COLLOQUE

Journal of the Irish Province of the
Congregation of the Mission

No. 11 **Spring 1985**

A rear view of St. Vincent's Seminary, 11 St. Patrick's Place, Cork. This photograph, by an unknown photographer, can be dated between 1872 when the horse-trams began running and 1875 by which time they had ceased. (Photograph by courtesy of Walter McGrath of the Cork Evening Echo).

Contents

Editorial

1985 is the centenary year of the establishment of the Congregation in Australia. On 4 November 1885 Malachy O'Callaghan and Anthony Boyle disembarked from the Liguria in Sydney, though they were not, in fact, the first confrères to go to Australia; Patrick O'Grady had gone there for health reasons in 1866, dying less than a year after his arrival. The Australian beginnings were written up in COLLOQUE No. 3.

In 1984 the one hundred and twenty-six years of Vincentian involvement with the Irish College, Paris, came to an end. The name which stands out most clearly from that period is that of Patrick Boyle. He spent forty-six years in the ICP, thirty-seven of them as Rector. This issue pays tribute to him, and through him to all the confrères who worked in the ICP.

Frs James Crowley and Pat Doherty died while this issue was with the printer; obituaries will appear in the next issue.

The Ministry of Priesthood for St Vincent and his Congregation

Eamon Flanagan

(Revised version of paper read to Vincentian Study Group, 17 November 1983)

On 23 September 1600 a young man knelt before an old bishop at Chateau l'Evêque; he was being ordained to the priesthood. He was no more than 20 years of age, and his name was Vincent de Paul. The premature ordination did not indicate a corresponding precocious sanctity, but more exactly a widespread unhappy condition of the priesthood which was in urgent need of reform. It is true that reform was under way in some places, as, for example, at Dax where the zealous new bishop was initiating better ways. But Vincent, for whatever reasons, did not receive priestly anointing from his episcopal hands.[1] The Tridentine clerical renewal, not given royal blessing in France till 1615, would later be one of the great consuming pastoral concerns of Vincent de Paul. But that lay a long way off in 1600.

It is not my intention here to narrate in detail the wonderful projects on behalf of seminaries and the priestly life and ministry, though I am keeping these in mind. Rather my specific intention is to look at Vincent's experience of priesthood, and his reflections on it. So I want to draw frequently on the rich reservoir of St Vincent's story as we follow him with vivid interest through the pages of his epic, re-lived, so to speak, and life-bringing to his sons of today some centuries further along the road. As a result of this vivified contemplation of our Founder my desire is that we would deduce some possibly great, workable and lasting insights bearing on our own experience of priesthood at the present time.

I think it is not too much to hope that our exploration, under the Spirit's guidance, may have far-reaching effects in the renewal of the Vincentian charism in our priesthood — what emphatically characterises us as Vincentian priests. I am aware that many of our confrères around the world are engaged like us in this noble ideal, and in many ways, whether in the vineyard of daily labour, the painstaking task of

research, at the well-spring of silent prayer, or in patient, relentless, suffering. I suggest that all these are complementary, and flow into and from each other. We then go on with this purpose of discovering the true Vincent and taking his spirit into our hearts only to let it pour out from us to present an authentic priesthood in this period of history.

Views on priesthood in St Vincent's time

Feudal society and later monarchic rule provided a structural background influencing attitudes in the religious sphere during the late Middle Ages and into the 17th century. Clichtove's image of priesthood was prevalent up to, and in, St Vincent's lifetime. This author, reflecting the current opinion, saw priesthood primarily in relation to cult; and the consequence of this was a tendency to separate priest from people. Priests and monks were placed far above the level of ordinary believers. According to this image priests became for the first time completely clerical and monastic, and spiritual literature on the priesthood has had clear echoes of this model right down to Vatican II.[2] Closely allied to this view formulated in the 16th century was one with much older roots, perhaps dating back to Pseudo-Dionysius of the patristic era. The theory stated that as higher angels illuminated those of a lower plane, so priests, being higher in the hierarchy of salvific economy, transmit redemptive influence to the laity and bring them to God.[3] The Council of Trent did not set out to present a complete doctrine of the Catholic conception of priesthood and priestly ministry. The canons of the Council emphasised the priest's presidency at the Eucharist and the performance of other sacramental acts. Trent also affirmed the ministry of pastoral leadership and proclamation, both in association with the episcopate.[4] More interesting perhaps than these statements of Trent were the actual effects they-were to produce in the future history of the Church. But that is a whole story in itself. More important for our present task is the extent, greater or lesser, to which St Vincent imbibed, assimilated or modified existing attitudes on priesthood. He himself recalled with enduring satisfaction the impression made on him in Rome by Clement VIII. He saw that Pope there probably in 1601, and always regarded him as a saint. It seems that it was on the occasion of that Roman visit that Vincent made his first real encounter with the mysterious world of sanctity.

Cardinal de Bérulle's concept of the priesthood was well-known to St Vincent, and had effects on his own early ministry in particular. "Priests should practise the religion of Christ towards his Father".[5] Here the two men are on common ground, but while Bérulle tended towards subtlety

and speculation, Vincent succeeded in taking the priesthood out of the purely theoretical sphere and into the reality of fraternal service unfolding in a discerned activity. Bérulle presented a powerful doctrine of the Incarnation and the call to all people to do God's will, and be redeemed in Christ. However, the great Oratorian "mystic of essences" somehow falls short of a dynamic direction which would bring to fruition this religion of the interior.

Evolution and labours of Vincent the priest

Vincent de Paul was alert to the conditions about him, and to other people and available writings. Francis de Sales and Benet of Canfield came into the young priest's orbit during the second decade of the 17th century. The Salesian *Love of God* with its unmistakable resonances of Teresian simplicity and gentleness softened the rigour and sharpened the active ministry of Vincent. Benet of Canfield's *Rule of Perfection* counselled him to follow the will of God and "be clothed with Jesus Christ".

The second decade of the 17th century was also crucial for the young Vincent for other reasons. It was the decade of his trials: the false accusation, and, according to Abelly, the horrific night of faith. Bérulle, to his eternal credit, stayed with him in these hardest of times. Out of the uterine darkness of purgation came the priest disillusioned with former ambitions. His altogether new self-gift in ministry to the poor was the antithesis of the soft option for a comfortable life on a fat benefice. The experience of pastoral ministry in the countryside, and especially at Folleville and Châtillon, channelled the evolving spiritual energy of Vincent towards a realisation of the kingdom, not just in himself, but far beyond, among those who were neglected and hungry for the word, in the hearts of the poor.

It appears rather odd that Bérulle, who approved of Vincent's early apostolate among the poor, should later oppose the foundation of the Congregation of the Mission. In the meantime the Oratorian had been adopting a policy of constriction towards the Discalced Carmelite nuns and, to say the least, Vincent was not in agreement with it. At all events, the young priest from Dax was now becoming more autonomous spiritually and more sensitive to the Spirit's urgings in himself. Also, from about 1618 (the year of Bérulle's clash with the Carmelites) he had as his spiritual director Fr André Duval, the humble Sorbonne professor, who was also a true friend to the Carmelites. This holy man remained his director for many years till his death in 1638. He allowed Vincent

to mature into his forties and beyond. He guided him wisely to new pastures of priestly zeal and ministry. One of these was the Little Company of the Mission.[6]

Madame de Gondi, the "woman behind the man" who preached at Folleville in 1617, urged him to establish a new community to preach the Gospel on her estates. For some time Vincent had performed a kind of peripatetic mission, drawing now and then on the collaboration of others. He invited other communities to enter this apostolate along with him on a more permanent basis. After these communities had turned down his request Vincent, after much reflection, decided to undertake the new foundation. On the way to his final discernment he made two retreats, from which he reaped a treasure which is surely part of his priestly charism, and ours. He had in fact a strong pull and desire to go ahead into action, but he rightly feared that this might be an all too natural inclination, and might even come from the evil spirit. So at the Soissons retreat he prayed insistently that he might be free of this too natural attraction, and of the haste which beset him. And he says: "The Lord in his mercy deigned to hear me so that he took away from me this desire and haste, and allowed me to enter into the contrary dispositions" (II, 247). It still took a decisive nudge from Fr Duval to give Vincent the confirmation he needed in regard to God's plan. As a good directee he poured out his heart to the prudent professor, who listened carefully and responded positively to his aspirations. On hearing his reply Vincent felt in his heart a strong outpouring of grace; he now experienced the peace and reassurance which accompany all true invitations from God. He abandoned himself totally to the enterprise.

The extensive project of preaching, teaching, conversion and healing among the people could not be carried out by a congregation of priests, no matter how devoted; there was required a holy and active priesthood right across the board. As one peruses the whole Vincentian story, the great work of priesthood renewal is one of the most inspiring and, I think, enduringly valid. The Tridentine seminary reform was slow in penetrating the maze of obstacles established by accepted usage, not least the poor quality of staff personnel in seminaries. Some reform was going on in this area. Among those already doing fine work in seminary ministry were the Jesuits for quite some time, and the Oratorians from 1612. Interestingly, St Vincent, with acute insight into human nature, did not favour the seminary recruitment of young boys, but he set great store by a thorough intellectual, pastoral and spiritual formation of men mature enough and ready to advance towards diaconate and priesthood. These he especially welcomed to the Bons Enfants College. He also

pursued with remarkable resourcefulness and energy what we call today renewal courses for priests already in the ministry. These courses were diversified into several disciplines. The methods could obviously not be as sophisticated as today's, yet they reveal a heart in the right place and we find a splendidly modern insight of the saint in his promotion of the association of priests who met for the famous Tuesday Conferences.[7]

Vincent de Paul, for all his far-reaching labours and love for the clergy, was the exact opposite of a clerical exclusivist. The wide expanse of his outlook was none other than universal in its embrace of the kingdom which is ultimately the possession of the poor in spirit. This man of Pauline courage and indomitable charisma was like another apostle striding the pages of Acts. Indeed his ministry and its light and fire have more than tenuous reminders of the Lucan early Church story. This chronicle of the young Church depicts the excitement of beginnings and the inebriating inflow of the Spirit. Vincent in some degree recaptures this sense of openness and sheer joy in love and service. He is not living today "in the body" to see the new expansion of multiple ministries in the life of the Church. But, no doubt, the mushrooming and variety of ministry would be in accord with his spirit, all of course with due deference to lawful authority. Châtillon was a discovery of lay potential in charity. It was a seed from which a great tree of love, variegated, rich and fruitful would spring up. The branches were laypeople, all who were willing to love, and give, and act, and the fruits were the love shared with the poor and all in need. A ministry of enlightenment, hope, and healing ensued, balm poured forth on a suffering world, and the laity were enrolled in this gentle kingdom of service. At this moment in time Vincent would find a responsibe chord in his heart for the modern agencies of mercy and relief, or for a group of Vincentians (or Vincentians in spirit) pouring oil on the wounds inflicted by drug abuse, or loneliness, or false prophecy, or unemployment. In a beautiful affirming talk to his lay ministers of charity he compares their position to that of the close followers and assistants of Jesus and his disciples of the infant Church:

> There is no condition in the world which is so close to their state as yours. They went from place to place to care for the needs not only of the Gospel workers but also of the indigent faithful (XIII, 815).

Together with groups of laity and his own community St Vincent had a unique partner in St Louise de Marillac, who, with him, founded

the Daughters of Charity. It was a case of new progeny rising from the family tree when the Company of the Daughers was established in 1633 and Louise, already eminent for her charitable work, was the right hand of St Vincent with regard to this new burgeoning of divine love released upon the world. In this context, as in many others, Vincent the priest esteems, listens to and incorporates women into the development of the Kingdom. He is not a feminist devotee of the 20th century, but a man who accepts fully the discipleship and ministry potential of womanhood. The launching of the Daughters into the city slums and the remote countryside was a stroke of genius, and also an act of faith in their spiritual calibre. Part of their apostolate, as that of the priests, was concerned with adult formation and education in the faith, something which was then appropriate and is now one of the most pressing needs of the Church. Vincent would use homely expressions of the Daughters, like "a fine big girl", "a really good girl, judicious and gracious", "little Barbara".[8] These endearing sum-ups show us his affection as well as good judgement. Surely his acceptance of women is an indication of a mature man at ease with his celibacy, and an imaginative cue-taking from his observation of women's role in the New Testament.

Vincent's particular insights on priesthood

At this point I want to reflect a little on the central vision of St Vincent regarding the priesthood, and then try to weave this living reality into our own experience of priesthood in the present age. From all we have been saying it is clear that our Founder was not cramped by the prevailing concepts of priesthood. Recently when I mentioned to somebody that he advocated simplicity and con-creteness in preaching, the response was that he was a man ahead of his time. He was ahead of his time in so many ways, but also he was strikingly wise in starting from the real position on the ground and in people's minds; he was a man of his time too. He subscribed in some degree to the Pseudo-Dionysian priestly model, mentioned above (cf XI, 348). On many occasions he expressed his highest esteem for the glory of the priesthood on earth as participating in the priesthood of Christ. He even went so far as to say:

> If I had known what the priesthood was before I had the temerity to enter that state…, I would have preferred to work the land rather than to commit myself to such an office (V, 568).

Exaggeration, no doubt, due to the saint's humility. But Vincent

was not paralysed by its awesomeness, and was always faithful to his call, relying on the grace it carried. He clearly distinguished the ministerial priesthood from the laity. But perhaps one of his most brilliant insights was to put the priesthood at the service of his brothers and sisters in a most radical way, to insert the priesthood and the priests he contacted into a living pastoral realism and love. The true greatness of the Vincentian priesthood is not separateness or superiority but a tent-pitching among humankind, a presence and brotherhood with people as they are. Along this wavelength heaven is found in hovels; the grace of Ordination becomes alive among the poor from the threshold of a royal palace to a traveller's caravan; the unloved are loved by those who bear the Vincentian emblem, so that through us they can believe in the Father's love for them. In words full of evangelical passion, St Vincent skilfully proclaims the special character of his followers:

> What reason has not the Congregation to humble itself, seeing the choice which the Lord made of it, since to the present day there has not been the like; and, be it said to the shame of our times, a congregation having for end to do that which Our Lord has come on earth to do — to announce the gospel to the neglected poor — has been but an object of contempt to the present age. Yet such is our end: to do what Jesus Christ has come on earth to do: "*Evangelizare pauperibus misitme"*. O! What an end![9]

This typical, though not fundamentalist, likeness to Jesus and his mission was, and is, the inner secret of Vincent's charism: to go and bring the Good News of God's kingdom to the neglected poor, yesterday, today, always. This is our obsession and peace. The peace of Christ may disturb us, but is disturbs only in order to bring freedom and peace to us now and at the last.

> Our portion, then, Gentlemen and my Brothers, are the poor. The poor! *Evangelizare pauperibus misit me.* What a blessing! Gentlemen. What a blessing! To do that which our Saviour has come on earth to do, and by this means to ascend from earth to heaven…[10]

Here is something to project one ahead on the road of Jesus, in his company, filled by the confidence he inspires. "Where I am, there shall my servant be" (Jn 12:26). And here, too, is another great part of the Vincentian secret. It is the mustard seed of the word ready for abundant

growth at all moments, given goodwill, effort and atten-tiveness to the Lord. This awareness of the Lord will find times of more intense expression in the context of daily meditation and a rich liturgical life, but also a whole prayerful attitude to life in every respect, a life reflected upon, derived from Christ, and directed back to its source in the Trinity.

"The Congregation of the Mission will last as long as it faithfully carries out the practice of prayer" (XI, 83). These are sublime and sobering words of St Vincent who himself discovered a deep and prolonged experience of priesthood and of God in his sustained prayer life. He passes on the experience to us in order that we may grasp the truth that all is emptiness without the fullness of a sound life of prayer.

A look at ourselves

At the present moment it appears as if the Congregation is maturing deeply. Signs of new plants can be spotted in the Vincentian field of the Church. Much also seems to be going on beneath the surface, roots refreshed, reaching upwards, soon, with the help of God, to break forth in a new spring of hope and goodness. A spirit of adventure and evangelical boldness invites us to affirm the goodness to be found in the world about us, and to challenge current popularly-accepted non-Christian values.

One day, a young priest imagined he would like to proclaim Christ to the crowds in a busy city centre. It was sheer madness, of course (though Paul, who trod the Roman Empire long ago would hardly think so, nor do the cult devotees of today). The priest's fervour did not last, perhaps fortunately. Only a crackpot or a saint would try such a thing, and the reckoning of our modern mentality would probablly rightly consign such a one to the former category. But what Catholic priest or Vincentian priest, with co-operators, would think of initiating popular Christian renewal in halls about our cities, in neighbourhood groups, in roadside mission (we already have the parish missions and the Travellers' Mission), a lunchtime evangelisation, presence at pop concerts or youth festivals for Sunday Mass and direct apostolate, talks and leadership in Christian meditation and contemplation (the oriental groups are very active with the thoughts of their own masters), study and programmes of action on the greatest spiritual needs in contemporary society? (St Vincent saw the horrendous state of the poor and the sacerdotal wastelands, and then discerned the way to action). These are some of the questions among the many that may be asked, though the answers are another matter, and in all fairness and respect it must be said that many of our confrères are launching fresh initiatives in some of

these, and other, areas. Here the heart could run away with the head, but also the head could be so cool as to cripple new possibilities, which are sometimes accompanied by risk and even failure. Certainly, means have to be proportionate to ends, and caution cannot be thrown to the winds. This kind of holy restlessness needs discerning, but I think it is great, especially now, to hear about new dreams, and to be open to the genuine prophetic voices within and without. It is good for us all to be tuned in to the insights, to listen, to reflect, to decide with the Spirit's guidance, to go forward with innovative vigour, perhaps very painfully.

We have gained much inspiration from events of recent years and new fruitfulness in the Congregation, intraprovincial and worldwide. We have had the Provincial and General Assemblies, and the 1981 Fourth Centenary with its prophetic letter from Pope John Paul II to Fr McCullen. The Pope thinks of Vincent today "finding the way of the poor, the new poor". There has occurred the Provincials' meeting on Mission at Bogota in 1983. We are witnessing the Lord's goodness in the spiritual fruitfulness and fresh promise of our young confrères in Columbia, Brazil, Nigeria, Poland, Austria and elsewhere. These seem to be among today's "signs of the times". And, most recently, the Congregation has experienced the Vincentian Month held in Paris in July 1984. Here was a whole mine of new richness betokening an ever-youthful Congregation to be unfolded in powerful mission in the fulness of God's time.

Some conclusions

I now want to pick out a few of the many fine splendours of St Vincent's priestly ideal and experience, and propose that in these areas we might find the fertile seeds of growth at this point in our story. I would like in this process to work from the outside inwards, so to speak, like following a light back to the lamp which is its source.

First, it seems to me that the Vincentian priesthood is alive and well. It shares the beauty of the Catholic priesthood throughout the world, as found in the New Testament, developed in the life of the Church, and transmitted through history. Now, especially in the light of Vatican II and renewal in all communities (including our own), the true inner essence of Christ's ministerial priests should be discovered and asserted. "The ministry itself (of priests) by a special title forbids them to be conformed to this world".[11] The Council's words contain encouragement for us priests to resist the "earthly, unspiritual, and devilish" (Jm 3:15) in ourselves and in the world. So, a strong evangelistic voice from us proclaims the word of life and the truth that sets us and all people free.

Wherever we are, whatever we do, this patient, divine word goes out from us to youth in our colleges and other places, to parishioners, to our seminarians, above all to the poor.

The poor did not receive much explicit mention in the documents of the Second Vatican Council. It is since 1965 that they have cried most pleadingly across all boundaries. In Gutierrez's phrase "theology from the underside of history" is now well and truly being written and lived. The Latin American theologians have reawakened our dormant consciousness and revolutionised Christian awareness on the existence of the poor. Paul VI and John Paul II have added momentum and weight to this trend. Vincent de Paul's vision and words again come to life, most of all in the hearts of his sons and daughters. The poor transcend terms like conservative and liberal. They are concerned with bread, a decent life and a liberating Gospel of love and brotherhood, where prayer is born out of authentic celebration of the Eucharist. That poor man, Father Vincent, speaks to us again:

> Yes, the Lord asks us to evangelise the poor. It is what he did, and wants to continue doing through us… What happiness, my brothers! And also, what an obligation to have an affection for it (our vocation). Therefore a great motive we have is the grandeur of the task: to bring the poor to the knowledge of God, to announce Jesus Christ to them, to say that the kingdom of heaven is near, and that that kingdom is for the poor. How noble this is (XII, 79-80).

Vincent thus catches the inner heart of our priesthood, its very essence. And in doing so he puts himself in the company of the most enthusiastic incarnationists. But we know that the Incarnation began with Christ, and always it has to include Christ in order to avoid ending up in the byways of mere philanthropy.

Secondly, we trace back a little further the light that illumines a prophetic message of humble spiritual leadership and partnership among the poor. Recently, on learning about new groups working among the poor, I was fascinated by the fact that these people live very simply and humbly. Their lifestyle is a sincere and pellucid witness to the poor whom they love. Their day-to-day living is eloquent and unmistakable, and compels credibility. I do not think the Vincentian way asks for an extreme form of poverty. We need reasonable community conditions, shelter and clothing. We need substantial food and the wherewithal to live and work effectively. Sufficient recreation and leisure, with opportunities for quietude, are also sound elements in our situation. The extent

of all these is surely something for us to reflect on, though not easy to legislate on. Vincent, as up to date as the latest spiritual theologians, sets poverty in its true perspective:

> Having made this vow of poverty we no longer hold on to anything, we are no longer attached to honours, riches and pleasures; and after that, shall our heart be without love? No. It must then give its love and affections to God. The vow of poverty, therefore, is nothing else than a sovereign and perfect means of loving God indeed (XII, 380).

