

6

REPORTS - General Curia

Address of the Superior General to the 2016 General Assembly

G. Gregory Gay, CM
Superior General

Without a doubt, our most significant resource are the missionaries, our confreres. These are words shared with us at the inter-assembly Visitors' Meeting in Mexico in 2007. They come from the heart of Father Hugh O'Donnell. These words struck a chord with me and have always been the vision from which I have tried to carry out my responsibility as animator of the Congregation of the Mission and of the Vincentian Family.

I speak to you today, my brothers, as the Superior General, directly to you, the delegates of this General Assembly, and to all the confreres of the Congregation of the Mission. These 12 years as Superior General have been a blessing, through which God has enabled me to see, with great clarity, the dynamism of our charism, expressed in different ways and different cultures throughout the world. For this, I am truly grateful and I can say that what I have given has been minimal in comparison to what I have received.

I have hope for the Congregation of the Mission. That hope is based on the continual guidance of the Holy Spirit that we, as members of the Congregation of the Mission and through different means, particularly our most recent General Assemblies, seek to implement. The direction that we are given comes from the discussions that take place here in the General Assembly. As I made clear to my Council from the beginning and repeated at the very end in an evaluation we had together in the Holy Land, the project that we carried out is not my project. We tried to be faithful to that which guides us, the directives given to us by the General Assembly. We have tried to follow through on them and we leave them now to the Holy Spirit, working through the next administration, the new Superior General and his Council. I exhort them to follow through not on what they want, but what the Congregation of the Mission wants. This will be evident in

the discussions that we have here and that began in the Domestic and Provincial Assemblies in preparation for this General Assembly.

Our theme is very clear. We are celebrating 400 years of the birth of the charism. I speak of this not just as the birth of the Congregation of the Mission, or the birth of the Confraternities of Charity, which today we call AIC. It is truly the birth of the charism, Saint Vincent's vision of service and presence in the Church, evangelizing and caring for those most in need, whom we call, and I refer to continually as, our lords and masters. I pray that we may always do this as good and faithful servants.

We are the Congregation of the Mission. This is our name. That means our mission is to evangelize and to serve the poor. We are called to follow Jesus Christ, the Evangelizer. In a small way, but one that is significant to me, by our name we should recognize our identity. It is unfortunate that popular names have been given to us, like the Lazarists, or the Vincentians, or Paulinos, or Paúles. They come from the people, but they do not identify clearly, whom we are as does our name, the Congregation of the Mission, given to us by Saint Vincent de Paul. This thrust of ours, our identity, is both international, as well as missionary. We are an international congregation at the service of the Church through evangelization and we try to cultivate that in the different apostolates that we have developed.

Another way to help us deepen our sense of identity is to know our Constitutions well. Unfortunately, I find, in my visits around the world, that many confreres do not know the Constitutions and, sadly enough, do not even have copies of the Constitutions available for their students in the Internal Seminary, etc. How can we understand or even have a sense of who we are if we do not know our basic common law, which is contained in our Constitutions? Unfortunately, what I see as an obstacle of growing in our knowledge of who we are, as international and missionary, is that many times we are guided by our traditions. I grant that there are very healthy traditions that we have to maintain within the Congregation, but there are other traditions, which I do not consider healthy, and even contrary to our Constitutions, which guide us more than our Constitutions do. Without going into detail on this matter, let us know our Constitutions and know them well.

Let us know well the writings of our Founder, the documents that have been developed by our General Assemblies and Superiors General and their Councils to help orient us to live more deeply the

charism. We do not have to reinvent the wheel. We have lots of information before us in order even to do our own ongoing formation in terms of what our identity is. I think, perhaps, one of the things on which we have to focus more and more is being faithful to what Saint Vincent de Paul teaches us. If you want a good Vincentian, find a man who is willing to deepen a sense of the five characteristic virtues in his life. Vincent saw these in Jesus. They were the ones that attracted him, perhaps the ones in which he himself needed to grow. These characteristic virtues identify who we are. When we see a man who is simple, when we see a man who is humble, when we see a man who is gentle, meek, a man who is willing to sacrifice, and a man who is enthusiastic, we can say: that man is a Vincentian. Let us ask the Lord to help us in our everyday lives, in our union with him in prayer, in our experience of him in the poor to live more faithfully that which is our spirit, that which comes to us through the characteristic virtues, our Constitutions, and other documents that are there to help us grow. We do not have to look outside to other places for any great, illuminating materials. We have it all. All we need to do is apply it. With God's grace, we can do that.

