



The Contributions of the Vincentian Charism to the Mission of the Church: A Formation Journey

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Before St. Vincent and St. Louise



A Church in which the clerical-religious element dominated



After St. Vincent and St. Louise

A Church with a more secular and lay character


A missionary and less clerical Church

Participation of many lay persons, especially women, in the mission



image: *La Dame de charité* by Jean-Baptiste Greuze

The first expression of the Vincentian charism



The “Confraternities of Charity:” groups of women lay apostles, now known as the Ladies of Charity or the Association of International Charities (AIC)

As a result of
Vincent's experience
in Châtillon



With the collaboration of Louise de
Marillac and other women who
animated the members of the
Confraternities in the rural areas

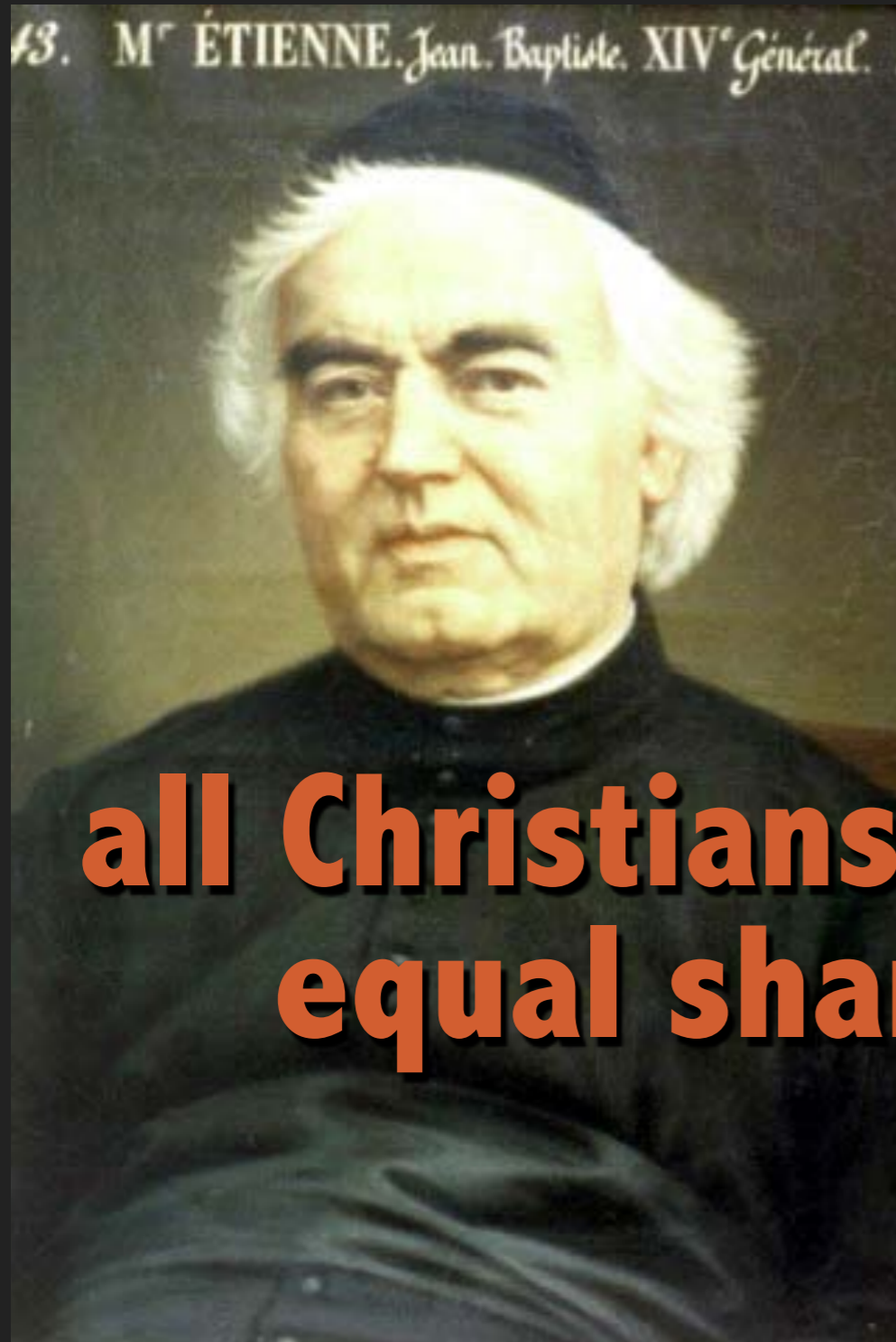




... these experiences led to the development of multiple creative forms that enhanced and affirmed the participation of the laity in the mission of the Church



A truly radical notion:



all Christians have a different but equal share in the Church's mission



The AIC, and other lay movements like the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, in succeeding centuries spread to virtually every country in the world.

Many have said that the present role of the laity in our Church is the most enduring gift of Vatican II.