

Fr. Joseph Williams, C.M., to serve as Provincial of Western Province

The Congregation of the Mission Western Province has elected Fr. Joseph Williams, C.M., to serve as Provincial Superior, effective July 1, 2024. He succeeds Fr. Pat McDevitt, C.M., and will be formally installed at the Province's Assembly in New Orleans in the final week of June.

The Kansas native was ordained in Denver in 1987 and has served in a variety of ministries, including pastor and associate pastor in parishes in Missouri, Illinois, and Colorado, as well as numerous academic and chaplain positions. He has served as pastor of St. Vincent de Paul Parish in Chicago since 2021, and for seven years prior to that he was Assistant Provincial for the Western Province.

Fr. Joe expressed thanks to the provincial community for selecting him to lead the Province.

"I am honored and humbled by my confreres at their trust and hope in me to continue to move the Province forward," he said. "I look forward to working with the confreres of the Province as we strive to share our mission and charisma with those we serve."

He said that he will focus on working with the priests and brothers of the Province, as well as its mission partners and lay collaborators,

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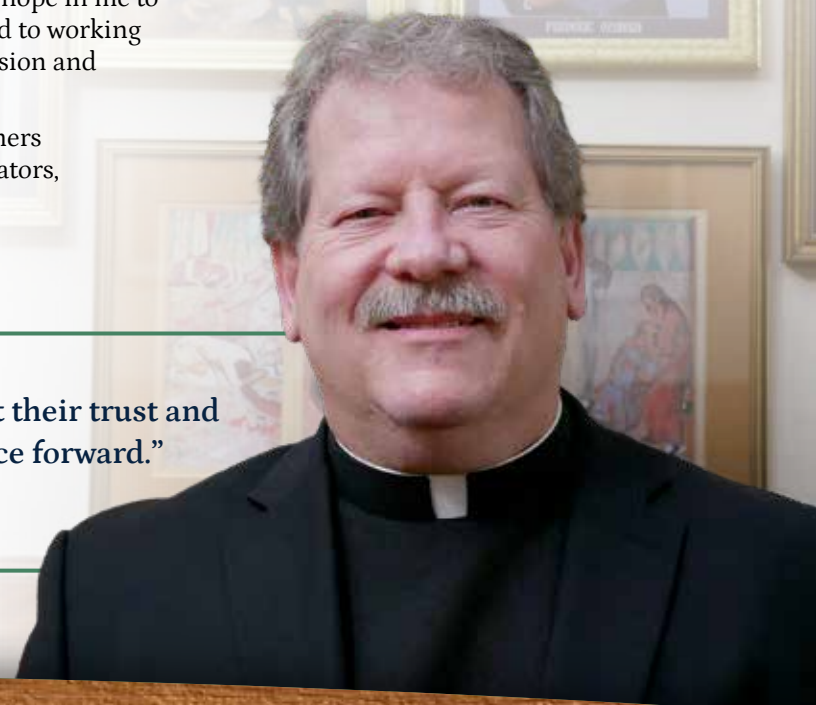
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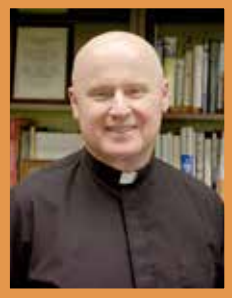
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—Fr. Joseph Williams, C.M.

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Dear Friends,

Happy Summer! I hope this special time of the year provides you and your family with many opportunities for leisure and special moments together with one another.

The summer gives us more time for quiet and reflection and prayer. I encourage you to make the time to pray. It is good to get out of the normal pace of work and school to simply enjoy God’s beautiful creation and have fun with one another. Take the needed time to slow down, to experience nature, to focus on loved ones, to laugh often, and to be grateful to God for all these gifts.

The time between summer and fall is often a time of transition. On June 25, the Western Province will welcome our new Provincial, Fr. Joe Williams, C.M. You will learn more about Fr. Joe in this issue of *The Vincentian*. It has been my experience that such transitions are moments of grace for us to reflect on the gifts of the past and to consider the new future possibilities for serving the mission. I ask that you pray for Fr. Joe and the Western Province as we make this change.