The basis and effects of Christian poverty are stated in these words, and we are called to something even deeper than material poverty: dependence on God, our treasure (Mt 6:19-21). We become like Jesus and the biblical *anawim,* and in some way we can thus approximate to the lives of those we serve. In this regard, and in many others, the quality of our personal lives and fraternity is a sure indicator to the level of witness we give in the apostolic activity we undertake.

Thirdly, and lastly, I wish to say something about the luminous point, where our light is intensified and where especially we reach the Father of Lights. I refer to our daily prayer, and the more extended periodic solitudes of our lives. Interior prayer, mature reflection, which blends with our liturgical activity (Mass, Penance, sacramental ministry, the Divine Office), and with all our labours and relationships, is the precious time of heightened presence, intimate conversation with Jesus Christ, and interior delight in God. Individually and communally we can draw water from the wells of the Lord. There, in interior prayer, we become conscious of the Spirit's promptings, lights, and the pulls of challenge, perhaps a treatment of healthy guilt at times. The divine life in us, born at baptism, nourished by sacraments, especially a living Eucharist, is fostered in the quiet hours of prayer, and in the sanctuary of a surrendered heart. A good knowledge of prayer and purification of self in accordance with a developing prayer life is a real need for all serious Christians. We give the daily desert time a high esteem in our diverse situations. And we could find great value in taking a quiet period at regular intervals for personal solitude and growth in friendship with Christ, "abiding" with him (cf Jn 15). Within our ministry, too, we can find a wealth of prayer, awareness and spirituality. In this way we would be able to discern more clearly the new invitations which the Lord extends to us, and receive strength to respond to them; our spirituality would be incarnational and transcendent in a balanced, harmonious

realism.

As to ways of praying, it is for each of us to see how the Spirit is leading us. St Vincent was wary of contemporary tendencies towards quietism and illuminism, yet he says contemplation occurs

> where the soul in the presence of God does nothing else but receive what he gives it. It does nothing but what God himself inspires in it, without any effort on its part… God himself fills your spirit and imprints on it a knowledge which you would never have reached (IX, 420-421).

So he appreciates this manner of praying, though for him in this area the most important point was to be praying consistently according to the divine urge in each one, and above all with good fruit in love. He also sapiently asserts that "perfection in fact does not consist in following a form of prayer, but in charity".[12] So, like Mary who pondered in her contemplative heart, we pray in silent times and with voice, but also reach out to others in our visitations of charity. I have tried to trace back the Vincentian charism of priesthood to its source. There, the brilliant light of the Trinity is found and shines forth in the heart of St Vincent de Paul who in the plan of Providence transmits beams from the spectrum in special tonalities to us who carry the Vincentian torch. We in turn let this light radiate, in harmony with the whole Church, and with an explicit expression of prayer, humble love, service and solidarity upon our brothers and sisters, especially the poor of our time.

Notes

1. Coste: *The Life and Labours of St Vincent de Paul,* three vols, London 1934, translated by Joseph Leonard. Cf vol 1 pp 31ff.
   Román: *San Vicente de Paúl, I, Biografía,* Madrid 1981, cf pp 53ff.
   Mott: *Saint Vincent de Paul et le sacerdoce,* Paris 1900, cf pp 57ff.
2. Schillebeeckx: *Ministry,* London 1981, cf pp 58ff.
3. Orcajo and Pérez Flores: *San Vicente de Paúl, II, Espiritualidad y seleccion de escritos,* Madrid 1981, cf pp 60ff.
4. Schillebeeckx: *op cit,* cf pp 60ff.
5. Delarue: *The Missionary Ideal of the Priesthood according to St Vincent de Paul,* privately printed English translation, cf pp 41ff.
   Ibanez: *Vicente de Paúl: Realismo y encarnación,* Salamanca 1982, cf pp 184ff.
6. Román, *op cit,* pp 167-168.
7. Coste, *op cit,* I, pp 264-267.
8. Coste, *op cit,* I, pp 336-337, 339.

9. *A Collection of the Conferences of St Vincent,* Dublin 1881, p3. (This translation, published anonymously, was by Malachy O'Callaghan and John Burke and was made from the imperfect Pémartin edition. This passage is slightly different in the Coste edition, XII pp 3-4. *Ed.)*
10. *Ibid,* p 4.
11. *Presbyterorum ordinis,* §3. Cf Rm 12:2.
12. Abelly: *Vie du vénérable serviteur de Dieu Vincent de Paul,* livre III, ch VII. (Pagination varies with edition, books and chapters remain the same).

St Vincent and Discernment

Padraig Regan

(Revised version of paper read to Vincentian Study Group, 2 April 1984)

1. Discernment

Within the entire span of religious consciousness and commitment there is a central conviction that God himself can and does direct our lives. A key exercise of the spiritual life is to experience God's direction or, as we say, to know God's will for us. This is called discernment. Many of us, even in our teens, first underwent this process when we felt the call of God and responded, painfully or joyfully, by joining the Congregation.

The experience of Elijah is a model of discernment. On Mount Horeb he did not find God in either the storm, the fire or the earthquake, elements classically associated in the bible with divine epiphany. Instead, he found God in the still, gentle, breeze, an unlikely manifestation of God's presence (I Kgs 19:9).

Jesus was filled with the Holy Spirit at his baptism (Mt 3: 16-17). Matthew refers us to the prophecy of Isaiah who foresaw in the Messiah a discerner of the things of God:

> And the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him,
> the spirit of wisdom and understanding,
> a spirit of counsel and power,
> a spirit of knowledge and fear of Yahweh.
> *He does not judge by appearances,*
> *he gives no verdict on hearsay* (Is 11: 2-3).

St Paul warns us against trusting every spirit and he advises us to test them all. For he is aware that Satan can, and does, disguise himself as an angel of light to lead us away from God (I Cor 11:11-15).

Emphasis on the need for discernment continues through the Christian tradition. Among the fathers in the East were *The Shepherd* of Hennas, Origen, Anthony of the Desert, Cyril of Jerusalem; and in the West St

Augustine, Cassian and St Gregory the Great. Thus, *The Shepherd of* Hermas:

> How, then, … shall I know their workings, seeing that both angels dwell in me? Here, saith he, the angel of righteousness is delicate and bashful and gentle and tranquil. When, then, this one enters the heart, forthwith he speaketh to thee of righteousness, of purity, of holiness and of contentment, of every righteous deed … When all these things enter into the heart, know that the angel of righteousness is with thee.
>
> Now, see the works of the angel of wickedness also. First of all, he is quick-tempered and bitter and senseless, and his works are evil, overthrowing the servants of God … Whenever a fit of angry temper or bitterness comes upon thee, know that he is in thee.'

The tradition is carried onwards by spiritual writers like St Bernard, John Gerson and Denis the Carthusian; also by theologians like Richard of St Victor, St Thomas Aquinas, Henry of Friemar, St Catherine of Siena. We imbibed the tradition in the seminaire while reading the *Imitation of Christ,* Bk 3, ch 54 *(Of the different motions of nature and grace)* and ch 55 *(Of the corruption of nature and the efficacy of divine grace).*

At the end of the middle ages the tradition on discernment was restated in a fresh and precise form by St Ignatius of Loyola. One writer makes the point that Ignatius, recently converted from an unspiritual life, was unaware of the tradition so that his Rules for Discernment were re-inforcing and confirmatory of existing teaching of which he was quite innocent. Ignatius fashioned his rules for the needs of a counter-Reformation apostolic spirituality. There are three stages in his discernment process:

> 1. First Week Discernment: simple judgement on the moral Tightness or wrongness of a decision or action;
>
> 2. Second Week Discernment: more sensitive discernment of possible evil masquerading as good; our affectivity is important at this stage;
>
> 3. Thinking with the Church (objective element which distinguished Ignatius' discernment from Luther's); discernment is not confirmed by God until it is confirmed by the Church.

I shall conclude this section with an attempted definition of discernment: Discernment involves choosing the way of the light of Christ instead of the darkness of the evil one, and living with the consequences of this choice. Or, more familiarly, knowing God's will and doing it. Shorthand: allowing God to direct my life.

2. St Vincent and Discernment

Our interest is in St Vincent and how he takes up the scriptural, patristic and medieval practice of discerning God's will. Vincent did not write, either systematically or autobiographically, about discernment. He was a mystic of action. His spirituality is expressed with actions rather than with words. In the Common Rules, the only work he wrote for publication, he summarises the principles of his spirituality for the benefit of his Congregation. There he advises us that we should always hold to the principle of using "divine means for divine ends" (CR II, 5). This was no mere theory. We find in Vincent's life occasions when he lays aside his customary protests of diffidence and ignorance in favour of a high degree of conviction and determination. And his effectiveness is not to be traced to any self-will but to his willingness to be the file in the hands of the divine tradesman. If we accept Ignatius' scheme for discernment as outlined above we will find that Vincent's discernment process follows along similar lines. As he discerns the will of God for himself and for those he directs we can see in operation those three stages: judgement about the Tightness or wrongness of a decision, awareness of the subtle deceptions of the evil spirit which present as good and holy what in reality is neither, and his ever-sensitive attention to the mind of the Church. Three events from his life may serve to illustrate Vincent's exercise of discernment.

(a) *Vincent's temptation*[2]

It would be interesting to have a study of this significant happening in Vincent's spiritual development. In his taking on himself of the burden of the doctor of the Sorbonne we have a hint of the future Vincent, the director of souls, drawing to himself the cloven hoofprints of the spirit of evil marking men's minds and hearts with anger, resistance and unbelief. The director is tempted to crumble beneath the weight, to allow evil to swamp his spirit, to indulge feelings of futility and hopelessness or, as we would say today, to burn-out. And we see how Vincent, slowly, painfully and persistently propels himself towards the light, senses rather than sees God's light in the ambient darkness, and ends by finding his life's vocation in this apparently endless night

of evil. Vincent chooses the way of light in preference to the way of darkness.

(b) Vincent's founding the Congregation

Vincent was reluctant to found a religious community. But once he arrived at the conviction that this was God's will, and that God's will was his will, the reluctance vanished and was replaced by single-minded determination. In order to arrive at this conclusion Vincent submitted himself on three different occasions to discern the will of God.

The first occasion, to judge the Tightness of the project, was during a retreat he made in the Carthusian abbey of Valprofonde. There his Carthusian director dispelled his misgivings about himself and his project. He told him a story about a bishop of the patristic Church who was having difficulties over the acceptability of women for the sacrament of baptism:

> He begged God often to set him free from these temptations; but as God did not hear his prayer he finally lost his patience and decided to retire to the desert. There God showed him three crowns, each one more costly than the other, which he had prepared for him if he should persevere. But he told him that he would receive only the smallest since he did not have confidence that he would preserve him from failing in this trial. . . (II, 107).

This anecdote — concluded Vincent, who told it to one of his confrères who was continually oppressed by scruples — "caused to vanish a temptation very similar to what I was then suffering in the exercise of my vocation".[3]

The second occasion, to cope with the more subtle difficulty of distinguishing the real from the apparent will of God, was during a second retreat, this time at Soissons:

> at the outset of the project concerning the Mission during that continual preoccupation of my spirit, as I distrusted it but did not know whether it proceeded from nature or from the evil spirit, I made a retreat at Soissons expressly for the purpose that God might desire to take away from me the spirit of pleasure and haste which I was feeling about this matter, and God deigned to hear me to such an extent that in his mercy he removed from me this pleasure and haste, and allowed me to move into the opposite dispositions (II, 246-247).

We notice how Vincent was becoming attuned to the Spirit of God rather than to any other spirit. He was reaching a state of indifference over the matter. He desired:

> … to remain in this practice of not finishing or undertaking anything while there remain in me these ardours of hope in the prospect of great benefits (II, 247).

The third occasion, confirmation by God through the authority of the Church, was the expressed view of his spiritual director, André Duval:

> In his efforts to submit himself totally to the will of God, Vincent … had learned that that will, even though well manifested by the interior movements of grace, becomes clearer still by way of the commands of one's superiors. At Soissons he had reached perfect indifference of spirit (freedom). He saw there a sign of the supernatural character of the proposed foundation. He wanted something more: an indication that it was positively willed by God (confirmation). So he brought the matter to his spiritual director Fr André Duval. Vincent poured out the whole story of himself, the missions, their success, the graces bestowed by God. Then he awaited the response of his director. It was brief but illuminating: "The servant who knows his master's will and does not do it will be given many blows". Scarcely had he heard these words than he felt in his heart a powerful explosion of grace. It was the divine command he was seeking. He doubted no more. God was calling him to offer himself completely, with all those who would follow him, to the mission of evangelisation of the poor.[4]

Once more in the Common Rules we can see Vincent's own spiritual experience made available to his community:

> Experience teaches that the surest and safest remedy in such cases (where the evil spirit disguises himself as an angel of light to mislead us) is to reveal the trouble as soon as possible to those who have been appointed for this purpose. Each one, then, if he finds himself beset by thoughts suspected of illusion, or by any serious trouble or temptation, should reveal it as soon as possible to the Superior, or the Director appointed for this purpose, in order that a suitable remedy may be applied (CRII, 16).

Let us now summarise the elements or stages of discernment used by Vincent in deciding to found the Congregation of the Mission:

> (i) The project was manifestly a good one;
> (ii) Vincent was free of harsh, hasty and harassed feelings, leaving him with a healthy indifference and free to be moved by God's spirit;
> (iii) The project was submitted to his director and it accorded with an authoritative voice of the Church.

(c) *Vincent: the discerning director*

Vincent, experienced in discerning and doing God's good pleasure in his own life, was now ready and able to direct others in this same exercise. Fr Claude Dufour, rector of the seminary of Saintes, was a conscientious but austere man who wished to leave the Congregation in order to live a life more in conformity with his inclinations. He submitted his plan to Vincent's direction; here is what Vincent told him:

> It is the part of the (devil's) cleverness to tempt most good people to greater perfection, so that he may make them abandon the post where God wishes them to be (III, 166).

That was 31 March 1647, and the following month, 23 April, he continues to warn Fr Dufour:

> (The devil's design) is to withdraw you from where God has placed you, under pretext of the greater security of your salvation, in order that the saving of your soul may be put in greater danger.

And he mentions that one hundred Jesuits in the city of Paris alone have fallen for this ruse; (even in Vincent's time at least a hundred of Ignatius' sons were not observing his Rules for Discernment):

> In the name of God stand fast in the state in which God has placed you (III, 173).

Vincent is prepared, if the need arises, to give Fr Dufour another appointment in order to keep him in the Congregation.

In 1648 Vincent was writing again to Fr Dufour, who had complained about the number of unnecessary rules in the Congregation. Vincent complimented him on his life and work in the community and explained

the necessity of rules in every group. He goes on:

> This makes me think that the little repugnance that you felt is the work of the evil spirit who wishes to annoy you in the beautiful road along which you are travelling. I beseech you, Sir, not to listen to him; for if two or three rules are displeasing to you because they are superfluous in your regard, another may like them because they suit him. The children of our Lord walk gladly in his ways; they have confidence in him and so, when they fall, they rise again; and if, instead of stopping to grumble about the stone they have tripped over, they humble themselves at their fall, this helps them to advance with great strides in his love. I hope for this from you, Sir, who are by his mercy entirely his, and who breathe only his holy will… And though it seems to you that you would more willingly carry out the duties of this holy religious state than those of our little institute, you would doubtless be therein deceived, as many others were who left their true vocation to enter on a different way of life in which they found less satisfaction. Why? Because the difficulties they thought to fly from were not in what they had left, but in their own imagination… (III 346-347).

Right or wrong (leaving the community); the affectivity experienced (irritation, annoyance, which the evil spirit brings); and the authority of the Church (rules of Church or community): These are the ingredients of discernment of spirits handed on by the Christian community and invoked, and applied, by Vincent.

3. Irish Vincentians and Discernment now

Our community is living through a period of upheaval and change in the Church and in the world. Doubts and difficulties within ourselves are experienced in the context of social disorder, violence and unjust poverty in the world around us. A choice to join, or stay with, the community can be an ambivalent one at present. For it may be an option to go along an easy, unreformed, unchanged, undirected drift powered by a familiar past and without any chosen future; or it may be a conscious corporate choice to assume responsibility for the spiritual and apostolic future of this province. At provincial gatherings, when we set about deciding our future, we say all the right things. We tell ourselves, for example, that we must pray for discernment of God's will. Do we translate this laudable sentiment into any recognisable process of prayerful

discernment? Do we love what Vincent loved, do we practise what he taught us by his actions:

> (i) to discern the evidently right decisions for our future;
> (ii) to experience interior peace with the corporate decisions we take, and with the carrying out of them;
> (iii) to arrive at these decisions because they clearly conform to the thinking of the Church today?

The tradition and practice of discernment are available to our Irish Province as we plan our future in response to Church and community demands (contained in *Evangelii nuntiandi* and in the Superior General's letter following the Bogotá meeting of Provincials). We must consider ourselves bound to follow St Vincent's principles and practice of discernment:

> … to use divine means for divine ends. We shall think and judge about matters according to the mind and judgement of Christ, never according to the standards of the world (CRII, 5).

So, a critical question facing our province is the following: in our decision-making for apostolic mission which is the more likely to influence us, the mind and attitude of contemporary business management whose terminology and values are centred on measurable material success, or the Spirit of Jesus Christ heeded through a process of Christian discernment, whose terminology and values are centred on the cross, consecration and oblation of self? I believe that at present we are inclined to listen first to the former. If so, our province is neglecting its Christian and Vincentian heritage.

Notes

1. Cited in Cowan & Futrell: *The Spiritual Exercises of St Ignatius of Loyola,* 1981, pp 154-155.
2. I am indebted to Fr Eamonn Flanagan CM for much of the material in this section and for his translation of pp 166ff of Roman: *San Vicente de Paúl, I, Biografía,* Madrid, 1981.
3. (On the recipient of this letter see COLLOQUE No. 9, pp 212ff. *Ed.*)
4. Roman, *op cit,* pp 167-168.

Locating St Vincent on the Enneagram

Stanislaus Brindley

Introduction

If Vincent de Paul was in North Africa it is a great pity his Moslem masters didn't teach him about the Enneagram. It would have proved a lot more useful than the talking skull. He could have included it in his Common Rules as a basic tool for the discernment of spirits. Chapter XII would have become far more comprehensive.

Edmund Spenser, it has been argued, had already written about it in *The Faerie Queen:*

The frame thereof seemed partly circulare And part triangulare: O worke divine!

(cf Nott: *Further Teaching of Gurdjieff,* London 1969, p216).

But not all Moslems knew about the Enneagram, only some of the Sufis. And it is only in very recent years that it has come to Europe via Chile and the US of A.

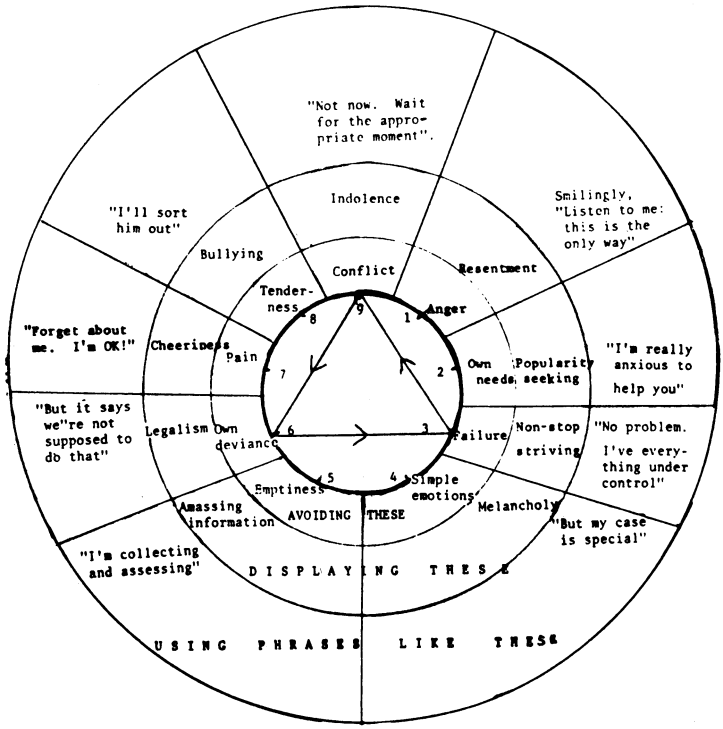
It was 1983 before I heard of it from a friend who recommended it. So in 1984 during July I participated in a 10-day course/ workshop/ retreat on the Enneagram in Milltown Park. I found it very helpful in understanding myself and others and in generating more compassion for all of us. Another effect was to relativise saints or outstanding people who tend to be idolised. God alone transcends.

Imperfection is the hallmark of all of us. We quickly came to admit this to ourselves and to each other. Like chatty patients in an accident ward we were soon ready to allow others see our woundedness, which we had previously been hiding from ourselves. The spirit of compassion was as much in evidence as, or perhaps more than, in a charismatic retreat. And no one was scoring points over anyone else. Let me share a few thoughts with you.

I am writing this article with three aims in mind: to whet other people's appetites for doing this kind of course; to carry out some helpful reflexions on the inner dynamics of the mind of St Vincent; to promote better mutual understanding and respect of individuals in the Vincentian families.

One of the dangers of delving into the Enneagram, or its relatives the Myers Briggs or the Kiersey Temperament Sorter, is that enthusiasts can cause a lot of annoyance by classifying others under sets of letters or numbers. Some of the nuns at the Enneagram course had been told prior to coming "You'll find you are a Six". So other members of the community may have felt there was an in-group in their midst, sitting in judgement on them, summing them up, belittling the unique individual mystery of their God-given being. Let's be careful, then, when we look at the following diagram, not to go jumping to conclusions about anyone other than perhaps ourselves.

A helpful energy map



My illustration of The Enneagram.

