

Regina Coeli REPORT

REGINA COELI HOUSE, 2918 Tracy Ave., Kansas City, MO 64109

Tel: (816) 753-0073 FAX (816) 753-3560

ST. VINCENT'S SILVER JUBILEE WITH THE SSPX

On September 15th, St. Vincent de Paul Church in KANSAS CITY, MO celebrated 25 years under the care of the SSPX with an outdoor banquet despite the overcast and misty weather. The rich history of St. Vincent's goes back much farther than 25 years though.

St. Vincent's began of course with its patron, who died in Paris on September 27, 1660, and whose corporal and spiritual works of mercy are well known, endearing him the title, "Father of the Poor". Aiding his founding of the Congregation of Priests of the Mission¹, St. Vincent made great efforts for the foundation of seminaries and the spiritual welfare of the clergy to foster much-needed vocations. He also founded the Daughters of Charity who performed all manner of work amongst the poor.

In June 1816 we come to America where a group of priests, brothers and seminarians from the Vincentian's Roman Province arrive in Baltimore. Asked by New Orleans' Bishop Louis DeBourg to start a seminary in the Upper Louisiana territory, they travel to Perryville, MO in 1818. There, St. Mary's of the Barrens Seminary was founded, the first west of the Mississippi and predating the founding of Missouri by 2 years. Henceforth, the Vincentians help staff most of the country's diocesan seminaries.

In 1887, just 7 years after the Kansas City, MO diocese was founded, Bishop John Hogan asked the Vincentians to start a parish in the burgeoning metropolis. They arrived in the person of Fr. P. O'Regan on September 4, 1887, and 2 different rooms were rented for Mass



The church's unique façade, complete with blind niches (a common feature on English churches) that flank the choir window. Inside the copper-domed tower is the cathedral's former bell, large and sonorous, that Fr. Bernard Donnelly (1807-80; Kansas City's "pioneer priest") had cast for his first church. Put in the cathedral, then taken down in 1895, Bishop Lillis gave it to the new St. Vincent's.

until the completion of the frame church at 1715 Oak Street on Christmas Eve 1888.

In 1890, the parish was moved south and the present location at the corner of 31st and The Paseo was chosen. This area, later known as Midtown,



St. Vincent's Academy, an imposing Georgian-style building faced with Carthage stone.



The Vincentian rectory, that now serves as the parish office, bookstore, classrooms, workshop and living quarters for lay workers, as the priests reside at the Regina Coeli House.

was still rural with dirt roads in 1890, however by 1892, civic leaders had hired George Kessler² to transform it into a European mode of parks and boulevards in order to check the prevailing American urban sprawl.

In 1895, across Flora Avenue from the present church, a brick church was built and used until 1924 when it became the parish hall. A brief, but spectacular fire destroyed the hall on March 11, 1942 and due to the war a new one was never built; the lot serves today as parking.

On June 17, 1906, Bishop Thomas Lillis blessed the academy's cornerstone. It was one of the first fireproof schools and concrete structures built in Kansas City. Under the care of the BVM Sisters³ the school was renowned for its thorough high school's liberal arts program, that in 1914 was accredited by the University of Missouri. In 1928, the diocesan's minor seminary would reside here for one month, and when St. John's Minor Seminary opened in 1931, the Vincentians, true to their role in America, staffed it.

In 1913, a brick house on Flora Avenue was bought for the new rectory. It underwent a major remodeling from 1947 to 1948 that included a rearward expansion, a chapel installed, and Tudor Gothic limestone details added to the façade.

By May 1921, plans for a new church were underway, having been conceived by the pastor, Fr. McCabe and his parish advisory committee, while architect and parishioner, Maurice Carroll, solicited Albert C. Martin's⁴ skills in designing St. Vincent's. When Fr. McCabe became the

