Julia Scott,” 28 October 1798, *Ibid.*, 1:49-50.

⁸¹ 1.39, “To Julia Scott,” New York, 20 February 1799, *Ibid.*, 1:62.

⁸² A-1.71, “To Lady Isabella Cayley, New York, December 1799, *Ibid.*, 1:549. This is an excerpt from Robert Seton, *An Old Family* (New York, 1899), 286-288.

⁸³ 4.10, “To Antonio Filicchi,” 25 October 1805, *CW*, 1:394. At the end of this letter Elizabeth spontaneously quotes Psalm 30:5, illustrating how intimately she breathed the Bible in her ordinary life.



Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton, Filicchi style portrait, with impression of the harbor of Livorno in background, by Dina Bellotti for the cover of the liturgical program at the Seton canonization, 14 September 1975, St. Peter's Square, The Vatican.

Courtesy, Daughters of Charity Province of St. Louise Archives, Emmitsburg, MD



Just as time is closely connected with order, Elizabeth saw the “Whole Natural Order” created by God’s WORD, recreated through the succession of ages.⁸⁴ Since God put all things in their proper order,⁸⁵ she willingly accepted her allotment, whether a painful separation or a dependence upon friends for her children’s sustenance. While en route from Italy, Elizabeth wrote a letter to Reverend Henry Hobart requesting his understanding why she had to leave the Episcopal Church. “As I approach to you I tremble and while the dashing of the waves and their incessant motion picture to me the allotment which God has given me, the tears fall fast thro’ my fingers at the insupportable thought of being Separated from you — and yet my dear H__[obart] you will not be severe — you will respect my sincerity....”⁸⁶ It is noteworthy that Elizabeth described the waves’ incessant motion as an image of the changes in life that God asked of her. By extension this is universal, as both nature and human life continually experience ordered changes.

B. The Virtue of Moderation and Harmony

Annabelle Melville, who wrote the definitive and most historically accurate biography of Elizabeth Seton, stated that like her father, Elizabeth had a passionate temperament. “She herself never lost consciousness of the fact that a hot temper was one of her sources of temptation. The serenity she displayed in later life was no gauge of the battles she had to fight. Her meekness and humility was hard-won.”⁸⁷ Elizabeth acquired meekness and cheerfulness by the constant practice of moderation in all her actions. For her, moderation was related not only to material possessions but also to emotional enjoyment. On 3 August 1799, Elizabeth wrote to Rebecca Seton: “I have often told you my Rebecca that I had determined never again to allow myself the enjoyment of any affection beyond the bound

⁸⁴ 3.31, “Journal to Amabilia Filicchi, *Ibid.*, 1:378. Dated 14 April 1805. Elizabeth laments the blindness of a redeemed soul not accepting the mystery of the Eucharist.

⁸⁵ 4.50, “To Eliza Sadler,” 28 August 1807, *Ibid.*, 1:462. This letter was written to Eliza when Rev. Louis Sibourd came to New York as a new pastor of St. Peter’s Church.

⁸⁶ 2.15, “Draft to Rev. John Henry Hobart,” at sea, n.d., *Ibid.*, 1:305.

⁸⁷ Annabelle M. Melville, *Elizabeth Bayley Seton*, ed. by Betty Ann McNeil, D.C. (original: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1951; new edition: Hanover, Pennsylvania: The Sheridan Press, 2009), 63.

of *moderation*—”⁸⁸ And, referencing moderation in another letter to Rebecca: “I make it a rule never to answer letters whilst under the influence of the first impression I receive from them.”⁸⁹

Elizabeth’s principle of moderation seemed to take root in her heart, as we see in a letter to Eliza Sadler: “Well—internal Peace is mine, let them go round and round—”⁹⁰ And again: “—Peace—Peace—oh the very sound is harmony— ...take the all in all I am well *content*.”⁹¹ Elizabeth was practicing what she had previously written to Eliza: “As I think the first point of Religion is cheerfulness and Harmony they who have these in view are certainly right.”⁹² Even after the funeral of her father, whom she loved dearly, Elizabeth wrote to Julia: “—I am going to be well when I get a little rest from my summer fatigues—‘thy will be done’ is my constant support—”⁹³

Consider also that when Elizabeth faced a need, such as her shaky financial situation in New York, she knew how to receive, but always with moderation. Elizabeth wrote to Julia, who was helping her financially: “—my case cannot be worse, nor can it be better for my real enjoyment than it is now while I have you, Mrs. [Sarah] Startin, and [Antonio] Filicchi that is saying a great deal but it is truly so. Nothing can be worse than a state of dependence, but if it is my allotment it cannot be better than when supplied by the hand of real friendship—”⁹⁴ Although well aware of the undesirable condition of dependence, Elizabeth graciously received because she understood that God puts all things in their proper order. Sometimes, that means we stand on the side of the receiver.

C. Elizabeth’s Virtue of Moderation in Light of Contemporary Land Ethics

Aldo Leopold (1887-1948), is the first contemporary scholar who raised the question of our “ecological conscience” toward the non-human. In his book *A Sand County Almanac and Sketches Here and There*, he stated that “conservation must spring from a sense of individual responsibility for the general health of the land.”⁹⁵ He believed we must stop thinking of responsible land-use as solely an economic problem. Rather, we should examine each question in terms of what is ethically and esthetically right, as well as economically expedient. Following a description of a biotic view and the ecological dynamics of a land community, Leopold proposed a Land Ethic. “A thing is right when it tends to preserve

⁸⁸ 1.61, “To Rebecca Seton,” 3 August 1799, *CW*, 1:91. Elizabeth continues, remembering beautiful experiences they had shared together and describing how she cried. Of her ‘crying spell’ she remarks, it “is not a very common thing for me.”

⁸⁹ 1.68, “To Rebecca Seton,” 2 October 1799, *Ibid.*, 1:100. Elizabeth tells Rebecca that, contrary to her rule, she ‘cannot refrain’ from immediately responding because of her affection for Rebecca.

⁹⁰ 1.66, “To Eliza Sadler,” 2 October 1799, *Ibid.*, 1:98.

⁹¹ 1.63, “To Eliza Sadler,” 9 September 1799, *Ibid.*, 1:94.

⁹² 1.8, “To Eliza Sadler,” New York, 8 February 1796, *Ibid.*, 1:8.

⁹³ 1.141, *Ibid.*, 1:187.

⁹⁴ 4.1, “To Julia Scott,” 10 July 1805, *Ibid.*, 1:380.

⁹⁵ Aldo Leopold, *A Sand County Almanac and Sketches Here and There*, Special Commemorative Edition (Oxford University Press, 1949), 174.

the integrity, stability and beauty of the biotic community. It is wrong when it tends otherwise."⁹⁶

These three ethical norms — integrity, stability, and beauty — are quite significant in better understanding Elizabeth Seton's ecological spirituality. As we have seen, Elizabeth appreciated and respected the integrity, stability, and beauty of this earth. We find this in her many insights into God's equity and mercy in all creation. However, what appears prominently in Elizabeth's ecological spirituality is her sensitivity and love for the beauty of nature. According to Leopold, human beings act not only through intellectual speculation, but also through direct emotional experience. As beauty draws out love from our heart, it is only when we love that we are willing to sacrifice our conveniences in order to nurture another life.⁹⁷

After regarding their careful observations of nature, we find that the thoughts of Aldo Leopold and Elizabeth Seton converge on the practical wisdom of moderation. In *A Sand County Almanac* Leopold stated that moderation is the best virtue if we want to live ecologically. "It is well that the planting season comes only in spring, for moderation is best in all things, even shovels. During the other months you may watch the process of becoming a pine."⁹⁸ This same sense of waiting for natural growth and moderation in all things matured Elizabeth's spirituality with its distinctive ecological flavor. Sensitive to nature and its seasonal changes, Elizabeth was able to identify her own sufferings within the universal equity of God. This wider ecological vision of how total creation works in the providence of God preserved her sense of harmony and contentment; or, as Leopold wrote, "Conservation is a state of harmony between men and land."⁹⁹

Conclusion

We have discussed four characteristics of the ecological spirituality of Elizabeth Seton, and their contemporary meaning in light of ecological philosophy. Aided by the beliefs of Arne Naess and Aldo Leopold we have gained some deeper insight into Elizabeth's sensitivity toward the beauty of nature. We can even be sure that Elizabeth established her own "ecosophy" — as Naess described, "one's own personal code of values, a view of the world which guides one's own decisions."¹⁰⁰ Moreover, the social ecology of Murray Bookchin guided us in understanding how closely the ecologies of humanity and nature are interconnected, and makes us appreciate just how well Elizabeth tied these

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 224-225.

⁹⁷ J. Baird Callicott, who became the spokesperson of Land Ethics, explained that Leopold incorporated an instinctual feeling of community and the concept of kinship in order to develop objective norms for the relationship between nature and humanity. See J. Baird Callicott, "Conceptual Foundations of the Land Ethics," *Companion to A Sand County Almanac: Interpretive & Critical Essays* (The University of Wisconsin Press, 1987), 212.

⁹⁸ Leopold, *Sand County Almanac*, 82. Over twelve months, Leopold spent every weekend in a country farm house recording his observations of seasonal changes, as well as the preparations of animals and humans. He finished his almanac with this comment on moderation.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 207.

¹⁰⁰ Naess, *Ecology, Community, and Lifestyle*, 36.

aspects together in her understanding of God's equity. She knew how to balance her care for human beings with her concern for nature. As when Elizabeth coaxed a child to open the birdcage-door to make a robin family happy, she also asked Rebecca Seton to bring a handsome ribbon for the child to remember this event. Elizabeth was thinking of both the animal's happiness and the psychology of a human being. Additionally, the communicative ethics of Anthony Weston helped us to see how Elizabeth was able to communicate with nature and find consolation and strength in its order, perceiving therein God's mercy which transforms suffering into new life.

Elizabeth saw the whole of God's creation in its totality, and also understood the relationships within it. Her relationship with nature was fundamental to the formation and maturity of her spirituality, and was as intimate and strong as her relationship with other human beings. Of course, God, as the Creator of both nature and humanity, always remained at the center of her heart, uniting and vivifying her sensitivity to all creation.¹⁰¹ Because of her love of nature, her insight into God's equity in creation, her practice of ecological balance and moderation, and her ability to identify herself with the sufferings of nature, which contains transformative power, it seems fitting to call Elizabeth Seton an ecological saint. Our hope is, that as we understand the ecological dimension of her spirituality, we will be able to commit ourselves more fully to the preservation of the integrity, stability, and beauty of our land, our community, and "all this wide and beautiful creation" before us.¹⁰²

Having considered Elizabeth's ecological spirituality in light of four major contemporary philosophers of ecology — Leopold, Naess, Bookchin, and Weston — let us conclude with an echoing call from Pope Benedict XVI: "Nor must we forget the very significant fact that many people experience peace and tranquility, renewal and reinvigoration, when they come into close contact with the beauty and harmony of nature. There exists a certain reciprocity: as we care for creation, we realize that God, through creation cares for us."¹⁰³



¹⁰¹Both Bruté and Elizabeth use the word 'atom,' such as "All earth an atom... I, an atom." See Shin Ja Lee, S.C., "The Practice of Spiritual Direction in the Life and Writings of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton" (The Catholic University of America, UMI Dissertation Services, 2010), 277-278.

¹⁰²1.115, *CW*, 1:157.

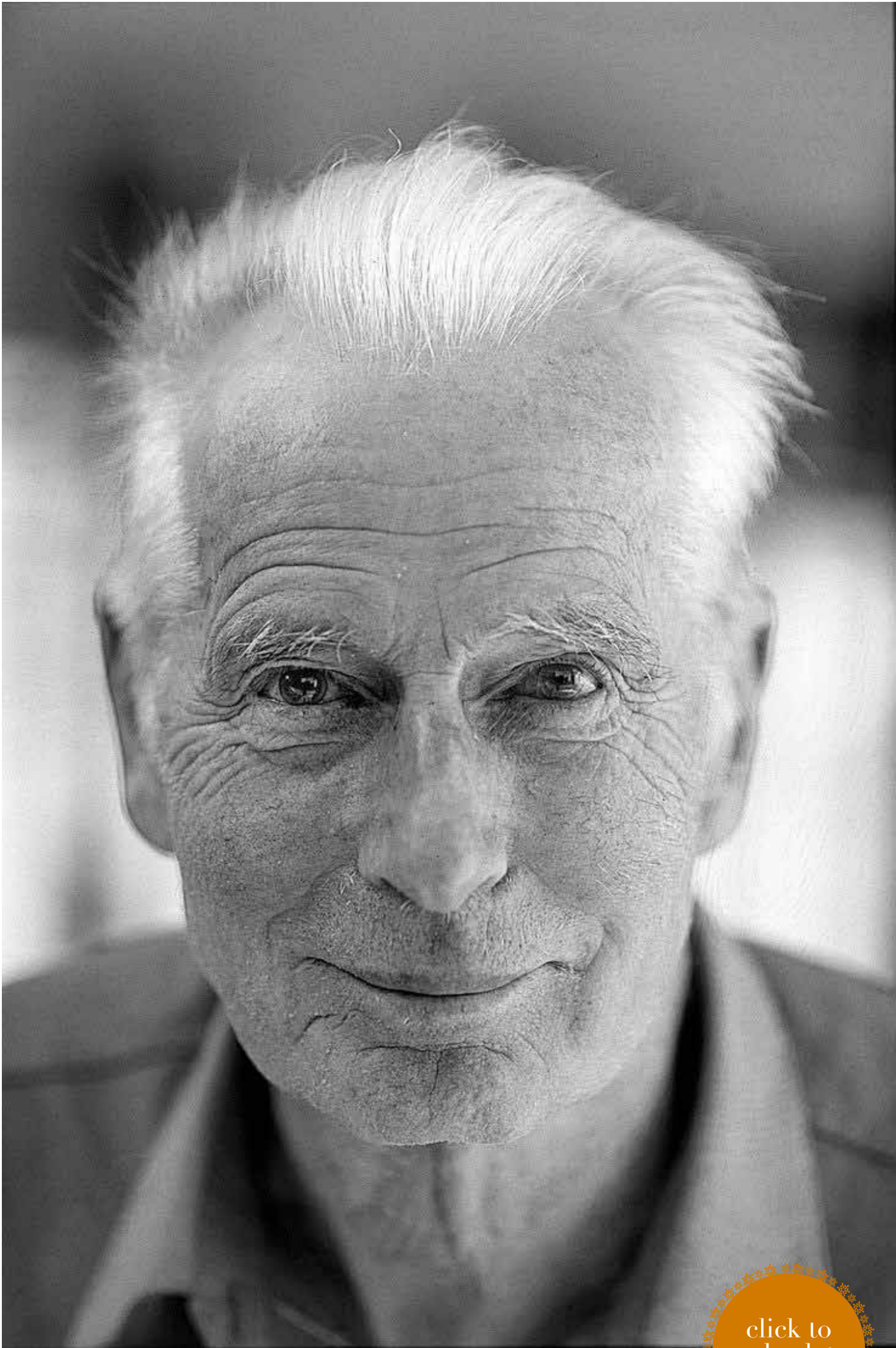
¹⁰³Message of Pope Benedict XVI for the Celebration of the World Day of Peace, 1 January 2010, Art. 13.



Mrs. William Magee Seton.
Engraving by Charles Balthazar Julien Fevret de Saint-Mémin, 1797.

Courtesy, Daughters of Charity Province of St. Louise Archives, Emmitsburg, MD





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Portrait of Arne Naess (1912-2009).

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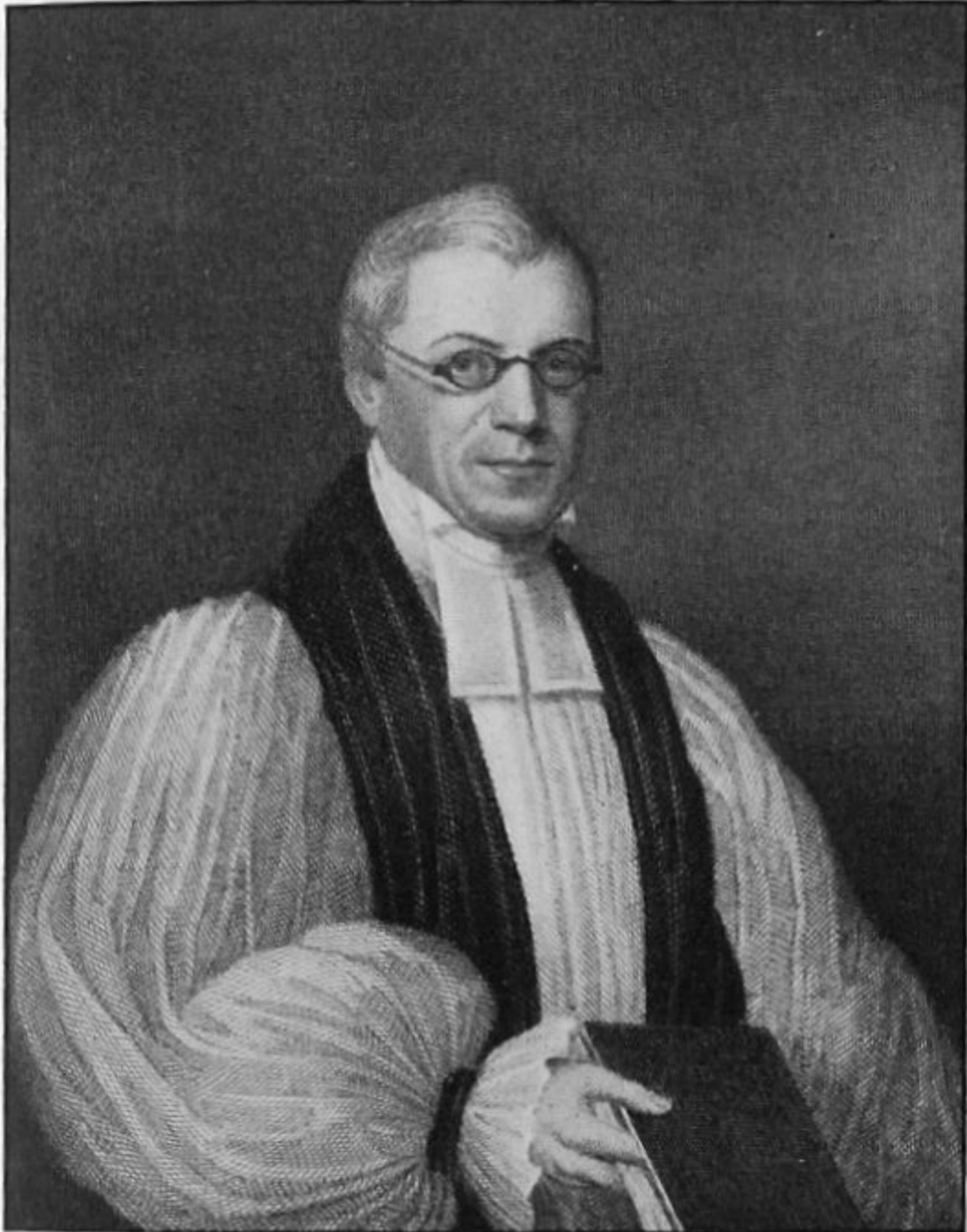


Veduta del Lazzeretto di S. Rocco



The Lazaretto at Livorno, Tuscany, Italy. Panoramic view.
Color etching by P. Lapi (1824).

Wellcome Library, London. Wellcome Images: <http://wellcomeimages.org>



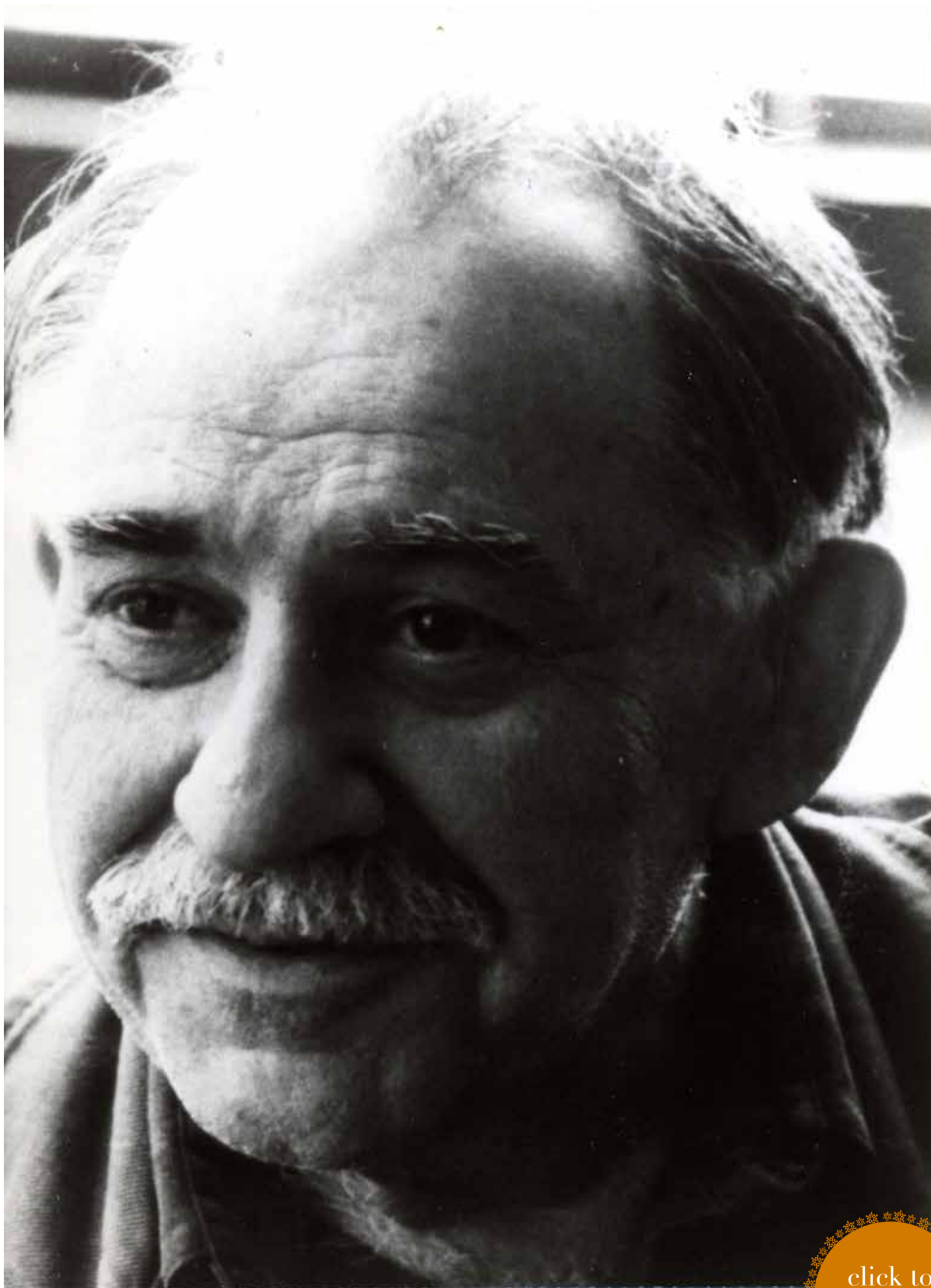
THE RIGHT REVEREND JOHN HENRY HOBART, D. D.,
Third Bishop of the Diocese of New York (State).
Born, 1775 ; Consecrated, 1811 ; Died, 1830.

From the engraving by J. W. Paradise
after the painting by J. Paradise, published
in "The Evergreen" for December, 1844.



The Right Reverend John Henry Hobart
(1775-1830), 3rd Episcopal bishop of New York.

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Murray Bookchin (1921-2006).

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Aldo Leopold (1887-1948).

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Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton, Filicchi style portrait, with impression of the harbor of Livorno in background, by Dina Bellotti for the cover of the liturgical program at the Seton canonization, 14 September 1975, St. Peter's Square, The Vatican.

Courtesy, Daughters of Charity Province of St. Louise Archives, Emmitsburg, MD



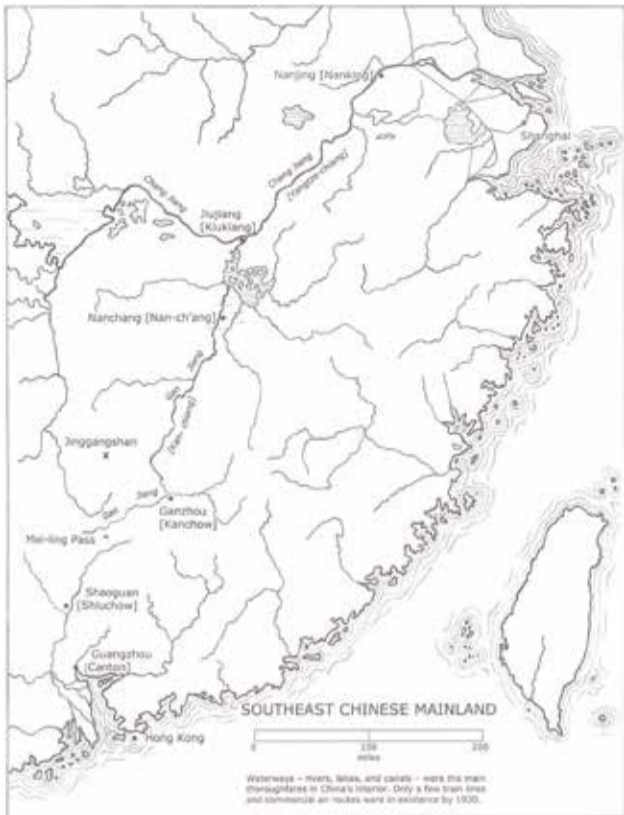
Eight American Daughters of Charity and the Chinese People's Liberation Army in Jiangxi Province, 1928-1930

LAWRENCE F. ASMA, C.M.



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Map of mainland southeast China, which includes the province of Jiangxi.

Courtesy of the author



This article follows the lives of a group of eight American Daughters of Charity in the southern part of Jiangxi Province, surrounded by the fledgling Chinese People's Liberation Army as it slowly learned how to exert its power.¹

It all began simply enough for Sister Vincent Louise DeLude, a Daughter of Charity in Emmitsburg, Maryland. Sister DeLude had no thought of China and wanted to take care of lepers. Belatedly, she discovered that her province did not operate an institution for their care. When she considered transferring to another American province which did, she was urged by two priests to volunteer to go to China where, as one of them said, there are lepers. So she volunteered and then waited eight years for her request to be granted. Finally, on Monday, 15 October 1928, with her dear friend Sister Anselma Jarboe, she set out for the city of Ganzhou² in the province of Jiangxi³ in southeastern China. The two of them planned to join six other Daughters of Charity from Emmitsburg already there who had established a hospital four-and-a-half years before.⁴ She eventually wrote of her experience, "I was so happy to serve [God] in a foreign country and to think He gave me the privilege of making Him known and loved in that pagan land."⁵

¹ The information in this article comes primarily from letters and memoirs in the Daughters of Charity Archives, Saint Louise Province. Hereinafter cited as ASLP. The author of this article weaves their narratives into the context of commonly-known historical events and geographical features. Place names are modified to modern spelling.

² Ganzhou, a city in southern Jiangxi Province, was formerly spelled Kanchow, Kanchou, or Kan-chou.

³ Jiangxi, a province bordered on the north by the Chang (Yangtze) River and on the south by the Nanling Mountains, was formerly spelled Kiangshi, Kiangsi, or Kiang-shi.

⁴ Anselma Jarboe, born 23 December 1885, served in China: 1928-1931; 1936-1951. Emily Kolb, born 19 January 1890, served in China: 1922-1930; 1936-1952. Catherine O'Neill, born 19 October 1893, served in China: 1925-1930; 1932-1952. Pauline Strable, born 24 September 1869, served in China: 1923-1930, and was by far the oldest in the band. Eugenia Beggs, born 27 October 1889, served in China: 1922-1930. Vincent Louise DeLude, born 23 November 1891, served in China: 1928-1930; 1936-1952. Clara Groell, born 6 November 1882, served in China: 1925-1930; 1936-1951. Helena Lucas, born 14 September 1894, served in China: 1923-1930.

⁵ Vincent Louise DeLude, D.C., "A China Mission 1920-1931," 3. Undated, unpublished typescript. ASLP record group 12-11-11, box 3-5 #1. Hereinafter DeLude, "A China Mission."

The Journey to Ganzhou

On Thursday, 25 October 1928, they sailed out of San Francisco Bay on the S.S. President Grant. On one day as they crossed the Pacific Ocean, when the waves were high, the two sisters, dressed as always in their large white cornettes and heavy blue ankle-length dresses, innocently thought it would be nice to sit on the hurricane deck to enjoy the weather. They were holding tight to their chairs which were bolted to the pitching, rolling deck when one of the waves came crashing over them, leaving them suddenly drenched but wiser. Perhaps this episode can be seen, in some ways, as a metaphor for their experience of China during the subsequent two years. The actors in the Chinese martial-political arena, a swirling mix of shifting loyalties, violent ideologies, and fluid alliances far removed from the quiet service of the sisters, were a rogue wave about to disrupt their lives. The houses of the Daughters of Charity in Jiangxi Province would be the most endangered of all their houses in China during the next two years.

At 7 A.M. on Thursday, 15 November 1928,⁶ the two arriving travelers, riding in a tender from the ship to shore, rejoiced to see two cornettes among the crowd on the Shanghai wharf. Two of the sisters who had been in China since 1922, Sisters Emily Kolb and Eugenia Beggs, had come from Ganzhou to greet them. They swiftly passed through Customs. After a quick visit to Mr. Lo's Saint Joseph's Hospice, but bypassing the other extensive works of the Daughters in Shanghai where sisters from nine different countries served the poor, the four sisters boarded a river steamer. They brought with them not only their own baggage but that of several Vincentian priests (Fathers Lawrence Curtis, Francis Flaherty, and Joseph Gately) who remained on the ship; they too were traveling to Ganzhou, but from the south via Hong Kong and the Mei-ling Pass — a mountain route that, contrary to all expectations, the escaping sisters soon would take in the opposite direction to flee the interior. Heading now into a largely road-less interior where people traveled mostly by river or footpath they put Shanghai behind them. For three days they steamed up the Chang⁷ River, passing Nanjing⁸ without incident. The year before, Nanjing had become the seat of the Guomindang⁹ government, a shifting coalition of warlords and provincial armies precariously led by Chiang Kai-shek.

When the sisters disembarked from the steamer in Jiujiang¹⁰ they cheerfully recorded visiting the Daughters of Charity from France who operated a huge compound including a hospital, nursing home, day school, and orphanage where as many as 800 babies a year were baptized:

⁶ See "Anonymous letter from Jiujiang," 22 November 1928, *Echo from the Mother House* 4:1 (January 1929): 39.

⁷ Chang River (Chang Jiang or Changjiang) was formerly called the Yangtze River. The longest river in the country, it creates a cultural and physical divide between north and south China.

⁸ Nanjing was formerly spelled Nanking. Around the year 1930, there were several steamer routes from Shanghai through the Chang River delta. All met downstream from Nanjing and passed this city.

⁹ Guomindang (GMD), formerly spelled Kuomintang (KMT), was the Chinese Nationalist Party.

¹⁰ Jiujiang, located at Lake Poyang where the lake empties into the Chang River, was formerly spelled Kiukiang.

We are at Saint Vincent's Hospital. It is a foreign building, modern in every way, equipped with private rooms and connecting private baths with hot and cold water. A high bed, two chairs, a dresser, and a table, constitute the furniture of each room. In the operating room there are distilled water tanks, sterilizers, and every conceivable kind of instrument.... Before being admitted to the wards each patient is given a scrub, sometimes two. It depends.... Sister tells us that this is the way they manage to keep the 'crawlers' down.... However in the Sisters' quarters they never have heat. This is done to save and thus to be able to give more to the poor.... It is warmer out of doors and for that reason we take our reading outside....¹¹

This extensive mission compound supplied so much to relieve the needs of the poor that two years later, when all European houses in the city were pillaged, it happened that "after making a round of inspection of the Sisters' hospital and works the communist leader put a guard at the door and wrote over it in big characters, 'Here is Charity', and they were undisturbed."¹²

In contrast to the mission, all around it:

The streets are only a few feet wide ...there are rickshaws going in every direction; coolies carrying large buckets of water, and building materials.... Beggars, almost naked, kneel in the very middle of the streets, banging their foreheads on the ground, imploring for help.... In a pagan cemetery we saw two men burn incense at one of the graves and shoot off some fire crackers. They were imploring the shades of their ancestors to obtain some favors for them.... we came upon a wedding procession. Musicians marched ahead and the bride followed in a closed chair.¹³

The four sisters were now 1000 serpentine miles upriver from Shanghai, but still 370 slow river miles (one month) away from Ganzhou, their destination. A new member of their party, Remigius, a Chinese catechist from Ganzhou, met them in Jiujiang on Monday, 19 November 1928. They were delayed here for several days by Customs, which at that time and place was rigidly enforcing the law because of widespread violence. Finally they were allowed to board the mission boat, a unique junk they dubbed 'Noah's Ark' as it reminded them of children's storybook pictures of Noah's vessel. "It has a sail and when the wind blows in the right direction it moves. Otherwise it either stands still or has to be dragged along by men or towboats."¹⁴

The two veteran sisters hired men to carry their baggage onto their junk and the priests' baggage onto a rented junk. They secured passports for both, and then made

¹¹ "Anonymous letter," 22 November 1928, *Echo*, 40.

¹² Anne Hughes, *Sister Xavier Berkeley. Fifty-Four Years in China as a Missionary Sister of Charity* (London: 1949), 139.

¹³ Clara Groell, D.C., *White Wings in Bamboo Land* (Emmitsburg: 1973), 26-27.

¹⁴ "Anonymous letter from Jiujiang," 21 November 1928, *Echo from the Mother House* 4:1 (January 1929): 38.



Period postcard of the S.S. President Grant, onboard which the sisters journeyed to China; Chinese junk boats lining the Yangtze River bank.



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arrangements for an oil tug to pull them across Lake Poyang.¹⁵ Their junks almost foundered in the huge waves of a sudden night squall when another boat, crossing behind the tug, accidentally cut their tow rope. The sisters threw Miraculous Medals in the water and their boat's crew screamed in panic. The tug captain came about and with some difficulty flung a new rope to them. And in that manner they were safely pulled to the Gan¹⁶ River. On the junk boards set across sawhorses served as their beds during the night, and during the day for their kitchen. Within a week the two arriving sisters had become accustomed to sleeping soundly on the boards and waking refreshed, "When we get up we roll up our blankets and cook on the beds."¹⁷

On Thursday, 29 November 1928, the French Daughters of Charity who operated a hospital in Nanchang gave them a warm welcome, an American Thanksgiving Day chicken dinner inside a cold building on a cold day. They passed southward through the city where, on the first of August the year before, He Long and Zhou Enlai had staged an urban uprising. Communists hailed the event as the founding of the People's Liberation Army. Although the uprising failed, the communists retreated successfully to the Jinggang Mountains along the southwestern border of Jiangxi. This communist base less than 100 miles from the sisters' destination was still attracting highway robbers, nationalist army deserters, and

¹⁵ Lake Poyang is considered the largest lake in China but is actually a system of marshes and lakes fed by several tributaries, of which the Gan River is the most important.

¹⁶ Gan River (Gan Jiang or Ganjiang) was formerly spelled Kan.

¹⁷ "Anonymous letter from the Gan River," 4 December 1928, *Echo from the Mother House* 4:1 (January 1929): 44.

dispossessed farmers from throughout the province, as well as other communist leaders. And so it happened that Mao Zedong and Zhu De arrived in Jiangxi Province at around the same time as Sisters DeLude, Jarboe, and their escorts. Undetected by the sisters, restless and unsettled movement percolated throughout the entire province, sometimes bubbling up into violence.

After their Thanksgiving dinner, the sisters hired a steamer to tow their two junks upriver as far as the unusually low water level would permit, about sixty more miles. But the steamer had to frequently stop while the crew stuffed paper, the only available material, into the rusting holes of the steam pipes. After the third stop for repairs, at 3:30 A.M., the crews of the sisters' junks unhitched from the steamer to make their own way. They started by paddling, but when a northeast wind rose in their favor they hoisted sail and got well ahead of the steamer with its irate passengers.¹⁸ Depending on the wind and water depth, for the rest of the journey the sisters' two junks were slowly sailed, poled, and sometimes pulled in a south-southwesterly direction up the Gan River. Sister DeLude wrote of the awesome natural beauty of "the lovely Kan [Gan] River winding its way between the mountain ranges, which were reflected in the water below. What a gorgeous view! How I thanked God that I could see the beauties He had made for man."¹⁹

Hoping to make use of moonlight and a favorable wind, their captain nearly capsized the junk one night when it sailed onto an undetected sandbar. The crew jumped in the cold water to their waist and with great difficulty shoved the craft into deeper water. So, more cautious now, they anchored safely with a group of other junks stopped for the night. The sisters wanted to get out and walk along the bank but their captain warned them it would be too dangerous and that they could be kidnapped.

After they sailed past Ji'an²⁰ where still another group of French Daughters of Charity operated an orphanage, the four sisters came to a long stretch of rapids. A pilot boarded here to guide them through treacherous waters lined with the remains of wrecked boats. They eventually stopped at the small river town of Tahoukiang²¹ where the Vincentian priest Father William McClimont²² was stationed — he himself was temporarily in Ganzhou welcoming the priests at that moment arriving from their journey over Mei-ling Pass. The sisters left the baggage belonging to these priests at his house. Perhaps with a sense of disappointment but

¹⁸ See "Anonymous letter from the Gan River," 2 December 1928, *Ibid.*, 43.

¹⁹ DeLude, "A China Mission," 7.

²⁰ Ji'an was formerly spelled Kian.

²¹ Tahoukiang was later flooded when a large dam was constructed. The old spelling is used here.

²² Between 1928 and 1930 nineteen Vincentian priests from the U.S.A.'s Eastern Province of the Congregation of the Mission, along with some remaining Vincentian priests from France, evangelized the southern part of Jiangxi Province. During this time the French Vincentian, Bishop Paul Dumond, was vicar apostolic of Ganzhou and the American Vincentian, Bishop John A. O'Shea, was coadjutor vicar apostolic. The other American Vincentian priests sent from Germantown, PA, were Leon Cahill, James Corbett, Thomas Crossley, Vincent Dougherty, George Erbe, James Gleason, John Lynch, William McClimont, Daniel McGillicuddy, John McLaughlin, Francis Moehringer, John Munday, John O'Donnell, Francis Stauble, and Edward Young. Young was captured and tortured by the communists. The last ones to arrive during this time were Lawrence Curtis, Francis Flaherty, and Joseph Gately in December of 1928.



The Bajing Pavilion in Ganzhou, Jiangxi province, China.

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certainly with a cheerfully innocent spirit, Sister DeLude stuffed a bathrobe, hat, and shoes to look like a man sitting in the priest's wicker chair. One dark night some time later when the priest returned home, he was so startled by the shadowy figure in his chair that he threw up his hands and accidentally destroyed an unlit oil lamp behind him.

Arrival in Ganzhou and Taiwo

Finally, admiring the skyline of pagodas, the sisters stepped ashore at Ganzhou on Friday, 14 December 1928.²³ They rode in rickshaws through narrow, winding streets filled with grunting pigs, barking dogs, and scurrying chickens. They saw a barber cutting hair in the street, and women squatting by tubs washing their clothes, glancing up and smiling at passersby. An astonished doorman named John yelled and ran into a building to announce their unexpected arrival, the veteran sisters having chosen to make it a surprise. Suddenly explosions of fireworks roared all around them announcing their appearance at Saint Margaret's House, their new home.

Many red steps ascended to a white hall with pine floors. The travelers knelt before the Blessed Sacrament in the little chapel to thank God for their safe passage, and venerated Our Lady and Saint Joseph. They admired the beauty of the statues made in France. They admired the cleanliness of the white altar, the white walls, and the white pine floorboards. It was now home, even with the cold air flowing up through the big cracks between those floorboards, even with the lack of heat, and even with the lack of hot and cold running water. Sister Pauline Strable, the sister servant — as the Daughters of Charity call their superiors — greeted them warmly, as did Sisters Catherine O'Neill, Clara Groell, and Helena Lucas.

The three priests who had traveled with them on the S.S. President Grant had arrived in Ganzhou only three days before, having explored much of the southern, mountainous

²³ See "Anonymous letter from Ganzhou," 15 December 1928, *Echo from the Mother House* 4:1 (January 1929): 45.

part of the province. They had nearly been frozen and were suffering from serious colds. Everyone was pleased that they had arrived just in time for the beginning of the Christmas Novena, a hauntingly beautiful service of hymns, readings, and meditations celebrated by the Daughters and Vincentians during the nine days before Christmas.

The little hospital, established on 21 June 1924, had only 35 beds, but in the out-patient clinic the sisters treated as many as 300 people daily. Typical complaints were leg ulcers, tuberculosis, infected eyes, scabies, and boils. All nurses, the sisters worked without the supervision of any doctor as none in the city knew western medicine:

How often we wished we had a doctor! Especially when we had cases like the following: One day a man was brought to us whose leg had been crushed in a quarry some distance from the city. The accident occurred two weeks previously and the wound was badly infected. No X-ray! No doctor! What to do? So, we did the best we could. The wound was cleansed, dressings applied and the leg splinted. Day after day, small pieces of bone were removed, the infection cleared up, and finally after several weeks, the wound was entirely healed. Since we had no X-ray, there was no way of knowing if the fractured bones had united. Our patient soon settled that! One day, on entering the ward, we were amazed to find him walking, without any support....²⁴

Sister DeLude was quickly assigned to the out-patient department. She set herself the task of learning Chinese from an English-Chinese dictionary. With the help of a Chinese assistant who doubled as tutor she eagerly began to learn the language, especially those words indicating medical symptoms. Meanwhile, within several months Sister Jarboe, also learning Chinese, had three Chinese nurses working under her in the hospital and dispensary. They found consolation in compassionately and tirelessly providing treatment for the poor who sought their help, either in the sisters' compound or in the simple clay structures many called home.

One of the sisters wrote that they were called out to see a woman who'd had an accident: "There was a cut of about three inches long on her head and it was plastered with a poultice of powdered young rat, mixed with lime. It was lucky for her we got it off before it hardened, for it becomes as hard as granite and then it is impossible to remove it..."²⁵ Lepers, who were allowed to come and go as they pleased, sometimes came for help. However, lepers tested the limits of the sisters' practical care as they could only hope to keep them comfortable. Remigius or another catechist usually accompanied the sisters when they visited people in their homes. This was done to explain their religion, and because of the example of their kindness many Chinese readily chose to be baptized. The sisters also sent out helpers to search for abandoned babies, and several were brought in daily. Sometimes hopeless mothers would bring in babies who were dying. The sisters

²⁴ See Groell, *White Wings*, 49.

²⁵ "Anonymous letter from Ganzhou," 5 May 1929, *Echo from the Mother House* 4:6 (June 1929): 229.



Mao Tse-Tung (Zedong) at left and Chu Teh (Zhu De), circa 1938. Photograph by Earl Leaf.

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would baptize them just before they died, calling them thieves of heaven, providing spiritual healing to eternal life in heaven when physical medicine no longer sufficed, with the thought that these new saints would pray for the conversion of their families.

While the two new sisters were settling into their routine, the nationalist army was besieging the poorly-supplied communist base at Jinggangshan. In January 1929 many of the defenders under the leadership of Mao Zedong and Zhu De broke through the siege lines. They created widespread havoc as they passed singly, severally, or in larger groups through the whole region around Ganzhou just one month after the sisters' arrival. Under the leadership of Zhu De many of them finally gathered again on the southeast border of Jiangxi. In the meantime, throughout the countryside of southern Jiangxi Province the poor were subject to pillaging by nationalist troops and communist bandits alike; landlords were killed and mission chapels destroyed wherever the communist army went. Thousands were killed and whole villages destroyed.

On Tuesday, 22 January 1929, Father Edward Young was captured by the communists as they passed through Nan'an,²⁶ a mountainous region south of Ganzhou. He was given a fierce lecture by Zhu De himself and told to pay a \$20,000 fine or forfeit his life. For about two weeks he was hustled up and down mountains in southern Jiangxi and northern Guangdong provinces. Firefights with nationalist troops occurred sporadically. During one, on Sunday, 3 February 1929, as the communists started to kill their prisoners, the priest and his good friend Pastor Schramm, an elderly German Protestant minister, managed to make their escape running hunched-forward through rice paddies in a pre-dawn heavy rain. The pastor had already arranged the release of his wife and daughter with a \$10,000 check.²⁷ The word "bandits" as it was used at the time frequently meant communists as they often demanded ransom for captured Europeans and Americans. Throughout southern Jiangxi Province, again and again, nationalist troops commandeered mission properties as

²⁶ Nan'an, now a neighborhood in the city of Dayu, was formerly spelled Nan Nan Fu, Nannanfu, or Nan-an.

²⁷ See Edward Young, C.M., "China — Father Young's Capture," *Echo from the Mother House* 4:3 (March 1929): 110-29.

barracks, and tried to defend the territory from the waves of communist fighters.

Tension mounted in Ganzhou during January of 1929. "One of the buildings on our compound, the male employees' quarters, was commandeered by one of the officers and was occupied for five months. He drilled his soldiers day after day in our front yard. Several times, officers tried hard to force us out of our house...."²⁸ While the sisters were pressured on the one hand by nationalists, they were also pressured by the communists who:

...did all in their power to instill anti-foreign and anti-Christian sentiments among the poor people and especially among the students, and succeeded only too well. Night after night, crowds of students gathered on the street before our house and yelled, 'Down with the foreign devils!' 'Down with Christianity!' 'Kill!' 'Kill!' and after having yelled themselves hoarse, came to our dispensary the next morning to have their sore throats treated!²⁹

During this time, in the latter part of January, as the sisters prayed for Father Young, Bishop John O'Shea urged nationalist troops to rescue him. One of the sisters wrote: "Most of the soldiers are out following up the bandits. Unfortunately they seem to move in a circle never accomplishing anything definite...."³⁰ Although perhaps they did just enough to jostle several of the prisoners loose.

In early April 1929 the American Consul ordered the evacuation of all foreigners from southern Jiangxi Province, as he had done two years before. This time, one sister wrote, "absolute necessity alone will enforce this order."³¹ Pockets of turmoil varied in frequency, intensity, and duration throughout the southern part of the province. Because their burned and looted missions were unsafe many priests hid in various places throughout the province. Father Gately and a number of Chinese priests took refuge in Ganzhou at this time.

Periods of dry weather during the rainy season of 1929 increased the fear of famine as the second rice crop the previous year had completely failed for lack of water. "Rain is badly needed and everyone is praying for it," wrote one sister.³² Not trusting the gardener to do it right, Sister O'Neill herself planted seed potatoes, though the sisters feared even her efforts would be useless. Their well was drying up and water had to be used sparingly. "In some provinces many thousands have already died of starvation and now with another war about to begin, the poor people are to be pitied...."³³ The sisters gave thanks to God when at last the rain came.

²⁸ Groell, *White Wings*, 52.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 53-54.

³⁰ "Anonymous letter from Ganzhou on Pentecost Monday," 1929, *Echo from the Mother House* 4:6 (June 1929): 233 [mislabelled in *Echo* as 133].

³¹ "Anonymous letter from Ganzhou," 10 April 1929, *Ibid.*, 222 [mislabelled in *Echo* as 122].

³² "Anonymous letter from Ganzhou," 14 March 1929, *Ibid.*, 220.

³³ "Anonymous letter from Ganzhou," 31 March 1929, *Ibid.*, 221.

During a lull in the military storm around the city, on Tuesday, 9 April 1929, Sisters Beggs, Groell, Lucas, and DeLude (the last having lived in Ganzhou only four months) were sent to start Immaculate Conception House and Hospital in Taiwo.³⁴ A village in the countryside about thirty miles southwest of Ganzhou and five miles south of Tangjiang,³⁵ Taiwo sat on the north bank of the upper reaches of the sinuous but temporarily dry Gan River. On their entry into town the sisters were greeted by Fathers George Erbe and Lawrence Curtis, a joyful crowd (including the Sisters of Saint Anne, a group of Chinese sisters who taught school there), and loud fireworks. They moved into a clean but unfinished house.

The following day carpenters installed windows and locks, and movers brought in the medicines and furniture that had been sent from Ganzhou via Tangjiang. Catholics called the hill on which the sisters lived Martyr's Hill because that was where Father Anthony Canduglia, an Italian Vincentian priest, had been killed by a mob during the Boxer Rebellion. One of the three mob leaders had eaten Father Canduglia's heart to gain some of his courage. He eventually became Catholic, and in sadness for his part in the murder the sisters would see him kneeling on the brick floor in front of the altar every Sunday during mass.

These four "country sisters," as they came to be called by their city compatriots, found the poor people of Taiwo to be very cordial and appreciative of their service. The small village lacked even a post office, though it did have a Boy Scout troop, a Catholic church and school, and now a dispensary. From the start, the sisters treated the sick in their own homes or in the dispensary for free. During the first month, before the dispensary opened, the sisters treated 300 patients in the convent's basement. As it was with all other Daughters of Charity throughout the world, their physical service was always intimately linked with spiritual service. It was all of a piece as they saw it.

On their second day in Taiwo one of the sisters baptized a four-year-old child who died shortly thereafter, eternal medicine offered with the same generosity as temporal medicine. About that same time they were asked to treat a burn victim who could not come to them:

Out we went, over the rice paddies and ploughed ground. We jumped ditches for one mile and at last found a poor settlement. The patient, a man, was horribly burned. His ears, the top of his head, his arms from the elbows down, including his finger tips and both feet, were a sight to behold. Even his fingernails dropped out. The accident had occurred three days ago.... He was lying on a wooden bed with hard bamboo pillows under his poor head. How disfigured! I thought of another Face. What a privilege is mine to dress his face. Well, you can well imagine the odor of the sloughing tissue after these three days. Even his bed reeked of pus. We went to work and while busy offered up all our discomfort for this poor pagan's conversion....³⁶

They worked in cooperation with the priests and "visited several pagan tribes nearby.

³⁴ Taiwo was formerly spelled in a variety of ways: Taholi, Ta Ho Li, Taiholi, Taiho-li, or Tai Ho Li.

³⁵ Tangjiang was variously spelled: Tangkiang, Tang Kiang, or Tan Kiang.

³⁶ "Anonymous letter from Taiwo," 30 April 1929, *Echo from the Mother House* 4:6 (June 1929): 227-28.



Chinese nationalist troops in training;
a gathering of People's Liberation Army
soldiers.

