



The Shrine now offers Sacramental Retreat programs for First Holy Communion, Reconciliation, and Confirmation. Learn more at miraculousmedal.org/faith-communities/youth-ministry.



Sacramental Retreat

Second graders from St. Anthony of Padua Church, Camden, New Jersey, recently visited the Shrine for a daylong sacramental retreat. Working with Carolina Soares, the Shrine's Youth and Young Adults Program Coordinator, the teachers crafted a supplemental program for the students, who will be receiving their First Holy Communion this year. The students enjoyed fun activities and sacramental learning experiences, tailored specifically for their class.

SAINTLY INSPIRATION

St. Anthony of Padua second graders pictured with "St. Catherine Labouré" (Victoria Bonito).



"The Spirit of Christmas" Concert

During the 2019 Christmas holiday season, The Miraculous Medal Shrine hosted "The Spirit of Christmas" concert that displayed the sights and sounds of the season within the breathtaking interior of the Shrine.

All three performers, Andy Cooney, Daniel Rodriguez, and Christopher Macchio, are renowned for their performances to sold-out theaters and audiences in the United States and Europe.



The World's Big Sleepout

The grounds of The Miraculous Medal Shrine were the perfect spot for the World's Big Sleepout in December 2019. The Sleepout is an international event of solidarity, support, and awareness to the plight of the homeless and displaced. Donations raised by the Shrine's participants went to Depaul USA, a local charity supporting Philadelphia's homelessness, and the Sleepout's funding for children and families who are displaced internationally. Among those participating were seminarians, priests, CAMM staff members, the Eastern Province staff, and personnel from the Depaul House and Depaul USA.

Shrine Director Honored



NIAGARA UNIVERSITY HONOREES

Left to right: Niagara University President's Dinner honorees Laura Zaepfel (Caritas Medal), Paul E. O'Leary Jr., '81 (Medal of Honor), Rev. Craig D. Pridgen (Legacy of Service Award), and Rev. Michael J. Carroll, CM, '73, '11 (Hon.), (St. Vincent de Paul Award) with the Rev. James J. Maher, CM, Niagara University president (center).

At Niagara University's 2019 President's Dinner, Friday, November 15, 2019, Fr. Michael J. Carroll, CM, Director of The Miraculous Medal Shrine and Spiritual Director of the Central Association of the Miraculous Medal, was recognized for his years of dedication, support, and service to Niagara University and the Vincentian (Congregation of the Mission) community. The event, held at the Conference & Event Center Niagara Falls, is held to support Niagara University's scholarship programs.

Fr. Carroll was among four recipients. As an alumnus of the Class of '73, '11 (Hon.), he received the St. Vincent de Paul Award.

Over the years, Fr. Carroll has held a number of assignments, including working in school ministry at Archbishop Wood High School, campus ministry at St. John's University in Queens, and as Executive Vice President for Student Services at the university's Rome campus. He was elected Provincial

Superior for the Eastern Province of the Congregation of the Mission in 2008 and served in that post until 2017. Today, Fr. Carroll promotes devotion to Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal.

Nearly 500 Niagara University alumni, students, and friends attended the event, the proceeds of which directly benefit Niagara University's scholarship programs. A total of \$272,000 was raised this year toward student scholarship assistance.

President's Letter to Fr. Skelly

June 5, 2020, marks the anniversary of Fr. Joseph A. Skelly's (founder of the Central Association of the Miraculous Medal) ordination to the priesthood. In commemoration of his Golden Jubilee (in 1950), U.S. President Harry Truman sent Fr. Skelly a letter to mark the occasion. The letter reads:

