

Passionate and enthusiastic about Vincentian ministry

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From the first moment that one participates in a meeting of some branch of the Vincentian Family, a positive impact is felt. Then, when one becomes involved in the ministry of that branch, it becomes “love at first sight.” That is the manner in which almost all of us have come to know the Vincentian charism and the manner in which the various branches function. The one reality that I believe all would affirm is the following: we are passionate about the Vincentian ministry and enthusiastic about this ministry that was divinely inspired.

There are many different factors that have drawn us to this Vincentian option. Here I mention the following elements: service on behalf of the neighbor; service in a family atmosphere; spiritual growth and development; the ability to engage in a process of evangelization; participation in the building up of a more just society. Those factors explain the great dedication

and enthusiasm of the membership of the many different branches of the Family.

The first element that motivates us to become part of the Vincentian Family is that of service on behalf of the neighbor. At a time when so many people are self-absorbed, a concern for charitable service on behalf of those who suffer could be viewed as almost miraculous. The poor open their doors to us; they receive us and embrace us and share their concerns with us. Isn't that incredible!!! We enter the homes of people who are at first unknown and those persons offer us their love and kindness. Thus, service on behalf of the poor is Vincentian fuel and give joy to the heart. How could we not love such ministry!!!

The second element is the fact that this service is carried out in a family atmosphere. In our group we find true and loyal and faithful friends ... all of whom share some common values: the Vincentian virtues, a desire to transform the world, a willingness to engage in a search for solutions to the urgent situations that confront our sisters and brothers. It is impossible to not love the other members of our group since each one of them shares so much of their lives with the other members.

A third element is the fact that our membership in the worldwide Vincentian Family provides us with an opportunity for spiritual growth and development. It is both an honor and a privilege to be a member of this Vincentian Family, to participate in the many different events, to become a better person (a better husband/wife, a better son/daughter, a better religious, a better layman/woman). We are able to develop ourselves spiritually as we cultivate our characteristic virtues and share our God-given talents. How could we not fall in love with this work of God, this work known as the worldwide Vincentian Family.

Another motive for our passion is the fact that we are able to live our Catholic faith in every aspect of our lives. As we reflect on the word of God and proclaim that word in our ministry, as we participate in a retreat or a gathering of our particular branch of the Family, as we celebrate the sacraments ... all of this draws us closer to the Church, closer to God, and closer to our neighbor. As we deepen our relationship with God and our

neighbor, we also become more deeply rooted in our faith. Thus, we discover and love the Jesus that we encounter in those persons who are poor.

A final element that instills in us an enthusiastic spirit is our desire to transform the world and participate in the building of a better society. Why have a home and a car and a job and health care and education if my brothers and sisters lack all of these. The reason why we are members of the Vincentian Family is that we desire to change the unjust structures that oppress the family of God and that create conflict and suffering and alienation. Yes, we are obsessed with this transformation and passionate about our neighbor, our sisters and brothers who are poor.

Therefore, our passion and enthusiasm, which flows from being members of the Vincentian Family, should become contagious and should be transmitted to others. We want other people to share our enthusiasm and we want them to say: Look at how happy these Vincentians are! It must be good to be a member of the Vincentian Family! We will recruit more members through our example and our attitude.

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