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Father [George] Erbe is delighted, for some of these tribes have been very bitter and hostile, and for years he has been trying to find a way to reach them."³⁷

The sisters opened their dispensary with great fanfare on Monday, 13 May 1929, and hung in the waiting room a scroll which had been given to them citing their "wonderful deeds." They treated leg ulcers, boils, and many kinds of infections during the morning hours in their dispensary. Many babies died in the heat; the sisters baptized them when they could. Poor persons often begged them to visit their homebound sick relatives, which they learned to do in the open air just outside the doorway because when they entered a home dozens of neighbors would crowd the doorway to see what was going on, in the process blocking out the only source of light.

The sisters walked many miles during the late afternoon and evening to people's homes. Through painful experience they learned to imitate the Chinese who avoided travel under the midday sun when they could. On one occasion Sister DeLude met a leper on one of the many very narrow paths in the countryside. She wrote that the paths were "...so narrow in places that in passing another person one must touch the other to prevent slipping into the water.... As I was crossing a field, I heard a man call: 'Wait, Sister, I am a leper.' The poor fellow did not want to touch me in passing. 'I am a Leper': how these words pierced my heart! The ones I longed to serve. We treated them in an Out-Patient. Our only precaution was to wash our hands well, putting soap and then alcohol; we used no gloves in dressing their sores."³⁸ Hilly paths could be even more difficult. Once Sister

³⁷ "Anonymous letter from Taiwo," 9 May 1929, *Ibid.*, 230.

³⁸ DeLude, "A China Mission," 11.

DeLude missed her step and slid twenty feet down, becoming plastered all over with yellow clay and having to walk below her companion Sister Groell for a long time before she could rejoin her. But they did not even have to leave the village to encounter problems with paths. Just to get to the nearby parish church for Sunday mass they had to slide down an embankment with skirts and umbrella firmly held, cross two “gullies” of rushing water which they sometimes fell in, and step along stepping stones through a rice paddy which they also sometimes fell in.

The “country sisters” had barely left Ganzhou when alarm shook the city. Contradictory rumors came and went. The communists were coming. No they weren’t. Yes they were. “Everybody is ready for them. Each householder has to have a light outside his door at night and every home has to either give one man to be on guard at night or pay ten cents which will hire a substitute. These men go around the streets and keep watch. They go in fours or fives and carry spades, hoes, and shovels. I hear somebody drumming all night long close to our place on something like two tin cans.”³⁹ The gates to the city were shut on Saturday, 13 April 1929, only four days after Sister DeLude and her three companions left Ganzhou. The inhabitants of the city felt temporary relief when nationalist reinforcements arrived during the first week in May 1929, but by the middle of the month the city was again surrounded by some of the communists who had fled Jinggangshan. On Sunday, 26 May 1929, Sister Jarboe dashed off a breathless letter, writing:

The bandits have been giving us lots of trouble and anxiety. We had orders from the American Consul to leave Kan-chou [Ganzhou] stating they could not protect us. At that time we were surrounded by these outlaws and [it] would have been dangerous to go outside of the city gates and besides if once we leave that would be the end of our mission. They would have a better chance to destroy it, and our works here mean so much to these poor people [and] the salvation of so many souls.... We treat a large number in our dispensary every day also a hospital for men and women and we have many conversions among them.... Our dispensary and hospital is free to all. We give them everything. I often wonder how we keep supplied with medicines but it is like the loaves and fishes it seems to multiply. And the little babies are so poorly cared for they die like flies in the summer time but they are so many little souls we steal for heaven. They are brought to us by their pagan parents for treatment of the body and in the meantime they get baptism. Also [we] visit the homes — and such homes — dark and dirty built of clay without windows some kind of an opening for a door. Many a visit means the salvation of a soul.⁴⁰

From this quickly-written letter we catch a glimpse of the organization of the Congregation of the Mission and the Daughters of Charity funneling resources contributed by so many unnamed Catholics in the United States, a glimpse of the impoverished milieu of the city

³⁹ “Anonymous letter from Ganzhou,” 13 April 1929, *Echo from the Mother House* 4:6 (June 1929): 224-25.

⁴⁰ Anselma Jarboe, D.C., “Letter from Ganzhou to Mrs. Anna Murphy in Albany, NY,” 26 May 1929, ASLP record group 22-1, box 6-5² #2B.



The China ministry, Sisters on mission visiting the poor. Written on the back of the photograph: "Visiting the poor in their homes. This man has a dreadful abscess on his thigh. The Sisters went nearly every day to dress it. The distance about two miles. Notice the furniture."

Courtesy, Daughters of Charity Province of St. Louise Archives, Emmitsburg, MD



of Ganzhou, and a glimpse of the violent chaos around it. We also see two important motivations that led Sister Jarboe and her companions to leave their own country: medical care for the sick-poor of course, but more importantly spiritual care for sick-poor souls. Human dignity deserves both. While two vicious extremes of Western culture — nationalism and communism — were engaged in fierce conflict around them, the sisters went about their quiet business. They might have described their work as the true core of human, not just Western, culture: the physical and spiritual annunciation of the kingdom of heaven on earth.

Associated with the sisters' motivations was a sense of superiority. This certainly was also exhibited by the violent and often supercilious heralds of both nationalism and communism, who planned to force on others what they thought was best. Unlike them, though, the sisters' sense of superiority was willingly offered as a nonviolent invitation to receive what was best, to anyone willing to take it. Even if our own, later sense of superiority were to judge them for sometimes baptizing dying babies without the full comprehension of parents, it must be understood they did so with an unabashed sense of generosity, and within the context of a medical delivery system in which unquestioning acceptance of the proffered treatment was the norm even in Western nations.

Poor babies who died "like flies" were not the only people singled out for special pity by the sisters. One of them wrote: "You cannot imagine the sad condition of women in China. If they are sick or cannot work, there is no room for them at home. They are not wanted and are gotten rid of...."⁴¹ And indeed among the babies, more often than not they were girls who were abandoned. By the leavening effect of sharing their Catholic faith, and converting others to it, the sisters hoped among other things to instill in China a moral system which values human life, both women and men equally.

Bishop John O'Shea and Father Francis Moehringer boarded "Noah's Ark" on

⁴¹ "Anonymous letter from Ganzhou on Pentecost Monday," *Echo*, 233 [misabeled in *Echo* as 133].

Monday, 1 July 1929, for the episcopal consecration of Father Edward Sheehan⁴² as vicar apostolic of Yujiang⁴³ scheduled for Sunday, 14 July 1929. On this date, almost two months after her last letter, Sister Jarboe dashed off another. She was feeling short-handed because Sister Strable, her sister servant, had visited the sisters in Taiwo on business, and was now exhausted from the sixty-mile round trip. She wrote that “we are so few where we are so much needed among these poor pagans we have most pitiful cases they come to our dispensary hardly able to walk.”⁴⁴ Although a temporary lull in “bandit” activity brought the city a sense of peace, Sister Jarboe had by now become attuned to the violent undercurrents. “The bandits are still in existence.... But we are not afraid. We know we have Our Blessed Mother to protect us and with all the prayers that are being offered daily for us.”⁴⁵ As always, after her name she signed the letter with the acronym “udocsotps” — i.e. “unworthy daughter of charity servant of the poor sick.” It was a custom with meaning. A deep sense of personal humility tempered the superiority she felt about what she offered.

On Thursday, 15 August 1929, the Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, a month after her last letter, Sister Jarboe again wrote from Saint Margaret’s House in Ganzhou. She filled several lines about how very happy she was; two masses and a solemn pontifical benediction by Bishop Paul Dumond produced a deep sense of joy that was a significant part of her general cheerfulness. She looked forward to seeing all the neighboring Vincentian priests at their annual retreat the following week when, no doubt, Father Young would narrate the story of his capture and escape from the communists (although she wrote nothing of it in her letters). And, after that, she especially looked forward to her own retreat wherein all eight sisters planned to gather at Saint Margaret’s House.

August was hot, but some said not as hot as previous summers. The many insects and spiders, as big as horses and dinner plates laughed Sister Jarboe, went unmolested by humans — everything had a purpose according to the Chinese. The well on the sisters’ property produced cold, clear water, but had to be boiled before drinking. Sister Jarboe hurriedly wrote in her usual slap-dash style about the arrival of soldiers that hot summer month:

We are in peace at present a new lot of soldiers came to guard Kanchou [Ganzhou] such as they are. I think more than half came to the dispensary for treatment that morning their complaint chiefly tired legs I gave most of them a hot drink of soda water and told them to go home and rest and they would be cured. The poor creatures they have great faith in our medicines. They had

⁴² Between 1928 and 1930 two Vincentian priests from the U.S.A.’s Western Province of the Congregation of the Mission evangelized the northern part of Jiangxi Province. Edward T. Sheehan traveled around the Poyang and Yujiang areas between 1922-1951. Harry W. Altenburg arrived in Poyang in 1929 and remained in China until 1944.

⁴³ Yujiang, located east of Lake Poyang in Jiangxi Province, was formerly spelled Yükiang.

⁴⁴ “Jarboe letter from Ganzhou to Sister Serena Murphy at Saint Mary’s Infant Asylum in Dorchester, MA,” 14 July 1929, ASLP record group 22-1, box 6-5² #2C.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*



Portrait of Sister Helen (Helena) Lucas, D.C.

*Courtesy, Daughters of Charity Province of
St. Louise Archives, Emmitsburg, MD*



been walking for two or three days is it any wonder their legs pained them. It is very hard traveling in the Interior any distance. We haven't any roads only beaten paths.⁴⁶

The eight sisters enjoyed their retreat together during the first week of September. The two traveling companions, Sisters Jarboe and DeLude, were especially happy to see each other again and share stories. All the sisters were given strict orders to rest as much as they could during their retreat, orders they seemed happy enough to obey. Then the quiet, busy daily schedule began again. Sister Jarboe dashed off several lines of a letter on Wednesday, 16 October 1929, but completed the page only on Sunday, 10 November 1929. When she realized it would be a month before it reached the United States her thoughts turned toward the Solemnity of Christmas. She recalled the previous year when the sisters had exchanged little gifts with a huge number of Catholics during the holy day celebrated with a simple spiritual fervor. Now, the countryside was relatively quiet and so she and Sister O'Neill were already planning a December afternoon excursion in the mountains to gather evergreen.

That fall, as the days got shorter, the weather became unusually cold and gloomy with a lot of rain and ice, and some snow. The nearby mountains were covered with snow. The sisters had a stove in their community room, but for the most part they shivered under layers of clothing. Many half-starved and freezing people came for help. Christmas was quiet and peaceful. The sisters attended midnight mass. Money that would be used to buy food and clothing for the poor arrived by mail, but expected packages for the hospital did not come. The Gan River was a dangerous place again. On Thursday, 17 January 1930, Sister Jarboe wrote: "Sister Catherine O'Neill and I are praying that the boxes will come in time, we didn't get any of our boxes for Christmas but we know they are all safe in Nanchang and will get them some time. At present the Kan [Gan] River is very dangerous it is filled with robbers and the boats will not venture out until it is safe for them to travel.

⁴⁶ "Jarboe letter from Ganzhou to Sister Serena Murphy," 15 August 1929, ASLP record group 22-1, box 6-5² #2D.

The Reds are very numerous and only a few days ago rumors were that they were within two days reach and intended to take Kanchou [Ganzhou]."⁴⁷

More soldiers arrived and the city freely celebrated the Chinese New Year on Thursday, 30 January 1930. Preeminently a family affair, most people in the region celebrated the event according to their means with a dinner honoring household gods and ancestors, setting off fireworks and opening doors and windows, if they had them, at midnight. During the next several days while people stayed at home or visited friends and relatives there was a pause in the activity at the hospital, dispensary, and out-patient department. The sisters went into retreat again during this expected break. Sister DeLude and the other "country sisters" arrived thoroughly wet from the rain during their trip to Ganzhou for the retreat. But the New Year lull was also the lull before the storm.

It is interesting to note that the sisters thought the arrival of extra troops and safety of the city during the Chinese New Year was the result of a flurry of telegrams sent by their "big brother," Father James Corbett. And there may be something to this considering the lingering effects of the foreign treaties the Qing dynasty had signed to end the Opium Wars almost a century before, granting foreigners more privileges and authority than many Chinese had in their own country. But these privileges were also a hindrance to clergy because they wounded ethnic pride and stirred up resentment. Resentments which fueled the more-or-less leaderless country-wide phenomenon of the Boxer Rebellion in 1900, and now fueled the ruthlessly-led phenomenon of Communism abetted by the political fragmentation following the end of the Qing dynasty in 1912. But the sisters placed their ultimate trust in heaven. Perhaps we detect even an implied impetuous command directed to heaven by Sister Jarboe, who wrote: "Divine Providence must and will protect us. Our Blessed Mother will not let anything happen to us. And we feel safe under her protection."⁴⁸

The Flight of the Taiwo Sisters during the Siege of Ganzhou

Our focus now shifts to the country village of Taiwo for several days. As Sister Helena Lucas was to write afterward, "You could not imagine how much tragedy and comedy were crowded into those few days."⁴⁹

On Saturday, 15 March 1930, the Taiwo sisters received a letter from Father Leon Cahill, in Ganzhou, saying that bandits were approaching the city and that reinforcements had not yet arrived. The danger was higher than usual. He described a line of conduct if they should be threatened.

On Sunday, 16 March 1930, at 3:30 A.M., Father Curtis awoke the sisters with his shouts and Father Erbe sent men out to watch the roads. A merchant had just arrived from Ganzhou saying the bandits had attacked the city. Concerned that a band might come

⁴⁷ "Jarboe letter from Ganzhou to Sister Serena Murphy," 17 January 1930, ASLP record group 22-1, box 6-5² #2F.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴⁹ Helena Lucas, D.C., Addendum to "Our Flight from the Bandits" (28 March 1930), 14, ASLP record group 12-11-11, box 3-2 #15. Hereinafter cited as Lucas, "Addendum to Our Flight."

their way, mass was immediately celebrated in the sisters' little chapel and the Blessed Sacrament was completely consumed. The sisters felt a palpable emptiness because of the now-empty tabernacle: "we realized that our Treasure — our ALL was no longer in our midst...."⁵⁰ After breakfast, in case they needed to escape, they packed a bag with a few necessities.

On Monday, 17 March 1930, the sense of imminent danger to Taiwo gradually waned. Nevertheless, the sisters' hearts ached with concern for the people in Ganzhou as they heard reports of the fierce fighting there. The Blessed Sacrament was returned to their chapel although watchers continued to take turns on the roads.

On Tuesday, 18 March 1930, Father Curtis informed the sisters that fighting around Ganzhou was still ferocious, but the communists were losing the contest. They would probably withdraw to Tangjiang, only a few miles away, and would no doubt sprawl throughout the area. He told them to obtain disguises because it would be too dangerous to travel in their habits. Sister Groell asked Martin their comprador to secretly find four old garments, long silk blue or black gowns such as ordinary men wore. Within the hour he was back with four old but spotlessly clean ones from his own home. That evening the sisters, with some laughter to cut the tension, tried them on. They wanted to be able to get into them in a hurry. They took off their cornettes; Sister DeLude wore a steamer cap, Sister Lucas some kind of Chinese hat, Sister Beggs a black cloth wrapped around, and Sister Groell a blue rag. A report, untrue but believed at the time, told of reinforcements arriving in Ganzhou from Ji'anfu, and contributed to a sense of good cheer.

On Thursday, 20 March 1930, from the out-patient department, Sister DeLude saw Father Curtis running toward the sisters' house and so she ran there too, not bothering to lock the clinic door thereby unwittingly saving it from later being broken. Sister Groell, upstairs in the house, had just finished a letter to their director in the United States, Father John Cribbins, and rushed downstairs at the disturbance. Bandits were near. The midday dinner lay ready but ignored. In the chapel each of the sisters thinking it might be her Viaticum received several hosts. They sent a messenger to Ganzhou. They put on their Chinese clothes, gave their apron-wrapped habits to Rosa, a Chinese employee who hid them in rice bins, and ran to the parish church where Father Erbe told them to follow a certain Catholic man who would lead them to safety.

After two hours of steady walking they arrived at a Catholic household hidden behind a large hill where they were received kindly and offered dinner, but they were too upset to eat. They spent the afternoon reading and saying prayers, grateful that Sister DeLude had brought her "Catechism of the Vows." Meanwhile, their practical-minded comprador, Martin, returned from Tangjiang to find a deserted mission. He assessed the situation, then packed and sent blankets, sheets, bread, table-service, and a lantern on to them. "The

⁵⁰ Clara Groell, D.C., "Our Flight from the Bandits," unpublished typescript (1930), 1, ASLP record group 12-11-11, box 3-2 #5. Hereinafter cited as Groell, "Our Flight."

room in which we were to sleep contained three beds. Two of these were placed at our disposal, while the poor woman of the house crowded several children in the remaining bed with herself. Of course, the room was a typically Chinese one — mud walls and floor, and a tiny window at each end. Several chickens also found a sleeping place there.”⁵¹

After dark, several Catholic men reassured them that others were watching the roads and stood guard around the house. To demonstrate their resolve one of them, a frail boy named Luke, showed them his very wicked-looking knives. The sisters decided to go to bed fully dressed, even keeping their shoes on, in case they needed to be taken to a safer place on short notice. And indeed there was a disturbance. Fathers Erbe and Curtis arrived with several other men in the middle of the night. The communists were expected in Taiwo at any moment and too many people knew the sisters’ hiding place. A pagan family living nearby agreed to take them in. The priests fled elsewhere. Through faint moonlight a man named Matthias silently led the sisters to their new hiding place where they were quietly admitted. Sister Clara Groell described the event:

Without a word, the man of the house and his wife led the way through a passage into an inner room. In this room a ladder led to a loft, up which we climbed one by one. It was devoid of furniture, except two old boxes, but our ‘host’ brought up four ‘horses’ and a few boards and our beds were made. I am quite convinced that from the day that house was built up to the present moment, no one had ever cleaned that place! Thick cob-webs like black curtains hung from the ceiling and on the walls and an inch or two of dust covered the floor. This room had two openings — very small holes — at one end. There was a door, but we had to keep it constantly closed for fear of being discovered. We sat on our beds for a while, praying. I made an act of acceptance of death and prepared for the worst. I prayed, too, that God in His goodness would bestow upon these good people the gift of Faith, for having so generously befriended us — perfect strangers to them.⁵²

Sister DeLude wondered if her own mother would do for complete strangers what these kind people were doing for them.

On Friday, 21 March 1930, after a sleepless night on hard boards the sisters could see a bright clear morning through their little window. They were offered eggs and rice gruel but their appetites were poor. The sisters were afraid to move or to speak above a whisper as they listened to the voices of people who came and went all day outside the house. That night Matthias returned to tell them their mission had been looted but not burned. After his report, they returned to their hiding place in the loft to be entertained again by scurrying rats and “affectionate” fleas. Sister Lucas would later say that the fugitives seemed “to thrive on Chinese food, midnight flights, hiding in lofts and other circumstances that go with escaping from bandits. The worst of the whole business was the anxiety we knew we

⁵¹ Groell, “Our Flight,” 3.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 5-6.



Turn-of-the-twentieth-century collotype depicting Chinese bandits. Printed by the The Swift Collotype Company.

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were putting others through on our account.”⁵³

On Saturday, 22 March 1930, the sisters woke stiff and sore to a dismal rainy day. Their hostess cooked a chicken which they enjoyed. Funny remarks sent them all into fits of suppressed laughter but the least outside noise would make them turn apprehensive eyes toward the trapdoor. In the evening their hostess told them to pack immediately. After dark, “Matthias came with Martin. How glad we were to see them! We scarcely recognized Martin, for he was disguised as a coolie, and looked so haggard and worn. He feared for our safety. There was a certain man, who knew where we were and could not be trusted. A reward was offered for information as to our whereabouts — \$200 for each Priest or Sister delivered into their hands! Martin feared this would prove too great a temptation to some, so he thought it best to take us to another place.”⁵⁴ They left as quietly as they had come. It was night. The rain had stopped but the paths were muddy.

Stopping first at the Catholic’s home where they had initially stayed, they walked without light in the moonless night while several men with lanterns set out in the opposite direction to deceive anyone who might be watching. Everyone in the party clung by hand or by stick to the preceding fugitive, and so they wended their slippery way over hills and between ponds, steep inclines and crude ditches. Eventually it was considered safe to light a lantern. They slipped and stumbled onward, sometimes falling and even laughing. Then their guide discovered he was lost and so went ahead while they all waited in the cold, wet darkness. “After some minutes our guide returned and we started out once more. We had not gone far when we saw lights coming towards us. There were only two, but the reflection in the water made us think at first, that there were several. We feared that we had been betrayed and that we were about to fall into the hands of the bandits. Quick as a flash Martin turned out the light and waited. It was a tense moment! Thank God!

⁵³ Lucas, “Addendum to Our Flight,” 14.

⁵⁴ Groell, “Our Flight,” 7.

They were the men, who had gone ahead with our blankets and were looking for us.”⁵⁵ Finally they arrived at their third hiding place. They passed through a labyrinth of inside passages, climbed a ladder, and found themselves in a loft with a tiny hole for ventilation and a pile of clean straw to be spread out for bedding. The men left and locked the door to the room below which caused some trepidation in the sisters. Locked in! It was very hot so Sister Lucas reached up and shifted some roof tile to make an opening; even the attic’s floor boards were not nailed in place. They slept well, and said their evening and morning prayers as always.

On Sunday, 23 March 1930, by mistake, they all received two breakfasts:

Matthias was so distressed because he thought we had not been getting the right kind of food, that he decided to prepare our meals himself, which he did from that time on, and we can assure anyone who wants to know, that he is a good cook. During the morning we had a pleasant surprise. Rosa (the girl who works for us) rushed into the room. She fairly hugged us. She had persuaded Matthias to tell her where we were, for she thought she could be of service to us, promising that she would be a “prisoner” with us, and only on this condition would he tell her. Her delight to see us and her distress at our sad plight were touching to behold. Enough cannot be said about the loyalty and kindness of these good Christians. Words can never adequately express our gratitude and appreciation for all that they have done for us!⁵⁶

Unbeknown to the four sisters, the messenger whom they had sent three days beforehand to Ganzhou had not succeeded in reaching the city until this very Sunday, and only by great daring. He was finally hoisted over the city wall by rope. The priests and sisters in Ganzhou now knew they had left Taiwo but were still in suspense concerning their welfare.⁵⁷

On Monday, 24 March 1930, while the four sisters united spiritually with their sisters throughout the world to prepare for the annual renewal of their vows, they were interrupted repeatedly with reports, some reassuring, some frightening. In the afternoon Matthias led them, along with Rosa, back to their first hiding place because the people wanted to have them back, and because the ambient threat level there had diminished enough that they could be as safe there as anywhere. In the evening a messenger from Ganzhou gave them such a puzzling dispatch about sedan chairs and an escort of soldiers arranged by Bishop O’Shea that they decided to remain where they were until they could talk with Martin.

On Tuesday, 25 March 1930, the four sisters arose early. It was a day in which the Daughters of Charity all over the world renew their Holy Vows, nearly 44,000 offering anew their hearts to God. “With a far greater zeal to love and serve Him in the person of the Poor, we four came down from our little shelter and in that mud hut knelt on the mud

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 9.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 10.

⁵⁷ Lucas, “Addendum to Our Flight,” 14.

floor and renewed our Holy Vows. No Mass; no Holy Communion for us; but God in His mercy made Himself All in All to us. Never have I ever had such a Happy Renovation; peace and love filled each heart to overflowing. We had nothing, not even our Holy Habit, but we seemed to possess all things. How I should trust Him after that Renovation! Every Sister felt the same great peace of soul."⁵⁸

Eventually they were able to retrieve, kiss, and don previously-hidden habits. In no time Martin arrived with four sedan chairs. He told them to travel with the curtains closed, because of continuing danger. On the way to Ganzhou they stopped at Taiwo, where a large crowd of people greeted them. They were told that when the looting began many Catholics also took things, to save them for their return. The sisters' hearts ached to see the loss and damage, especially since their own families had donated many things. Most of what remained on the property was broken.

Sister Lucas learned that "the bandits encountered opposition or at least protest from the people both in Tangkiang [Tangjiang] and Taiholi [Taiwo], when they went for the mission. They told them, 'If the communists are to help the people, why do they rob the Catholic Missions that give the people free medicine, etc?'"⁵⁹ Then, hurrying toward Ganzhou, they had traveled about seven miles when they were met by one of their men who reported that the city was again under attack and the gates were locked. To go back would have been more dangerous according to Martin, and soldiers detailed to escort them into the city had taken a different path.

Sister Groell reminisced, "It was decided that we keep right on, so placing ourselves under the protection of our Immaculate Mother, we continued our journey. Our carriers fairly flew along, making only one stop. About 4 P.M. we reached the city. Thank God! the gates were open, and without any difficulty we entered and in a few minutes were at Saint Margaret's and in the arms of our Sisters. How they rejoiced to see us! What a welcome we received! The scene can better be imagined than described!"⁶⁰ Sister Lucas added that "this running around the country in men's clothes was certainly a most unpleasant business.... And could you believe it? The missionaries were waiting for us with cameras, to get us in our disguises!"⁶¹

Bishop O'Shea and Fathers Cahill, Corbett, McClimont, Jules Meyrat (from France), Daniel McGillicuddy, and Francis Stauble greeted them. When the excitement settled they all entered the chapel for benediction, and with great joy and gratitude they sang the *Magnificat*. Little did they know that their "running around the country in men's clothes" had merely been a practice. The siege had been lifted, but four months later all eight sisters would be disguised as Chinese men, fleeing for their lives again as the communists firmly took control of the southern part of Jiangxi Province.

⁵⁸ DeLude, "A China Mission," 15.

⁵⁹ Lucas, "Addendum to Our Flight," 16.

⁶⁰ Groell, "Our Flight," 12.

⁶¹ Lucas, "Addendum to Our Flight," 15.

Meanwhile, the Siege of Ganzhou

Meanwhile in besieged Ganzhou, despite the danger to themselves, Sister Strable worried about the country sisters so much that every day when they prayed the *De Profundis* she would start weeping, not knowing whether they were alive or dead.⁶² It was not until Sunday, 23 March 1930, that the messenger lifted over the wall was able to tell them that the sisters had left Taiwo safely. But the question remained: were they still safe?

We go back now to Saturday, 15 March 1930, the same day that the sisters in Taiwo received the message from Father Cahill about how to act if they were threatened. Until the attackers withdrew westward toward Tangjiang and the Taiwo area on Wednesday, 19 March 1930, the fighting was fierce. All the priests — excepting four of them who had escaped to Hong Kong and two who happened to be in Shanghai on business — had fled for refuge into Ganzhou, the only place in southern Jiangxi where Catholic Church property was not looted or destroyed during this phase of communist movement. One of the priests went around the city walls burying Miraculous Medals, praying for the intercession of the Blessed Mother.

Hundreds of attackers climbed up ladders and were shot down by the defending troops. Sister DeLude opined that if they had known how few defenders there were, because the expected reinforcements had not come, the city would have certainly been taken.⁶³ Over five days the city was bombarded, once for an entire twenty-four hours. On the morning that the twenty-four-hour bombardment began, Sister Jarboe arose and dressed at 3 A.M. because the noise was keeping her awake, and had just stepped out of her room when a shell smashed through her bed.⁶⁴ She later reminisced how amazing it was that no priests, sisters, employees, or wards except for one orphan were injured; none were killed. She stated what all the sisters and priests and many citizens believed, that it was the “Blessed Mother that saved Ganzhou. It is really miraculous how all the priests and sisters reached here safely some of them came in while we were being fired upon....⁶⁵ Along with the “country sisters” in their mud home and the many sisters throughout the world, the Daughters of Charity in Ganzhou renewed their vows on Tuesday, 25 March 1930. After the Taiwo sisters reached the walled city of Ganzhou, they remained there to work. The eight were again reunited.

The sisters continued quietly and diligently to provide service to the sick poor. Later, in May, Sister Jarboe wrote: “Our work goes on as ever. Many sick ones in the hospital and dispensary arrived every day last week we treated almost a thousand men I do not know how many women and children we have two separate dispensaries and I have charge of all the men.”⁶⁶

⁶² DeLude, “A China Mission,” 16.

⁶³ *Ibid.*

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 13.

⁶⁵ “Jarboe letter from Ganzhou to Sister Serena Murphy,” 18 May 1930, ASLP record group 22-1, box 6-5² #2G.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

The countryside was in turmoil. Communists in groups of variable strength moved to and fro. National troops, many of them with divided loyalties, attempted to defend the cities and towns. Transportation along the Gan River had already been stopped altogether in November of the previous year. In fact, by the time the sisters fled the city at the end of July, at least 100 parcel post packages with duty and postage paid were waiting downriver to be shipped to them.

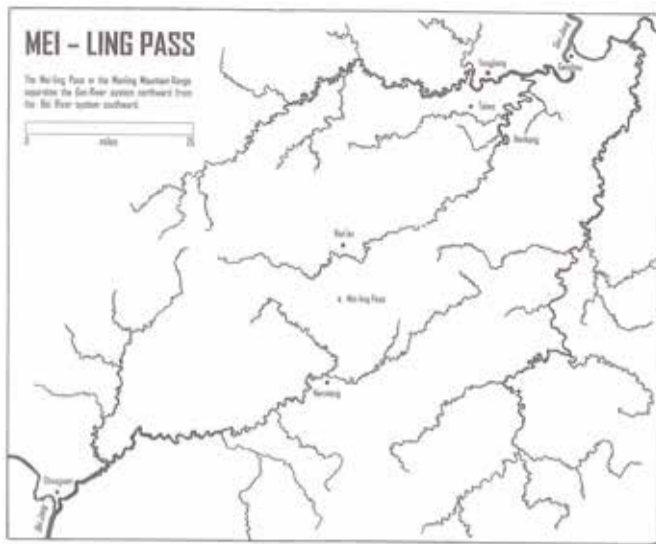
A Second Flight, a Second Siege

Rumor had it that Mao Zedong and Zhu De planned to return to the Ganzhou area. At 3 P.M. on Wednesday, 30 July 1930, Father Cahill hurried to the hospital to report that the defending general had orders from Nanjing to abandon the city, orders he was not particularly keen to obey. The general had paced the room in agitation as he told Bishop O'Shea that he would be forced to leave on Friday, 1 August 1930, because he had his orders, had little ammunition left, and because one of his two regiments were communist sympathizers awaiting the opportunity to let the others in. In the afternoon of that day Bishop O'Shea, who was deeply worried about the wellbeing of the sisters, wrote to Sister Strable asking her to leave for Shanghai until Ganzhou was safer.

Father Cahill and Bishop O'Shea decided that it was advisable for the four Taiwo sisters to leave early the next morning, Thursday, 31 July 1930, ready for an all-day hike. So after the 4:30 A.M. mass at which the Blessed Sacrament was entirely consumed — causing a sense of desolate emptiness in the chapel — they left with Father Corbett at 6 A.M. in the rain, as though going to visit the sick as was their custom. Two Chinese employees named Rosa and Tina accompanied them. The sisters rode in rickshaws as far as the river. Then Sister Lucas rode the priest's mule while all the rest walked westward until they arrived in Pinglu,⁶⁷ about eight miles and four hours away. This was the closest Catholic mission to Ganzhou, where Father Stauble was stationed. He was able to acquire two sedan chairs for them, and so Sisters DeLude and Beggs arrived in Taiwo by nightfall.

Meanwhile in Ganzhou, Father Meyrat, the remaining French Vincentian, waited with the general who hoped to hear of a change in his orders. Aware of this arrangement, the Ganzhou sisters opened Saint Margaret's clinic gate, still hoping that they would be able to stay. They worked quickly to serve the unusually large crowd of patients that morning. Right after the noon meal the sisters were told to leave the city within the hour. Sister Strable put her foot down and said two hours. They swiftly packed clothing in large baskets, paid the employees, secreted the chapel's sacred objects, and set a trustworthy man in charge of the hospital. Then they were ready to start on their way; "the worst came when we had to leave our work our poor sick it was heart rending our hospital filled

⁶⁷ Formerly spelled as either Pinglo or Pinglu, the area is perhaps now in the western part of the city of Ganzhou. The old spelling is retained here.



Map of the Mei-ling Pass, over which the sisters fled.

Courtesy of the author



with sick people.”⁶⁸ Bishop Dumond, and Fathers McGillicuddy, McClimont, and Cahill completed the last group that set out at 3 P.M. for Pinglu in the hot afternoon sunshine, leaving Bishop O’Shea and several priests to their fate in the city.

At around 5 P.M. a fierce rainstorm with sudden black clouds and thunderous cracks of lightning caused this final group of refugees to take shelter in a teahouse. When the fury was spent half an hour later, they set out again under a steady rain. Finally, at about 7:30 P.M., they met up with Sisters Groell and Lucas in Pinglu. The priests stayed overnight at Father Stauble’s house. Rosa, Tina, and the six sisters stayed nearby with a group of Chinese sisters. The rain continued on. For the Ganzhou sisters, dinner that evening was their first experience of Chinese food, and that night their second experience of Chinese beds — a board with a wooden block for a pillow. Unaccustomed to board beds, except for their voyages on “Noah’s Ark,” the sisters awoke with aches and pains. Sister Jarboe said her neck felt like it was broken.

On Friday, 1 August 1930, the sisters attended mass in the chapel. The party set out again in sedan chairs in the rain, leaving behind Sisters Strable and Kolb who planned to leave at noon. The sisters often had to get out of their sedan chairs at rickety bridges; slippery mud was everywhere. The fatigued carriers finally got them to Taiwo at 4 P.M. The six sisters slept on the bare springs of the vandalized beds in the looted house.

On Saturday, 2 August 1930, because the communists had desecrated the sisters’ chapel in March, the group gathered in the mission church for mass. In the afternoon the remaining two sisters rejoined the group. All eight sisters still fervently hoped they would be able to return to Ganzhou. The remainder of the day was spent in securing sedan chairs for the next morning, and readying disguises.

On Sunday, 3 August 1930, the group spent their time happily enough in prayer and relaxation. They went to their spring beds again expecting another night’s rest, until suddenly at 11 P.M. one of the priests called to Sister Strable. A message from Bishop O’Shea

⁶⁸ “Jarboe letter from Shanghai to Sister Serena Murphy,” 25 August 1930, ASLP record group 22-1, box 6-5² #2H.

had arrived ordering them all to put on their disguises and get out of the province as soon as possible as they were in danger of being surrounded. They hastily dressed and packed what they could into bundles, including what they had of heavy Chinese silver money, and placed them in baskets. The baskets were hung one at each end of a bamboo pole and carried by a porter.

Monday, 4 August 1930, began with a midnight mass and 1 A.M. breakfast. They were now a group of at least forty-four people (one bishop, three priests, and eight sisters; each priest had a bus boy and muleteer, each sister one porter and two sedan chair carriers) attempting to slip secretly away into the night. "I noticed the tears spring to the Fathers' eyes as dear Sister Pauline stepped through the arch of the mission gate to her chair."⁶⁹

Sister Strable, at age sixty-one, was by far the oldest in the group of sisters. Under a moonlit partly-cloudy sky just as they passed a "particularly dangerous" place several miles from Taiwo (probably near Nankang⁷⁰), one of the priests became violently sick. He was placed in one of the sedan chairs and three of the sisters took turns riding the mule. Sister Strable allowed them only an hour at a time on the animal during daytime hours, fearing they might suffer heatstroke. At a rickety bridge Father McGillicuddy told Sister DeLude to get off and let the animal jump across. She retorted that it was the mule's job to jump and hers to hang on. However, after the jump, she revised that philosophy and subsequently walked herself across rickety bridges!

Through the night and during the day they pressed on, covering some thirty miles. All along the way they saw "houses and even whole villages burned to the ground"⁷¹ by the communists. Although they hoped to reach the shelter of Father Young's oratory in Xincheng,⁷² the Communists had gotten to it already. It was totally ransacked. So they stayed the night in a Chinese inn where they found one room for men and another for women. The beds were narrow mats on boards lined so closely together one had to climb on from the foot of each bed. Wanting more privacy for her sisters, Sister Strable asked if there was room in the attic. The innkeepers made a great show of sweeping and dusting an unused old loft, beneath which was an opium den where "horrid creatures were lying around smoking the opium."⁷³ An open door gave the sisters light and air. After an 8 P.M. supper they enjoyed the luxuries of a bucket of hot water to wash their hands and faces, and straw on the floor for beds. A shared bottle of Citronella did not deter the bedbugs or the swarms of mosquitoes. Sister DeLude told Sister Strable that "I was afraid to fall asleep, as I sometimes slept with my mouth open, for fear a rat would mistake it for a rat hole and dive in. She gave me one of her solemn looks!"⁷⁴ The men stayed on the ground

⁶⁹ DeLude, "A China Mission," 17.

⁷⁰ Nankang continues to be spelled as it was in 1930.

⁷¹ Groell, *White Wings*, 99.

⁷² Xincheng was formerly spelled Shincheng.

⁷³ "Jarboe letter from Shanghai to Sister Serena Murphy," 25 August 1930, ASLP.

⁷⁴ DeLude, "A China Mission," 18.



Portrait of Sister Vincent Louise DeLude, D.C.

Courtesy, Daughters of Charity Province of St. Louise Archives, Emmitsburg, MD



floor to protect the sisters. The next morning they looked like they had measles, covered with blotches, but they boiled coffee in their wash basin and considered themselves happy enough. Sister DeLude's comment about the night was to recall a statement made by Father John Gabriel Perboyre⁷⁵ that advised if one wished to practice mortification there was no better place than a Chinese inn.⁷⁶

On Tuesday, 5 August 1930, at 5 A.M., everyone was ready to start out again. They travelled the forty miles to reach Nan'an, where Father Young was stationed (as well as a couple of Chinese sisters) and remained active after his escape from captivity. He and Father John McLaughlin welcomed them at the end of their hard day's journey. Here they were able to wash, eat, and sleep in exhaustion. It had taken them six days of anxious travel by way of a winding, circuitous route to cover the fifty straight miles that separates Ganzhou from Nan'an.

Wednesday, 6 August 1930, was the Feast of the Transfiguration. The sisters dressed in their habits for the day, attended mass, received Holy Communion, washed clothes, and baked bread. The quiet day was interrupted once by the sounds of gunfire and many running feet, but their fears were quickly calmed by the news that it was "only a local fight between the salt merchants and the tax collectors."⁷⁷ Another night was spent sleeping on boards.

Mei-ling Pass and Beyond, Still in Flight

On Thursday, 7 August 1930, the journey began again early in the morning. The day became hot. The sisters remained in their sedan chairs for about two hours until they reached the mountain ascent to Mei-ling Pass. The road was several feet wide, chiseled by hand a few millennia before, and "by far the best roadway we had seen in the interior of

⁷⁵ Jean-Gabriel Perboyre, C.M. (1802-1840), served as a missionary in China from 1835 until his arrest in 1839 and eventual martyrdom on 11 September of 1840. He was canonized on 2 June 1996 by Pope John Paul II.

⁷⁶ See *Ibid.*

⁷⁷ Groell, *White Wings*, 102.

China.”⁷⁸ The famous Father Matteo Ricci had traveled this route in the opposite direction in the late sixteenth century. The sisters made it a kind of pilgrimage in honor of Fathers Regis Clét⁷⁹ and John Gabriel Perboyre, nineteenth century Vincentian martyrs who also had crossed that mountain range although, the sisters were told, not exactly that pass.

Hiking upward they passed ancient pagodas and idols on the way to the pass which divides the Jiangxi and Guangdong provinces. At the top Bishop Dumond turned and solemnly blessed the whole of the Jiangxi Province, tears falling down his cheeks. His action was impressive to the sisters: “We looked below and knowing we were leaving the work we all loved so much our hearts were breaking, now more than when we parted with loved ones,” wrote Sister DeLude.⁸⁰ The sisters chose to continue walking on the way down, rather than ride. The scenery was beautiful and they felt secure with soldiers of the “Home Guard” protecting the road on the south side of the pass. Later, they heard that the soldiers were driven away the following day. The day continued to be fiercely hot, and they passed the body of a man on the side of the road who had apparently died of heat exhaustion. In late afternoon they reached Nanxiong⁸¹ where a Salesian⁸² priest from Italy named Del Maso heartily welcomed them and had a greatly appreciated spaghetti dinner prepared. He had been a captive of the communists for a time but was set free by one of their officers who had once been nursed back to health by Daughters of Charity in Paris. The sisters slept that night on boards, as usual, in the school.

On Friday, 8 August 1930, Father Del Maso arranged for their passage down the Zhen River on sampans. Because of widespread robbery along the river in the wilderness downriver he hired wary, well-armed soldiers from the local Mandarin to serve as security. Each sampan was a flat riverboat about thirty-five feet long, open with no partitions. The soldiers occupied one end, the crew the other. The passengers, the priests and employees in one, the sisters in the other, occupied the middle under a bamboo covering. The sisters cooked, ate, and slept on their little vessel. The deck was the table where they ate and the bed where they slept four to a row; the taller ones could not stand up straight because of the low roof. Moonlight allowed them to travel at night, during which the boatmen would stop for only a few hours of rest before beginning again. The fugitives spent three days and two nights like this and covered about fifty miles, drifting past makeshift communist forts placed at regular intervals waiting for an unwary boat to drift within range of their weapons. If any of the sisters became a little glum, Sister Jarboe would chide them saying, “Cheer up! Every minute is bringing us nearer to the ice cream and bananas!”⁸³

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 104.

⁷⁹ François-Regis Clét, C.M. (1748-1820), served as a missionary in China from 1792 until his arrest in 1819 and martyrdom on 18 February 1820. He was canonized on 1 October 2000 by Pope John Paul II.

⁸⁰ DeLude, “A China Mission,” 19.

⁸¹ Nanxiong was formerly spelled Nan Yum or Namyung.

⁸² Salesians of Don Bosco, formerly Society of St. Francis de Sales, is a Catholic institute founded in the nineteenth century.

⁸³ Groell, *White Wings*, 110.

On Sunday, 10 August 1930, at 2 P.M. they arrived in Shaoguan,⁸⁴ at the convergence of the Wu and Zhen Rivers. At one time Father Matteo Ricci had temporarily located his mission house at this spot. Currently the Salesians operated a very active mission here, and the Italian Sisters of Our Lady Help of Christians ran a large school. From the river the whole group of travelers, including the still-disguised sisters and their bodyguards, trudged a long way through the streets to the Salesian mission. They were delighted by its cleanliness and were again able, temporarily, to change into their habits.

Around the same time the Taiwo sisters had begun their trial flight on Tuesday, 25 February 1930, Luigi Versiglia,⁸⁵ vicar apostolic of Shaoguan, was martyred here by the communists. A few months previously he had publicly prayed for martyrdom in distant Tianjin,⁸⁶ the site of the martyrdom of ten Daughters of Charity sixty years before. The sisters felt a special bond with this bishop because he had visited them and said mass for them in their chapel several years before.⁸⁷ As Sister DeLude knelt and kissed the stone that covered his remains, she begged him to intercede for her so that God would bring her back to China. Her prayer would later be answered as she hoped, but not without a six-year delay.

The sisters, aware that they had perhaps come close to martyrdom several times themselves, felt privileged to visit this holy place and to see the bloody ropes and handkerchief that had bound Saint Versiglia and the bloody bamboo rod that had beaten him. Eye-witnesses told how cruelly he had been treated and of a young priest with him martyred at the same time. In a slight digression Sister DeLude wrote that she gave a relic of this saintly bishop to Father William Slattery, future Superior General of the Congregation of the Mission, who daily touched this relic to his eye. By this means, much to the amazement of his physicians at Johns Hopkins in Baltimore, God miraculously healed him of an untreatable tubercle lesion which was causing "progressive blindness."

On Tuesday, 12 August 1930, the sisters boarded a train, one which might be said to have been located at the junction of two frontiers: the industrial revolution, and the Chinese communist revolution. The train was supposed to leave at 8 A.M. and take them to Guangzhou⁸⁸ (Canton). However, the still-disguised sisters waited in their seats on the train for two-and-a-half hours while another engine was moved out of the way. Sister Strable did not have much money but, when she saw the third class car they were in, she sent Sister DeLude ahead to check out first class. The only difference she saw were swivel

⁸⁴ Shaoguan was formerly spelled Shou Kwang or called by variations of Shiuchow. Areas named Zhenjiang and Wujiang now also occupy this same area, on the northeast side of which is located the "Shaoguan Martyr's Cemetery."

⁸⁵ Luigi Versiglia (1873-1930), was a Salesian priest who served as a missionary in China beginning in 1906. On 25th February 1930 he and fellow priest Don Caravario were traveling with five others when they were stopped by a group of armed bandits demanding money. Both priests were martyred when they attempted to stop the bandits from abducting three women traveling with them. Both were canonized by Pope John Paul II on 1 October 2000.

⁸⁶ Tianjin was formerly spelled Tientsin.

⁸⁷ On Tuesday, 1 May 1928.

⁸⁸ Guangzhou, also known as Canton, was formerly spelled Kwangchow.

chairs that allowed passengers to hang their legs out the windows. The sisters willingly stayed in third class.

Eventually underway, the train chugged very slowly along the east side of the Bei⁸⁹ River and then the Zhu⁹⁰ River, surrounded by the beautiful scenery of flower-laden mountains reflected in the water of the winding river. They stopped at every teahouse, and at one several sisters and priests with cups and jugs made a dash for a mountain spring to gather water. But, hearing the train's whistle they had to hurry back, spilling much of what they had been able to get. The train was already jolting ahead in uneven jerks when they boarded, and ultimately their car became disengaged and was left at a standstill. Alerted by their yelling and flag-waving, the surprised engineer looked behind, realized what had happened and returned to reattach their car. By the means of this ramshackle railway they covered what seemed to them an astonishing 150 miles in a mere ten hours.

Resting Finally, in Guangzhou

On Tuesday, 12 August 1930, at 8 p.m., they arrived at the big port city of Guangzhou in the delta of the Zhu River. Here they piled into two "real" cars that tore so quickly through the streets the sisters feared they would be killed — speeding along at 25 mph! Looking like a "bunch of tramps,"⁹¹ they arrived at a convent of the Immaculate Conception Sisters, a French-Canadian community. They had not received the telegram announcing the sister's arrival and were already in bed after a hard day's work. Yet, they graciously arose, prepared something to eat, and set out boards on sawhorses for beds. Sister Beggs was so exhausted she remained on her bed the entire time they were there. Meanwhile, the other seven sisters witnessed the good works done there.

Among the works was the salvation of infants. Every day Chinese lay women searched the streets for abandoned babies. Most of these babies were girls (as many as a dozen a day) and almost all were comatose. The women carried two babies to a bushel basket, with a basket tied to each end of a bamboo pole. When the women returned, the superior waiting at the door immediately baptized the babies she thought would die before noon. The rest were baptized in a solemn ceremony in the afternoon. If a baby was still alive one week after admission the chances were good she would live, but most died within a few hours.⁹²

Sister Strable decided that they should not look like tramps as they entered Hong Kong and so she borrowed \$100 in U.S. currency from the French-Canadians to buy a trunk and suitcases for their clothing. The two sisters who entered China together, Sisters DeLude and Jarboe, volunteered to do the shopping and took with them their loyal comprador

⁸⁹ Bei River (Bei Jiang or Beijiang), one of the main tributaries of the Zhu River, was formerly spelled Pei.

⁹⁰ Zhu River (Zhu Jiang or Zhujiang) was formerly known as the Pearl River, less commonly as the Guangdong River or Canton River.

⁹¹ DeLude, "A China Mission," 22.

⁹² *Ibid.*



Ministry at St. Margaret Hospital, Kiangsi (Jiangxi).
Written on the back of the photograph:
"St. Margaret's House Kanhhsien, Kiangsi, May 1940. Our women's clinic. This is not a picked crowd but the regular number called in from waiting room to be treated. See how the mothers carry their babies to clinic on their backs. Sr. Anselma and Rose our nurse."

Courtesy, Daughters of Charity Province of St. Louise Archives, Emmitsburg, MD



Martin and one of the local employees of the French-Canadian mission who spoke both the Cantonese dialect and Mandarin.

While the sisters had only to re-acclimate themselves to the speed of the traffic, it was Martin's first experience of the city's quick pace and he was frightened, especially when crossing streets. Besides this, he did not understand the local dialect. To make matters worse, Martin had been entrusted with the \$100 and unfortunately he encountered a pickpocket. Martin suddenly swung about with the stranger's arm in his grip, shouting in his own dialect, "This man has my money; I have his hand; I know he has it."⁹³ A struggle ensued. Martin's shirt was ripped. A crowd gathered. The thief broke away and ran, followed closely by Martin and the mission employee running after him and shouting "Thief!" A shop owner offered the sisters a place to sit and wait. Eventually the mission employee returned and led them back, telling them that Martin and the thief were in a police station. After the noon meal one of the priests went to the police station and brought Martin back, along with the \$100 which had been found in the thief's hat lining. So, for several reasons, Martin asked to be relieved of his duty and returned to Ganzhou. The sisters remained in Guangzhou until after Friday, 15 August 1930, the Feast of the Assumption.

It took the sisters five hours to travel the eighty miles to Kowloon⁹⁴ in the private compartment of a train, "like we have in the U.S.A."⁹⁵ Even before lunch Sister Strable allowed them to eat ice cream. It had been eight years since some of the sisters had tasted it. In Kowloon they were received by a group of Maryknoll Sisters⁹⁶ who "gave up their

⁹³ *Ibid.*, 23.

⁹⁴ Kowloon was sometimes also spelled Chiu-lung.

⁹⁵ "Jarboe letter from Shanghai to Sister Serena Murphy," 25 August 1930, ASLP.

⁹⁶ The Foreign Mission Sisters of St. Dominic, commonly called Maryknoll Sisters, officially changed their name in 1954 to Maryknoll Sisters of St. Dominic.

beds and slept on cots and tables to give us a much needed rest."⁹⁷ Additionally, friends of the Maryknoll Sisters provided an automobile tour of the island of Hong Kong. They stayed in Kowloon until Wednesday, 20 August 1930, when a Canadian Pacific line steamer arrived to take them to Shanghai. The 800-mile voyage over two days and two nights on the ocean delighted the eight sisters.

