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Many Strokes of the Lash: André Duval¹

BY

TIM WILLIAMS, C.M.

“Servus sciens voluntatem Domini et non faciens, vapulabit multis.”

“The servant who knows what his master wants, but does not do it, will receive very many strokes of the lash.”² Thus spoke André Duval to Vincent de Paul in 1624.³ Later, Vincent often said that his Company (the Congregation of the Mission) owed a good part of its origins and establishment to this same André Duval.⁴ Who was this man who spoke so strongly to Vincent de Paul, and convinced Vincent to take up (albeit some time later!) what was to become his life’s work? What was his relationship with Vincent de Paul and his role in Vincent’s life?

Background and Early Years

André Duval was born at Pontoise, just north of Paris, on 15 January 1564, the son of Nicolle d’Eaubonne and Robert Duval, both of whom were Catholic and of well regarded families.⁵ His father was a lawyer in the *Parlement*. André’s youth was untroubled, but he grew up during the Wars of Religion, his family actively siding with the Catholic League against King Henry (later to become Henry IV of France).⁶ When the Catholic League became a political faction in the service of ambitious individuals, along with a number of other moderate Catholics André separated himself from the League. It was from these more moderate Catholics that Henry IV, after his abjurations (there were several) and as King of France, drew his supporters.⁷

Growing into manhood during and towards the end of the Wars of Religion,⁸ André began his studies of philosophy – first at the Collège de Pontoise, then in

¹ Originally published in *Oceania Vincentian*, Volume 3 (September 2002): pp. 29-45. Reprinted by permission of the author and the Vincentian Studies Group of the Australian Province of the Congregation of the Mission. All rights reserved by *Oceania Vincentian*. For a selection of articles published in *Oceania Vincentian* and readable online, please visit their web site at: www.vincentians.org.au/vinstudies.htm

² Cf. Luke 12:47. Note: The quotation does not correspond exactly to the gospel text.

³ Robert Duval, *La Vie de M. André Duval, Docteur de la Sorbonne* (Paris: Archives of Maison-Mère de la Congrégation de la Mission), 72-75. Extract by Pierre Coste, C.M., from manuscript of Robert Duval, André Duval’s nephew. Note: Original manuscript is in the Municipal Library of Versailles, France.

⁴ Duval, *La Vie*, 72-75.

⁵ Gueriteau, L.D.C., *Opuscles Biographiques – Mémoires Sur la Vie de Vénérable et Discrète Personne André Duval* (Pontoise: Société Historique du Vexin, 1909), 33.

⁶ Jean Calvet, “Un confesseur de Saint Vincent de Paul,” *Petites Annales de St. Vincent de Paul* 41 (1903): I, 136.

⁷ Calvet, “Un confesseur,” I, 137.

⁸ The Wars of Religion formally ended in 1598 with the Edict of Nantes, but rivalries and battles between Catholics and Huguenots continued well into the next century.



Portrait of André Duval. Period engraving.
Image Collection of the Vincentian Studies Institute

Paris, dedicating his philosophical theses to Cardinal de Gondi, archbishop of Paris and Abbé de Saint-Martin-lez-Pontoise. Uncertain of a career on which to embark, he then studied law. Eventually, he began studies in theology in preparation for priesthood, receiving a doctorate in theology, apparently being 'top of his class' in this discipline.⁹

It appears he came to be in demand as a preacher. He preached Lenten sermons in the cathedral churches of Rouen, Nantes, Amiens, and Paris. His reputation drew Henry IV to come and hear him at Notre-Dame in Paris. Having heard him preach, Henry said of him "Here is someone who must become a bishop," and requested his presence at Court. Duval however, regarded being at Court to be a dangerous enterprise, and could not be persuaded.¹⁰ Active in opposing the spread of heresy, he was named by Henry as a lecturer and *Regius Professor* in theology at the Sorbonne.¹¹ He was to occupy a chair of theology in the University of Paris for 42 years.¹²

But teaching theology and preaching were not the only aspects of his life worthy of note. His own virtue, and his wise counsel, soon acquired for him a number of admirers and friends. He was the spiritual director of many, including Père Joseph (François du Tremblay).¹³

He visited the poor, and was himself quite poor.¹⁴ His Lectureship in Theology

⁹ Gueriteau, *Opuscles Biographiques*, 34.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 35.

