

Tutorial for VirtualVins.net Website

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Introduction

VirtualVins is a community space on the Internet where people from across the Worldwide Vincentian Family can connect, discuss, and share. Social communities on the Internet started with sites like MySpace and Facebook. VirtualVins is a specialized site dedicated to Vincentians, whether CM, DC, SC, Ladies of Charity, SVDP Society-- you can sign up and immediately start connecting with other people who share similar interests, ministries, ideas and talents. You can share news, information, links to photos, music, videos, or personal anecdotes about you and your life. You can network with others who share the same interests as you by searching for them by name, joining groups and discussion forums, and creating friendships so that you can keep track of and stay in touch with the people you've met.

Brief overview of some of the things you can do on VirtualVins:

Profiles: Describe yourself to let other members of the community get to know them better.

Avatars: Upload a small photo of yourself to display on the website

Friends: Connect by sending and accepting friendship requests and creating a list of friends within the community.

Private messages: Send and receive private messages from your friends.

Updates / Activity Stream: Keep up to date with all activity within the community, such as comments, blog posts, friendships, and group activity.

Forums: Allows community members to create and manage their own discussion forums.

Registration

Registering is easy! This site is set up for self-registration.

How to register as a member

1. Click Sign Up in the bar at the top of the screen.
2. Or, click on Create an Account on the right sidebar.
3. Fill in the required information. **NOTE:** Your login **username** must be all lowercase, letters or numbers, with no spaces or punctuation. (The other items that you fill in do not have this restriction.)
4. An email will be sent to the address you provide, asking you to confirm your membership.

Log In

How to Log In

1. To log in, click Log In in the bar at the top of the screen.
2. Or, use the log in area at the top of the right sidebar.
3. Enter your username and password.

Things you can do on VirtualVins once you are logged in

You will notice several navigation tabs across the top portion of the screen: Home, Updates, Members, Groups, etc. The following sections describe what you can do with each of these tabs.

Updates

Post a Personal Status Update

1. Go to the Updates tab.
2. Type a message in the box at the top of the screen where you see "What's new, (your name)?"
3. Below the message box, you can choose to post your update to the general audience (by selecting My Profile) or to a specific group you belong to (if any), by selecting the name of the group.

View Updates

Updates are like an ongoing list of alerts of any type of new activity on this site. Updates can include members' personal status updates, notification of new blog posts, new comments, new forum topics that have opened up, new replies, new groups that have formed, new members added to a group, new friendships, new people who have registered for the site, and new "Likes" or favorites-- basically any time something new happens on the site, it will be listed here.

Select which Updates you want to see

You can filter the Updates by All Members, people in My Groups, My Favorites (if any), or @mentions about you. To do this, click on the tabs across the top of the Updates page.

Subscribe to RSS of Updates

Click on the link labeled RSS at the top of the Updates list. This will allow you to subscribe to an RSS (syndicated feed) of the Updates. You can choose to send Updates to a news reader you already use or choose to receive email notification of Updates.

"Like" an update

Click on the Like button below an update to indicate that you like this.

Mark an update as Favorite

Click on the Favorite button to mark an update as a personal favorite. If this is your first Favorite, notice that a new tab appears at the top of the page called My Favorites. Click on this tab to view a list of all your favorite items.

Members

Make friends

Why should I have VirtualVins friends? Here are 2 reasons: 1) You must establish friends first if you wish to create a Group, so that you will be able to invite your friends to join. (Creating a Group allows you to create discussion forums with topics you are interested in.) 2) You must be friends to send someone a Private Message.

Note: You must be logged in to do the following.

To make a friend, go to Members, find the member you're looking for and click on Add Friend next to the person's name. The message "Friendship Requested" will appear. The person will receive a notification that you requested them as a friend. The notification will be sent to the email address they provided when they registered, and an alert will also appear at the top of their screen where it says Notifications.

If you have received a notification that someone wants to be your friend

Click on the link in the email, log in to the site if you are not already, then click on the Notification at the top of the screen which will take you to the Members tab --> Friends tab --> Requests tab where you will see an Accept button and a Reject button. Click on Accept to accept this person as a friend. The person will then receive an email notification that you accepted them.