Continued Work in Shanghai and Environs

On Friday, 22 August 1930, at the pier in Shanghai, two French Daughters of Charity greeted them and took them to Maison Centrale. After several days of rest here they all went to work. They expected to stay and work there until Ganzhou would be "freed from banditry. If it is His Holy Will we want to go back to Kanchou [Ganzhou] as soon as possible our poor people need us. It will be like beginning new again."⁹⁸

Six of the eight sisters worked in the out-patient department of Maison Centrale, or in the clinic at Saint Mary's Hospital in Shanghai. But they were having difficulty readjusting to the complexity and speed of modern city-life. They complained that the ports simply were not "China," and that they longed for "our poor in the country with all their primitive ways."⁹⁹ No doubt they also had trouble adjusting to the French language commonly spoken at the mission. Untainted by contemporary prejudices which seduced many civic leaders in early twentieth-century America, the American sisters were pleased to notice the presence of many Chinese Daughters of Charity, including fourteen in the seminary with "many aspirants and postulants."¹⁰⁰

Sisters DeLude and Beggs were sent to Hangzhou¹⁰¹ in Zhejiang¹⁰² Province, a mosquito-filled city of many canals, fine silks, and pagan altars. Sister DeLude wrote of the 500 pagan altars and about the ubiquitous mosquitoes: "...the quinine is passed around the table three times a day. The Sisters are all anemic-looking."¹⁰³ She was also fascinated by the silk industry in the city. In a lengthy digression she wrote about witnessing the process of its manufacture from the cocoon, to dying, to weaving: "I could hardly believe my eyes when I say what was hidden in this little mud house. Beautiful silks of pure white in flower patterns, raised and so rich that you felt like you could pick one of the flowers from the silk. Silk is very cheap in this city, cheaper than cotton, this last imported for weaving."¹⁰⁴ Perhaps this account metaphorically can be seen to indicate the beauty of

⁹⁷ DeLude, "A China Mission," 24.

⁹⁸ "Jarboe letter from Shanghai to Sister Serena Murphy," 25 August 1930, ASLP.

⁹⁹ Pauline Strable, D.C., "Postscript to Jarboe letter from Shanghai to Sister Serena Murphy," 25 August 1930, ASLP record group 22-1, box 6-5² #2H.

¹⁰⁰ "Jarboe letter from Shanghai to Sister Serena Murphy," 25 August 1930, ASLP.

¹⁰¹ Hangzhou was formerly spelled Hangchow. It is the capitol city of Zhejiang Province and is located in the extensive Yangtze delta 110 miles southwest of Shanghai.

¹⁰² Zhejiang Province, which occupies the middle part of the East China coast, was formerly spelled Chekiang.

¹⁰³ DeLude, "A China Mission," 25.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 25-26.

a freely-given Christianity, now hidden in the inner lives of individual Chinese people, particularly those who appeared to be poor and insignificant. Sister DeLude was placed in charge of a 40-bed ward in a hospital run by a Catholic Chinese doctor who had studied in France. It was a post she would hold until just before Christmas.

On Saturday, 4 October 1930, the communists captured five French Daughters of Charity in Ji'an, close to where Sisters DeLude and Jarboe had been warned during their voyage two years before not to get out of the junk for fear of being kidnapped. The five sisters were "carried off into the mountains from place to place for eighty days."¹⁰⁵ Three priests were murdered there, and a bishop and priest were tied up, driven through the city streets, beaten by insulting crowds, and sent downriver to Shanghai with orders to send back \$600,000 in ransom for the sisters. The bishop was told never to return, and to take his Christianity with him.¹⁰⁶ Later, in Shanghai, it became known that the Chinese sisters among them were able to move about freely but anxious doubt remained regarding the fate of the European sisters: "we have very little hope of their deliverance perhaps they are in heaven by this time."¹⁰⁷ Then, the day before Christmas, the sisters learned that the captives had been rescued.

This distinction between Chinese and foreigner, and the resultant acts of persecution, illustrates a continuing resentment the unequal treaties of the previous century fostered by the communists and probably a significant number of the common people. The line many Chinese drew between Western politics and Christianity was blurred, no doubt because of the privileges these unequal treaties gave to missionaries. The ironic thing is that the communism the Chinese people were eventually bludgeoned into accepting was, itself, from the West.

On Saturday, 18 October 1930, the sisters received an encouraging message: Bishop John O'Shea and several priests were still holding out in a besieged Ganzhou. The sisters hoped the danger would soon pass and they would be able to return. Ambivalent news continued to come in as well. Nanchang, where four of the traveling American sisters had once been treated to a Thanksgiving dinner by courteous French sisters, was completely overrun and looted by the Communists. They chose to spare the French sisters and allowed them, with some inconvenience, to continue operating their hospital.

In late October 1930, still longing to return to Ganzhou, Sisters Jarboe, Groell, and O'Neill traveled twelve hours by boat to the pleasant Zhoushan¹⁰⁸ Island. Here they were to assist the English Daughters of Charity led by the able Sister Xavier Berkeley. She had been in China for forty years and had established extensive works of the community there, including "the infant asylum, the old folk's home, hospital for men and women, dispensary,

¹⁰⁵ Hughes, *Sister Xavier*, 139.

¹⁰⁶ See "Jarboe letter from Zhoushan (Chusan) Island to Sister Serena Murphy," 7 November 1930, ASLP record group 22-1, box 6-5² #2I.

¹⁰⁷ "Jarboe letter from Zhoushan (Chusan) Island to Sister Serena Murphy," 2 December 1930, *Ibid.*, #2J.

¹⁰⁸ Zhoushan was formerly spelled Chusan.

catechumenate, school, workroom, and orphan asylum...."¹⁰⁹ One day they accompanied an English Daughter of Charity and a Chinese Daughter of Charity to visit prisoners in a jail. "Those who needed treatment were brought out of their cells, ten at a time, into a room where we attended to them. They were so glad to see us, and the well ones crowded to the doors of their cells and peered through the bars, calling to us. We treated over forty cases and after we had finished with the patients, we went from cell to cell distributing buns to each prisoner."¹¹⁰

The American sisters returned temporarily to the French sisters in Shanghai (perhaps on Tuesday, November 18) for the weeklong celebrations of the Feast of the Miraculous Medal, which culminated on the feast day of November 27. One of them wrote that "...it was nice to see our Blessed Mother loved and honored by so many of the Chinese people the church was filled every day and from the 19th until the Feast they had pilgrimages every day with four or five Masses and three or four benedictions in the chapel. The sisters all went to the choir to make room for the people.... Twelve thousand medals were given out each person being enrolled."¹¹¹

A feeling of thanksgiving for their own safety, tinged with sadness and longing, filled the sisters' hearts at the end of the year. One of them wrote: "Just now we are exiles. Our French sisters are kind enough to us but it is not like our own. We are thankful to have a place to stay and appreciate all our sisters are doing for us. But the first of the year we hope for good news of our mission in Kanchou [Ganzhou].... It is really beautiful here and we have plenty of work. We have the poor with us always and we can serve them here as well as any other place."¹¹²

Epilogue: Back to North America

The next month, with a deep sadness for China's poor, seven sisters left the country as violence continued to wash across it. The sisters left for the United States, perhaps on 26 December, in 1930; it was the very year that Chiang Kai-shek in Nanjing vainly declared the whole country unified. Sister Jarboe would be the last of the eight sisters to leave, sometime in 1931. It was as though they were leaving a hurricane deck, hoping to return when the waves were less violent.

In Honolulu the sisters felt blest to meet "Brother" Joseph Ira Dutton, a tall, old man with a full beard, who for three years had assisted the "martyr of charity" Peter Damien

¹⁰⁹"Jarboe letter from Zhoushan (Chusan) Island to Sister Serena Murphy," 7 November 1930, ASLP.

¹¹⁰Groell, *White Wings*, 121.

¹¹¹"Jarboe letter from Zhoushan (Chusan) Island to Sister Serena Murphy," 2 December 1930, ASLP.

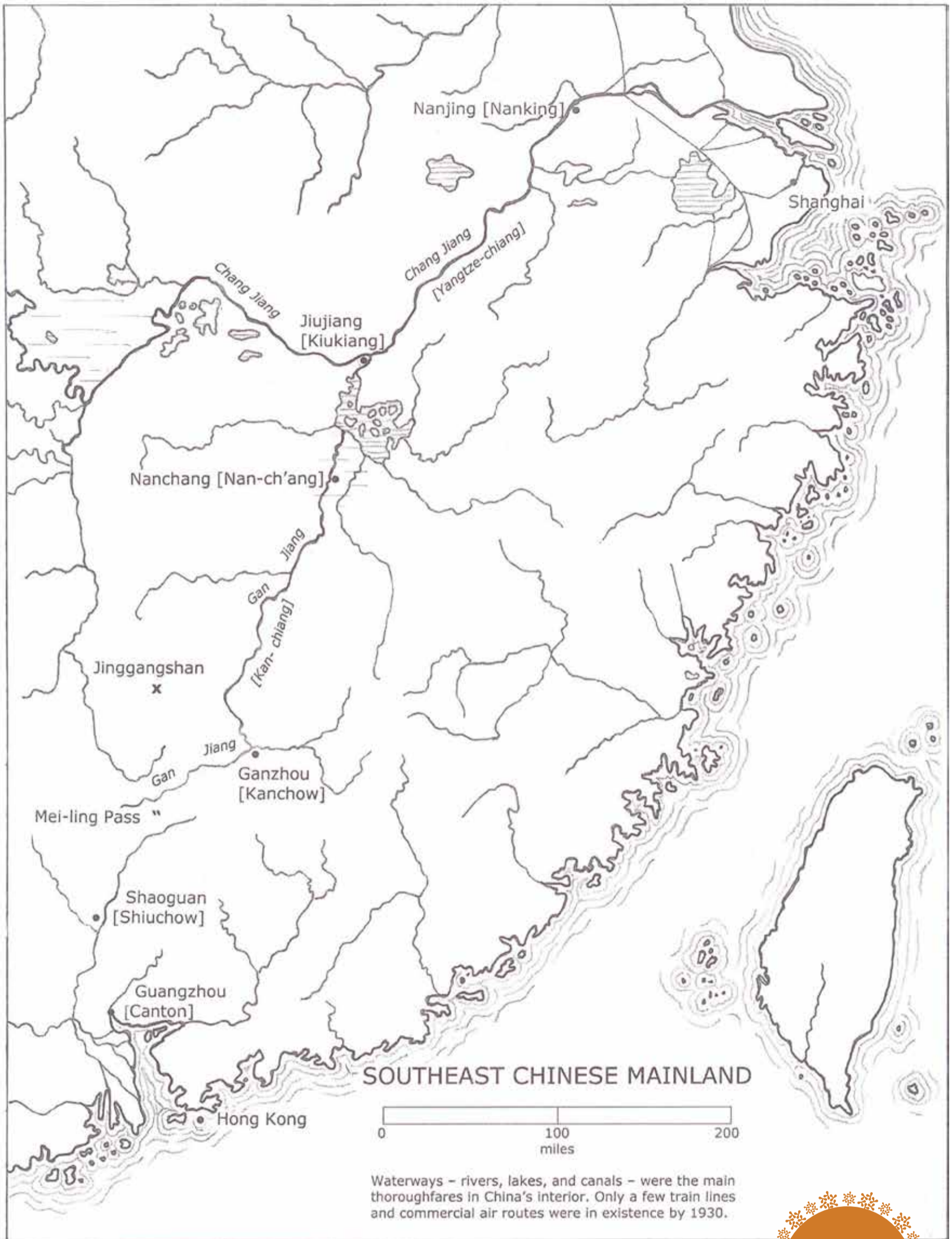
¹¹²*Ibid.*

de Veuster¹¹³ on Molokai. Then, for many years after the priest's death, he had taken over for him, washing sores, dealing with ulcers, performing surgeries, and building shelters for the lepers. It seems fitting that on her journey from China "where there are lepers," as a priest had once told her, Sister DeLude should meet, shortly before his death, this man who had given the better part of his life in service of lepers. The sisters had escaped a martyrdom of blood, but still hoped to give their lives in the white martyrdom of service in faith.

Of these eight sisters who were exiled from China in 1930 and 1931, five returned to continue their charitable work. Sister Catherine O'Neill returned in 1932. Then, in 1936, Sisters Vincent Louise DeLude, Clara Groell, Anselma Jarboe, and Emily Kolb returned. All were exiled from China a second time in 1951-1952, never again to return.

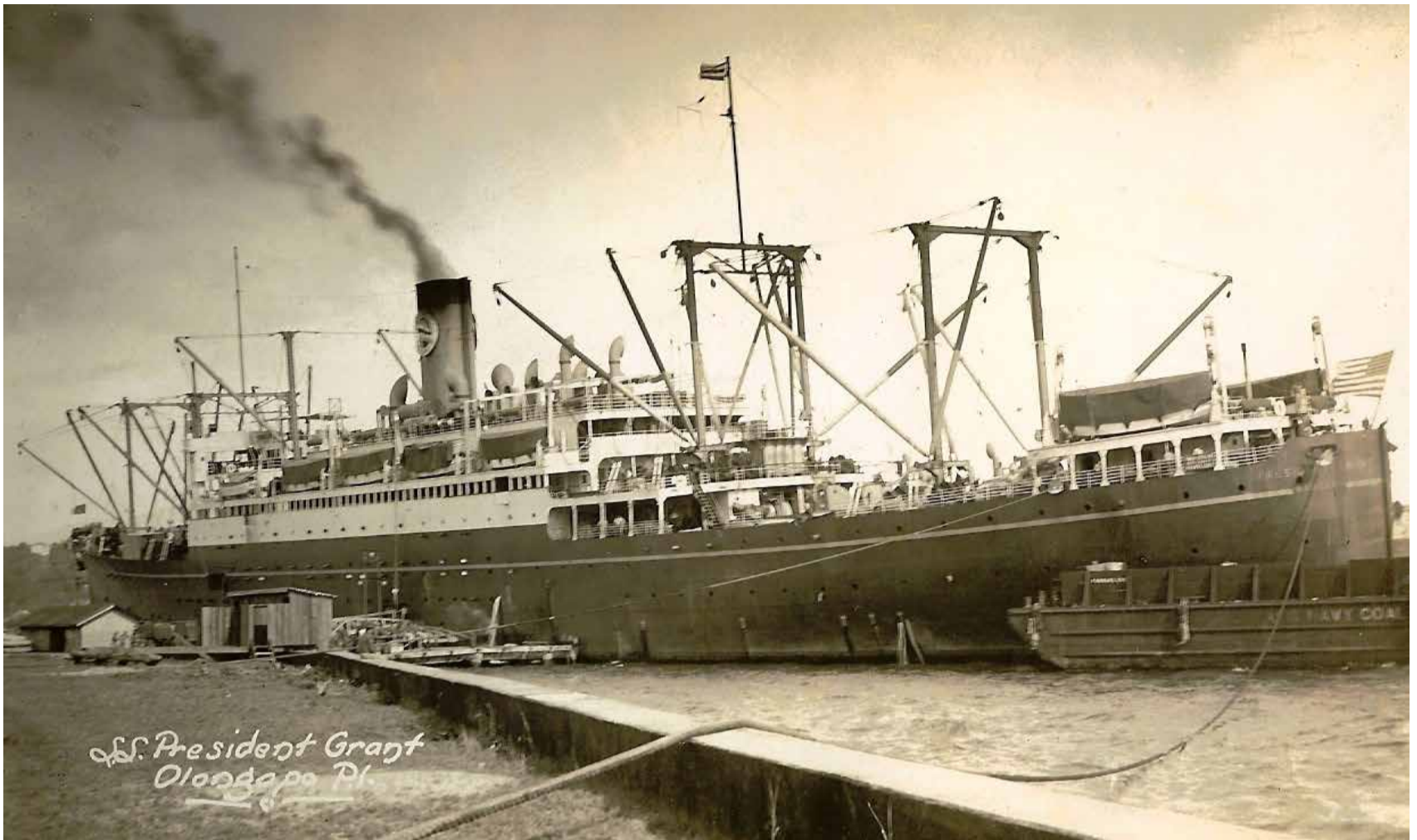


¹¹³Father Damien or Saint Damien of Molokai (1840-1889), was a priest and member of the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary who served as a missionary in Hawaii. In 1873 he began work at a medical quarantine on the island of Molokai, ministering and caring for those stricken by leprosy. In 1884 he contracted the disease; despite this he continued his many good works until his death on 15 April 1889. Father Damien was canonized by Pope Benedict XVI on 11 October 2009.



Map of mainland southeast China, which includes the province of Jiangxi.

Courtesy of the author



Period postcard of the S.S. President Grant, onboard which the sisters journeyed to China; Chinese junk boats lining the Yangtze River bank.

Public Domain





The Bajing Pavilion in Ganzhou, Jiangxi province, China.

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Mao Tse-Tung (Zedong) at left and Chu Teh (Zhu De), circa 1938. Photograph by Earl Leaf.

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Chinese nationalist troops in training; a gathering of People's Liberation Army soldiers.

Public Domain





The China ministry, Sisters on mission visiting the poor. Written on the back of the photograph: "Visiting the poor in their homes. This man has a dreadful abscess on his thigh. The Sisters went nearly every day to dress it. The distance about two miles. Notice the furniture."

Courtesy, Daughters of Charity Province of St. Louise Archives, Emmitsburg, MD





Portrait of Sister Helen (Helena) Lucas, D.C.

*Courtesy, Daughters of Charity Province of St. Louise
Archives, Emmitsburg, MD*

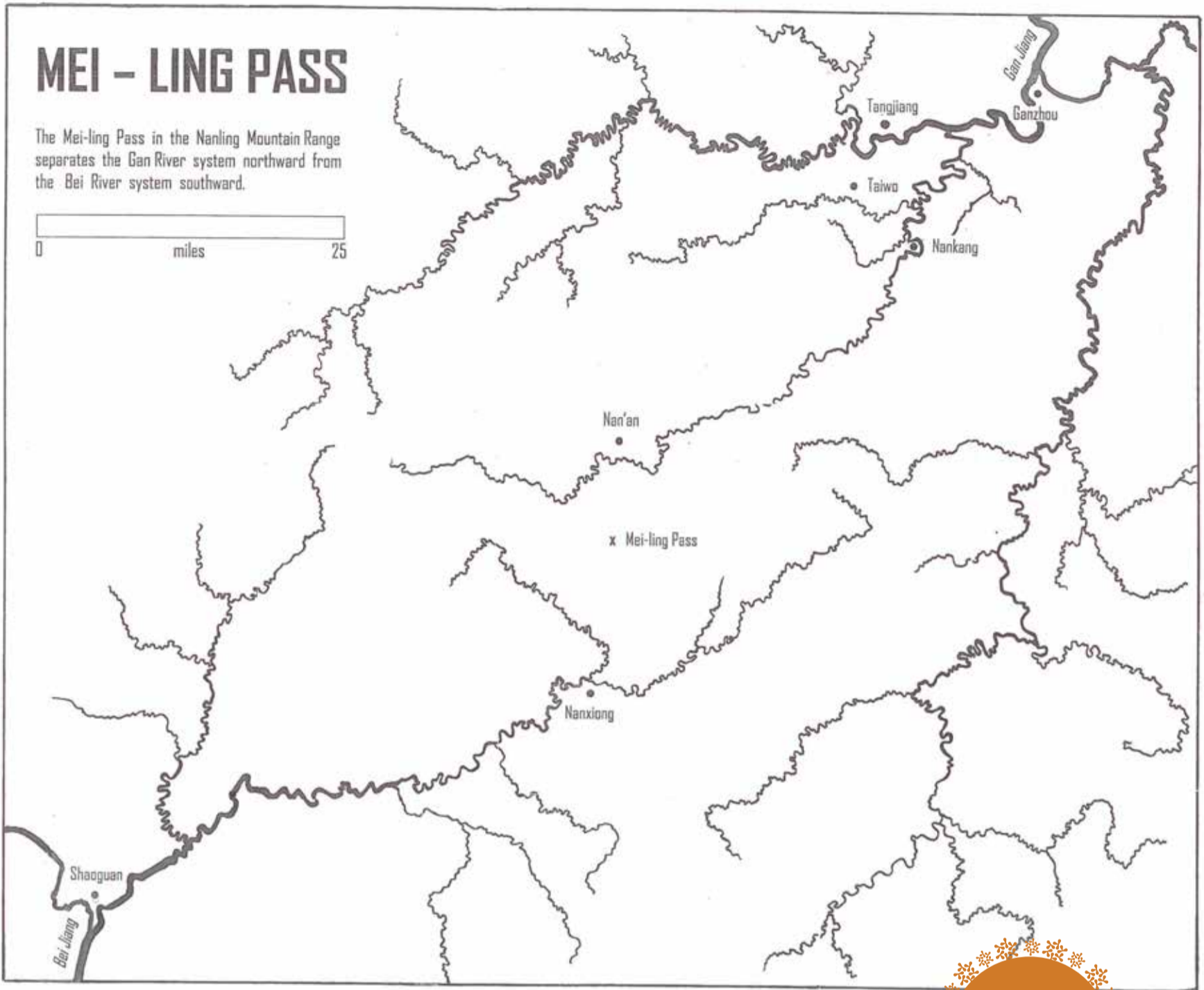




Turn-of-the-twentieth-century collotype depicting Chinese bandits. Printed by the The Swift Collotype Company.

Public Domain





Map of the Mei-ling Pass, over which the sisters fled.

Courtesy of the author



Portrait of Sister Vincent Louise DeLude, D.C.

*Courtesy, Daughters of Charity Province of St. Louise Archives,
Emmitsburg, MD*





Ministry at St. Margaret Hospital, Kiangsi (Jiangxi). Written on the back of the photograph: "St. Margaret's House Kanhsien, Kiangsi, May 1940. Our women's clinic. This is not a picked crowd but the regular number called in from waiting room to be treated. See how the mothers carry their babies to clinic on their backs. Sr. Anselma and Rose our nurse."

Courtesy, Daughters of Charity Province of St. Louise Archives, Emmitsburg, MD



The Epiphany of Yvaral's St. Vincent Portrait

BRO. MARK ELDER, C.M.



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Portrait of Saint Vincent de Paul (1988), 10th arrondissement, Paris, France. Mural by Jean-Pierre Vasarely, better known as Yvaral.

Image collection of the Vincentian Studies Institute

We are DePaul 1, mural, Thomas P. Levan Center, DePaul University, dedicated in 1998.

Courtesy DePaul University Office of Mission and Values



We are DePaul 2, mural, McCabe Residential Hall, DePaul University, dedicated in 2001.

Image Collection of the Vincentian Studies Institute



I was a high school teacher when I took the Vincentian Heritage Tour in 1988. It was then that I first saw the *Portrait of Saint Vincent de Paul* by Jean-Pierre Vasarely, known as Yvaral. As interesting as it was to me then, I assumed it was only a flat computer print-out. But it did make an impression, as brief as this first visit was for me. It stood nearly sixty feet tall, at the back wall of an apartment building that used to be part of the original site for the motherhouse of the Congregation of the Mission, Saint-Lazare.

As I look back now I can see how intrigued I was by it. But it would be another twelve years before I had the chance to see it again. When I returned to Paris in 2000, I was by then an accomplished visual artist teaching at DePaul University in Chicago, Illinois. In Chicago, I have my own pieces of public art and my own large-scale mural of St. Vincent's portrait displayed at the university. This portrait was first done in 1998 for the university's centennial, and was completed again in 2001 at a separate location. The mural features the likenesses of DePaul faculty, staff, and students combined to make up an overall image of the saint.

I know well how much seeing Yvaral's piece influenced me in creating this mural. But it turned out to be the start of another journey that began when I re-visited Yvaral's mural in 2000. A true epiphany indeed!

This second visit was done to satisfy my curiosity and to make sure that my 1988 memory was real. Before the visit, I had assumed that Yvaral's rendering was a flat image. When I saw the mural again, it looked as I remembered. Then as I walked down the street, I looked up and noticed that all the tones of the mural became more pronounced and darker. How did this happen? I walked back up the street and the mural returned to its original tone.



Detail of *The Mandatum* mural illustrating the interplay of light and shadow.

Courtesy Michael Vasilko, Lead Architect

Portrait of Vincent de Paul. Engraving by Nicolas Pitau, after the painting by Simon François de Tours.

Courtesy St. Vincent de Paul Image Archive Online
<http://stvincentimages.cdm.depaul.edu/>



To me, this seemed impossible, and so I walked back-and-forth twice more. Still amazed, I decided to walk right up to the mural itself to see if there was something that could tell me how this happened. It was then that I saw how the image was forged by light and light alone, truly an amazing discovery. I vowed then that I had to learn how this was done. Luckily, I had six weeks left in my sabbatical program in Paris.

After some research, and help from historian John R. Rybolt, C.M., I made contact with Yvaral and he was gracious enough to invite me to his studio. The meeting was a very exciting ninety minutes for me, a fellow artist. Carla Bertana, the translator at my sabbatical program, was kind enough to go with me to help translate. Carla recalled that her head was moving back and forth trying to keep up with our enthusiastic dialogue.

The conversation turned to what both of us did that was similar, since each of us had created mural portraits of the saint. I asked Yvaral how much he knew about St. Vincent the man. Unfortunately he did not know much, but he was grateful to learn more about him and his place in history. It seems that Yvaral was directed more in what would be appropriate for the park setting of the old Saint-Lazare site than about the subject itself, Vincent. So how did that direction come about?

The *Portrait of St. Vincent de Paul* was commissioned in 1985 by the local government of the 10th arrondissement in Paris. By this time Yvaral had completed a number of portraits in public locations featuring aluminum surfaces, each with perpendicular fins that projected shadows which provided the viewer a recognizable image or portrait. These portraits featured *The Mona Lisa* for the Louvre Museum and *Charles de Gaulle* among others. The installed portraits were light in weight and could be mounted on any good-sized exterior wall. Being aluminum they would also stand up well against inclement weather.

It has to be assumed that Yvaral was referencing Nicolas Pitau's engraved portrait of Simon François de Tours' painting when he composed his aluminum shadow-piece of St. Vincent, an image easily found in the public domain. There is much in Yvaral's rendering that reminds an informed viewer of Pitau, and indirectly of Simon François. The viewer might reach this conclusion by looking at the coloring and positioning of the figure in



Fondation Vasarely, Aix-en-Provence, France.

*Courtesy Pierre Vasarely, Président, Fondation Vasarely
www.fondationvasarely.org*



the two compositions, both Pitau's and Yvaral's. There are many similarities, but Yvaral's overall depiction of the figure is a post-modern abstraction. It is this abstraction that makes us contemplate St. Vincent in a new way.

In the mid-1980s a committee from 10th arrondissement, the site of the original motherhouse, sought public art for a location overlooking a park at the junction of Boulevard Magenta and rue du Faubourg St. Denis. After some research, Yvaral proposed installing a portrait featuring St. Vincent. This would recognize Vincent's place in French history and Saint-Lazare's importance to their neighborhood. The local government approved the proposal, and by early 1988 the aluminum shadow-mural of St. Vincent was installed at 105 rue du Faubourg St. Denis. But what is of most interest is how an artist like Yvaral developed his own unique approach to portraiture. How did he come to be such a highly respected artist?

Yvaral was widely known in the contemporary art world not only for his own work, but also for being the second son of Victor Vasarely, the Op Art star from the 1960s highly regarded in art history. Although Jean-Pierre's family name was Vasarely, he used the anagram 'Yvaral' when he came of age as a professional artist in the early 1960s. This anagram was a combination of 'Yves' and 'Aral,' a nickname supplied from his father. Yvaral did not want any confusion with, nor influence gained from, his family name had it been used. Jean-Pierre wanted his own name, a name that his family had used amongst themselves since he was a child, a name that gave him his own professional identity. So Yvaral became that professional name. But if one takes a look at Victor Vasarely's work in comparison to Yvaral's, there is no doubt as to how influential Victor was to Yvaral's artistic life.

Victor Vasarely (1906-1997), born in Pecs, Hungary, started out as a medical student. By 1930 he had given up medicine to pursue graphic art at the Muhely (Budapest Bauhaus), then later devoted himself to painting full time. He was also involved with graphic and creative work for advertising firms like Draeger, Havas, and the printing company Devambeze. In 1930 he moved to Paris with his wife Claire Spinner (Yvaral's mother, 1909-1990).

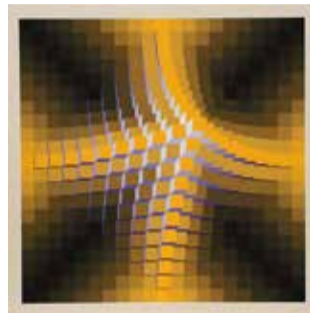
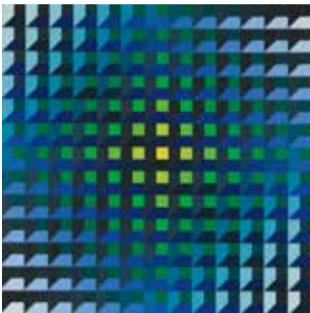
The Vasarelys lived in inexpensive hotels as Victor developed his art. Victor was



Victor Vasarely, *Tupa* (1972).

Tapestry measuring 562x506 cm, located at the Fondation Vasarely.

Courtesy Pierre Vasarely, Président, Fondation Vasarely
www.fondationvasarely.org



Several works by Yvaral: *Structure Ambigüe V.E.B.* (1970), acrylic on canvas; *Untitled 2*, (1965), silkscreen.

Public Domain Images



fascinated with abstract art, especially compositions that contained hard-edged patterns that featured interplay with organic forms. He experimented with the transparency of Plexiglas, and started asking bigger questions like, “Why should paintings be confined to just two dimensions?” Many of these compositions of the late forties and early fifties were strictly in black and white. It was in these explorations that he developed a desire to create abstract art that was accessible and attractive to all viewers, whether they had a background in art or not.

In 1955, at the Denise René Gallery, Vasarely was included in a popular exhibition called *Le Mouvement*. It was this show that put Victor on the map in the art world. When he combined this success with a more restricted high-key color palate, he developed his version of what art historians refer to as ‘Op Art.’

By 1965 Victor was internationally known as a very successful painter. His place in art history was solidified when he was invited to New York to take part in William C. Sietz’s *The Responsive Eye* exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art. There he showed with other great Op Art founders like Bridget Riley and Richard Anuszkiewicz, along with Minimalists like Ellsworth Kelly and Frank Stella. The show was very popular with the general public, although critics in general dismissed the work as parlor tricks that fooled the eye.

Op Art (or later Kinetic Art), works in this way. Black and white patterns are pushed around to create a dynamic, or undulating, figure/ground relationship that keeps the eye moving. The tighter the patterns, the more the eye moves. Add bright color to the pure geometric shapes and your eyes will move quite a bit, till they hurt. Then, as you turn

away, an after-image from the piece becomes quite vivid. This is very animated art, and Victor Vasarely was one of its founders. Parlor trick or not, Vasarely became an established and respected name in the art world.

Artistically, Yvaral was his father's son. In 1960, he and other artists of the time (Julio Le Parc, Francois Morellet, Francisco Sobrino, Horacio Garcia Rossi, and Joel Stein) founded the artistic group GRAV (*Groupe de Recherche d'Art Visuel*). The purpose of the group — which eventually split in 1968 — was to create a visual abstract language made up of simple geometric forms accessible to anyone. By 1975, Yvaral began describing his work as “Numeric,” so-called because he used algorithms to compose and format recognizable images and portraits into abstract art, while keeping the original image recognizable. From this point forward, Yvaral pioneered the use of computers with art. Yet, in the end, all of his studio work was hand-rendered, an incredible accomplishment.

During my visit with Yvaral, I was unable to ask whose portrait he used for the portrait of Vincent, whether it stemmed from Simon François, Pitau, or someone else. We can assume that he referred to these artists because he created similar fin-like compositions with other classical portraits such as the *Mona Lisa*, Simon Bolivar, Amadeus Mozart, Marilyn Monroe, and Blaise Pascal. He did show me the bristol board maquette that was the small-scale model of the St. Vincent mural. It amazed me to see how this technique was able to clearly convey an image purely through shadows. Even though there were no tones at all in the completely white maquette, Vincent's image could easily be seen.

The secret lay in Yvaral's numeric handling of the perpendicular fins that protruded at right angles from the supporting wall. The farther the fin came out, the darker the surrounding area became. But how did he make the fins? Yvaral helpfully told me what kind of aluminum was used, and how light it was on the wall. There was no need for support beams or any extraneous braces to support the wall. Exactly how he worked that out was a trade secret. I asked point-blank if there was a way to emulate his technique, his numeric approach to art. He asked if I knew about Chuck Close and his approach to the grid in portrait making. I assured him that I did, and he then encouraged me to explore the world of the grid for myself, and to make my own way through it. I took this as an invitation and returned to DePaul to do just that — explore the world of the grid.

I had also planned to invite Yvaral to DePaul University, perhaps to give a lecture and show his work, but sadly it was not to be as he suddenly died after suffering a heart attack in 2002. He was 68 years old.

After returning I had the perfect project in mind for this “new” technique. Catholic Charities of Chicago had invited me to create a mural for their building facing the Kennedy Expressway downtown. Convincing people at Catholic Charities of my approach was not difficult. The unique nature of the technique, and the fact that it would be done here for the first time in the United States was enough. Supporters and donors were not hard to find. The project, however, was facing handicaps: the primary one being our lack of practical experience in building a “shadow mural” out of aluminum. The French, and



Portrait of the Virgin, and detail of its Miraculous Medal composition.

Courtesy of the author



Maquettes composing St. Vincent's likeness as seen from readable angle, and straight-on.

Courtesy of the author

Yvaral, possessed the knowledge but were unwilling to share; even though Yvaral had been invited to collaborate on the project before he passed away.

The group behind our project was made up of excellent problem solvers and generous donors, in particular Dietrich Gross of Jupiter Aluminum. Mr. Gross, familiar with Yvaral's work in Europe, was excited to donate all the aluminum for the project. Also, Michael Vasilko donated his services as the lead architect. The rest of the group was composed of engineers and contractors. As the lead artist it was decided early on that after I rendered an effective design others in the group would be brought in to complete the large task of building the piece.

I gave myself the job of learning Yvaral's approach through making my own "numeric" portrait pieces. This started in the late fall of 2001 with the completion of *Portrait of the Virgin*. This piece features vinyl appliques of the Miraculous Medal in five angles, which are the five tones of the portrait. The work was instrumental in my research for the Catholic Charities piece. It gave me the necessary confidence to approach this commission logically, taking that next step to create a portrait utilizing the fin technique. I then made maquettes of St. Vincent's likeness using black construction paper and balsa wood as a background. In the group of illustrations above you can see how this works. On the left is the maquette as the viewer sees it at the intended readable angle. On the right is the same maquette seen straight-on. From this angle you see pure shadows, and these shadows still make the image recognizable. The rest of the composition, known as *The Mandatum*, followed this formula. This included the portrait of Blessed Frédéric Ozanam, and the figures of Jesus and the



The Mandatum (2003), mural, original location; and study of shadow detail of St. Vincent.

Courtesy St. Vincent de Paul Image Archive Online; Michael Vasilko, Lead Architect



Detail of *The Mandatum* mural; Reinstallation of *The Mandatum* mural (2014), Holy Family Villa, Lemont, Illinois.

Courtesy Michael Vasilko

apostles at the Last Supper. The maquettes produced a reality that no drawing could, and each planning session in which they were present to be seen buoyed the dedicated efforts of the planning group and donors.

By summer of 2003 *The Mandatum* was ready to be installed. We had overcome our lack of experience with shadow murals, but in so doing made the overall weight of the mural much heavier. At 152 feet long and 22 feet tall, the mural featured aluminum plating at 5/8 inches thick and aluminum fins at 1/4 inch. The plates came in at a hefty 700 pounds each. It is no wonder that a foundation for the mural had to be built, since the wall of the building would otherwise be pulled away. On 4 September 2003, *The Mandatum* was unveiled and a picture of it made the front page of the *Chicago Sun-Times*. The piece lived up to expectations, winning an award for innovative construction techniques.

The Mandatum, unfortunately, had a short life at its original location. In a business move, Catholic Charities sold their building in 2006 and the mural was put into storage. But the exposure it received was the source of many stories, often told to me unwittingly by motorists who had seen it from the Kennedy Expressway. As described earlier, the mural's handicap, its overall weight, did not allow for flexibility and ease of reinstallation. I was left to hope (and pray) that the mural might one day be mounted again to do the job it was made for, evangelization. Fortunately, just such an opportunity arose, and in spring

of 2014 *The Mandatum* was installed once again, this time at Holy Family Villa, a senior living and rehabilitation facility bordering Chicago in Lemont, Illinois.

Yvaral's technique has opened the door to a myriad of ways in which I intend to use visual art as a means to evangelize. Somehow, this reminds me that St. Vincent himself distained the thought of having his portrait done. Legend has it that Vincent's fellow Vincentians secretly invited Simon François to create the portrait that Nicolas Pitau's engraving was based on. I truly believe Yvaral relied upon Pitau's engraving for his work at rue du St. Denis in 1988. I also know that Vincent was submissive to the will of God, and that it certainly felt like the will of God was revealed to me as I walked down this street in Paris and first saw the *Portrait of Saint Vincent de Paul*.

Thus was humility once again exalted. Saint Vincent had shunned glory but it had followed him after death, and three years had scarcely elapsed when his portrait was reproduced in four different styles, and was becoming a household treasure in all parts of the world.¹

It is safe to say we can add at least one more portrait in a style for our time.



¹ Andre Milon, C.M., "St. Vincent de Paul and Portraiture," *Annals of the Congregation of the Mission*, vol.16 (1909), 474.



*Portrait of Saint Vincent de Paul (1988), 10th arrondissement, Paris, France.
Mural by Jean-Pierre Vasarely, better known as Yvaral.*

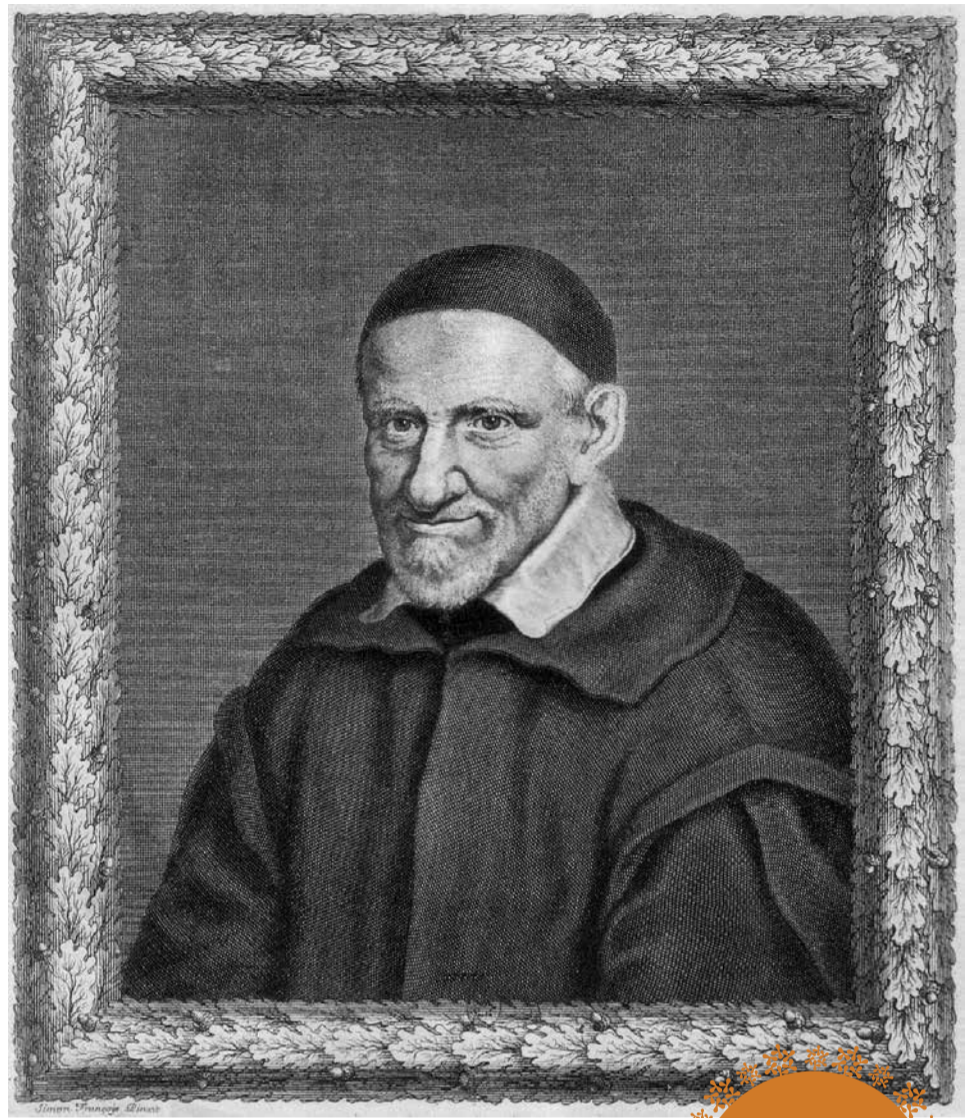
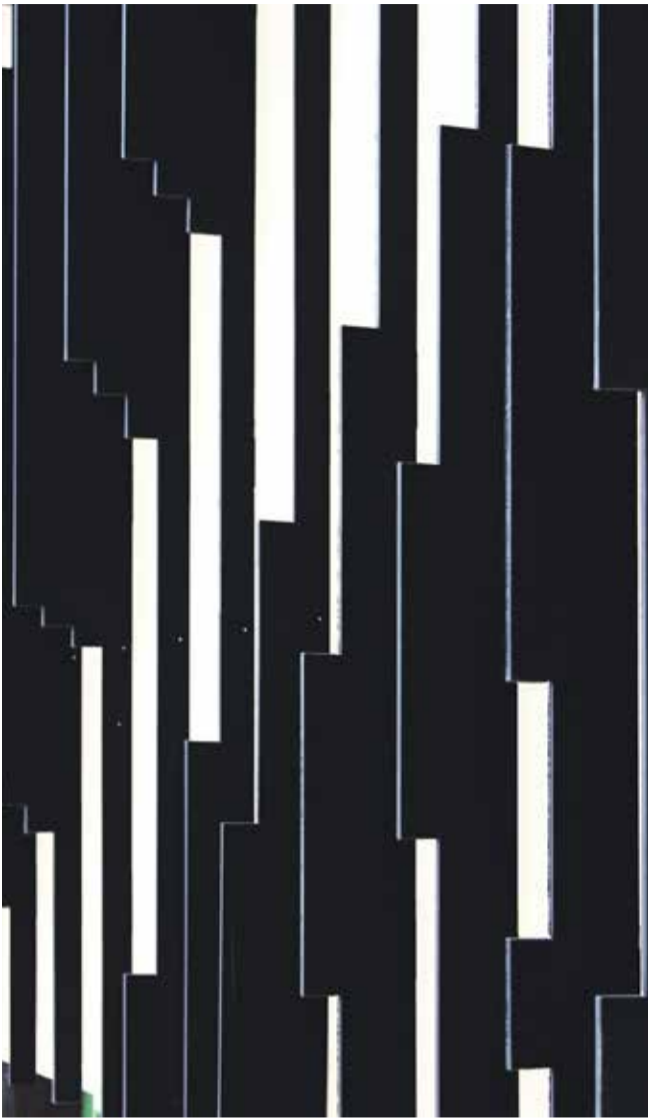
Image collection of the Vincentian Studies Institute

We are DePaul 1, mural, Thomas P. Levan Center, DePaul University, dedicated in 1998.

Courtesy DePaul University Office of Mission and Values

We are DePaul 2, mural, McCabe Residential Hall, DePaul University, dedicated in 2001.

Image Collection of the Vincentian Studies Institute



Detail of *The Mandatum* mural illustrating the interplay of light and shadow.

Courtesy Michael Vasilko, Lead Architect

Portrait of Vincent de Paul. Engraving by Nicolas Pitau, after the painting by Simon François de Tours.

Courtesy St. Vincent de Paul Image Archive Online
<http://stvincentimages.cdm.depaul.edu/>





Fondation Vasarely, Aix-en-Provence, France.

Courtesy Pierre Vasarely, Président, Fondation Vasarely



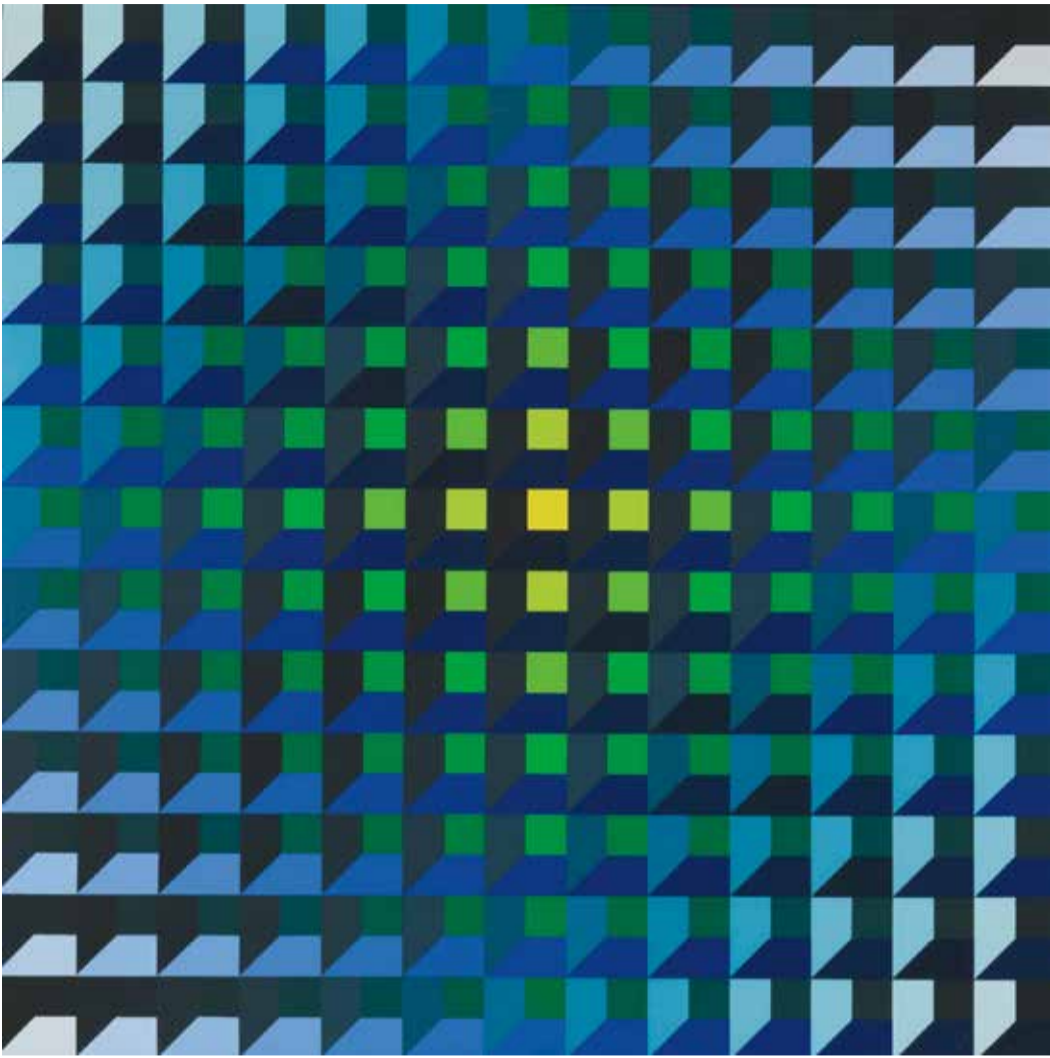


Victor Vasarely, *Tupa* (1972).

Tapestry measuring 562x506 cm, located at the Fondation Vasarely.

