The Miraculous Medal Association Australia

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Bulletin No 16 Issue 3
Winter July 2017.

Incorporating AMM Sydney, New South Wales
AMM Adelaide, South Australia. and Nausori, Fiji.

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NEWS FROM THE INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF THE AMM.

SOME EXTRACTS FROM THE INTERNATIONAL BULLETIN NO 48.

Annual Meeting of the General Council of the Miraculous Medal Association. March 27, Paris, France.

All the members of the General Council were present at this meeting that was directed by the Sub-Director General, Father Carl Pieber, CM. This was the first meeting in which the Director General, Father Tomaz Mavric, participated.

The first part of the meeting was led by Father Tomaz who shared with us some reflections on the significance of the Jubilee Year in which we celebrate the 400th anniversary of the Vincentian charism. He also spoke about the four great international initiatives of the Vincentian Family.

a) The pilgrimage of the heart of Saint Vincent

This year the relic of St Vincent's heart will be venerated throughout France and then, in later years, throughout the world. The pilgrimage will follow the order in which the Vincentian Family became present in the various countries of the world.

b) **Symposium**

This will take place in Rome, Italy (October 12-15, 2017) Fr Tomaz encourages all the members of the national and local councils to participate in this event.

c) Global initiative of the Vincentian Family on behalf of street people viewed from three different perspectives.

People living on the street; people who do not have dignified housing; and refugees.

This initiative was spoken about during the meeting of the Executive Committee of the Vincentian Family. Strategies are being prepared and this initiative will be inaugurated on June 28th. We will begin by gathering information with regard to current assistance and programs that are caring for and helping homeless people. This phase will enable the initiative to be more effective.

Father Tomaz explained that this is not a new project but one that has already begun and it is necessary to gather information from all the branches of the Vincentian Family- all the branches are engaged in some wonderful work in this area. We must take advantage of these experiences in order to make our effort more effective.

Picture of Mary in church of St Andrew della Fratte, Rome. (see page 2)

D)Film Festival

We encourage all interested persons to develop videos from 15 to 20 minutes in length, a video with an original script and that deals with some aspect of the Vincentian charism. The result of this work will be made public in September 2018.

At this meeting the Council reviewed information about the progress of the International Association on a worldwide level. A financial report was also given and these monies are derived from the quotas that are received from the national councils.

Father Carl Pieber gave a report about the work that is being done in order to create a new website and also reported on the status of the text: *The Path of Life*. Very soon this work will be available to all the members. We want to thank Fr Tomaz for his participation in

this meeting.

The International Bulletin, as well as the remark made by Fr Tomaz urging all national and local councils to participate in this event, adds the following. At the time of the Symposium, all the members of the Miraculous Medal Association will meet together at the church of Saint Andrew delle fratte, on October 12th at 7.00 pm. Unsure whether any members from Australia will be there. The Pilgrimage to France celebrating 400 years of the Vincentian charism, organised by our National Director, has been cancelled for lack of pilgrims. Have we any takers for the Symposium? (Ed)

The Vatican

I am sure we were all happy to see Pope Francis celebrating in the presence of the painting that is usually displayed in the church of Saint Andrew della Fratte in Rome. The work was painted by the artist Natale Carta and depicts the apparition of Mary to Alphonse Ratisbonne. This painting was placed at the

IMPORTANT NEWS ITEMS

1. Retreat Day at Marsfield, Sydney:

A good number of our members attended the Retreat Day held at Marsfield, and once again we were blessed to have the input for this day given by Sr Therese Haywood DC and Vincentian student, Marc Tapson. The theme was based on the 400 years of the Vincentian charism and on Mary and the Vincentian tradition. The input and time for reflection and sharing was appreciated, and the day concluded with the Eucharist, celebrated by our National Director, Fr Kevin Canty, CM.

2. Miraculous Medal Shrine, Marsfield:

Our members and parishioners to St Anthony's Church at Marsfield have welcomed the Miraculous Medal shrine in that church. If any of our members desire to make a donation towards the construction and upkeep of the shrine, could they please forward this to Sr Marie Westblade at the Marian Office in Marsfield. You will find the address on page 1 of this bulletin. We are very grateful for what has already been contributed towards this shrine, and we thank sincerely anyone who would also like to contribute. Thank you for all the generosity that you display.

