



# MISSION ENRICHMENT

Volume 18, No. 3 | May-June, 2018

*The Spirit of the Gospel in Service of the Mission*

## *Year of Oblate Vocations*

December 8, 2017 - January 25, 2019

Actively promoting vocations to the many groups that are inspired by St. Eugene's example and charism.

“Fairy tales are more than true; not because they tell us that dragons exist, but because they tell us that dragons can be beaten.”

– G. K. Chesterton



Feast of St. Eugene de Mazenod... Celebrate by doing a good deed for someone who cannot repay you.

## Being Sent into the World

(from *Bread for the Journey*, Henri Nouwen, Apr. 23)

Each of us has a mission in life. Jesus prays to his Father for his followers, saying, “As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world.” (John 17:18)

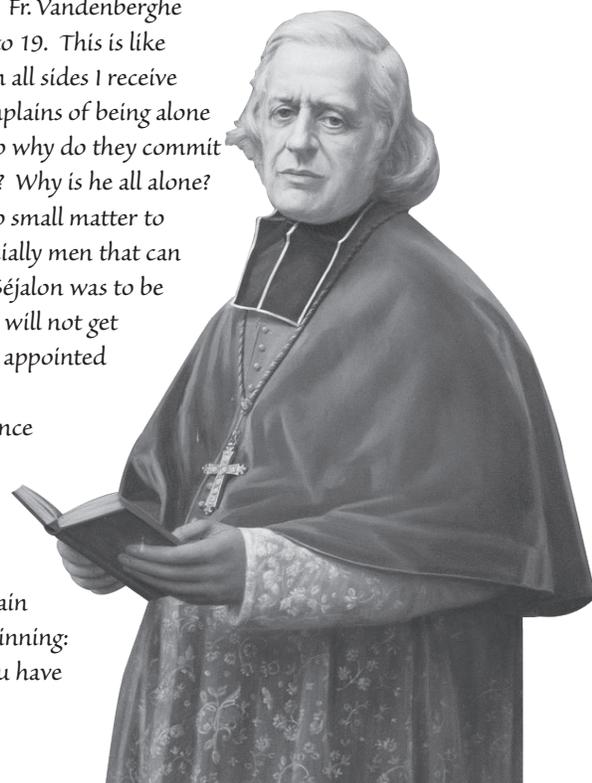
We seldom realize fully that we are sent to fulfill God-given tasks. We act as if we have to choose how, where, and with whom to live. We act as if we were simply dropped down in creation and have to decide how to entertain ourselves until we die. But we were sent into the world by God, just as Jesus was. Once we start living our lives with that conviction, we will soon know what we were sent to do. †

FROM THE WRITINGS OF THE FOUNDER  
*May 20, 1855 letter to Fr. Vincens--*

Dear Fr. Vincens, please get going... Fr. Vandenberghe tells me that his novitiate will be down to 19. This is like a threat to dying a beautiful death. From all sides I receive letters crying for help. Fr. Jeanmaire complains of being alone at Nancy to do the work of four men. So why do they commit themselves to doing more than they can? Why is he all alone? What happened to all the others? It is no small matter to select the men that they need, and especially men that can get along together. We had said that Fr. Séjalon was to be sent to serve the prisons, but this Father will not get along with a given Superior who may be appointed over him.

I truly share in the grief you experience at the loss of your respectable brother. He will have received the reward for the good he has done and especially for having contributed to giving to the Church a worker such as you... I say again to you in finishing what I said in the beginning: get going, get going, start your work. You have no time to lose.... Goodbye.

+ C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles



Ideas or comments are welcome.

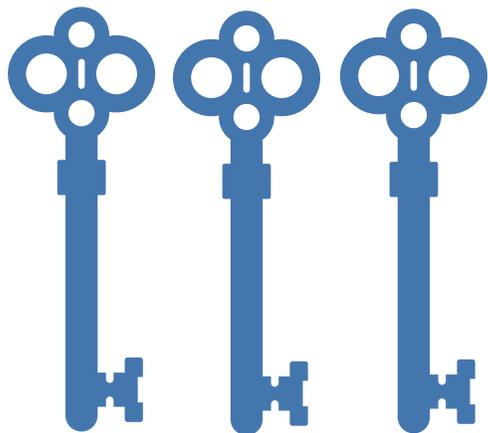
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# THREE KEYS YOU NEED

by Steve Goodier



A funny story tells about three high school seniors who went to New York for their senior trip. When they arrived in the city, they went immediately to one of the finest hotels and registered for a room. They were assigned a room on the 30th floor.