The word Enneagram means in Greek "Nine Points". A more helpful phrase would be "Energy Map". The (inner) circle represents the free flow of energy from God into the activity of our lives. Around the circumference are plotted nine points where resistance to energy-flow tends to take place. Perhaps they are like jumps in a steeplechase: for each jockey there is one particular jump which worries him more than the other jumps, although all the jumps are hazards. Each of us participating in the course faced the task of discovering "Which is my really difficult jump?" Or, in the language we soon found ourselves using, "Which is my fix, my fixation?" It might not be the one I think at first sight, because a lot of repression and suppression tends to obscure the real problem. (Here, of course, the jockey analogy limps; horsemen have a conscious knowledge of their toughest jump).

Jesus's principle of "The truth will make you free" is of particular relevance here. One participant confided: "I spent two hours resisting and saying I wasn't a Two; but when I began to admit the truth I felt freer". Many of us experienced the same. We prayed for enlightenment and acceptance and when this was gifted to us we detected a sense of relief and trust.

The diagram is much simpler than it appears at first sight. In the outermost band are phrases which are typical of the jump, or number, or fix with which they are aligned. For example, a person who constantly finds himself saying "Forget about me, I'm OK" would be advised to ask himself if he is a Seven. His outward cheeriness (middle band) hides the fact that, deep down, he is avoiding pain (inner band). The inner band indicates the basic reality which is being unconsciously avoided. This avoidance is covered up by what is charted in the middle band.

Seeking to locate Monsieur Vincent

Where would Vincent de Paul have located himself on the Enneagram?

But first, a word on the legitimacy of such an enquiry. In no way am I challenging the centrality of faith and prayer in the saint's life. But neither are we to lose sight of the fundamental principle that grace builds on nature. Even when my life is speaking God's language, my basic native accent, which is personal to myself, will still be detectable. Monsieur Vincent's life spoke God's language but beneath this we can still, so to speak, pick out his own personal speech-pattern. We do this when we are trying to identify the inner dynamics of his psyche which was co-operating with grace.

Another metaphor is helpful here. When a person tries to locate

himself on the Enneagram it is a bit like going into a shop and trying on ready-made suits. A suit in this case will consist of trousers and jacket. Often a waistcoat will be included. And sometimes also co-ordinates like a shirt and matching tie and handkerchief. In other words, each fix may comprise several aspects. One or two of these may fit the particular individual but others may not. He then has to ask himself: "Is this really *me?* Do these garments match my personality? Or should I try some others?"

So, let Vincent try on the Eight. When he recalled the fiery way in which he had pursued the miscreant who had absconded with his legacy Vincent might have seen something of the Eight in the young Fr de Paul muttering "I'll get that guy" and doing a Clint Eastwood after him. The Gascon's frequent references to his own grumpy, irritable ways which cost him so much effort to correct would also have been evidence suggesting his being an Eight. Yes, some of the Eight ensemble would have fitted Vincent. But not the complete suit. Let him try on another.

Would he perhaps have seen himself as a Five? All those letters he wrote to his mother in the early days of his priesthood show him grasping at, striving to lay hold on, a benefice which would bring security to himself and his mother; leading to honourable retirement. Yes, but later in life he was anything but a money-grasper. Rather did he let it flow through his hands freely. So his earlier efforts may simply display a somewhat normal, culturally determined amount of ambition in a young priest.

Vincent the achiever

Vincent's sustained endeavours to lay hold on a benefice clue us in to noticing the pursuit of success which ran through all the rest of his life. Grace did not play a large part in his benefice-hunting or his thief-hunting! Later, however, the basic drive continued in a more and more graced way. Our founder displayed an unswerving determination to have the CM and the DC set up in the precise way he wanted. Francis de Sales had been unsuccessful in getting the Visitation nuns to be allowed to do visitation. Vincent de Paul was mightily resolved to succeed in putting the Daughters out on to the streets and into the homes and hospitals where the poor could be served. And succeed he did.

Yes, Fr de Paul was an achiever. So, if suits Eight and Five do not fit him too well, he should try on the One, the Two and the Three. All of these could be called executive suits: they are achiever's suits. At an Enneagram course Vincent would certainly have found himself saying: "I'm sure I must be a One, Two or a Three. Let me try on a One".

The One is an over-perfectionist. He looks out on the world, experiences unacknowledged anger at the imperfection of the world and, with feelings of resentment tries to set it all right according to his own very high standards. Does that apply to Vincent? Well, if it does, why did he not accept the offer of the St Lazare property without such prolonged misgivings? A perfectionist would surely have seen the vast demesne as clearly fitting the needs of his growing community. Ones tend to go for the best without much hesitation. Then later Vincent was to keep urging the Visitation nuns not to purchase the too grandiose building in Paris which they subsequently bought: not really a One's approach. Without being dogmatic in our denial, let's suggest his trying another garment.

That Vincent is not a Two is easier to see than that he is not a One. The Two is always striving to win favour by rendering services. True, Vincent did, as Twos tend to do, burn himself out working for others. But it would be hard to argue that he was motivated unconsciously by an effort to win approval. That just doesn't fit. When he humbled himself before the community the Founder wasn't doing it so as to manipulate others into affirming him: "Oh, Monsieur Vincent, you're not miserable; you're fantastic!"

Vincent's efficiency

A Three, then, is that what he is? The great striving of the Three is easily confused with that of the One. But the root cause of the striving is different. Avoidance of his own anger, in the case of the One. Avoidance of failure, in the case of the Three. Over-efficiency is a compulsion of the Three. How does Fr de Paul score on this?

As an organiser Vincent was extremely efficient. A striking fact about Buzet is that it is far more than commuter distance from Toulouse, yet the young de Paul kept his little school thriving there while he studied theology at Toulouse. Quite a remarkable achievement. A sort of *actio in distans!* No wonder M. de Comet had been so impressed. Vincent was coming across as an enthusiastic, clear-headed teacher, business-like about curriculum and schemes of work, about overall organisation and attention to practical details. Even without his considerable personal charm (Vincent's dash of the Seven) this would have made him a most successful head teacher.

The thief-catching in Marseilles was an off-the-cuff operation which was also stamped with efficiency.

Efficiency of a more tactful kind would have been essential for the special diplomatic mission which Abelly says was entrusted to the young priest by the French Ambassador to the Holy See: a secret

mission to Henri IV. Even if there is not enough evidence to prove the historicity of this enterprise, Abelly clearly sees Vincent as a person capable of carrying it out efficiently.

All this was early in St Vincent's life. No need to go into the other endeavours throughout his life to prove that his efficiency didn't decline. Vincent, I suspect, became almost aghast at his own efficiency. All that breast-beating, which I used find so hard to interpret, my intuition now tells me that maybe it was a sort of defence mechanism for someone who was scared of his own over-efficiency.

The Ecumenical Implications of the Ministry of St Justin De Jacobis in Ethiopia, 1839-1860

(Part II)

William Clarke

(Dissertation for the Master of Arts programme, Angelicum University, Rome, May 1984. Because of its length the text is divided, quantitively rather then thematically, between this and the following issue.)

I. De Jacobis as Missionary of St Vincent de Paul

(a) *Entry and formation in the Congregation of the Mission*

Justin De Jacobis was born on October 9 1800 at San Fele in the diocese of Muro in the Basilicata region of Southern Italy. He was the seventh of fourteen children and grew up in an atmosphere of strong Christian faith. In 1814 the family transferred to Naples where Justin continued his education until he entered the Congregation of the Mission in that same city in the year 1818.[1]

The Congregation of the Mission was founded by St Vincent de Paul in 1625 and spread rapidly in Italy.[2] In succeeding centuries this Congregation has spread to most countries in the world and one of the results is that it is called by different names in different countries. In Italy the members are called Missionaries of St Vincent de Paul, which gives me the title for this first part. In the English-speaking world they are usually called Vincentians, while in France itself and in countries that have come under French influence the members are called Lazarists because the first house that St Vincent acquired in Paris was called Saint Lazare. This is the name used in Ethiopia because the first member of the Congregation to come to that country came from the French Lazarist missions of the Middle East.[3]

Modern historians writing Ethiopian history in the English language, such as Crummey and Rubenson, always use the term Lazarist,[4] so I

have followed their example throughout this paper except as above when referring to a particularly Italian situation.

It would go beyond the scope of this paper to give a complete account of the formation received by the young De Jacobis in the community which he joined at the age of eighteen. One thing is very clear, however, that he was strongly influenced by the life and teaching of St Vincent de Paul himself. Much later in life when he was already a bishop and an experienced missionary he gave a very strong testimony to his devotion to the saint and to the Congregation of the Mission:

> Instead of thinking it necessary to make changes in our Common Rules, on the contrary I am convinced that the Congregation as it came from the hands of its Holy Founder is the institution most adapted to the needs of our century. I believe that the spirit of prophecy helped our saint when he drew up the Rules and that, as a consequence, even to dream of changing one solitary syllable in this masterpiece of legislation would be a sacrilege. Further, I am persuaded that if such a grave disgrace were to come to our little Company she would be abandoned by the most precious among her sons.[5]

Since this letter was written to the Superior General of the Congregation, Father Etienne, Justin was putting himself very publicly on the line as a follower of St Vincent and a devoted member of the Congregation, a full Lazarist.

Two particular areas of Vincentian tradition need to be examined before proceeding to the ministry of De Jacobis in Ethiopia so that the principles from which his ministry proceeded may be seen more clearly. These two areas are: (1) Friendship as a central expression of the gospel, and (2) The missionary vocation.

(b) *Friendship as a central expression of the gospel*

St Vincent de Paul wrote a rule for his Congregation in which he placed great stress on fraternal charity and friendship between the members. In the chapter entitled *On the mutual relationships of our members* he begins by citing the example of Christ in his relationship with the apostles, how he gave them the precept of loving one another, that they should wash each other's feet, that anyone who had a difference with another should go and be reconciled with his brother, that whoever wished to be greater become least, etc.[6] He then goes on to describe this fraternal charity in the Congregation as *"in morem tamen*

carorum amicorum, inter se semper conviventes" — always living together after the manner of dear friends.[7]

This stress on friendship is no accident in St Vincent's thought and life. It comes directly from a very good friend of his own, St Francis de Sales, bishop of Geneva. Of him St Vincent said on one occasion: "Thinking back over the words of the servant of God I experienced such admiration that I was brought to see in him the man who best resembled the Son of God on earth".[8] Right to the end of his life the two books Vincent preferred to all others were de Sales' *Treatise on the Love of God* and *Introduction to the Devout Life.*[9] The latter book contains no less than five chapters on the theme of friendship as well as several others closely related to the same topic.[10]

What is important for this present dissertation is to see how this principle of friendship was in fact extended by St Justin following St Vincent to include also those Christians who were either out of communion with the Church of Rome or were in danger of reaching that position. I give here some examples of this reaching out in friendship in the case of St Vincent to show how De Jacobis learned from his master and spoke and acted in a very similar way during his time in Ethiopia.

St Vincent left his own missionaries in no doubt that he considered the reforms of Luther and Calvin a disaster for the Church of God. On one occasion he spoke as follows to them:

> I have, all my life, been afraid of finding myself at the birth of some heresy. I saw the great ravages done by that of Luther and Calvin and how many persons of every kind of condition have drunk from it the pernicious poison and wished to taste the false sweetness of their pretended reform …[11]

Yet when his old friend, the Abbé de Saint-Cyran, was put in prison for his Jansenist views Vincent went to visit him and to give him courage in his trial. Again, after his release, Vincent went to visit him several times at Port-Royal and attended his funeral when he died.[12]

He fought a long battle against Antoine Arnauld's book *On Frequent Communion* which contained much of the Jansenist type of spirituality, as well as several errors of doctrine in St Vincent's opinion.[13] But after the publication of the Papal Bull *Cum occasione* on 31 May 1653 condemning five Jansenist propositions Vincent hastily visited all those in Paris who had worked to have the propositions condemned. He begged them to keep a restrained attitude in their victory and to moderate their public expressions of joy, and to avoid in sermons and conversations

every word capable of stirring up their adversaries. He urged them instead to treat the defeated party with respect, charity and friendliness.[14]

Sermons attacking Protestants had become quite popular in 17th century France. Thus on Christmas Day in the year 1608 P. Gonthier, preaching before the king, called Protestants "vermin and dogs" and added that Catholics should not suffer them in their midst.[15] Other examples are not lacking.[16] St Vincent, however, counselled not to make a frontal attack on errors opposed to the true faith but to content oneself with an indirect refutation in presenting and demonstrating Catholic doctrine.[17]

In his early life Vincent de Paul became parish priest of Châtillon-lès-Dombes and took up his residence in the house of a rich Calvinist of the town, Jean Beynier.[18] Vincent's biographer, Pierre Coste, expresses surprise at the intimate relationship between the Catholic cure and the heretic,[19] but the friendship matured to such a degree that Beynier gave up his rather loose way of life and converted to the Catholic faith.[20] Other conversions in his family followed.[21] Perhaps this incident continued to influence Vincent throughout his life, as well as the gentle way in which Francis de Sales suffered the hostility of the Protestants in his diocese of Geneva who prevented him from residing in the episcopal city itself.[22]

In the following pages we shall see the same attitude of friendship expressed by De Jacobis and also the same firmness of attachment to the teachings of the Catholic Church. Another Lazarist who exhibited these same qualities in more recent times was the Abbé Fernand Portal whose friendship with the Anglican Lord Halifax has sparked off the modern phase of ecumenical encounter with the Anglican Church.[23] Both of these Lazarists exhibited the spirit of their founder to a very marked degree.

(c) *The missionary vocation*

Justin De Jacobis was ordained priest on June 12 1824 and for the following twelve years he was occupied with the task of preaching parish missions in Southern Italy.[24] St Vincent had placed this work as the first apostolate of the Congregation[25] and it can no doubt be seen as a very positive response to the Protestant Reformation, namely the renewal of the faith and religious life of the poor country people who made up the vast bulk of the membership of the Catholic Church. So instead of ranting against heretics Vincent got down to renewing the Catholic Church from the inside. De Jacobis continued this tradition

and thus had already become a missionary before he ever departed for Ethiopia.

By the year 1838 De Jacobis found himself superior of a Lazarist house in Naples and it was there that he met Cardinal Franzoni, Prefect of the Sacred Congregation *De propaganda fide,* who was looking for missionaries to take up the new opportunity of opening a Catholic mission in Ethiopia.[26] A Lazarist missionary, Giuseppe Sapeto, had already entered Ethiopia with two Irishmen of French descent, the d'Abbadie brothers, and Sapeto had succeeded in being accepted by the Ethiopians. Because he didn't consider himself as superior of the mission he wrote to *Propaganda fide* asking for a suitable priest. That was exactly why Cardinal Franzoni entered into the discussion with one of the men he was considering, Justin De Jacobis.[27] By October of the following year De Jacobis with another Lazarist priest Luigi Montuori had joined Giuseppe Sapeto at the Ethiopian town of Adwa.[28] From this point we go on to look at the ecumenical elements of De Jacobis' ministry in Ethiopia, or Abyssinia as it was often called at that time.

II. The Ecumenical Elements of Justin De Jacobis' Ministry in Mthiopia

(a) *The first approach of friendship and acceptance*

De Jacobis established himself in a small hut in Adwa and immediately set about learning the languages of Ethiopia. People at first viewed him with curiosity, then with respect and then some visited him more frequently to hear him speak of the Christian faith. So it came about that on January 26 1840 he gave his first discourse from a written manuscript to an audience of ten people in his little hut:[29]

> The door of the heart is the mouth, and the key to the heart is the word. As soon as I open my mouth and speak I open the door of my heart, and when I speak I offer you the key of my heart. Come and see: in my heart the Holy Spirit has kindled a great love for the Christians of Ethiopia …
>
> I have seen you, I have come to know you, and now I am happy…; you are the owners of my life because God has given me this life for you. If you desire my blood, come and open my veins and take it all; it is yours; you are its owners; I shall be happy to die at your hands. Unless it might please you to inflict on me this kind of death which I greatly desire I shall come to comfort you in

> the name of Jesus Christ. If you are naked I shall give my clothing to cover you; if you are hungry I shall give my bread to feed you. If you are ill I shall visit you.
>
> If you want me to teach you what I know, I shall be happy to do that. I no longer possess anything in this world: no father, no mother, no native land. Only one thing is left to me: God and the Christian people of Ethiopia. You are my friends, you are my family, you are my sisters, you are my father, you are my mother … I shall always do what pleases you. Do you want me to stay in this region? I shall stay here. Do you want me to go away from here? I shall leave. Do you want me to speak in this church? I shall speak. Do you want me to be silent? I shall be silent. I am a priest like you, a confessor like you, a preacher like you. Do you want me to celebrate Mass? I shall do so. Do you not want it? I shall not celebrate. Do you want me to hear confessions? I shall do it. Do you not want me to preach? I shall not preach. Since I have said all this to you, you know who I am. Since I have now opened by heart, I have handed the keys of my heart to you. You know who I am. If you should therefore ask me who I am, I shall answer "I am a Roman Christian who loves the Christians of Ethiopia" … Four months ago I came to your region and have lived with you ever since. You have seen me, you have lived with me, you know me. Tell me: Have I ever given scandal? Have I caused you any injury? Not in the least, I believe. However, even if I have not given you any scandal nor caused you injury, I have not done any good either! But from now on I want to change. Not only will I be your friend, but also your servant. Can I be of any use to you? Come, I shall do for you what I can. However, if you do not want to come, call me at any hour, at any time whatever. I tell you once more: I am totally at your disposal. And you, O Lord, before whom I am standing here, you know that I am not lying when I speak like this.[30]

Justin certainly expresses here the Vincentian principles of a gently friendly approach combined with a willingness to speak of Catholic teachings without attacking those of other faiths. He very deliberately identifies himself as a Roman Christian, but one who loves the Christians of Ethiopia. (Throughout this text I refer to them collectively as the Ethiopian Orthodox Church or else as the Ethiopian Church). Underlying Justin's homiletic formula, which appeals to the friendship and the common faith of Christian brothers and sisters, I believe there

lies the theology of the Church as a communion which enabled the Fathers at Vatican II to see the positive aspects of the relationship of the Catholic Church with other Christian Churches and communities. Thus the Decree on Ecumenism states: "For men who believe in Christ and have been properly baptised are put in some, though imperfect, communion with the Catholic Church".[31]

I wouldn't claim that Justin formulated a theology of communion, but he seemed to act and speak from it. He doesn't, for example, usually call the Ethiopians heretics or dissidents or schismatics or non-Chalcedonians or even separated brothers. He addresses them simply as fellow-Christians, friends, family, sisters, father, mother. To the model of the communion of friendship is here added that of the family which is itself another kind of communion.

Yet the communion is not perfect. Justin expresses this by saying that he is a Roman Christian, knowing that the Ethiopians did not consider themselves Roman Christians and in fact retained very bitter memories of the Portuguese Jesuit mission of the 16th and 17th centuries.[32] He also very delicately expresses the problem of his preaching or celebrating the Mass and the sacraments. He asks their permission (instead of claiming the rights of the Roman Church!) and declares himself willing to abide by their decision in the matter. Of course if he had come to work in a Catholic diocese these faculties would have been automatically granted. Therefore by asking he is politely indicating the break in full communion between himself and them.

Finally, no doubt aware of the hurts the Ethiopians had suffered from the Latinising Jesuits of the past, Justin goes farther than friendship, which always denotes a relationship of equality, to becoming a servant who is at their beck and call. He offers to comfort the afflicted in the name of Jesus Christ, to give his own clothing to the naked, to give his own bread to the hungry, to visit those who are ill.

By any standards this is a remarkable opening statement from a missionary coming into another country for the first time. He set a very high standard for himself and it will be part of the task of this dissertation to see how far his words are backed up by his ministry, and then in Section IV to assess all of this in the light of modern ecumenical developments. The principle of "taking people where they actually are" could be traced in the Vincentian tradition to St Vincent's advice to the missionaries he sent to Madagascar,[33] but De Jacobis gave this a very personal and sensitive application in coming as a missionary to a country with a Christianity dating back to the 4th century, a strong, living, monastic tradition,[34] and a complex theological history, especially in the area of

Christology.[35] Not every Lazarist followed the Vincentian tradition so faithfully. The Abbé Poussou, visiting Ethiopia twelve years later on behalf of the Lazarist Mother House at Paris, reported back in a letter of February 12, 1852:

> Abyssinia and all the neighbouring countries can be regarded as countries more than half savage, where one has first to make men before making Christians of them. Everything has to be done in the civil and political order as in the moral and religious …

He observed also that there were no schools, that the sacraments of baptism and priestly ordination were of doubtful validity and that there were a number of other defects in the Ethiopian character to which I will have occasion to refer at a later point in this dissertation. Poussou wondered whether the French government shouldn't do something to counterbalance the influence of the English and of the Bishop of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, *Abuna* Salama. Finally, Poussou mentions that the Ethiopians love going to Jerusalem to visit the holy places.[36] Yet if all the sweeping generalisations he makes in the rest of the letter were true, one wonders how these supposedly ignorant, half savage, people would even come to know of the existence of the holy places let alone know what their significance was and want to visit them.