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² Calvet, "Un confesseur," I, 138.

¹³ *Ibid.*, I, 143.

Note: Père Joseph, nicknamed *Éminence Grise* (Grey Eminence), was a confidant of Cardinal Richelieu, who was known as *Éminence Rouge* (Red Eminence). The 'colorful' nicknames referred to the colors of their respective religious and ecclesiastical dress. The term *Éminence Grise* now also carries in English the meaning of a *confidential agent*, especially one exercising unsuspected or unofficial power.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

at the Sorbonne brought in 700 livres annually¹⁵ and he lived simply – no fancy furniture or clothes. His room had no floor covering, just one bed and five plain chairs, and no silverware. When he relinquished his lectureship, he was unwilling to accept a pension.¹⁶ One day, on seeing a large number of mules carrying the luggage of Michel de Marillac (Keeper of the Seals and uncle of Louise de Marillac) who was going on a trip with the King, he said to M. de Marillac, whom he knew very well “Monsieur, how poor you are!” M. de Marillac asked why he would say that. “Because you need so many things” was the reply!¹⁷

Like his father before him, Duval was not concerned about accepting preferments to better his state.¹⁸ He refused the archdiaconate of Limoges (which was worth 1000 ecus¹⁹), the *théologale*, of the cathedral church of Amiens and the curacy of the Saint Germain l’Auxerrois à Paris.²⁰ Duval was proposed and named Archbishop of Rheims, but he would not accept the appointment.²¹

In his religious life, he was devout to the point of mysticism, a disciple of de Bérulle, a friend of Benoît de Canfield (Benet of Canfield), and very much influenced by Madame Acarie,²² herself a mystic. It was in writing the life of Madame Acarie²³ that his deep knowledge of theology preserved him from error and misunderstandings in describing her unusual piety, including her experience of the stigmata.²⁴

Duval was somewhat modest as to his own appearance. He had been told that, being *un bel homme* who had *un beau visage*, he should have his picture sketched. He refused, but his portrait was drawn without his knowledge. Vincent de Paul was given one of the copies of the sketch and displayed it at Saint-Lazare. When Duval, visiting Saint-Lazare, saw it there, he was overcome with confusion, so much so that he compelled Vincent to remove it from sight. This Vincent did, until after the death of Duval, when the picture was again displayed, along with those of others known for their virtue and piety.²⁵

It is no wonder such a man became one of the most listened to in the University of Paris.²⁶

¹⁵ For an estimation of the value of French currency in this period, see the article: Greg Cooney, C.M., “The Social Conscience of Vincent de Paul,” *Oceania Vincentian* 2:20 (2002): n.39.

¹⁶ Gueriteau, *Opuscles Biographiques*, 48.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 49.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 34.

¹⁹ Cf. Footnote 14 above.

²⁰ Gueriteau, *Opuscles Biographiques*, 34.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 47.

²² Calvet, “Un confesseur,” I, 144.

²³ André Duval, *La vie admirable de Soeur Marie de l’Incarnation* (Paris: 1621).

²⁴ Calvet, “Un confesseur,” I, 145.

²⁵ Duval, *La Vie*, 295. According to Gueriteau (op.cit., 47), the painter Michel Ange, (Michaelangelo) sketched the portrait of André Duval without Duval’s knowledge, and made two copies of the sketch. It was one of these copies that Vincent de Paul displayed at Saint-Lazare. Gueriteau (op.cit., 54) also indicates that two engravings of the portrait of Duval were done by a M. Asne. Gueriteau gives a description of both of these engravings.

²⁶ Calvet, “Un confesseur,” I, 138.

