

How do I start a chapter of the International Order of St. Vincent?

First, discuss it with your parish Priest and if you are not a member submit your application to become one.. Remember, that as lay ministers we serve as our priest wishes and so his blessing for starting a chapter is necessary and very important.

You might research the records (we may be able to help) as well as talk to older members of your parish to see if there had been a chapter in your parish that you can reactivate.

A chapter consists of at least three lay members and an ordained chaplain so your next step is to find at least two other lay ministers in your parish who also would like to join our Order. These can be either Life, Full, or Junior Members and as we originally were an order for Acolytes, many clergy like to start as a way to improve the training of their Acolytes. We suggest recruiting adults who have been acolytes and now may be serving in another capacity so that they can mentor the Junior Members.

Each chapter must have a designated Chapter Warden approved by the Clergy who is our point of contact at your church. All correspondence, membership packets, and annual oblation statements will be sent to this person for distribution. If this person changes the name of the new Warden needs to be sent to the Order's headquarters.

Remember that any lay minister who has served at least six months is eligible to join. This includes Acolytes, Adult Chapter

Leader, Lector/Lay Reader, Chalice Bearer (L.E.M. 1), Lay Eucharistic Minister (L.E.M. 2), Usher, Verger, Chorister, Sacristan/Altar Guild, Greeter, Sub Deacon, and any other lay ministries at your church. Clergy may be Associate Members of the Order and do not usually receive a medallion

The organization of the chapter is left up to each individual chapter with the only requirement being an Annual Meeting during the octave of the Feast Day of St. Vincent (Jan. 22) and the submission of a short Annual Report of the activities of the chapter. Since two of the benefits of a chapter are fellowship and mentoring you may decide on regular meetings. Some chapters meet regularly for a service with fellowship afterwards.

The chapter name is also the choice of the chapter members. Many chapters choose the name of their church for their chapter name while others choose the name of a saint that is significant to them. Some chapters choose the name of someone associated with their parish, either clergy or lay.

There is an initial fee required to start or reactivate a chapter; however, as long as there are at least three active lay members in the chapter there is no additional fee required. A chapter that falls below three members becomes inactive unless there are extenuating circumstances and after three years it becomes dormant.

For junior members we have two options for membership. Either they can join individually and by paying the initial fee can have their own medallion or the chapter can purchase enough medallions to meet the needs of the parish and then junior members join by just paying the annual oblation. If this option is chosen we recommend that the chapter acquire a medallion and present it when the member turns 16 and becomes a Full Member.

Application for Chapter Charter

(three parish OSV members are required)

Name of Parish _____

Diocese of _____

Proposed name of Chapter: _____

Parish address _____

Phone _____

E-mail address _____

I, the undersigned, have read and understand the Purposes, Objects, and Rules of the Order of St. Vincent (**see back**). I pledge before God that I will do my utmost to support and encourage the faithful application of these principles by all of the members of the proposed Chapter, and I will assure that the same persons fully comprehend the obligations they undertake when becoming members of the Order and the Chapter. I further pledge that the conduct of the proposed Chapter will comply with the Constitution of the Order of St. Vincent, knowing that failure to submit annual Chapter and member dues and roster to the office of the Order will be cause for the placement of the Chapter on inactive status. As such, no member may wear the OSV medal, and the Chapter may not display its Charter. I also understand that if the Chapter should remain inactive for three consecutive years, a new application for Chapter Charter must be made with full fees paid to reactivate the Chapter.

Signed this ___ day of _____, AD 20__.

Name of Chapter Warden _____

Signature _____

X _____

the

Rev'd _____

(Rector, Vicar, or Priest in Charge)

The Purpose of the Order of St. Vincent

To emphasize a world-wide fellowship of lay ministers within the Catholic Communion of Christ's One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church

To encourage every lay minister at our Lord's altar to have a progressive rule of life based on the Sacraments

To instill within each lay minister an interest in proper liturgics within their branch of the Church

To encourage knowledge, understanding and preservation of traditional rituals

To pray that all members will consider their service as Lay Minister to be a vocation

The Objects of The Order

To promote holy living among its members

To promote loyalty and full cooperation to clergy and lay leaders

To encourage regular attendance at the Holy Eucharist, and more careful preparation for its reception

To promote unity in Christ and friendship and brotherhood among lay ministers

To teach the complete Sacramental Faith as taught in the One, Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church, and to promote the practice of the same

The Rule of The Order of St. Vincent

To pray each morning and each night

To be faithful in the reading and study of Holy Scripture

To make due preparation before the service and to say the Order's prayer

To attend Mass and receive Communion, if possible, every Sunday and Holy Day, and to be duly prepared through self-examination and confession

To fully cooperate with, and support the clergy and other spiritual leaders

To always speak reverently of Holy Things and when in Holy places

To pray for the Order and all her members

To pray for the unity of the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church

Our Long History and Tradition

Our Order dates back to 1882, when the first Guild of St. Vincent was formed at St. Clement's Church in Philadelphia, where the acolytes joined together in prayer, study, and training as a part of their service at God's altar. The Order was officially founded on the Feast of Vincent of Saragossa (22 January), 1915 at the Church of the Advent, Boston (which remains our oldest Chapter today) to serve Anglicans/Episcopalians in all of the North American countries. There, the Purpose, Objects, and Rule of Life were adopted by the Council of Governors consisting of clergy and laity with an advising Bishop. In 1939, the OSV affiliated with the Scottish and British acolyte guilds. This affiliation brought acolytes throughout the Anglican Communion into fellowship with and prayer for one another.

In 1970, the Order opened membership to girls and women, and to all lay ministers involved in sacred service in 1979. The Governors voted in 1984 to continue affiliation with the newly formed "continuing" Anglican bodies and to, by word and example, call all Catholic Communion to visible and comprehensive unity. We are now truly a trans-Catholic order.

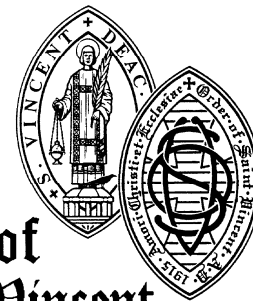
Amori Christi et Ecclesiae

(For the love of Christ and His
Church)

**For more information about our
Order visit our website
www.OrderStVincent.org**

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The
International
Order of
St. Vincent



St. Vincent's Tract
No. 0

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Make check payable and send to
The International Order of St. Vincent

P.O. Box 1245, Summerville, SC 29484

Ph: (843)442-1288

Application Fee:

New Chapter - \$35

Reactivate a dormant Chapter - \$35