This will be my last letter to you as Provincial. It has been an honor and a joy for me to serve you, the Congregation, and the Church in this leadership ministry. I appreciate your support and prayers over these four years. I give thanks and praise to God for the many blessings received while in office. I have met so many wonderful people and learned a tremendous amount. I leave office with a peaceful and grateful heart.

Please continue to remember me in prayer.

Sincerely yours in St. Vincent de Paul,

Fr. Patrick J. McDevitt, C.M.
Provincial Superior

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to shape models and methods of sharing the Vincentian mission, in particular focusing on instilling the Vincentian charism in young people through parish schools, religious education programs, and Vincentian institutions like DePaul College Prep High School and DePaul University.

While he said such efforts can serve to bring more young men to the Vincentians as vocations, he is realistic about recruitment being able to keep up with declines in the numbers of active Vincentians through aging. He said robust partnerships with organizations and individuals who share in the Vincentian mission can go a long way toward keeping the mission alive and can energize vocation recruitment.



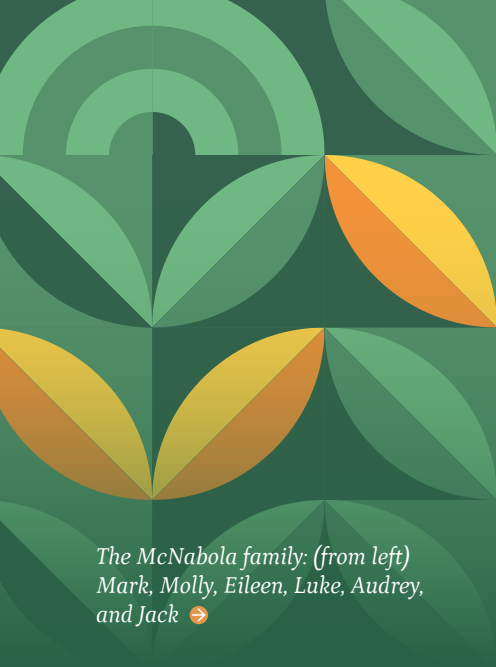
“These moments of change are opportunities for renewed hope, and as Vincentians, it offers us an opportunity to deepen our commitment to service to the poor.”

—Fr. Patrick J. McDevitt, C.M.

“I look forward to continuing to work with our partners in ministry going forward,” he said, “as well as to making new partnerships in service.”

Fr. McDevitt served as Provincial from July 2020 through this June, an active period that included pandemic lockdowns, the relocation of the provincial office, and the establishment of the Region of Kenya as a Vice-Province, among other initiatives. He offered Fr. Williams his support and well wishes.

“These moments of change are opportunities for renewed hope, and as Vincentians, it offers us an opportunity to deepen our commitment to service to the poor,” said Fr. McDevitt. “We offer Fr. Joe Williams our support and our prayers as he helps us move forward in the future.”



The McNabola family: (from left) Mark, Molly, Eileen, Luke, Audrey, and Jack ➔



Vincentian Roots Run Deep in Faith-filled Chicago Family

➔ With generations of connections to members of the Congregation of the Mission, Mark and Eileen McNabola of Chicago recently reflected on their devotion to and support of the Vincentians. They share some of what inspires them about the spirit and work of the followers of Saint Vincent de Paul.

Q. Tell us about the Vincentian roots of your family.

A. (Mark) My maternal great-great-grandfather was Thomas Tully. A native of Caven County, Ireland, he came to Chicago and served as a lieutenant for the Chicago Police. Two of his mother's brothers — both Vincentian priests — immigrated to the U.S. in the late 1800s to help strengthen the Congregation's presence here.

Frs. Thomas and Edward Smith, C.M., were pioneering leaders. They built churches and founded universities, including DePaul University, St. Vincent de Paul Church in Chicago, and the iconic St. Joseph Church in New Orleans.