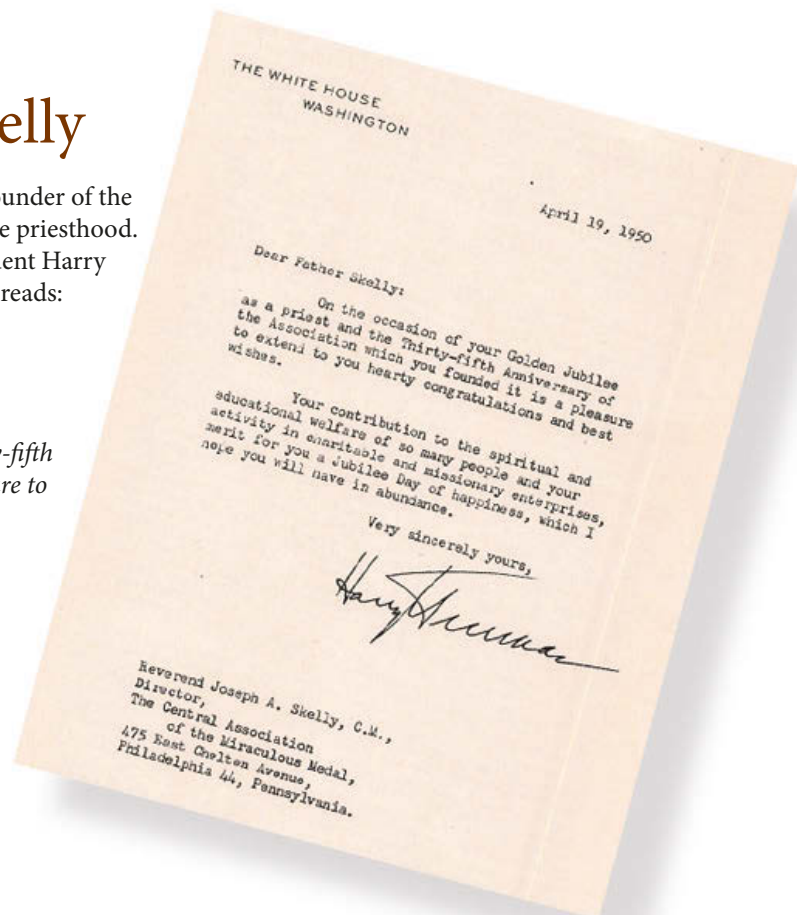
April 19, 1950

Dear Father Skelly:

On the occasion of your Golden Jubilee as a priest and the Thirty-fifth Anniversary of the Association, which you founded, it is a pleasure to extend to you hearty congratulations and best wishes.

Your contribution to the spiritual and educational welfare of so many people and your activity in charitable and missionary enterprises, merit for you a Jubilee Day of happiness, which I hope you will have in abundance.

Very sincerely yours,
Harry Truman





Halt Hate

Niagara University's Rev. Joseph L. Levesque, CM, Institute for Civic Engagement, in partnership with Leadership Niagara, united the community to "Halt Hate" on Thursday, April 2. Now in its second year, this annual initiative encourages participants to spend twenty-four hours choosing to respond compassionately to circumstances they encounter in their everyday lives. Students consciously seek to understand, practice tolerance, and gain perspective in each situation. The goal is for these actions to expand past twenty-four hours into a lifetime. In its first year, #HALTHATE content reached more than 28,000 social media users.

Participants followed Leadership Niagara and Niagara IMPACT on social media for thoughtful activities, "Hate Hacks," and updates. They used the hashtag #HALTHATE to share their stories about their efforts to impact positive change rather than react, and they challenged others through social media, as well.

Sacred Conversations



Approximately 200 students from eight high schools throughout Western New York gathered on the Niagara University campus on March 3, 2020, to participate in "Sacred Conversations," the third annual youth, race, and equality conference hosted by the university's Rose Bente Lee Ostapenko Center for Race, Equality,

and Mission. The conference provided opportunities for students to address local and national issues of ethnicity; engage in dialogue about race and equity; and realize their potential in creating change through advocacy and collective action.

The students participated in workshops that addressed the role race plays in future goal-setting, how it sometimes creates an unequal playing field, and how justice movements can help overcome marginalization and oppression in communities. The workshops were led by Niagara University students.

Vincentian Universities Donate Much-needed Supplies

Early one morning at the Queens, New York, campus of St. John's University, staff loaded more than fifty boxes of classroom medical supplies into campus vehicles and transported them to nearby New York Presbyterian-Queens Hospital.

Inside the boxes were donations of critically needed personal protective equipment to assist local health workers on the front lines of fighting the global COVID-19 pandemic. The supplies included 186,000 medical gloves, 500 disposable lab coats, 100 surgical masks, and 20 protective face shields.

The rapid call to action began with a weekend email from Philip S. Lukeman, Ph.D., Professor, Department of Chemistry, which quickly generated immediate participation from the university's administration and faculty. The faculty remotely provided inventory information and the location of available supplies.

More than 400 miles away, Niagara University was answering the same call to action. What initially appeared to be an unexpected delivery might actually have been a happy coincidence, as an order of personal protective equipment, initially intended to be used by Niagara University's nursing students, was donated to the places that need them most—local hospitals and nursing homes.

Margarita Coyne, interim Dean of Niagara University's School of Nursing, spearheaded the effort, with the help of Dr. Maria Frosini Gadawski, a faculty member in the school, and Dr. Mary McCourt, a professor of chemistry, whose daughter works at Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center.

Thanks to their coordinated efforts, 22,000 pairs gloves, 500 masks, and 100 gowns



Photos courtesy of Niagara University

THE VINCENTIAN DIFFERENCE
Volunteers from Niagara University packed supplies donated to area hospitals to help frontline healthcare workers deal with the COVID-19 outbreak.

arrived at Roswell Park, as well as Niagara Falls Memorial Medical Center and Our Lady of Peace/Ascension group.