Yet Poussou was the man trusted by the Superior General of the Lazarists in Paris not only with the visitation of Ethiopia but also and primarily with the visitation of the largest existing Lazarist foreign mission, that of China. It is clear from Poussou's letter that he visited Ethiopia on his way back from China and in fact he makes some fairly negative comments about the Chinese also.[37]

What is the difference between these two Lazarist priests, both sharing so much in faith and culture? Poussou sat in judgement on the moral, religious, political, social and intellectual life of the people as he perceived these realities. From the height of his European superiority he issued a sweeping condemnation which included such errors of fact as saying that there were no schools in Ethiopia when the truth was that the *debteras,* or professors, in Ethiopia had to undergo a rigorous course of learning to read and write the ancient Gi'iz language, of learning the Bible and many works of the early Fathers of the Church by heart, etc.[38] Where De Jacobis searched for everything that could unite him to the Ethiopians, especially love, Poussou viewed everything with the cold, loveless eye of the superior European. De Jacobis was to suffer quite a lot from some of his fellow-Lazarists who veered towards the Poussou

approach, but he was also to receive great consolation from many other fellow-Catholics, even as authoritative as Pope Gregory XVI.[39]

(b) *Accepting local customs, rites and devotions*

From December 10, 1839, De Jacobis had been the only missionary at Adwa, the others having departed to their posts, Sapeto to the region of Scioa and Montuori to Gondar.[40] Left alone, De Jacobis immediately began to conform as far as possible to local customs so as not to offer any scandal or to become just an object of curiosity. He took the habit of an Ethiopian monk, dressing in a white linen tunic, white trousers, a cotton hat and the white cloak of all the Ethiopians. He wore sandals on his feet as a first stage towards going barefoot like the rest of the population.[41]

De Jacobis considered dress so important that he wrote from Adwa on February 17, 1844, to Father Etienne, Superior General of the Lazarists, in Paris, describing the dress of the Ethiopian monks and saying that he himself was dressed in this way:

> I believe that the principle of the Congregation in this regard is the principle of our Holy Founder, that the missionaries wear the habit more or less exactly like that of the most exemplary ecclesiastics of the country in which they live… If you, Most Honoured Father, find nothing unsuitable in this, I pray you at least to recommend it to me so that I can have a reason to make the others conform to it.[42]

Another area of sensitivity to the Ethiopian Church was in the learning of languages and the very closely allied question of liturgical rites. De Jacobis first applied himself to learning the Amharic language which was the official language of the kingdom and the most widely used. He soon attained a good spoken knowledge.[43] He also learned the ancient liturgical language Gi'iz, though he and the other Lazarists generally used the Latin rite themselves, while encouraging their convert priests to use the Ethiopian rite. They also extended this rite to the Galla converts and, as Crummey remarks of De Jacobis, "despite an absence of much theoretical discussion on his part, his entire career was a continuous identification with his neophytes". The Capuchin missionary Massaja remarked of him: "… he greatly loves the Abyssinian rite and Abyssinia".

This same Massaja, however, expressed a very different opinion of the oriental rites when he wrote: "The oriental rites are an eternal

monument to the obstinacy of these peoples …; the Levantines will never be Catholics in their hearts until they are Latins and sons of Latins, born and educated in the Latin rite".[44] Massaja became a bishop and on January 8, 1849, he ordained De Jacobis bishop in the coastal town of Massawa.[45] Since part of Massaja's territory reached into Ethiopia[46] we are here presented with the spectacle of the ecumenical approach of De Jacobis side by side with the latinising policy of Massaja. Fortunately for De Jacobis and for the Ethiopians the Congregation *De propaganda fide* stressed the autonomy of local usage and insisted that Ethiopian Catholics be respected in their own practices.[47]

De Jacobis experienced the difficulty of finding reliable texts for the liturgy, but he nurtured the essential spirit of preserving and developing what was best in the Ethiopian liturgical tradition.[48] From his first years on the mission the Congregation *De propaganda fide* charged him with the task of writing a catechism in the Ethiopian language, presumably Amharic the spoken language, and also of resolving some questions about the Ethiopian liturgy and of correcting the liturgical books. Slowly but surely he sent the results of his labours back to Rome. In the last two years of his life he sent back the manuscripts of the Ethiopian missal and ritual and also a manual of moral theology composed by himself in the Gi'iz language.[49]

On September 30, 1859, he wrote to Father Giovanni Guarini, Procurator General of the Lazarists at the Holy See, noting that the Lazarists had established a Liturgical Academy at their house at Montecitorio, Rome, and that this had given him the idea of inviting these learned ecclesiastics to occupy themselves with the liturgy of Abyssinia. He states:

> The co-operation of a learned Society of Ecclesiastics was necessary in order to publish the Ethiopian Missal and Ritual. For this work, in order to be useful to the Abyssinians and honourable in the face of Europe and of the Roman Wisdom, as well as the knowledge of the languages in which they are written, requires even more a knowledge of liturgy, more difficult and rarely met…

Because of the difficulties he recommends first the printing at the Ethiopian press at the Congregation *De propaganda fide* of grammatical, historical, devotional and other works not so difficult to execute. From these they could proceed to the ritual and missal in Gi'iz after the appropriate scholarly work had been done on them. The production of

these would be "a precious fruit". If all this is not carefully done the productions of the Gi'iz printing press would be "undigested and therefore useless and little respected".[50]

Less than a year after writing this letter Justin was dead. By then he had laid firm foundations for the development of the Ethiopian liturgy in the Catholic Church and therefore for providing a bridge with the Orthodox Christians. But within his own Lazarist congregation great difficulties were experienced by such as Lorenzo Biancheri, who was to succeed Justin as bishop. Writing from Emqulo, Ethiopia, to Father Sturchi in Paris on January 6, 1854, he said that he viewed with despondency the prospect of becoming bishop of a diocese staffed by ill-educated priests to be run in the Gi'iz rite. (He was already coadjutor with the right of succession). How could they meet the needs of the people when the Ethiopian rite demanded two priests, two deacons and one cleric for the celebration of Mass? "Judge the crushing weight which bears down on my shoulders", he added."[51] Part of the problem lay in Biancheri's difficulty in accepting the Ethiopian priests as fellow-workers in the apostolate, but I will return to that point later on.

From what has been said it is possible to see De Jacobis' anxiety not to present Roman Christianity as a foreign Church but as one which would readily accept rites and customs already existing in Ethiopia. To this he added a personal life of deep prayer and in those first years at Adwa he prayed in the Ethiopian churches and graveyards.[52] People and clergy saw in him a man of God whose counsel was always wise. And so on the Orthodox Easter Sunday of that first year the clergy of the four churches came to him dressed in their vestments and accompanied by musicians to salute him for the feast. His devotion to Mary, mother of God, was greatly appreciated and he demonstrated this through the medal of the Immaculate Conception, popularly called the Miraculous Medal, which he was willing to explain and distribute. The Ethiopians had a very strong devotion to Mary and celebrated thirty-three feasts in her honour every year. They began to call him *Abba* Yakob Mariam, Father Jacob of Mary.[53] Thus in the area of devotion also he achieved an identification between Roman Christianity and that of Ethiopia.

(c) *The journey to Rome, an essay in ecumenical dialogue*

At the time that De Jacobis arrived in Ethiopia the country had been lacking a bishop for more than ten years. Bishops for Ethiopia had always come from Egypt according to ancient custom, so an embassy was being prepared to bring a new bishop back and De Jacobis was asked to accompany this embassy to give it more prestige and security

in the journey to Egypt. At first he suffered from scruples of conscience about bringing a non-Catholic bishop back to a non-Catholic people, but after prayer and thought he agreed under certain conditions. These conditions amounted in fact to an ecumenical initiative well ahead of his time, as well as a request for permission to construct Catholic churches in Ethiopia.

First, he asked to be allowed to try to convince the Coptic Patriarch to enter into union with Rome; second, that the construction of Catholic churches in Ethiopia be permitted; and third, that the whole embassy should accompany him to Rome and make an act of homage to the Pope and at least ask for his friendship. De Jacobis undoubtedly took a risk in making these conditions. Anyone less respected than he might well have been expelled from the country for making such proposals. But fortunately the local chief, *Dajámách* Webé, assured him that he had written to the Patriarch making these very requests and had also written a letter of homage to the Pope. The two other Lazarists, Sapeto and Montuori, agreed with the plan and so the delegation set out from Adwa on January 20, 1841. It was composed of monks, priests, *debteras* and other functionaries representing the different states of Ethiopia. Among these the *Debtera* Ghebre-Michael will appear again in this text as he played an important part in the mission of De Jacobis in Ethiopia. The total number of the embassy came to approximately fifty people, escorted by armed men.[54]

When people are thrown together on a journey they often begin to talk to each other whereas in other circumstances they might strictly avoid all communication. So it was on this journey also that some of the Ethiopians began to question De Jacobis about his faith. “According to you is it not true that after the union there are two natures in Jesus Christ?” they asked.”Yes, that is our belief, Justin replied. “But if, as the Fathers teach, there cannot be a nature without a person nor a person without a nature, then there should be as many persons as there are natures”, they said. “Is that what your masters teach you?” asked Justin. “Yes, it is” they replied. “Well then, if that is so, how do you explain that in the Trinity there is only one nature and three persons?” At this the *Aleka* Apté Sellassié seeing his brothers confused said to them angrily “I warned you very well not to dispute with this man”. They were all indeed astonished by the reply they had received. And the *Aleka* Apté Sellassié continued: “Why then did our masters not teach us this? and why did we not ask them? If we were to be called today to give reason for our faith we would all be covered with confusion”.[55]

The reason for the Ethiopians’ question and for the strong reaction

to De Jacobis' answer was that since the time of the Portuguese the Ethiopian Church had been deeply divided on christological questions which issued in different schools of interpretation about Christ as Anointed One.[56] In the 18th century forty-four monasteries in union with Gondar wrote to Egypt asking that the formula "Weld-qeb", meaning "The Son is Unction", be confirmed. This formula lends itself to the monophysite view that after the union of the divinity and the humanity in Christ only the divine nature remains. The Patriarch of Alexandria duly confirmed this formula and indeed De Jacobis was not yet to know that the very bishop whom his embassy would bring back to Ethiopia, *Abuna* Salama, was passionately devoted to this view of christology.[57] Another tradition, however, centred around the monastery of Debra-Libanos and its founder, St Teklé-Haimanot. These held a view called *"Tsegga",* Son of Grace: that Jesus was anointed in his humanity by the Holy Spirit. This view seems reconcilable with Catholic teaching.[58]

As I have already described, De Jacobis approached his mission from an ecclesiological rather than an apologetic or dogmatic standpoint. He recognised his already-existing, though imperfect, communion with the Christians of Ethiopia and sought to conform himself as far as possible to their customs, liturgy and devotion so that the Ethiopians would see that union with Rome did not mean the abandoning of their whole religious, liturgical and devotional tradition. Even before he had reached Ethiopia at all we find him writing back to Monsignor Ignazio Cadolini, Secretary of the Congregation *De propaganda fide,* telling of the reply of the Coptic Patriarch of Alexandria to the question why he was separated from the Catholic Church: "I am so separated" he replied "but in the end it belongs to the Father to call back to himself the lost son". De Jacobis hopes that some letter or sign of affection might "strengthen him even more in these laudable dispositions and make the return of this lost Pastor ever more easy, and also that of his considerable flock, to the sheepfold of Jesus Christ". This was written in July 1839 on the journey from Cairo to Ethiopia[59] and now we see him almost two years later approaching Cairo again with his company of Ethiopians who since his reply about the persons and nature in the Blessed Trinity had declined from asking him any further questions.[60]

Unfortunately for De Jacobis disunity rather than unity was to mark his visit to Cairo. Safe from the perils of the desert the Ethiopians abandoned him and went to stay with Petros, the Patriarch, to whom they refused to show the letters of *Dajámách* Webé. De Jacobis then experienced the greatest difficulty in getting an audience with the Patriarch and succeeded finally only through the good offices of a French doctor,

Antoine B Clot. When De Jacobis presented the letters the Ethiopians disputed their authenticity and the Patriarch upheld their protest and added that so far from going to Rome they were not even to go to the Holy Land as they had intended. But in this the Patriarch overplayed his hand and a number of the most influential members of the delegation rebelled against the Patriarch and asked pardon of De Jacobis for having abandoned him. So it was that after some further confusion and uncertainty twenty-three Ethiopians set sail for Europe with De Jacobis on July 7, 1841.[61]

On August 17 the Ethiopian delegation was received in audience by Pope Gregory XVI. He first met the three leaders, the *Aleka* Hapté Sellassié, the *Abba* Resedbrà and the *Abba* Ghebre-Michael. He had them seated in chairs in front of his throne. He then welcomed them warmly and entered into a discussion with them about the missions. Then the rest of the delegation came in and the letter of *Dajámách* Webé was read. Finally the Ethiopians gave gifts of incense, perfume and some rare birds from Ethiopia. The Pope thanked them and said he would reply to *Dajámách* Webé's letter at a later date. The Ethiopians left the audience delighted at the affable manner in which they had been received.

The Ethiopians then enjoyed a round of invitations from such cardinals as Franzoni, Mezzofanti, Mattei and Tosti, and some of the Romans and the visitors began to speak of entering into a Council for formal discussions on doctrinal matters. But the Pope, who had previously been Prefect of the Congregation *De propaganda fide,* judged that there was insufficient preparation and preferred to regard this as a courtesy visit only. In fact, rather than discussing ecclesiology they were experiencing it.

On the feast of the Assumption they assisted at the Pontifical Mass in the basilica of Santa Maria Maggiore and the crowd which awaited the papal procession gave a lively applause at the group of Ethiopians who moved up to a special tribune within the church, rather as the observers from among the "separated brethren" were given special positions near the Pope at the Second Vatican Council. The Ethiopians were very impressed by the liturgical ceremonies and by the enthusiasm of the congregation. They also noted the great respect given to the Pope. One of them, the *Abba* Ghiorghis, was heard to quote from Hermas: "I have gone down to the Church of Rome; I have seen her; I have recognised and loved her as a sister; I have always presented her in her beauty; I have seen her again after many years and I have found her made cleaner than the waters of the Tiber". What precise degree of cleanliness the

Tiber possessed in those days I am not expert enough to say, but the *Abba* Ghiorghis expressed the truth that the Ethiopians experienced themselves to be in fact much closer to Rome in their religious beliefs than they had expected. Four of them became Catholics and remained to study at the College *De propaganda fide.*

On August 29 the deputation had its final audience with the Pope and received a letter for *Dajámách* Webé, as well as many gifts. All were deeply moved. On their departure from Rome in September the *Aleka* Hapté Sellassié declared: "Ah! If I were not head of this embassy I would not leave Rome at all". To which De Jacobis replied: "Rome! Rome is wherever its name and its unity are found".[62]

The departure from Rome did not end the ecumenical aspects of the journey. On reaching Cairo De Jacobis again visited the Coptic Patriarch Petros but did not succeed in getting permission to build Catholic churches in Ethiopia. In fact the Patriarch tried to avoid this importunate Roman missionary and finally wrote a letter to Webé saying only that the Ethiopians had gone to Rome "with his full consent".[63] Clearly the Patriarch was not at all keen on entering into serious relationships with Rome and viewed the Roman mission in Ethiopia, his dependent province, with suspicious eyes. His earlier expression of goodwill towards Rome was made at a time when De Jacobis was just setting out for Ethiopia and therefore had no power or influence there. He could afford to be magnanimous towards Rome as long as there did not seem to be any danger of a practical follow-up to general expressions of a vague desire for unity, but the actual establishment of Catholic churches which might prove to be centres of dialogue towards unity — that was going much too far!

Departing from Cairo they journeyed on to Suez (pre-canal Suez) and here an extraordinary ecumenical event took place. They met a group of missionary sisters of the Congregation of Jesus and Mary who were on their way to India and together one day they celebrated a Missa Cantata and Vespers in the house of the French consul. With the two groups of Catholic missionaries there were joined the Ethiopian Orthodox members of the delegation, the French consul (himself a member of the Orthodox Church), and the English consul and his wife, both Protestants. The priests and sisters alternated the singing in choral fashion and at the end all were deeply moved by the experience.[64]

Looking at this journey to Rome, then, we can see the same vision at work as De Jacobis had expressed in his first sermon: "I am a Roman Christian who loves the Christians of Ethiopia".[65] As a Roman Christian he had shown them his father's house and they had been made

very welcome without being asked to change their faith or their allegiance. De Jacobis trusted in the truth of their belonging to the universal Church. So we are not dealing here with just what are (disputably) called non-theological factors, e.g. removing the prejudices of history. We are dealing with the reality of the Church as a communion, and of some parts of the church lacking the full communion of the universal Church. In view of this reality it is not surprising that the Ethiopians experienced their communion with the universal Church very strongly at two particular liturgies on their journey, the solemn Pontifical Mass at Santa Maria Maggiore and the ecumenical House-Mass at Suez. They were both celebrations of the Holy Communion of the body of Christ of which all the baptised are made members.[66]

In bringing this particular group to Rome De Jacobis had seized upon a golden opportunity to influence some of the most learned religious leaders in Ethiopia towards the cause of reunion of the Churches. In this he was not to be disappointed as a number of the members of this delegation who returned to Ethiopia with him were to spend their lives working to bring Ethiopian Christianity back into union with the universal Church.

(d) *Church unity by means of an Ethiopian Catholic priesthood*

Just over a year after his return from Rome De Jacobis wrote to his Superior General, Father Etienne, in Paris describing how the Catholic faith was spreading in the capital city of Ethiopia, Gondar, which was also the seat of the Orthodox bishop, *Abuna* Salama, and of the powerful head of monks whose title was *Ichegé.* De Jacobis describes how the *Debtera* Ailou made a strong profession of Catholic faith before *Abuna* Salama and declared himself willing to suffer for his beliefs rather than retract them. According to the report De Jacobis had received (he himself is writing from Adwa and had never visited Gondar) all the *debteras* publicly proclaimed their Catholic belief. This change at Gondar was the work of the Ethiopian converts:

> The Abyssinians who have most worked at Gondar to bring matters to this point are, among others, *Debtera* Ailou, *Abba* Melchisedek, *Aleka* Hapté Sellassié and the monk Ghebre-Michael, who nowadays should be known in Europe, and especially the young Attassab recently converted.[67]

From this point on it becomes crystal clear that De Jacobis saw the return of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church to Roman communion as

primarily the work of these *debteras,* priests and monks. They would persuade the others to come into full communion with Rome while retaining their own liturgy and local customs. The reverse of this ecclesial vision was that the role of the European missionary fell into second place, and this did not please many of his fellow-Europeans at all. But in September 1846 De Jacobis put his view-point in writing to Father Sturchi, an Italian assistant to the Lazarist Superior General in Paris:

> A priest of Abyssinia, profoundly Catholic and sufficiently instructed, because of his perfect knowledge of the language, of the customs and, finally, of the prejudices of his co-nationals, knowledge at which a European arrives with great difficulty, because of all this the Ethiopian here always works with a success incomparably above that of a European. Since the Ethiopians follow the liturgy and the oriental Catholic discipline they advance the Catholic cause among a people such as this which allows itself to accept only what it sees and what it counts in the hand. In fact the three Abyssinian Catholic priests we have do more than all of us Europeans.[68]

De Jacobis committed himself to this viewpoint to the extent of devoting his energies to finding a place to establish a community of priests and students where a formation-process along very Ethiopian lines could be pursued. After numerous journeys and searchings he found a suitable place in the village of Guala. A contract for the purchase of the land was signed on December 12, 1844, just two and a half years after this return from the Roman journey.[69] This Catholic centre was constructed on Ethiopian lines, a complex of little houses and huts, one of which served as an oratory since De Jacobis still did not have permission to build a church. He dedicated this first foundation to the Blessed Virgin, calling it the Seminary, or College, of the Immaculate Conception. The teaching body of the seminary was composed of De Jacobis, Lorenzo Biancheri and *Abba* Ghebre-Michael, by now a Catholic. Twenty young Ethiopians came to prepare for the priesthood and a short time later *Abba* Welde-Gabriel, who had left the delegation in Rome to study at the College *De propaganda fide,* returned as an ordained priest and joined the staff of the little seminary.

From the neighbouring villages both people and priests came for instruction. A short time later De Jacobis founded a house at Emqulo near the coast and, more importantly for later history, at Alitiena among one of the poorest tribes of Ethiopia who welcomed the white mission-

ary and handed over to him their church of St Mary.[70] From this we can see the missionary character of the foundation at Guala. It was a centre from which missionary efforts were made in the surrounding villages, and such was the success of these efforts that the people of Guala also handed over their church to the Catholics. Only a few of them objected, but the local ruler authorised it.[71] No doubt this raises a problem of the tension between mission and ecumenism, but I will discuss that in Part III, Section (a).