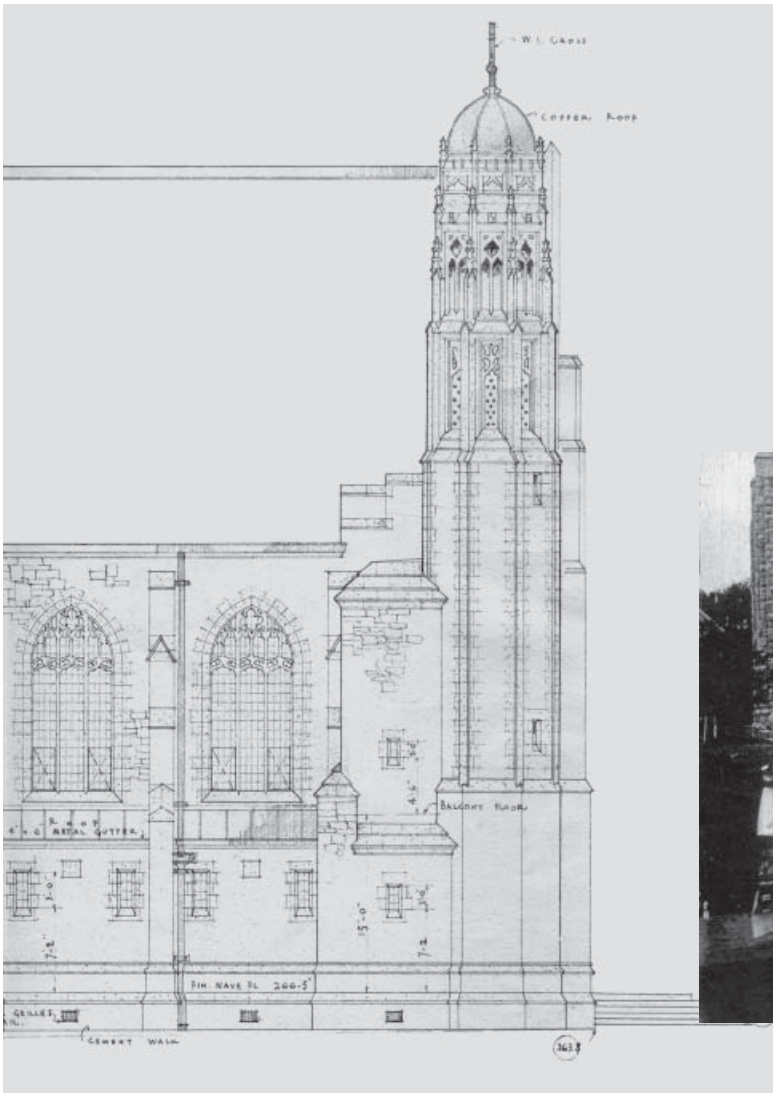


On The Paseo side, a solid block of Indian Bedford weighing 12 tons and standing over 9 feet tall was carved *in situ* by famous artist, Joseph Conradi, into the corpus of Christ Crucified. Another first in Kansas City, and even today, one of the largest in the United States.

provincial, Martin's brother, Fr. John Martin, succeeded as pastor.

A description Carroll made during the design stage gives indication of the grand scope of the project. It would be a "*pleasing departure in church design*"⁵ and constructed "*after the English Gothic school of the 16th century, which adapts itself splendidly to use of the local limestone*", while the *Saint Vincent's Golden Jubilee* booklet expounds further, "[T]he aim of the architects in designing the new St. Vincent's Church, was to produce a true Gothic church, not a Gothic cathedral with a wealth of ornament, such as only a large diocese should attempt, but a Gothic parish church, with the classic lines and decorative designs of Gothic" and in doing they sought to ensure that "[T]here is nothing superficial about the structure; every beautiful line in the building has its place from a structural viewpoint... There are no massive girders or heavy arches resting in the air on flimsy columns..."

On October 8, 1922, Bishop Lillis laid the cornerstone of the church that became a work of liturgical-architectural genius. The interior was carefully arranged so worshipers' focus would be on the high altar, hence minimal ornamentation was in the nave, while a balanced array of Tudor Gothic details comprised the high altar's, fumed-oak reredos. Also incorporated were recessed stations, a lack of niches



This architectural drawing of St. Vincent's strikingly shows the fine perpendicular-gothic traits of the church. Indiana Bedford was used for details and local limestone for the walls. However, the Bedford's whiteness, more visible in early photos, has darkened over time and so many details are now rather obscured.



Fr. Oscar Huber, who administered the Last Rites to President Kennedy.



Bishop Lillis poses in front of St. Vincent's with various ministers after blessing the church in 1924.

to avoid superfluous statues and elegant, but simple stained glass windows. Other features included distinct Lady and St. Joseph chapels (as opposed to side altars), 2 spacious sacristies, a baptistery, shrine area, and a basement chapel that seats 200 persons complete with sacristy and confessional.