After settling in, they decided to go see the sights. They toured Manhattan, the Empire State Building, Wall Street and the Statue of Liberty. They finally returned to their hotel utterly exhausted.

When they asked the desk clerk for the key to their room, he said, "I am sorry, the elevators are not running." He told them that they could either wait or use the stairway. The thought of a soft bed was irresistible, so they decided to climb the stairs – all thirty stories.

One of the boys had an idea. "On the way up, each of us will tell the funniest

story we know for ten flights of stairs," he suggested. The other two agreed and started to climb. When they reached the tenth floor, they were still going strong. By the twentieth floor, their legs were rubber and they panted for breath. The steps grew harder to climb and the one whose turn it was to tell a funny story said, "I'm sorry, I'm just too tired to talk."

They trudged on in silence. When they reached the 29<sup>th</sup> floor, one of them began to laugh. He sat down on the steps and laughed hysterically. Finally, he said to his amazed companions, "I just thought of the funniest thing ever. And it happens to be true!"

"What is it?" they asked.

"We left the key in the lobby."

Many people feel as if they have lost the key to getting what they want in life – meaning, happiness, success, peace, security. They have been trudging and toiling at length but feel as if they are locked out of that place they really want to be. They think, "If only I had the key to a whole and happy life."

That wise and amazing woman Eleanor Roosevelt gave three keys to meaning, happiness, success and peace.

1. She said to **do whatever comes your way as well as you can**. She knew that the key to satisfaction in life is to take pride in whatever you're given to do, regardless how grand or humble the undertaking.

2. Another key is to **think as little as possible about yourself, and as much as possible about other people, and also about things that are interesting**. Eleanor Roosevelt knew that those who take a genuine interest in the concerns of others and in great ideas lose their desire to worry needlessly about themselves.
3. The third is that, since people receive more joy back when they **give joy to others**, you should put a good deal of thought into the happiness you are able to give. She was aware that the key to finding happiness is in giving happiness – wherever and whenever possible.

These are three keys that should neither be lost nor locked away in a safe place. Learn to use them – every day – and you'll open doors to those important and wonderful things that will make your life worth living. †



## RANDOM ACTS OF KINDNESS

The person who doesn't fit in with our notions of who is worthy of our love—the bag lady at the corner, the strange old man who rides through town on a three-wheel bike all strung up with flags – is just the person who, by not fitting into our patterns, insists that we expand not only our views but also our capacity to love.

Today, see if you can stretch your heart and expand your love so that it touches not only those to whom you can give it easily, but also to those who need it so much. †

–Daphne Rose Kingma

## New Boss

A business owner decides to take a tour around his business and see how things are going. He goes down to the shipping docks and sees a young man leaning against the wall doing nothing. The owner walks up to the young man and says, "Son, how much do you make a day?"

The guy replies, "150 dollars."

The owner pulls out his wallet, gives him \$150, and tells him to get out and never come back.

A few minutes later, the shipping clerk asks the owner, "Have you seen the UPS driver?? I asked him to wait here for me!" †



# Focus on the Family (2014)

**M**any families termed “dysfunctional” are affected by mental illness, trauma from tragedy, or simply by being headed by individuals with very poor parenting skills.

One's dysfunctional personal behavior becomes a model or example to the next generation, and the cycle can be repeated over and over again.

Most experts believe that children who are raised in abusive homes learn that violence is an effective way to resolve conflicts and problems. For example, boys who witness domestic violence in their own home are three times more likely to become batterers. Children of alcoholics... have a four-fold increased risk of becoming alcoholics as adults compared with the general population.

