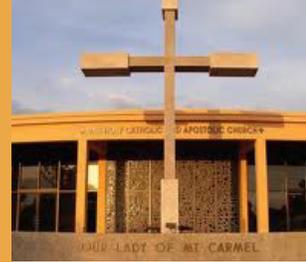




THE Vincentian

Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Conference March 2017



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Interview with Fr. Jerome Cayetano



Q: Fr. Jerome, at OLMC we recently welcomed you as “Parochial Vicar” in our parish. How did you find your vocation as a priest?

A: I would like to thank Fr. John Bonavita and all the parishioners for warmly welcoming me at Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Parish. I come from a very religious family where I was the second eldest of 10 children. My mother and especially my father were practicing Catholics and had a strong influence on my spiritual formation. I have a brother (Fr. Alvin Cayetano) who is also a priest and is serving as parochial vicar of St. Joseph Catholic Church in Myers, AZ.

Q: When did you enter the priesthood?

A: I entered the diocesan seminary (Holy Rosary Minor Seminary) in 1973 after I had finished my elementary school years. After high school, I was recruited to join the Society of the Divine Word. I entered Christ the King Seminary in Quezon City, Philippines, in 1977. After two years in college, I took my novitiate at Divine Word Seminary, Tagaytay City, Philippines, and continued my philosophy and theology studies at the same seminary. I was ordained on October 24, 1987, and I will celebrate the 30th anniversary of my perpetual vows as a member of the Society of the Divine Word (*Societas Verbi Divini, SVD*) in April 2017.

Q: What have been your assignments since your ordination?

A: After ordination I had to stay for a few months in the seminary to finish my Master's in Theology. After I had defended my thesis, I reported to the SVD Philippine Southern Province, which is based in Cebu. My provincial Superior then (Fr. Ernesto Lagura, SVD) assigned me to Divine Word College of Tagbilaran, Bohol (Philippines). From 1988 to 1995, I was a chaplain of the High School department and later on the chaplain of the college department. From 1996 to 2002, I worked as a missionary in Kenya. For three years, I served as chaplain at Moi University in Eldoret, Kenya, and then for four years as a parish priest of Divine Word Parish-Kayole in Nairobi, Kenya. In 2003, I returned to the Philippines, where I served as chaplain and chair of the religious education department at the University of San Carlos in Cebu City, a private Catholic institution, where I taught courses in Old Testament, New Testament, Morality, and Sacraments.

Q: What brought you to the United States of America?

A: I have often visited the United States as a tourist, since most of my family lives here. My father passed away in 2009, but my mother still resides in Florida along with 6 of my siblings.

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OLMC School Food Drive Benefiting St. Vincent de Paul

This year, during Catholic School Week, OLMC students, teachers, and staff held a food drive benefiting our St. Vincent de Paul conference. Under the direction of **Principal Bruce Hermie**, students collected non-persishable food items such as soup, mashed potatoes, canned meat, and fruit. Each class had been assigned to bring a specific item to school so that the boxes would have an assortment of nutritious foods.

On Friday, February 3, under the supervision of **Mrs. Regan Iker-Lopez**, all donated foods had been neatly displayed on tables in McCready Hall. In the middle of the hall, there were tables with 50 boxes that the students had creatively decorated with colorful drawings and inscriptions of virtues such as kindness, patience, and self-control. Then, students from each grade picked up one of the items donated by their class and placed it in the food boxes. See slide show <http://olmcstvincentdepaul.weebly.com/photos.html>.

Thank you, OLMC School, for allowing the children to share their blessings with families in our community who will benefit from their generosity.



Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy (by Maxine Malini)

It was in the middle of August, the day of the Feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary. My home visit partner, Connie Jo, and I met with a woman who had called SVdP that day for rental assistance for herself and her 8-year-old daughter.

A young woman in her 30s welcomed us. She helped us bring in our food boxes filled with canned goods, dried beans, rice, frozen meat and bread, and some granola bars and candy, which we thought her daughter would like. She had a sofa in her living room and a flat screen TV; there was no other furniture. A birthday cake that she had bought in a store was sitting in its box on her kitchen counter. "Today is my daughter's birthday," she said. "I bought her a cake, but I have no money for a gift." She started crying.

