

Congregation of the Mission (The Vincentians)

The Congregation of the Mission (the Vincentians) arrived in the territory of the Louisiana Purchase in the fall of 1818. A group of three priests and several seminarians, came to the territory to provide priestly formation for future generations of seminarians. Vincentian Frs. DeAndreis, Rosati, and Aquaroni, working in concert with Bishop DuBourg, laid the foundations for what was to become the Diocese of St. Louis. Felix DeAndreis was named the vicar general of the Louisiana Diocese, and Joseph Rosati was to be the superior of the Mission, as he began the work of building what was to become St. Mary of the Barrens Seminary in Perryville, MO. Fr. DeAndreis died two years later in 1820, but through the work of the young community the mission thrived. Fr. Rosati was named the first bishop of St. Louis, and as he tended the diocese, he directed the work of the Vincentians.

From this small town south of St. Louis, there was a missionary explosion that spanned both eastward and westward founding diocesan seminaries, universities, and many mission stations and parishes. In the Twentieth Century, the missions expanded throughout the world. China, Africa, Central and Latin America. Today, we continue to be involved in parochial ministry, outreach to the poor, formation of the clergy and laity for ministry, and a continuing presence in mission territories. The Vincentians of the Western Province sponsor DePaul University, staff 12 parishes with outreach to the poor, underserved and marginalized, preach parish missions throughout the United States, and have a mission outreach that expands from Peru and Alaska to Kenya and Taiwan. Two hundred years after our arrival in the United States we are still in the St. Louis Archdiocese following Christ, the Evangelizer of the Poor.