My father, Dr. William McNabola, attended DePaul University and was a member of its basketball team in the early 1940s. After he became a surgeon, he volunteered for many years serving the DePaul Athletic Department as team physician. I attended DePaul from 1977-1984, completing my undergraduate and law school studies, and I had the opportunity to assist Fr. Walter Brennan, C.M., at St. Vincent church!

Other Vincentian priests shaped my path with their unique and guiding influence, including Frs. John Richardson, Dennis Holtschneider, Thomas Munster, Thomas Croak, and Patrick McDevitt.

Q. And you raised your own family close to these roots?

A. (Eileen) Yes. Mark and I met in 1992 in Chicago and married in 1995. We raised our four children in the shadows of the St. Vincent de Paul Church on the DePaul University campus. Luke, Molly, Jack, and Audrey were all baptized there. The kids are grown, but when we can, we still attend Mass there as a family.

Mark and I have also been involved with the church for many years and have enjoyed assisting with the food pantry.

Q. What is it about the spirit of the Congregation of the Mission that attracts you?

A. (Mark) The Vincentian spirit is in my spirit. I fully embrace the character of St. Vincent and his commitment to helping the poor and making an impact for others. I strive to put my faith into action by trying to make a difference for people who are less fortunate.

Q. You have offered financial support to the CM priests and brothers. What has inspired that generosity?

A. (Eileen) Mark and I are devoted to the Vincentian priests and brothers and their mission. Out of respect for those who have dedicated their lives to others, we have offered unrestricted gifts. We have great faith in the Congregation and know the money is being used for good.

Mark and Eileen McNabola continue to make their home in Chicago, Illinois. Mark is the founding partner of McNabola Law Group. Eileen is an interior designer and a landlord. Together they enjoy golfing, boating, and skiing with their kids, as a family.



From Vietnam to Patterson

Fr. 'Tino' Tran feels at home at Sacred Heart Parish



Sacred Heart Parish in Patterson, CA, has had a Vincentian as pastor since 1955. The latest, Fr. Nhan “Tino” Tran, C.M., was named to the post in early March after seven years as Parochial Vicar and Parochial Administrator, respectively.

He stands in front of the church after Mass before a line of parishioners who wait to shake hands or receive a blessing. The tidy town of 24,000 sits next to the green Sweetwater Mountains, palm trees lining the street into town.

“I love it here,” Fr. Tino said. “It is an active parish and still growing, and the people here are very good, very generous.”

Fr. Tino came to the U.S. from his native Vietnam in 2001 at the age of 37. Prior to this he worked at an Internet café, the last of a string of jobs he held before making the one-way trip to the U.S. While still in Vietnam, he had considered but could not act on a call to a priestly vocation. He credits his vocation to his aunt, a Daughter of Charity, who inspired him with her goodness and charity.

“I had the idea to join a monastery, but I did not have the opportunity because of the communist government’s restrictions on religious orders,” he said.

Fr. Tino’s immigration to the U.S. followed that of his parents and brothers, who moved to the U.S. in 1993. His father passed away in 1999, and his mother recently turned 96. In those early days, he went to community college to study English and sought out the Vincentians, which he joined in Los Angeles as a brother.

“Fr. Hoan Nguyen (also from Vietnam) took me around with him, and as a brother I could visit the people and help them materially, but I could not give them the sacraments,” Fr. Tino said. “That is what inspired me to become a priest.”

He was ordained in 2010 and served in parishes in Dallas, St. Louis, and Los Angeles before his assignment to Patterson. The parish, he said, embraces the members of the community in need, regularly answering the call to contribute toward efforts for the less fortunate.



“As a brother I could visit the people and help them materially, but I could not give them the sacraments. That is what inspired me to become a priest.”

—Fr. Nhan Tran, C.M.

The parish operates St. Vincent’s Thrift store and collaborates with the St. Vincent de Paul Society and other local entities that provide services for the needy. And they fill the church throughout the weekend Masses, including a Spanish Mass at the school gym whose size can accommodate the larger crowd.