“What happened is a classic St. John’s answer to the Vincentian question, ‘What must be done?’”

BRIAN BROWNE
AVP, GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

R.I.S.E. ABOVE

The students at St. John's University are required to enroll in experiential, site-based learning programs, which involve community service. The service activities meet course objectives, and through reflection, students examine issues such as hunger, homelessness, education, civic engagement, and community youth services.

One such programs is R.I.S.E. (Reach, Inspire, Succeed, Empower), a scholar's empowerment network that provides first-year Black and Latino students with support, skill-based development, and opportunities to enhance their overall academic career.

The Freshmen mentors are former R.I.S.E. scholars, who benefitted from the program, and are trained to help others. The results have been outstanding: Retention rates for first-year R.I.S.E. scholars have outpaced those of the general student population, and their four-year graduation rate has also increased.

The Middle States Accreditation Program commended St. John's, stating, “While most colleges have instituted or maintained service programs, St. John's is particularly well-organized and integrated into academic life.”

St. John's University 150 years: Faithful to the Mission

In 1870, when the Congregation of the Mission (the Vincentians) first opened the doors of what was then known as St. John's College—located in a one-room farmhouse in Brooklyn, New York—those pioneering educators opened a world of opportunity to students and began an enduring mission to transform lives.

What began with forty-seven students and six faculty on Lewis Avenue in Brooklyn has evolved over the last century and a half into a truly metropolitan and global university.

As the university prepares for its 150th-anniversary celebration beginning in September, they are ever mindful to always be faithful to their founding and enduring

mission. So much so, that the theme selected for the year-long sesquicentennial celebration is "150 Years: Faithful to the Mission."

At St. John's, the dedicated university community works to create a path of mobility and open doors of opportunity for students who want to make a difference in the world. As a private, Catholic, and Vincentian university, St. John's prepares students for personal and professional success in today's global society while never wavering from their founding Catholic and Vincentian mission.

With its main campus located in Queens, New York, St. John's University also has campuses and locations in Staten Island,

Manhattan, and Hauppauge, New York; Rome, Italy; Paris, France; and Limerick, Ireland.

St. John's University is comprised of six colleges, including the College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences; The Lesley H. and William L. Collins College of Professional Studies; St. John's College of Liberal Arts and Sciences; The Peter J. Tobin College of Business; The School of Education; and the School of Law. As of Fall 2019, the university has 1,561 full-time and part-time faculty, 17,088 undergraduate students, and 4,633 graduate students who come from 46 states and 119 countries.



To learn more,
visit stjohns.edu



Photos courtesy of St. John's University



To watch the full interview, visit
[vincentiansusa.org/news-and-events/vincentians-celebrate-170-years-in-philadelphia-ewtn-news-nightly/](https://www.vincentiansusa.org/news-and-events/vincentians-celebrate-170-years-in-philadelphia-ewtn-news-nightly/)

EWTN Interviews Eastern Province Vincentians

In recognition of last year's 170th anniversary celebration of the Vincentians' arrival in Philadelphia, Frs. Michael Carroll, CM, and Timothy Lyons, CM (pictured right), were recently interviewed by EWTN contributor, Colm Flynn, on the rich history, influence, and experiences of the Vincentians of the Eastern Province. The interview focused on the Congregation's myriad ministries, and the longevity and significance of the Perpetual Novena and the Miraculous Medal.

Flynn referenced how 2019 marked a pivotal anniversary for the Vincentians and the profound impact they've had on thousands of lives. Fr. Carroll agreed.

"The problems of the Philadelphians back then are no different than those experienced today," noted Fr. Carroll. "There are a lot of people struggling, and we [the Vincentians] continue to be here and walk with this population to share the faith with them and offer them hope. We are right where we belong."

Homelessness and prison ministry were discussed as primary missions in



Philadelphia, given their significance and relevance both 170 years ago and today. Fr. Lyons cited how this was what St. Vincent de Paul, the Congregation's founder, instructed his followers to do.

"We have a continuous mission to live out the mission of [our] founder, St. Vincent." He added, "I feel the mission of the [Vincentian] community has only deepened."

Flynn also addressed how promoting devotion to Mary through the Miraculous Medal was—and will always be—rooted in the Vincentian ministries. "The Miraculous Medal is a symbol of devotion and a relationship with God," Fr. Lyons stated.

Vincentian Seminarians Internal Seminary



In January, seminarians Rogelio Pineda and Juan Carlos Guerra from Concepcion, Chiriqui, Panama, began Internal Seminary in the Congregation of the Mission. This experience involves a year of prayer, reflection, and discernment to discover the depth of their vocation and make their first commitment to the Vincentians by the end of the first year.