For the 1920's, its construction was also *avant-garde*. The limestone-clad structure was the first steel-reinforced, concrete church in Kansas City and also to use a concrete boom pump and full-height casement molds for forming the massive arches. Many modern conveniences, such as a forced air system for heating and natural cooling, central vacuuming, and confessionals with courtesy lights, radiant floor heaters and cooling vents for the confessors were also included.

The bulk of construction was completed by May 29, 1924 when Bishop Lillis blessed the structure with a Pontifical Solemn High Mass, attended by many diocesan and Vincentian clergy, faithful and even several papal knights, of whom 2 were parishioners. The cost was \$230,000⁶, and in fact, the church continued to have work performed for nearly 10 years, though even to now, details contemplated by the architects were never completed.

In late 1948, the parish was experiencing a financial crunch and in 1950, a worried pastor, Fr. Oscar Huber, was jotting down his concerns for the economic future of St. Vincent's.

The complex had been built big as substantial parish growth had been expected, but due to the Depression, this never occurred. Shifting demographics in the 1950's, caused by suburbanization, only worsened matters. A decrease of a Catholic populace that could support a parish like St. Vincent's resulted, and this factor helped lead to the closure of parishes in American cities from the 1960's onwards. In 1962, St. Vincent's began borrowing money from the diocese in order to meet ordinary expenses, eventually leading to a projected yearly debt of \$50,000.

On November 22, 1963, President Kennedy was assassinated. Stationed in Dallas at Holy Trinity Church just near Parkland Hospital was St. Vincent's former pastor, Fr. Huber, who was called upon to administer the Last Rites. He afterwards made the announcement that the president was dead.

In June 1975, the Vincentians deeded St. Vincent's to the diocese, which merged it in July with 2 other nearby parishes after many months of discussion, and the parish debt of \$79,766 was transferred to the new merger church of Risen Christ (in 1995 it too was merged and closed). The diocese divided up the complex and twice attempted to sell the church to Protestant groups, but failed. The academy was sold to the Crusaders Church Cooperation headed by "Bishop" Penn in March 1979 and the rectory in

Continued on p.4



Fr. Bolduc oversees a May Crowning in 1979 at St. Michael's Chapel, then located in the floral shop's basement



Archbishop Lefebvre is shown St. Vincent's for the first time by one of the gentleman who helped to obtain the church.



Cloister-style arcades and a nave directing focus to the high altar endow St. Vincent's with the contemplative qualities of a monastery chapel, while retaining enough decoration for a parish church. The church is 193 feet long and its interior apex, supported by gothic rafters of California redwood, is 69 feet high.

April to Dismas House.

In 1968, attempting to arm their children against the errors of Vatican II, some faithful organized Baltimore Catechism classes at St. Thomas More Church. Bishop Charles Helmsing tried to end these classes, but the catechists were diocesan certified, so he could not justify their closure. In 1969, a diocesan mandate ordered the replacement of the Roman Mass with the *Novus Ordo Missae*, yet some parishes continued to have the Mass of All Time until 1971. The faithful then had Mass said in their homes, or would travel to the VA Hospital in Leavenworth, KS, where Fr. Cornelius Gallagher, a military chaplain, said Mass until 1976.

In the summer of 1975, U.S. SSPX District Superior, Fr. Hector Bolduc, was celebrating Mass regularly in Springfield, MO, and so, some faithful from Kansas City went there and asked him to come and say Mass for them, which he did, dedicating the group to St. Michael the Archangel.

In 1976, the faithful of St. Michael's obtained from St. Joseph's Hospital (then slated for demolition and once down the street from St. Vincent's) its 3 marble altars, stations and statues, and sent them to Queen of Angels Church in Dickinson, TX, where they are to this day.

St. Michael's was also instrumental in obtaining a complex familiar in SSPX circles. In 1978, a couple coming to St. Michael's from Topeka, KS informed Fr. Bolduc about a vacant Jesuit property eastward of them. Driven by a St. Michael's

parishioner, an interested Fr. Bolduc journeyed to the little known town of St. Mary's, KS to inspect the closed seminary. The complex was purchased in June 1978, and for months thereafter, the faithful from St. Michael's frequently made the one-way, 2-hour drive to clean and repair the neglected buildings. They also assisted by purchasing furniture for the sisters' convent and an assortment of items for the chapel. Interestingly, when St. Vincent's was purchased, Archbishop Lefebvre originally sought to incorporate St. Vincent's and St. Mary's as a joint parish, but the crossing of state lines made this impossible.