Afterward, they line up to spend a few precious moments with the celebrant, not heading to the parking lot until they have had their turn with a handshake, a hug, or a blessing.



PATTERSON, CA

A Teaching Moment

Fr. Stephen Gallegos embraces instructional role in his ministry

In front of his congregation at Sacred Heart Parish’s 11 a.m. Mass in Patterson, CA, Fr. Stephen Gallegos, C.M., stops after the sign of the peace for a “teaching moment.” He holds the broken host aloft, a symbol of how Christ was broken for us, explaining to the congregation as he does it.

Fr. Stephen knew from age seven or eight that he had a vocation. Having been raised in Denver in an orphanage run by the Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth, he went to Mass every day by his own choice.

In high school, he found his way to the Vincentians in Perryville, MO, entering the novitiate in the mid-1960s and becoming a brother because, as he put it, he did not think he could handle the academics associated with becoming a priest.

“I wouldn’t let anyone teach me,” he said.

Working as a brother in Perryville, he later decided he wanted to go to the missions. He was sent to work in Taiwan, in the Vincentian mission of China. During that time, he started to yearn for a more direct connection between the parishioners and the sacraments.

“It was in Taipei that I eventually ‘grew up’ and decided I wanted to be a priest,” Fr. Stephen said. “I was ordained in 1988, and everywhere I went, I made it a point to educate the people in the new liturgy.”

Back in the U.S. since 2007, he served in parishes from Missouri to Arizona to California before his present

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Loaves and Fishes

Mary and Willy Miranda are devoted to feeding Patterson’s needy

After 11 a.m. Mass at Sacred Heart Church in Patterson, CA, Mary Miranda hands out flyers for a fundraiser to help feed the area’s poor. Treasurer of Patterson’s chapter of the St. Vincent de Paul Society, she and her husband, Willy, run the Trust in Jesus Cuisine Ministry for the homeless.

The couple, both “retired,” devote countless hours to the ministry, obtaining food from partner institutions, like restaurants and grocery stores, preparing meals, and serving them at the parish’s Fr. Connors Hall—practically a full-time job. Mary says she was inspired by her aunt and spiritual mentor, Sr. Rose St. Francis, a Little Sister of the Poor.

“When she passed in 2018, we knew we needed to do something,” Mary said. “We contacted Fr. Tino, and he said they needed help feeding the homeless.”

They serve hot meals three days a week and also prepare lunch bags, enlisting the help of their three children and members of the parish community. When the pandemic lockdowns came in 2020, they moved the operation to their home and focused on delivery.

“This is our calling,” Mary said. “But it’s not just us. This whole community is very generous. We never run out of food.”





Congregation of the Mission
of **Saint Vincent de Paul**



Put on the Spirit of Jesus Christ

In 2025, the Congregation of the Mission world-wide will be celebrating the 400th anniversary of its official establishment. What happened in 1625, and how did St. Vincent de Paul bring it about?

When Father Vincent de Paul preached his first parish mission in Folleville, France, in 1617, it became a pivotal moment in this life. The spiritual and physical poverty of the rural Catholic population in France moved his heart in a way that would shape the rest of his life. Vincentians today refer to the sermon at Folleville as the birth of the Vincentian charism. From this point on, Vincent would focus his ministry on preaching missions to poor country people. His chief benefactors were Comte Phillippe and Madame Françoise Marguérite de Gondi, whose children had been tutored by Vincent and on whose estates he planned to begin his new work.

Vincent, however, did nothing haphazardly. Although he was a man of action, he was also an organizer and financial realist. To help him in these missions, he enlisted other priests who shared his concern for the spiritual welfare of the country people. They joined him for as long or as short a time as they saw fit. In each town, they would stay for several weeks, preaching, teaching, catechizing, and hearing confessions. He would also start a Confraternity of Charity – an organization of parish laity who would care for the sick, hungry, and lonely of the parish, long after the missionaries departed.