3. AMM WEBSITE; The AMM in Australia now has a Website. http://amm.org.au This has been up and running for a few weeks now, and it has been interesting to note just how many people have already clicked onto it, and from what parts of our world this has happened. We are still working on it and hope to add regular items—news, formation articles, etc., during each month. We offer our members the opportunity of also being part of our National Encounter, in the form of an E-Conference in September and we will endeavour to show this in our website.

4. National Encounter;

With the significance of this year and the celebration by the Vincentian Family of 400 years of the Vincentian Charism, it was decided to have a special National Encounter, whereby members of the AMM throughout Australia could come together and celebrate this occasion with a special formation session made available through modern technology in the form of an e-conference. Those members in Sydney, who can join us at Marsfield, are welcome to join us there, while others in Sydney and beyond will be able to join us in their own homes or wherever they might gather together. More information on how to connect to the e-conference will be provided closer to the date, but keep the date in mind:

Gannes Foleville

Châtillon

400 yrs. 1617-2017

Saturday, 16th September, 2017—commencing 9.30 am

and concluding the day with lunch together at 12.30 p.m.

Living Life in the Spirit (Part 2: continuing our series on Prayer and Spirituality)

MYSTICISM : - a Spirituality seeking union with God

"A multifaceted term, which can bear a variety of meanings. In its most important sense, the term refers to the union with God which is seen as the ultimate goal of the Christian life. This union is not to be thought of in rational or intellectual terms, but more in terms of a direct consciousness or experience of God." ("Christian Spirituality" : Alister E. McGrath, page 187)
"The devout Christian of the future will have to be a mystic, one who has "experienced" something, or he will cease to be anything at all." (Karl Rahner Christian Living, formerly and today. Theological Investigations VII Further theology of the Spiritual Life 1[New York, Crossroad, 1977} page 15.

"Why do you think of infused contemplation, mystical prayer, as something essentially strange and esoteric, reserved for a small class of almost unnatural beings and prohibited to everyone else? Infused contemplation is a powerful means of sanctification and is intimately connected with the pure and perfect love of God which is God's greatest gift to the soul. Therefore, if anyone should ask: 'Who may desire this gift and pray for it?' – the answer is obvious: everybody." (Thomas Merton)

"We are all mystics at our core, since God's own seed is within us (1 Jn 3:9). Indeed, it is this very seed that holds us lovingly in being. Inasmuch as God has willed to plant his own seed in us, is it not also his will and desire that this seed should germinate and extend its leaves and branches like the mustard tree? The contemplative/mystical life is the flowering and blossoming of this divine seed. The gift of contemplation is the experiential discovery that 'God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts' (Gal 4:6), that 'in him we live and breathe and have our being' (Acts 17:28), and though our physical body is falling daily into decay, we experience 'the inner person being renewed day by day' (2 Cor 4:6)." ("Why Not Be A Mystic" : Frank X. Tuoti)

THE THREE STAGES OF THE SPIRITUAL WAY, OF SPIRITUAL LIFE:

Traditionally the spiritual journey has been seen to have three stages. The mystics speak of an inner journey to ever deepening union with God. From their own experience they speak of this journey as having three stages. Here we speak of "The Doctrine of the Three Ways". We could be excused for thinking that one has to pass from one stage of these three ways to the next to reach holiness or sanctity. Perhaps our own experience might help us to see that our journey is more like a spiral, where we pass from one stage to another and back and forth continuing the spiral, up and down. As we look at how these three stages are considered today, we might reflect upon our own experience, our own journey.

THE PURGATIVE WAY:

here there is special concentration on diminishing the force of responses that are alien to the attraction of God: selfish, destructive, divisive, unloving responses which isolate us from one another and from God.

PRAYER: forgiveness, purification, single-minded desire to do the will of God, strength and perseverance; Grateful acknowledgement of God's unconditional love that called us to being and now calls us to repentance and intimate relationship.

THE ILLUMINATIVE WAY:

Characterised by heightened awareness; we become increasingly sensitive to the attractive power of God, to God's presence within us, to God's life-giving love calling us beyond ourselves; coming to know God personally in an I – THOU encounter. ("experience of God".)

PRAYER: at this stage one becomes more aware of the presence and action of God in other people's lives; one will see God in the poor, disadvantaged, the oppressed, etc., as well as in the gifted, dedicated, generous and unselfish.

THE UNITIVE WAY:

The way of love. Our response to God's initiative becomes full and intense and unreserved and all-inclusive.