Meanwhile, St. Michael's was attempting to secure its own church. Since 1975, the group had been in houses, garages, 2 former Protestant churches, and were now in the basement of Betty's Floral Shop in Grandview, MO. Bishop John Sullivan had been approached about purchasing one of the recently closed churches, but vowed never to sell one to the SSPX. Finally, a third party sale was made through Bishop Penn, who had an option to buy the church, and on Ascension Thursday, May 15, 1980, St. Vincent's was purchased by the SSPX for a mere \$60,000⁷.

A few days later on May 23rd, Archbishop Lefebvre echoed the words "*C'est magnifique! It is a Cathedral!*" within the spacious nave of St. Vincent's, now the largest church the SSPX owned anywhere.

After nearly 2 months of extensive cleaning, Fr. Bolduc celebrated the first Mass by an SSPX priest in St. Vincent's



The 1981 ordinations held in St. Vincent's.



Various carved symbols and the original wooden statues of St. Vincent (center), and the patrons of the Roman Church, Sts. Peter and Paul (respectively left and right, and befitting for a church served by the SSPX) adorn the ornate reredos. The tea rose marble altar and suspended wooden tester were installed in 1944, as where similar altars with distinctive mosaics in the Lady and St. Joseph chapels. In 2001, Fr. Kenneth Dean, Br. Marcel and parishioners highlighted various reredos details per the regal English style, using shades of red, blue, and gold and silver leafing.

on July 19th, feast day of the church's patron.

On May 9, 1981, Archbishop Lefebvre solemnly blessed St. Vincent's, rededicating it to Catholic worship. Then in keeping with his designation of St. Vincent's as the SSPX's "Episcopal Church"⁸, the Archbishop conferred Holy Orders (the subdiaconate and various minor), tonsure and then distributed a host of First Communions. A standing-room-only crowd of 1500 attended, while 4 TV stations (one from as far away as Chicago) were on hand to cover the momentous event.

In 1989, St. Vincent's Academy was acquired and after two years of hard work, could be opened for the academic year of 1991-1992. Previously, from 1980 to 1991, the school had functioned in various locations as Our Lady of the Rosary.

In July 1991, the generosity of the St. Vincent's faithful was a factor in the transference of the District Office from St. Louis to Kansas City, and in 2002 of the teaching Franciscan Sisters of Christ the King from Portland, OR.

In October 1996, the brick rectory was finally re-obtained, while in November of this year, a large, 2-story, L-shaped, brick building across 31st Street was purchased. Erected in 1917 as an automobile dealership, it is massively overbuilt and its spacious interior will be used for a parish hall and boys' high school.

¹ Abbreviated "C.M.". The congregation's initial object was to minister to the countryside's poor, as these had been neglected by a lack of priests caused by the state of affairs in France caused by the continual religious wars.

² Kessler (1862-1923) was a German immigrant who was considered "the leading landscape architect and city planner of the early twentieth century".

³ Their full title was the Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary. They were founded in Dublin, Ireland in 1831, and served many Catholic schools in this country.

⁴ Carroll outlined the reasons for choosing Martin in a May 19, 1921 letter: "We readily agreed on you because you are a Catholic architect, you have made a brilliant success of your profession, and we know that you would put your best efforts behind it. Being a brother of Father Martin, and this being his church, we feel that you have a close interest in the project." Martin was a renowned architect residing in Los Angeles, and from 1922-23, he was building another St. Vincent's Church there, but in the Spanish Colonial style.

⁵ This comment referred to the mediocre trend of building superficial, "cookie-cutter" churches, something liturgists and church architects alike were decrying in that era.

⁶ Equivalent to \$2.5 million in today's currency, though it would cost nearly \$30 million to build a structure such as St. Vincent's today.

⁷ To understand more of the diocesan background surrounding the purchase of St. Vincent's, cf. Michael Davies' book *The Barbarians Have Taken Over*.

⁸ Meaning its ability to host large episcopal ceremonies such as ordinations, as Ridgefield's seminary chapel was too small, nor was it centrally located in the country. Yet, after the 1981 ordinations, this arrangement was deemed logistically impractical and so not repeated.