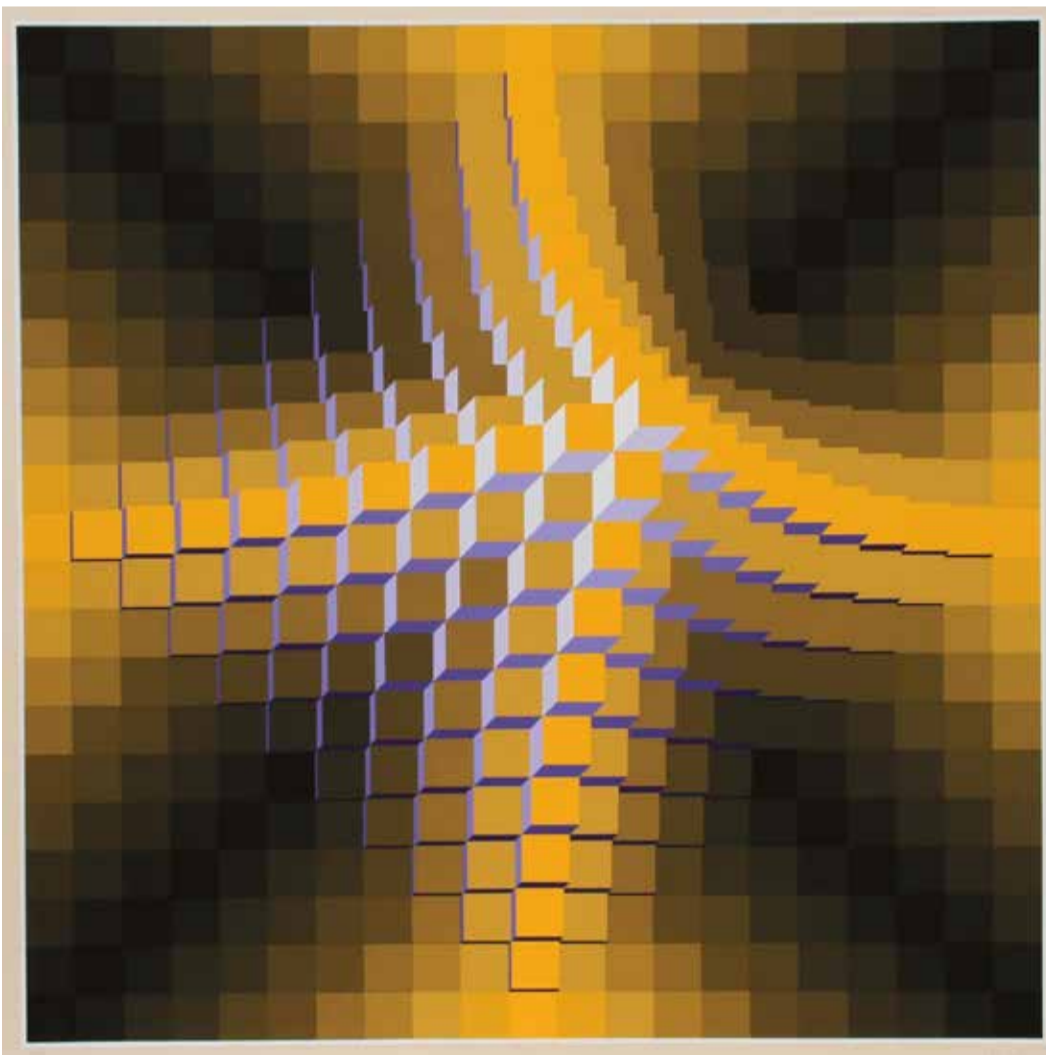
Courtesy Pierre Vasarely, Président, Fondation Vasarely
www.fondationvasarely.org

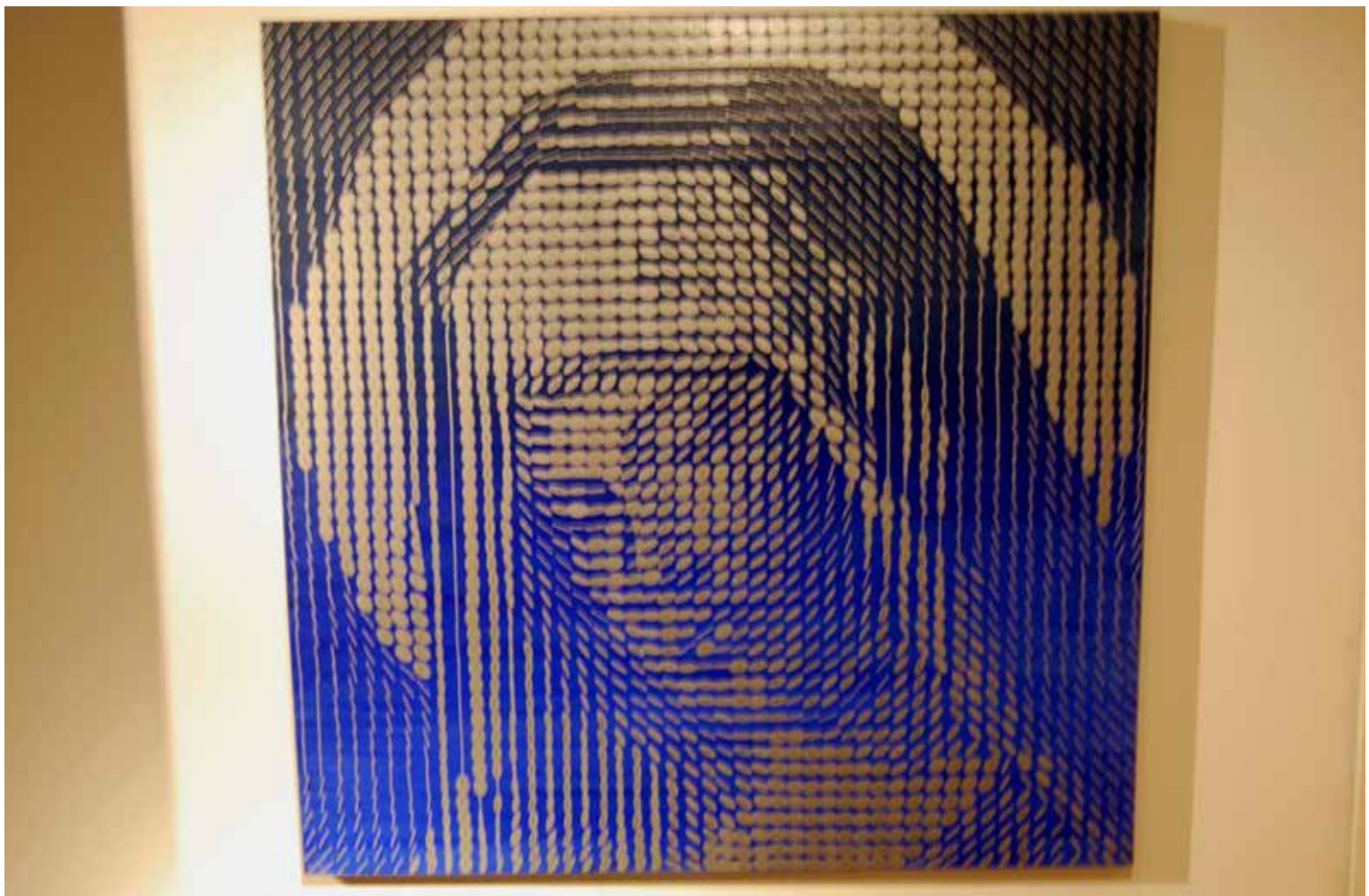




Several works by Yvaral:
Structure Ambigüe V.E.B. (1970),
acrylic on canvas; *Untitled 2*,
(1965), silkscreen.

Public Domain Images





Portrait of the Virgin, and detail of its Miraculous Medal composition.

Courtesy of the author





Maquettes composing St. Vincent's likeness as seen from readable angle, and straight-on.

Courtesy of the author



The Mandatum (2003), mural, original location; and study of shadow detail of St. Vincent.

Courtesy St. Vincent de Paul Image Archive Online; Michael Vasilko, Lead Architect





Detail of *The Mandatum* mural;
Reinstallation of *The Mandatum* mural
(2014), Holy Family Villa, Lemont,
Illinois.

Courtesy Michael Vasilko



Antique Polychromy Applied to
Modern Art and Hittorff's Saint
Vincent de Paul in Paris, the
Architectural Showpiece of the
Renouveau Catholique

MICHAEL KIENE, PH.D.

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Jacques-Ignace Hittorff (born Karl Jakob Hittorf, 1792-1867) realized one of the most remarkable artistic careers of the nineteenth century. He was linked to distinguished European scholars, artists, and royal houses and embodied some of the broad contradictions of the age. The son of a humble Cologne tinsmith, Hittorff became a highly distinguished architect and scholar. He was showered with honors and elected to many of the most prestigious academies and scientific associations in Europe and the Americas, perhaps in part as a result of his interest in technical knowledge. On 14 March 1844, in Washington, D.C., he became a member of the National Institution for the Promotion of Science, founded in 1840 as the heir to the mantle of the earlier Columbian Institute for the Promotion of Arts and Sciences. It was later renamed the National Institute, and eventually became a part of the Smithsonian Institution.

From 1817 onwards Hittorff served as inspector of the *Menus-Plaisirs*, the royal institution for the decoration of court festivals. In 1818 he followed fellow and friend Jean-François-Joseph Lecoq (1783-1858), and their teacher François-Joseph Bélanger (1744-1818), as directors of the *Menus-Plaisirs* and as Architect of the King (*architecte du Roi/de Sa Majesté*). Hittorff was rewarded with a salary of 3,500 francs per year, free housing and royalties for special commissions. From 1818 to 1823 Hittorff also functioned as *architecte de Monsieur*, and from 1819 to 1823 as the Louvre's Architect of the Museum. Politically dexterous, he served five different governments in France and was influential in shaping the urban landscape of nineteenth-century Paris — a city praised as “the metropolis of modern civilization”¹ since Napoleon's conquests made it the artistic showpiece of the world.

Hittorff's architectural career began during the last years of the first Empire, barely two years after his arrival in the French capital. In cooperation with his teacher and mentor François-Joseph Bélanger (1744-1818), the young man, then just 18 years old, was involved in the 1810 design of the *Halle au Blé* (also called *Halle aux grains*, the grain halls), in *Rue de Viarmes* (I^{er}, destroyed 1885). Architecturally it was one of the first cast-iron constructions in nineteenth-century France. He created and laid out some of the most famous squares and avenues of Paris, including the *Champs-Élysées* (1834-1843), the *Place de la Concorde* (1833-1853) and the *Place de l'Étoile* (1853-1868), and even designed the *Bois de Boulogne* (1852-1855). Indeed, the very look of public spaces in Paris, with its grand boulevards and ornate street lamps, was shaped by his designs.

In his academic training Hittorff assimilated the principles of Beaux-Arts design, but he extended his particular interest in classicism while travelling to Italy, and in particular to Sicily, from 1822 to 1824. He did this at his own expense and not as a fellow supported by an institution or patron. He became interested in the use of color in ancient art, and following his travels he published two volumes and various articles on polychromy in art and architecture. He was one of the first modern scholars to recognize that Greek architecture and sculpture was originally painted brightly and was multi-colored. Expecting his ideas

¹ Theophile Lavallée, ed., *Le Diable à Paris* (Paris: 1845), *Histoire de Paris*, 1.

to provoke much controversy he even kept at his home some souvenir specimens of polychrome stone fragments from his travels, evidence with which to convince opponents.

Hittorff always paid careful attention to technical innovations of all kinds. He finished the northern railroad station in Paris (1859-1865), his last and perhaps biggest commission of all, for Baron James de Rothschild (1792-1868). In this, due to his advanced age, he was assisted by his son Charles-Joseph (1825-1898), and by an American student (the second American citizen to study architecture in France at the *École des Beaux-Arts*, now *École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts*), Henry Hobson Richardson (1838-1886). However, the building that best represents his aesthetics and research interests, his pursuit of innovation, and his political maneuverability, is undoubtedly the Basilica of St. Vincent de Paul in Paris.

This was no ordinary church. From the beginning it was exceptional, located on a hill overlooking the city-center of the French capital and at the edge of the rapidly expanding northern region of the city. Earlier, new churches in this part of the capital were located at the foot of Montmartre. The new *quartier*, nowadays unpretentiously called the *X^e arrondissement*, was originally named *Nouvelle-France*. It was the location of the motherhouse of the Congregation of the Mission, founded by St. Vincent de Paul. The motherhouse was sacked during the French Revolution, and the rebuilding of a church honoring St. Vincent de Paul embodied the restoration of the Catholic Bourbon monarchy and the role of the Church in a post-revolutionary society. The twin-towered structure, dedicated to this saint revered by the Bourbon family, was designed to be a dominant artistic showpiece in the rapidly growing neighborhood.

In 1824, while returning from Italy, Hittorff's father-in-law, Jean-Baptiste Lepère (1761-1844), received the commission for this church in Paris. It is not documented precisely when, but soon Lepère passed the work to Hittorff. That said, until the building was finished, he never gave up supporting his son-in-law when difficulties presented. For example, in 1842 when criticism arose of the polychromy of the exterior and interior of the church, and in particular of the façade, he and Hittorff published an open letter to opponents of their design, including Baron Georges-Eugène Haussmann (1809-1891).² Lepère died on 16 July 1844, having been still drawing on the scaffolds of St. Vincent only three months earlier. On the funeral monument of the Lepère and Hittorff family, Hittorff paid tribute to his father-in-law, honoring him as their spiritual director.

From here on Hittorff's career was tied to the Bourbons. Eager to demonstrate their recapture of the throne, and in equal measure their 'devotion' to Catholicism, likewise freshly restored in *Renouveau*, the two Bourbon Kings, Louis XVIII and Charles X, lavished

² Jacques Ignace Hittorff and Jean-Baptiste Lepère, *Mémoire présenté par MM. Lepère et Hittorff, Architectes, à M. le Préfet de la Seine*, off-print from the *Journal de l'Artiste* (Paris: 1842). A copy with handwritten annotations and post-publication corrections is preserved in the ULC, call-no. K5/83. A pre-print version was in the Municipal Archives of Cologne, call-no. Best. 1053, Nr. 6, fol. 91-100 (squeezed in after fol. 101). The original report may have been destroyed with the collapse of the archive in March 2009. A replacement can be found on a security microfilm, now available in the Digital Municipal Archive: www.historischesarchivkoeln.de/struktur.php?lang=de&modus=show&a=3&b=15&c=227.



Jacques-Ignace Hittorff: Saint Vincent de Paul.
Héliogravure signed by Eduard Baldus, Paris
c. 1850.

Erich Schild, Aachen



scarce resources on this ancient holy ground to commemorate their sanctified ancestor, whose bones had been dug up in the *Révolution*. This gave rise to a veritable Vincent de Paul revival.

Following the July Revolution, in 1830, the Minister of the Interior for new King Louis-Philippe, Marthe-Camille Bachasson, Count of Montalivet (1801-1880), appointed Hittorff a second time as architect of the Basilica of St. Vincent de Paul. Consecrated in 1844, i.e. almost at the end of the reign of Louis-Philippe, this church embodied the architectural principles of his reign. Hittorff had been recommended to Louis-Philippe by international traveler and savant Baron Alexander von Humboldt (1769-1859). Humboldt and Hittorff became friends in Paris, the Baron having arrived two years before the student of architecture from Cologne. Humboldt subscribed to the publications of Hittorff and introduced newly arrived artists, especially Germans, to him. In an 1857 newspaper article a certain M. Biercher from Cologne reported: “Every educated German who visits Paris and the house at no. 40 in Rue Lamartine has been received kindly by our Hittorff, the longtime owner.”³

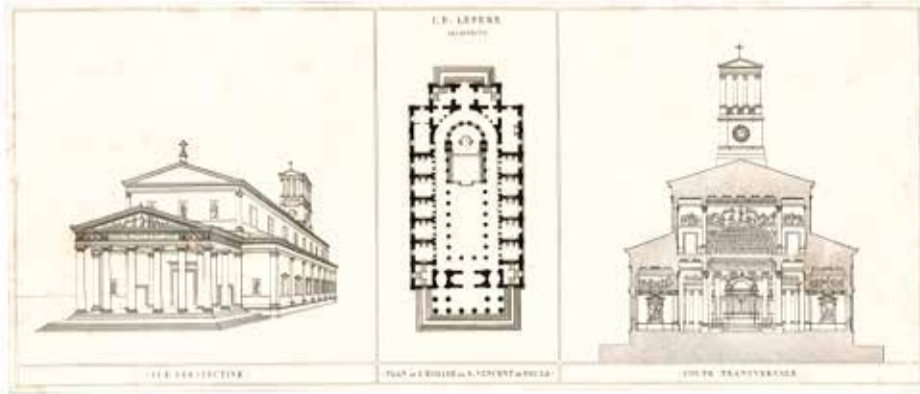
For decades Humboldt and Hittorff shared interests in the arts and sciences. Humboldt presented copies of Hittorff’s designs for the church to architecture-loving Prussian King Frederic William IV (1795-1861)⁴ who, perhaps stimulated by these plans, and in competition with the French monarchy, insisted on finishing the long-dormant cathedral of Cologne — the German equivalent of the Catholic *Renouveau*.⁵ In 1833 Humboldt also promoted

³ “Jeder gebildete Deutsche, der Paris und das Haus Nr. 40 in der Rue Lamartine besucht, darf sich bei dessen langjährigem Besitzer, unserem Hittorff, einer freundlichen Aufnahme versichert halten,” in M. Biercher, “Ein Kölner Maurer-Lehrling,” *Kölnische Zeitung* (January 1857). Off-print in the ULC, Zeitungs-Ausschnitt-Sammlung Merlo 2, 187-209.

An example can be found on Ludwig von Zanth’s calling card which bears the printed text “L. de Zanth / Architecte de S. M. le Roi de Wurtemberg,” and in ink “Rue Lamartine 40,” Biberach an der Riss, Brait-Mali-Museum, inv. 1989/9295b (at the bottom of the first page of an album headed by a photograph of the artist. The album bears the title “*Voyage d’Italie / 2*”).

⁴ Preserved at the Kunstbibliothek in Berlin, reproduced by Karl Hammer, Jakob Ignaz Hittorff, “Ein Pariser Baumeister” (Pariser Historische Studien Stuttgart: 1968), 6, ill. 86-88; also in the catalogue of the Hittorff-Exhibition in Cologne, 1987: “Jakob Ignaz Hittorff, Ein Architekt aus Köln im Paris des 19 Jahrhunderts,” no. 149-155.

⁵ *Das Dombaufest von 1842*, Faksimile edition of Johann Georg Niedenhoff, Gedenkbuch der durch Se. Majestaet unsern Koenig am 4 Sept. 1842 feierlichst vollzogenen Grundstein-Legung zum Ausbau des hohen Domes zu Köln (Köln: 1842). Reprinted for the Friends of the ULC (2009), cfr. my epilogue therein.



Jean-Baptiste Lepère/Jacques-Ignace Hittorff: Saint Vincent de Paul, c. 1824 (ULC).

Courtesy of the author



Hittorff as designer of the *Place de la Concorde*. Hittorff had lost the initial competition in 1828, but after the arrival of King Louis-Philippe to the throne it turned advantageous that the defeated Bourbons selected somebody else's designs.

The most spectacular feature of the Basilica of St. Vincent was the introduction of twin towers, unique to Parisian church architecture of the nineteenth century. Towers had been a crucial element in church-design following the Restoration in France.⁶ St. Vincent's, however, were magnificent and almost without precedence. The towers rise 55 meters high over an intricate series of ramps and steps (nowadays converted in part into a public garden) like the French church in Rome, the Trinità dei Monti (1503-1587) [whose Spanish Steps at the front were added in 1723-1726 by Francesco De Sanctis (1693-1740)]. On 21 October 1844, four years before the next revolution would banish Louis-Philippe, Archbishop Denis- Auguste Affre (1793-1848), who had already presided over laying the foundation stone, inaugurated the Basilica of St. Vincent de Paul.

The construction of the Basilica had carried on for twenty years, with some interruption. Soon after 1824 the Lepère-Hittorff building was stopped, but after 1830 and the arrival of Louis-Philippe it was immediately revived. We are fortunate that extensive plans for the church have survived. All of them are notable for their precision and clarity: drawings and engravings of the original scheme of Lepère and Hittorff (1824); Hittorff's earlier plans preserved in a beautiful volume in the parish of Saint Vincent in Paris (1833); and the later designs in the library of the ULC (1837); as well as the final stages in the Royal Collection, now incorporated into the Kunstbibliothek at Berlin (1844/1845), which document the décor and furnishings.

The enormous bulk of the mostly unpublished, inaccessible 800 detailed drawings for St. Vincent are held in the Wallraf-Richartz-Museum at Cologne. They are documented

⁶ Françoise Boudon, "Les Églises Paroissiale et le Conseil des Bâtiments Civils, 1802-1840," in Bruno Foucart, Françoise Harmon, eds., *L'Architecture Religieuse au XIX^e Siècle. Entre Éclectisme et Rationalisme* (Paris: 2006), 201.



Carlo Amati, Saint Vincent de Paul-variant with lightning conductors, 1830 (from Amati, *Ricerche Storico* [1830]; see note 16).

Courtesy of the author



gold medal. The Monreale drawings had an impact on the development of the paintings for St. Vincent de Paul.

Several features of Lepère and Hittorff's 1824 project⁹ were integrated into Hittorff's updated concept: he kept the hexastyle Ionic temple portico, which he slightly revised by raising the number of columns from ten to twelve, done for iconographical and architectural reasons. Hittorff continued the established layout of a basilica, and also integrated the double-storied colonnade of the previous project into the church. The Ionic temple portico was much admired for its archaeological correctness, architect Nicolas-Auguste Thumeloup (1804-1864) writing: "The portico with an ionic order, derived from Greek models, at Saint-Vincent-de-Paul is one of the first buildings in Paris where the monuments of Athens have been conscientiously studied."¹⁰

Instead of the twin-towered façade, the Lepère-Hittorff project proposed one single tower over the apse. This was standard in Classicist architecture of the early nineteenth century. The primary difference between this project and the Hittorff church, then, are its twin-towers. Hittorff did not hesitate in emphasizing the preeminent position of the church rising over old, pre-Restoration Paris.

Previously, though, in 1828, he and Lecoq had suggested a one-towered church (at the center over the sanctuary) in a project for the Hospital of St. Vincent de Paul. This was to be located next to the cradle (*Berceau*) of St. Vincent de Paul in the city of St. Vincent de

⁹ Jean-Baptiste Lepère, *Saint Vincent de Paul* (1823/24), ULC, call-no. K4/422-1, fol. 4v/5r; high 39 x large 57 cm; Engraved by "Bigant sc." There are several copies of the Lepère-Hittorff project in the Wallraf-Richartz-Museum, described by David Van Zanten, "The Architectural Polychromy of the 1830's" (dissertation, Harvard, 1970; reprinted: New York, 1977), 29. The engraver belonged to a group of engravers commissioned by Hittorff for various publications. Others would be: Alexandre Giboy (1786-?); Victor Texier (1777-1864); Charles Lenormand (1835-?); Louis Normand the older, Charles-Victor Normand (1814-?); and the otherwise undocumented Clara Adam, Beaugan, Orgiazzi, Jean-Joseph Olivier, E. Ollivier, and Melchior Péronard. Olivier and Péronard independently exhibited their engravings in the *Salon* from time-to-time, but they were loyal to Hittorff's commission and not attempting to further their own reputations.

¹⁰ N.A. Thumeloup, *Le portique ionique d'architecture grecque de l'église Saint-Vincent-de-Paule est un des premiers édifices, à Paris, ou le style des monuments d'Athènes ait été consciencieusement étudié* (Paris: Leçons élémentaires d'architecture, 1842), 92.



The façade of Notre Dame de Paris.

Photo by Peter Haas / CC-BY-SA-3.0



Paul in Gascony, in the south-west of France, diocese of Dax.¹¹ The design was published by a leading lithographer in nineteenth-century Paris, Godefroy Engelmann, in 1828.¹² The project in Gascony was supported, according to its detailed inscription, by members of the Royal Family. The text mentions in particular Ferdinande-Louise de Bourbon (1798-1870), Duchess of Berry, Princess of Both Sicilies, and mother to heir of the throne Henri-Charles-Ferdinand-Dieudonné, Duke of Bordeaux, Count of Chambord (Henri d'Artois, 1820-1883).¹³ Following the sudden end to the Bourbon dynasty in 1830 the project in Gascony lost its sponsors and was never built.

The new political situation was not easy to cope with for artists like Hittorff. Some insight into this is found in the never-printed 1837 German edition of a book by Gell and Gandy on the excavations of Pompeii, which Hittorff intended to dedicate to the Duchess

¹¹ John E. Rybolt, C.M., *In the Footsteps of Vincent de Paul. A Guide to Vincentian France* (Chicago: Vincentian Studies Institute, 2007), 285-293; Pierre Coste, C.M., "Le Berceau de St. Vincent de Paul dans la première moitié du XIX^e siècle," *Bulletin de la Société de BORDA* (1914), 97-116, and 169-184.

¹² Inscription: "VUE PERSPECTIVE DE L'HOSPICE DES INCURABLES DE S^T VINCENT DE PAUL / fondé par / S. A. R. MADAME DUCHESSE DE BERRY, en 1828 / SOUS LE MINISTRE DE M^r LE V^{te} DE MARTIGNIAC / sur les projets / de MM. J. Lecoite et Hittorff / Architectes du Roi / SOUS L'ADMINISTRATION DE M^r LE B^{on} DE CAUNAN PREFET DES LANDES / Le paysage par F.A. Pernot — Lith. de Engelmann, rue du faub. Montmartre N^o 6 — L'architec.^e par Chapuy," diameter 28, 8 cm, ULC, call-no. K 13/314, fol. 43; Michael Kiene, *Die Alben von Jean-François-Joseph Lecoite (1783-1858). Architekturen, Skizzen und Visionen* (Cologne: Schriften der Universitaets- und Stadtbibliothek Koeln, 2005), 14, inv. no. L189; cfr. on Hittorff and the Duchesse de Berry in particular, Coste, "Le Berceau de St. Vincent," 101, 105, 108, 178, 182; Paris, Archives Nationales F¹⁵.809.

¹³ Historiography remembers him as a "miracle child" (*enfant miracle*) because his father was assassinated on 13 February 1820, half-a-year before his birth. This is why tormentors of his mother were arrested on 21 November 1820 until enough witnesses were present to confirm the legitimate birth of the heir to the Throne. Thereafter the newly born child was immediately praised to fulfil the "vow of all true French." "*Enfin l'évènement a prononcé; l'évènement que nos aïeux appelaient le Jugement de Dieu a comblé les vœux des vrais Français. Le prince qui nous fut promis est né. Il continuera cette race auguste, sous le sceptre de la quelle la France marche depuis tant de siècles à tous les genres de gloire, de liberté et d'illustration. Pour apprendre les vertus qui font les rois et les héros, il n'aura qu'à lire l'histoire de ces ancêtres,*" in *Journal de Paris* (1820), no. 274, p. 1.



Jacques-Ignace Hittorff: façade of Saint Vincent de Paul, 1837 (ULC); Engelmann, chromolithography of Saint Vincent de Paul. Cologne, Adenauer Collection, c. 1851.

Courtesy of the author



of Berry.¹⁴ In his chapter, written for the French translation of this book in 1827, Hittorff dealt with mosaics and theatres. In the edition he included a view of the forum of Pompeii, and he “recycled” this particular view into a set for the unexecuted 1828 project of a theatre in Cologne.¹⁵ This provided publicity for the French edition, at the time still in print. He would have included it in the never printed German edition of 1837, dedicated to a queen banished seven years previously! This illustrates almost a decade of allegiance to the Bourbons, even after their banishment and continuing thereafter during a critical period when installing the queen’s son as legitimate heir to the throne was repeatedly discussed. Indeed, this would have been the dream of the “legitimists” in French politics. If they had succeeded, Hittorff would already have been on loyal terms with the dynasty.

During his studies in Italy, Hittorff stopped twice in Milan (on the way south and then on the way back to France) where he met with Carlo Amati (1776-1852), the leading architect of Classicism in Lombardy well-known for his Vitruvian studies. Hittorff submitted a copy of the print illustrating the 1824 Lepère-Hittorff-project to Amati for his critique. After examination, Amati carefully worded his opinion in a report preserved in the municipal collection of engravings in Milan. Therein he proclaimed Hittorff architect of St. Vincent, discussed advantages in detail, and suggested architectural improvements to the plan such as an increase from ten to twelve columns. In 1830 Amati himself re-used the illustration of the Lepère-Hittorff-project in a chapter on lightning conductors. In it he replaced the classical tower in the earliest known version of the Lepère-Hittorff print with a Neo-Gothic tower.¹⁶ Amati did not hesitate to combine both “styles” in one building, an idea not-so-

¹⁴ As one of the very first publications detailing his studies in Italy, Hittorff wrote a chapter for the French edition on the excavations at Pompeii by Sir William Gell (1777-1836) and John Peter Gandy-Deering (1787-1850), titled: “Pompeiana: The Topography, Edifices, and Ornaments of Pompeii” (London, 1817-1819). The editor of the French edition was engraver and lithographer Nicolas Hubert Roux the older: “Pompeiana,” in William Gell, John P. Gandy, *Vues des ruines de Pompéi, d’après l’ouvrage publié à Londres en 1819* (Paris: Firmin Didot, 1827), In-fol., 143 pp., fig., pl., plans. Roux (active in Paris from 1831-1847) exhibited his illustrations for this book separately at the *Salon* of 1831. At the *Salon* of 1847 he previewed twelve lithographs from Hittorff’s forthcoming monumental publication on polychromy, *Restitution du temple d’Empédocle à Sélinonte ou l’Architecture polychrome chez les Grecs* (Paris, 1851).

¹⁵ To be built at the Augustinerplatz, later Casinoplatz. Schild, “Der Nachlass des Architekten,” 59.

¹⁶ Giacinto Amati, *Ricerche Storico-Critico-Scientifiche*, vol. 4 (Milan, 1830), ch. XXV, plate between pp. 160-161 (see: <https://archive.org/details/ricerchestorico12amatgoog>); cfr. Caterina Mutti, “Carlo Amati e i suoi rapporti con Jacques-Ignace Hittorff,” in *Arte Lombarda*, 2nd ser. 12 (1998), 63-67.

easy to accept for a purist — and certainly not possible during the “battle of styles” waged over the second half of the century.

As has been noted, the most decisive new feature of Hittorff’s design for St. Vincent was its twin-towered façade,¹⁷ similar to Notre-Dame in Paris (1163-1345), but also prominently used in the French church in Rome, the Trinità dei Monti. Jean-Nicolas Servandoni (1695-1766), also, re-introduced a post-Gothic twin-towered façade to the architecture of the modern church at Saint-Sulpice (1631-1732) in Paris. The victorious designs of a basilica for the 1801 *Grand Prix* competition, by Hippolyte Lebas (1782-1867), eventually paved the way for Hittorff’s revival.¹⁸ These prints included a colonnade in the interior of the basilica, apart from the twin-towers, like Hittorff’s later project. This was also true for the peculiar, sometimes criticized combination of the apse, main, and side aisles at St. Vincent.

In Italy, Hittorff studied grand public steps and ceremonial staircases in private and public buildings. In Turin and its suburbs he sketched the unexecuted stairway in the castle of Rivoli, and his ground-plan is nowadays the only trace of this Baroque project.¹⁹ No drawings from the architect Filippo Juvarra (1678-1736) are known to presently exist. As of 2010, the Austrian architects Erich Hubmann and Andreas Vass are building an escalator on this site, half-camouflaged in the slope of the hill. On the other side of Turin, located on top of a mountain, is the Basilica Superga, the *Salvatrice di Torino*. The royal castle and the royal basilica embrace the city, and the impact of such baroque scenography is visible in Turin’s vast avenues, starting with *Corso Francia* in Rivoli.

In Rome Hittorff lived close to the Spanish Steps, which to an extent was an even more convincing model for his *amphithéâtre* in front of Saint Vincent de Paul in Paris. Engravings and early photographs of Paris document how dominant St. Vincent was before the tall buildings of the modern metropolis changed the scale of the neighborhood. Hittorff’s 1833 plan for the basilica includes most of the features incorporated into the completed building

¹⁷ This héliogravure is signed by Eduard Baldus (1820-1882), famous for his photographic documentation of the Louvre, 1854-1855. The original in the Wallraf-Richartz-Museum has been damaged by fungus, cfr. note 2.

¹⁸ *Grand Prix D’Architecture. Projet couronnés par l’Académie d’architecture et par l’Institut de France* (Paris: Allais, Détournelle et Vaudoyer, 1802-1808 [2°]). Copy in Hittorff-library, no. 35.7; listed in Gunter Quarg, *Katalog der Bibliothek Jakob Ignaz Hittorff* (Cologne: Schriften der Universitaets- und Stadtbibliothek Koeln, 1993), 4.

¹⁹ ULC, call-no. K 13/140, fol. 15rA/24 (it will be assigned the inventory number H It. It. 20 in my forthcoming inventory of Hittorff’s sketches from his journey to Italy).



Jacques-Ignace Hittorff: a longitudinal section; a section of the sanctuary; and a section of the apse, Saint Vincent de Paul, Paris, 1837 (ULC).

Courtesy of the author

a decade later.²⁰ The design depicts twin towers with virtually the same architectural décor as the finished structure. There would be some small, minor modifications, but the layout with niches and moldings remained unchanged.

The plan found in the album located at the parish of St. Vincent displays *laves émaillées* (enamel on slabs of lava stone) in the portico. There is a very similar collection of scenes in the design of 1837 found in the University Library, Cologne (from here on abbreviated to ULC). Even the chromolithography of 1851 retains similar scenes as those found in the 1833 design.²¹ Nevertheless, in 1838 Hittorff considered substantial changes,²² including integrating scenes from the “Life of Jesus” into a typological arrangement confronting the Old and New Testament. Hittorff published on Raphael Santi’s (1483-1520) frescoes in 1844, when St. Vincent was inaugurated, and compared them to antique paintings. He presented his argument using a typical philosophical and rhetorical text, known as

²⁰ Donated to the archives of the parish in April 1942, by M^{lle} Elizabeth Cartier and M^{me} d’Astier de Valenches (born Cartier), heirs of Charles-Joseph Hittorff (1825-1898), son of Jacques Ignace Hittorff, in memory of their brother Pierre Cartier († 12 December 1941). The size of the album: 54 cm high, 40 cm across. The title reads: *Élévations et coupes diverses de l’Église St. Vincent de Paul*. Inside there are six mounted drawings:

fol. 1: the rear of the church, 28 cm high, 20 cm across;
fol. 2: elevation of the exterior, 30.5 cm high, 47.4 cm across;
fol. 3: elevation of the interior, 30.5 cm high, 47.4 cm across;
fol. 4: section of the sanctuary and apse, 30.8 cm high, 47.6 cm across;
fol. 5: façade, 29.9 cm high, 24 cm across;
fol. 6: church and the square in front of it, 12.2 cm diameter.

A detail of fol. 6 is reproduced in the *Catalogue Paris/Cologne*, 1987, “Jakob Ignaz Hittorff, Ein Architekt aus Köln,” p. 129, no. 147.

In addition, the parish archives keep two more drawings of unexecuted projects drawn to scale, which include free-hand corrections for windows towards Rue Bossuet / Fénelon. The archives also own yet another volume with mounted designs entitled, *Presbytère de St. Vincent-de-Paul, II^e projet, VI dessins*.

²¹ Hittorff, *Restitution du temple d’Empédocle*, pl. 24; Van Zanten, “Polychromy of the 1830’s,” ill. 34.

²² C. de Vaulchier in *Catalogue Paris/Cologne*, 1987, “Jakob Ignaz Hittorff, Ein Architekt aus Köln,” p. 137, no. 147.

a *parallèle*.²³ This is also why Hittorff asked his friend Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres [(1780-1867), director of the French Academy in Rome from 1835 to 1841], to obtain copies of the paintings of Raphael in the *Stanze* of the Vatican palace in order to use them for polychrome *laves émaillées* in the façade of St. Vincent.

The very refined finished drawing from the ULC (approximately 1837), proves that the inclusion of Raphael copies did not come to fruition.²⁴ Discussions of a change of iconography remained discussions. Comparing the ULC drawing with the chromolithography, different colors dominate the project: in the elevation of 1837 there are more blues and fewer gold pigments. Abroad, an interested audience immediately started analyzing this stage of Hittorff's project. In 1839 the first director of the Old Master Paintings Gallery in Berlin, G.F. Waagen (1794-1868), discussed Hittorff's plans for St. Vincent;²⁵ and in Berlin in 1844/1845 Alexander von Humboldt personally presented copies of the latest designs to the architecture loving King of Prussia, Frederic William IV.²⁶ Hittorff in turn detailed, in his 1851 book on the Temple of Empedocles in Selinunte, contemporary achievements on polychromy in Berlin as found in the works of Karl Friedrich Schinkel (1781-1841) and Friedrich August Stühler (1800-1865).²⁷

In a special section of his library Hittorff collected reviews by current art critics documenting their reception of his St. Vincent paintings. The interest was international. The German public received an uninterrupted flow of new information on the progress of the decorations, while the Imperial Academy in Vienna accepted Hittorff as a member, praising in particular his achievement at St. Vincent.²⁸

Hittorff planned *laves émaillées* for the paintings that were to be located on the façade of the church. No later church so extensively used enameled lava stone paintings in Paris. After much research on how to incorporate the polychromy of ancient Greece in modern architecture, Hittorff discovered the original polychromy in Selinunte, Sicily, during the winter of 1823-1824. He brought home specimens, over the surface of which

²³ Jacques Ignace Hittorff, *Parallèle entre les arabesques peintes des anciens et celles de Raphaël* (Paris, 1844). Copy in Hittorff-library in the ULC, no. 485.13. This was published in English that same year: Jacques Ignace Hittorff, "On the Arabesques of the Ancients, as Compared with those of Raphael and his School," in Ludwig Gruner, *Description of Fresco Decorations and Stuccoes of Churches and Palaces, In Italy During the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries* (London, 1844). Hittorff also arranged his own drawings from Sicily in two sections: *Sicile ancienne*, Hittorff-library in the ULC, no. 469, 2 vols.; and *Sicile modern*, Hittorff-library in the ULC, no. 470. This was an established rhetoric, in particular on aesthetics, mainly concerning whether or not Antiquity could serve as a model for contemporary art.

²⁴ For a detailed description of the technique, cfr. Michael Kiene, *Die Alben von Jakob Ignaz Hittorff. Die Bauprojekte, 1821-1858* (Cologne: Schriften der Universitaets- und Stadtbibliothek Koeln, 1996), pp. 105-110 (inv. no. 92-97), here p. 108 (no. 94).

²⁵ Gustav Friedrich Waagen, *Kunstwerke und Künstler in Paris* (Berlin, 1839), 764-765.

²⁶ Hammer, "Ein Pariser Baumeister," p. 154, notes 17, 29.

²⁷ Hittorff, *Restitution du temple d'Empédocle*, 744 (on Schinkel and on Frederic William IV). On Stuehler, he wrote that he built "Le plus beau monument moderne de la capitale de Prussie..." with "les laves émaillées peintes, elle eut sa source dans la présence à Berlin, de plusieurs échantillons de cette peinture que j'adressais en 1833 à M. BEUTH, directeur de l'Institut Royal des arts et métiers, en insistant auprès de ma honoré ami, sur l'utile et rationnel emploi de cette inaltérable technique à la décoration de l'extérieur des édifices. Parmi ces échantillons se trouvait une dalle circulaire d'une assez grande dimension."

²⁸ *L'Artiste* (1845), 160; following the publicity of his drawings presented to the Prussian King there was continued interest in St. Vincent in Germany, cfr. *Notizblatt der Allgemeinen Bauzeitung* (1851-53), 67; *Das Kunstblatt* (1857), 95.

were scattered traces of the original color — more than 2000 years old. He kept them in order to convince doubters. The chromolithography in his book on the Temple of Empedocles is a testament to his fascination for modern reproduction techniques, and illustrates his concept and its impact in color.²⁹ The print shows the sequence of *laves émaillées* for St. Vincent. However, soon after completion they were taken down when public disapproval arose, fostered by the clergy and by Hittorff's arch-enemy Baron Haussmann. Thus the only way to truly appreciate this crucial concept is through looking at his designs and the chromolithography. Two *laves émaillées* plaques were taken from the deposit of art works of the city of Paris to be displayed, but they are currently exhibited under difficult illumination conditions and hang much too high on the wall. This makes it difficult to discover them in the dark, or to enjoy looking at them. In 2010 the Holy Trinity was remounted in its original location above the entrance.

The panels of *laves émaillées* on the façade is a spectacular, unusual prelude to the even richer paintings found in the interior. In 1842 Hittorff and Lepère wrote a summary of their artistic decisions for painting indoors.³⁰ Explicitly, they modeled St. Vincent after the cathedral of Monreale, built from 1174 to 1182, which Hittorff had sketched in Sicily with Ludwig von Zanth. In his very refined, almost sublime, 1837 drawings Hittorff provided a possible inspiration for future painters decorating the interior of St. Vincent. At the time he hoped Dominique Ingres might be engaged for this commission, but ultimately one of his pupils was hired.

Hittorff was an eye-witness to the fiery destruction of San Paolo fuori le Mura, Rome, in 1823.³¹ With its rebuilding, a kind of early Christian revival spread in European Classicist architecture. For example, the church of Saint-Philippe-du-Roule (1774-1784) in the Faubourg Saint-Honoré by Jean François T. Chalgrin (1739-1811) marked a new reception to Early Christian art in Paris. Hittorff changed one principal feature of the earlier Lepère-Hittorff project: the side chapels, four on both sides, no longer included walled divisions and were simply separated by grillworks. Here, Hittorff created an impression of a five

²⁹ Chromolithography was a new technique for printing in color, protected by copyright thanks to Godefroy Engelmann († 1897). The reproductions replaced the only available earlier technique for printing in color with (at least in part) hand-colored engravings. Hittorff investigated state of the art techniques not only for his buildings but also for reproducing his drawings. The chromolithography for St. Vincent de Paul in Paris was ordered from Engelmann. He produced it at his printing company in Rue du Faubourg Montmartre N° 6 in Paris, not far from the (destroyed) home of Hittorff. Before 1827, Hittorff lived at Rue Coquenard N° 32, and after 1834 at Rue Coquenard N° 40 — i.e. the true heart of *Nouvelle France*.

Indeed, in a review on the architectural history of the cathedral of Bourges, Hittorff compared the chromolithographies in the publication with the illustrator's drawings in a collection of the Louvre. He praised "the beauty and truthfulness of the plates reproduced in chromolithographies" (*la beauté et du caractère de vérité qu'offrent toutes les planches exécutées par le procédé de la chromolithographie*). Jacques Ignace Hittorff, "Rapport sur les parties publiées de la monographie de la Cathédrale de Bourges, par MM. Arthur Martin et Charles Cahier, prêtres," in *Annales de la Société Libre des Beaux-Arts* 12 (1842), 163 (reprinted in: *L'Artiste* 3, série 3 [1843], 310-312).

³⁰ Hittorff/Lepère, *Mémoire présenté par MM. Lepère et Hittorff*.

³¹ On 16 July 1823, at 8 A.M., he wrote Lecointe a letter reporting what he saw that night. Municipal Archives of Cologne, call-no. Bestand 1053 (copies of the letters of Hittorff from Italy), Nr. 1, fol. 50v; compare to the digital copy as cited in note 2.

aisled basilica, like at Notre-Dame in Paris or Saint Peter's in Rome. Likewise, from 1823 to 1854, San Paolo fuori le Mura was rebuilt as a five-aisled Early Christian basilica.

Unlike his sources of inspiration in medieval Gothic architecture, Hittorff introduced a double-storied colonnade to St. Vincent, with an Ionic and Corinthian order instead of Gothic arcades. A gallery was located over the side aisles on the second floor. The construction of the roof made extensive use of cast iron, studied by Hittorff in separate drawings; the iron is unnoticeable to visitors who believe they look upon a traditional painted timber roof in the Early Christian style.

Hittorff had already used cast iron in the first building he was involved with, the grain hall of Paris (1810). He was particularly aware of how to use metal fittings, especially with regard to achieving unexpected effects in modern architecture. At the end of 1823 he discovered iron fittings in the antique architecture in Selinunte. He even brought several such pieces of metal back to Paris and, using socles, integrated them into his private collection of antiquities. Together with his drawings this collection served as antique models relevant for modern architecture.³² In 1838, simultaneous to the building of St. Vincent de Paul, he used cast iron fittings at his Panorama-building in Paris (1838-1841, destroyed in 1856) on the Champs-Élysées (originally 1^{er}; since 1860, the VIII^e arrondissement).

In his Paris guidebook of 1849 Félix Pigeory praised St. Vincent, one year after the second Revolution to take place in Paris during Hittorff's lifetime. He did not condemn it as a symbol of the recently banished regime; on the contrary, thanks to its combination of architecture, painting, and sculpture, he insisted St. Vincent would be "one of the most beautiful modern buildings of this type."³³

During the various stages of its construction Hittorff studied and re-studied almost every detail of St. Vincent. He left very few decisions to collaborators, who were given almost no chance to add personal variations to his design. Hittorff's copy-books of letters for St. Vincent provide indexes enabling one to trace the contracts with and payments to artists and craftsmen he had hired. His oversight is extraordinarily well documented in the collection held at the Wallraf-Richartz-Museum (particularly in the Schild photographs of the now-damaged drawings). The collections preserved at the parish of St. Vincent in Paris (1833), the ULC (1837), and in the former Royal collection in Berlin (1844-1845) also enable us to reconstruct some important steps in the development and design of this building.

The main principles of the design were detailed in the album of the parish, and were

³² In a letter, Hittorff reported on the discovery of metal fittings: "*Quoique toutes ces constructions soient en général à joints nus nous trouvâmes dans un des temples l'emploi du fer et du plomb très multiplié.*" Quoted from the original letter in the destroyed Municipal Archives of Cologne, call-no. Bestand 1053 (copies of the letters of Hittorff from Italy), Nr. 1, fol. 80r; cfr. note 2.

Professor Clemente Marconi of the Institute of Fine Art in New York City is very familiar with the excavation site at Selinunte, and from him I have learned that similar metal fittings are an extraordinary find today. Among Hittorff's collection there are a noticeable number of iron fittings, now held at the Archaeological Institute of the University of Cologne. They are listed in the inventory of Henner von Hesberg (and others), "Die Antikensammlung des Architekten Jakob Ignaz Hittorff," in *Koelner Jahrbuch für Vor- und Fruehgeschichte* 25 (1992), 7-48.

³³ "*Un des plus beaux ouvrages des temps modernes en ce genre.*" Félix Pigeory, *Les monuments de Paris au 19^e siècle* (Paris 1849), 161.



Jacques-Ignace Hittorff: funeral chapel of countess Marie Potocka, née princess Marie Soltikoff (1807-1845). Cimetière Montmartre, 4e div./Avenue de Montebello, Paris (IXe), 1845.

Courtesy of the author



maintained in an intermediary stage until the building was finished. A completed series of saints depicted in a solemn procession towards the sanctuary, by Jean Hippolyte Flandrin (1809-1864), ultimately utilizes warmer colors than the initial design. A similar change is noticeable in the enamels of the façade, moving away from “cool” colors, and is in line with the general development of the design. On the evidence of the drawings Hittorff should be considered as the person who conceived the program of the paintings, and his publications prove that he was a connoisseur of intricate iconography.

There was a general tendency in nineteenth-century Europe to coordinate all the arts into a whole. Richard Wagner (1813-1883) approached opera with what he termed *Gesamtkunstwerk*, integrating music, stage design, costuming, and ambiance into a coherent aesthetic. In Paris there was a similar impetus towards what was variously described as *alliance des arts* or *un'œuvre d'art total*. Among Hittorff's contemporaries this was called a *travail d'ensemble*,³⁴ and it was claimed by the architects of St. Vincent. Hittorff and Lepère were convinced they had achieved it in the building's architecture and decoration. Hittorff cited, of course, antique models for his synthesis of the arts. He found it in Greek architecture and the harmonious working together of many different crafts into what was called “ensembles.”

Hittorff and Lepère insisted on one ingredient for this new concept, their *unity of design*.³⁵ Consequently they designed every part of the building, even suggesting — as architects — key notes to the painters. Not especially modest, Hittorff and Lepère wrote to Baron Haussmann, their opponent but also responsible for funding the Basilica: “Put the inevitable difficulties in perspective: your name will be attached to works that may in the future attain the renown of Periclean Athens, the interiors of the Vatican, and the cloister of the Carthusian monastery.”³⁶ This is the epitome of diplomacy, persuading an opponent in order to reach their own goals, and might be considered an example of how Hittorff

³⁴ Quoted from *L'Artiste* (1842), 350-351.

³⁵ “Unité de création.” Hittorff/Lepère, *Mémoire présenté par MM. Lepère et Hittorff*, 7.

³⁶ “Mettez ce désappointement inévitables en parallèle avec la perspective d'attacher votre nom à des ouvrages qui peuvent atteindre, dans la postérité, la renommée de Périclès d'Athènes, des salles du Vatican ou du cloître des Chartreux.” *Ibid.*, 18.

maneuvered politically to serve so many different governments in his lifetime.

Hittorff reasoned of his preference for the past, for a known aesthetic system, in one of his few English publications, as follows: “The study of futurity is speculative; the present is wrapped up in that which is to come; and it is the past only which is complete ...we gain knowledge and experience only from the past. The study of antiquity must therefore be as useful to ourselves, as it is beneficial and instructive to our fellow-creatures by the softening and elevating of our minds.”³⁷ But his appreciation did not preclude his ability to criticize antique art: “my sincere admiration for the oeuvre of antique art has never prevented me from recognizing in many productions of the ancients either an individual inferiority or foreign influence.” Nevertheless, he thought it a model for contemporary nineteenth-century architecture, particularly essential issues like polychromy: “the paint in Paris rather than Athens is necessary to preserve materials and colors, more so than under the skies of Greece, Sicily, or Italy, to protect sculptures and their more important architectural parts. They require necessary assistance under a sunless sky”³⁸ (weather conditions he deplored in Paris).

It was difficult to accommodate this priority in polychromy as Classicism reflected an aversion to color. Joachim Winckelmann (1717-1768) was insistent on the color of marble and white ashlar surfaces in antique art, and serious doubts on the use of color were raised by the secretary of the Academy of Fine Arts, Antoine C. Quatremère de Quincy (1755-1849). In 1780, de Quincy discovered traces of polychromy in diggings at the temple of the Olympic Jupiter in Agrigento, which in turn were studied in the many 1823/1824 sketches by Hittorff. But it was not easy for Hittorff to convince his contemporaries. It took several decades, from the 1823 discovery of polychromy in Selinunte to the 1851 publication of *Restitution du temple d'Empédocle à Sélinonte ou l'Architecture polychrome chez les Grecs*. For his research and this monumental publication Hittorff was elected a member of the *Institut de France* in 1852, following the architect Jean J.-M. Huvé (1783-1852). One year later he became a member of the most important scientific order of Prussia, the *Pour le Mérite* in Berlin, following Pierre-F.-L. Fontaine (1762-1853) — his great-grand-father-in-law, and a companion to his teacher Charles Percier (1764-1838).

Hittorff suggested a totally new polychrome façade of colors, resistant to the weather of Paris. The various stages of how to realize this concept were summed up in the *Restitution du temple d'Empédocle*. Previously, in 1827, Hittorff wrote a chapter on wall painting in Pompeii for the French edition of Gell and Gandy. In it he presented his own observations on encaustic painting, discovered during the ongoing excavations while he was there.

³⁷ Jacques Ignace Hittorff, “On the Polychromy of Greek Architecture,” in *The Museum of Classical Antiquities* 1 (1851), 20.

³⁸ “Mais ma sincère admiration pour les oeuvres d'art antique ne m'a pas empêché de reconnaître dans beaucoup de productions des anciens ou une infériorité individuelle ou une influence étrangère... que la peinture est à Paris plus qu'à Athènes un moyen de préservation des matériaux et que si des couleurs aident sous le ciel de la Grèce, de la Sicile et de l'Italie à faire distinguer d'avantage et les sculptures et les parties les plus importantes des formes architectoniques, leur concours est sous ce rapport bien plus efficace et plus nécessaire sous un ciel privé de soleil.” Hittorff, *Restitution du temple d'Empédocle*, 814; Cfr. Louis Hautecoeur, *Histoire de l'Architecture classique en France*, VI (Paris: 1955), 236-237.



Saint Vincent de Paul: moulding of the central door, and the capital in the portico.

Courtesy of the author



This antique technique applied colors dissolved in wax and warmed up for painting, then finally fixed to the wall with the aid of a paint scraper. Hittorff also collected publications in his private library on *émaillés* (enamels), another technique utilized to add color.

The collection of *émaillés* in the Louvre was described in two volumes of an 1853 inventory edited by Count Léon E.S.J. de Laborde (1807-1869),³⁹ someone Hittorff had collaborated with for decades. Also, while Hittorff and Lepère were busy with St. Vincent, in 1841 a book was published by Louis-Étienne Dussieux (1815-1894) on the history of enamels from ancient times to the present.⁴⁰ Hittorff had copies of both works in his private library. Based on this research he finally adopted for St. Vincent the *peinture en lave émaillée de Volvic* (enamel on slabs of lava stone from a quarry located in Volvic in the province Puy-de-Dôme). The development of this special technique came about thanks to the collaboration of three contemporaries: Count Gilbert Joseph Gaspard; Count de Chabrol de Volvic (1773-1843; who was from Puy-de-Dôme and supported, even insisted on using stones from quarries in Volvic⁴¹; and Ferdinand Henri Mortelèque (1769-1842, or 1774-1844; who developed the technique of how to produce *lave*).