De Jacobis obviously put great personal effort into the formation of the Ethiopian Catholic priests of the future. At the same time he gave a very unmistakable sign of acceptance and communion with the Ethiopians, that is, sharing a life together as a Christian community. Ordinations began in 1847 and between then and his death in 1860 De Jacobis saw 35 Ethiopians ordained as Catholic priests, 18 celibate and 17 married.[72] Crummey comments on the creativity of this approach:

> His commitment (to a national priesthood) anticipated by several generations Catholic practice elsewhere in Africa. Obviously, the way was eased by the existence of the Orthodox Church, but this scarcely lessens the creativity of his approach, for the commonest missionary view was that traditional piety constituted their biggest barrier. De Jacobis saw deeper. Jettisoning European preconceptions about clerical training, he accepted Ethiopians as they came, and pressed them for the ministry with few alien trappings.[73]

By the 1850s De Jacobis had moved into an even more radical position. From regarding Ethiopian priests as superior in their efficacy to Europeans he came to the point of writing to Paris to say he did not want any more European priests to come out to the mission. This view is seriously questioned by Father Poussou, whose views on the half-savage nature of the Ethiopians we have already noted. In that same letter from which I quoted in Section (a) of this Part, written on February 12,1852, he shows how isolated De Jacobis had become from the other European missionaries:

> This respectable and worthy confrère seems to have, on the subject of the need of the mission, an idea which is not shared by his confrères, and which I would not adopt either: it is that the indigenous priests can be sufficient to renew the face of Abyssinia without it being necessary to have more European missionaries and that is why he wrote to me about two years ago not to send any new

> ones. I think myself that for Abyssinia as for China the indigenous priests are useful for the mission, even necessary, but that they have the need to be directed, otherwise they do little work and that little they do badly; I am therefore of the opinion that for the moment two more missionaries are needed, one with Mgr De Jacobis and the other with M. Stella.[74]

I have already quoted Biancheri's letter of 1854 on the subject of having to work in the Gi'iz rite which demanded five clerics for the celebration of Mass, but Biancheri suffered from a deeper problem than that of liturgical rules, namely, he had the greatest difficulty in accepting and loving his fellow-priests of Ethiopian nationality. Even before he took over as bishop in 1860 the Ethiopian priests had rebelled against him during an absence of De Jacobis in Gondar. This was to happen again after Biancheri took over the diocese. The Ethiopians petitioned the Congregation *De propaganda fide* for a "Patriarch" who would act in humility, patience and love. To give Biancheri his due, he considered himself unsuitable for the task and went to Paris to convince his Superior General of this. Etienne recommended to the Congregation *De progananda fide* that he be permitted to resign, but nothing was done.[75]

In the area of the priesthood, therefore, De Jacobis saw the step towards unity as quite a small one. He seemed to enter naturally into a communion of love with the Ethiopians and this enabled him to approve such practices as celebrating the Gi'iz liturgy with Catholic priests, assisted by men in Orthodox orders so that the numerical requirements of the Ethiopian rite might be fulfilled. The doubts raised about the validity of Orthodox orders did not appear to trouble him.[76] He loved the Ethiopians and thereby overcame many of those factors which are sometimes called non-theological (pride, selfishness, arrogance, personal ambition, fear of standing for the truth, fear of losing control of the Church, racial prejudice, etc.). In fact all of these have a very definite bearing on the degree of communion that exists within the Catholic Church herself and between her and the other Churches and ecclesial communities. I have not discovered in De Jacobis' writing a theology of communion of the Church but he seemed to act consistently from the vision of loving and accepting the Ethiopians as the way to heal the damaged communion of the two Churches.

A final illustration of this is provided in an incident which took place at Massawa when De Jacobis arrived with two Ethiopians, one a priest. The priests at the mission were the Lazarist, Stella, and the Capuchin, Felicissimo. Three places were set at table for the three Europeans. But

when the food was served De Jacobis left the table with his portion and went to share it with the two Ethiopians.[77] Nothing could be a clearer expression of communion and non-communion. Just as Jesus established a life and table-fellowship with his apostles which prepared the way for the Last Supper so De Jacobis saw how essential it was to have a real, lived communion if the sacramental communion was to embody its full sign-value.

Notes

(a) In the notes I use the abbreviation A.M. for *Annales de la Congregation de la Mission.*

(b) Quotations from Vatican II documents are taken from *Vatican Council II: the Conciliar and Post-conciliar Documents,* Dominican Publications, Dublin, 1975, General Editor Austin Flannery, OP, and are used with the publishers' permission.

---

1. Lucatello and Betta: *L'Abuna Yaqob Mariam,* Roma, 1975, pp 17-19.
2. *Ibid,* p 19.
3. *Ibid,* p 15.
4. Crummey: *Priests and Politicians: Protestant and Catholic Missions in Orthodox Ethiopia, 1830-1868,* Oxford, 1972, p 173.
   Rubenson: *The Survival of Ethiopian Independence,* London 1976, p 434.
5. De Jacobis to Etienne, 10 February 1850, in *Annali della Missions* 82, 1975, pp 36-37.
6. Common Rules, 8:1.
7. C.R. 8:2.
8. Coste: *Monsieur Vincent: Le grand saint du grand siècle,* Paris, 1931,vol. I p 158.
9. *Ibid,* vol. Ill p 408.
10. *Introduzione alia vita devota,* Marietti ed., Torino-Roma, 1925, pp 206-268.
11. Coste, *op. cit.,* volIII, p 135.
12. *Ibid,* vol. Ill, p 164.
13. *Ibid,* vol. III. pp 171-186.
14. *Ibid,* vol. Ill, p 188.
15. *Ibid,* vol. II, p 405.
16. *Ibid,* vol. II, pp 404-405.
17. *Ibid,* vol. II, p 412.
18. *Ibid,* vol. I, pp 95-96.
19. *Ibid,* vol. I, p 96,n 1.
20. *Ibid,* vol. I, p 101.
21. *Ibid,* vol. I, p 102.
22. Petrocchi: "Francesco di Sales" in *Enciclopedia Cattolica,* Città del Vaticano. 1950, vol. V, p 1601.
23. Furlani: "Halifax, Charles Lindley Wood", in *Ibid,* vol. VI, pp 1339-1340.
24. Lucatello & Betta, *op. cit.,* pp21-22.

25. C.R. 1:1.
26. Lucatello & Betta, *op. cit.,* p 15.
27. *Ibid,* pp 15-17.
28. *Ibid, 65.*
29. Teklé Haimanot: *Episodi della vita apostolica di Abuna Yacob,* Asmara, 1915. pp 9-10.
30. Pane: *Vita del Beato Guistino De Jacobis,* Napoli, 1949, pp 303-307.
31. §3 from the Flannery edition as noted above; subsequent citations will be indicated in the body of the article by a bracketed reference to the paragraph in question.
32. Uqbit: "Current Christological Positions of Ethiopian Orthodox Theologians" in *Orientalia Christiana Analecta* 196, Roma, 1973, p61.
33. Coste: *op. cit.,* vol. II. pp 229-230: "… to help these poor people born in the darkness and ignorance of their Creator to understand the truths of our religion not by subtle reasons of theology but by reasonings taken from nature. We will send you pictures of all our mysteries which serve marvellously to help those good people understand what one wishes them to learn and which they are pleased to see".
34. Santi: "Etiopia II, Storia" in *Enciclopedia Cattolica,* vol. V, pp 684-685.
35. Cf Uqbit, *op. cit.,* pp 24-60.
36. Poussou to Salvayre, in A.M., vol. 17, 1852, pp 130-153.
37. *Ibid.*
38. Coulbeaux: *Vers la lumière,* Paris, 1926, 2nd ed., pp 22-34 and pp 35-42.
39. Lucatello & Betta, *op. cit.,* pp 87-90.
40. *Ibid,* pp 69-70.
41. *Ibid*, p 71.
42. *Annalidella Missione* 82, 1975, pp 29-30.
43. Lucatello & Betta, *op. cit.,* p 71.
44. Crummey, *op. cit.,* p 80.
45. Lucatello & Betta, *op. cit.,* pp 139-142.
46. *Ibid,* p 125.
47. Crummey, *op. cit.,* p80.
48. *Ibid,* p 82.
49. Betta: "Spigolando fra gli scritti di Giustino De Jacobis" in *Annali della Mission* 82*,* 1975, p 37.
50. *Ibid,* pp 37-38.
51. A.M., vol. 20, 1855, pp 512-513.
52. Lucatello & Betta, *op. cit.,* p 72.
53. *Ibid,* p75.
54. *Ibid*, pp 78-79.
55. Tekle Haimanot, *op. cit.,* p 21.
56. Uqbit, *op. cit.,* p72.
57. *Ibid*, pp 76-77.
58. *Ibid*, p 57.
59. Quoted in Betta, *op. cit.,* p 46.
60. Tekle Haimanot, *op. cit.,* p 21.
61. Lucatello & Betta, *op. cit.,* pp 81-84.
62. *Ibid,* pp 87-90.
63. *Ibid,* p 93.
64. *Ibid,* p 93.
65. Pane, *op. cit.,* p 306.
66. cf I Cor 12:12-13.

67. De Jacobis to Etienne, from Adwa 18 June 1843, in A.M., vol. 10, 1845, p 153.
68. Quoted in Betta, op. *cit.,* pp 31-32.
69. Davitt. *Justin De Jacobis,* Dublin, 1975, p 39.
70. Lucatello & Betta, *op. cit.,* pp 122-123.
71. Davitt, *op. cit.,* pp 39-40.
72. O'Mahony: *The Ebullient Phoenix,* Asmara, 1982, Bk I, appendix II.
73. Crummey, *op. cit.,* p 82.
74. Poussou to Salvayre, in A.M. vol. 17, 1852, pp 130-153.
75. Crummey, *op. cit.,* p 112.
76. *Ibid,* p 83.
77. *Ibid,* p 83.

Patrick Boyle

I. John McGuinness

(Paper read to a meeting of the Union of past students of the Irish College, Paris, in June 1936)

The distinguished Secretary of the Union, Fr Hayes, has asked me to prepare a short paper on our "Grand Old Man" of the Irish College, Fr Boyle.

I will not delay you with long biographical details. Fr Boyle was born in 1849 in the diocese of Deny. After a thorough preliminary course in a local classical school of great repute he was, like several Derry students of that time, sent to continue his ecclesiastical studies in a French seminary. It was to Cambrai, the city of the great Fenelon, that he went, and his superiors were French Vincentians. This was towards the end of the Third Empire, and the connection of Church and State at that period was evidenced in the military honours paid to the archbishop and at great religious functions. The Franco-Prussian war of 1870 changed many things in France and interrupted Patrick Boyle's studies. From his contacts with his Vincentian professors he thought of offering himself to St Vincent's community in Ireland, and it was at Castleknock that he made his novitiate and completed his studies. After his ordination he was occupied for some time in church work both at Phibsboro and at Lanark; but later, when he was only twenty-nine years of age, he was made superior of St Patrick's College, Armagh, which he governed with great success both from the educational and administrative points of view, till he was sent with Fr John Myers to begin the work of spiritual father in Maynooth, which the Irish bishops had just entrusted to the Vincentians.

On the retirement in 1889 of Fr Thomas McNamara, who had been rector of the Irish College, Paris, for over twenty years Fr Boyle was appointed to succeed him, and thus began his long connection with the Irish College, with which his name is so linked in our minds.

During his years in Paris Fr Boyle accomplished much. On the spiritual side, by his instructions and example, and by much of his literary labours also, he continued the work of forming young ecclesi-

astics on which he had been so successfully engaged at Armagh and in Maynooth.

On the material side he took over in 1889 a building nearly 120 years old; and, though its roof had been recently entirely renewed, and its two upper storeys completely reconstructed interiorly, much remained to be done. The new rooms for the students were without any provision against the severe winter of Paris, and so in 1896 Fr Boyle introduced central heating, and a little later installed bathrooms. The apartments on the ground floor next engaged his attention. The ceiling, the floor, the wainscoting and windows of the refectory were completely renovated and decorated in 1899. Similar work was done in the chapel, the study-hall and the recreation-hall between 1901 and 1903; and a few years before the Great War the whole college was lighted by electricity.

In his last report to the Irish bishops at his retirement in 1926, in the seventy-seventh year of his age and the thirty-seventh of his presidency, he referred to his rectorate as "the longest in the history of the College, and not the least difficult". One very difficult period was that of the anti-clerical legislation in the beginning of the present century. The public authorities had it in contemplation to close and sell the college, and allow the income of the Irish Catholic Foundations to be used only in French establishments, and for the education not only of ecclesiastics but also of lay students from Ireland.

I remember well the anxieties of that time, when all over France ecclesiastical seminaries were being summarily closed down.* At the famous college of Saint-Sulpice in Paris some American seminarists put up a resistance, but were forcibly expelled like the others. About the New Year of 1907 the bursar of the Irish College, the late Fr Patrick Hullen, whose recent death we all regret, presented at the Public Treasury the usual documents for receiving the payment of the quarterly allowance from the funds of the Irish Foundations, but was told that ne payments to seminaries were permitted. At first it was feared the authorities might try to starve us out and that the students should have to return to Ireland. However, that did not come to pass.

Another alarm was caused by the fear that the authorities might wish to seize the title-deeds and other documents of the Irish Foundations. This difficulty was met by a member of the staff carrying away by night these precious papers to safe keeping in London. In the following year 1908, on the advice of the British Ambassador in Paris, and with the approval of the Irish bishops, all the title-deeds of the college

* In the 1905 *Castleknock Chronicle* PB has an article on this period.

property and of the foundations of Burses were handed over to the Under-Secretary of State at the Foreign Office, London, and were communicated diplomatically to the French Government for examination.

It was mainly due to the alertness and energy of the Rector, combined with his intimate acquaintance with the history of the title-deeds and of former legislation and decisions regarding the college that, after months of negotiations in 1907 and 1908, the British Government of the time, with Sir Edward Grey as Foreign Minister, at the instance of John Redmond and the Irish Parliamentary Party, was able to stave off by diplomatic action the carrying out of the proposed reform. A final decision and formal agreement on the subject between the British and French governments was never reached, but the college continued to exist. As a Frenchman said in this connection *C'est le provisoire qui dure.*

It is fair to notice here that the members of the Bureau for the administration the Irish Catholic Foundations in France had no share in the project of closing the college. The president of that Bureau in a special interview, requested Fr Boyle to inform the bishops of Ireland that there was no reason for anxiety about the future of the college, especially in view of the *entente cordiale.* He observed that the Irish College stood quite apart from legislation affecting education and the Church in France, and that its position was then stronger than ever because it was under the official protection of the British government.

Later on other difficulties for the college arose from the Great War, during the greater part of which Fr Boyle, in spite of privations and dangers, remained in Paris. The bishops having arranged on the outbreak of war that the students should continue their courses at colleges in Ireland, some of them went to Wexford and Waterford, but the majority, numbering about 46, went to Maynooth. Fr Boyle collected the belongings of all these students and through a transport agency had them delivered in Ireland. The *Bureau gratuit* allowed the bursar, for students studying in Ireland, an indemnity of 500 francs per head, equivalent then to about £20 now (1936).

Early in the hostilities, when Paris was threatened with a siege by the Germans, eighty-five Sisters of Charity were obliged by the French military authorities to evacuate a house outside the fortifications, and they received hospitality in the college. At the end of December, when the danger of a siege had passed away, the sisters returned to their own house. During their stay they defrayed expenses for light, fuel, etc., and on their departure left everything in perfect order.

In 1916, by arrangement with Fr Boyle, the college was occupied by about sixty refugees from Verdun under the care of Sisters of Charity,

who kept the house in order and lived at their own expense. The presence for over two years of these refugees from the harassed region of Verdun naturally appealed to French patriotism and protected the college from being seized for military purposes.

At length, after the long-drawn and futile war of trenches, in 1918, at the time chosen by Foch, namely "at the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month", which was the feast-day of the French soldier St Martin of Tours, came the armistice, which was practically a German capitulation, and another problem arose for Fr Boyle, that of the re-opening of the college.

In consulting the bishops on this point he noted that all other schools, lay or clerical, in Paris were opening and urged that if the Irish College remained vacant it would be hard to prevent it being requisitioned, and in fact enquiries had been made for renting or purchasing it. In his opinion, if the house were once occupied by any branch of the public service its existence as a residence for Irish students might be considered as at an end. His reasons prevailed and in June 1919 the bishops decided that, peace having been restored, the college should be re-opened. The difficulties in carrying out this decision were, as Fr Boyle realised, very great.

All the previous students having completed their course in Ireland, new ones, with no knowledge of college customs and traditions, should be sent out; and the house, which had naturally fallen out of repair during the preceding five years, had to be made ready for them at a cost, it turned out, of nearly 47,000 francs. It was like starting a new college.

The financial difficulties were particularly great. Owing to a moratorium the rents on the house property of the college were greatly reduced; whilst, on the other hand, taxes were increased, as were also servants' wages and other expenses, and the cost of food was more than doubled. In these circumstances not more than thirty students could be received. Fr Boyle judged that these should, for a beginning, belong to the first philosophy. Nineteen freshmen accordingly entered as Philosophers on November 7. In spite of difficulties and hardships these students found the life interesting and happy, and gave satisfaction in their studies and the observance of rule. In each succeeding year the numbers increased till at length the full course of philosophy and theology was restored.

In the meantime further financial difficulties arose from the fall of the franc. As a consequence, the free places assigned to the different Irish dioceses, formerly worth about £35 each, fell to a fifth of that sum, and were worth only about £7. In 1923 the bishops ruled that during depreciation the amount of the pension should be £45, paid in pounds

sterling, and that if the amount of the diocesan foundation allocated to each diocese fell short of £45 the balance should be made up by the students enjoying the burses. Temporary relief to these difficulties came in 1924 through a subscription from past students, generously led by His Lordship Dr Kelly, bishop of Ross, and amounting in all to over £1,300.

By that time (1924) Fr Boyle has passed the "three score and ten years" allotted by the Psalmist (Ps 99:10) and had celebrated the golden jubilee of his priesthood, in honour of which the students in the college presented him with a golden-cupped chalice. His health was now failing but he got successfully through one very serious crisis. In spite of delicacy he continued for some years his traditional classes of Canon Law and Sacred Eloquence up to the summer holidays of 1932. After his return he wrote to me from Paris to say how glad he was to be back again at his old rooms in the college, where he received, of course, every care and great respect. But his further stay in the old familiar surroundings was not to be long.

Divine Providence spared him a lingering or painful illness and, as you know, he passed away peacefully in the 84th year of his age on January 3, 1933. It was the feast of St Genevieve, patroness of Paris, whose relics and tomb are in the parish church of the college, St Etienne du Mont. The requiem, sung by the President Fr Sheedy in the college chapel, was attended by members of the Bureau and other French ecclesiastical friends.

In Ireland, both in Dublin and Cork, large numbers of old students were present at the Office and High Mass. The President of Thurles College and of the Paris Union was celebrant of the Mass on both occasions.

Having spoken, perhaps at too great length, of Fr Boyle's successful efforts for the preservation of the Irish College I should like to refer briefly to his literary labours. As far as I know, his first efforts in this field arose in connection with a little brochure on the history of the college which was going out of print. While he was preparing a new edition, and consulting documents and references, the material grew under his hands into a substantial and reliable volume, some of the materials of which he used also for an article on the Irish College in the American *Catholic Encyclopedia.* Following up his researches he came upon a large number of interesting documents in the public libraries or archives bearing on the college itself or on remarkable Irishmen in France, which he utilised in several articles that appeared from time to time in the *Irish Ecclesiastical Record.* His largest book was on Irish

Vincentians in France in the time of St Vincent, and was based to a great extent on the correspondence of the saint. He printed also a smaller book on Irish Vincentians in China.

After the separation of Church and State in France he wrote, in French, a long article on a "Non-concordataire Church" (that of Ireland), which appeared in the high-class review *Le Correspondant* and it is remarkable that not a single word of his composition had to be changed by the editor.

He also translated into English the *Regula pastoralis* of St Gregory the Great, and St John Chrysostom's treatise *On the Priesthood.*

In conclusion, I may assure Fr Hayes that it has been a privilege for me to be invited to pay a tribute to the memory of this distinguished Churchman, with whom I had the honour of working for nearly forty years in Paris. He, more truly and in a higher sense than the boasting pagan poet, could have said of himself *Monumentum exegi acre perennlus.* The Wise Man gives the admonition "Praise not a man before his death" and adds the phrase which I would apply to the old pupils of Fr Boyle, "for a man is known by his children" (Ecclus. 11:30).

II. John Oakey

(In Evangelizare *of August 1959 JO wrote an article on PB; the earlier part covered, though more briefly, the same area as the paper of J McG; the later part, re-printed below, treats of PB from an angle not covered by J McG)*

We have seen Fr Boyle as a great administrator and scholar. The picture is somewhat sketchy. What was he like in appearance? What were the idiosyncracies, the mannerisms, without which we have no adequate picture of the man himself?

The first time I met Fr Boyle was at Blackrock in 1924. As first impressions are sometimes valuable, I will try to recall him as I then saw him. He was tall above the average but with a slight stoop, the scholarly stoop I suppose. His face was pale and somewhat bloodless, I thought. Above all, I was struck by the serenity and calm of his countenance. If there was a trace of asceticism in his bearing it was relieved by

the kindliness of his smile. While I was speaking to him he had occasion to consult a railway guide and he raised his glasses to his forehead in a gesture with which I was later to become familiar. I could see that his eyes, grey-blue in colour, were, if not exactly piercing, keen and alert. His hair was grey and there was little trace of baldness. Even at that first meeting I think I realised that here was a man of great refinement, great strength of mind and quiet self-possession. There was no pose about him. His manner was natural, courtly, dignified and priestly. But with all that, it seemed to me that there was a reserve behind which it would be exceedingly difficult to penetrate.

I came to know Fr Boyle more intimately in the Irish College. He was no longer President but was still a member of the staff. It is hardly necessary to say that his life as a Vincentian and a priest was saintly and edifying. The Rule was a second nature to him. His regularity was heroic in a man of advanced years and it was an edification to be present at his Mass. His example to priests and students was a radiation of his personality and priestly character.

One occasionally detected in his thought and action the influence of his French training and background. But there were very few traces of French mannerisms. One, however, is, I expect, well remembered by those who knew him. When opening a conversation he invariably tapped the back of his left hand with the extended fingers of his right, and prefaced his remarks with the words "Well, now…".

I am sure that a good number of my readers have heard of the "Salon" in the Irish College, the famous salon to which the community adjourned for after-dinner coffee and conversation. Fr Boyle, when I knew him, was somewhat taciturn, but when he did join in the conversation in the salon he had always something worthwhile to say. He was not a brilliant conversationalist in the sense that his conversation sparkled with wit, but it was informative and one could take keen delight in the evidence of a well-stored mind and of a vast experience. His humour was of the dry and somewhat sardonic type. From time to time we had guests, occasionally men who had made their mark in ecclesiastical or literary circles. Even in such company, without in any way monopolising the conversation, Fr Boyle's was the dominating personality.

It was a delight to hear his reminiscences of the Irish College, and of such well-known Vincentians as Fr Thomas McNamara, Fr Peter Duff, Fr John Gowan and the Superiors General Fr Etienne and Fr Fiat. Listening to him speak of these one was made aware of the link between ourselves and the Founding Fathers of the Irish Province. Many famous men in the Catholic life of France he had known personally and he made

them live again for us in his conversation.