SOURCES:

Saint Vincent's Golden Jubilee booklet, c. 1939 and available as a reprint from St. Vincent's bookstore

Kansas City-St. Joseph Diocesan Chancery Archives

De-Andreis-Rosati Memorial Archives (Midwest Province of the Congregation of the Mission), DePaul University, Chicago, IL

Kansas City Star, Kansas City, MO

The Angelus magazine

Various interviews

REGIONAL REPORT



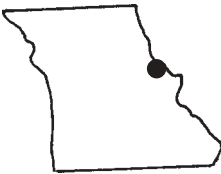
NEW YORK

After 5 years of serving the SSPX's missions in the upper New York state area, Fr. Philippe Pazat, former prior at the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God priory in Syracuse was called to St. Thomas Aquinas Seminary in Winona, MN in order to take charge of the Brothers' Novitiate moved recently to the seminary from El Paso, TX.

So after the Sunday Mass on August 14th at St. Athanasius Church in BINGHAMTON, NY, the faithful there gave a farewell reception of punch, cookies and cake in gratitude for their pastor's 5 years of fruitful labor in their parish.



The highlight of the reception was the performance of Polish folk dances by a family of children complete with ornate native costumes. In addition to folk dancing, the children also speak Polish, and sing songs and recite poems in that Slavic language.



MISSOURI

On the evening of October 5th, St. Mary's Assumption Church in ST. LOUIS, MO held a party in honor of the departure of Br. Gregory (SSPX). A fixture at the St. Louis priory for nearly 7 years, Brother was transferred to Queen of Angels Church in Dickinson, TX, where he was reunited with his former St. Louis prior, Fr. Stephen Stanich.

Held at the academy's auditorium, about 100 grateful parishioners attended the potluck banquet, during which, a skit by school children, presents and donations were given, concluded by a speech of gratitude by Br. Gregory.



A formal portrait of Br. Gregory (who made his first profession in 1996) with his beloved breviary.



Br. Gregory takes the opportunity to thank the parish for many years of graces and their continual prayers.



Famous for his healthy appetite, Br. Gregory can't wait to get a piece of the cake that bears his portrait, well wishes and Archbishop Lefebvre's coat of arms!



GEORGIA

On All Souls Day, October 31st, Fr. Christopher Danel, pastor at St. Michael's Church in **ROSWELL (ATLANTA), GA**, said a Low Mass at the gravesite of some parishioners in scenic Arlington Memorial Park. Conveniently located at the outdoor

Calvary scene in the Catholic section of the cemetery is a stone altar, and there Fr. Danel offered the Requiem Mass.

Such altars are quite a common thing in European cemeteries, being erected by the family either on a plot, or even within the confines of the family mausoleum (for the internment of bodies, not ashes). Unfortunately this is not a too frequent sight in American cemeteries; however, they typically have a chapel dedicated for an entire cemetery.

After the Mass, Fr. Danel went and sprinkled various graves throughout the cemetery, including those of the departed clergy of the Atlanta diocese.



Sprinkling Holy Water on various graves, Fr. Danel passes through the majestic cemetery, a reminder of the eternal rest that awaits those who die in the state of grace.



Fr. Danel offers the Precious Blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ for the remission of temporal punishment of the Poor Souls in Purgatory.

RETREAT SCHEDULE

ST. IGNATIUS RETREAT HOUSE

**209 Tackora Trail, Ridgefield, CT 06877
(203) 431-0201**

MEN: February 6-11, March 20-25 (Marian)
May 15-20, July 10-15, August 21-26
October 16-21, December 11-16

WOMEN: January 16-21, March 6-11 (Marian)
April 17-22, June 26-July 1, August 7-12 (Third
Order), September 18-23, November 6-11

ST. ALOYSIUS GONZAGA CAMP & RETREAT CENTER

**19101 Bear Creek Road, Los Gatos, CA 95033
(408) 354-7703**

MEN: January 26-29 (weekend), March 6-11
(Lenten), May 1-6, June 5-10, August 21-26,
October 2-7, November 9-12 (weekend)

WOMEN: February 6-11, March 27-April 1
(Lenten), May 15-20 (Marian), June 26- July 1,
September 11-16, October 23-28, November 16-
19 (weekend)

OUR LADY OF SORROWS RETREAT CENTER

**750 E. Baseline Road, Phoenix, AZ 85042
(602) 268-7673**

MEN: February 13-18, May 8-13 (Virtues),
October 9-14, December 4-9

WOMEN: January 16-21, March 13-18,
September 18-23 (Virtues), November 13-18

MIXED: April 17-21 (Teachers'), May 17-21
(Matrimony), December 26-31 (Marian)

Saint Pius X Pilgrimage Co.