Champion of the Catholic Reform

Duval made a significant impact on the reform of a number of religious orders and institutions in France. He contributed to the establishment of the reformed Benedictines, and was involved in the reform of the orders of Saint Augustine, of Saint Benedict and of Cîteaux. He was a member of Extraordinary Council to the Bernardines in Paris.²⁷ He was appointed one of the judges in the troubles among the religious of the Third Order of Saint Francis. He opposed the expulsion of the Jesuits from France.²⁸ He also contributed to the foundation and governance of the Reformed Carmelites in France, which is further discussed below. He was one of the first to whom Madame Acarie communicated her ideas on bringing the order to France. Along with Pierre de Bérulle and Jacques Gallement, he was one of the three first superiors of the Order.²⁹ In 1604, he founded a convent of the same Carmelites at Pointoise. Out of his own resources he purchased the house where the Carmelites in Pointoise were to live. And he founded like establishments in Rouen, Gisors, Amiens, Dijon, Beaune, and Châlon-Saône. He worked to re-establish proper observance in the abbeys of Montmartre and de Montivilliers, where relaxation had taken place during the civil wars, and he assisted in the setting up of the Ursulines of Pointoise.³⁰ He was appointed one of the three directors and administrators of the Hôpital de la Miséricorde in Paris.³¹

As a theologian in the Sorbonne, Duval was further able to dedicate his talents and prestige to the Catholic Restoration in France by concentrating upon restoring the University of Paris to its role as the intellectual stronghold of Catholicism. Two ideas dominated his theological attitudes. A dedicated disciple of Saint Thomas Aquinas, Duval was concerned that only re-dedication to authentic Thomism could offer the foundation requisite for the refutation of heresy and the revival of Catholicism. Secondly, he staunchly defended the infallibility of the pope and the papal supremacy in spiritual affairs.³² André Duval was an ultramontanist.

His zeal for the theological restoration of the university was concentrated on the Collège de Sorbonne, where his teaching made a profound impression on the students, eg., Richelieu and François du Tremblay, the future Père Joseph. In addition to his mastery of dogmatic theology, Duval was an expert in ascetical theology, being noted as “not having an equal in handling cases of conscience and spiritual problems.”³³ This competence explains Duval’s influence with Mère Acarie, and his selection as one of the three superiors of the Carmelites.³⁴ He was also instrumental in setting up a foundation to assist criminals condemned to

²⁷ Gueriteau, *Opuscules Biographiques*, 41.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 42.

²⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹ *Ibid.*, 43.

³² Joseph Symes, C.M., *The Contrary Estimations of Saint Vincent de Paul on the Abbé de Saint-Cyran*, Doctoral Thesis (New York: St. John’s University, 1973), 15.

³³ *Ibid.*, 15.

³⁴ *Ibid.*

death, and from this time on, a professor from the Sorbonne assisted such criminals in conducting their defense.³⁵

He also published a *Commentaire de la Somme de Saint Thomas*, a *Supplement* to the translation of Ribadeneira's *Fleurs de la Vie des Saints*, and a refutation of Dumoulin's *Le Feu d'Héli pour Tarir les Eaux de Siloé*.³⁶

Gallicanism, Ultramontanism, 'Duvalism'

As a Doctor of the Sorbonne, the Gallican dispute in regard to papal authority eventually involved Duval. The assassination of Henry IV in 1610 brought matters to a head in the Sorbonne. Immediately after the appeal on behalf of Henry's assassin, François Ravaillac, had been conducted, the Parlement ordered an Assembly of the Sorbonne to discuss the revision of a former decree of the Jesuits who had taught that it was permissible and even meritorious to take the life of the king in some cases. The Sorbonne renewed its decree, even though the renewal was never actually promulgated.³⁷

A further threat to Gallican power was seen in the work of Cardinal Bellarmine centered on the power of the pope in temporal matters. Edmond Richer, a *syndic*³⁸ of the Sorbonne, created a storm with his work *Libellus de ecclesiastica et politica potestate*.³⁹ This work, published in 1611, focused on the nature of authority within the Church, embracing the views of Conciliarism. It contained, among others, the idea that legislative power (in the Church), as well as infallibility, were not attributes of the pope but belonged to the hierarchy, composed of the bishops and the priests, which functioned in its totality as a general council. It also maintained that the episcopate was an essential element in the constitution of the Church – the papacy was only an accessory.⁴⁰

The pope complained to the Queen Regent (Marie de Medici) and the bishops were obliged to censure the work.⁴¹ This was done in 1612, and was followed by a number of works criticizing Richer, notable among which was the work *Elenchus libelli de ecclesiastica et politica potestate* by André Duval.⁴² Duval deeply respected the church hierarchy, and saw the Pope as the head of this hierarchy and sovereign moderator of the Church.⁴³ Cardinal Barberini (the future Urban VIII) had urged Duval to respond to Richer's Conciliarism,⁴⁴ and Duval refuted Richer with such success that he had ecclesiastical praise heaped on him, contributing to Richer

³⁵ Gueriteau, *Opuscules Biographiques*, 35.