**A huge part of what keeps destructive behaviors going is individuals who don't know they're dysfunctional and don't know they don't know. We pass on through words, actions and attitudes — consciously or not — what we know. We can't pass on what we don't know.**

Dysfunction does beget dysfunction. *But that's not fair.* Right, it's *not* fair... few things in life have been fair. People get hurt when they didn't do anything to deserve it. People who intentionally hurt others seem to get away with it. The most unfair circumstances occur when helpless children get injured by parents who are supposed to be their protectors.

*“So yelling at my girlfriend isn't my fault because that's what my dad did to me.”* Slow down,... If you blame your father, he could blame his father who could blame his

father.... Lousy logic because it's not an either/or situation. It's a both/and.

Follow me on this. When your father yelled at you, who did the yelling (the dysfunctional action)?

*“My father.”* That yelling is your father's fault. He's the one guilty of yelling at you. When you yell at your girlfriend, *who's* doing the yelling this time? *“I guess I am.”*

This yelling episode is your fault. Your father “dealt you a bad hand” (not fair, true). Still, it's up to you how you play those cards. The actions that follow are yours. You had no control over your father's actions toward you. You *do* have control over whether you repeat the cycle — or not.

*Can this cycle truly be broken?* This answer is simple: Yes, it can.

**Dysfunction begets dysfunction. So, too, function begets function, health begets health, and truth begets truth. So how do I change?** Here's how you can set a new precedent for your future family.

**1. Become aware of your family's destructive relationship patterns.** This is the first step in moving toward healthy functioning. You can't teach what you don't know, and you can't change what you're *not* aware of. Awareness is a big first step. And it's highly likely you're *not* aware. You truly *don't* know, so ask around. Seek out individuals who you think are healthy and stable, and ask them what questions are the good questions to ask. You may decide to seek professional therapy to help you see what you aren't able to see on your own.

**2. Take ownership of your own actions, attitudes, beliefs and emotions.** Admit,

“It's my problem. I need help. *I'm* the one needing an attitude adjustment. *I* may be the one who's wrong in this situation.” Whether you know all your dysfunctional ways or not, take responsibility for the ones you know.

**3. Purposely observe, compare and contrast other families' interactions with how your family handles similar situations.** Have you noticed other family groups

who — in your way of thinking — are just plain weird? They don't overreact to anything it seems. They speak their minds. They listen and actually hear each other. None of this is how your family interacted.

**That's what makes it seem so weird to you....** What do they believe that makes them different and more stable or healthy?

**4. Do Google searches on:** The rules of dysfunctional family systems; or Codependency/enabling; or Adult Children of Alcoholics — even if there was no alcohol in your house.

As you read, identify the things that fit your life story. Take notes on ways to change the unhealthy things you learned as a child. Ask yourself: What *is* healthy in a friendship? What is an accurate way for me to see me? What assumptions do I have, and what perceptions do I cling to so tightly?

**5. Evaluate your present relationships.**

Are they going smoothly and benefiting both parties? Do you know what healthy boundaries are, and do you keep them? How would the other party answer these same questions?

**6. Ask God** to open your eyes and mind to what true and healthy living looks like and what changes you need to make.

**7. Practice.** Healthy living is learned experientially. Awareness and understanding is your starting place. Now it's practice, practice, practice. It's not natural, yet it will be; ...there will be some “errors” in your practicing. That's normal; it's OK.

**8. Be patient with yourself and others.** Patience is one of the *functional* ways of dealing with the world.

Do all these things with the goal of becoming aware of and changing the dysfunctional ways you learned as a child. You're *not* condemned to repeat how your parents parented. You don't have to be a 25-year veteran of healthy living before you pass functional relationship patterns on to the next generation. All you need to be is one step ahead of where they are. **Start here. Start now. It's never too late to move from dysfunction to function. NEVER. †**



# The Art of Emotional First Aid

By Kalia Kelmenson (*Spirituality & Health*, Dec. 12, 2016)

Every night, before bed, most of us brush our teeth, wash our face, perhaps apply some lotion to our hands. These simple acts of self-care are meant to help our physical body stay healthy.