By 1625, it became clear that Vincent needed a stable group of priests to join him in his work, priests were interested in the evangelization of the poor as a full-time ministry. The de Gondis had already financed his missionary endeavors on their estates. Now they were ready to help Vincent expand this important work. And so, on April 15, 1625, Vincent de Paul and the de Gondis signed the charter of foundation of the Congregation of the Mission, specifying the mission work Vincent and his collaborators were to do and the financial backing the de Gondis would provide.

The founding of the Congregation of the Mission in 1625 was a dream come true for Vincent de Paul, and he would be the Congregation's humble and resourceful leader for the next 35 years of his life. Little did he know then that the ministry of preaching parish missions would spread throughout France and lead to other ministries, such as the formation of the clergy, the foreign missions, and the works of charity among the sick and abandoned.

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The God Minute to be Available to Prison Inmates

After almost a year of planning and in cooperation with the U.S. government and State Departments of Corrections, The God Minute app with daily prayer, rosaries, meditations, audiobooks, and formation videos will soon be available on demand to almost 1 million incarcerated people in correctional facilities throughout the United States.

Many prisoners have access to a specially designed tablet for personal use. Content is carefully calibrated and mostly includes material (written and video) for personal growth and advancement. Each week, the God Minute Daily Prayer will be “pushed” to the tablets and made available for individuals to pray each day. Additionally, books on the faith by Fr. Oscar Lukefahr, C.M., will be included as well as the many archived devotionals and retreats. Currently, upwards of 900,000 prisoners have access to these tablets in the United States.

“The very first work of charity of St. Vincent de Paul was caring for the spiritual needs of prisoners in the Galleys—the most forgotten and dismissed members of society,” said Fr. Ron Hoye, C.M., who directs The God Minute. “Today we continue in his footsteps through the blessing of digital evangelization. We will keep you posted on the development as it reaches its final stage.”

Please pray for its success as we continue to spread God’s Word and welcome our incarcerated brothers and sisters to our God Minute prayer community! Download the free app today: TheGodMinute.org



DePaul Mission Team helps celebrates 325th anniversary of Cahokia parish

On April 20-24, Fr. Gilbert Walker, C.M., and Fr. Jim Cormack, C.M., of the new DePaul Mission Team, held a Parish Mission at Holy Family Parish in Cahokia, IL. The team was invited by Fr. Evaristus Akabueze, C.M., pastor of Holy Family and Sacred Heart Parish in Dupo, IL, to celebrate Holy Family’s 325th anniversary. At the conclusion of the parish mission, Fr. Walker and Fr. Cormack celebrated a Mass at the historic log cabin church on Holy Family’s grounds.

“The chalice we used at Mass was brought over by the first French missionaries who evangelized the area,” said Fr. Walker. “It was also used by St. John Paul II at the Mass he celebrated when he came to St. Louis in January 1999.”





CONGREGATION
of the **MISSION**

THE VINCENTIAN
WESTERN PROVINCE

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ST. VINCENT DE PAUL

2024 SUMMER NEWSLETTER

Learn more about the Congregation of the Mission Western Province, join us in prayer, and offer your support. Visit us online at vincentian.org and like us on Facebook at facebook.com/CMWesternProvince.

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assignment two years ago as Parochial Vicar at Sacred Heart Parish.

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“I was ordained in 1988, and everywhere I went, I made it a point to educate the people in the new liturgy.”

—Fr. Stephen Gallegos, C.M.

“I see myself as helping people get closer to their faith,” he said. “Understanding why we do things is part of that. That is what St. Vincent did, and I want to be like him.”

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In the coming year, the Congregation of the Mission will celebrate its foundation with special events in all of its 53 provinces, vice-provinces and regions. Guided by the Superior General, Fr. Tomaž Mavrič, C.M., Vincentians the world over will be reflecting and then acting on the theme of this anniversary, “Put on the Spirit of Jesus Christ.” More importantly, the priests and brothers will celebrate by renewing in their hearts the foundational spirit which St. Vincent and his first followers had in their hearts 400 years ago.