(Fully escorted pilgrimages accompanied by an SSPX priest)

LENTEN PILGRIMAGE TO THE HOLY LAND

(MARCH 3 - 13, 2006)

Cana of Galilee • Nazareth • Mt. Tabor • Sea of Galilee • Capernaum • Mount of the Beatitudes • Caesarea Philippi • Mt. Carmel • Bethlehem • Ein Karem • Emmaus • Bethany • Jericho • Dead Sea • Qumram Caves • Jerusalem • Mt. Olives • Church of the Ascension • Road of Palm Sunday • Last Supper Chapel • Dormition Abbey • Golgotha • and more.

Space limited on this pilgrimage.

Price: \$2455.00

ITALY WITH THE SAINTS

(AUGUST 2 - 13, 2006)

Pompei • Padre Pio • Monte Angelo • Eucharistic Miracle of Lanciano • House of Loretto • Home of St. Francis of Assisi • St. Rita of Cascia • Rome including Papal Audience and Scavi Tour • Genazzo with the Miraculous Image of Our Lady • Eucharistic Miracle of Orvieto • St. Catherine of Sienna • Florence • St. Catherine of Bologna • St. Anthony of Padua • St. Mark in Venice • and more.

Price: \$2995.00

- Daily Mass ● 4-star or better accommodations
- experienced Catholic tour-guides

For itinerary brochure, reservations contact: Saint Pius X Pilgrimage Co., Robert & Christine di Cecco, 38 Ten Coat Lane, Shelton, CT 06484; telephone 866-369-8149; or e-mail: info@stpiousxpilgrimage.com

For more information on our pilgrimages, please visit our website: www.stpiousxpilgrimage.com

Orbis Vacations

(accompanied by a SSPX priest)

MARIAN PILGRIMAGE TO COLONIAL MEXICO

(JUNE 8 - 17, 2006)

- Visit and pray before the most miraculous images and statues of Our Lady in Mexico.
- Travel through the cities and towns that gave Mexico its Spanish Colonial Heritage.
- Discover the culture and history of a Catholic country that has suffered more than 150 years of religious persecution.

Fr. Lawrence Novak recently transferred to Mexico will be the group's chaplain. His expertise on the region will be an asset to the participants on this pilgrimage.

PILGRIMAGE TO THE CALIFORNIA MISSIONS

(JULY 21 - 29, 2006)

- Render homage to those heroic priests that evangelized the natives of California.
- Travel from San Diego to San Francisco following the way of the Catholic missions.
- Discover the history and the role of these missions in the future of California.

Fr. Paul Tague will be the group's chaplain. He has traveled throughout California for years and has a profound knowledge on the missions and their history.

For more information on these pilgrimages please contact:

ORBIS VACATIONS

1-800-290-3876

www.reginapilgrimages.com

info@reginapilgrimages.com

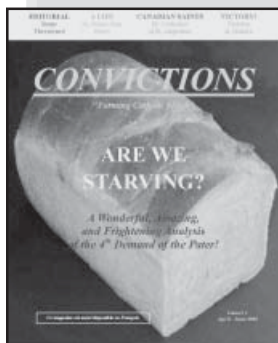
EUCHARISTIC CRUSADE

MONTHLY INTENTIONS: January-March

- January* For a restoration of the missionary spirit
- February* For numerous vocations
- March* For the sanctification of the family

U.S. DISTRICT TREASURE—September 2005

Daily Offering	8310
Masses	2599
Sacramental Communion	2334
Spiritual Communion	6473
Sacrifices	23,312
Decades of the Rosary	34,232
Visits to the Blessed Sacrament	2995
15 minutes of silent meditation	3679
Good Example	9452
Number returned	312



NEW FROM THE CANADIAN DISTRICT, CONVICTIONS MAGAZINE

Easy to read with many pictures, this new 32 page quarterly provides articles on the saints, the movement of Catholic Tradition, the Sacraments, Liturgy, Holy Scripture and cover stories that treat such issues in-depth

as the New Age Movement, Ecumenism, the New World Order, Martin Luther and more.

Yearly subscription cost for 4 issues is \$25.00. Subscriptions for *Convictions* may be sent to:

Convictions Magazine
480 McKenzie Street
Winnipeg, MB, R2W 5B9
CANADA