³⁶ Calvet, "Un confesseur," I, 142-143.

³⁷ Gueriteau, *Opuscules Biographiques*, 35.

³⁸ Note: The *syndic* was the legal representative of the theology faculty with the *Parlement*; he was also primarily responsible for the orthodoxy of the faculty. Cf. Symes, *op.cit.*, 15, n.12.

³⁹ Calvet, "Un confesseur," I, 139.

⁴⁰ Symes, *Contrary Estimations*, 16.

⁴¹ Gueriteau, *Opuscules Biographiques*, 36.

⁴² Calvet, "Un confesseur," I, 140.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, I, 138.

⁴⁴ Symes, *Contrary Estimations*, 16.

being dismissed from his position of syndic in the Sorbonne in 1613.⁴⁵ At the same time, while refuting Richer, Duval did not elaborate too much on views that would be contrary to those of Richer. The result was that Duval came to be regarded as the champion of a 'reasonable' form of Ultramontanism, acceptable both to the Pope and to France. In his treatise on *l'Autorité du Pape*, he critiqued the extreme views of both the Ultramontanists and the Gallicans, offering a new approach which came to be known as "Duvalism."⁴⁶ The affair continued for some years before Richer yielded on his propositions, and was reconciled with Duval.

Duval was again called in, this time by Pope Urban VIII, to address the matter of the Jesuit Santarel's work on a similar theme. Once again he acquitted himself with great distinction.⁴⁷

Duval and Pierre de Bérulle

In the issue of opposing the ideas of Edmond Richer and his particular brand of Conciliarism, Duval had been joined by Pierre de Bérulle, the founder of the Oratory, and mentor of Vincent de Paul in Vincent's early discernment period. Richer had, in fact, had his revenge on de Bérulle by persuading the members of the University of Paris to extend to the members of the Oratory the ban which excluded all alumni who were members of religious orders from professorships, and from voting at the meetings of the college corporation.⁴⁸ This certainly would have had an effect on de Bérulle and his Oratorians.

But trouble was brewing between de Bérulle and Duval. Intellectually, de Bérulle was setting aside the scholastic approach of Duval for a theology based on the writings of the Church Fathers, particularly Saint Augustine. De Bérulle was also passing this patristic view on to his Oratorians, who then communicated it in their various works. Moreover, de Bérulle seemed able to attract some of Duval's outstanding doctoral candidates into joining the Oratory, thereby excluding themselves from assisting in Duval's hope of building the Sorbonne into a Thomistic Centre. It became clear that de Bérulle regarded his Oratory as being more important in the Catholic Restoration than the Sorbonne! The whole matter was exacerbated by a physical problem of Duval – increasing deafness – as he saw his teaching career nearing its end.⁴⁹

Then there was the involvement of both men with the Carmelite Nuns and Madame Acarie, a mystic.⁵⁰ Madame Acarie's *salon* in Paris had become the meeting place for some well known personages of the time – Michel de Marillac ('Keeper of the Seals'), Benoît de Canfield, Pierre de Bérulle, François de Sales, André Duval, and many other great ladies and gentlemen.⁵¹ Duval, along with Madame Acarie and

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 17.

⁴⁶ Calvet, "Un confesseur," I, 140.

⁴⁷ Gueriteau, *Opuscules Biographiques*, 39-40.

⁴⁸ Symes, *Contrary Estimations*, 17.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 17-18.

⁵⁰ Pierre de Bérulle and Madame Acarie were cousins.

⁵¹ Calvet "Un confesseur," I, 141.