After a three-day retreat, Pineda and Guerra, along with other seminarians from neighboring Provinces (Central America, Dominican Republic, Costa Rica, and Mexico), were formally received as beginning members of the Congregation. They have completed their philosophy studies in the San Jose Major Seminary in Panama City, Panama, and are now stationed in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, for their one-year Internal Seminary experience. This part of formation is a joint collaboration between the Eastern and Western Provinces.

THE JOURNEY IS JUST BEGINNING

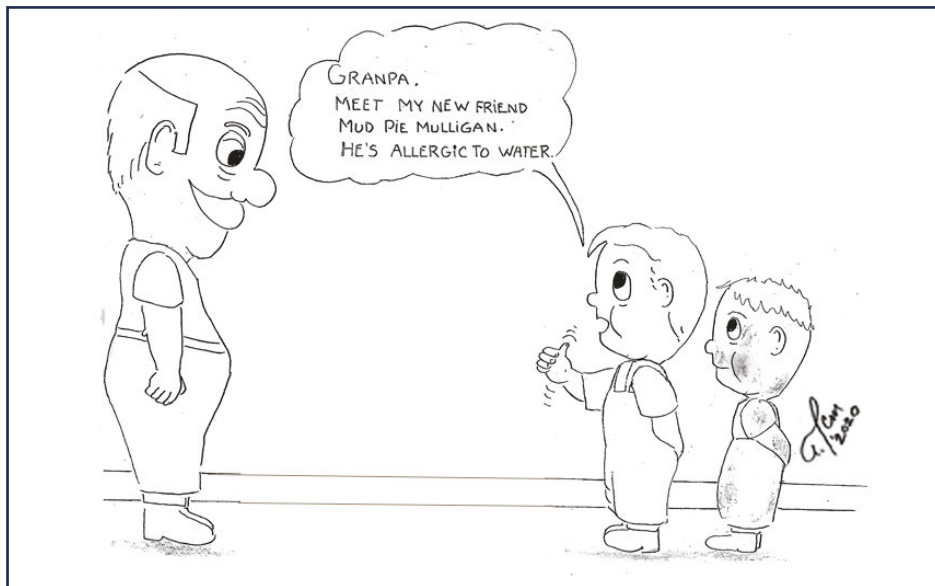
Pictured are (left to right) Rogelio Pineda, Fr. Teodoro Justavino, CM (Regional Superior), and Juan Carlos Guerra leaving for St. Juan Gabriel Perboyre, Vincentian Internal Seminary in Guatemala.

Alma Mater Honors Fr. Rock



Fr. Richard J. Rock, CM, a Vincentian of the Eastern Province, was recently honored by his alma mater, Immaculate Conception Catholic Academy (formerly Immaculate Conception School), at its 95th Anniversary Celebration. Fr. Rock and his siblings attended Immaculate Conception School where they were taught by the Sisters of the Holy Union of the Sacred Hearts.

After graduation from the school in 1959, Fr. Rock attended St. John's Preparatory School in Brooklyn, and it was there that he met the Vincentian Priests. The Vincentians, who served as administrators and faculty at St. John's Prep, had a major impact on Fr. Rock's life, which led to him entering the seminary to discern his priestly vocation. Fr. Rock was honored for his forty-six years of parish ministry, community service, and campus ministry.



Cartoon by Fr. Al Pehrsson, CM, a resident of St. Catherine's Infirmary, Philadelphia

NEW ARCHBISHOP WELCOMED

The installation of Archbishop Nelson J. Perez in Philadelphia was a joyous occasion for everyone, including the Vincentians. Having collaborated with the Hispanic Evangelization Team in Philadelphia, and later as an auxiliary bishop in Rockville Centre with the confreres in Southampton, the Archbishop has been a friend of the Vincentians for many years. Several Vincentian priests and brothers attended the ceremony at Sts. Peter and Paul Cathedral to greet the Archbishop and welcome him home.

THREE NIGHTS, THREE APPARITIONS

For three consecutive nights in early March, Fr. Michael Shea, CM, provided parishioners at St. Eleanor's Parish in Collegeville, Pennsylvania, with a Lenten reflection on the Marian apparitions to St. Catherine Labouré. Fr. Shea's presentation was part of the parish's Lenten Triduum honoring the Miraculous Medal, titled, "A Lenten Journey with Our Lady."

Focusing in chronological order on one apparition during each of the three nights, Fr. Shea, who serves as Associate Director of The Miraculous Medal Shrine, illuminated the three apparitions received by St. Catherine, and how Mary's words are relevant today. Almost 200 people attended the first night alone, with one parishioner commenting, "What a gift to have Fr. Shea here."

IN MEMORIAM

Fr. Joseph A. Elzi, CM:
Oct. 27, 2019

Fr. William J. Sheldon, CM:
Nov. 7, 2019

Fr. Harold G. Skidmore, CM:
Nov. 28, 2019