



# Central Association of the Miraculous Medal

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
PHOTOS**

## **The First-Ever Vocation Immersion Service Program (VISP) Brings Young Men to Discern Their Vocation with the Congregation of the Mission**

*Three young men visit the Vincentian priests, brothers and seminarians in Germantown, Philadelphia*



*Photo Above: Participants in the first-ever Vocation Immersion Service Program (VISP) gather for an evening barbecue.*

*[You can download this image "VISP Group Shot.jpg" at: <https://flic.kr/p/25orreu>]*

**Germantown, Philadelphia, PA – June 14, 2018** – The first-ever service immersion program for college-age men discerning a vocation to the Congregation of

the Mission – also known as the Vincentians – took place May 14-18, 2018, in the Germantown section of Philadelphia. Sponsored by the Vocation Office of the Eastern Province, this ***Vocation Immersion Service Program (VISP)*** gave the three participants a full exposure to “all things Vincentian.” It included meeting Vincentian priests, brothers, and seminarians, learning about their ministries, and working with laity of the Vincentian Family, who serve the poor in non-profit programs and Church organizations.

Three students from Niagara University traveled with Fr. Bill Allegretto, CM, a Vincentian priest at Niagara University, where the Vincentians have a cluster of local communities and ministries. The students visited St. Vincent’s Seminary, meeting Vincentian priests and brothers in active ministry, those who are retired, and those in assisted living housing at St. Catherine’s Infirmary. They visited the Miraculous Medal Shrine adjacent to St. Vincent’s Seminary, attended the weekly Miraculous Medal Novena, and learned of the Miraculous Medal Shrine’s history and the spirituality it fosters.

The young men visited St. Vincent’s parish, the first church in Germantown founded by the Vincentians in 1851. Today, this parish has a thriving liturgical life and social service outreach programs. The visitors served meals at “Face to Face,” a multi-service agency geared to helping the homeless in the parish. They also met with the pastor, Fr. Sy Peterka, CM, and with Br. Al Smith, CM, founder of “Inn Dwelling,” an after-school academic enrichment program preparing inner-city high school students for college.

The VISP participants met Vincentian seminarians in the novitiate and theological studies, and spoke with them at length during meals and at an informal backyard barbecue. They experienced first-hand the Vincentian charism of working with the poor as they went with the seminarians to their apostolates: a homeless shelter, food pantry, thrift store, and bringing sandwiches to the hungry. The young men watched in amazement as the 80 sandwiches they made went in 20 minutes!

Most of all, the gentlemen were able to see the variety and depth of the Vincentian charism, ranging from elderly men in the infirmary to seminarians in their mid-20s. All freely shared their journey of faith and commitment to the Vincentian way of life. The three young men from Niagara University still have a long way to go in their process of discerning and faith. But all agreed on one matter: the Vocation Immersion Service Program (VISP) was an enjoyable, enlightening, and energizing experience.



Photo Above: The VISP participants assist the seminarians in preparing sandwiches for delivery to homeless men and women in Center City.

[You can download this image "VISP Sandwiches.jpg" at: <https://flic.kr/p/25orrcA> ]

For more information about upcoming events at the Central Association of the Miraculous Medal and the Miraculous Medal Shrine, please visit [www.MiraculousMedal.org](http://www.MiraculousMedal.org).

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The Miraculous Medal Shrine, home of the Miraculous Medal Monday Novena, welcomes all visitors to our beautiful Shrine, located in the heart of Philadelphia. The Shrine of Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal provides a sanctuary for prayer, meditation, and pilgrimage to God and to The Blessed Virgin Mary. Visitors are also encouraged to enjoy our Museum's historical collection of Marian and religious artwork. The Shrine and Museum are run under the auspices of the Vincentian Community and The Central Association of the Miraculous Medal.

For over 100 years, The Central Association of the Miraculous Medal (CAMM) has dedicated itself to spreading devotion to Mary Immaculate and her Miraculous Medal. CAMM also supports the formation and education of seminarians, provides care to the aged and infirm Priests and Brothers of the Vincentians' Eastern Province, and supports programs that assist the poor. For more information about upcoming events at The Central Association of the Miraculous Medal and the Miraculous Medal Shrine, please visit [www.MiraculousMedal.org](http://www.MiraculousMedal.org).

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