**When we get a cut, we put a band aid on it to help it heal. Our mental health deserves the same level of care and attention, but we aren't taught how to do that.**

Just as a cut left untended would probably fester into an infection, psychological injuries are often ignored until they settle deep into us and create pathology. According to Guy Winch, author of *Emotional First Aid: Healing Rejection, Guilt, Failure, and Other Everyday Hurts*, this is because we are not taught how to practice first aid on our emotional bodies.

Winch suggests that in the same way we sometimes get a cold, our mental health suffers dips. Recognizing these dips and attending to our emotional well-being can help us recover more completely. **Here are three ways to start:**

- **Pay attention to your self-talk.** Winch suggests noticing how you talk

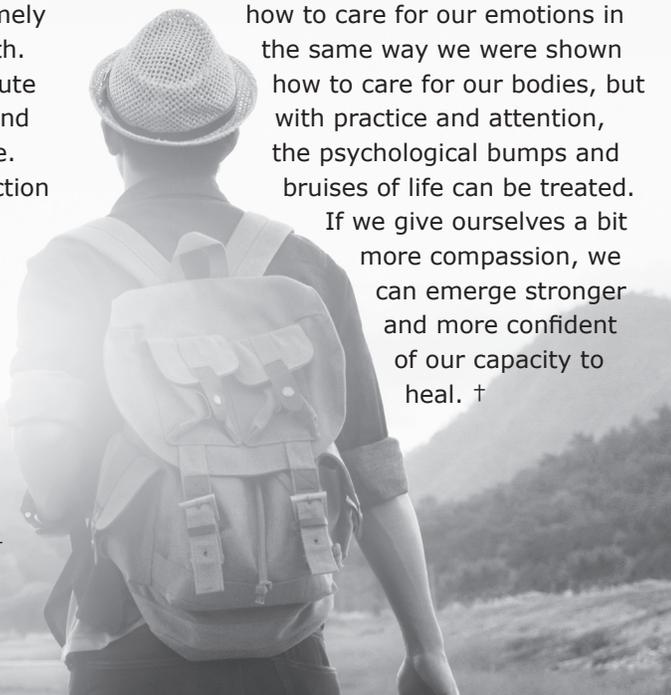
to yourself when you make a mistake or experience some kind of failure. Most of us are extremely critical of ourselves. He suggests pretending that you are talking to your closest friend. Be kind and compassionate. If you've made a mistake, instead of beating yourself up about it, act like a detective, being curious about what you might do differently in the future.

- **Flip the switch on unhealthy thought patterns.** Rumination, the constant, repetitive replaying of a certain event can be extremely detrimental to mental health. Studies show it can contribute to depression, alcoholism and even cardiovascular disease. Winch suggests that distraction can help break the habit of rumination. When you notice the mind going into that repetitive pattern, find a way to distract it: think of something else or get your brain involved in another task. Even two minutes of distraction can break the habit if repeated often enough.

- **Change your response to stumbling blocks.** Often, when we don't succeed at something, we spend an inordinate amount of time thinking that we are to blame, that bad things always happen to us. Winch says that a more productive response would be to practice a kind of gratitude. Take some time to remember what you are good at and celebrate something you have accomplished in the past. When you look again at the stumbling block, use your mental energy to find ways around it instead of getting caught up in wondering why it's there.

We may not have been shown how to care for our emotions in the same way we were shown how to care for our bodies, but with practice and attention, the psychological bumps and bruises of life can be treated.

If we give ourselves a bit more compassion, we can emerge stronger and more confident of our capacity to heal. †



**I CAN PLEASE  
ONLY ONE PERSON  
PER DAY.  
TODAY IS NOT  
YOUR DAY...**

**TOMORROW'S NOT  
LOOKING GOOD  
EITHER!**

## 80 year-old woman getting married for 4<sup>th</sup> time

An 80 year-old woman was recently married to her 4<sup>th</sup> husband. A reporter questioned the occupation of her newly acquired husband. She replied that he owned a funeral home. Curious about the other husbands, the reporter also asked about their occupations. The woman paused for a while and stated that her first husband was a banker. The second one she was madly in love with and he was a circus master. The third one was a minister. Puzzled by her answers, he replied, "None of these people have anything in common! Why did you marry these?" She stated that she married number one for the money, two for the show, three to get ready, and four to go. †