Hittorff was so convinced by the *laves émaillées* technique that he founded a company to produce them, the *Société Hachette et C^{ie}* which he directed from 1832 until 1838. The

³⁹ Léon de Laborde, *Notice des émaux, bijoux et objets divers exposés dans les galeries du Musée du Louvre*, 2 vols. (Paris: 1853), Hittorff-library in the ULC, no. 613. The scientific collaboration of Hittorff with Count de Laborde started in 1830. Laborde was curator of antiquities at the Louvre from 1845 to 1848, and in 1850 he took over the collections of the Middle Ages and Renaissance. In 1857 he became director of the archives of the Second Empire.

⁴⁰ Louis-Étienne Dussieux, *Recherches sur l'histoire de la peinture sur émail dans les temps anciens et modernes et spécialement en France* (Paris: 1841), Hittorff-library in the ULC, no. 296.

⁴¹ While he was on duty many streets and boulevards, particularly the pedestrian sidewalks, were paved with volcanic stone from the quarries of Volvic in Puy-de-Dôme. Chabrol was a member of the Academy of Fine Arts and spent some time in Egypt under Napoleon. Here he may have met Lepère preparing the drawings for his famous volumes of engravings from the region. Like Hittorff, he possessed a talent for negotiating the different systems of government. For example, Chabrol was nominated *Préfet de la Seine* under Napoleon I^{er}, continued his services under the Bourbons, and was reappointed a second time under Louis-Philippe after 1830 (Adolphe Robert, Edgar Bourloton, and Gaston Cougny, *Dictionnaire des parlementaires français: comprenant tous les membres des assemblées françaises et tous les ministres français depuis le 1^{er} mai 1789 jusqu'au 1^{er} mai 1889* (Paris: 1889-1891; Reprinted, Geneva: 2000, s.v.).

1834 address of this company was Rue Coquenard N° 40, Hittorff's house.⁴² However, orders were so infrequent and production was so difficult that Hittorff eventually decided to abandon his own company to escape forthcoming financial losses. In the *Restitution du temple d'Empédocle* he revealed the whole story and expressed his regret over the fiscal troubles, especially as he still believed in the process.

Letters and some correspondence detailing his commissions were until quite recently preserved in the municipal archives of Cologne, but they may have been destroyed when the archive buildings collapsed in 2009. Among these papers was a letter reporting on the otherwise undocumented Monsieur Hachette, a nephew of Mortelèque. Hachette knew the recipes for burning the *lave*,⁴³ and he founded the first manufacture for *laves émaillées* in the suburbs of Paris (located in the *faubourg Saint-Denis*), giving his name to the company. Hachette died on 11 September 1847 according to a note in Hittorff's copy-book of letters.⁴⁴ An associate of Hachette's, François Gillet (1822-1889), took over the enterprise and continued their manufacture, supplying *laves émaillées* for St. Vincent. In fact, the manufactory was just next door to its most important commission, at Rue Fénélon, N° 9 (it has since been replaced, in 1914, by a building featuring a beautiful polychrome exterior).⁴⁵

An important series of Hittorff's drawings is preserved in the ULC collection illustrating applications of the *peinture en lave émaillée de Volvic* on various objects like clocks, chimneys, medals, columns, candelabras, and architectural decorations. Similar items were presented to the public in the Industry Exhibition, Paris, in 1834 (Hall 4, no. 113). A flyer for this show, held in the ULC, praises the advantages of enamel-technique: the objects do not alter when

⁴² Hittorff lived at Rue Coquenard N° 40, Paris (IX^e), after 1824 (the house was destroyed following his death in 1867). Before 1968, unpublished photographs of various rooms in this house were held in the collection of M^{lle} Cartier (Hammer, "Ein Pariser Baumeister," p. 222, note 17). She donated her collection of the designs of Saint Vincent to the parish in 1942 (cfr. note 19). The canvas and the preparatory drawing of the portrait of *Madame Gaudry, née Hittorff* in her collection was passed to the Louvre after her death (RF 1963-114 and RF 1963-115) in 1968. The albums of Lecointe, as well as the photographs, were given to the École Nationale des Beaux-Arts in Paris in 1968, but the latter ones cannot be traced at the moment.

For further documentation on Hittorff's house, see Charles Ernest Beulé, Institut impérial de France, *Éloge de M. Hittorff par M. Beulé, secrétaire perpétuel, Prononcé dans la séance publique de l'Académie des Beaux-Arts, le 12 décembre 1868* (Paris: 1868), 22; Charles Saunier, "L'attirance de l'art français au delà du Rhin, de Napoléon I^{er} à Napoléon III," in *Revue des Études napoléoniennes* 11 (1917), 58-86, plate between pages 70 and 71; M. Biercher, "Jakob Ignaz Hittorff, Vom Kölner Maurerlehrling zum französischen Akademiepräsidenten," in *Stadtanzeiger* 500 (Oct. 4, 1931), off-print in the ULC, *Zeitungsauschnitt-Sammlung Merlo*, II 154, 278-280; Catalogue Paris/Cologne 1987, "Jakob Ignaz Hittorff, Ein Architekt aus Köln," 348.

⁴³ Hittorff, *Restitution du temple d'Empédocle*, 745.

⁴⁴ Municipal Archives of Cologne, call-no. Bestand 1053, Nr. 2 (volume containing copies of the letters of Hittorff on *laves émaillées*); cfr. note 2.

⁴⁵ P. Bruno Horaist, the present curé de Saint Vincent de Paul, cares for an abundant amount of documentation on this matter in the archives of the parish; among these papers are copies of several nineteenth-century leaflets documenting the later history of the *manufacture*, its owners, the location of the workshop, and the esteem with which contemporaries held it. After 1889 the company was continued by V^{ve} Gillet.

There are still today companies producing *peinture en lave émaillée de Volvic*, including one in Mozac: Marie-Line Chevalier produces such objects in her Atelier Saint-Martin, 63200 Mozac (2, rue de la Font Vachette). I would like to thank Marie-Line Chevalier for information generously forwarded from her private archives. The city of Longwy in Lorraine is also famous for its *émaillés*.

exposed to weather, the warmth of the sun, the constant rain, or when frequently used. The only secular piece of *peinture en laves émaillée* presently known to exist is found in the Chrysler Collection, Virginia: it is an exceptional table, similar to the drawings in the ULC. The work reflects the refined painting possible in applying the technique, and its absolute beauty.⁴⁶ Beyond that, there are several religious paintings, such as the altar antependiums in Notre-Dame de Lorette, built by Louis-Hippolyte Lebas (1782-1867).⁴⁷

Before proposing *laves émaillés* for St. Vincent, Hittorff examined the history of polychromy from antiquity to the present day, and published the results in his 1851 book. Attempts to incorporate polychromy into architecture, and related problems in wall painting, were well-researched. He evaluated various achievements made, particularly in the search for new, environment-resistant technique. He dedicated hundreds of folio pages to the discussion of encaustic painting, painting on stucco, and their imitations in modern French art: especially, attempts to revive antique polychromy by Leo von Klenze (1784-1864) found in the architecture of Munich; by Karl Friedrich Schinkel (1781-1841) in Berlin; and by Friedrich August Stühler (1800-1865). Finally, he decided to move forward, having given “three years of sacrificing much time and money, before I gave up direct involvement in painting on lave.”⁴⁸

One reason Hittorff hoped to complete the *laves émaillées* for St. Vincent de Paul was because his previous attempt to revive encaustic painting at the tomb of the Countess Marie Potocka (born Soltikoff, 1807-1845) proved relatively unsuccessful. In *Restitution du temple d'Empédocle* he revealed that the encaustic paintings at the tomb in Paris needed restoration every six years, as the colors faded, transformed, or even almost fell off.⁴⁹ The polychrome tomb was restored yet again about ten years ago, and its present condition proves that Hittorff's disappointment with the problems of conservation was correct.

In smaller buildings in the gardens of the Champs-Élysées Hittorff tried painting on canvas covering the walls. However, strangely enough, he reported the canvases needed

⁴⁶ Table with *Lave émaillée* top, 1833, J.-I Hittorff designer, Hachette & Cie. manufacturer, Chrysler Museum, Virginia, Object Number 2001.21: see <http://collectiononline.chrysler.org/emuseum/objects/viewcollections/chrysler/> (search for: Table Lave). I would like to thank David Van Zanten from Northwestern University, Evanston, Ill., for pointing out this important and only known extant specimen of *laves émaillées*. It was displayed at the exhibition “The Basilica of St. Vincent de Paul. Architecture of the Catholic Renouveau in Paris,” held at De Paul University Art Museum, Chicago, Ill., September 30–November 20, 2010, cat. no. 9. The actual preparatory design is in the ULC, and is described and reproduced in Kiene, *Die Alben von Jakob Ignaz Hittorff*, inv. no. 65.

⁴⁷ Hittorff had a particular affiliation to this church. He participated in the competition for its design in 1823, and was married here to Elisabeth Lepère on 2 November 1824. Also, the funeral service for his father-in-law, as well as the memorial mass for Hittorff himself, took place in Notre-Dame de Lorette.

⁴⁸ Hittorff, *Restitution du temple d'Empédocle*, 744: “Je dus, après trois années de sacrifices de temps et de beaucoup d'argent, abandonner ma participation directe à l'exploitation de la peinture sur lave.”

⁴⁹ “La conservation de la peinture à la cire a été assez satisfaisant pendant de six années; mais à partir de ce temps, les rouges ont commencé à foncer: les ornements en argent des écussons ont noirci, et les bleus, aussi bien que quelques fonds blancs, lorsqu'on les frottait, se détachaient à la surface par petites parties en une fine poussière; les verts et les jaunes et les ors étaient restés à peu près intacts. Toutefois, il est à considérer que la petite chapelle est élevée sur une hauteur dominante du cimetière, qu'est entourée de végétation, et exposée par conséquent à toutes les intempéries, comme aussi aux émanations corrosives du temps de repos comme, au-dessus duquel le monument est construit.” *Ibid.*

to be restored every spring.⁵⁰ To his knowledge, similar disappointing results were obtained in Belgium and the Netherlands. Therefore, finishing the *laves émaillées* at St. Vincent would be an unparalleled achievement in architecture, and also a way in which to revive the model of the ancients in creating an acceptable modern-day equivalent capable of resisting the environmental conditions of Paris. Hittorff wrote: “using historical paintings on the outside of our monuments was one of the most rational and magnificent elements of all architectural decoration. Once the procedure of *peinture sur lave émaillée* was sophisticated enough to replace with unquestionable superiority the mosaics of old ...and offered the certainty of lasting longer; I had the intention to introduce them into the decoration of the portico of Saint-Vincent-de-Paul as well as to other parts of the building.”⁵¹

Although the bulk of Hittorff’s discussions on polychromy at Saint Vincent dealt exclusively with archaeological or technical problems, he offered something akin to an imaginary guided tour of his future building before ending his monumental book — expanding upon the iconography and message he wished to visualize: “The paintings of the portico must offer subjects taken from the Old and New Testaments; but the composition over the front door representing the Holy Trinity, accompanied by four prophets and four evangelists, is completed. This was painted by M. Jollivet, and ...I have commissioned this skillful painter and conscientious artist for all the paintings.”⁵²

The portico was praised for its archaeological correctness. Altogether it has twelve columns referring to the twelve apostles. The vestibule represents our earthly paradise and guides one to the heavenly paradise, the church. The sculpted ornaments of the doors depict wine and grain, sculpted and painted frieze patens, and garlands of flowers — the liturgical implications evident. For the main frieze Hittorff selected angel’s heads. The capital is decorated with the crosier and a cross. Here Hittorff invented a unique Vincentian style for this building dedicated to Vincent de Paul. In the center are two cardinal virtues, faith and charity, as he felt it necessary to demonstrate “the personages necessary to explain the salvational influence of the patronage of the church on the priests, people of the world,

⁵⁰ “La peinture sur huile, quoique plus favorablement exposée, n’a pas offert la même durée pour la belle conservation des tons: les rouges ont changé bien plus tôt, et les blancs ont jauni d’une année à l’autre. Mais comme la coloration des constructions dans les Champs-Élysées doit être maintenue dans un parfait état de fraîcheur, que par conséquent les peintures y sont partiellement ou entièrement renouvelées à chaque printemps.” *Ibid.*

⁵¹ “L’emploi de la peinture d’histoire, à l’extérieur de nos monuments, devient un des éléments les plus rationnels et les plus magnifiques de toute décoration architecturale. Dès que le procédé de la peinture sur lave émaillée fut assez perfectionné pour remplacer avec une incontestable supériorité la mosaïque des anciens, et permettre une application analogue avec une perfection beaucoup plus grande dans l’exécution et la certitude d’une durée plus longue, j’eus l’intention de le faire entrer dans la décoration du porche de Saint-Vincent de Paul et des autres parties du monument. Dans celles-ci les bandeaux et les frises des croisées et des portes, ainsi que les frises des entablements des trois ordres de l’édifice, sont disposés pour recevoir l’incrustation des laves émaillées, qui seront décorées d’emblèmes religieux et de riches ornements.” *Ibid.*, 820.

⁵² “Les peintures du porche, doivent offrir des sujets tirés de l’Ancien et du Nouveau Testament; mais il n’y a que la composition, au-dessus de la grande porte, représentant la sainte Trinité, accompagnée des quatre prophètes et des quatre évangélistes, qui sont exécuté. Ce tableau a été peint sur lave par M. Jollivet, et c’est d’après les dessins de cet habile peintre et concencieux artiste, que j’ai donné l’ensemble des tous ces sujets.” *Ibid.*

the muslims, the prisoners, and to express Vincent's influential well-known cooperation with institutions such as the Sisters of Charity, the orphanages, and the hospitals for the sick-poor."⁵³

The Basilica of St. Vincent de Paul in Paris, which might have seemed at first something of an academic exercise, a demonstration of archeological erudition, or even solely an attempt to revive architectural traditions of the past for the present, turned out to be tailor-made for the Vincentians and for the *Nouvelle France* of the Bourbons and Louis-Philippe. For Hittorff there was no rough distinction between past and present, there was instead an ever increasing flow of artistic knowledge ultimately headed toward an "eternal second Renaissance."⁵⁴ In the introduction to his book on antique architecture in Sicily, on the very first page, he emphasized: "But the architectural principles of the Hellenists are the only true ones, the only ones that apply for all times, all people, and in all countries ... The attributes of the Supreme Being are unity and harmony, which are also the characteristics of poets, historians, orators, and philosophers; as well as the artists from Greece who were always inspired by these holy qualities."⁵⁵



⁵³ "Les personnages nécessaires pour expliquer la salutaire influence du patron de l'église sur les prêtres, les gens du monde, les mahométans, les galériens, et exprimer sa puissante coopération aux immortelles institutions des sœurs de la Charité, des asiles pour les enfants trouvés et des hôpitaux destinés aux malades pauvres." *Ibid.*, 821-822.

⁵⁴ Kiene, *Die Alben von Jakob Ignaz Hittorff*, 27.

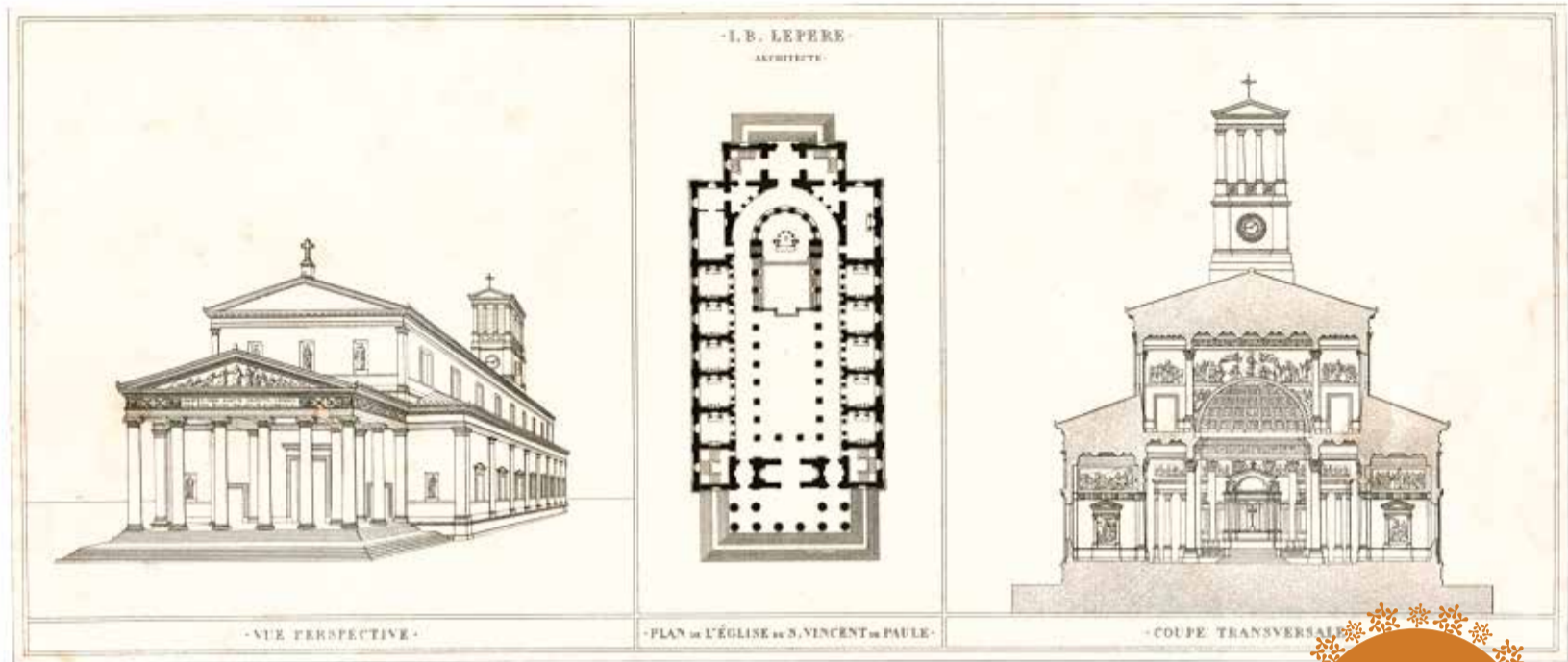
⁵⁵ "Mais les principes de l'architecture des Hellènes sont les seuls vrais, les seuls applicables dans tous les temps, chez tous les peuples, pour tous les pays. ... / Un Être suprême dont l'unité, l'harmonie étaient les attributs caractéristiques, et les poètes, les historiens, les orateurs, les philosophes aussi bien que les artistes de la Grèce s'inspirèrent toujours de ces qualités divines." Jacques Ignace Hittorff, Ludwig Zanth, *Architecture antique de la Sicile. Recueil des monuments de Ségeste et de Sélinonte, mesurés et dessinés par J.-I. Hittorff et L. Zanth. Suivi de Recherches sur l'origine et le développement de l'architecture religieuse chez les Grecs par J.-I. Hittorff*, Text and atlas with 89 plates, Charles Hittorff, ed. (Paris: 1870).



Jacques-Ignace Hittorff: Saint Vincent de Paul.
Héliogravure signed by Eduard Baldus, Paris c. 1850.

Erich Schild, Aachen

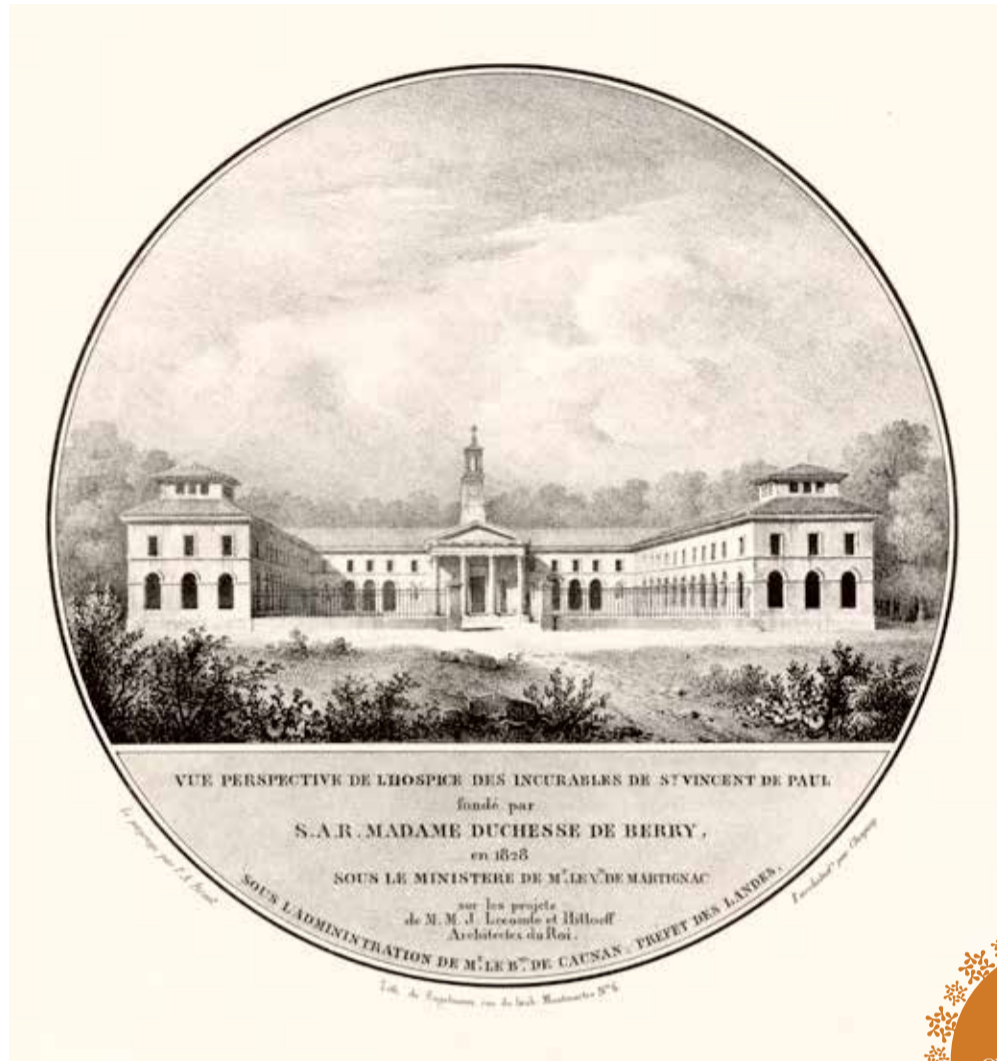




Jean-Baptiste Lepère/Jacques-Ignace Hittorff: Saint Vincent de Paul, c. 1824 (ULC).

Courtesy of the author





Jacques-Ignace Hittorff/Jean-François-Joseph Lecoqte:
design for the hospice of Saint Vincent de Paul, 1828
(ULC).

Courtesy of the author

The Hittorff/Lecoqte design was eventually used
to construct the Hôpital Saint-Michel in the 12th
arrondissement of Paris.

Courtesy of architect Régis Grima,



Carlo Amati, Saint Vincent de Paul-variant with lightning conductors, 1830 (from Amati, *Ricerche Storico* [1830]; see note 16).

Courtesy of the author



The façade of Notre Dame de Paris.

Photo by Peter Haas / CC-BY-SA-3.0

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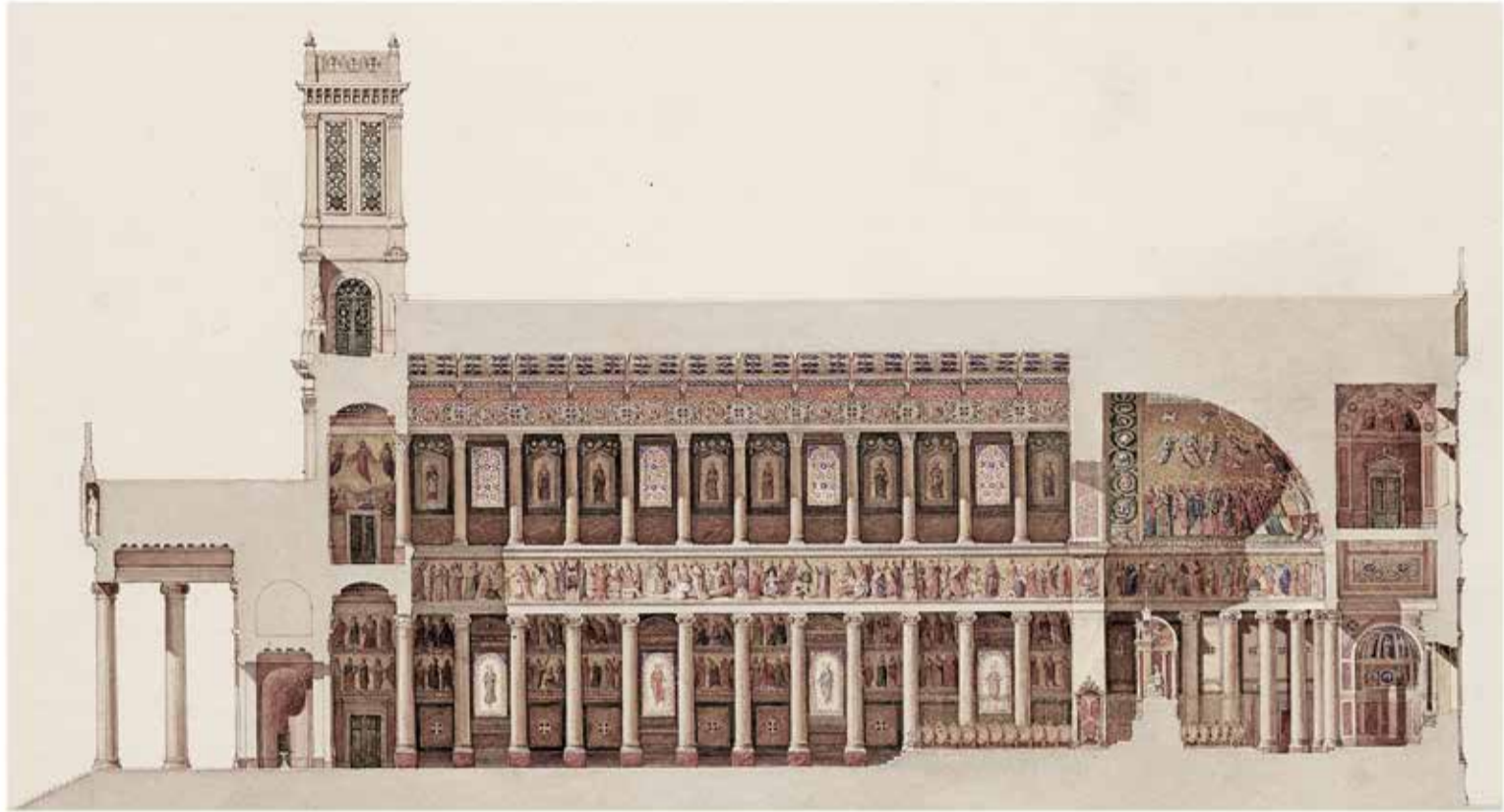


Jacques-Ignace Hittorff: façade of Saint Vincent de Paul, 1837 (ULC);

Engelmann, chromolithography of Saint Vincent de Paul. Cologne, Adenauer Collection, c. 1851.

Courtesy of the author





Jacques-Ignace Hittorff: a longitudinal section; a section of the sanctuary; and a section of the apse, Saint Vincent de Paul, Paris, 1837 (ULC).

Courtesy of the author



Jacques-Ignace Hittorff: funeral chapel of countess Marie Potocka, née princess Marie Soltikoff (1807-1845). Cimetière Montmartre, 4e div./Avenue de Montebello, Paris (IXe), 1845.

Courtesy of the author





Saint Vincent de Paul: moulding of the central door, and the capital in the portico.

Courtesy of the author

The Future of the Vincentian Charism in the United States: Challenges, Trends, and Opportunities

SCOTT KELLEY, PH.D., AND JESSICA WERNER, PH.D.



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With declining membership in many branches of the Vincentian Family looming in the background, a key question emerges: how will the Vincentian mission continue in the United States in the twenty-first century? In 2005, Rev. Edward R. Udovic, C.M., Senior Executive for University Mission at DePaul University, argued that “by 2023 the Vincentians may well have no physical presence, canonical sponsorship role, or governance role at DePaul University.”¹ His conclusion is based on careful observation of the historical membership trends in the Congregation of the Mission in the United States, going all the way back to their arrival in 1816. It is a trend line that steadily increased over decades until it reached a peak in 1965, and which has been on a steady decline ever since.² The membership trends that Fr. Udovic described in 2005 not only pose a challenge to DePaul University, they will also continue to impact virtually every apostolate sponsored by the Vincentian Family in the United States. Despite noted trends of decreasing membership and a corresponding narrative of decline, there are also powerful signs of growth and rebirth, signs that should not be overlooked. The unaffiliated lay Vincentian experience may well be one of those signs of our times, pointing toward seeds of growth and renewal.

In consultation with his confreres towards the end of his life Vincent de Paul wrote the *Common Rules* for the Congregation of the Mission, creating the institutional structures necessary to sustain the mission and to ensure that future generations would share in the profound experience of “being good news to the poor.” As Vincent had learned first-hand, any institution must do two vital things well in order to ensure its long-term viability: establish lasting institutional forms to maintain the integrity of the original charism; and inspire new generations of people to “gather together for the sake of the mission.”³ Future viability, Vincent came to realize, depends not only on the successful cultivation of the *esprit primitif*, the founding spirit, from one generation to the next, but also on the *institutional forms* necessary to sustain the mission from one generation to the next. This paper will analyze the extent to which there has been and continues to be a cultivation of the Vincentian charism in a new generation of lay people in light of decreasing membership in two established branches of the Vincentian Family in the United States. The paper will also identify some basic characteristics of new institutional forms that may sustain the vibrancy, vitality, and effectiveness that has marked the work of the Vincentian Family in the United States over the last two centuries.

¹ Edward R. Udovic, C.M., “Translating Vincent de Paul for the 21st Century: A Case Study of Vincentian Mission Effectiveness Efforts at DePaul University,” *Vincentian Heritage* 23-25:2, 26:1 (2005): 298. Available at: http://works.bepress.com/edward_udovic/6. This poses a particular challenge to DePaul University because its Articles of Incorporation stipulate that “[t]he management of the corporation shall be vested in a Board of Trustees. The number of Trustees may be increased or decreased by the Membership at any of the meetings of the Membership. Trustees shall be elected by the Members in such a manner and for such terms of office as shall be provided in the By-Laws. At least two-thirds (2/3) of the voting Membership of the Corporation shall be members of the religious society called in the Roman Catholic Church, The Congregation of the Mission.” The Articles of Incorporation are available at: <https://secretary.depaul.edu/trustees/articles.aspx> (link expired; accessed 27 March 2015).

² “Personnel Studies and Statistical Analyses,” in Personnel Files, DeAndreis-Rosati Memorial Archives, Special Collections and Archives, Richardson Library, DePaul University, Chicago, IL. Hereafter: “Personnel Studies,” DRMA.

³ Udovic, “Translating Vincent de Paul,” 294.



Fullerton Avenue entrance to the DePaul University campus quadrangle.

Public Domain



In the case of DePaul University, the future prospect of not having any physical presence of Vincentians on campus or in governance roles is not an intractable, unsolvable problem. In many ways, these challenges are already being addressed in remarkable fashion;⁴ however, there is no guarantee that future generations will engage the Vincentian mission with the same commitment as previous ones. In what manner are new generations of people being inspired by the Vincentian mission? Who are they? What is their current relationship with the Vincentian Family? What kind of relationship do they want with the Vincentian Family in the future? Accurate responses to the questions of *charismatic* cultivation will also help address strategic questions of *institutional form*. The two are mutually interdependent.

Currently, there is no adequate term to refer to this new generation of people inspired by the Vincentian mission in the United States; therefore, this paper uses the term “unaffiliated lay Vincentian” (ULV) to describe young adults ages 18 to 35 who have had a formative experience with the Vincentian mission either as a student at a Vincentian university, as a volunteer in a post-graduate Vincentian volunteer program, or both. They are *unaffiliated* because they do not currently have a formal relationship with the Vincentian Family as members of the Congregation of the Mission, Daughters of Charity, Ladies of Charity, or the Society of St. Vincent de Paul. They are *Vincentian* because they have been formed in and continue to self-identify with the Vincentian mission in profound ways. It is not an exaggeration to argue that Vincentian universities and post-graduate volunteer programs function as a kind of new Vincentian novitiate for Millennials, a period of initial exposure and formation that helps young adults identify a path of life-long commitment to the Vincentian mission. From one perspective it is not surprising that Millennials appear to have little interest in a formal relationship with existing branches of the Vincentian Family, given the broader characteristics, traits, and interests of Millennials. From another perspective, however, there is a unique opportunity to engage unaffiliated lay Vincentians in new ways and to establish new forms of ongoing engagement.

Even though many young adults have had a formative experience in this new novitiate, by and large they leave the experience without a community of like-minded

⁴ Rev. Udovic describes DePaul’s efforts to build “mission capital” in “Translating Vincent de Paul” as cited above. More recently, in 2007, DePaul University, St. John’s University, and Niagara University collaborated to create the Vincentian Mission Institute to develop leadership capacity for mission. For more on this effort, visit: <https://mission.depaul.edu/Programs/vmi/Pages/default.aspx>

and like-hearted people to sustain them, no discernable structure for life-long formation, no rituals to celebrate ongoing commitment, no clear prospects to work professionally in the many apostolates of the Vincentian Family, and no structure of formal membership or ongoing participation in the broader Vincentian Family. They are, in a word, *unaffiliated*.

DePaul University's Office of Mission and Values (OMV) commissioned the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA) at Georgetown University to conduct a survey of unaffiliated lay Vincentians. In addition to collecting basic demographic information, the study sought to understand the degree to which ULV's consider themselves to be spiritual and religious, how the Vincentian mission currently influences their lives, and how they would like to engage with the Vincentian Family in the future. An online survey, consisting of both close-ended and open-ended questions, was sent to 1,734 men and women who had been identified by OMV as unaffiliated lay Vincentians.⁵ As a point of comparison, a total of twenty-eight men and women have joined the Congregation of the Mission or Daughters of Charity in the United States since 2004.⁶ A total of 351 men and women completed the online questionnaire, which equates to a twenty percent response rate.

In addition to data provided by the survey, the study also utilizes data gathered through follow-up interviews conducted with three survey respondents. Interviewees were chosen because their various ages and experiences represented the range of ages, backgrounds, and experiences of the larger ULV community.⁷ "Louise" attended a Vincentian university as an undergraduate student and participated in two different Vincentian volunteer programs. She is in her late 20s, married with two children, working as a full-time stay-at-home mother, and lives in the Pacific Northwest. "Elizabeth" is in her mid-20s and has completed two Vincentian service programs as well, but attended a public university for her undergraduate education. She is currently single and has plans to attend graduate school for occupational therapy. "Vincent" participated in a Vincentian service program and attended Catholic universities for both his undergraduate and graduate education. "Vincent" is in his mid-30s, lives in the West with his wife and currently works as a public school teacher. The interview protocol consisted of fourteen open-ended questions relating to the three primary categories that were also assessed in

⁵ In establishing a working definition of unaffiliated lay Vincentians, it became apparent that any definition would never be exhaustive or perfectly accurate. Selecting programs that did or did not fulfill a set of criteria for "formative experience" posed a difficult challenge. The design of the survey, therefore, was framed more narrowly and not with the aspirations of being comprehensive but merely a representation of a group that is most likely much larger. Because the research was commissioned by the Office of Mission and Values at DePaul University, and relied on the institutional experiences at DePaul, the data is naturally skewed toward the formative experiences of a sizeable group of DePaul students and alumni as determined by well-established programs such as Vincentians in Action that have over a decade of experience. In addition, getting a sufficient number of survey responses so that the findings were statistically valid was challenging, especially on university campuses where "survey fatigue" is a significant problem for institutional researchers. It is important to note these challenges, therefore, and to recognize that the conclusions based on this data must be qualified accordingly.

⁶ Since 2004 in the United States, fifteen women have entered the Daughters of Charity and fifteen men have entered the Congregation of the Mission.

⁷ The names of the respondents were changed to keep their identity confidential.

the survey: demographics, religiosity and spirituality, and current and future engagement with the Vincentian mission.

To better frame the importance of the unaffiliated lay Vincentian experience, it is important to understand the dynamics of diminishment in the Congregation of the Mission and some general trends regarding the spirituality and religiosity of Millennial Catholics. After these background contexts have been described, we will examine the general demographics of ULVs and their possible significance for the Vincentian Family, the nature of the ULV experience with regard to faith, spirituality, and life choices, and the desires of ULVs for more formal, longer-term relationships with the Vincentian Family. We will conclude with some brief suggestions about how the Vincentian Family might proceed in building those longer-term relationships.

The Story of Diminishment

Three factors will play an increasingly important role in shaping the work of the Vincentian Family in the future: diminishment in total numbers in the Congregation of the Mission and the broader Vincentian Family in the United States; generational shifts with regard to Catholic identity; and changing socio-economic and cultural contexts in the broader U.S. Catholic Church.

In 2016 the Vincentian Family in the United States will commemorate the 200th anniversary of the arrival of the first members of the Congregation of the Mission of St. Vincent de Paul in Baltimore, Maryland, in July of 1816. At the time the total population of Catholics in the United States was below 1.2 million. Over the last 200 years, total membership in the Congregation of the Mission shows a pattern of steady and consistent growth up until 1965, when membership peaked at just over 800 confreres. This was then followed by a pattern of steady and consistent decline that continues to this day.⁸ In 2014 there were as many Vincentians as there were in 1920, but the total Catholic population in the United States has grown from less than thirty-four million around the same time period to over seventy-seven million today.⁹ It is estimated this population could reach between ninety-five and 128 million by 2050.¹⁰ At the same time, and perhaps paradoxically, Catholicism is a “faith in flux” like all other religious traditions in the United States, wherein Americans change religious affiliation early and often. Forty-four percent of the U.S. adult population does not currently belong to their childhood faith.¹¹ While the percent of Americans who were raised Catholic and later leave the faith (32%) is considerably lower than Presbyterian

⁸ “Personnel Studies,” DRMA.

⁹ *Ibid.*; “Pies, damned pies, and statistics: Is the Catholic population growing?” in *Nineteen Sixty-four*, a research blog for the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate at Georgetown University, edited by Mark M. Gray (25 November 2010). Available at: <http://nineteensixty-four.blogspot.com/2010/11/pies-damned-pies-and-statistics-is.html>

¹⁰ “Pies, damned pies, and statistics,” *Nineteen Sixty-four*. Available at: <http://nineteensixty-four.blogspot.com/2010/11/pies-damned-pies-and-statistics-is.html>

¹¹ “Faith in Flux,” *Pew Research Center Religion and Public Life* (February 2011). Available at: <http://www.pewforum.org/2009/04/27/faith-in-flux/>

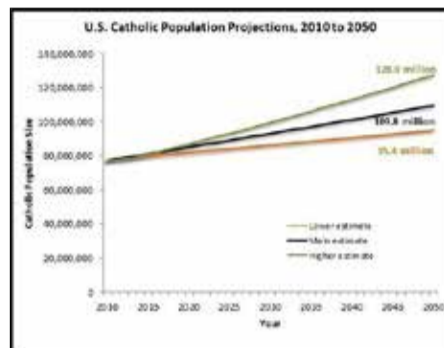
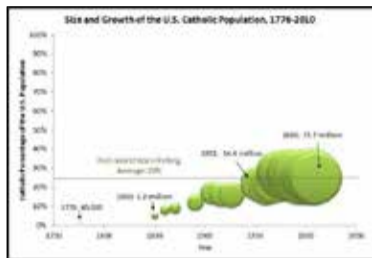
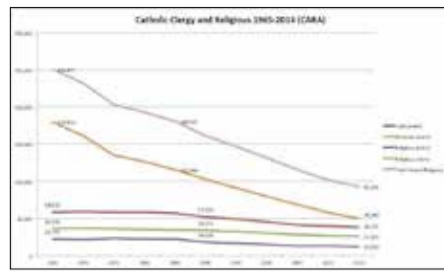
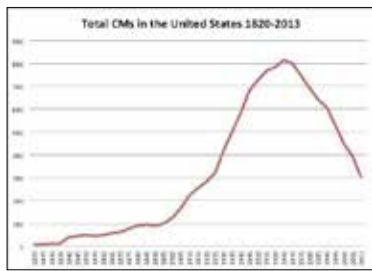


Figure 3.; Figure 4.

Images from Gautier PPT, data from CARA.

<http://nineteensixty-four.blogspot.com/2010/11/pies-damned-pies-and-statistics-is.html>

Figure 1. Created by Scott Kelley. Source: Personnel Studies and Statistical Analyses. Personnel Files, DeAndreis-Rosati Memorial Archives, Special Collections and Archives, DePaul University.

Figure 2. Created by Scott Kelley based on data from CARA.

<http://cara.georgetown.edu/CARAServices/requestedchurchstats.html>



(59%), Anglican / Episcopalian (56%), or Methodist (54%), it is still a very sizeable group of people.¹² And so there is a peculiar paradox:

[w]hat is certain now is that the Catholic population in the United States has remained around 25 percent, in part due to sizable immigration of Catholics from Latin America, Africa, and Asia. Meanwhile, some 16 million to 20 million Americans who were born Catholic no longer identify as such.¹³

A simple narrative of diminishment, therefore, does not accurately portray the complex realities of the U.S. Catholic Church overall, only certain aspects of it, particularly the significant decline in religious life relative to the total population of Catholics. In 1965 there were more than 250,000 total vowed religious, but by 2014 there was just over 92,000.¹⁴ Diminishment in the Congregation of the Mission and the Daughters of Charity is not a unique Vincentian phenomenon, but reflects a similar pattern of decline among nearly all Catholic religious in the United States since 1965.

Diminishment of numbers in religious life poses significant challenges for a Catholic Church that is expected to continue growing well into the twenty first century. It poses challenges for a robust network of well-established Catholic institutions in health care,

¹² "Pies, damned pies, and statistics," *Nineteen Sixty-four*. Available at <http://nineteensixty-four.blogspot.com/2010/11/pies-damned-pies-and-statistics-is.html>

¹³ William V. D'Antonio, Michele Dillon, Mary L. Gautier, *American Catholics in Transition* (Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2013. Kindle Edition), locations 140-142. Hereafter, D'Antonio et al., *American Catholics*.

¹⁴ "Frequently Requested Church Statistics," compiled by the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate at Georgetown University. Available at: <http://cara.georgetown.edu/CARAServices/requestedchurchstats.html>

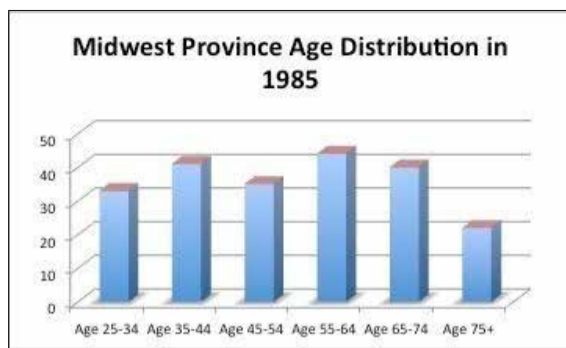


Figure 5. Created by Scott Kelley. Source: Personnel Studies and Statistical Analyses. Personnel Files, DeAndreis-Rosati Memorial Archives, Special Collections and Archives, DePaul University.

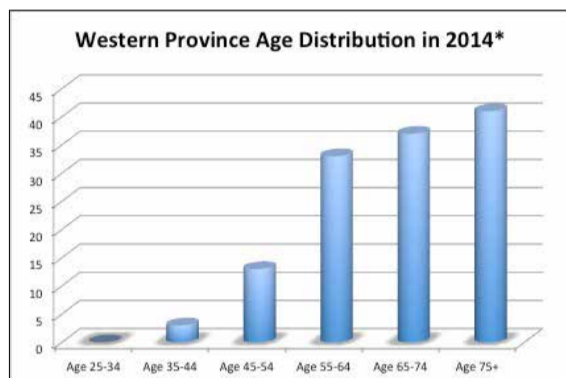


Figure 6. Created by Scott Kelley. Source: Personnel Studies and Statistical Analyses. Personnel Files, DeAndreis-Rosati Memorial Archives, Special Collections and Archives, DePaul University.

* On 25 January 2010, the Congregation of the Mission's provinces of the Midwest (St. Louis), South (Dallas), and West (Los Angeles) merged into a new Western province that is headquartered in St. Louis. As a result of the merger, the age distribution data in 1985 and 2014 may not correspond exactly.



education, and social services that were founded and managed by Catholic religious for much if not all of their institutional history. The term “diminishment” in this context is not used to describe influence, impact, legacy or relevance, but merely to describe the decline in total, professed religious membership of sponsoring orders due to deaths, departures, and declining vocations. Many Catholic institutions are not likely to have a significant presence, or any presence at all, of the orders of religious men and women who founded them, raising the essential question about the viability of the various charisms that animated, guided, and shaped generations of religious women and men.

[Click links throughout article to access relevant tables and statistical data]

A decline in total membership is only one dimension of the diminishment challenge; age distribution is another. In 1985 there was a fairly even age distribution in the Midwest Province of the Congregation of the Mission with roughly the same number of confreres in their mid-thirties as in their mid-sixties.¹⁵ By 2014, however, the age distribution is skewed significantly by the numbers of confreres who are 55 or older.¹⁶ In 1985, forty-nine percent of confreres were age 55 or older, but in 2014, eighty-seven percent of confreres are 55 or older. Today, roughly seventy-five percent of members are over the age of 65. This reality has profound implications. Not only are more confreres retired or retiring, decreasing the number of full-time working men and reducing or eliminating the respective incomes that come into community, but members are also entering a phase of life that includes greater demand for health care, hospice care, and all of the other needs associated with aging. The cost pressures of meeting these demands will require difficult decisions,

¹⁵ “Personnel Studies,” DRMA.

¹⁶ It is important to note that confreres from Kenya were not included in this data. This is largely because Kenya is likely to become its own province soon, and many Kenyan confreres do not have primary apostolates in the United States. Including Kenyan confreres in these numbers would mask the phenomenon of diminishment among confreres whose primary apostolate is in the U.S.

and may include alienating property, terminating the formal sponsorship of institutions, or the liquidation of other assets to meet present need. This demographic reality also means that a sizable majority of current members come from an older generation of Catholics who, on the whole, tend to have a different understanding of their Catholic identity in general, and the role of the sacramental life in particular, especially when compared to lay Millennial Catholics.

The vast majority of confreres are in the Pre-Vatican II or Vatican II generation, and are likely to possess different opinions about the fundamentals of Catholic identity when compared to lay Catholics from the Post-Vatican II and Millennial generations. As such, the broader contours of Vincentian culture do not appear to be monolithic, homogenous, or doctrinally shaped, but rather appear to be multivalent, emergent, and dynamic.

For reasons obvious and not-so-obvious, the Catholic Church of 2050 will look very different than it did in 1816 when the Vincentians first arrived. Geographically, new generations of Catholics are less likely to live in cities on the Eastern seaboard or in the Midwest, cities like Boston, Baltimore, or Chicago, that grew considerably as waves of European immigrants came to the United States. As D'Antonio et al., explain:

[t]he changing demography is intensifying the geographical redistribution of American Catholics that has been occurring over the last 50 years. At the same time that younger Catholics were abandoning the old ethnic neighborhoods in the inner cities of the Northeast in favor of the suburbs and moving off the farms and villages of the upper Midwest to follow jobs in the South and the West, many Catholic immigrants from Latin America were also seeking opportunities in the fast-growing suburbs around major cities, particularly in the South and the Southwest. This dispersed the geographical locus of Catholicism away from the Northeast, from the traditional bastions of urban Catholic concentrations in Boston, New York, Buffalo, Detroit, and Philadelphia, to the suburbs in and around Los Angeles, Phoenix, Houston, Dallas, Atlanta, and Miami.¹⁷

European Catholic immigrants built a sizable infrastructure of parishes, schools, and hospitals that tended to serve populations who did not have access to existing resources, infrastructure, or capital. Over the last century, however, changing demographics and geographical redistribution have made Catholic populations in the United States far more diverse in terms of ethnic and cultural identity. Cities like Phoenix, New Mexico, or Los Angeles have seen considerable growth in their Catholic populations, but often lack the same Catholic “infrastructure” that was built over decades on the Eastern seaboard and in the Midwest.

Increasing diversity and generational differences in the U.S. Catholic Church continue to have a profound impact. For Pre-Vatican II Catholics, that is, Catholics born in or before

¹⁷ D'Antonio et al., *American Catholics*, locations 2615-2620.

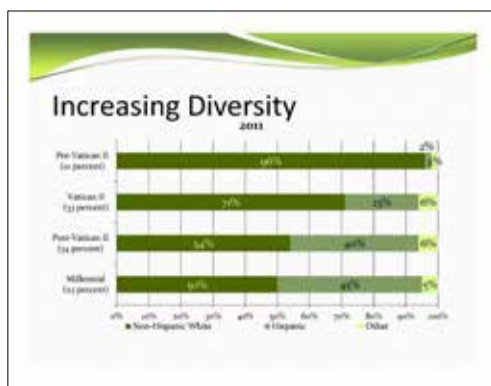
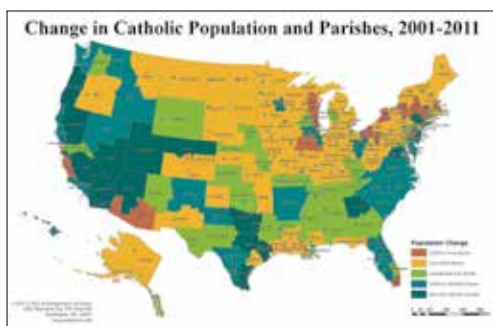


Figure 7. Used with permission from CARA.
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Figure 8., From Gautier PPT.