Madame Acarie. Detail of a painting.
Public Domain

de Bérulle, had been instrumental in bringing the Reformed Carmelites to France. By the Bull of foundation in 1603, Jacques Gallemant had been named first superior, with Duval and de Bérulle as assistants. In 1606, the Holy See made Gallemant Visitor of all French Carmels until 1614. But in 1611, de Bérulle began to negotiate with Rome to have the Visitorship made the exclusive prerogative of himself and his successors in the Generalship of the Oratory. In 1614, Rome acceded to the request, thus antagonizing Duval.⁵² De Bérulle then went even further, and tried to introduce into the Carmelites a vow of 'servitude to Our Lord and His Mother.' This was too much for Duval, who took his case to the Holy See. Madame Acarie, by then a member of the Carmelite community at Pontoise, and known as Mère Marie de l'Incarnation, sided with Duval, despite de Bérulle's attempts to persuade her to his own views. In the conflict which followed, and especially in an interview with Madame Acarie at Pontoise in 1618, de Bérulle revealed the acrimonious streak which had caused even François de Sales to be alarmed.⁵³ Madame Acarie, ill at the time, died in that same year without making her peace with de Bérulle.⁵⁴ After her death, Duval himself wrote the story of her life.⁵⁵

So there developed a rift between Duval and de Bérulle, a rift which must surely have impinged on Vincent de Paul when he made the choice to move from de Bérulle to Duval for his spiritual direction.

Duval and Vincent de Paul

After the Edict of Nantes in 1598, and the formal end of the Wars of Religion, the energy which had driven the Catholic League fighting to keep France Catholic needed to go somewhere. Much of it went into the Catholic Restoration, or Revival,

⁵² Symes, *Contrary Estimations*, 18-19.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 19ff.

⁵⁴ José Maria Román, C.M., *St. Vincent de Paul, a Biography* (London: Melisende, 1999), 98.

⁵⁵ André Duval, *La vie admirable*.



Vincent de Paul. Portrait.

Image Collection of the Vincentian Studies Institute

and typically took the form of a renewal of interior life. Religious Orders were reborn and reformed, and as indicated above, Duval contributed to this. Religious life in general, and mysticism in particular, flourished. This was epitomized in the founding of the Oratory by Pierre de Bérulle, the development of Port Royal, and the center of mysticism at the Hôtel Acarie. All this involved the clergy, religious, and the well to do. But there was no spirituality for lesser lights like the poor in the country. Here Vincent de Paul, having a great understanding of the necessity of developing an interior life, at the same time directed his attention outwards towards action. Vincent, while continuing to associate with and draw on people like de Bérulle, Duval, Benoît de Canfield, and François de Sales, developed a 'way' that would enable ordinary people to find God in the 'sweat of their brow.' In a number of areas, Duval played a role both in Vincent's outlook and decisions.

Around 1610-1611, it seems André Duval introduced Vincent de Paul to the work of Benoît de Canfield – *The Rule of Perfection reduced to a single point – The Will of God*.⁵⁶ It was after a retreat at Soissons in 1624 that Duval spoke the words to Vincent: *Servus sciens voluntatem Domini et non faciens, vapulabit multis* ("The servant who knows what his master wants, but does not do it, will receive very many strokes of the lash").⁵⁷ Vincent, in his effort to be completely submissive to God's will, was guided by de Canfield's *Rule of Perfection* – having learned that if God's will is made known by interior promptings of grace, it is even more clearly revealed through the will of superiors. Needing to know if his plan for the company of missionaries was God's will, he appealed to André Duval.⁵⁸ On

⁵⁶ André Dodin, C.M., *François de Sales, Vincent de Paul, les deux amis* (Paris: OEIL, 1984), 12, referring to *La Règle de perfection réduite au seul point de la volonté de Dieu* (Paris: Chastellain, 1609).

⁵⁷ Cf. Luke 12:47.

⁵⁸ Román, *St. Vincent*, 165.

hearing these words of Duval quoted above, Vincent felt an upsurge of grace with the conviction that indeed this proposed work was the will of God.⁵⁹ And so, as we now know, “he resolved to take on the work, and search for the means to do so, consulting André Duval, without whose opinion he undertook nothing.”⁶⁰

Vincent’s Deference to Duval’s Opinion

During his life Vincent consulted and deferred to André Duval many times. The matters on which he consulted Duval were both large and small.