Edit your member account settings & options

The first step in any of the tasks listed below is to go to the Members tab, find your own name in the list and click on it. From there you will see several tabs across the top of the section showing what you can do. (These options are also available in the My Account drop-down menu in the menu bar at the top of the screen):

View your own Activity

Click on the Activity tab. This is a list of all the actions you initiated since becoming a member, most recent first.

Edit your profile

Click on the Profile tab. Here you can change your name, your Affiliation (indicate which branch of the Vincentian Family: CM, DC, SC, etc.), your About Me and My Ministry/Interests, and your avatar (the little picture that represents you).

Messages

This section is used to send messages between members of the site. Click on the Messages tab. Here you can View your Inbox, View Sent Messages, or Compose a Message to another member.

Friends

View a list of your friends.

Groups

View Groups

See a list of the groups you belong to.

Join a Group

Click on Join Group.

Leave a Group

Click on Leave Group.

Settings

Here you can change your preferred email, or change your password.

Private Messages

To send a private message, go to the Members tab, click on the name of the person, then click on Send Private Message. The person's username will automatically be added to the To field. Note: You must be friends with the person you are sending the message to, otherwise the message will not be sent.

To reply to a message, click on Send Private Message and the compose screen will come up as a reply.

@Mention A User

Go to the Members tab, click on the name of the person, then click on Mention This User. You will be taken to the Updates page where you will see that the person's username is automatically filled in (for example: @john). You can then continue to compose an update message and since the person was mentioned, they will be sent a notification of your update message.

Groups

This page lists all the groups that exist on the site.

Note: You must be logged in to do the following.

Create a Group

Click on the Create a Group button, next to the title Group Directory at the top of the page. Follow instructions on the screen. You can choose if your group will be public

(anyone can join) or private (by invitation only). You will then be listed as an administrator of that group.

My Groups

Click on the My Groups tab to view a list of any groups you belong to.

Join or Leave Groups

Click on the Join Group or Leave Group button which is to the right of the group's name.

Group Options

Click on the title of the group for more options.

Home tab

This allows you to post an update about what's new in this group (can also be done from the Updates page).

Forum

Lists all forum topics associated with that group, and allows you to post a new topic if desired (can also be done from the Forums page).

To open a forum and participate in a topic discussion (Post a reply)
First click on the title (link) of the topic you wish to participate in. This will take you to a list of posts for that topic. Scroll to the bottom of the screen and type your message in the Add a Reply box, then click on Post Reply.

Members

Shows a list of all members in that group.

Send Invites

Shows a list of all your friends. Check the box next to each friend's name to send an invite to join the group. Your friend(s) will receive a notification.

Setting up Group Roles

The group administrator can add other administrators or appoint moderators by selecting the group and choosing admin -> manage members. There they can promote to moderator or administrator, demote, or even ban members of the group. Once someone has posted a comment to a group discussion forum, the only ones who will see the editing options for the post (Edit, Delete, etc.) are: 1) the user who created the post, 2) the group moderator, and 3) the site administrator.

Forums

*Note: Forums are always associated with Groups; must join group to fully participate

Note: You must be logged in to do the following.

To create a new discussion topic

Click on the New Topic button, next to the title Group Forums Directory at the top of the page.

My Topics

View topics you are involved in.

To participate in a topic discussion (Post a reply)

First click on the title (link) of the topic you wish to participate in. This will take you to a list of posts for that topic. Scroll to the bottom of the screen and type your message in the Add a Reply box, then click on Post Reply.

Blog

The blog consists of brief news articles or other entries posted by the site administrators from Famvin.

Leave a Comment

To comment on a blog post, click on the title of the post, then scroll down until you see the Leave a Reply box - enter your comment then click on Submit.

Conferencing

This page allows you to view a schedule of upcoming video conferences hosted by Famvin. You can also request use of the Famvin Video Conferencing system for a discussion on topic of your choice (it holds up to 6 people at a time). Each site or participant will need to have a webcam and microphone. For more details see <http://vinformation.famvin.org/start-community/> and scroll down to the section called "What you need to do video conferencing."

Live Feeds

The Social Media Live Feeds page is like a central Vincentian communications hub. It contains live Twitter feeds, Facebook streams, links to the VirtualVins Flickr Group and Famvin's YouTube Channel. It also contains a list of links to the Facebook and Twitter pages of many branches of the Vincentian Family.