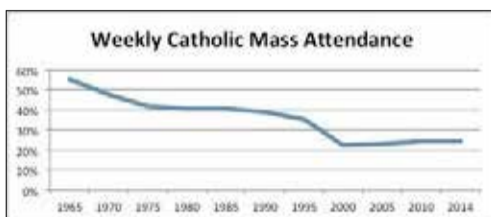
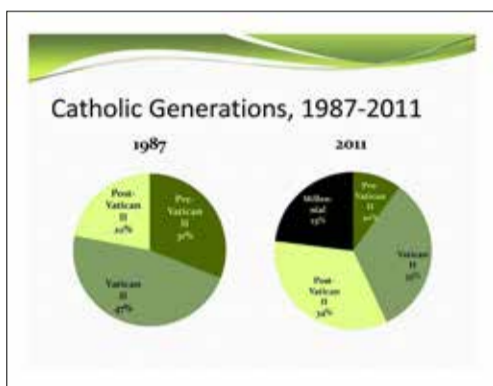


Figure 9., From Gautier PPT.

Figure 10. Created by Scott Kelley from Mass Attendance figures in "Frequently Asked Church Statistics," CARA.
<http://cara.georgetown.edu/caraservices/requestedchurchstats.html>



1940, ninety-six percent are Non-Hispanic white. For Millennial Catholics, that is, Catholics born between 1979 and 1987, fifty percent are Non-Hispanic white.¹⁸ Not only are there major *cultural differences* between Non-Hispanic whites and Hispanics when it comes to Catholic practices and identity, there are also major differences *across generations* concerning marriage, Mass attendance, knowledge of and belief in the Eucharist, participation in parish life, and religious practice beyond the parish.¹⁹

The events of the early 2000s, including September 11th, 2001, and the sex abuse scandal that gained prominence in 2002, had a profound impact on the religious self-understanding and Catholic identity of Millennials.²⁰ Catholic Mass attendance has declined steadily since 1965, when over fifty percent of Catholics attended Mass weekly, to 2014 when just over twenty percent attended weekly.²¹ While the literature on Catholic generations is considerable and far more nuanced, it is sufficient to note that the Millennial Catholics who made up twenty-three percent of the Catholic population in 2011 have a significantly different understanding of their Catholic identity and their relationship with the Catholic Church than the ten percent of Pre-Vatican II Catholics they continue to replace. These differences, for various reasons, are often framed in an overall narrative of decline.

While it is true that the Congregation of the Mission in the U.S. faces some significant challenges, the phenomenon of diminishment is not unprecedented in Vincentian history. Beginning with the sacking of Saint-Lazare in Paris in 1789, and the subsequent suppression of the Congregation of the Mission and the Daughters of Charity until 1816, the Vincentian

¹⁸ See Figure 2.2, "Race / Ethnic Identification by Generation" (2011), in D'Antonio et al., *American Catholics*, location 651.

¹⁹ See "Generational Changes in Catholic Practice" in D'Antonio et al., *American Catholics*, location 1761.

²⁰ William D'Antonio, "Survey reveals generation shift in the Catholic church," *National Catholic Reporter* (24 October 2011). See: <http://ncronline.org/news/survey-reveals-generation-shift-catholic-church>

²¹ See Figure 6.2, "Apart from Weddings and Funerals, About How Often Do You Attend Mass?" in D'Antonio et al., *American Catholics*, location 1809.

Family faced a significant period of diminishment for roughly five decades up to 1843. However, it then saw a considerable period of growth under Jean-Baptiste Étienne, often called the second founder of the Vincentians.²² The refounding of the Vincentian Family in the nineteenth century was ultimately successful because it responded to the needs and realities of the period, not the needs or realities of an era that no longer existed.

Étienne was elected Superior General of the Congregation of the Mission and the Daughters of Charity in 1843, and remained in office until his death in 1874. During his time as Superior General, both branches of the Vincentian Family enjoyed a period of rapid expansion, which included the explosive growth of a new branch of lay men who first called themselves the Society of St. Vincent de Paul in 1833. The Congregation of the Mission saw the addition of fourteen new provinces and 120 new houses (fifty in France, seventy elsewhere). Personnel numbers doubled. By 1870, the Congregation of the Mission numbered 1080 priests, 500 brothers, 220 students and seminarians.²³ During this period of recovery and expansion, the Congregation of the Mission developed not just in Europe, but also in North and South America, and in large parts of Asia and Africa.

It is hard to imagine any confrere could possibly foresee an era of growth and expansion in the dark years having witnessed Saint-Lazare, the beloved motherhouse, sacked, looted, and claimed by secular revolutionaries who actively sought to suppress their activities and purge their contributions to French civil society. One could easily parse a narrative of decline becoming a standard way of framing the realities between the years 1789 and 1816. Using a longer historical point of view, however, with the benefit of nearly four hundred years of perspective, one can easily see the paschal rhythms of growth and decline, expansion and contraction, death and new birth that is woven into the fabric of the Christian experience itself. As G.K. Chesterton so eloquently described: “Christendom has had a series of revolutions and in each one of them Christianity has died. Christianity has died many times and risen again; for it had a god who knew the way out of the grave.”²⁴ With this paschal rhythm in mind, it is all the more important to look for the seeds of new beginnings in what appears to be a narrative of decline.

Millennial Catholics and the Narrative of Decline

For Christian Smith, a prominent sociologist of religion, “[t]he story of most previous research on young Catholics, in short, is largely one of decline and loss.”²⁵ The narrative of

²² Edward R. Udovic, C.M., *Jean-Baptiste Étienne and the Vincentian Revival* (Vincentian Studies Institute, 2001). Available at: http://via.library.depaul.edu/vincentian_ebooks/3

²³ “Jean-Baptiste Étienne” in Famvin’s *Vincentian Encyclopedia*. Available at: http://famvin.org/wiki/Jean-Baptiste_%C3%89tienne

²⁴ G.K. Chesterton, *The Everlasting Man* (1925). Public domain e-edition, page 160, available at: <http://www.basilica.org/pages/ebooks.php>

²⁵ Christian Smith, Kyle Longest, Jonathan Hill, Kari Christoffersen, *Young Catholic America: Emerging Adults In, Out of, and Gone from the Church* (Oxford University Press, 2014. Kindle Edition), location 100.

decline and loss is understandable, considering the findings that young American Catholics exhibit the following characteristics:²⁶

- they are less well-educated and knowledgeable about their Catholic faith, reporting that they do not understand it well enough to explain it to any children they might have;
- they are more individualistic in their approach to religious authority and beliefs, viewing their own personal subjective experiences and sensibilities, rather than Church teachings, as the arbiters of truth and value;
- they are very selective in what parts of their tradition they decide to believe and practice (e.g., adhering to core doctrinal truths about Jesus' resurrection and the Eucharist, but discarding Church teachings on sex, birth control, abortion, etc.);
- they are more tentative and weak in their affiliation with the Church, described as being "loosely tethered";
- they are less involved in the Church as an institution by irregularly attending Mass, making Confession, or participating in other forms of Parish life;
- they are more liberal-minded about and tolerant of non-Catholic faiths and those who claim no religious identity, viewing the Catholic Church as only one denomination among many in a larger religious system of voluntary participation;
- they may still largely adhere to a general Catholic identity, yet retain the right to define that as they wish;
- they are less likely to place their Catholic identity at the center of their personal identity structures, but rather view it as one among many other competing identities;
- they are unable to articulate a coherent account of what it means to be Catholic.

It should be no surprise that many who study these trends see in them a steady process of decay.

The narrative of decline and loss tends to be framed around two primary concerns: that there is nothing that differentiates young Catholic adults from their non-Catholic peers; and that there is a general erosion of foundational beliefs and practices. Christopher White observed, "among the major findings in *Young Catholic America: Emerging Adults In, Out of, and Gone from the Church* is the fact that Catholic emerging adults over the past four decades are almost indistinguishable in beliefs, practices, and attitudes from their non-Catholic peers. During this same time period, the study found, Catholic emerging adults have exhibited a more dramatic decline in attendance at worship services than their non-

²⁶ *Ibid.*, location 88.

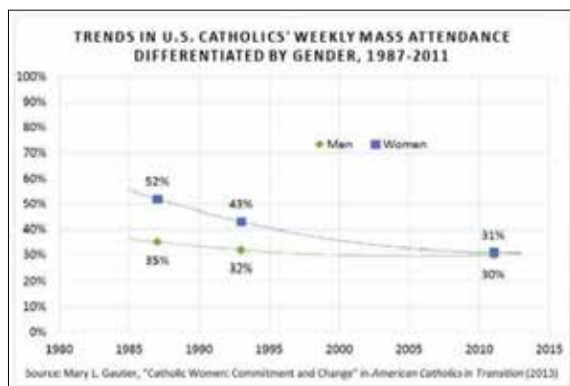


Figure 11.



Catholic peers."²⁷

Beyond decline in Mass attendance, there are deeper concerns about the theological commitments of Millennials. Coined in 2005 by Christian Smith and Melinda Lundquist Denton in their book *Soul Searching: The Religious and Spiritual Lives of American Teenagers*, the term “moralistic therapeutic deism” illustrates both the lack of differentiation of theological commitments among Millennials and the nature of their divergence from Catholic theological orthodoxy. Smith et al. describe the beliefs of the 3,000 teenagers interviewed as follows:

- A god exists who created and ordered the world and watches over human life on earth.
- God wants people to be good, nice, and fair to each other, as taught in the Bible and by most world religions.
- The central goal of life is to be happy and to feel good about oneself.
- God does not need to be particularly involved in one’s life except when God is needed to resolve a problem.
- Good people go to heaven when they die.

What might be called an undifferentiated theological consciousness, which Smith and Lundquist Denton describe, can be framed as deeply problematic because it does not reference foundational claims in the Catholic professions of faith that are both distinctive and necessary for Catholic doctrine.²⁸ It is not difficult to see the concern that an undifferentiated theological consciousness can devolve into an undifferentiated moral consciousness when it comes to Catholic moral teaching. Coupled with a decline in religious practice, particularly with regard to weekly

²⁷ Christopher White, “Young Catholic America” in *Catholic Pulse: News Catholics Need to Know* (18 June 2014). Available at: <http://www.catholicpulse.com/en/columnists/white/061814.html>

²⁸ Bernard Lonergan uses the term “undifferentiated consciousness” to describe people who have not yet carefully analyzed the habits of mind that constitute a pattern of knowing. Undifferentiated *theological* consciousness, then, describes people who have yet to differentiate the ways in which the content of their beliefs about God can radically shape worldview, outlook, value, and behavior. The Creeds of the Catholic Church and the writing of Vincent de Paul, for example, move well beyond a creator God who “watches over,” and instead upholds belief in a God who *actively participates* in human history, most notably through the incarnation. The category of Providence so foundational to the thought of Vincent de Paul is conceptually incompatible with the kind of uncritical deism that posits a God who passively watches over. The theological principles implied in moralistic therapeutic deism seem to be largely incongruent with the Catholic professions of faith: http://www.vatican.va/archive/ccc_css/archive/catechism/credo.htm

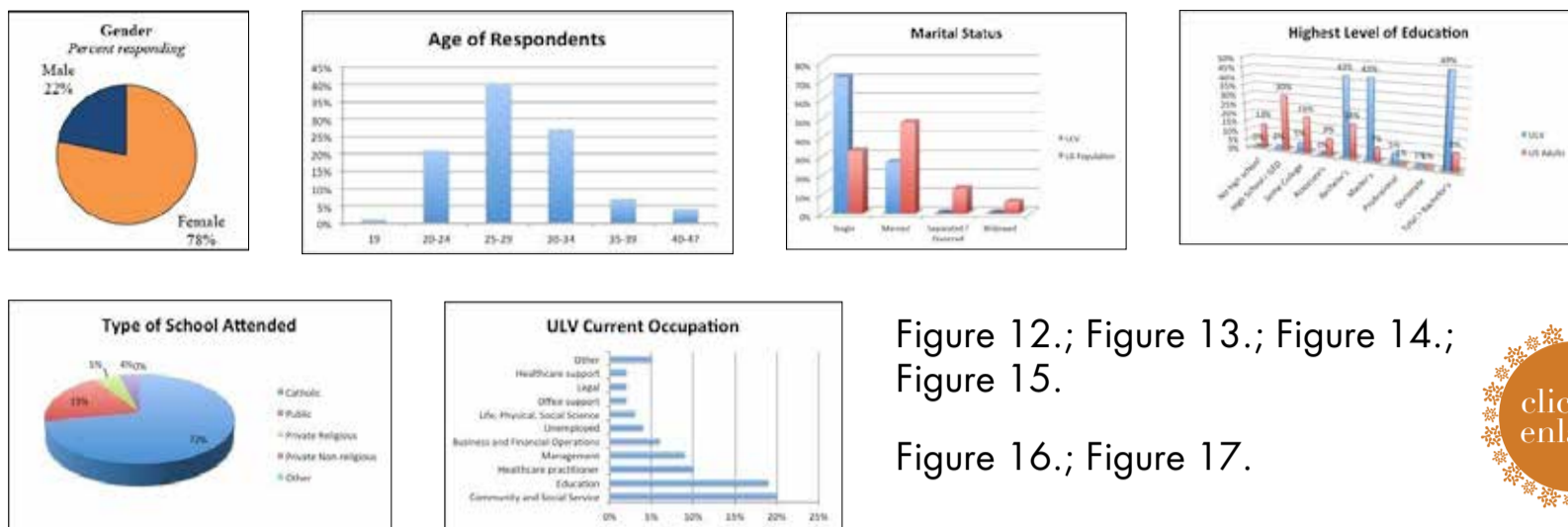


Figure 12.; Figure 13.; Figure 14.;
Figure 15.

Figure 16.; Figure 17.



Mass attendance, it is understandable to see why there is significant concern about the general relevance of the Catholic Church in the lives of Millennials.

Patricia Wittberg, S.C., sees the concern through a different lens, that of the declining role of women in the Catholic Church. In her 2012 article, “A Lost Generation? Fewer young women are practicing their faith: How the church can woo them back” in *America Magazine*, Sr. Wittberg notes that in Western societies like Europe and the United States, women are generally more religious than men. They are more likely to join churches, to participate in worship services, to be more orthodox in their beliefs, to be more devout in their daily religious practices, to be more likely to say that they experienced the presence of God in their lives, and to be more likely to read scripture. While in the mid-1990s Catholic women of Generation X *equaled* their male counterparts in Mass attendance, now, by some polls, Millennial Catholic women are even slightly *less likely* than Millennial Catholic males to attend Mass.²⁹

Compared to men, at least twice as many women have entered religious life. This holds true from the fourth-century Middle East, to twelfth- and thirteenth-century Europe, to seventeenth-century France, and to nineteenth-century North America. The greater religiosity of women has been a central dimension of the Christian experience for centuries, up until the mid-1990s when the Catholic women of Generation X (1962-1980) equaled male counterparts in regular Mass attendance. By the 1990s, the Catholic women of Generation X and Millennials (1981-1995) were significantly more likely than men to profess opinions that differed from Church teaching particularly with regard to the ordination of women and matters of sexuality. The generational divides between Catholics are even larger for women than for men. This poses a serious challenge for the Catholic Church, as Sr. Wittberg rightly points out.

The narrative of decline and loss is certainly understandable given the findings of prominent sociologists of religion like Christian Smith and Sr. Patricia Wittberg when it comes to weekly Mass attendance, differing notions of Catholic identity, and the presence and leadership of women in the Church.

²⁹ See: <http://americamagazine.org/issue/5129/article/lost-generation>

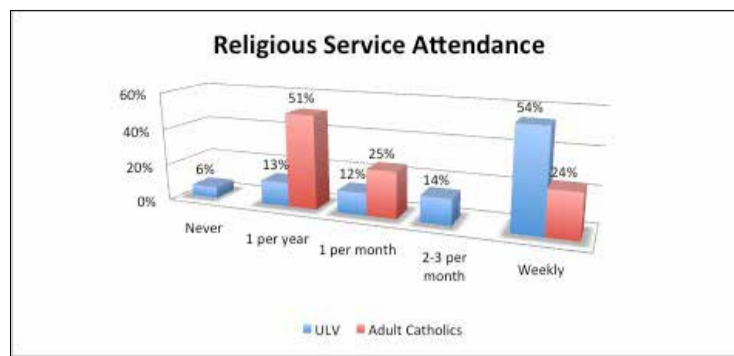
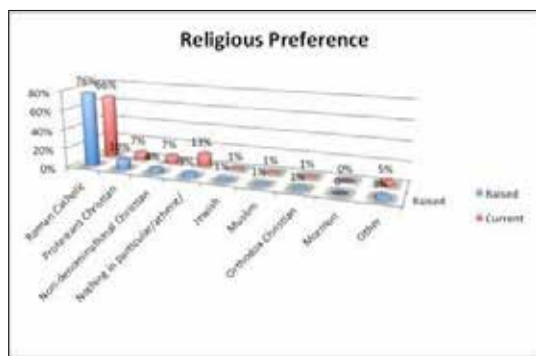


Figure 18.;
Figure 19.



Unaffiliated Lay Vincentians: Demographic Background

The majority of unaffiliated lay Vincentians are highly educated, unmarried young women in their mid-to-late 20s and early 30s who are deeply committed to the Vincentian charism, active in the Catholic church, and likely to have begun professional careers in social service, education, health care, and management. These trends stand in sharp contrast to the broader narrative of decline in much of the literature about Millennial Catholics.

It is striking to note that seventy-eight percent of respondents were female and twenty-two percent were male. U.S. Census Bureau data indicates a common trend of higher rates of volunteerism among women: of the twenty-seven percent of the U.S. Adult population who are reported to volunteer, fifty-eight percent are women.³⁰ A significantly higher proportion of Vincentian volunteers are women (78%) when compared to national averages for volunteer organizations (58%). The high proportion of females in ULV programs is a notable anomaly to the overall decline of religious practice among women since the mid-1990s. This may suggest that ULV programs are one way to enhance the religious and spiritual engagement of women who are more likely to volunteer than their male counterparts.

ULV respondents ranged in age from 19 to 47 years old, and the mean age was 28. Eighty-one percent of the respondents fall into the Millennial age range of 18-32, and nineteen percent are considered members of the Post-Vatican II age range. Although Millennials who are still in college are in a very different state of life than Millennials who are well-established in a professional career, views towards religious identity and practice tend to be more alike when compared to Pre-Vatican II or Vatican II Catholics. Fifty-one percent of respondents identified as being single, twenty-seven percent identified as being married, and fifteen percent of respondents have one or more children. One percent reports having been divorced.

In terms of educational attainment, forty-three percent reported a Bachelor's degree as their highest level of education, while another forty-three percent reported a Master's as theirs. Six percent of respondents were terminal degree holders. The comparison of the ULV population to the educational levels of the U.S. population as a whole is meant only to highlight the relative opportunities that ULVs have in light of their education. The vast

³⁰ U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, Volunteering Supplement (2012), as quoted in "CARA Volunteer Introspective: A Survey of Former Volunteers of Two Vincentian Volunteer Programs" (2012).

Figure 20.

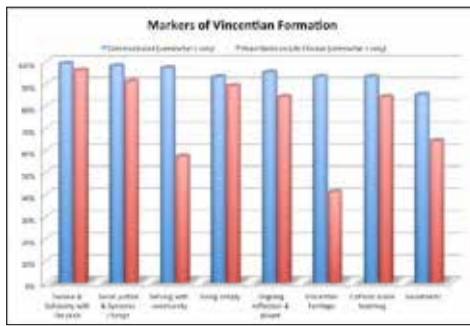


Figure 21.

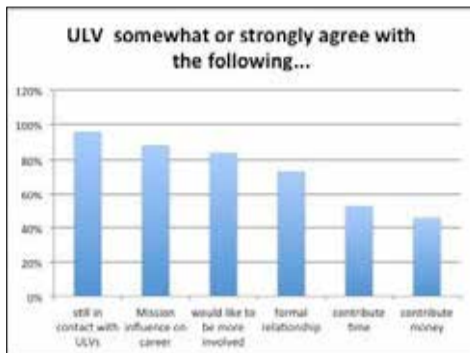
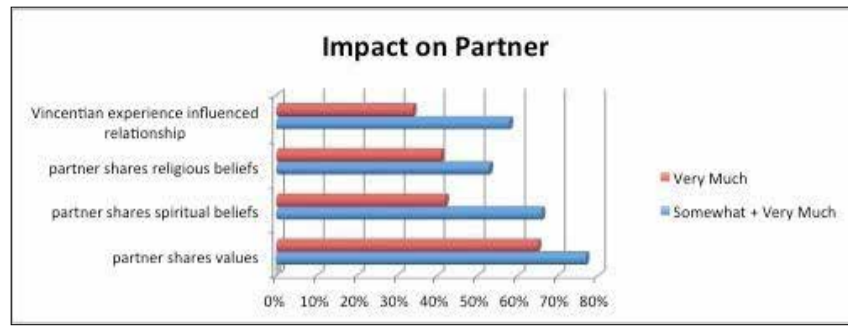


Figure 22.

majority of ULV respondents, seventy-two percent, attended a Catholic university, suggesting that their formative experiences could be understood along a continuum of opportunity and exposure spanning from the college experience or earlier all the way through the post-graduate volunteer experience. It is significant to note that ULVs tend to choose professional fields that could be considered apostolates of the Vincentian Family, including social service, education, and health care.

Unaffiliated Lay Vincentians: religious and spiritual identity

ULV respondents tend to have a well-formed and well-defined spirituality and religious identity that includes a number of distinct markers of formation in the Vincentian tradition. Although seventy-six percent of ULVs were raised as Roman Catholics and only sixty-six percent currently self-identify as Roman Catholic, there are still significant indicators of faith formation and religious practice: sixty-eight percent attend religious services more than *twice per month*, compared to the fifty-one percent of the U.S. adult population that attends religious services *once per year*.

Judging by the results of the survey, the Vincentian mission has had a profound impact on ULVs. Survey respondents were asked how important different aspects of the Vincentian mission were in informing their life choices up to this point. Ninety-six percent of survey respondents said that the Vincentian tenets of “service to, and solidarity with people who are poor and marginalized” has been “somewhat” or “very” important for informing their life choices, including their choice of graduate studies and/or professional careers. Ninety-one percent said that “working for social justice and systemic change to reduce poverty” has been “somewhat” or “very” important for informing their life choices, followed closely by the Vincentian ideals of “living simply” (89% chose “somewhat” or

“very”), and “engaging in ongoing reflection and prayer” (84% chose “somewhat” or “very”).

Respondents were given the opportunity to elaborate on their responses to the question “the most important thing the Vincentian mission has taught me is” and 288 people wrote in a response (82% of all respondents). Themes that occurred most frequently in the responses included the importance of showing hospitality to all people, especially the poor and marginalized, valuing all people one encounters as human beings with dignity and worth, seeing the poor and marginalized as teachers, and living simply and in solidarity with the poor and marginalized.

Each of the interviewees said that the Vincentian mission had a significant impact on their current career choices and daily lives.

As “Louise” describes:

[The Vincentian mission] made my faith make sense to me. The whole idea of being poor as incorrect — we are all in this together, we are all equal. [Vincentians ask]... How do we build each other up? How do we fix the problems that everyone is experiencing in different parts of the world, in our own country? It was the missing puzzle piece that made my faith make sense to me.

In “Elizabeth’s” words:

I think it was just learning how to see the inherit [*sic*] dignity in every person. I have always considered myself [to be] a caring and empathetic person, but to see people, and especially the poor in a way you usually don’t get a chance to see — I grew up in a small town, the poor were not very visible, and in college I didn’t really reach out through a spiritual perspective and now I do. For me, now I look at each person and see Christ in them, and think about how God sees them.

“Vincent” explains:

I [learned] that I was best serving people that didn’t have the same upbringing that I was given. So for me that’s my gift now — to find a place where I can be an advocate for these [underprivileged] kids and their families.

The comments from “Louise,” “Elizabeth,” and “Vincent” point to a number of markers of Vincentian formation that were communicated to ULV participants during their programs and continue to be important factors for their life choices. The ULV experience was formative in profound ways. It might even be viewed as a parallel to the formative novitiate experience for members of the Congregation of the Mission or Daughters of Charity at a time when people are discerning what to do, where to live, who to become, and a variety of other existential questions that come into play after the college experience.

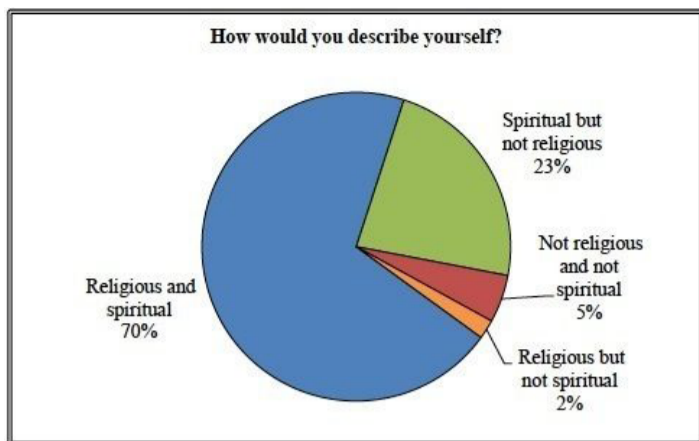


Figure 23.



One of the primary factors bolstering the narrative of decline with regard to the religiosity of Millennials is the recent growth in the number of people who self-identify as spiritual, not religious, or neither spiritual nor religious. There are a growing number of religiously unaffiliated.³¹ The ULV survey asked respondents to identify if they considered themselves to be religious and spiritual, religious but not spiritual, spiritual but not religious, and not religious and not spiritual. It also included an open-ended question for respondents to elaborate. As previously stated, a majority of ULVs self-identify as Roman Catholic (66%), but seventy percent of respondents describe themselves as being both religious *and* spiritual, whereas only twenty-three percent say spiritual but not religious, and five percent say not religious and not spiritual. Post-Vatican II respondents (85%) are more likely than Millennial respondents (66%) to describe themselves as religious and spiritual. Millennials (25%) are more likely than Post-Vatican II respondents (14%) to describe themselves as being spiritual but not religious. Compared to other adult Catholics in the United States, ULVs are more likely to attend Mass weekly and to have considered a vocation of religious life and/or ordained ministry.

Respondents were invited to interpret the terms “religious” and “spiritual” as they saw fit. Some examples of their interpretations of “religious” include the importance of having a formal relationship with religious traditions, believing in the tenets of faith and religious traditions, and attending religious services or participating in congregational life. Interpretations of the term “spiritual” were varied but typically fell into the following categories: having a personal relationship and experience of God outside of a communal one; experiencing God through prayer and/or meditation; experiencing faith in service to others; and finding God and religious truth in more than one religious tradition.

One respondent explained identifying as both religious and spiritual by stating:

³¹ See “Religion and the Unaffiliated,” *Pew Research Center’s Religion & Public Life Project*, at: <http://www.pewforum.org/2012/10/09/nones-on-the-rise-religion/> (Accessed 6 February 2015); “‘Strong’ Catholic Identity at a Four-Decade Low in U.S.,” *Pew Research Center’s Religion & Public Life Project*, at: <http://www.pewforum.org/2013/03/13/strong-catholic-identity-at-a-four-decade-low-in-us/> (Accessed 6 February 2015).

I would say I am religious because I attend regular services at a Catholic church. I would say I am spiritual because I believe in experiencing God in all things and it is not necessary for me to attend Mass in order to practice this side of my spirituality.

Another stated:

I find beauty in the Eucharist and Mass as a whole. I also consider myself spiritual in the sense that I find God in nature and yoga and in other religions besides Roman Catholicism.

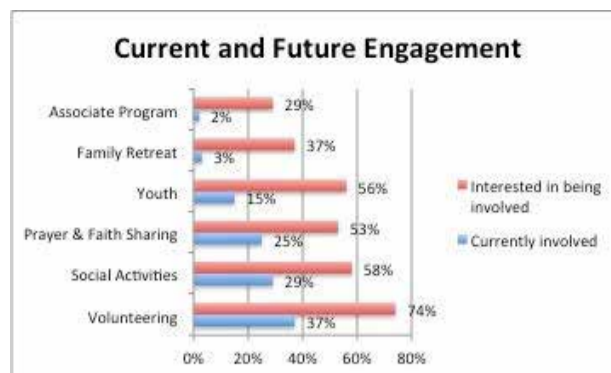
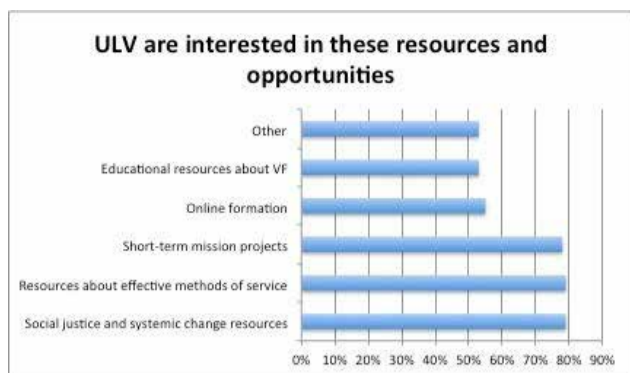
Another described the disconnection between religiosity and spirituality as follows:

I do attend Mass every so often and believe in the Catholic Church — however, I am not overly religious in that I don't attend Mass regularly/go to church for confessionals. I do pray daily (I don't often recite rote prayers) and believe in helping those who live on the margins to the best of my ability in a manner that respects people's dignity and autonomy. I believe in the power of human understanding and human connections that go beyond organized religion.

"Vincent" stated that he felt more spiritual than religious. When asked to explain he replied, "I feel more spiritual in that I can see God in different ways, not just in the Church." "Louise" and Elizabeth," however, chose to describe themselves as being equally religious and spiritual, but said they felt they could do better at both. "Elizabeth" explained:

I feel like the more you dig into your faith, the more you realize there is so much you don't know. The more I work at it [...the less spiritual and religious I feel]. There is so much out there. I could always be doing better.

When examining religiosity and spirituality, ULVs attend weekly Mass more often than their Catholic counterparts and generally describe themselves as being both spiritual and religious. However, the way individual ULVs describe religiosity and spirituality differs considerably from person-to-person. Like others of the Millennial and Post-Vatican II generations, many have begun to differentiate between being active members of the Church because they attend Mass, and being active members of the Church because they live out the tenets of the faith in their daily lives. A complete analysis of this particular question is beyond the scope of this paper, and further analysis would be very beneficial; however, the general trend lines of an active and personal appropriation of religious faith is clearly evident.



One Thing Would Like to See the Vincentian Family Organize in My Area

Respondents were invited to write in a response to finish this sentence: “The one thing I would like to see the Vincentian family organize in my area is...” Some 201 wrote in a response, or 57 percent of all respondents.

While respondents’ answers and descriptions varied widely, these 16 answers appear most often in their responses:

- Short term volunteer opportunities
- Volunteer opportunities for families
- Service with reflection or education
- Social events
- Networking events
- Young adult groups
- Groups for service and faith sharing
- A program for education and formation in the Vincentian tradition
- Young adult conference
- Reunions for year of service alumni
- Retreats
- An SVDP more proactive in raising the profile of the Vincentian mission
- Outreach around existing Vincentian organizations
- Outreach to at-risk children
- Outreach to college students
- Community services like a soup kitchen, food bank or clothes drive

Figure 24.;
Figure 25.;
Figure 26.



Engaging the Unaffiliated

The findings from the survey suggest that the primary challenges facing ULVs is not necessarily ensuring that they understand and live out the tenets of Vincentian spirituality, since that appears to be the case already, but rather it is helping ULVs stay connected to each other and to the Vincentian Family in the future. Only fourteen percent of survey respondents said they are still “very” involved with the Vincentian Family, and thirty-five percent said they were “somewhat” involved. This may be partially due to location. Only fifty-nine percent of respondents said there were Vincentian priests or brothers within 45 minutes of their house, fifty-seven percent near Daughters of Charity, and forty-two percent close to another group or organization committed to the Vincentian mission. The majority of survey respondents are either unaware of Vincentian organizations nearby their place of residence, or there are not Vincentians or Vincentian organizations in close proximity, causing some ULVs to feel disconnected from the mission. Despite these geographic challenges, eighty-four percent said they would like to be more involved with the Vincentian mission.

ULVs generally remain connected to each other and to others with whom they have experienced the Vincentian mission. Ninety-six percent reported staying in contact with people they met through their experiences with the Vincentian mission, and seventy-three percent said that they would like their relationship with others who share the Vincentian mission to be more formal and ongoing.



St. Vincent's Circle. Located next to the Richardson Library on the DePaul University Lincoln Park campus.

Image Collection of the Vincentian Studies Institute



In the form of an open-ended question, ULVs were offered the opportunity to share how they believe the Vincentian mission could address their needs and to help them remain connected to the mission. Respondents were in one of two main categories: those who live near other Vincentians, either lay or religious; and those who live in places where there is no significant Vincentian presence. Those who live in areas that do not currently have a Vincentian Family presence are still eager to stay involved and connected to the mission. Respondents suggested having a specific website for young adults that could serve as a bulletin board for ULVs. The website could include formation materials, information about regional or local gatherings, and service opportunities and updates on the happenings of the Vincentian Family both nationally and internationally. This could be a space where ULVs who live in areas without a Vincentian presence could 'check in' with Vincentians. It would also serve as a way to network ULVs who do live in areas where there is a Vincentian presence but are not sure what is happening or how to connect. Creating a Young Adult-focused, Vincentian E-newsletter was also suggested as another method of communication with ULVs.

Responses varied but several common themes emerged, including the opportunity for service. ULVs are looking for various ways to participate in Vincentian service opportunities, but busy schedules, finances, and geographical location make it difficult. ULVs identified a variety of options for potential participation: longer-term service options (such as the Vincentian Lay Missionaries which offers four week programs), half-day options, weekend-long 'plunge' experiences, and evening gatherings with a service component were all mentioned as viable options that would appeal to ULVs.

In addition to service opportunities, ULVs also suggested formal and informal ways to connect with each other and with the Vincentian Family. This may include local and/or regional day or weekend retreats, social gatherings after Mass in Vincentian parishes, and Bible studies. Many respondents indicated they would appreciate programming that is family-friendly, or has a family option, as more ULVs begin to raise families.

"Louise," who is currently married with children, and "Vincent," who is married and planning on starting a family soon, indicated that family-friendly opportunities are essential, yet are significantly harder to attend due to financial restrictions, location, and the necessity of advanced planning.

As “Louise” describes:

It’s hard, especially with the situation I am currently in, being married with small kids. Since we don’t live close to our family, we pretty much only ever travel to visit family. I think a part of it is just prior planning. The amount of prior planning that needs to go into travel when you’re no longer single — things have to get on the calendar early. Regional stuff is all good, but even when people are in the same city it’s still hard to get together. When you’re not even in the same city, it can be kind of hard to make that happen.

Additional suggestions included more opportunities for full-time, paid, employment in the Vincentian Family, or a mentorship program for recent college graduates or for those who have completed a year of service to have a connection with ULV alumni/ae that have had similar intensive mission-immersive experiences. ULVs also suggested the possibility of creating a formal lay associates program similar to the Jesuit Contemplative Leaders in Action program or Ignatian Associates.

Students and graduates of Vincentian universities indicated they would appreciate learning more about Vincentian community and service opportunities that exist after the college experience. For example, a graduate of St. John’s University moving to Denver could be connected to the Vincentian community there by his/her campus ministers or professors before leaving school.

Conclusion

In many ways, ULVs indicate a strong desire to continue in their formative mission-immersive experience, but do not currently have a community, a structure, or a format for doing so. Considering the findings from the ULV survey, there are three overarching insights for building a stronger relationship with ULVs. First, the narrative of decline and diminishment needs to become a narrative of opportunity, of growth, and of meaningful engagement. If Millennial Catholics are judged by the religious and cultural practices forged by a different generation in a different American cultural context, there will always be an undercurrent of loss, decay, demise. To the contrary, if Millennial Catholics are viewed with an eye that is attentive to the signs of the times and a mind that sees the ways in which the hand of Providence continues “to make all things new,”³² then unaffiliated lay Vincentians may well have an essential role to play in the future of the Vincentian Family in the United States.

Second, it is essential to take into consideration some seismic generational shifts that continue to differentiate Millennial Catholics and Post-Vatican II Catholics from their elders. Changing views on the importance of the sacramental life, evolving patterns of spiritual and religious self-identification, openness and interest in non-Catholic, non-Christian, and

³² Rev. 21:5.

secular traditions, all suggest that the established branches of the Vincentian Family must consider what is and what is not foundational to the Vincentian charism. These are not easy questions. In fact, they may well establish a boundary between what is considered to be authentically and uniquely Vincentian and a compelling form of humanism that marks a broader cultural trend. While this does not suggest that Vatican II and Pre-Vatican II Catholics should downplay the formative elements of their own spiritual and religious identity, it does suggest that new forms of engagement should create a hospitable space for Millennials who do not share the same spiritual and religious self-understanding. Are there some well-established practices that might slowly fade away without losing the *esprit primitif* that all religious orders were called to recover at Vatican II? Are there opportunities to engage religious otherness in ways that are mutually affirmative, yet maintain distinction and difference? Can the Vincentian Family share a common commitment to “search out more than ever, with boldness, humility and skill, the causes of poverty and encourage short and long term solutions; adaptable and effective concrete solutions”? And by doing so, can the Vincentian Family “work for the credibility of the Gospel and of the Church,” as Saint John Paul II asked of the Congregation of the Mission in 1986?³³

Lastly, the findings indicate that the ULV population is interested in opportunities for ongoing formation in the Vincentian charism and wants a closer connection to the Vincentian Family. As more opportunities for engagement emerge, it is vital for older generations to share their lived experiences and their faith experience with a new generation, and to listen attentively to the lived experience, desires, and hopes of a new generation of young men and women who also seek to be good news to the poor.



³³ “Pope John Paul II address to the General Assembly of the Congregation of the Mission in 1986” in *Vincentiana* 30:5-6 (November-December 1986), 417. Available at: <http://via.library.depaul.edu/vincentiana/vol30/iss5/>



Fullerton Avenue entrance to the DePaul University campus quadrangle.

Public Domain



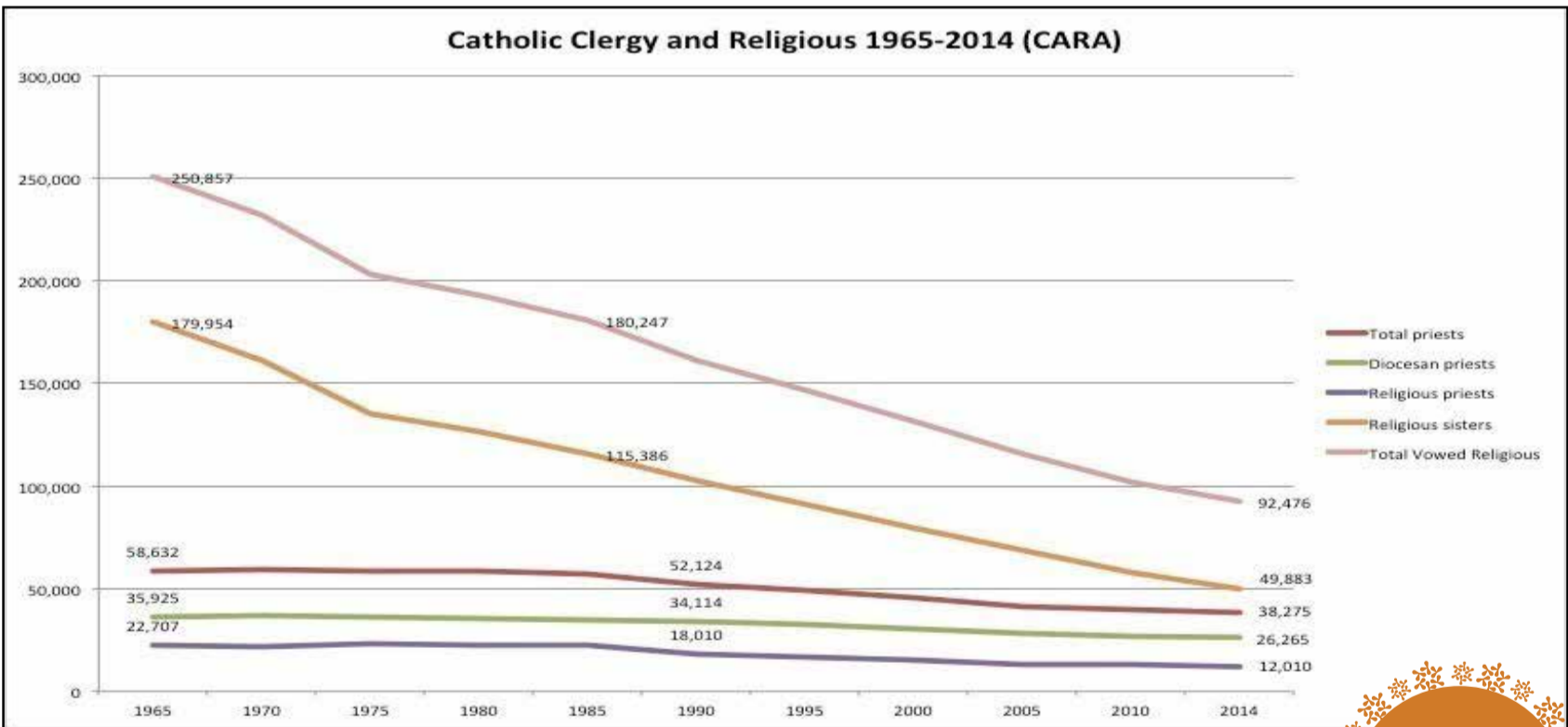
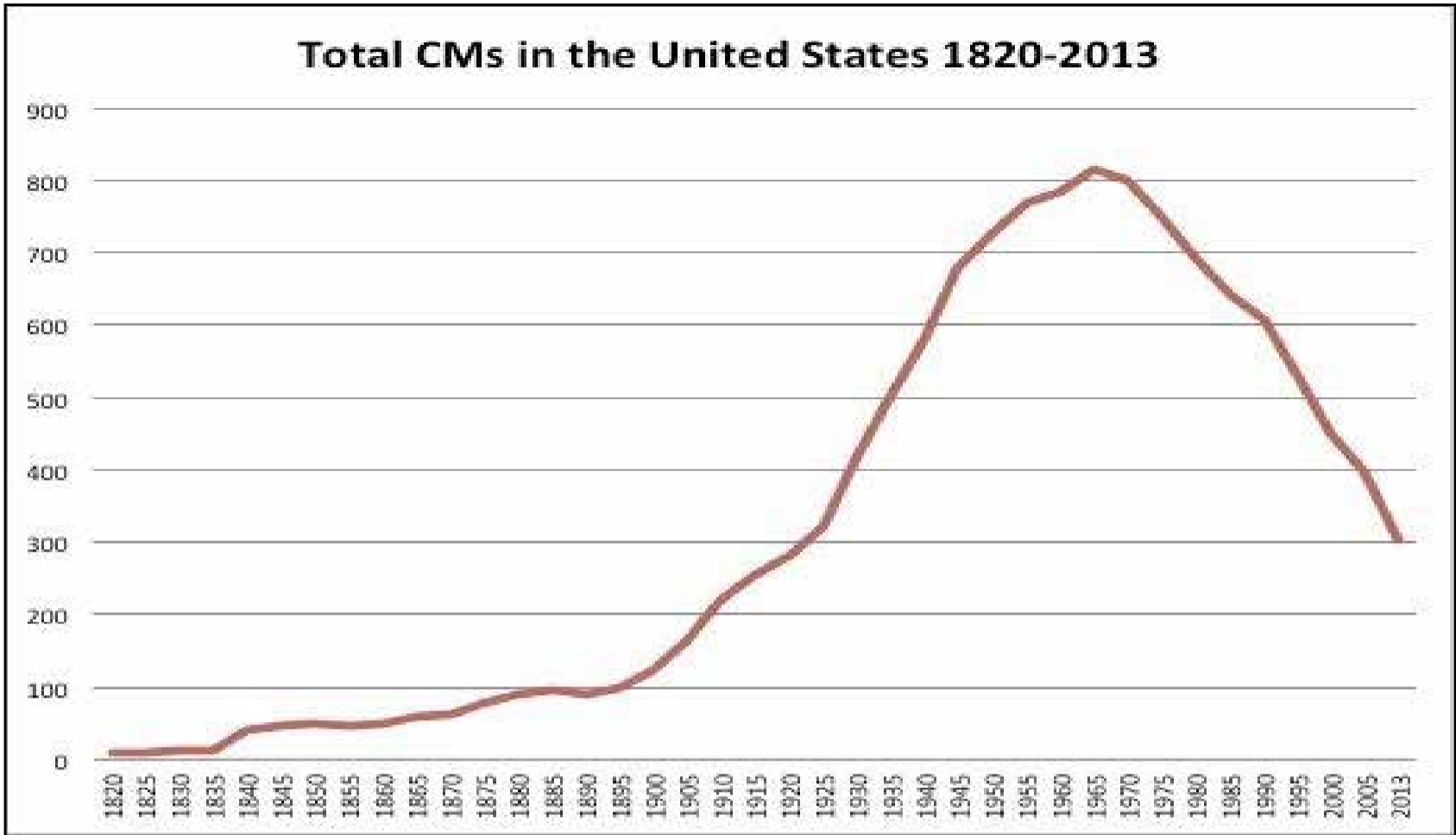


Figure 1. Created by Scott Kelley. Source: Personnel Studies and Statistical Analyses. Personnel Files, DeAndreis-Rosati Memorial Archives, Special Collections and Archives, DePaul University.

Figure 2. Created by Scott Kelley based on data from CARA.
<http://cara.georgetown.edu/CARAServices/requestedchurchstats.html>



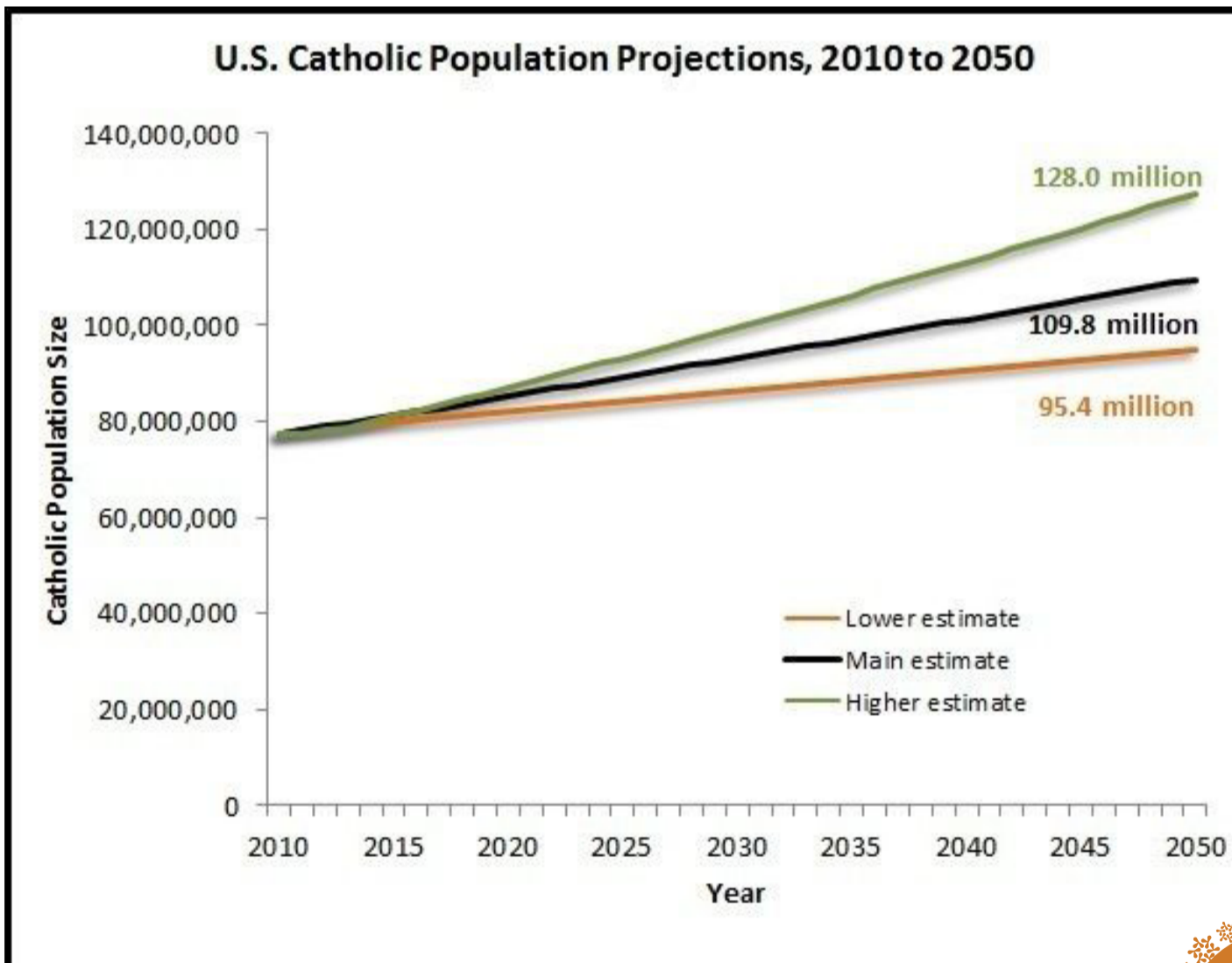
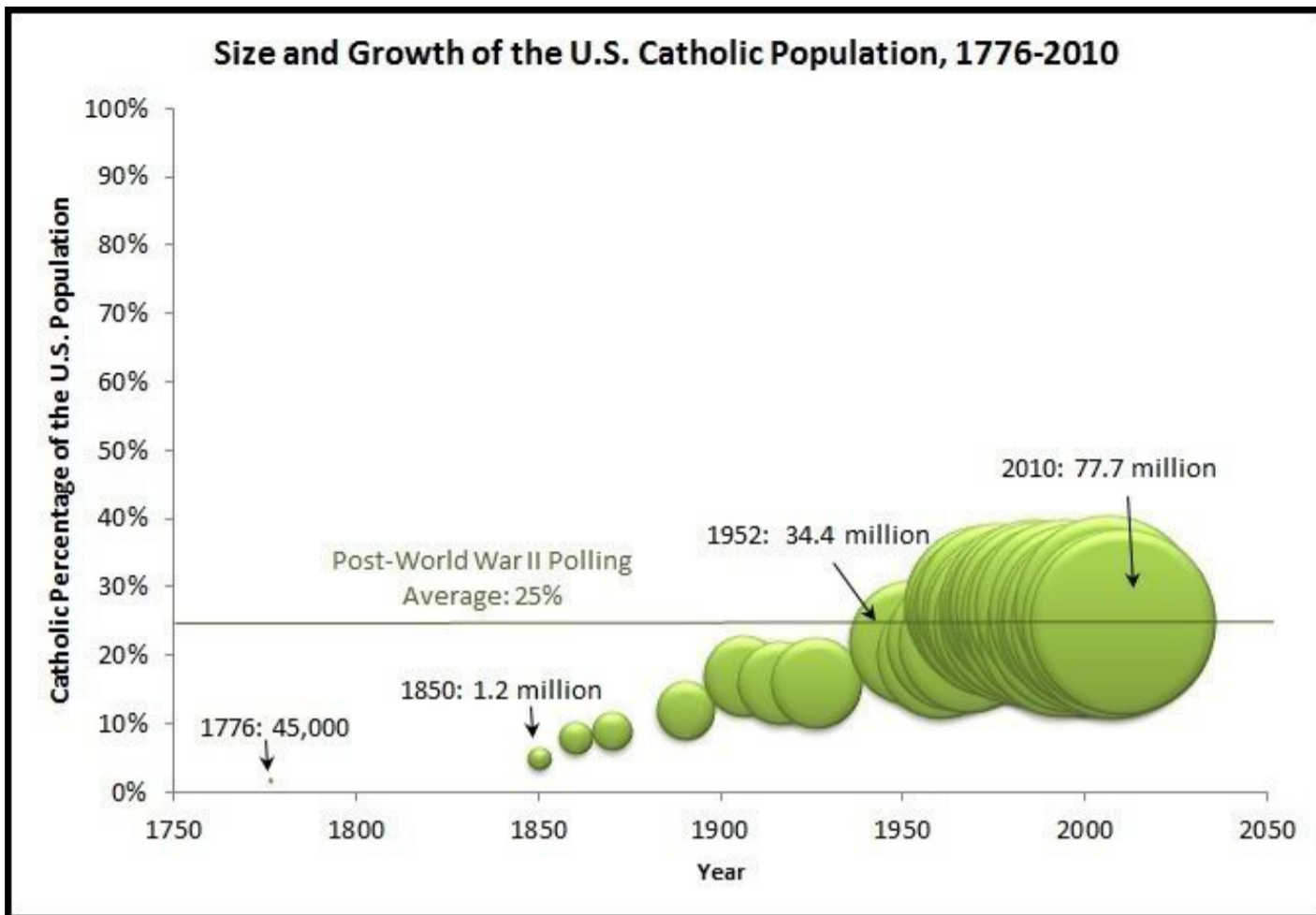
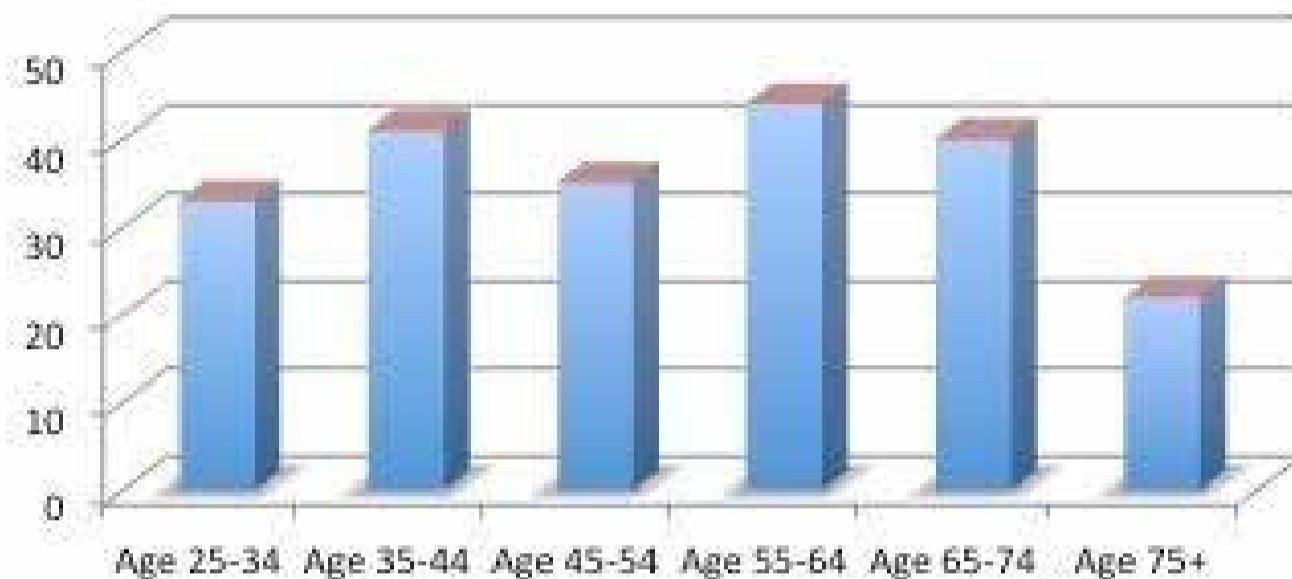


Figure 3.; Figure 4.

