

# INTRODUCTION

## Editor's Note

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This edition of *Vincentiana* has a different theme from what was planned previously, and for good reason. After publishing the *Ratio Formationis* in the last issue, our plan was to devote this one to a series of articles written by confreres on the various aspects of the Ratio. However, with the General Assembly on the horizon, we decided that a more pressing need was to have an issue devoted to materials entrusted to us by the Preparatory Commission for the General Assembly. This year, provinces will hold domestic and provincial assemblies to discuss *postulata* and to elect delegates for the 2016 General Assembly. We at *Vincentiana* want to assist you in this important endeavor by providing you with resources and information on the General Assembly.

So this issue is devoted to assisting confreres in getting ready for the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Assembly. To accomplish this goal, our main presentation is divided into two parts. Part One is comprised of memos and short articles on the “mechanics” of preparing for a General Assembly. Of special interest will be a “practical guide” for planning a provincial assembly, a “reflection guide” for both domestic and provincial assemblies, instructions for submitting “*postulata*” for the General Assembly, forms that need to be submitted to insure provinces are represented at the Assembly.

The second section (Part Two) on preparing for the 2016 General Assembly holds a series of articles by confreres for reflection and discussion. Fr. Patrick Griffin, with his keen background in Scripture, reflects on the Assembly’s Jeremiah-based biblical theme: “*To whom-ever I send you, you shall go*” (Jer. 1:7). Fathers John Rybolt and Bernard Koch exercise their prerogative as excellent historical researchers in writing on a brief history of General Assemblies (Fr. Rybolt), and lessons we can learn in studying the genesis of our Vincentian charism (Fr. Koch).

Two articles touch upon current and pressing interests in the Church today. Fr. Celestin Fernandez explores the contributions Vincentians can make to the “New Evangelization” today, and Fr. Jaroslaw Lawrenz discusses two favorite themes of Pope Francis: “mercy” for those on the “peripheries” of life. We conclude with a reflection by our Fr. G. Gregory Gay, our Superior General and Fr. Joseph Agostino, the chair of the Preparatory Commission. They share their ideas on

“Multiculturalism, Solidarity, and Collaboration”, three themes bound to be topics of considerable discussion at the next General Assembly.

Rounding out the issue is a thought-provoking article from Fr. Robert Maloney, entitled, “The Company will cease to exist, unless...” (I will let you end that sentence on your own, but please read the article first!). We also include our continued reflection from the General Curia on the vow of stability, as well as regular notices and circulars from the General Curia and the Superior General.

The next issue will have as its theme a discussion of the eight parts of the *Ratio Formationis*, written by confreres who have generously shared their experience of formation, along with their ideas and insights on these topics. Confreres authoring articles for issue come from varied countries and continents, but all are united in their desire to live and pass on the Vincentian charism to the next generation of confreres, seminarists, and aspirants to the Congregation of the Mission. It is important to recall that the *Ratio* deals with initial as well as ongoing formation, so it is meant to be utilized by all members of the Congregation of the Mission. As we can see from the life of our Holy Founder, St. Vincent, we are all constantly being formed in Christ’s way!

May the grace and blessings of the Lord Jesus be with you in 2015, and may St. Vincent’s spirit and example continue to guide us as we prepare for the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Assembly in 2016.