In 1631, in a letter to François du Coudray concerning the seeking of approval of the Congregation of the Mission by Rome as an Institute, he wrote: “Note that the opinion of M. Duval is....”⁶¹ A footnote to the same letter refers to Duval as “friend and counselor of Vincent de Paul.” It also states that Vincent never took any important decision without recourse to Duval’s insights, and that he asked Duval’s opinion before accepting Saint-Lazare and establishing vows in the Congregation of the Mission.⁶²

Also in 1631, in a letter to Guillaume de Lestocq, the Curé of Saint-Laurent, Vincent indicated that it was appropriate to refer the acceptance of Saint-Lazare to André Duval. Duval in fact supported the Prior, Adrian le Bon, in his wish that Vincent accept the property.⁶³ (The process of accepting Saint-Lazare, and the litigation involved in retaining it, was quite a saga.⁶⁴) The same idea was echoed the following year, 1632, in another letter.⁶⁵ In 1633, writing to Michel Alix, Curé de Saint-Ouen-L’Aumone, on a personal matter, he advised that there should be consultation with Duval.⁶⁶ In the summary of a Conference of unknown date, Vincent quotes Duval’s opinion regarding the role of a Curé as almoner.⁶⁷

In the *Interrogatory of the Abbé de Saint-Cyran* (14-31 May 1639), Duval was named as the one whose advice, above all, Vincent followed in the way he did things, an example given being the refusal of a particular priory.⁶⁸ Presumably this refers to his refusal to accept the Prieuré de Bonneville.⁶⁹ And, in regard to his relations with the same Abbé de Saint-Cyran, however willingly Vincent may have listened to Saint-Cyran, he did not follow his advice slavishly, but preferred that of Duval or other doctors of the Sorbonne.⁷⁰

⁵⁹ Duval, *La Vie*, 72-75.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 72-75.

⁶¹ *Saint Vincent de Paul. Correspondence, Entretiens, Documents*, ed. Pierre Coste, C.M., 14 volumes (Paris: Librairie LeCoffre, 1920-25), 1:116. Hereinafter cited as *CED*.

⁶² *CED*, 1:116, n.1.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 1:138, n.5.

⁶⁴ Román, *St. Vincent*, 226-236.

⁶⁵ *CED*, 1:151.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 1:190.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 11:26.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 13:117, q.117.

⁶⁹ Pierre Coste, C.M., *The Life and Works of St. Vincent de Paul*, trans. Joseph Leonard, C.M., 3 vols. (New York: New City Press, 1987), 3:116. Hereinafter referred to as *SVP*.

⁷⁰ *SVP*, 3:116-117.

Vincent's Regard for Duval

In his conferences and repetitions of prayer to the confreres of Saint-Lazare, Vincent referred several times to André Duval – or quoted him – as being both humble, learned and simple;⁷¹ as saying that the unlearned or the poor would gain entry into paradise before 'us' (Duval and Vincent),⁷² or before 'us' (the confreres at Saint-Lazare!);⁷³ and in respect for the authority of the Pope.⁷⁴

For a number of years, Vincent had looked to de Bérulle for guidance on a professional level, in matters concerning his work and occupations, but he followed Duval's advice more in matters of conscience. It would seem that Vincent found Duval just as wise as de Bérulle, but more impartial in his judgments and more saintly.⁷⁵ Vincent said of him, "He was a great doctor of the Sorbonne, but even greater for the holiness of his life."⁷⁶ Speaking further about Duval, Vincent de Paul said, "Everything is holy in M. Duval. If I wanted to go through all the virtues I have seen in him, I would never have managed it. And so, I conclude that I have never seen anything in him which did not appear to me to be holy."⁷⁷ Vincent provided a similar testimony when the nephew of Duval gave to M. des Cordes, an adviser at the Chatelet, two small pictures that had belonged to Duval. Vincent said, "These are relics of a holy man – do not refuse them."⁷⁸

Vincent found Duval's teaching more to his liking – the idea that the unlearned would compete with the wise for entrance into heaven, and that they would be admitted first,⁷⁹ would have appealed to Vincent more than de Bérulle's notion that the shepherds of Bethlehem were unworthy to pay homage to the Word Incarnate because of their lowly condition.⁸⁰

Active service of God was one of Vincent's maxims. "Let us Love God, my brothers, let us love God, but let it be in the strength of our arms and in the sweat of our brow." Vincent took active service (of the poor) as his rule of life, quoting Duval in a repetition of prayer, 24 July 1655: "M. Duval, great doctor of the Church, said that an ecclesiastic should have more things to be concerned about than he can manage."⁸¹

Vincent had been to Rome himself, and it left a deep impression upon him. He became used to looking towards Rome and papal authority. The ultramontanist approach of Duval strengthened him in his feelings of respect and submission to the Pope. He was from this point of view an ardent 'Duvalist' – and so when Rome spoke against Jansenism, Vincent immediately distanced himself from what

⁷¹ CED, 11:128.