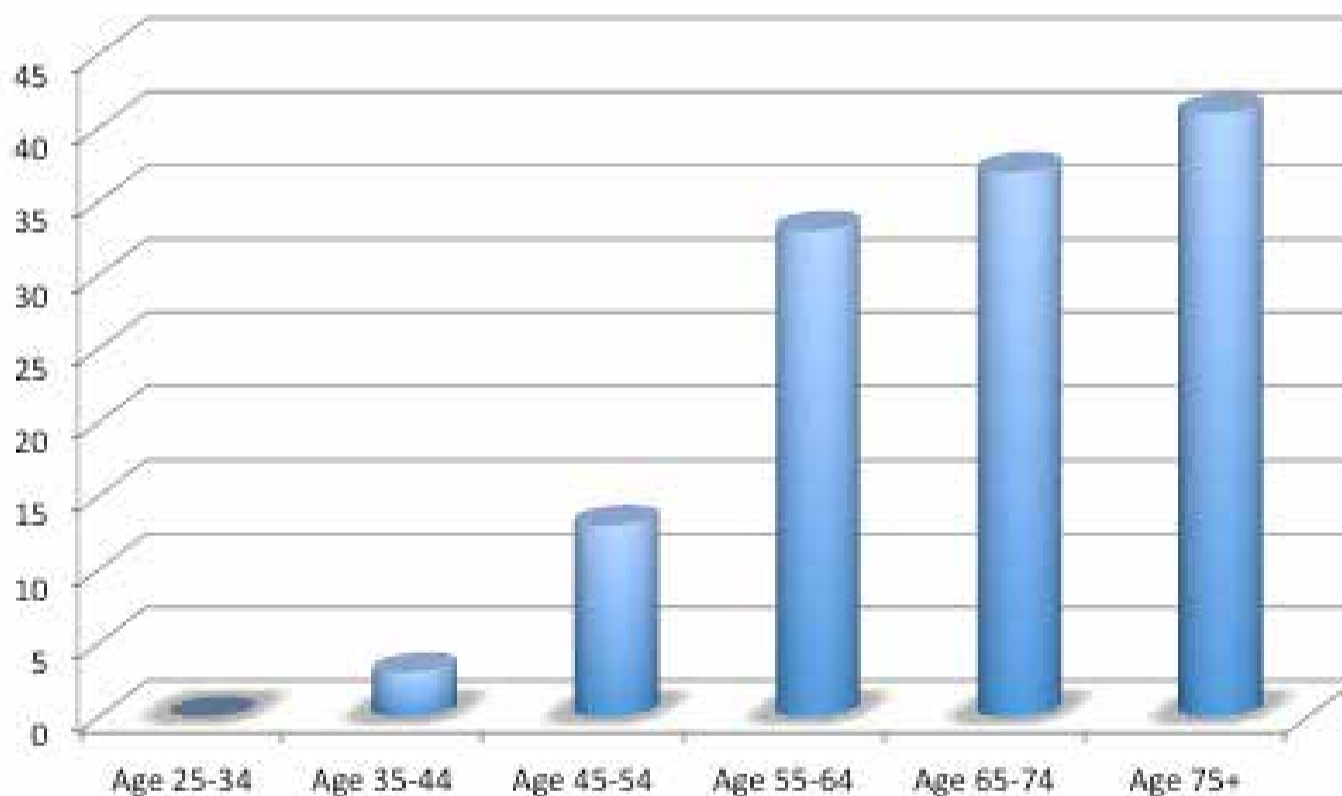
Images from Gautier PPT, data from CARA. <http://nineteensixty-four.blogspot.com/2010/11/pies-damned-pies-and-statistics-is.html>



Midwest Province Age Distribution in 1985



Western Province Age Distribution in 2014*



[click to go back to article](#)

Figure 5. Created by Scott Kelley. Source: Personnel Studies and Statistical Analyses. Personnel Files, DeAndreis-Rosati Memorial Archives, Special Collections and Archives, DePaul University.

Figure 6. Created by Scott Kelley. Source: Personnel Studies and Statistical Analyses. Personnel Files, DeAndreis-Rosati Memorial Archives, Special Collections and Archives, DePaul University.

* On 25 January 2010, the Congregation of the Mission's provinces of the Midwest (St. Louis), South (Dallas), and West (Los Angeles) merged into a new Western province that is headquartered in St. Louis. As a result of the merger, the age distribution data in 1985 and 2014 may not correspond exactly.

Change in Catholic Population and Parishes, 2001-2011

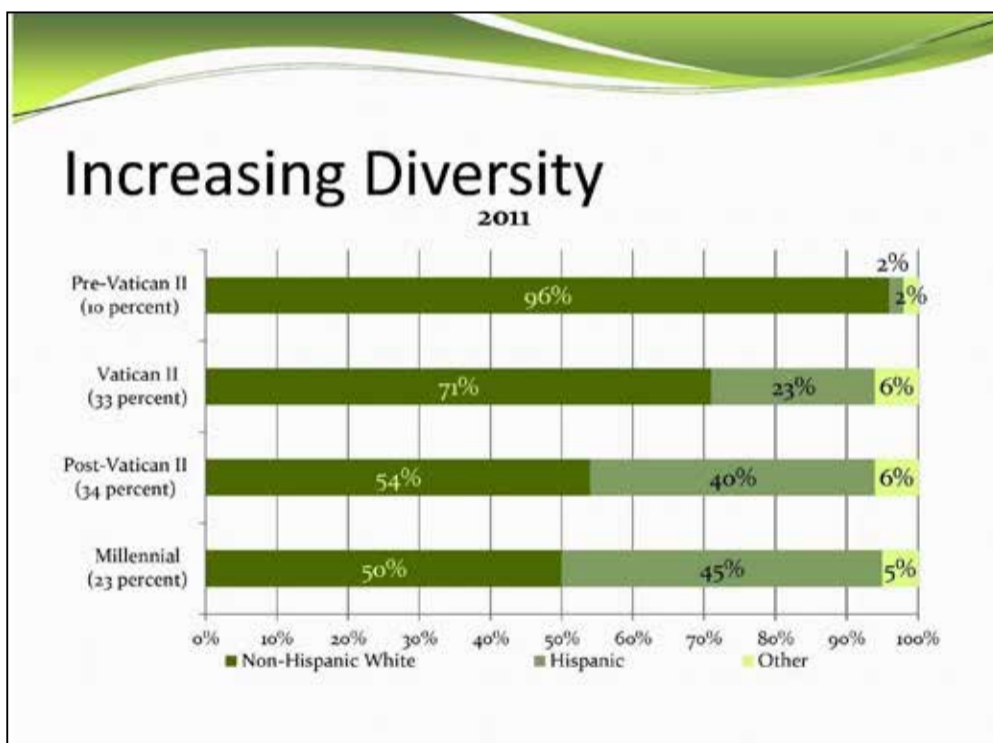
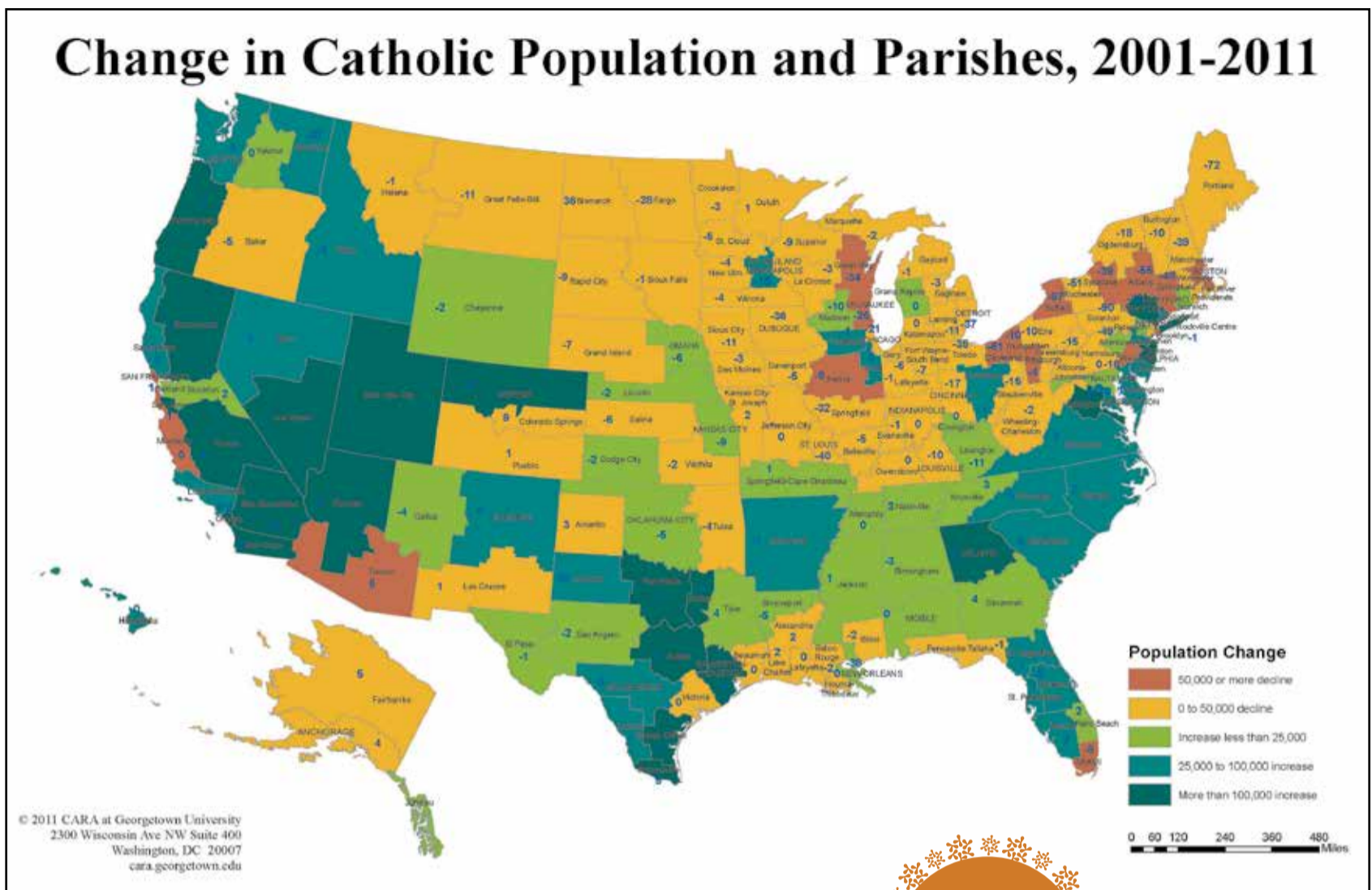


Figure 7. Used with permission from CARA © 2011 CARA at Georgetown University. <http://cara.georgetown.edu>

Figure 8. From Gautier PPT.

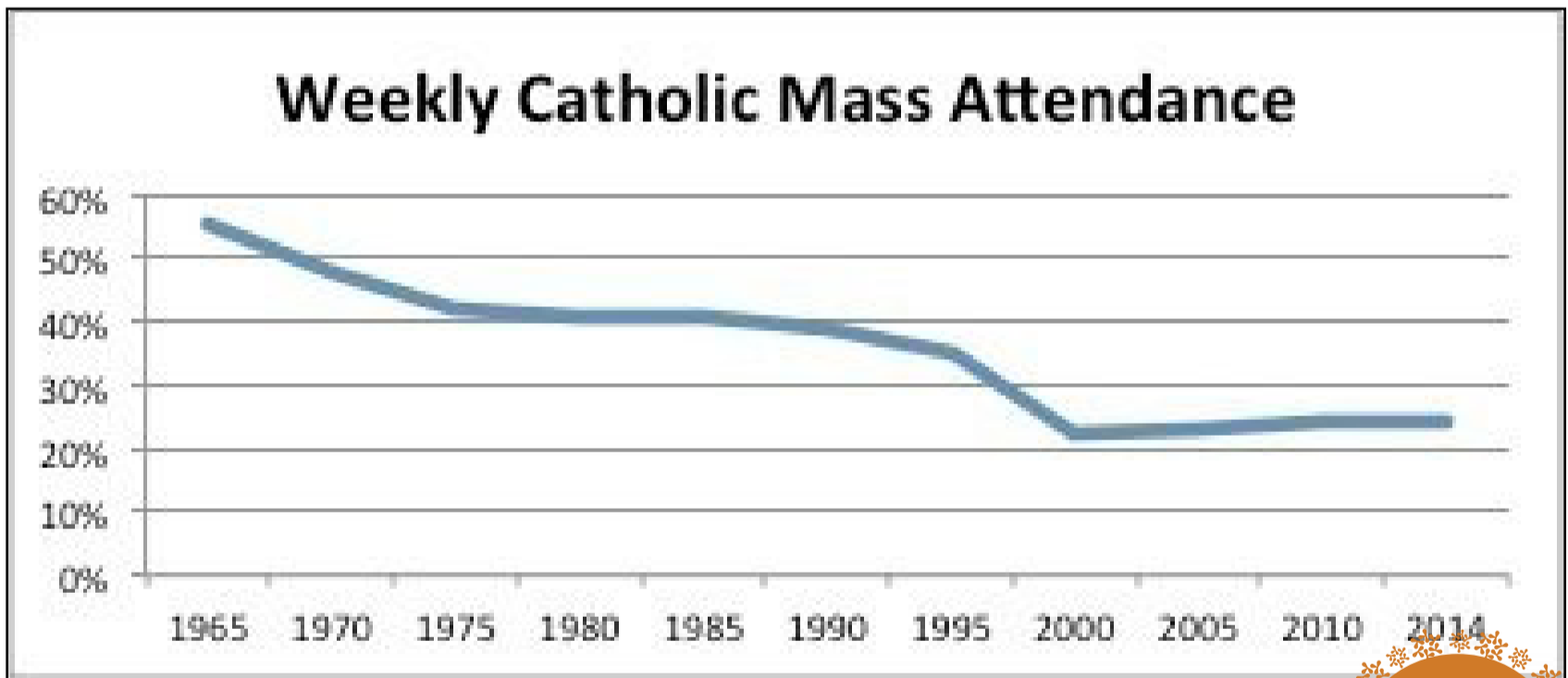
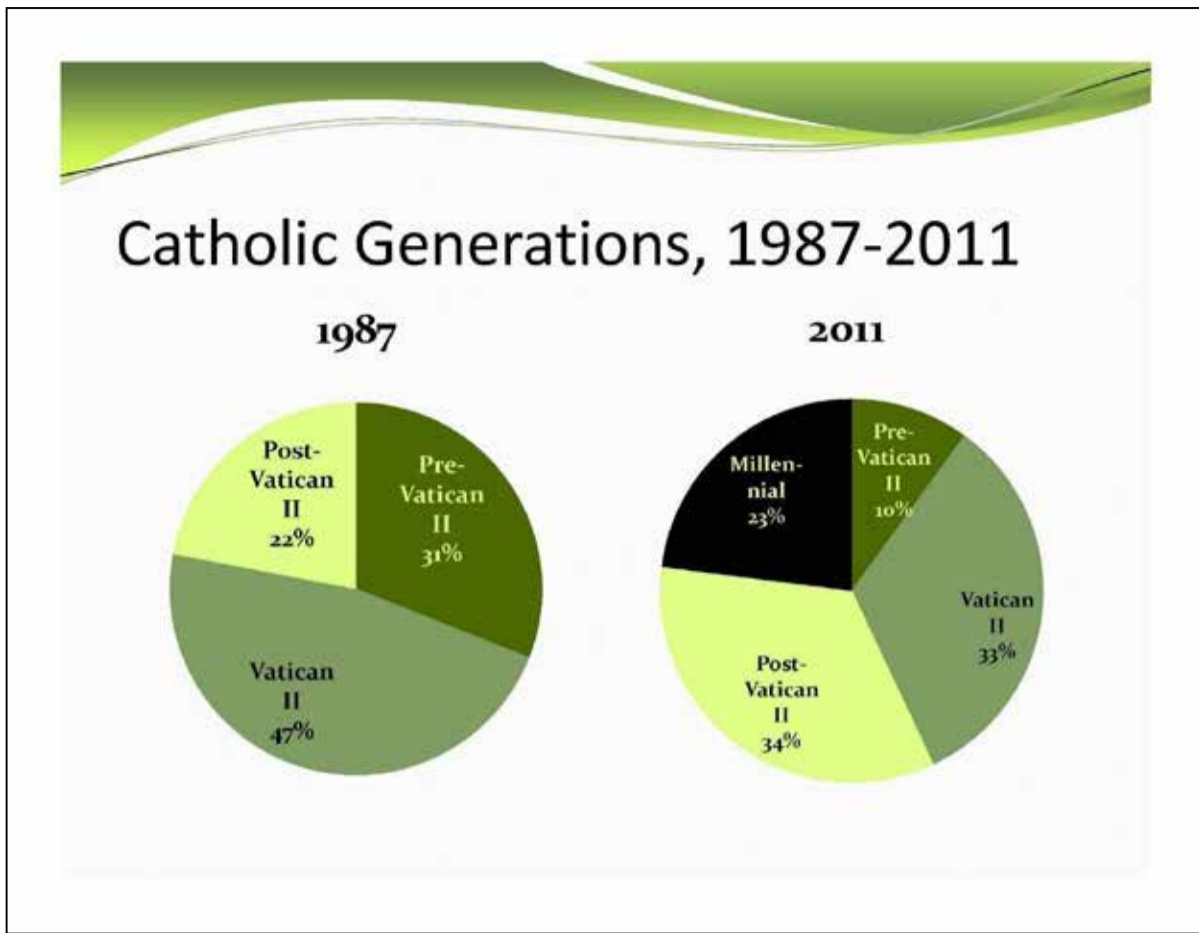


Figure 9. From Gautier PPT.

Figure 10. Created by Scott Kelley from Mass Attendance figures in "Frequently Asked Church Statistics," CARA.
<http://cara.georgetown.edu/caraservices/requestedchurchstats.html>



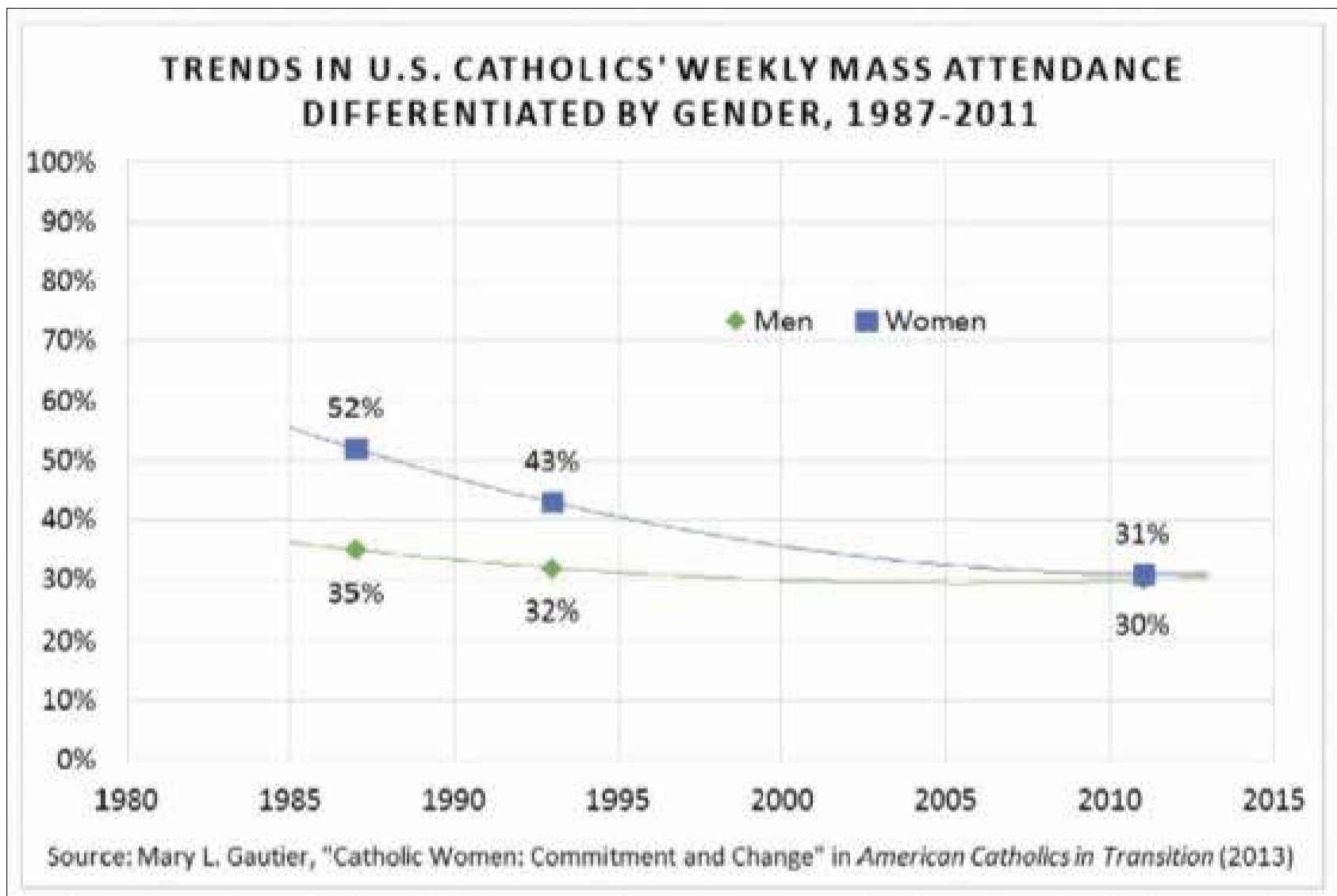


Figure 11.



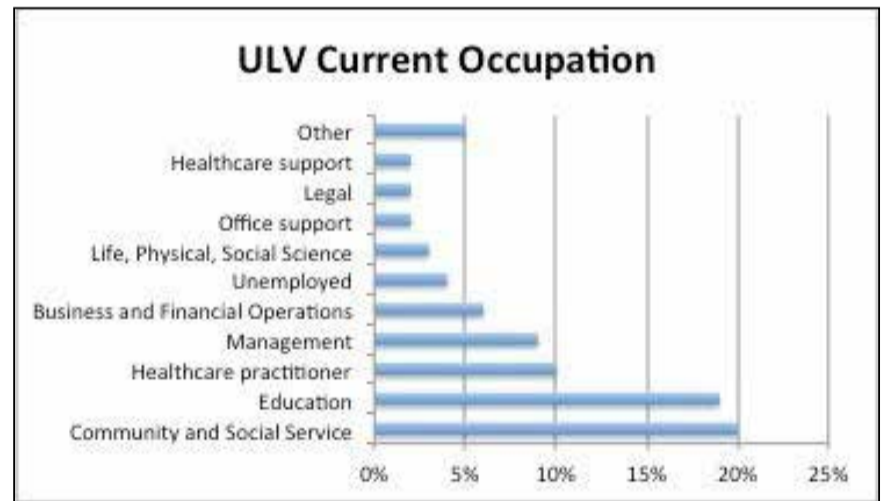
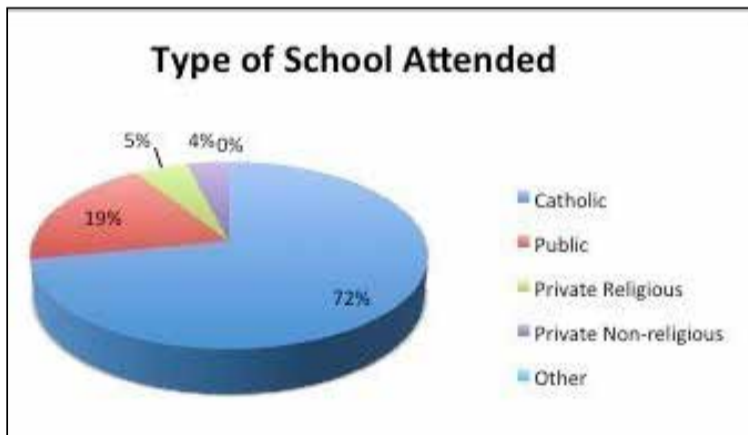
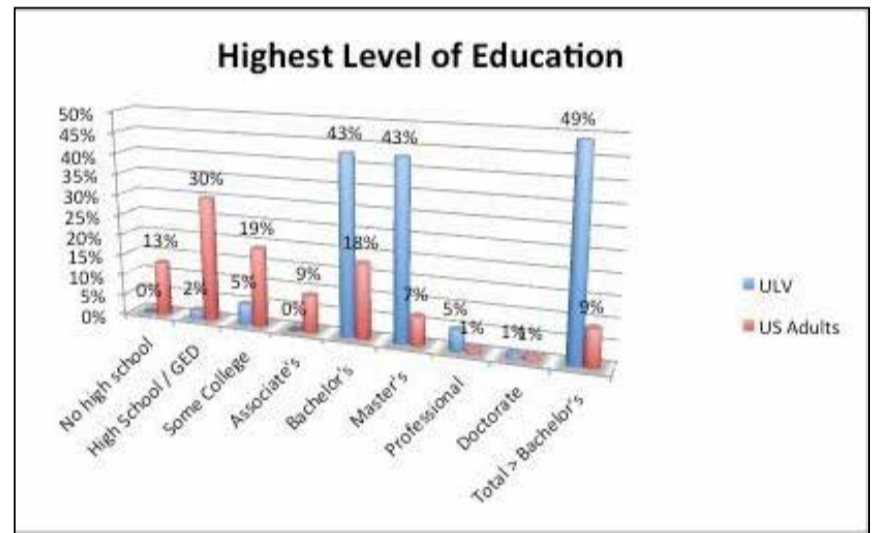
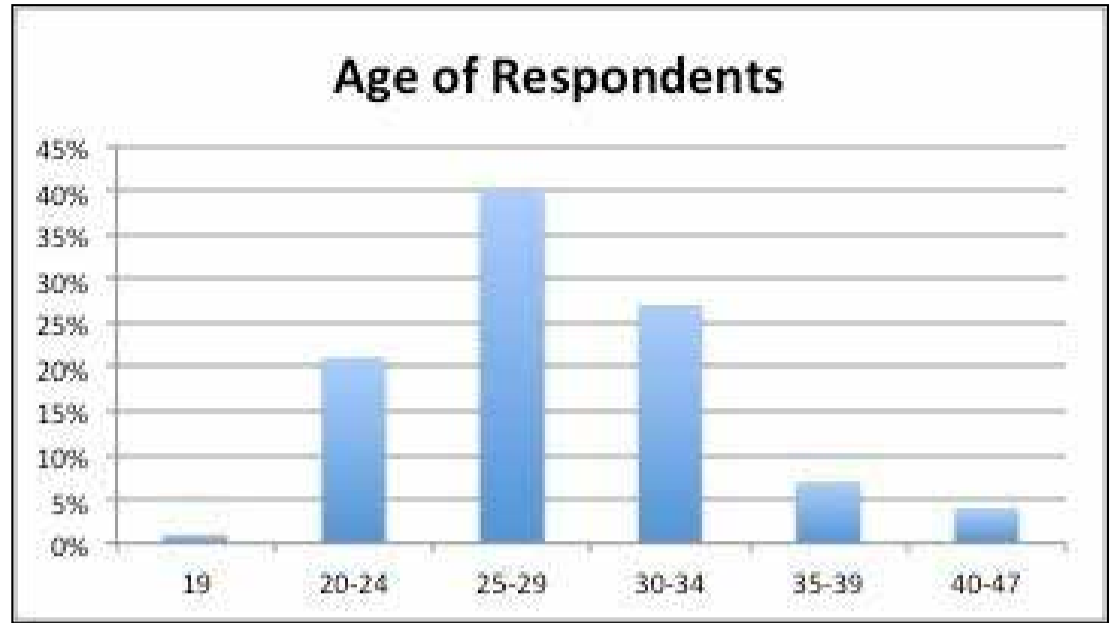
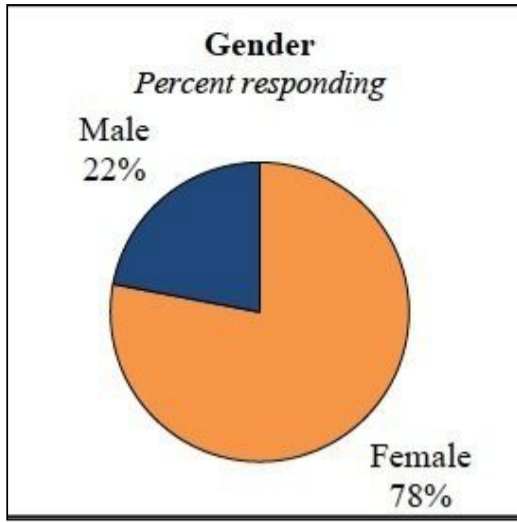


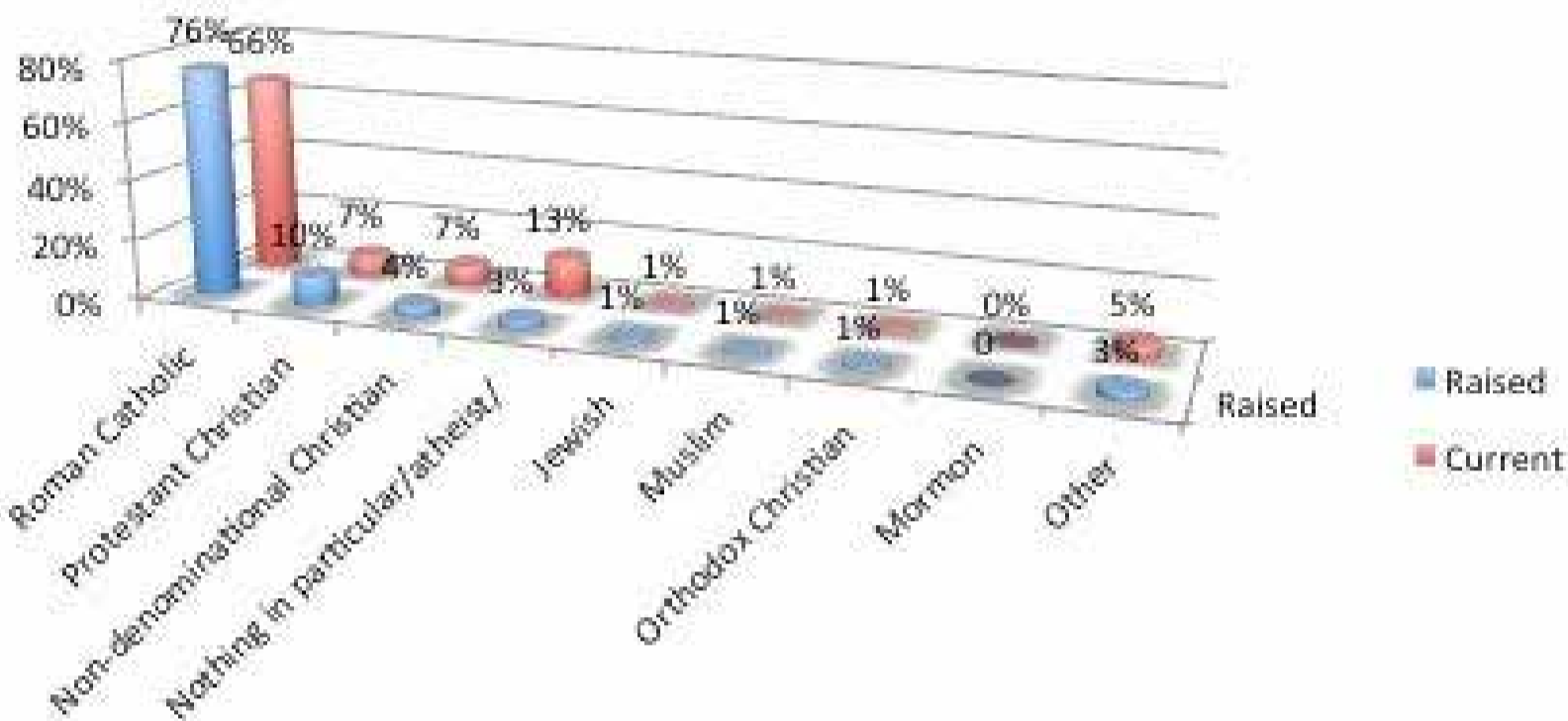
Figure 12.; Figure 13.

Figure 14.; Figure 15.

Figure 16.; Figure 17.



Religious Preference



Religious Service Attendance

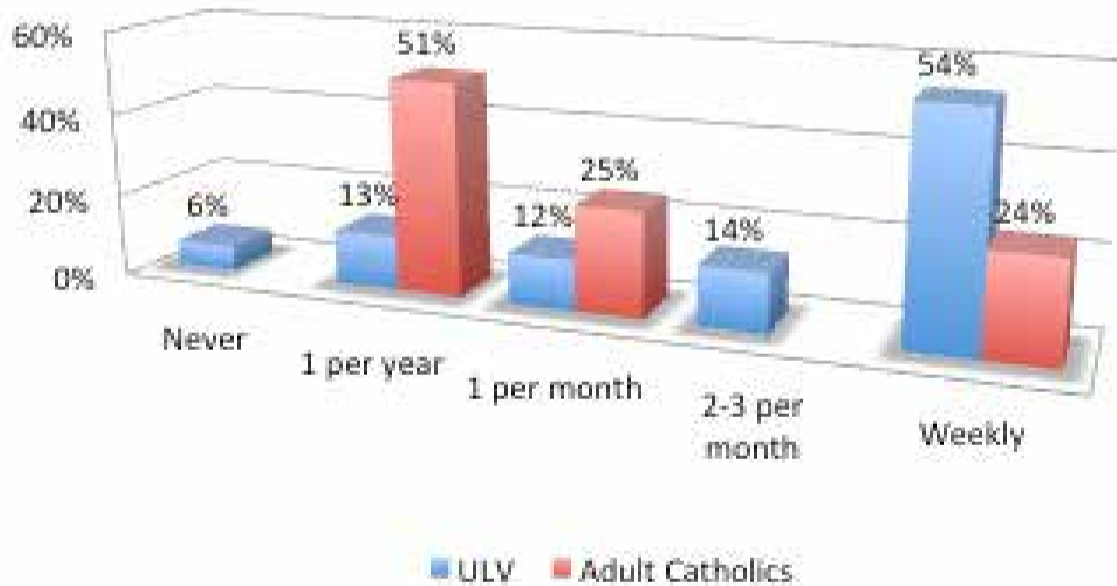


Figure 18.; Figure 19.



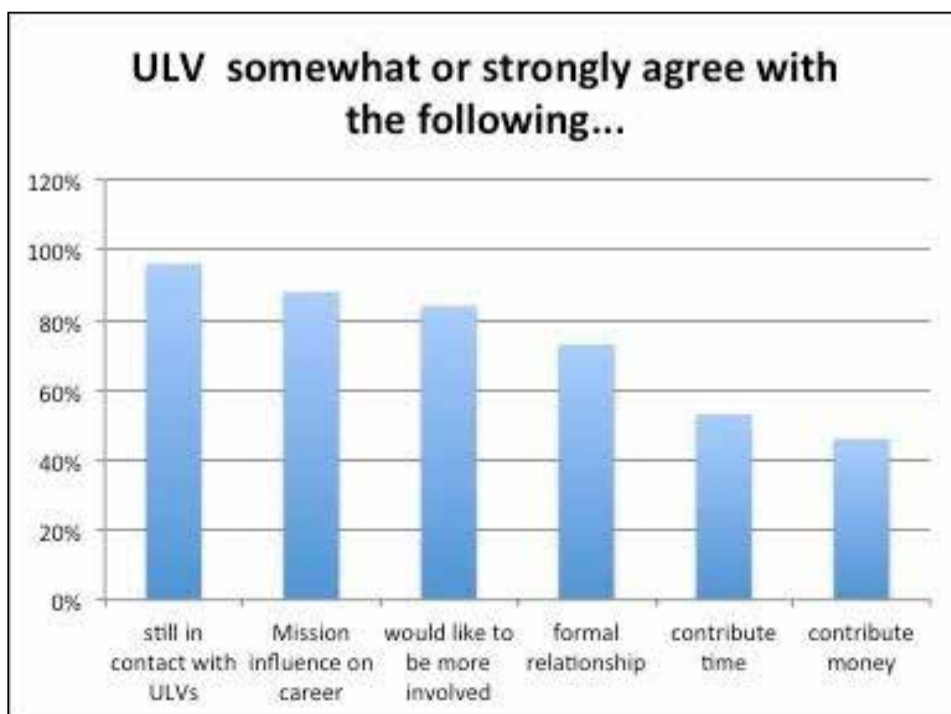
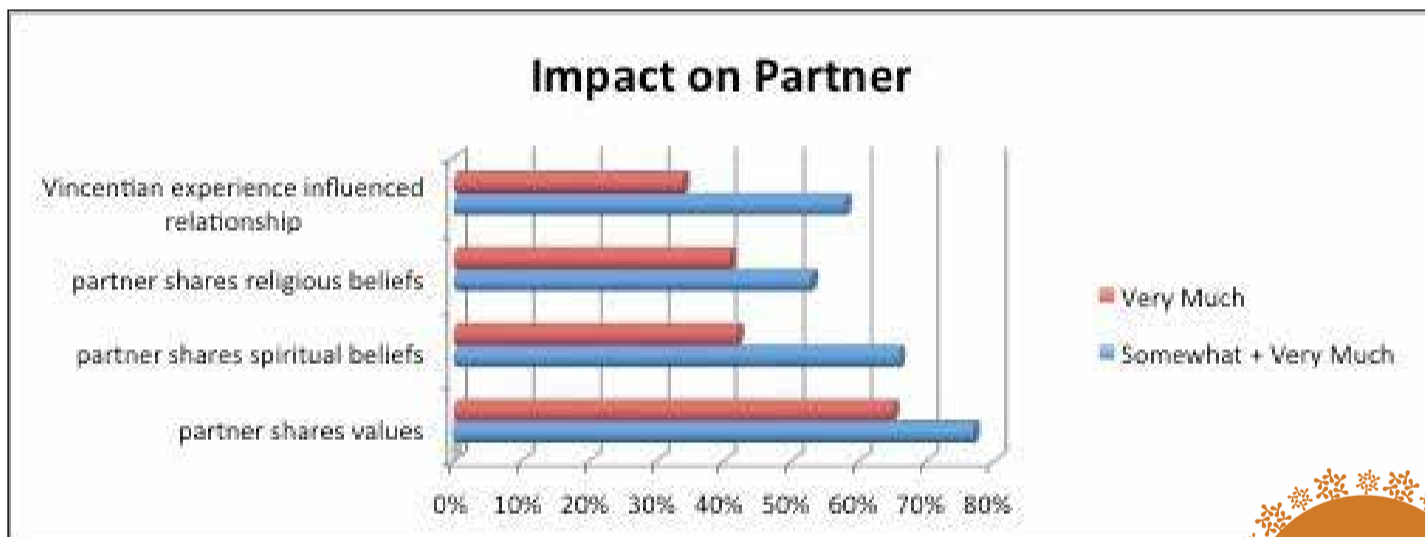
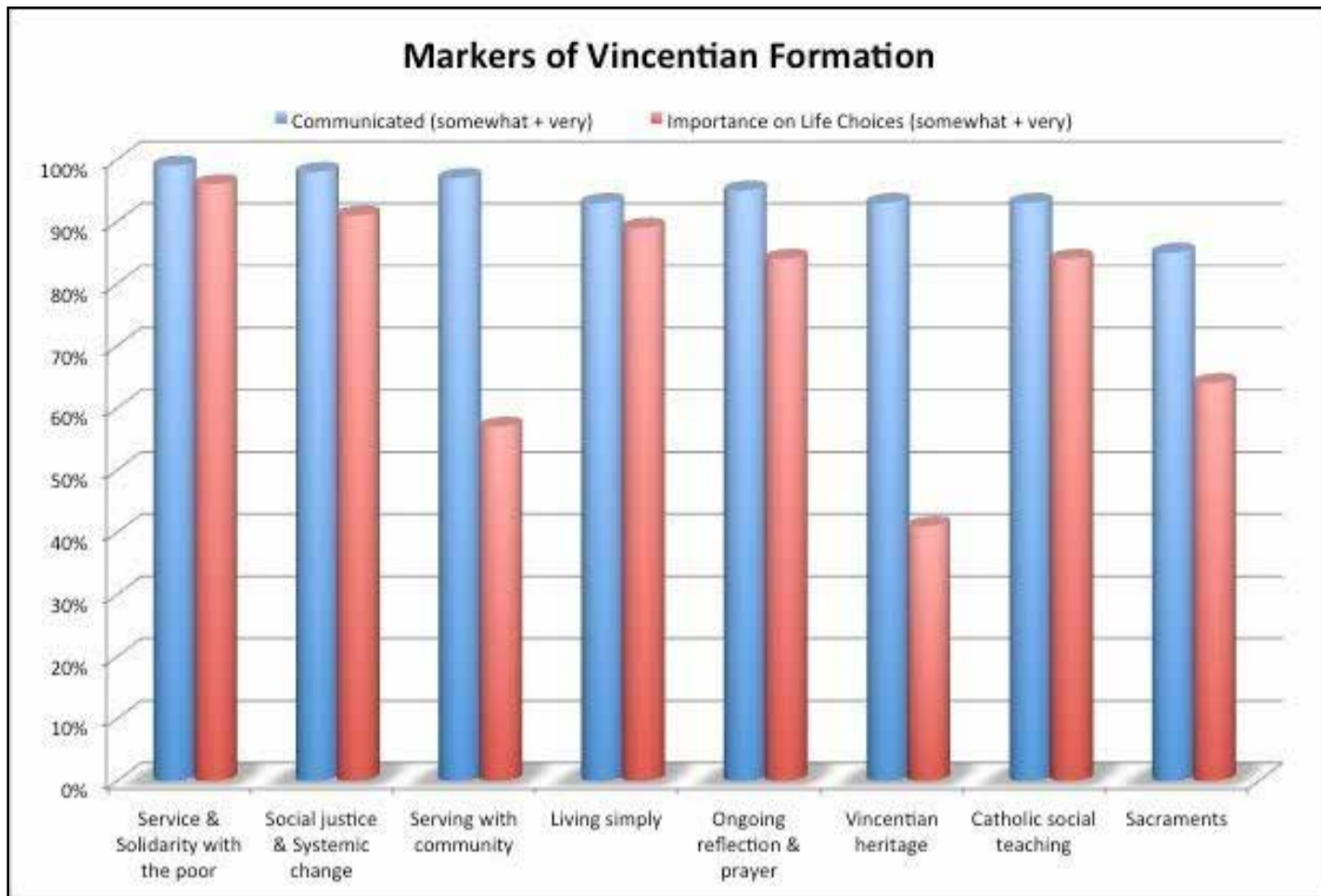


Figure 20.;
Figure 21.;
Figure 22.

How would you describe yourself?

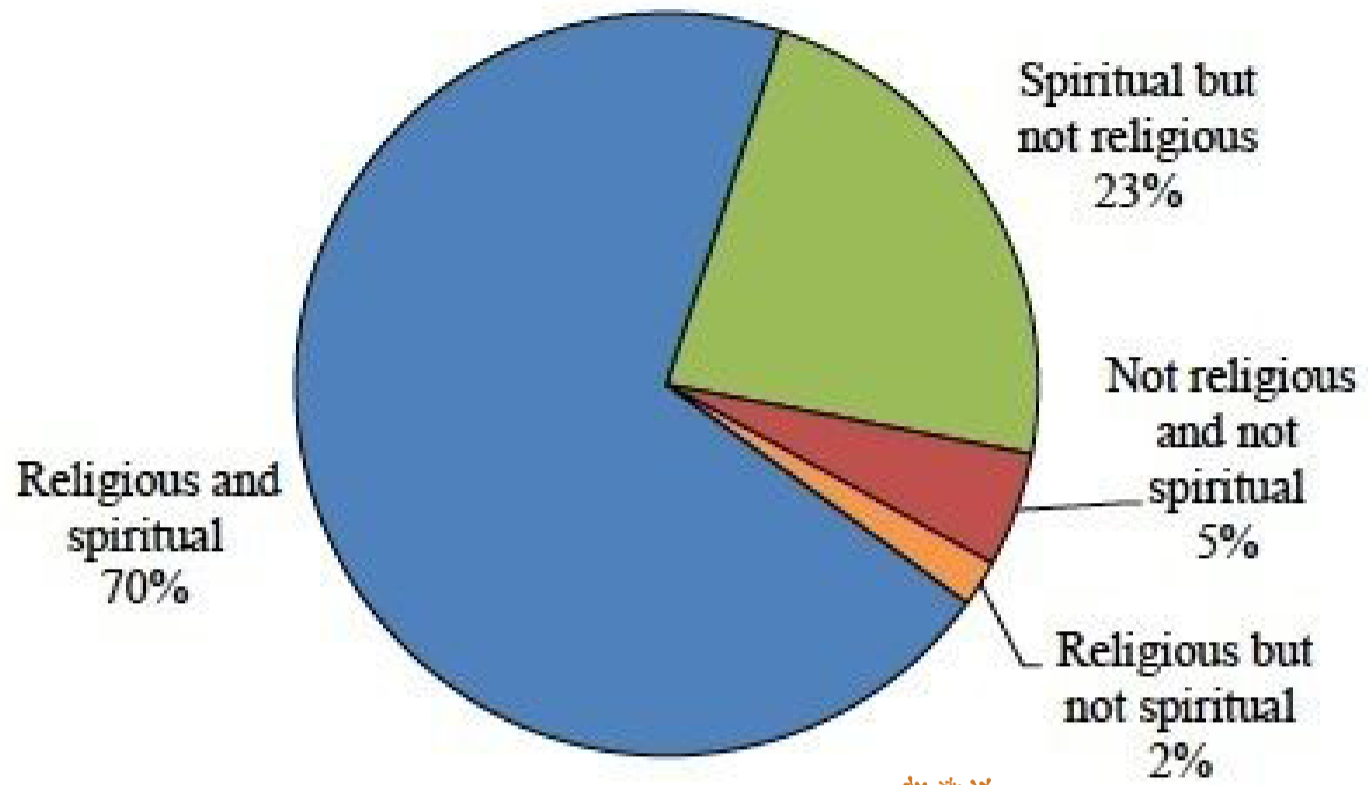


Figure 23.