On a certain morning in 1933 when Fr Boyle did not appear Fr Sheedy, the late Fr Donovan and myself went to his room and, receiving no answer to our summons, forced the door. There he lay, cold and peaceful in death. As I gazed on the face of this great priest I realised, in some way, that an era had closed for the Irish College, Paris.

III. Letter from Patrick Boyle to John McGuinness 10 October 1932.

(J McG was appointed to teach dogma in the ICP in 1889 and left the college in July 1932, having been rector for his last six years; he was transferred to St Joseph's, Blackrock. The first part of the following letter details changes introduced by the new rector Joseph Sheedy; this portion is omitted here).

I have been reading over the papers Dr McSherry got copied at Propoganda about the troubles here in 1858. They are in Italian, Latin and French. The matter was more serious than I imagined. It was a case of McHale versus Cullen. In 1856 Propoganda directed the archbishops of Ireland to draw up new statutes for the College, in place of those of 1849. This was not done. Dr McHale was opposed to it. When the College was closed in 1858 the matter was reported to Propoganda and Dr Nixon was appointed to go to Paris, and report to Rome on the state of things. Meantime the case was reserved to the Holy See and the Bishops were forbidden to hold a general meeting to settle matters. Dr McHale wrote a letter protesting himself bound to carry out the orders of the Holy See. All the Bishops seemed to agree that Dr Miley was a learned and good man, but without the qualifications necessary to govern. Dr Miley himself wrote to Propoganda, and sent the Econome, a Fr Whelan, to Rome to state his case. He pleaded strongly to be allowed to continue as administrator, should the College be handed over to the Lazarists. Dr Cullen, though he promised him a parish, supported him at this point. About two thirds of the Bishops were in favour of the transfer of the College to the Lazarists. Dr Dixon interviewed the abp of Paris, the Nuncio, the Minister of Instruction and the Superior Gl of the

Lazarists, and reported to Rome in favour of the transfer of the College to the Lazarists.

What led to the Commission of 1849 I do not know. Anyhow, the French Government and Propaganda disapproved of the Statutes drawn up by it; the former as contrary to the rights of the French Government, and the latter as too democratic, depriving the Rector of authority.

Dr Miley in his statement to Propaganda wrote (in French):

> First of all as regards the building: at the time of my appointment in 1850 the college gave the appearance of total dilapidation and neglect, and the yard, kitchen, refectory and prayer hall were in a filthy and disgusting state. Well before the end of that same year everything had so changed for the better that, according to priests and bishops who had visited those areas in former years, they were no longer recognisable; and I have continued this improvement right up to this day.

Then he goes on to speak of what he did to improve the state of things at Arcueil; and then he continues:

> As regards the student body: everything which comes under the headings of ecclesiastical education, discipline, behaviour of the students, had sunk very low in the college.
>
> As regards the teaching: scholastic opinions and traditions in theology had had very strong leanings towards Gallicanism. The study of Church History had been almost totally neglected, etc.
>
> Up to the time of my arrival, as far as I have been able to make out, there was nothing laid down about spiritual retreats. From my taking up office until today there have been two general retreats every year, one at the start of the academic year and the other at Pentecost.

Then he speaks of his having promoted devotion to the S Heart, the B V Mary, St Patrick, till then unknown as public devotions. Then he adds:

> I have also had the happiness of seeing the Stations of the Cross erected for the first time in the college.

I presume from the above that the study-hall benches and the woodwork in the chapel date from Dr Miley's time.

(PB ends with a request for the return of the copy of the new Order of Day which he had enclosed).

IV. Patrick Boyle's Writings

(a) Books:

The Irish College in Paris from 1578 to 1901, London, 1901, Art and Book Co.

Instructions on Preaching, Catechising and Clerical Life, by St Francis Borgia, St Francis de Sales, St Augustine, St Jerome, etc., translated by Patrick Boyle CM, Dublin, 1902, Gill & Son.

On the Priesthood, by St John Chrysostom, translated by Patrick Boyle CM, Dublin, 1905 (?; 2nd ed. 1910), Gill & Son.

A Homily of St Gregory the Great on the Pastoral Office, translated by Patrick Boyle CM, Dublin, 1907, Gill & Son.

St Vincent de Paul and the Vincentians in Ireland, Scotland and England, A.D. 1638-1909, London, 1909, R&T Washbourne.

Some Irish Vincentians in China in the 18th and 19th Centuries, Dublin, 1918, Browne & Nolan.

(b) Articles in the *Irish Ecclesiastical Record*

1901 Lord Iveagh and other Irish officers, students in the College des Grassins in Paris from 1684 to 1710.

1902 The Irish College in Paris, 1587-1901: Gleanings — Language. (On the use of the Irish language there. *Ed.*) Glimpses of Irish collegiate life in Paris. Lynch's Ms *De Praesulibus Hibemiae,* A.D. 1672.

1903 The Catholic University of Paris, 1875-1901.
Irishmen in the University of Paris in the 17th & 18th centuries.
Hibernia Vincentiana.

1904 The centenary of Bossuet, parts I & II. The centenary of Bourdaloue.
The Irish College in Paris during the French Revolution. An Irish Vincentian martyr in the 17th century.

1905 The Irish Brigade at Fontenoy.
The Concordat between the Holy See and France. Abbe John Baptist Walsh, DD, Administrator of the Irish Foundations in France from 1787 to 1815.
1906 Catechism: A historical sketch of legislation, texts and methods. Catechism in higher schools.
1907 The Irish College at Bordeaux, 1603-1794. A plea for the Irish College in Paris.
1908 The Abbé Charles Kearney, DD, (1762-1824); his life and sufferings during the French Revolution.
1909 The pulpit of Notre Dame in Paris in the 19th century.
1910 The Irish Pastoral College at Antwerp.
Some Irish ecclesiastics at the seminary of St Nicolas du Chardonnet (1735-1791).
1911 Brigida Thaumaturga.
Marshal MacMahon, Duke of Magenta (1808-1893).
1912 John O'Donovan at Oxford.
John O'Molony, Bishop of Killaloe (1672-1689) and of Limerick (1689-1702); (b. 1619, d. 1702).
1913 Pastoral work in a great city — Paris 1913. A study in pastoral theology.
1914 The Irish pulpit in the 19th century.
1915 Dr Hussey, Bishop of Waterford, and the concordat of 1801.
1916 Sedulius Scotus of Liège: An Irish scholar and poet of the 9th century.
1923 A Jansenist agent in Ireland in 1646: Rev John Callaghan, DD.

(c) Articles in other publications. (This section is almost certainly not complete and references to omitted articles would be welcomed).

Catholic Encyclopedia (Old edition):
Irish colleges on the continent.
Schools, Apostolic.

The Catholic Bulletin, May 1913:
An Irish missionary priest in China, Rev Robert Hanna CM (1762-1797).

Castleknock Chronicle 1905:

Some victims of religious persecution in France (The French Vincentians).

Les Annales de la Mission

60 (1895) A letter from PB to the Superior General on the death of Bishop Gillooly.
68 (1903) Le College de Maynooth.
70 (1905) Un martyr lazariste irlandais. (Translation from IER).
72 (1907) Les relations de saint Vincent avec 1'Irlande. (Translation from IER).
75 (1910) La Congrégation de la Mission et la province d'lrlande.
81 (1916) A letter from PB to Edouard Robert, Secretary General, on Irish confrères as army chaplains.

Saint Vincent's Seminary, Cork

(Part II)

Thomas Davitt

Laurence Gillooly became superior of St Vincent's on 27 July 1855 and at the end of August he was able to report to the Superior General that things had begun to change in Cork; the bishop, who for years had treated the community rather coldly, had begun to praise the Vincentian work in Cork in his public statements, and many personal privileges which Michael O'Sullivan had enjoyed were extended by the bishop to the community as a whole, even adding new (unspecified) ones with regard to the seminary (CMAR).

From this time on Gillooly had another problem to contend with, as he reported in letters to the Superior General; he was trying to resist mounting pressure on him to accept nomination as coadjutor bishop of Elphin (CMAR).

At the beginning of 1856 there was a development in the accommodation of the community. Mary McSweeney, who had given "Ardfallen" to Michael O'Sullivan, gave two more houses and the adjoining garden to Laurence Gillooly and Philip Burton, with the condition that for her lifetime she would retain the upper floor and attics of the house nearest the road, together with access; also, the priests were to have a kitchen built on for her use. At her death the two houses were to be united into one holding. The two houses were numbers 26 and 27, in the numbering system then in use, on Sunday's Well Road. They were on the same side of the road as the still unfinished church, beyond it in the direction away from the city. Number 27, the outermost one, was right on the edge of the road and its side formed part of the garden wall of "Lee Villa". Number 26 was set back from the edge of the road and part of its front wall was the back wall of 27.[39] When the necessary adaptations had been made the community took up residence in these houses and the Mansion House became purely a school building.[40]

At this time there was some suggestion of separating the seminary from the secondary school but nothing came of it; this was recorded by the Provincial Council (CMAD).

The availability of extra accommodation may have had something to do with an increase in staff in 1856. In April Cornelius Hickey, aged 36 and ordained in 1847, arrived and in June Malachy O'Callaghan joined him. The latter was 31, a native of Dublin who had been at school in St Vincent's, Usher's Quay, before going on to Castleknock; he was ordained in 1850. 1856 is the first year for which there is evidence of the financial state of the school; a document dated 12 June records "net profit on the school last year £250" (ASW).

The principal events of that summer were the official opening of St Vincent's Church and the re-interment in its vault the following day of the remains of Michael O'Sullivan. On 11 July the *Examiner* carried an advertisement about the coming double event on the 20th and 21st; admission was to be by "sealed cards". The advertisement was repeated in three subsequent issues and on the 16th there was a news item in addition to the advertisement; it concluded: "The church will be known as St Vincent de Paul's, but in the minds and on the tongues of the people it will long be called Fr Michael O'Sullivan's". At the re-interment the celebrant of the Mass was Bishop Delany and the preacher was Fr Bartholomew Russell OP who had just finished a term of office as Provincial. The newspaper account of his sermon is the source of much otherwise unrecorded biographical information on O'Sullivan.

With the opening of the church the community was again increased and it now comprised: Laurence Gillooly, superior, Malachy O'Callaghan, Neal McCabe, Cornelius Hickey, Philip Burton, Daniel O'Sullivan and Michael Cody. Gillooly's efforts to escape the episcopate were unavailing and he was ordained bishop in St Vincent's on 7 September; he was thirty-seven. Neal McCabe, aged forty, succeeded him as superior.

The following month it was decided to give the Mansion House to the Sisters of Mercy for a hospital and to move the seminary to a disused school building at 11 St Patrick's Place.[41] On 31 December the *Examiner* carried the usual notice about the date of re-opening and mentioned the move to "the well-known Everton Schools". The building was the second on the right after turning into St Patrick's Place from St Patrick's Hill.[42]

An undated Prospectus with the new address probably dates from this time. Its contents are very similar to those of the 1846 one, though Hebrew and Irish are no longer listed among the subjects and Piano and Singing have been added; the fees are one guinea less than before. There were three priests "aided by a large and highly efficient staff of Professors, who devote themselves with great earnestness and zeal to the advancement of the pupils". It also adds, rather smugly, "The fact

that the Seminary is conducted by the Priests of the Congregation of the Mission is sufficient guarantee that the religious instruction of the pupils is carefully attended to".[43]

The seminary opened its new doors on 7 January 1857, with Malachy O'Callaghan as Headmaster; Philip Burton and Daniel O'Sullivan were the two other priests; there were three full-time lay teachers. Within two weeks of the start of the term there was a problem about a Classics Master and it was decided that "one of our first-rate classical students" would take his place. The change of building also meant re-furnishing; the old desks were given to the contractor who was panelling the new lower sacristy in Sunday's Well. At the end of the academic year receipts from the school were £200 (ASW).

In October Philip Dowley conducted a visitation from the 5th to the 7th. The first visitation of the house had been in 1848. On the occasion of the Month's Mind for Michael O'Sullivan he conducted a sort of informal visitation, so that the visitation of 1857 was only the second since the foundation of the house. In his report Dowley had this to say about the work of the community in the school:

> On visiting the Schools I was at once struck with the order and neatness of the several departments there. I could not help being impressed with the conviction that the class of pupils now happily confided to your care was superior in many respects to any that I had the advantage of witnessing before. The success which has attended your pupils at the competitive diocesan examinations on late occasions leaves me no doubt but that the system adopted and the efficiency of the instructors are admirable. I am not surprised to learn that this excellent seminary has been distinguished by the revered Bishop's special commendation. A word from me is needless to exhort you the renewed and increased attention to this great and important work confided to your zeal. The instruction of youth is one of the most precious and meritorious works, of the last importance everywhere but most especially so on the spot in which we are called upon to take a share in it. The value of training the youth of this great Catholic city to the spirit & practices of our holy Faith cannot be over-rated, and when this is united with cultivation of Knowledge and Science in your Schools, the Seminary of St Vincent, Cork, will be held as one of its foremost institutions and will not fail to be blessed and favoured of God (CMAD).

For the summer examinations of 1857 a formal record of prizewinners was started; this was added to each year up to 1869. So far it is the only official record from St Vincent's which has come to light.[44]

In March 1858 Malachy O'Callaghan was transferred to Castleknock to take up the post of Provincial Bursar, as he explained in a letter of 15 April to the Superior General (CMAR). He was replaced by Nicholas Barlow, aged 30. Philip Burton probably took over as Headmaster in Cork, but he too was transferred later in the year, to the mission staff in Phibsboro, and was replaced as teacher by Thomas Murphy; it was probably at that stage that Daniel O'Sullivan became Headmaster.

In April 1858 the annual salary of the English teacher, Mr Denney, was raised from £40 to £45, with a £5 annual gratuity (ASW).

At the start of the new school year it was decided that the confrères teaching in the seminary would meet once a week as a distinct group to discuss matters concerning their work (ASW).

The only items about the school on record for 1859 concern staff changes, as well as the list of prize-winners already referred to. The post of Classics Master seems to have been a continuing problem. A Mr Duggan took the post in May but left on 20 June, and it was then decided to look for a replacement in England who might also "be able to take part in choir". In September a Mr Fitzmaurice (subjects not specified) was engaged "for 3 hours at £40 *per annum"*. The final change noted is that Fr Daniel O'Sullivan was to teach French and Philosophy in place of Fr Thomas Murphy (ASW).

From the material in various documents it is not always possible to be certain which confrères in Cork taught in the school and which were on the staff of St Vincent's Church. All who have been mentioned so far in connection with the school certainly taught there, but some of them at least, and certainly Philip Burton, were also involved part-time in missions.

For the years 1860 to 1865 information about St Vincent's Seminary is rather sparse, and much of what is recorded is about the salaries of the lay-teachers. In April 1860 Mr Nagle's salary was raised by £6, but there is no mention of what it was raised from nor what subjects he taught. That year also saw the departure of Fr Thomas Murphy to the Irish College, Paris (ASW).

In September 1861 Neal McCabe reported on Cork to the Superior General; unlike his predecessors as superior he wrote in English:

> The School is larger than in *any* former year at this season of the year. The boys are good. About forty ecclesiastics attend every day (CMAR).

In December a Mr Holland was appointed as an additional English Master at £2 per month (ASW).

In February 1862 Neal McCabe wrote to the Superior General:

> Our school is quite full — about one hundred & fifty 150 pupils frequent it every day (CMAR).

This is the largest attendance figure which is recorded.

In the same month the Classics Department was again in difficulties as a Mr O'Callaghan got ill; a Mr Keogh from the university took his place, but Mr O'Callaghan was retained as a staff member while ill and was paid his salary. In April a Mr O'Connor was appointed to teach Classics and was paid £70 (ASW).

In March 1865 the organist at St Vincent's Church was given notice that from 1 April his salary would be reduced from £60 to £50 as he would no longer be required to teach singing in the school. In his case, as in most others mentioned, there is no indication of the number of hours taught per week (ASW).

On 27 November 1862 Philip Dowley wrote to the Superior General:

> (There is) nothing to remark in respect of this zealous and laborious community beyond stating that there is an extern secular College conducted by the confrères there, the most numerous and prosperous of any school ever seen in that city. I need not dwell upon its importance, given the peculiar spirit and tone of the upper classes in that city (CMAR).

Philip Dowley died in January 1864 and was succeeded as Visitor by Thomas McNamara. In February 1865 he made a visitation of St Vincent's and when he first went to the school he said he

> was happy to observe by an examination of some of the classes the efficiency with which the Establishment is conducted. The importance of such an Establishment cannot be over-rated (CMAD).

The last point had reference to the Queen's College.

In 1865 there was drawn up an "inventory required by the 5th paragraph of the rules of the local Procurator". It deals with the income of the Cork community and in connection with the school mentions that the yearly pension for a boy is £8, £6 or £4 "according to age, etc".

Average receipts from the school for the previous few years had been about £500, and expenditure on "rent, four teachers, etc" was about £300. The premises of the school were held for twenty years from 25 November 1856 at £45 *per annum.*[45] It is also mentioned that the two houses given by Miss McSweeney in 1856 had been joined together as one unit, as originally agreed.

In spite of this it would seem that accommodation was still insufficient as in this year there is the first mention of erecting a new building as a combined presbytery and retreat-house, adjacent to the church. There was also some discussion about transferring the school from St Patrick's Place to Sunday's Well. A plan for the proposed presbytery and retreat-house was prepared and submitted to the Provincial Council. The Council rejected the plans as being too elaborate and too costly but agreed to the erection of "a plain, substantial building of a size sufficient for the present and probably prospective requirements of our community in Cork. The Visitor reserves his opinion" (ASW for move of school; CMAD for rest).

On 16 February 1866 Neal McCabe wrote to McNamara that the cost of the proposed new building could be reduced if it were to be sited closer to the road (CMAD). McNamara made a visitation of St Vincent's in June and said he hailed "with all gladness the project of a new community house" and also hoped to establish a permanent band of resident missioners in Sunday's Well the following year, something which had been hoped for from the start. Presumably this latter was contingent upon there being accommodation by then (CMAD).

It would seem that McNamara was in favour of the originally proposed building, the one his Council had rejected. Needless to say both plans had their supporters. In September Philip Burton wrote to the Superior General on the subject, in Latin. He said that all the senior confrères considered the proposed new building *puram esse insaniam, pro magnitudine et impensis,* because of the *edificandi mania* of certain confrères (CMAR).

In 1867 Jules Chinchon was sent from Paris by the Superior General to conduct a visitation of the Irish Province. He was in Cork in February and his report on the house contains no reference either to the work of the school or to the proposed new building in Sunday's Well (CMAD). The Cork community, however, recorded that "he recommended strongly to complete portions of the new building" (ASW).

One result of the Chinchon visitation was the removal of McNamara from the office of Visitor, which he had held since 8 February 1864. His successor was Peter Duff, appointed on 11 March 1867; the Superior

General told Duff that the change was the result of the Chinchon visitation (CMAD).

Duff held his first Council meeting on 9 April. Building in Cork had begun in mid-1866 and Duff sought authority from the Superior General to modify the plans, and on the 30th the Council laid down that the plans should be simplified and at a further Council meeting on 7 May it was decided to write formally to the superior in Cork, Daniel O'Sullivan, requiring him to confine construction to "the centre-piece" and the basement of the wing at right-angles to it; at no stage was construction to get ahead of money actually in hand. It appears from the minutes of the meeting on 12 June that O'Sullivan was under some pressure from the architect to allow more building, and on 27 June the Council required the architect to direct the builder to keep within specified limits. In September Duff conducted a visitation of St Vinsent's and re-stated his position on the building. He reported to his Council on the 24th, and the minutes also record "in reference to the school that if it be not at least self-supporting it is to be given up" (CMAD).

About late October 1867 Robert Ryan, aged 26, was appointed by Duff to the staff of the seminary and on 30 December it was decided that he would take over as Headmaster from Christopher Dooley; Dooley had been ordained in 1864 and Cork was probably his first appointment. In 1867 Patrick Kelsh, the former lay teacher in the early years of the seminary, returned to the staff from Castleknock where he had been teaching for most of the time since his ordination in 1854. About this time also Michael Cribben joined the staff; he was born in 1842 and probably went to Cork immediately after his ordination.

The possibility of relinquishing the seminary was again raised at a meeting of the Provincial Council on 16 December 1867. Daniel O'Sullivan, the superior, was requested to send to Peter Duff "the number of pupils in actual attendance, distinguishing lay pupils from Eccls; the average attendance for the year ending Dec. '67; the receipts and expenditure for the same period". The requested report, if it was sent, does not seem to have survived, but at a meeting of the Council on 2 January 1868 the matter was discussed and "on the school it was resolved to leave to time to solve the difficulties attending its maintenance or suppression" (CMAD).

The question of the possible closure of St Vincent's Seminary was linked with the increase of missions. From early in 1868 a band of four full-time missioners was based permanently in St Vincent's, Sunday's Well. Previous to this, confrères stationed in Cork had helped at missions given by men from Phibsboro; this arrangement included some who

were teaching in the school, and this continued even after this date.

In July 1868 Michael Mullen was transferred to Cork from St Patrick's College, Armagh, and took over from Robert Ryan as Headmaster in September when the latter went to the Irish College, Paris (ASW).

There is no mention of the school in 1869 but in 1870 it is noted that "the school at St Vincent's was well attended". Michael Mullen was replaced as Headmaster in February by James Hanley who was transferred from Sheffield. On 19 July, which at that time was the Feast of St Vincent, the end of year "Exhibition, or academical exercises" was held in the new presbytery in Sunday's Well. Some confrères took up residence in the building in September. In the new school year Michael Cribben was to teach Mathematics and Christopher Dooley French; this was on the instructions of the Visitor (ASW).