As we sat down and asked her about her need for rental assistance, we learned that she was working as a telephone agent for a large health care insurance company. The last two months had been very slow and her hours were cut. She had struggled in July to pay her rent and was again behind this month. She had received a letter stating that she would be getting an eviction notice soon. Five days later, she would be served papers for a court appearance. With late fees of \$ 5.00 per day quickly accumulating, she already owed \$1,000, and she would have to pay high court fees in addition to that amount if she were taken to court. She knew that her next pay check would not cover the entire amount she owed, and her manager did not accept partial payments.

The corporal and spiritual works of mercy were leading this woman and her daughter to Jesus Christ Himself.

When asked if she had family or friends to help, she said she was alone. She stated she was adopted, both her adopting parents were drug addicts, and her step father was in prison for sexual abuse. She had moved out of their house when she was 16 to live with friends. She now had a good job and had been able to afford her own apartment. Her hours at work would pick up in September with open enrollment; it was just these last two months that she was in a crisis.

We promised her financial help and told her we would refer her to the SVdP Family Assistance Program for additional help. Then we asked if we could pray with her, and she agreed. We gave thanks to the Lord for His grace and entrusted her and her daughter to the Lord and His Blessed Mother. The woman cried as we prayed, grateful for help in her dire situation.

At this point she said she had been away from the church for a long time and had the desire to start going to church again. We asked her permission to refer her and her daughter to the RCIA program at Our Lady of Mt. Carmel. She stated that she would be very much interested in taking religious education classes and becoming a full member of the church. It was such a blessing for us to see that the corporal and spiritual works of mercy were leading this woman and her daughter to Jesus Christ Himself.

As we left, my partner and I gave her some personal money for a birthday gift for her daughter. As it turned out, with the rental assistance from our conference and the funds from Family Assistance, her entire rent was paid, and she and her daughter were saved from eviction.

One younger sister resides in Michigan, and two of my siblings also live in Arizona. I opted to come to Arizona upon the invitation of my cousin, Mrs. Rose C. Cavagnaro.

Q: Will you be able to stay in our parish for an extended time?

I am currently on a one-year leave from my province (SVd PHS). My Superior had approved of it. If I am still needed here at OLMC, I could apply for an extension from my General Superior in Rome some time in August of this year. Pray hard that it will be approved.

Q: How do you keep balance in your life?

I devote a good amount of my time to prayer. To remain physically healthy, I also try to exercise. I enjoy everything from walking and running to playing badminton and working out in Zumba classes.

Q: The St. Vincent de Paul Conference at Our Lady of Mt. Carmel appreciates your willingness to serve as its Spiritual Advisor. Do you have some “words of wisdom” for our members and the parish as a whole?

A: God is so gracious to us. We have to be generous in our small capacity and share our blessings with others, especially the poor in our society. We cannot outdo God’s generosity. I agree with St. Mother Teresa of Calcutta when she said, “Whenever I adore Christ in the Eucharist, I am reminded of the poor. And whenever I serve the poor, I see Jesus in them.” What matters in the end is “LOVE,” especially love for the “least brethren” in our society with whom Jesus completely identifies.

Kudos to all the members of the St. Vincent de Paul Society of OLMC parish. You all have a big heart for the poor. Keep on doing good and never give up ... for the glory of God!

Many of our donors prefer to use their credit cards to make a donation to St. Vincent de Paul. In addition to being able to make an online donation through the OLMC website at <http://olmctempe.com>, they can now use the kiosk at the south-east entrance of the church.

Making a donation to St. Vincent de Paul using the kiosk is as easy as 1,2,3,4,5:

Tapping the screen will take you to

Step #1: Select the recipient of your donation:

General Donation or **St. Vincent de Paul**

Step #2: Would you like to make this donation recurring? Make your selection.

Yes, please!

No, thanks.

Step #3: Enter amount of donation.

Step #4: Swipe your card.



Step #5: Would you like the system to send a receipt to your email? Make your selection.

Send a receipt copy to your email

No, thanks. I'd just like to view my receipt.

Tapping the box to the left of the button “Email Receipt” will open a keyboard that allows you to enter your email address.

You may choose to just view your receipt, but we recommend that you have your receipt emailed to yourself for tax purposes.

Thank you for using this easy way of supporting our ministry.