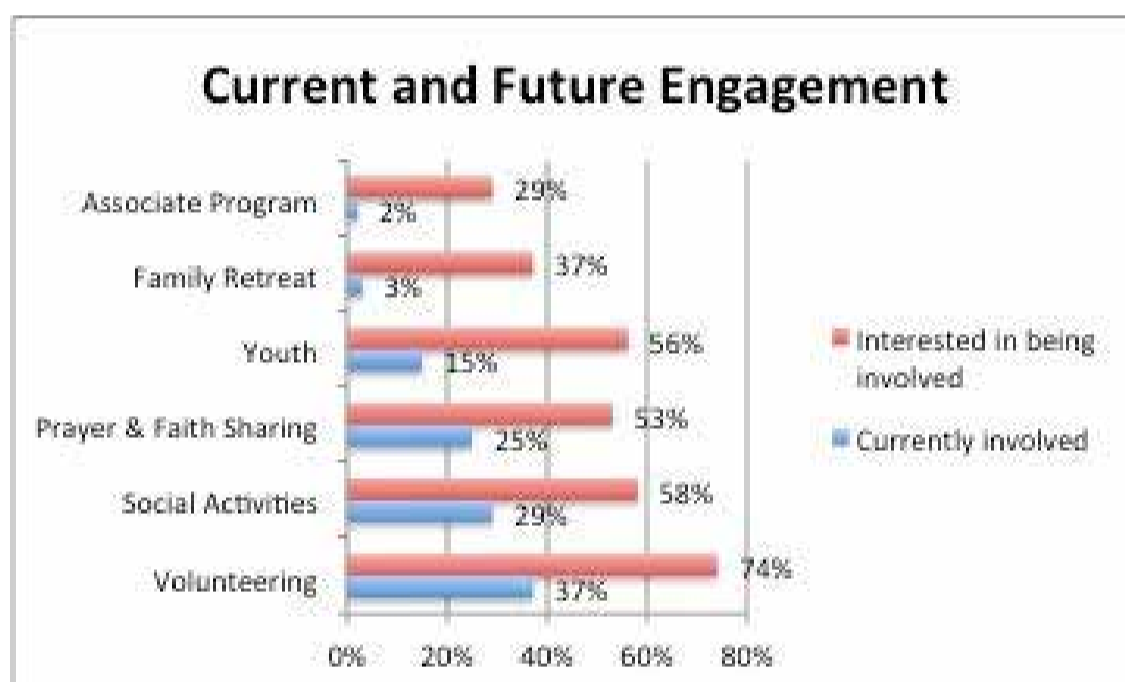
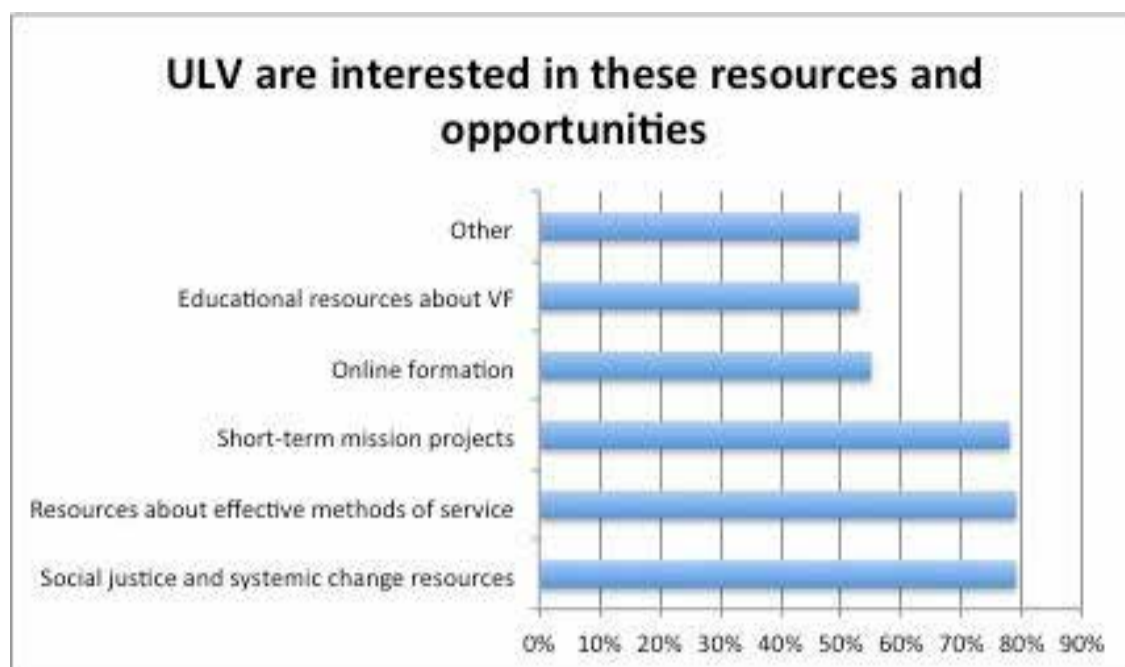


Figure 24.;

Figure 25.;

Figure 26.

One Thing Would Like to See the Vincentian Family Organize in My Area

Respondents were invited to write in a response to finish this sentence: “The one thing I would like to see the Vincentian family organize in my area is...” Some 201 wrote in a response, or 57 percent of all respondents.

While respondents’ answers and descriptions varied widely, these 16 answers appear most often in their responses:

- Short term volunteer opportunities
- Volunteer opportunities for families
- Service with reflection or education
- Social events
- Networking events
- Young adult groups
- Groups for service and faith sharing
- A program for education and formation in the Vincentian tradition
- Young adult conference
- Reunions for year of service alumni
- Retreats
- An SVDP more proactive in raising the profile of the Vincentian mission
- Outreach around existing Vincentian organizations
- Outreach to at-risk children
- Outreach to college students
- Community services like a soup kitchen, food bank or clothes drive





St. Vincent's Circle. Located next to the Richardson Library on the DePaul University Lincoln Park campus.

Image Collection of the Vincentian Studies Institute



Newsnotes



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Newsnotes

NEWS

John E. Rybolt, C.M., Honored by St. John's University

Congratulations to our colleague, and longtime V.S.I. member, Fr. John Rybolt as he received an honorary doctorate from St. John's University, New York, on 25 September 2014. The Conferral of the Degree of Doctor of Laws was presented to Fr. Rybolt during the Vincentian Convocation Ceremony held at Bent Hall Auditorium on the Queens Campus. He was also asked to deliver the Vincentian Chair of Social Justice Lecture — "Vincentian Social Justice."

Vincentian Heritage Bookstore Operates with New Partner

From the DePaul University press release: "The Vincentian Heritage Bookstore, established in 1995 by the Vincentian Studies Institute at DePaul University, is expanding its reach. Effective July 1, 2014, the operations will be managed by the bookstore and gift shop at the National Shrine of Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton in Emmitsburg, Maryland.

More than 120 items dedicated to Saint Vincent de Paul — including books, prints, statutes and medals — will be for sale in the shrine's Seton Heritage Shop.

According to the Rev. Edward Udovic, C.M., senior executive for university mission at DePaul, the new arrangement will give the Vincentian Heritage Bookstore a larger presence and better infrastructure since the Seton Heritage Shop already manages a significant operation both in the store and online. It will also be able to provide the Vincentian Heritage Bookstore with efficient technical support and better shipping options, Udovic noted. "This new operation will provide us with a mechanism to sell materials that we have in our inventory.... The Seton Heritage Shop gives us more outreach and makes the items in our bookstore more widely available to scholars, Catholics and members of the Vincentian family. We believe we have found the right partner with the right mission who can provide the support for our books, publications and heritage material," he said.

"We are excited about this partnership with the Vincentian Studies Institute and we look forward to working with DePaul University in the promotion of St. Vincent de Paul. We feel this partnership will make the shop more well-rounded as St. Elizabeth Ann Seton's legacy is part of the Vincentian heritage," said Rob Judge, executive director at the shrine. "The new line will be featured in its own category on the Seton Heritage Shop's website, and a special area of the store will be dedicated to the Vincentian Studies Institute line," Judge said.

Serving the Vincentian family worldwide, the Vincentian heritage collection is the

largest retailer of merchandise dedicated to the Vincentian family. The collection features a large selection of books about the Vincentian family, history and spirituality; as well as images, artwork, and copies of the Vincentian Heritage Journal.”

The Vincentian Heritage Bookstore can now be found online at: <http://www.setonheritage.org/product-category/vincentian-studies-institute/>

The DePaul University “Voices of Charity Oral History Project”

DePaul University’s Voices of Charity Oral History Project is now live online, available at: <http://voc.is.depaul.edu>

The Voices of Charity Oral History Project was initiated in honor of the Centennials of Marillac Social Center (in 2014) and the St. Vincent de Paul Center (in 2015) both located in Chicago. In order to document the histories of the two Centers, narrators were selected based on their having worked at one of the Centers for at least ten years or more. In all, twenty-one narrators were interviewed between October 2012 and October 2013. Interviews addressed workers’ experiences dating as far back as the 1960s. Interviews were transcribed verbatim and checked against the audio for omissions/errors; minor edits were made to ensure clarity.

The oral history project was generously funded by the Irene and Bill Beck Faculty Fellowship, sponsored by the Beck Research Initiative for Women, Gender, and Community and the Irwin W. Steans Center for Community-based Service Learning and Community Service Studies. The website design was generously funded by the Vincentian Endowment Fund of DePaul University.

The project could not have been completed without the diligent work of students from HST 396: ORAL HISTORY PROJECT in Autumn 2012, and most notably it could not have been completed without Eleanor Bossu, who served as the Lead Interviewer for the project. All are recognized on the credits section of the website. The faculty lead on this project was Amy Tyson, an associate professor in DePaul University’s History Department.

DePaul University Announces Digital Collection of St. Vincent’s Handwritten Letters

Andrew Rea, DePaul University’s Vincentian Librarian, writes: “In 1969, DePaul University acquired its first original, handwritten letter by St. Vincent de Paul (1581-1660), presented by the well-known book collector and DePaul alumnus Abel Berland. Since that time, through other generous gifts and judicious purchases, it has added to that first letter seven-fold. DePaul’s eight Vincent letters represents the largest such collection outside of Europe. The letters are the collective cornerstone of DePaul’s Vincentian Studies Collection, a multidisciplinary corpus of resources pertaining to the study of St. Vincent and the Vincentian Family. They, along with bulk of the Vincentian Studies Collection, are currently housed in DePaul’s Special Collections and Archives department at the John T. Richardson Library.



Letter From Vincent de Paul to Pierre du Chesne, in Crécy, 24 July 1642.

Courtesy Vincentian Studies Collection, Special Collections and Archives, DePaul University, Chicago, Illinois



In 2013, the decision was made to digitize these eight letters and make them more accessible to the public. The result of this effort is a new DePaul Library digital collection, St. Vincent's Handwritten Letters. It can be a powerful experience to view 400-year-old letters written by the hand of Vincent, but the collection will also give scholars and researchers a chance to pore over the way the letters have been written — underlining, scratch-outs, and bolder passages — which cannot be replicated in the print volumes of Vincent's correspondence.

Each letter includes a transcription and translation of the respective text, which allows users easy access to Vincent's words. The seventeenth-century penmanship of these letters can be difficult for most of us to read, even with a knowledge of French. The letters themselves range in topic, from the mundane (in which Vincent simply writes that he has nothing much to say) to the essential (in which Vincent explains his opposition to the then-popular heresy of Jansenism). They span the years of 1641-1660, a fertile period during which Vincent's influence was at its height.

We hope this collection further illuminates the figure of St. Vincent, whose four-century legacy of charity and respect for humanity informs the fundamental mission of DePaul even today."

The collection is available at: <http://libservices.org/contentdm/handwritten-letters.php>
If you have any questions or feedback about this collection, please contact Mr. Rea at: area1@depaul.edu

St. Vincent de Paul Online Image Archive

John E. Rybolt, C.M., curator of the archive, writes: "Since 2008, the St. Vincent de Paul Image Archive has been offering a large collection of downloadable images related to the Vincentian family. Thanks to DePaul University, which hosts the archive, more than 15,000 images are now available, divided into four general categories: Vincent de Paul, Louise de Marillac and the Daughters of Charity, Vincentian Persons, and Vincentian Places.

The images are free to download for personal or professional use (such as for newsletters, in-house publications, greeting cards or announcements), but not to be distributed for profit. Those who want to contact me about various images or details can use a special email established for this purpose: jerybolt@gmail.com

I am happy to report that people do have questions or observations, and some even send me images to include in the Image Archive. My feeling is that there is a huge mass of material still to be uncovered. For this reason, I welcome new images and acknowledge those who have submitted them. Even though the name “St. Vincent de Paul” is in the title, the archive covers a vast array of possibilities. I am certainly willing to broaden the scope of this undertaking, and will soon be adding “Events” to the Vincentian Persons area.

Where else can you find nearly 7,500 different (or mostly different) images of Vincent de Paul, 2,200+ of Louise de Marillac, the Daughters of Charity, Elizabeth Seton, the Miraculous Medal, and many others? As of August 2014, the totals are as follows, reaching 15,000+ images for the first time: St. Vincent de Paul – 7,498; St. Louise and Daughters of Charity – 2,281; Vincentian persons and events – 3,449; and Vincentian places – 2,219.”

The archive can be found online at: <http://stvincentimages.cdm.depaul.edu/>

Stanford University and Bibliothèque Nationale de France French Revolution Digital Archives

From the website [Hyperallergic: Sensitive to Art and its Discontents](#): “Toppled crowns and tumbrels to the guillotine are just part of the massive archive of images and documents released online this month. The French Revolution Digital Archive, a partnership between Stanford University and the Bibliothèque nationale de France, was announced last week with some 14,000 high-resolution images.”

From the [French Embassy of the U.S.](#): “The site contains both resources for the dedicated scholar and fascinating material for the everyday history buff, from prints depicting the events of 1789 to records of parliamentary deliberations and private letters. FRDA is the result of a multi-year collaboration of the Stanford University Libraries and the *Bibliothèque nationale de France* (BnF) to produce a digital version of the key research sources on the French Revolution and make them available to the international scholarly community.”

[The search engine](#) that powers the French Revolution Digital Archive allows users to limit by:

- Date, Date Range
- Material Found in Speeches
- Proximity of Words (1-5 words)
- Only Words in Title and Key Terms
- Turn Off Stemming

Facets allow users to refine results. Categories include:

- People
- Documents
- Genre
- Collection

- Artist

A dynamically created visualization located at the top of every search result page allows users to view results grouped by volume (year/month).

From the [Curator Section of the FRDA Web Site](#):

The FRDA provides access to the most complete searchable digital archive of French Revolution images available. *Images de la Révolution française* is a benchmark image-base undertaken by the Bibliothèque nationale de France on the occasion of the Revolution's bicentennial in 1989. It aimed to "allow the reader to explore the relationships, articulations and confrontations between the ideas of the Revolution and their metaphorical embodiment, the constant cross-fertilization of ideology and make-believe..." For this project the BnF created over 38,000 separate views of over 14,000 individual images, showing closeups and dividing documents with discrete iconographic materials into appropriate sections. The *Images*, which were originally offered in analog format on laserdisc, had become extremely difficult to access due to rapid technological change. Within the framework of its digitization programs, the BnF rescanned at high resolution almost half of the images on the laserdisc from the original materials. New JPEG files were created from the original videodisc for the remaining images in the corpus. Now all of these images are available online as part of the FRDA....

The images included in the [FRDA](#) are classified by provenance or by subject within the collections of the BnF. Descriptions of the Hennin and De Vinck image collections, which constitute an important part of the FRDA corpus, are found in separate print catalogues. The *Images de la Révolution française* laserdisc constituted an initial stage in the development of an iconographic corpus of the Revolution, bringing these visual materials together into a single collection accessible through highly indexed descriptive metadata using a controlled vocabulary for artists, iconographic genres, places of publications, and subject terms. Unfortunately the obsolescence of laserdisc technology meant the loss of access to this descriptive metadata, as well as to certain images themselves, which became available only through the General Catalog of the BnF. FRDA incorporates this indexed metadata, and expands its research possibilities, by finally restoring access to this coherent corpus of iconographic materials on the French Revolution.

Direct link to: [French Revolution Digital Archive](#)

Direct link to: [Images of the French Revolution](#)

PUBLICATIONS

Notable Books

Gérard Cholvy, *Le XIXe, Grand siècle des religieuses françaises* (Perpignan: Artège, 2012), 134 pp. ISBN: 9782360400799. Available: [Amazon France](#)

Présentation de l'éditeur: Dans la mémoire collective, le «l'invasion mystique». Pourtant, en 1790, le royaume ne compte que 55 500 religieuses. Il y en aura 135000 en 1900.

Cet essai cherche à décrire cet essor, une fois résumé le legs de l'Acien Régime. Si la Revolution a entendu supprimer »la religieuse«, le XIXe siècle, lui, va promouvoir « la sœur».

L'espace est libre pour un pléiade de fondatrices avec des Sophie Barat (Sacré-cœur de Jésus). Anne-Marie Javouhey (Saint-Joseph de Cluny), Thérèse Couderc et le Cénacle, Jeanne Jugan et les Petites Sœurs des Pauvres.

Sur le terreau des Pieuses filles, Béates et »sœurs des campagnes« prendront naissance quelque 400 fondations nouvelles. L'index énumère ici plus de 200 congrégations anciennes et nouvelles. Il était temps de mettre à la portée de tous ou ouvrage qui repertoire les différents visages de ces sœurs aux fonctions multiples et au service de tous, jusque dans les missions lointaines.

L'auteur: Gérard Cholvy est Professeur émérite d'histoire contemporaine Paul-Valéry (Montpellier-III) où il a enseigné de 1962 à 2002. Auteur de nombreux ouvrages distingués par des prix littéraires, il est un eminent specialist de l'histoire religieuse et culturelle en France.

Joan DeJean, *How Paris became Paris: The Invention of the Modern City* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2014), 320 pp. ISBN: 978-1-60819-591-6. Available: [Amazon.com](#)

From the publisher: "At the beginning of the seventeenth century, Paris was known for isolated monuments but had not yet put its brand on urban space. Like other European cities, it was still emerging from its medieval past. But in a mere century Paris would be transformed into the modern and mythic city we know today.

Though most people associate the signature characteristics of Paris with the public works of the nineteenth century, Joan DeJean demonstrates that the Parisian model for urban space was in fact invented two centuries earlier, when the first complete design for the French capital was drawn up and implemented. As a result, Paris saw many changes. It became the first city to tear down its fortifications, inviting people in rather than keeping them out. Parisian urban planning showcased new kinds of streets, including the original boulevard, as well as public parks and the earliest sidewalks and bridges without houses. Venues opened for urban entertainment of all kinds, from opera and ballet to a pastime invented in Paris, recreational shopping. Parisians enjoyed the earliest public transportation and street lighting, and Paris became Europe's first great walking city.

A century of planned development made Paris both beautiful and exciting. It gave people reasons to be out in public as never before and as nowhere else. And it gave Paris its modern identity as a place that people dreamed of seeing. By 1700, Paris had become the capital that would revolutionize our conception of the city and of urban life.”

This work provides invaluable and fascinating insights into Vincent de Paul’s Paris.

Brigitte Glutz-Ruedin, *Hirondelle d’Allah: Une cornette en mission aus pays des sultans* (Editions Saint-Augustin, 2014), 333 pp. ISBN: 978-2-88926-070-6. Available: [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com)

“Ouvrage historique, *Hirondelle d’Allah* se lit comme un roman. Il contient un Journal tenu par Louise, une Suissesse qui vécut dans l’Empire ottoman. Ce document authentique, légèrement adapté, n’avait jamais été édité jusqu’ici. Il décrit la vie quotidienne et les difficultés d’une communauté de Filles de la Charité dans une ville d’Anatolie durant la Première Guerre mondiale, puis au début du conflit entre Grecs et Turcs.

Hirondelle d’Allah est aussi une biographie. La demoiselle de Neuchâtel quitta tout pour entrer en religion. D’aspect fragile sous sa grande cornette, comment devint-elle une héroïne? Quelques éléments de l’histoire familiale et communautaire apportent un éclairage psychologique car en Sœur Louise se condensent d’autres héros et héroïnes restés anonymes. Dans cette fresque politique et religieuse, solidement documentée, tout est véridique à l’exception de quelques petits trous ravaudés par l’imagination.

L’ouvrage s’attarde sur les personnalités attachantes de trois grands Saints de France qui inspirèrent notre héroïne, Vincent de Paul, Louise de Marillac et Catherine Labouré. Il permet aussi de faire plus ample connaissance avec la Turquie, pays fascinant au passé prodigieux, au développement fulgurant. Mais *Hirondelle d’Allah* est d’abord et avant tout un témoignage de foi et de courage.”

Marie-Joëlle Guillaume, *Vincent de Paul. Un saint au Grand Siècle* (Perrin, 2015), 450 pp. ISBN: 9782262036515. Available: [Amazon.fr](https://www.amazon.fr)

From the publisher: “Petit paysan des Landes devenu prêtre, nommé précepteur dans l’illustre famille de Gondi après diverses aventures, Vincent de Paul, né en 1581, découvre à trente-six ans la vocation de sa vie: servir les pauvres. Aumônier général des galères du roi à partir de 1618, il fonde en 1625 la congrégation de la Mission, afin d’évangéliser et soigner le peuple des campagnes, et former des prêtres pour cette tâche. En 1632, il se voit offrir avec sa communauté le prieuré de Saint-Lazare à Paris. Les lazaristes étaient nés. Leur ordre allait devenir un refuge pour des milliers de démunis et un centre de rayonnement spirituel considérable.

Peu à peu, Vincent de Paul s’affirme comme la conscience de son temps. Avec Louise de Marillac, supérieure des Filles de la Charité, il suscite l’engagement et la générosité des femmes de la haute société, lutte sur le terrain contre les horreurs de la guerre de Trente Ans, institue à Paris l’œuvre des Enfants trouvés. Par sa présence, de 1643 à 1652, au Conseil de conscience de la reine Anne d’Autriche, celui qui fait jeu égal avec les grandes figures de la Contre-Réforme catholique, François de Sales, Bérulle, Olier, influera aussi

sur les affaires de l'Etat et s'engagera contre le jansénisme. Les années 1650 le voient jouer un rôle décisif dans le développement des missions étrangères. Il meurt en 1660 et sera canonisé moins d'un siècle plus tard.

Homme de prière, homme d'action, meneur d'hommes, témoin auprès des grands des exigences de la conscience, l'humble paysan gascon est devenu une grande figure de notre histoire."

Carol E. Harrison, *Romantic Catholics: France's Postrevolutionary Generation in Search of a Modern Faith* (Cornell University Press, 2014), 344 pp. ISBN: 978-0-8014-5245-1. Available: [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com)

From the publisher: "In this well-written and imaginatively structured book, Carol E. Harrison brings to life a cohort of nineteenth-century French men and women who argued that a reformed Catholicism could reconcile the divisions in French culture and society that were the legacy of revolution and empire. They include, most prominently, Charles de Montalembert, Pauline Craven, Amélie and Frédéric Ozanam, Léopoldine Hugo, Maurice de Guérin, and Victorine Monniot. The men and women whose stories appear in *Romantic Catholics* were bound together by filial love, friendship, and in some cases marriage. Harrison draws on their diaries, letters, and published works to construct a portrait of a generation linked by a determination to live their faith in a modern world.

Rejecting both the atomizing force of revolutionary liberalism and the increasing intransigence of the church hierarchy, the romantic Catholics advocated a middle way, in which a revitalized Catholic faith and liberty formed the basis for modern society. Harrison traces the history of nineteenth-century France and, in parallel, the life course of these individuals as they grow up, learn independence, and take on the responsibilities and disappointments of adulthood. Although the shared goals of the romantic Catholics were never realized in French politics and culture, Harrison's work offers a significant corrective to the traditional understanding of the opposition between religion and the secular republican tradition in France."

Janine M. Lanza, *From Wives to Widows in Early Modern Paris: Gender, Economy, and Law* (Ashgate Pub. Co., 2007), 252 pp. ISBN 978-0-7546-5643-2. Available: [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com)

From the publisher: "Looking especially at widows of master craftsmen in early modern Paris, this study provides analysis of the social and cultural structures that shaped widows' lives as well as their day-to-day experiences. Janine Lanza examines widows in early modern Paris at every social and economic level, beginning with the late sixteenth century when changes in royal law curtailed the movement of property within families up to the time of the French Revolution. The glimpses she gives us of widows running businesses, debating remarriage, and negotiating marriage contracts offer precious insights into the daily lives of women in this period.

Lanza shows that understanding widows dramatically alters our understanding

of gender, not only in terms of how it was lived in this period but also how historians can use this idea as a category of analysis. Her study also engages the historiographical issue of business and entrepreneurship, particularly women's participation in the world of work; and explicitly examines the place of the law in the lived experience of the early modern period.

How did widowed women use their newly acquired legal emancipation? How did they handle their emotional loss? How did their roles in their families and their communities change? How did they remain financially solvent without a man in the house? How did they make decisions that had always been made by the men around them? These questions all touch upon the experience of widows and on the ways women related to prevalent structures and ideologies in this society. Lanza's study of these women, the ways they were represented and how they experienced their widowhood, challenges many historical assumptions about women and their roles with respect to the law, the family, and economic activity."

Joanna Milstein, *The Gondi: Family Strategy and Survival in Early Modern France* (Ashgate Pub. Co., 2014), 260 pp. ISBN-13: 978-1409454731. Available: [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com)

From the bookjacket: "One of the most striking features of French government in the second half of the sixteenth century was the influence of Italians. Notwithstanding widespread French admiration of Italian culture, Italian influence at the heart of French government aroused xenophobic antagonism among many in French society. This study throws light on this complex relationship by offering the first detailed examination of the Gondi, one of the most influential of the Italian families active during this period. The Gondi family played a leading part in the finance, government, church and military affairs of the nation, and were indispensable counselors to the Queen Mother, Catherine De' Medici. They were also the targets of anti-Italian hostility, much of it deliberately stirred by rivals in the French aristocracy who felt threatened by these powerful foreigners occupying positions they believed were rightfully theirs. The book examines perceptions of the Gondi through examination of contemporary pamphlets, diaries, and ambassadors' dispatches. It investigates among other issues, their notorious role in the plotting of the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre in 1572. Making use of many previously overlooked archival sources from France and Italy, this book charts the Gondi's rise to power and demonstrates how their deft use of patronage and financial expertise allowed them to weave the intricate web of power and obligation that protected them against native hostility. In so doing the book reveals much about government and society in late sixteenth-century France."

Geoffrey Parker, *Global Crisis: War, Climate Change & Catastrophe in the Seventeenth Century* (Yale University Press, 2014), 904 pp. ISBN-13: 978-0300208634. Available: [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com)

From the publisher: Winner of one of the 2012 Heineken Prizes; Sunday Times History Book of the Year 2013; Selected as a Choice Outstanding Academic Title for 2013 in the History, Geography, & Area Studies Category; Received an Honorable Mention for the 2013 American Publishers Awards for Professional and Scholarly Excellence (PROSE), in the European & World History category; Winner of the Society for Military History 2014 Distinguished Book Award for the best book-length publication in English on non-United States military history.

“Revolutions, droughts, famines, invasions, wars, regicides — the calamities of the mid-seventeenth century were not only unprecedented, they were agonizingly widespread. A global crisis extended from England to Japan, and from the Russian Empire to sub-Saharan Africa. North and South America, too, suffered turbulence. The distinguished historian Geoffrey Parker examines first-hand accounts of men and women throughout the world describing what they saw and suffered during a sequence of political, economic and social crises that stretched from 1618 to the 1680s. Parker also deploys scientific evidence concerning climate conditions of the period, and his use of ‘natural’ as well as ‘human’ archives transforms our understanding of the World Crisis. Changes in the prevailing weather patterns during the 1640s and 1650s — longer and harsher winters, and cooler and wetter summers — disrupted growing seasons, causing dearth, malnutrition, and disease, along with more deaths and fewer births. Some contemporaries estimated that one-third of the world died, and much of the surviving historical evidence supports their pessimism.

Parker’s demonstration of the link between climate change and worldwide catastrophe 350 years ago stands as an extraordinary historical achievement. And the contemporary implications of his study are equally important: are we at all prepared today for the catastrophes that climate change could bring tomorrow?”

Marie Poole, D.C., ed. and trans., Ann Mary Dougherty, D.C., et al., *Vincent de Paul: Correspondence, Conferences, Documents, Vol. 14-Index* (New City Press, 2014), 658 pp. ISBN: 978-1-56548-498-6.

After some 40 years, the task of the Vincentian Translation Project is complete. The final volume of the English edition of Pierre Coste’s 14-volume series of the work of Saint Vincent de Paul, the index volume, was published in September 2014. The index is exhaustive and is a great help in quickly and easily accessing this incredible resource. Congratulations are in order to Sr. Marie Poole and her collaborators on this final volume. The book is now available for \$45.00. Although the project’s offices are closing all volumes will remain available for purchase. They have been shipped to the Central Association of the Miraculous Medal building in Philadelphia, where the Vincentians will see to their storage and future sale. If you wish to obtain any of the volumes in the series, *Vincent de Paul: Correspondence,*



Conferences, Documents, please contact: Nick Gibboni, Director of Operations, Central Association of the Miraculous Medal, 475 E. Cheltenham Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19144; 215-848-1010 x232 (Office); 267-299-1463 (Fax); via email: ngibboni@cammonline.org

James M. Scott, *Target Tokyo: Jimmy Doolittle and the Raid that Avenged Pearl Harbor* (W.W. Norton & Company, 2015), 672 pp. ISBN-13: 978-0393089622. Available: [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com)

Of note, Mr. Scott discusses the role of the U.S. Vincentian and Daughters of Charity missionaries in China in aiding the flyers in their escape. Images are reprinted from the DeAndreis-Rosati Memorial Archives at DePaul University in Chicago.

From the publisher: “The dramatic account of one of America’s most celebrated — and controversial — military campaigns: the Doolittle Raid.

In December 1941, as American forces tallied the dead at Pearl Harbor, President Franklin Roosevelt gathered with his senior military counselors to plan an ambitious counterstrike against the heart of the Japanese Empire: Tokyo. Four months later, on April 18, 1942, sixteen U.S. Army bombers under the command of daredevil pilot Jimmy Doolittle lifted off from the deck of the USS Hornet on a one-way mission to pummel the enemy’s factories, refineries, and dockyards and then escape to Free China. For Roosevelt, the raid was a propaganda victory, a potent salve to heal a wounded nation. In Japan, outraged over the deaths of innocent civilians — including children — military leaders launched an ill-fated attempt to seize Midway that would turn the tide of the war. But it was the Chinese who suffered the worst, victims of a retaliatory campaign by the Japanese Army that claimed an estimated 250,000 lives and saw families drowned in wells, entire towns burned, and communities devastated by bacteriological warfare.

At the center of this incredible story is Doolittle, the son of an Alaskan gold prospector, a former boxer, and brilliant engineer who earned his doctorate from MIT. Other fascinating characters populate this gripping narrative, including Chiang Kai-shek, Lieutenant General Joseph “Vinegar Joe” Stilwell, and the feisty Vice Admiral William “Bull” Halsey Jr. Here, too, are indelible portraits of the young pilots, navigators, and bombardiers, many of them little more than teenagers, who raised their hands to volunteer for a mission from which few expected to return. Most of the bombers ran out of fuel and crashed. Captured raiders suffered torture and starvation in Japan’s notorious POW camps. Others faced a harrowing

escape across China — via boat, rickshaw, and foot — with the Japanese Army in pursuit.

Based on scores of never-before-published records drawn from archives across four continents as well as new interviews with survivors, *Target Tokyo* is World War II history of the highest order: a harrowing adventure story that also serves as a pivotal reexamination of one of America's most daring military operations."

Giora Sternberg, *Status Interaction during the Reign of Louis XIV* (Oxford University Press, 2014), 224 pp. ISBN: 978-0-19-964034-8. Available: [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com)

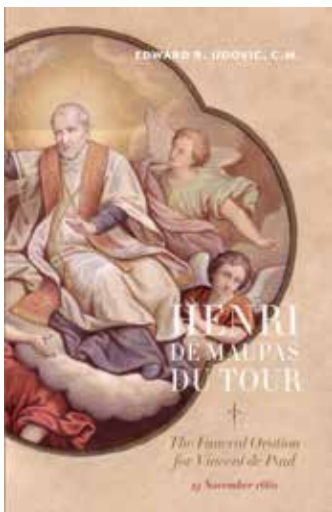
From the publisher: "The first study to address social status in Louis XIV's court as a key tool for defining and redefining identities, relations, and power; Offers perspectives on members of the court, rather than the usual perspective of the Sun King himself; Draws from a wide variety of printed and manuscript sources. Who preceded whom? Who wore what? Which form of address should one use? One of the most striking aspects of the early modern period is the crucial significance that contemporaries ascribed to such questions. In this hierarchical world, status symbols did not simply mirror a pre-defined social and political order; rather, they operated as a key tool for defining and redefining identities, relations, and power. Centuries later, scholars face the twofold challenge of evaluating status interaction in an era where its open pursuit is no longer as widespread and legitimate, and of deciphering its highly sophisticated and often implicit codes.

Status Interaction during the Reign of Louis XIV addresses this challenge by investigating status interaction — in dress as in address, in high ceremony and in everyday life — at one of its most important historical arenas: aristocratic society at the time of Louis XIV. By recovering actual practices on the ground based on a wide array of printed and manuscript sources, it transcends the simplistic view of a court revolving around the Sun King and reveals instead the multiple perspectives of contesting actors, stakes, and strategies. Demonstrating the wide-ranging implications of the phenomenon, macro-political as well as micro-political, this study provides a novel framework for understanding early modern action and agency. Readership: Scholars and students of the early modern period, of Louis XIV and his court, and of social and political interaction in an historical context."

Edward R. Udovic, C.M., *Henri de Maupas du Tour: The Funeral Oration for Vincent de Paul. 23 November 1660* (Vincentian Studies Institute, 2015), 223 pp. ISBN: 978-1-936696-07-9. Available: [Seton Heritage Shop Online](https://www.setonheritage.com)

The DePaul University Vincentian Studies Institute is pleased to announce the publication of its sixth monograph. This title offers a first look at the narrative that would eventually frame the story of Vincent de Paul's life as we recognize it today. It also marks a remarkable accomplishment of Vincentian scholarship and research, and an invaluable contribution to the study of Vincent de Paul that will undoubtedly become required reading for future scholars.

Robert P. Maloney, C.M., 23rd Superior General of the Congregation of the Mission,



writes: “This book provides the first English translation of the funeral oration given by Henri de Maupas du Tour two months after Vincent de Paul’s death. The oration has a special importance as it was “the first public presentation of Monsieur Vincent’s life and works.” Rev. Udovic presents an enormous amount of original research about Henri de Maupas du Tour, the literary form of funeral orations, their sometimes political goals, and the canonization process of St. Vincent. I recommend this book highly to those who love Vincent de Paul and are eager to know more about this extraordinary period of history.”

A press release from DePaul University can be read here: [Maupas du Tour publication](#)
For an interview with the author concerning the historical significance of the funeral oration and the publication of the book, please visit: <http://tinyurl.com/maupas-video>

Paul Wang Jiyou, *Le Premier Concile Plénier Chinois Shanghai 1924* (Les Éditions du Cerf, 2010), 416 pp. ISBN: 9782204092050. Available: [Editions du Cerf](#)

From the publisher: “In 1924, in Shanghai, the first Plenary Council for China took place in communion with Rome. The canonical institution of the Roman Catholic Church, even then, foresaw the possibility of uniting bishops at a plenary council, i.e. on a national scale. But to hold such an assembly was, and remains, an exceptional initiative. This non-permanent collegiate instance can help adapt pastoral work and Catholic activities to the richness and the difficulties of a local context, and the Plenary Council of Shanghai succeeded in adapting canonical missionary law to the specificity of China at the beginning of the 20th century. The evangelization of the Middle Kingdom, which had begun long before, then required appraisal, consecration and a relaunch. For centuries, the direction of the Church in China had been obliged to rely essentially on many foreign congregational missionaries, and to deal with foreign political powers who took great interest in the evangelization of China. More than his predecessors, the Pope at that time — Pius XI — was capable of summoning such a council: his vision was to recommend that Chinese Catholics should participate in the canonical decisions and gain access to greater ecclesial responsibilities. So the Council of Shanghai marked an important and unique development in the history of this country and the establishment of the local Church, by putting an end to the famous quarrel of Chinese rites that had lasted since the 16th century. It also contributed to adapting

the canonical missionary law of the entire Roman Catholic Church. To situate this event, analyzed in detail from the viewpoint of its juridical originality, the author paints a vast fresco of China's very long religious evolution, with its renowned and subtle encounter between Confucianism and the various Christian presences that had been in China for centuries."

Cindy Yik-yi Chu, ed., *Catholicism in China, 1900-Present: The Development of the Chinese Church* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 288 pp. ISBN-13: 978-1137361745. Available: [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com)

From the publisher: "The Chinese Catholic Church, with its complex history and remarkable longevity, has continued to attract the attention of China watchers. Historians, political scientists and theologians have been exploring different aspects — the Church's development in the modern era, the issues of contention between the Vatican and Beijing, and the implications of a universal Catholic Church. This edited volume is the product of scholars of various backgrounds, specialties and agendas bringing forth their most treasured understandings and findings regarding the Chinese Catholic Church. The chapters in this book covering the church from 1900 to the present trace the development of the Church in China from many historical and disciplinary vantage points, and shed light on the way forward."

Our colleague John Harney from Centre College in Danville, Kentucky, contributed a chapter to this volume entitled: "Vincentian Missionaries in Jiangzi Province: Extending an American Catholic Community to China, 1921-1951." Much of the research upon which this chapter was based was done at the DeAndreis-Rosati Memorial Archives at DePaul University. The DeAndreis-Rosati Memorial Archives are the archives of the Western Province (U.S.) of the Congregation of the Mission.

VIDEOS OF INTEREST

- To watch a newly-produced YouTube video on the history of the Sisters of Charity Federation in the United States, please visit: [Sisters of Charity history](#)
- For a great YouTube video which offers a ten minute presentation on the "Little Ice Age" and its impact on the seventeenth-century world, including France, see: [Little Ice Age and 17th Century](#)



Di 8^o lors avo^t les parvis n^o 24 juillet 1642

Monsieur

La grace de mr seigneur soit avec vous po^r jamais ; voyez
la réponse de Monsieur de Meaux, & quel menuisier & que par
son langage se repent a la difficulté si vous devriez a dessein a
m^r Messieurs, Je n'ai trouvé plus empesché, avant de l'embarquer
de qu'on a alla Mission se fandra que les forces viennent
pour le degné, Je n'ai que la langue, on ne s'en trouve bien
si on le remede seoit si m^r agronem de servir a table
alternativement, comme si on mande sy, et de lire a table & assés
a son tour, la despenne ne pasont peu de chose en comparaison
de cela, mais j'y si vous jugés en raison & généralité
Je pense que ny aura fait d'incouvenien que nous nous voyons
de que vous veniez, soit par un jour ou par deux, pour en prendre l'un
des quel queis un de la Compagnie

Je n'ay pu vous mander Seig pour luy dire le proceder
de m^r Ministre qui est intervenu par M^r Witz. Je doctumoy
adieu a mondit Seigneur,

Je ne comprends pas bien & que vous me dicit que les
de m^r deux fuis hommes a bi^s & gentils des pieds tournés on les a
est ce la pointe des pieds, bi^s & artels, & bouter il point est fion
des pieds & elle est deforme, & l'empesche elle de marcher loing
pour le servir & on dit se ne son bee quel ny a pas d'usage
de le prendre que de luy de sa pauvre mere de quoy vivra elle?

Je suis consolé de ce que vous me dicit de M^r Oriet
de le faire de ce que vous me dicit de M^r Oriet

On ne faut point sabiller la viande, & ainsi et pour est
que l'on ne ferra pas faire la viande, si l'on le fait de d'icy que
L'vous sero^t vos sem bler, si se ne loubie

Madelle Je sçait bien ne feroit prendre est pauvre femme
elle ne recevoit que celles qui font en danger de se perdre & de
non pas celles qui le font de sçias. Je ne trouve empesché en cela
Je tas ser ay de vous si l'on luy pourra trouver une autre chose
ce qui n'est pas fait de difficulté, Je vous remercie mr frere paschal
V S V Mami De Paul

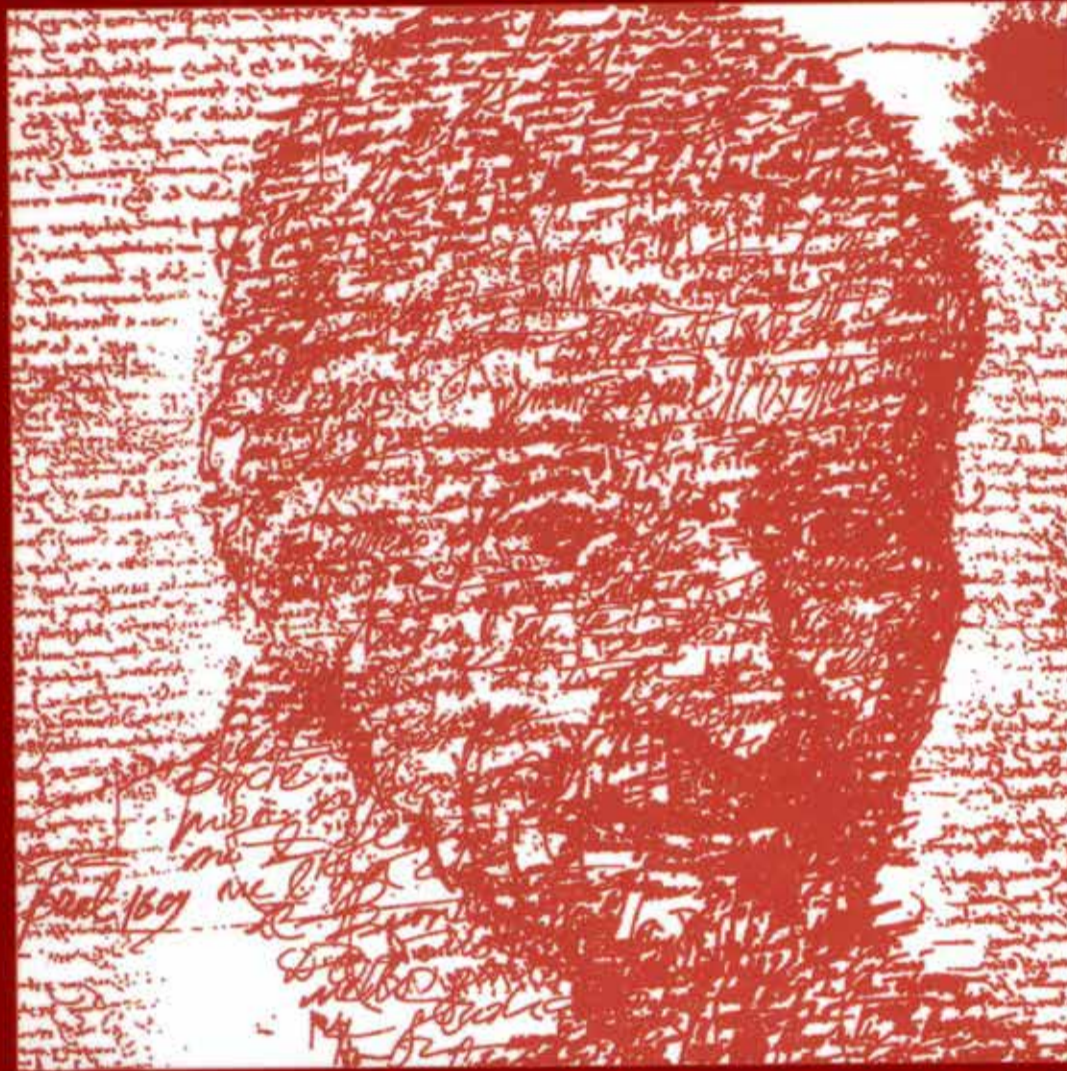
Je pense que vous n'avez pas vu le menuisier & que par son langage se repent a la difficulté si vous devriez a dessein a m^r Messieurs, Je n'ai trouvé plus empesché, avant de l'embarquer de qu'on a alla Mission se fandra que les forces viennent pour le degné, Je n'ai que la langue, on ne s'en trouve bien si on le remede seoit si m^r agronem de servir a table alternativement, comme si on mande sy, et de lire a table & assés a son tour, la despenne ne pasont peu de chose en comparaison de cela, mais j'y si vous jugés en raison & généralité Je pense que ny aura fait d'incouvenien que nous nous voyons de que vous veniez, soit par un jour ou par deux, pour en prendre l'un des quel queis un de la Compagnie



Letter From Vincent de Paul to Pierre du Chesne, in Crécy, 24 July 1642.

Courtesy Vincentian Studies Collection, Special Collections and Archives, DePaul University, Chicago, Illinois

Vincent De Paul

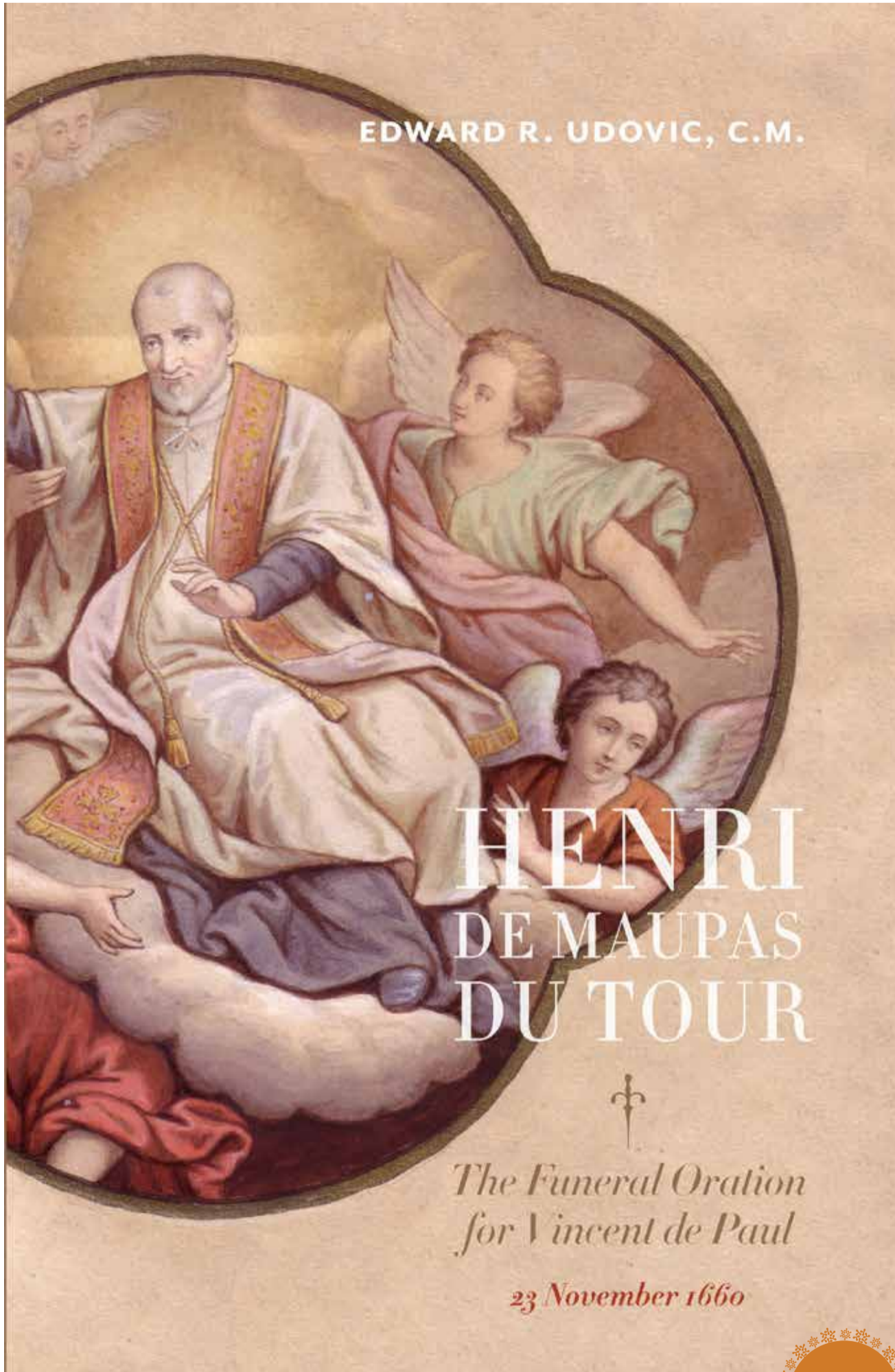


CORRESPONDENCE CONFERENCES DOCUMENTS

volume 14 - Index



EDWARD R. UDOVIC, C.M.



HENRI DE MAUPAS DU TOUR



*The Funeral Oration
for Vincent de Paul*

23 November 1660



About Vincentian Heritage



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Vincentian Heritage is the journal of the Vincentian Studies Institute of the United States. Founded in 1979 the Institute is dedicated to promoting a living interest in the historical and spiritual heritage of Saint Vincent de Paul (1581-660) and Saint Louise de Marillac (1591-1660), the patrons of the wide-ranging Vincentian Family including the Congregation of the Mission, the Daughters of Charity, the Ladies of Charity, the Sisters of Charity, the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, and a number of other congregations, communities, and lay movements who share a common dedication to serving those in need.

Vincentian Heritage welcomes manuscripts, poetry, and other expressions of Vincentian themes that meet the publication criteria. All articles should relate directly to topics of Vincentian interest, be researched and documented in a scholarly fashion, and directed toward Vincentian oriented groups in the reading public and the Vincentian family. Ordinarily, articles should not exceed thirty typewritten pages and should be submitted twelve months prior to anticipated publication.

All manuscripts and editorial correspondence should be addressed to:

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Suite 850F
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