The annual *Catholic Directory* had begun to carry a section called *Annals,* listing various happenings in the Irish Church. Under the date 15 June the 1871 issue had the following:

> Presentation of a memorial to the Most Rev Dr Delany by a number of leading Catholics of Cork, praying his Lordship to sanction the establishment of a Jesuit College in the city. The memorialists, while admitting the excellence of the existing school conducted by the Vincentian fathers, urge that the arduous missionary labours undertaken by the Vincentians interfere, to a great extent, with their educational work, and involve employment of lay teachers.

In September 1871 Maurice Quish, aged 31, was appointed to St Vincent's; James Hanley, the Headmaster, and Michael Cribben were the other two priests teaching. "The Seminary was singularly successful this year in numbers & results. There was a very successful exhibition in July" (ASW).

On 25 January 1872 the remaining members of the community transferred from the old residence to the new presbytery. This occasioned some discussion as to what should be done with the former residence, the combined numbers 26 and 27 which had been given by Miss McSweeney in 1856. The latest plan showing the shape of this building indicates that quite a large addition had been made to it in the meanwhile.[46] On 22 April the Provincial Council discussed various options for this building: adapting it as a retreat-house, adapting it as a hostel for students, letting it to tenants, or demolishing it; the last was chosen. The final portion of the new building, completed that year, at right angles to

the main block, was designated as a retreat-house (CMAD).

At the end of the school year it was noted that "The school continued in the same development of success as last year". At the beginning of the new school year a "School Council" was formed, comprising Frs Daniel O'Sullivan, William Gavin, James Hanley and Maurice Quish (ASW). O'Sullivan was community superior and may not have had any active role in the school; Hanley was Headmaster and the usual complement of priests was two plus the headmaster. Gavin was a new arrival who had been teaching in Castleknock since 1867. The name of Michael Cribben is absent from the list, though he was not officially replaced on the teaching staff until the following year when Richard Bodkin is mentioned specifically as coming to replace him.

1873 is the first year in which there is mention in the minutes of the Provincial Council that there was a problem of accommodation for the numbers attending the school. The community in Cork proposed spending £600 or £700 on enlarging the building in St Patrick's Place. On 7 May the Council discussed the matter and decided that it was "inadvisable to incur so much expense & responsibility in face of the uncertainties before our school & the state of higher Education in Cork"; the Provincial was to have further discussions with the community in Cork (CMAD).

One of the uncertainties was probably the question of what the position would be when the lease on 11 St Patrick's Place expired in November 1876. It was decided, however, that plans for a new building should, be prepared. They were received by the Cork community in May 1873. They discussed whether they should accept the plans, and if so when they should start the actual construction; the matter was referred to the Provincial (ASW).

In April 1874 the community discussed another possible way of alleviating the accommodation problem in St Patrick's Place; should the ecclesiastical and senior lay students have their classes and do their study in the new building in Sunday's Well? After much discussion it was decided that this would not be convenient. That year, in spite of the accommodation problem, "the school was well attented & successfully worked" (ASW).

On 27 November the Provincial Council again considered "the crowded state of our Cork school" but judged it "unwise in the actual state of the Diocese & of our funds to build a new one". By 26 January 1875 the Council had changed its mind and "for many reasons it was considered better to take a plot at £25 p. ann. near our present school, & by means of donations & loans to build thereon a suitable school"

(CMAD). Less than a week later the confrères in Cork considered "Mrs Murphy's house" as a possible school-building, though no details are given as to where it was (ASW).

On 30 March Peter Duff wrote, in English, to Eugene Bore who had succeeded the late Jean-Baptiste Etienne as Superior General in 1874:

> The prospects regarding the erection of the new School House in Cork have improved considerably since I had the honour of forwarding their application to you, Most Honoured Father, for permission to commence the intended building. The Superior, Mr O'Sullivan, informed me about a week ago that a few kind Benefactors had already promised to give over one thousand pounds sterling or nearly half the sum required without any interest, upon condition that it would be paid back in ten years, and he added that he expects to be able easily to secure the other half; I presume upon similar favourable terms (CMAR).

On 19 April he again wrote to Bore to say he had passed on to the Cork community permission to start the new building (CMAR).

When Bishop Delany was informed of this he refused to give his sanction. He said that the Congregation *de Propaganda Fide* in Rome had requested him to establish a minor seminary for the diocese of Cork. The final mention of St Vincent's Seminary in the minutes of the Provincial Council is dated 28 May 1875 and is rather laconic: "The Bishop not wishing we should build a new school in Cork the work was set aside". Formal notification was sent to the bishop that St Vincent's Seminary would close at the end of the following academic year in July 1876.

On 13 July 1875 Daniel O'Sullivan, superior in Cork, wrote to the Superior General about his decision; he reveals a detail not recorded elsewhere: St Vincent's took only day-boys and so could not meet the requirements of a minor seminary for the whole diocese. He also says that relations between the bishop and the community are "all that could be desired" (CMAR).

The names of two lay teachers in the final years are known as they applied for posts in Castleknock and their references are in the archives there. A Mr J. F. MacDonald taught in St Vincent's Seminary from 15 April 1871 until it closed. He taught English, History and Geography, Physical Science and Christian Doctrine. A Mr O'Brien taught Literature, Mathematics and Physical Science, apparently from 1873 until the closure.[47]

St Vincent's Seminary closed as planned at the end of the 1875-1876 school year.[48] The final reference to it in Vincentian documentation occurs in 1877, though the writer ventured the opinion that it would not in fact *be* final. In April and May of that year a Spanish confrère, Mariano Mailer, was sent by the Superior General to conduct a visitation of the Irish Province. In his report to the Superior General he said that the bishop had closed St Vincent's Seminary because he did not want communities of religious men to expand, and because there would not be a sufficient number of boys available for both St Vincent's and the new diocesan minor seminary. He ended his report on Cork with this comment:

> It would not be surprising, though, if, even in the lifetime of the present bishop, but especially after that, the confrères were asked to take over the running of the seminary, as it seems that the person in charge of it is already tired of it, and the temporal advantages which had been believed accruing to the confrères were greatly exaggeraged, as practical experience shows (CMAR).

Notes

39. These details are compiled from documents and plans in the Valuation Office, Ely Place, and others in the keeping of the solicitor who acts for St Vincent's, Sunday's Well.
40. ASW. Perhaps it was shortly after this that No. 25, the former residence of MO'S, was demolished. It appears on a plan, with the completed church, dated 1856. I have found no later reference to it, and a plan of 1877 shows its former site as free of any building. (See note 39).
41. The minutes of the Domestic Council record: "7 October: Unanimously agreed that we gratuitously give up the Mansion House to the Sisters of Mercy as a hospital".
42. The 6 inch Ordnance Survey map, 1st edition, 1845, (which was surveyed in 1841-42), sheet 74, shows Everton Schools in St Patrick's Place. Griffith's Primary Valuation, 1852, describes 11 St Patrick's Place as "school house" and records it as being vacant. The relevant manuscript map shows No. 11 to have been the second building on the right as one goes along the Place from the St Patrick's Hill end. On 1 January 1845 the *Examiner* carried an advertisement for The Everton Boarding School with an address at 47 King Street. The issues for 22 January and 5 February carried advertisements for Dr Downing's School, with an address at 11 St Patrick's Place.
43. A copy of this Prospectus is in the Cork diocesan archives, the only item there connected with St Vincent's Seminary.

44. This is a quarto notebook in half-leather. It survived because someone used it as a scrap-book, pasting newspaper cuttings (not of CM interest) onto its pages; the pages have now been freed from these accretions.
45. The manuscript has, in fact, twenty-five years but it seems clear from other references that the period was twenty years. The document is with the solicitor for St Vincent's, Sunday's Well.
46. This plan is also with the solicitor.
47. It is not possible to ascertain whether they obtained posts in Castleknock as the list of lay staff given in the *Castleknock College Centenary Record,* pp 204-205, goes back no earlier than 1885.
48. The building itself lasted until about 1902 when it was demolished to allow Christian Brothers College, which had been built on the adjoining site, to expand. The Brothers erected their new science wing on the site in 1903.

Some Thoughts on the Early Years of the Province

Patrick O'Donoghue

In writing about any historical events there is always one great hurdle to overcome and that is the necessity to project oneself into the particular period with which one is dealing and to dispense with the environment to which one is accustomed. A simple example might be taken in the areas of transport or communications. A world without telephones and where travel and mail were still dependent on horse and sailing ships is a far cry from the present time. When one comes to deal with the burning issues of a particular age, and the ideals in mind and heart of men and women in any era, it is all the more necessary to try and forget the religious, social, and political questions of our day, and attempt to see the problems they faced, and the solutions they tried to adopt. Abortion, contraception, divorce and materialism were not matters confronting the Irish church in the 19th century. Ignorance and poverty, and the problems stemming from both were of grave concern to anyone with the best interests of the church at heart. Totalitarian marxism was not yet heard of but the bitter antagonism towards Catholicism of many leading statesmen and members of the established church was an everyday fact of life for catholics even in the years after emancipation.

When the small group of priests gathered together to open their school in 1833 on Usher's Quay Ireland was a very different country from what it is today. Its population of roughly eight million people was almost double what it is at present. Between seventy-five and eighty per cent of that population was catholic but, if so, the wealth of the country and political power lay in the hands of protestant landowning magnates, either Anglo-Irish or English. To be catholic was largely synonymous with being poor in every respect. It is true that a catholic middle class had grown up during the eighteenth century comprised of trade and commercial interests in the towns and larger farmers in the country but they were a small minority of the total population without any great social or political status.

Irish society was preponderantly rural based, untouched by any industrial revolution. In 1841 five and a half million people lived in

the countryside or in towns and villages of less the 1,500 people. Of this five and a half million a terrifyingly large proportion was made up of labourers and cottiers and their families who lived at subsistence level with no social insurance schemes and were largely dependent on one crop, namely the potato. This vast rural proletariat was generally illiterate and poorly instructed in the tenets of its religion. The question is sometimes asked as to why Fr Dowley and his small band of young men were attracted to, and eventually joined themselves to, the Congregation of the Mission as opposed to any other already existing congregation? Various suggestions have been put forward such as the inspiration of Fr Ferris and the influence of Archbishop Murray which are no doubt valid but there were striking similarities between the conditions of rural France in the 17th century and rural Ireland in the 19th century. In certain respects St Vincent's community was tailor-made for the essential needs of the Irish church. This was probably self-evident to the founders of the Province but perhaps not quite so apparent to us today. The doubts of the young priests in Usher's Quay, Castleknock and Phibsboro did not centre around the ideals of St Vincent but rather in subjecting themselves to a foreign authority when other congregations, "were being founded on, and were drawing their members from, the native soil". Another difficulty was their wish to uphold, "the vital principle of subjection to the Ordinary, the Archbishop of Dublin".[1]

In 1979 it is interesting to note that the one hundred and fiftieth year of the passing of the Catholic Emancipation Act barely merited a few lines in Irish national newspapers and was not marked by any official or unofficial church ceremonies. The centenary year in 1929 had warranted a week's celebrations and an open air mass in the Phoenix Park attended by the leaders of church and state. Forty-five years earlier the O'Connell monument was unveiled in Dublin to honour the great protagonist in the struggle for emancipation. Whatever subsequent generations may have thought about the achievement of 1829 there is little doubting that the long fight for full civil and religious rights for catholics had galvanised the church in Ireland and set it on its way towards a period of extraordinary growth and activity in succeeding decades. This new life in the church after 1829 is seen in the foundation or growth of new religious communities of both men and women, and the arrival in Ireland of established continental congregations. New churches were built and old ones reconstructed, a vast building programme was gradually undertaken so that the church's mission of charity and education might be fulfilled. In this exceptional movement of the post-emancipation years the early Vincentians and their co-workers and supporters

were an integral part.

The protestant archbishop of Tuam, Power le Poer Trench, gave this command to his clergymen in 1826: "You are bound in conscience to embrace every opportunity, from God's sacred word, to rescue the poor, dark, ignorant, deceived people from their vital errors, and when no opportunity shall occur, you must in prudence and in discretion and in wisdom make one".[2] Some four years earlier the protestant archbishop of Dublin, Wiliam Magee had written to his clergy, "the true *parish priest,* in continual contact with his flock ... in continual intercourse with them; their adviser; their friend; the moderator of their disputes; the composer of their differences; the careful instructor of their children; not content merely to afford spiritual aid where it may be demanded, but vigilant to discover where it may be applied, and prompt to bestow it where it will be received".[3] To most catholics these instructions read like an open declaration of religious war and in fact ushered in an evangelical movement in the established church which came to be known as the "Second Reformation". It was a virulent attempt by some Irish and English clergy and laymen of the state church to make converts of their catholic brethren. Various proselytizing societies were established such as the "Society for Irish Church missions to the Roman Catholics", public disputations were held in towns and cities throughout the country, tracts and pamphlets were distributed and mailed through the penny post, itinerant preachers in Irish and English travelled throughout the country, and relief agencies were started in the poorest districts with obvious intentions to convert. In the years roughly 1820-70 this protestant crusade continued with unabated vigour and forced the catholic church to adopt counter measures. Obviously the huge catholic population had to be better instructed in their faith, and care for the hungry, the sick, and the aged could not be left in the hands of those who were inimical to Catholicism and sought by material relief to make converts.

The missions to the country people as begun by St Vincent were clearly one strategy that could be employed to instruct the people better in their faith and combat the zeal of the evangelical churchmen. They were to prove extraordinarily effective as the contemporary accounts relate, and as evidenced by the fact that ten years after the first Vincentian mission in Athy in November 1842 orders and congregations such as the Jesuits, Dominicans and Redemptorists were to be engaged in similar work. The early missions were conducted by five or six confrères during a period of six weeks, sometimes helped by the local clergy, and in the case of the Dingle mission of 1846 by the Christian Brothers and

Presentation Sisters. The local bishop frequently came to administer confirmation to people of all ages during the mission, and preparation for first holy communion was also part of the work of the missioners. Huge crowds waited for confession, sometimes staying in the church all night, and general confession seemed to have been the norm. Sermons were preached three times daily based on the little method, simplicity, and the small and large catechism. These early missions were compared to Fr Mathew's temperance apostolate such numbers of people did they attract, many of whom stayed away from their homes sometimes for five and six days at a time. That the missions were badly needed there is no doubt. Many hundreds were described as going to confession for the first time at the Carlow mission of August 1843. At the Oughterard mission of 1852 two thousand three hundred and seventy persons were confirmed by Archbishop McHale. Fr Dowley reported to Fr Etienne at the end of 1844 that on one mission hundreds had made their first holy communion and been confirmed, aged between eighteen and eighty. In his end of year reports to Paris Fr Dowley speaks often of the problems posed by the proselytizers for the missioners. In 1846 he told Fr Etienne that at Dingle sixty of the most notable apostates recanted. In 1848 he complained of the use made of the famine by those seeking to turn catholics away from their faith and three years later he was clearly disturbed by the amount of money coming from England to support the protestant missionary societies. Since the days of Cromwell, he wrote, when St Vincent first sent his missioners to Ireland there was never greater need of their zeal and labour. Thus the small community of Vincentians were playing an active part in one area of the post emancipation renewal.[4]

At first sight it may seem somewhat strange that men following in the footsteps of St Vincent would start three of their first four Irish foundations with schools, seminaries or colleges as these rather general terms were applied at the time to places of education whether of a second or third level nature or a combination of both. Indeed St Peter's, Phibsboro, the one exception, had care of a large primary school from its earliest years. However when one views the condition of the people and the opposition to all kinds of catholic education it is not altogether surprising. From travellers from outside the country to the early members of the Congregation reference is continually made to the ignorance and deprivation of the people. As late as 1861, thirty years after the beginning of the National School system, forty-six per cent of catholics were illiterate while only sixteen per cent of Church of Ireland members and eleven per cent of Presbyterians were in this category. Gradually the church would fashion the non-denominational national system to

its own liking and make it a major instrument for the transmission of catholic instruction for young people.

If a catholic primary system would slowly evolve in the nineteenth century, progress at what we know today as second and third level education was of a much more difficult nature. Yet if the church of the vast majority of the people was to re-establish itself in the wake of the penal laws a properly educated generation was needed to give leadership in church and state affairs. A clear cut division in these two areas was not apparent to Irish churchmen of the day. They were well aware of the need for an increasing number of well educated priests and religious but they were equally aware of the necessity for a well educated laity if the emancipation act was to be translated into reality. It is essential to remember that in the early years of the Province no catholics held positions in the government and very few in the civil service, that there was no catholic judge or stipendiary magisrate, and that the high sheriffs with one exception, the overwhelming majority of the unpaid magistrates and grand jurors, the five inspectors general and thirty two inspectors of police were all protestants. In the professions catholics were very much under-represented. In all these areas of civil life a large residue of bitter anti-catholicism remained. Catholic schools, seminaries or colleges would on the one hand provide for the needs of the church and on the other make sure of a proper representation for catholics in public and professional life. In catholic eyes non-catholic education was either godless or a thin veil for covering protestant missionary activity. The early years of the seminary in Cork are a good example of the thinking of the first Vincentians on their involvement in education. The school was seen as a bastion against the newly established Queen's College, about one third of its pupils were studying for the priesthood and it provided some financial support for those who were engaged from Cork in the works of the mission.[5] It is interesting to note that in the provincial assembly of 1861 a suggestion was made that those engaged in mission work would stay in Castleknock and that in 1863 there was question of some missioners being attached to St Patrick's, Armagh.[6] Fr Dowley's frequent praise of the lay students in Castleknock in his end of year letters to Fr Etienne is also interesting to note.[7] At this stage of the development of the province its apostolate perhaps was viewed in a more unitary way and its separate works contributing in their own fashion to a common objective, the rebuilding of catholic life in Ireland.

As the Irish church picked itself off the floor it also began to think of the needs elsewhere in the world and the plight of those who emi-

grated either before or after the famine. Fr John Hand the founder of All Hallows, and who worked in the church in Phibsboro, 1838-40, with Fr McNamara, must surely be considered the initiator of this great movement towards the English speaking world and beyond. The foundation of mission houses in Sheffield (1853) and Lanark (1859), the taking on of parishes in both places, and the later beginnings in Australia (1885), are all part of this movement.

The impression given by the early Vincentians in their correspondence, by their actions and work, and to contemporaries is one of a zealous, independent minded and pragmatic body of men who responded quickly to the needs of the church. That they had their differences and clashes of opinion it is manifest, but these were centred about methods not aims. Many of them were extermely able and would have made their mark in any age. It is not surprising therefore that five of these early Vincentians were made bishops, and others were short listed for different sees.

Notes

1. COLLOQUE No. 7, p. 47; No. 8, p. 119.
2. Desmond Bowen, *The Protestant Crusade in Ireland 1800-70,* Dublin 1978, p. 73.
3. Ibid. p. 89.
4. For details of the work of the missions from 1844 on see Fr Dowley's end of year reports to Fr Etienne, the Superior General in Paris; E. J. Cullen, *A Century of Irish Vincentian Foundations,* 1833-1933; E. Larkin, *The Devotional Revolution in Ireland 1850-75,* in American Historical Review LXXVII, (1972); P. Mac Suibhne, *Paul Cullen and His Contemporaries,* vol. III, 1965; DDA, Relatio Status Diocesis 1845, Abp. Murray File 32/2.
5. COLLOQUE No. 10, pp. 295, 298, 301.
6. COLLOQUE No. 4; p. 24, CMAD 1863.
7. CMAD. 1845, 1851, 1862.

For general reading of the period, S. J. Connolly, *Priests and People in Pre-Famine Ireland 1780-1845,* Dublin 1982.

Forum

AN EMIGRANT CHAPLAIN

When I received an appointment to take up residence in a London parish as a member of the Irish Emigrant Chaplaincy team, that was the first I heard of the existence of the chaplaincy. Many questions arose~in my mind, but there were no immediate answers. Sometime later the Provincial showed me a letter from one of the Westminster Bishops, and this clarified my position. As a member of the Chaplaincy team I would have the status of curate in the parish and my income would include a share in the Christmas and Easter Offerings.

Later I learned more about the Chaplaincy. It is difficult to say who started it or when it was actually started. Perhaps it would be best to say that "it evolved". Towards the end of the war years many Irish labourers found themselves working in isolated locations with no possibility of Sunday Mass. From this need priests found their way among them; the delight and joy of the labourers was, in itself, ample reward.

The need of the Irish was seen, not so much as for a priest, but for one "of their own priests". In time the Chaplaincy was established. The policy was to seek a priest from each of the dioceses in Ireland and, likewise, a priest from each of the Orders and Congregations.

The chaplains found themselves either as curates in parishes with high Irish numbers or else found themselves in the category of "special works". I was among the curates.

The parish in which I found myself was approximately three miles square with a dense population. Being one of just three priests I felt I had more than enough to fulfil my duties as curate; I wondered where I could find the time to attend to "the special needs of the Irish". If that was one problem I had another. I had lived in communities where all reasonable needs were provided for; now I found myself in a couple of bare rooms and I had no means of transport.

My confusion was somewhat matched by that of the other clergy. Why should I arrive with a special interest only in the Irish? Was there an implied allegation that they were neglecting the Irish? What was so special about me that I would have special success with the Irish? These questions were not directly asked, but discussion and conversation clearly suggested them.

Clearly, I was not wanted to create a division in the parish between the Irish and the "others". The parish clergy would continue to show concern for the Irish as for all the others. I would be expected to treat all parishioners in the same manner irrespective of their country of origin. I felt this attitude was reasonable and correct; I approved of it then and I approve of it now. Hence I found myself as a curate of Irish origin in a parish of mixed nationalities showing the same concern for all.