⁷² *Ibid.*, 11:154.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 12:100.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 12:376.

⁷⁵ Román, *St. Vincent*, 98.

⁷⁶ CED, 11:154.

⁷⁷ Duval, *La Vie*, 411.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

⁷⁹ CED, 11:154.

⁸⁰ Román, *St. Vincent*, 99.

⁸¹ CED, 11:202.

had become an erroneous train of thought.⁸² As Duval had been so clear in his explanations on the ultramontanist-Gallican debate, Vincent became accustomed to consulting him in everything, and as a result Duval became a sort of theologian and canonist for the growing Congregation of the Mission.⁸³

Some Further Relationships

Vincent and the Congregation of the Mission had some wider connection and influence with Duval's relatives. André Duval's nephew, Robert Duval, certainly had knowledge of his uncle's close relationship with Vincent de Paul, as we see from his manuscript of the life of his uncle.⁸⁴ And the le Vacher brothers, Jean and Philippe, who joined the Congregation of the Mission, were nephews of André Duval.⁸⁵ Jean le Vacher is remembered for his work in Africa, and execution at the mouth of a cannon; Philippe is remembered for being among the first confreres to work in Ireland, as well as for his work in Africa.

Final Years

Eventually work and travel weakened the health of André Duval. From his youth, he had suffered with a hearing problem, despite a painful operation to remedy it. During his university studies, he endured a severe fever for seven or eight months, and soon after, a painful abscess, then stomach problems which continued for the rest of his life.⁸⁶ Overtaken finally by fever, he died on 9 September 1638, aged 74.⁸⁷ His body was buried in the Sorbonne Chapel, his heart, bequeathed to the Carmelite Nuns at Pontoise, was placed near the tomb of Soeur Marie de l'Incarnation (Madame Acarie).⁸⁸

Conclusion

Though Duval was Vincent de Paul's director for many years, he never captured Vincent's soul. Vincent admired him, and respected him, but did not indicate he wanted to imitate him. Though he was his friend, Vincent was not one of those who frequented the salon of Madame Acarie.⁸⁹ As with Pierre de Bérulle, Vincent remained his own person.

Vincent de Paul was eclectic in his sources of spirituality. The real key to making sense of Vincent de Paul's eclecticism lies in looking not firstly at the sources from which he drew, but rather at the particular experiences and events of his life, and the results of his reflection on them. These experiences and events

⁸² Jean Calvet, "Un confesseur de Saint Vincent de Paul," *Petites Annales de St. Vincent de Paul* 42 (1903): II, 167.

⁸³ Calvet, "Un confesseur," II, 167.

⁸⁴ Cf. Footnote no. 2 in this article.

⁸⁵ Román, 282.

⁸⁶ Gueriteau, *Opuscles Biographiques*, 43-44.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 44.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 45-46.

⁸⁹ Calvet, "Un confesseur," II, 167.

would include: an accusation of theft in his early days in Paris; taking on the doubts of the Theologian at Margu rite de Valois' Court; the incidents at Gannes and Folleville; his time at Clichy and Ch tillon; the founding of the Congregation of the Mission; the acceptance of the Priory of Saint-Lazare; the setting up of the Ladies of Charity; his work with Louise de Marillac founding the Daughters of Charity; and others. Perhaps the events of his 'missing years' might even have figured in his reflections! Many of the thoughts or writings of Beno t de Canfield, Pierre de B rulle, Fran ois de Sales, and others, resonated with, or spoke to, Vincent's own experiences. The language and ideas Vincent used may have been from these sources, but the experiences, and his reflection on them, were his own.

In time, much of Vincent de Paul's developing spirituality focused on Providence and the Will of God. And, from 1610 or 1611 up until 1638, at the forefront of advising him with sound judgment, helping him to make decisions and to recognize the Will of God in the experiences and events of his life, was Andr  Duval. Clearly, this man had more than a passing role in the life and work of Vincent de Paul!