

Daughters of Charity

of St Vincent de Paul

77, Kilbarron Park, Kilmore West, Dublin 5

Tel: +353 1 8470648

Mobile: +353 87 4170628



PO Box 10216
Denver, CO 80250-2168
Phone: +1 303-383-1610
Fax: +1 303-383-1613

Gracepark Road
Drumcondra
Dublin 9
Phone: +353 1 8373745

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Fr Gregory Gay CM
Superior General
Congregazione Della Missione
Via del Capasso 30
00164 Roma
Italy

Dear Fr Gregory

We wish to inform you of our intention to provide a Diploma Programme to train 10/12 Spiritual Directors annually grounded in our Vincentian tradition at All Hallows College, Dublin commencing in June 2013. This Programme is adapted from that developed and offered by the Vincentian Centre for Spirituality at Work Denver, Colorado and twice reviewed by the Vincentian Studies Institute of the United States for educational integrity, fidelity to the tradition, multicultural character and Vincentian emphasis.

This model of programme delivery consists of two intensives together with a supervised internship and study programme. The first intensive is of two weeks duration followed 13/15 months later by one of one week duration. Structured in this way the programme will be attractive, accessible and suitable for international as well as some local participants and would be of particular interest to those within the Vincentian Family in Europe, Asia and Africa as the intensives are the only times the participants need to be in Ireland. The rest of the programme is carried out in the participant's normal place of residency and ministry and shaped by that. Each intensive will include ample time for study, prayer, reflection and learning in a small community environment. For the first offering of the Programme the dates of the Intensives are:

First Intensive: 28 June-13 July 2013

Second Intensive: 6-11 September 2014

The working language for the Programme is English.

The Application and Tuition Cost is €1,600 for the entire programme. In addition Accommodation costs are €1,200 for the First Intensive and €480 for the Second Intensive.

During the course of the programme participants are expected to:

- a. Read six books chosen from the reading list and submit a reflection paper for each book. Reading is processed in the context of small study groups of peers.
- b. Participate in monthly web-in-hours
- c. Are actively involved in a ministry of spiritual direction/retreat direction
- d. Receive monthly supervision in their local setting.
- e. Are actively involved in service with and presence to people who are poor/marginalised
- f. Receive spiritual direction themselves

Acceptance to the programme implies a commitment from the participant to both intensives as well as the supervised internship and study programme as outlined.

The Advisors/Facilitators for the Programme for the first two offerings will be Dr Vie Thorgren (Denver) and Sr Éibhlís NicUaithuas DC (Dublin) who also plan to identify and up-skill, from the pool of graduates, those who would be suitable and willing to assist in facilitating the programme into the future.

The goals of the Programme are six-fold:

1. To establish a theological base for the ministry of spiritual direction that is solidly grounded in the 2,000 year history of this ministry and responsive to the needs of our contemporary day and time.
2. To foster continued spiritual growth of participants to more freely 'put on the Spirit of Christ'. While tools and techniques are helpful and will be incorporated throughout the process of the whole programme, the 'recognised authority' of the spiritual director emerges from knowledge of the ways of the Spirit. While reverencing other world religions, it is intentionally Christian in its core theology, language and expression.
3. To provide a process, animated by the pastoral spirit of Vincent de Paul and Louise de Marillac, through which participants may discover a deeper relationship with persons who are poor/marginalised. We are intentional in fostering the gifts of 'spiritual presence' in those who serve marginalised people in physical and material ways. We pray, plan, teach, facilitate and supervise with an understanding of partnership with all who are poor and marginalised. It is our hope that some of our graduates will commit themselves to being a 'spiritual presence' to those who are neglected and abandoned and that all of our graduates will minister with an awareness of their call to be in relationship with those who are marginalised.
4. To enable the participant to discern his/her own call to this ministry. While some individuals have been gifted by the Spirit with the Charism for spiritual direction and are called to the specific exercise of this ministry, others may be called to integrate a spiritual presence into some other work/service in which they may be involved. We seek to be of service to both.
5. To meet the need of the spiritual director to grow in the art of spiritual direction. This is facilitated through an on-going process of practice, supervision and theological reflection.
6. To foster an environment of co-learning and co-discerning. We are here to grow together, to learn from each other and to foster the growth of each individual. Participants are asked to commit themselves to a shared journey and a shared process.

The content of the programme is presented through an adult learning model that is respectful of the experience of all of the participants.

We wish to request your support for this Programme in a number of ways. In the first instance we seek your approval to contact the Visitors directly with information about the programme. We invite you to advertise it in ways you deem appropriate so that it reaches as many possibly interested members of the wider Vincentian Family as possible.

Thanking you in anticipation and wishing you every blessing of this Easter season.

Yours affectionately



Dr Vie Thorgren
Centre for Spirituality at Work, Denver



Sr Éibhlís NicUaithuas DC
Daughters of Charity, Ireland



Dr Patrick McDevitt CM
President, All Hallows College

cc Sr Evelyne Franc DC
Mme Laurence de La Brosse AIC
Dr. Michael Thio SSVP
Ms Yasmine Cajuste JMV
Sr Vivienne Keely CHF
Sr Catherine Prendergast DC
Fr Éamonn Devlin CM
Sr Rosaleen Cunniffe CHF