Without proper means of transport in a parish of such great size I found I could not undertake a fair share of many duties. I had to limit my pastoral work in the parish to those areas that were within reasonable walking distance; and then wet weather and tiredness often curtailed that. I became, as it were, an inferior partner in the team.

In time, my connection with the chaplaincy became known. The non-Irish felt that I was not concerned with them. The Irish, on the other hand, showed great welcome and delight. They rallied around me and wished me to organise social functions for the Irish, to give them an Irish atmosphere, foster Irish entertainment and Irish culture; even to organise an Irish Club.

I got permission to use the Parish Hall for the Irish on St Patrick's Night. Without any great effort, and from within the resources of the Irish community, a dinner-dance was organised. The demand for tickets was excessive.

At this point there must have been murmuring in the parish. Perhaps they were wondering why the Irish were having this very special social occasion? A change was forced upon me: it would have to become a Parish Dance held on St Patrick's Night, and the Irish could have only half of the tickets! But to change a name was one thing: it was too late to change the arrangements: Irish Band playing Irish music, Irish dancers in traditional Irish costume, the presentation of a shillelagh to the mayor. The non-Irish were either thrilled with the night or felt uncomfortably out of place. One now felt that the writing was on the wall.

Sometime later an English priest joined the clergy. I was asked to vacate my sittingroom, so my bedroom became my sittingroom and office. Then there were more priests than necessary available to fulfil all Mass commitments; and I wondered: how long before…?

The Chaplaincy tactfully came to the rescue. The Nuclear Power Group was building a nuclear power station on the north Somerset coast and McAlpine's, a major sub-contractor, had stipulated facilities for a priest on the camp that would be erected. I was asked to be the

camp chaplain.

I left the London parish without receiving any portion of Christmas or Easter Offerings. Further, I was requested to place all stole fees in a common box and they would be equally divided; I received nothing; well almost nothing! On the day before my departure I baptised three children; I received £7 and placed this in the box. This was returned to me with the remark: "you keep that, you have well earned it". And so I left having received £7 for a period of 14 months!

The camp, which would come under the heading of "special works", was a great contrast to parish life. The camp could house about 800; each chalet accommodated 24 men. The camp had two dining areas, two licensed bars, a cinema, games rooms with snooker tables, a Post Office, a unit for the sick. It was well laid out, well lit, with all services beneath tarmacadamed roads. I was alotted two "terrapin" units: the living accommodation comprised large well-furnished sitting room, two bedrooms well-furnished, a fully-equipped kitchen and bathroom. It had a telephone, and I got no bills for either that or electricity. I could dine in any canteen on either the camp or the site.

The second unit was my chapel for daily Mass. It was well laid out with altar and tabernacle, seating for about 40, well heated. And I had a belfry and bell. I must say something about that bell. With all vestments and church furnishings, it had been brought from a previous camp. I was asked to be very careful about the bell; it was a ship's bell, it had a story behind it!

But years passed before I learned the story. On a previous camp it tolled as all good bells should. But the tolling was not to everyone's delight. And one day it did not toll for the tongue had been removed. But silence did not reign, there was uproar as the tongue was sought or the person who removed it! One day a cleaner found the tongue beneath a bed; it was restored to its rightful place. Next morning the occupant of the room was found dead in his room; it was the camp manager.

The Camp Cinema was alotted to me on Sundays and Holydays for Mass. The scene was one that was to be found in many Irish villages on Sunday morning. The men, all spotless and in best clothes, were gathered around in little groups chatting away as they waited for Mass. When the bell tolled they went in quietly and were a very impressive congregation, devout in prayer and most receiving Holy Communion. It was a different congregation, there were no women or children; that made it even more impressive. The Irish on the camp were mainly men who had wives and children in their homes in Ireland. They were a

credit to any country.

On my first morning in the camp I headed for the canteen for breakfast. In providing so well for me they forgot about food! There I found a huge area of empty tables, there was a service hatch and a queue of men in working clothes collecting their food. I felt terribly out of place. I seemed to be noticed by all of every religion and many countries with a silent querulous look. I took my place behind them and, in due time, was served my breakfast. I went to a table. But I had no cutlery. Others had some. Where would I get some? All the men told me they had their own. They kept it in their pockets! What would I do? I went to the canteen manager in my distress. Oh, I should have my own. However, if I went to a shop around a corner the assistant might lend me some. Or I might prefer to buy some so that I would have it for future occasions. I found the shop and bought a picnic-set of knife, fork and spoon. They cost me two shillings! They are now among my souvenirs.

Friendship with the men grew quickly and became very strong. Soon I learned the other side of a chaplain's life. I had to bring them to the doctor or dentist when needed. I visited them in hospital and bought their needs. I could have established a travel agency with all the travel tickets I had to buy. And, then, transport to the airport, 36 miles away. Could this really be the purpose for which I was ordained?

Anecdotes, perhaps, are the best means of revealing the lot of an emigrant in the camp. But I could tell a thousand!

One evening I joined a man in the labourers' canteen, who seemed to be lost in silent contemplation. I began to converse. Slowly he put his hand into the inner pocket of his jacket, he took out a letter. He produced a photograph, a little boy in First Communion dress. "That's my son", he said, "he made his First Holy Communion a short time ago". It explained so much. What wage can you pay a man to be separated from his home and loved ones?

One day I drove a man from the local shopping town. As he sat in the seat beside me he opened a parcel and took out a dainty little dress to fit a seven or eight year old child. He sat admiring it. The contrast was somewhat extreme. He was a big rough-and-tough-looking man and the delicate little dress seemed so out of place. "It's for one of my girls", he explained. "The missus asks me to get them in Marks & Spencers. She thinks they are great value; they're different and wear and wash well. She tells me what to get and the sizes. I buy them every week and bring them all home for Christmas". Hasn't love a terrible price to pay? Will the children of Ireland ever know the true cost of

that envelope with the money that gave them a better chance in life?

A man was killed on the site. He had left no names or next-of-kin. After great trouble the townland from which he came was identified and I phoned the priest in the area. He could not locate anybody of that name in the area. We buried him near Taunton. Sometime later a relative was discovered. The dead man was the brother of the lady-sacristan in the parish I had contacted.

A news item on the Irish radio: a fishing boat, which was named, was lost with all hands off Tory Island. A man on the camp recognises the boat; his son would be in the crew. I gave him my radio which could pick up RTE; he listened long for the body to be found to go to the funeral. The body was never found.

One man on the camp stood out from all the others. He was past retiring age. He always dressed in bowler hat, dark suit and spotless shirt after the day's work. He seemed to be a figure out of the 1920s or '30s. He was among the "chippies', but I was assured that he was the best craftsman on the site. He was from the Liberties and the son of a well-established cabinet-maker of the past. One evening he knocked at my door and came in. "I've got to go", he said, "but before I go I had to come and see you. You knew I never went to Mass, but I contributed to all your collections. You were always kind to me and never showed annoyance. Now I must explain. I was a student in St Patrick's College in Dublin. It was during the troubles and I and others were caught drilling in the grounds. We were all expelled. I swore I would never go to Church again: and I haven't. And I want you to know this. But since you were kind to me I'll make you a promise; when I return to Dublin I'll make my peace with God. Now I must go". And out he went into the night and I never saw him again. Some months later a message reached me from Dublin. He had died and had been reconciled to the Church some time before his death.

Another elderly man from Donegal told me his story based on the time of the "troubles". He explained that he was excommunicated and had never been to Church since. Among the incidents he related was one about a young woman with a baby in her arms being harrassed by two young soldiers. "And I pulled out my gun and shot the two of them, and I never felt a happier man in all my life". He, too, has passed away.

And a final anecdote. A strike was called; I offered my help to both men and management in case I should be of any use. Then from a distance I watched a meeting; the decision to stay on strike was not unanimous. That evening I had a visitor, a man from the union. "You

were down there today", he said. "Yes", I admitted, "I thought I might be of some help." "Stay away", he said, "we don't want you down there during strikes". "I was far away", I said, "I didn't interfere". "No", he said, "you did not interfere but you could see the men, and they could see you. Some of them would not dare put up their hands to strike if you were watching. So stay away". I answered that I would act in the way that I thought best in the men's interest. "Down there", he said, "there are buildings two hundred feet high; a spanner could fall on you! And there are holes a hundred feet deep; you could fall in one! And you have a maroon car in the parking area; a brake cable could accidentally snap".

Apart from removing my car to a place beside my hut, I did nothing nor told anyone. But on the day I was finally leaving I called into the foremen's hut at morning tea-time to bid farewell. Then I related this story to them and concluded that as he and I were now part of the past, they might as well know it. There was a longish silence; I wished I had not spoken. "We knew it alright", said the head-foreman, "and you were the safest person in the camp".

I hope these stories set against a background of the most advanced technologies reveal something of the true nature of the men who control them: their love, their anxiety, their loneliness, their concern. Their attendance at Sunday and daily Mass was inspiring, their halting for prayer when the Angelus rang out was impressive. They had no impressive cathedrals with organs and choirs and impressive liturgy to sustain their faith; they were delighted and honoured to meet the Lord in a borrowed room. And when they had rosary in May and October, and benediction with real incense, that was a bonus!

And when one shares one's life with others, their lot is also shared. I, too, was often bored and lonely. And, perhaps, when I had collected my meal, cleaned a portion of table on which to place my plate, put my safety helmet on the bench beside me, taken my knife and fork and spoon from my pocket, I then had time for memories. And I may well have thought of Blackrock and Glenart days, when dressed in soutane and wearing a biretta I sat down at a clean table and was waited upon!

But today my memories are of that camp; four years and three months, and I missed saying Sunday Mass in it during that time only once; fog delayed my plane from Dublin. As the work drew near completion it was time to go. I broke up the home I had put together, ensured the safety of all furnishings and equipment— and the bell! I returned the rubber boots for which I had signed and asked to keep the helmet as a memento. I am most grateful for that experience.

And it was back to being a curate, to the oldest public Catholic church in England, St Peter & St Paul's, Wolverhampton, 1728. After the midlands I concluded my chaplaincy in London. I had learned from my first appointment as curate, but I had not learnt enough…

Tony Clune

ACROSS THE GREAT DIVIDE

When asked to present my reflections on the differences between Arts and Theology I summed them up as a leap across a great divide. I've always had great difficulties with study. During my Arts years I took French, English and Geography. Of the three my favourite subject was Geography because it was concise and practical while English was more theoretical and, in my opinion, less concrete. But the change to Dogma and a whole new language was almost frightening.

I can still recall my first impressions of Theology. Eugene and I arrived into a hall where ninety students were present. (Eamon and Jerome went to the wrong room and sat in on the 2nd Div lecture on Christology). In the 1st year class there were over 85 men and three women, all sisters. Out of that class I knew about twelve and for the life of me I could not see a familiar face. By ll a.m. one thought was continually running through my mind and that was "Will I ever get out of here? In my three years studying Arts I had made many close friends. Now, however, I felt very much an outsider as I was not a resident clerical student. Even the physical features of the room, a long hall filled with long rows of "school desks", a room which was always associated with exams, made everything even more off-putting. To crown all this the language of our lectures in Revelation was unfamiliar. I was glad to hear the bell at 12.45.

Some of these difficulties may seem ridiculous and superficial; the fact is that these feelings were shared by my three confrères and a Columban student and close friend of ours from Arts. Like myself he too felt a kind of "culture shock" and a sense of alienation.

On going to class for the second day I thought to myself "I can sit in the corner or I can try to break into the main body and get to know the other lads in the class". I chose the latter, and thank God that I did.

The great consolation about starting Theology was that we were all new to the subject and therefore we were all at the one level,

academically speaking. It was good to know that my ignorance and bewilderment at such expressions as "supernatural existential" were shared by the other lads in the class.

In addition to the difficulties which I found in adjusting to the study of Theology I was also still in an emotional trough following the exams of Autumn. I now felt an attitude of "Why bother?" As a result it took me nearly three months to get back to a steady pattern of work. This was a time of vocation crisis for me. I felt frustrated, discouraged and depressed after the exams. But my great anchor was the advice my father gave me some years before. He asked me to ask myself "Would you be happy in the work?" Now my gut feeling was that in view of the work, (I mean pastoral work as a priest), this was for me. To me this question has always been the bottom line in assessing what I believe to be my vocation. So I carried on with the mentality that "this has got to be gone through", and stubborn perseverance was to motivate me for the coming year. Now, over a year later, I believe that my decision was the right one. I have developed an interest in Theology, but for a long time my future as a Vincentian was tentative.

Statistics and experience have shown that the transition from Arts to Theology is an extremely difficult one and I can see why. It is not so much that the study is difficult, but rather that one's life seems to take a different direction. One begins to wonder if one's "yes" on leaving school is filled with the same commitment, particularly in view of the many changes which occur between 18 and 21. In 1983 we had a class of 93; in October 1984 we returned with a class of 61. While some students had gone to spend time overseas there was still a marked decrease of 30%. For me, the feature of the religious life was the work and the cameraderie of De Paul House. The fulfilment I found in my pastoral work was reinforced last summer in my placement in Our Lady's Hospital in Crumlin and in the retreat we helped to give in Belfast last September. I wonder if my peers in Maynooth were to have had the same opportunities, experience and encouragement in pastoral work, would they still be there?

I have often wondered why it is that in our student years 90% of our work is study and 10% is pastoral work, while as priests our studies will be minimal and our pastoral ministry extensive; it bears thinking about. One of the most enjoyable experiences of my short life in the community was the retreat we gave in Belfast. Eamonn Cowan, Sean Johnston, Eugene and I spent a week there, and for me the retreat was most fulfilling. I firmly believe that if there were more of this involvement we, as students, would experience deeper conviction and reassurance in our

vocation. It would help to clarify our understanding of the Vincentian way of life, and we could look more to the future of the Province rather than to Maynooth, De Paul House, and the imperfections of our human nature. Such involvement is increasing, thank God; with it will hopefully come the realisation that "the great divide" is not that great and can, in fact, be overcome easily enough.

Jay Shanahan

Miscellanea

IRISH CONFRÈRES 1638-1839

Philip Dowley began his seminaire in Paris on 18 March 1839. He returned to Castleknock on 20 July the same year and thus began a new development in Irish membership of the Congregation, namely Irish confrères permanently resident in Ireland. Before him more than fifty Irishmen had joined the Congregation but only a very small number of them had ever worked in Ireland and there had never been a house of the Congregation in Ireland before 1839. Below are listed all Irishmen who joined the Congregation before Philip Dowley.

TD

NB: *Each entry is in the following order — Year of entry; Place of entry; Name; Diocese of origin; Remarks.*

1638, Paris, SKYDDIE, John, Cork.
Ordained 1640. Paris till 1642, then Rome. Advised Vincent that superior of 1646 Irish mission should be a Frenchman. Died 1646.

1638. Paris, WATER, James, Cork.
Ordained 1641. Considered, but not chosen, for 1646 Irish mission. Most of life professor in Cahors seminary. To Ireland 1662.

1639. Paris, BRIN, Gerard, Cashel.
In Ireland 1646-52, 1656 and 1663. Six superiorships. Named for proposed Spanish foundation, which did not materialise.

1641. Paris, BARRY, Edmund, Cloyne.
On 1646 Irish mission. Most of life in Montauban and superior there twice. Died there 1680.

1642. Paris, (Mc)ENNERY, John, Limerick.
Most of life in Italy: Genoa, Rome, Turin, Genoa. Professor of theology in Paris 1652-53. Died of plague in Genoa in 1657.

1643. Paris CROWLEY, Donat, Cork.
Seven superiorships. Professor of dogma, later moral, in Paris; director of students. Member of commission on seminaries after 1668 assembly. Still alive as superior in Le Mans in 1690.

1643, Paris, GOGLEY, Mark, Lismore.
Most of life in Sedan, being superior there twice.

1643, Paris, MOLONY, Thady, Limerick.
Ordained Rome 1650. Then Genoa, Paris and Le Mans.

1643. Paris, LEE, Thady, Limerick.
Killed in Limerick 1651, aged 28, still a student.

1644. Paris, WALSH, Patrick, Limerick. Ordained 1646. Genoa 1647-52 and again from 1656.

1645. Paris, DUGGAN, Dermot, Emly.
Ordained before entry. On 1646 Irish mission. Then to Scottish mainland and islands.

1645, Paris, WHITE, Francis, Limerick.
Alternated between Paris and Scotland; three periods in each.

1645, Paris, O'BRIEN, Dermot, Emly. Died 1649; no other information.

1645, Paris, WHITE, George, Limerick.
Ordained before entry. On 1646 Irish mission. Also in Le Mans, Paris and Richelieu.

1648, Paris, CART, William, Limerick.
The only Irish confrère of the period who does not figure in Vincent's letters.

1653, Richelieu, PLUNKET, Luke, Meath.
Vincent told him his French was so poor he could not be let give missions.

1654, Paris, COGLEY, Laurence (Bro), Waterford.
The first Irish lay brother. Brother of Mark. In Bons Enfants in 1655.

1654, Richelieu, BUTLER, Peter, Cashel.
Problem about missionary oath demanded by *Prop. Fid.* that he be available for Irish mission.

1654, Paris, ARTHUR, Nicholas, Cork.
Probably nephew of James Water. To Montmirail for health reasons before ordination. "C'est un bon enfant" Vincent wrote of him.

1655, Paris, COGLEY, Gerard (Bro), Lismore. Cousin of Mark and Laurence.

1656, Paris, DALTON, Philip, Cashel. Ordained before entry. In Troyes and Sedan.

1657, Paris, TAYLOR, Patrick, Dublin.
Born in St Michael's parish in Dublin. No other information.

1658, Paris, WHITE, John, Limerick.
See COLLOQUE No. 9.

1665, Paris, O'FOGERTY, John, Cashel.
To Poland after vows in 1667. Ordained there and spent all life there as missioner. Died in Warsaw 1723 aged 80.

1679, Paris, GERALD, Thomas, Lismore.
In Rochefort in 1707 and appointed by bishop to special ministry to new converts.

1682, Paris, PEMBERTON, Anthony, Limerick.
Died in Paris as first year seminarist.

1706, Paris, SULLIVAN, Eugene, Aghadoe.
In 1715 changed from Montauban to Montuzet. No other information.

1711, Paris, KELLY, Edmund, Dublin.
Vows in 1713; left later.

1711, Paris, VAUGHAN, Christopher, Meath.
Vows in Versailles 1713. Died in Les Invalides, Paris, in 1763. No other information.

1713, France, O'DANIEL, Michael (Bro), Waterford.
Vows in Rochefort. No other information.

1714, Paris, MAHONY, James, Cork.
Convert. Died in Paris 1715 as second year seminarist.

1717, Paris, MOROGH, James (Bro), Cork.
Died in Saint-Méen in 1746. No other information.

1722, Paris, O'ROURKE, Thady, Ardfert.
Died in Beauvais 1762. No other information.

1725, Paris, TAAFFE, George, Dublin.
Left in 1727 to take care of his father.

1725, Paris, BYRNE, John, Dublin.
Vows in 1727; left later.

1725, Paris, MACNEMARA, Thomas, Elphin.
Vows in July 1727; died in January 1728.

1727, Paris, TAAFFE, William, Dublin.
Vows in 1729; left later.

1727, Paris, GIFFARD, William, Dublin.
Also known as Fitzharris. Vows 1730. In Angers 1734. Seems to have left CM later.

1741, Rome, BARRY, Thomas, Dublin.
Appointed to mission staff in Macerata in 1777. Died there in 1789.

1758, Paris, FERRIS, Edward, Kerry.
See COLLOQUE No. 7.

1760, Paris, O'HEA, Matthew, Ross.
Appointed to Lyon in 1769. Was present at death there of John O'Brien, Bishop of Cloyne and Ross in that year.

1766. Paris, MANTIN, James, Dublin.
Vows 1768. Dispensed 1772.

1767. Paris, NOWLAN, James (Bro), (Ireland).
Vows 1769. Left later and was ordained priest in 1774.

1767(7), Paris, BARRYMORE, James, (Ireland?).
Vows in Paris in 1769. No other information.

1783, Paris, HANNA, Robert, Dromore.
Convert. After ordination studied astronomy in Paris in order to help superior in Peking on Imperial Board of Science. Macao 1788-1793. Reached Peking June 1794. Died there January 1797 aged 34.

1820, St Louis, HARRINGTON, Daniel (Bro), Cloyne & Ross.
In charge of farm at The Barrens. Duties included purchase of slaves.

1820(7), St Louis, QUIN, Hugo, Down & Connor.
Kept diary (now in Ulster Museum) from his departure from Portaferry to arrival in St Louis. Nothing in diary re CM, which he left later.

1828, Rome, McCORMACK, Robert, (Ireland).
Left for reasons of health.

1830, The Barrens, SHANNON, James, Ferns.
Vows January 1832; died July same year.

1834, Rome, RING, Patrick, Cork.
Vows Rome 1836. Died as sub-deacon in Louisiana 1839.

1834, Rome, BURKE, Thomas, Cashel.
Vows 1836 then to US. Prov Bursar & Prov Consultor. Died St Louis 1877.

1835, Rome, COLLINS, Michael, Cloyne.
Died in The Barrens 1847. Hard to distinguish from another Collins.

1835, Rome(?), CORY, Edward, Kildare.
Died Cape Girardeau 1871.

1836, Rome(?), TIERNAN, James, Meath.
Died St Louis 1847.

1837, Rome(?), BRAYDERICK, John, (Ireland).
Died in US in January 1841.

In addition to the above another Irishman whose name is not recorded was received into the seminaire in Richelieu in 1660. On 14 January Vincent wrote to Edmund Barry, superior of Notre-Dame de Lorm, that he should send the young Irishman to Richelieu (VIII 224). On 2 May he wrote to Pierre de Beaumont, superior in Richelieu, “Praise be to God that you have received into the seminaire M. Lorfebvre and the Irish student recommended by Fr Barry” (VIII 286).