Our main thrust throughout this whole Assembly, as you know from the Domestic Assemblies, is evangelization and how we might better do that in the world in which we live today. All the major themes that we have discussed in the last General Assemblies continue to be very much present in this Assembly, whether it be collaboration in the Vincentian Family or interprovincial collaboration. The latter includes reconfiguration and a willingness to enliven our missionary spirit by encouraging our young men in formation to enkindle within themselves a missionary spirit and to be willing to go even beyond the frontiers of their own provinces.

I have to say, with all sincerity, that probably one of my greatest challenges has been the promotion of being an international congregation with a missionary spirit. We come up against one of our biggest obstacles, which is provincialism. I will say it again, provincialism. As many people have commented, there is a sense in some provinces that we are nothing more than a loose federation. Perhaps this is a reaction to the overly centralized government of the Congregation prior to our last Constitutions of 1984. Our new Constitutions, although reserving some authority to the Superior General and his Council concerning the direction to be given to the Congregation of the Mission, nonetheless remain weak with regard to

our “internationality.” There are still indications, at times, that little importance is given to what takes place at the international level. This is reflected in poor communication between the Superior General or the secretariat and some of our provinces, particularly the Visitors. I must admit that, in these 12 years as Superior General, I have seen some improvement in communication on the part of a number of our Visitors. However, another obstacle, besides provincialism, is the closed mindset of some, who cannot see beyond the frontier of their own provinces and cannot see us as part of an international missionary operation at the service of the Church throughout the world.

One effort to promote our missionary dimension has been the establishment of international missions. In my 12 years as Superior General, we have grown from three international missions, which were begun by my predecessor, Father Robert Maloney, to ten official international missions. In addition, we have expanded our presence in one of those international missions, Tunisia, with a new apostolic presence in that country most in need. We hope to extend our presence beyond Tunisia to Mauritania, with the presence of one or more other confreres. I see this as a new missionary thrust in honor of our 400th anniversary.

Besides the seven missions established during my time as Superior General, there is hope for other missions too. On an experimental basis, we are going to open a new mission in Beni, Bolivia. It is a wonderful mission of evangelization in the jungles and rivers of that country. This mission was begun by the Daughters of Charity, who, for lack of personnel, are withdrawing. We have two missionary candidates who will go, at least on an experimental basis, from September to December of this year. I hope that we will be able to grow that mission.

We have another request from Belize, a country that is part of or not part of Central America, where the Daughters of Charity have a mission. The bishops have asked us to participate in that mission, accompanying the Daughters, as well as responding to the pastoral needs of the people.

Another possible site, which I visited most recently in Brazil, is Tefé, Amazonia, where our confrere, Bishop Fernando Barbosa, has asked us to begin a mission. It is one of the poorest dioceses in all of Brazil and we want to respond where we are most needed and where the poor are most abandoned. That is our call as members of the Congregation of the Mission.

Some people at times have cautioned me to be careful about opening missions, but really, in my heart I feel that the requests that we receive are often very clearly areas where people are abandoned. They want to hear the Good News and it is our vocation to share that Good News with them.

In this same light, I would like to point out something that I consider significant, as our way of collaborating with the Vincentian Family. Every single mission that has been opened, both in this and my previous administration, in one way or another, directly or indirectly, resulted from a call to mission by some branch of the Vincentian Family. For example, we were invited to the international mission in Cochabamba, Bolivia by MISEVI. Our lay missionaries wrote, telling us of this great need in a neighboring parish, close to where they were, and we responded. We hope to move on from there to another area of need, because the work has been well done so far. Another mission in Benin, Africa, was a response to a request of the Sisters of the Miraculous Medal, a Community from Slovenia, founded by a Daughter of Charity. A group of Sisters from Croatia went to Benin. The Community now has native Sisters and is beginning to grow. The request of the Sisters came through the bishop. We responded to the need and now have three Polish confreres there. I hope that mission too will grow.

The rest of the missions have been a response to requests made, directly or indirectly, by the Daughters of Charity, whether in Alaska (USA) or in Punta Arenas, Patagonia (Chile), or in Chad. In the last named, we now not only have a missionary parish in the same place where the Daughters of Charity are, but we also assumed the responsibility of the minor seminary, with the help of some of our missionaries from the Province of Congo.

We now have three confreres working in our mission in Angola with an invitation for others to participate and expand this mission, because the needs are great. My first visit there came at the invitation of the Daughters of Charity and the Vincentian Family. In a gathering of the members of the Vincentian Family, a young gentleman from the Saint Vincent de Paul Society stood up and said, "Father, the only branch of the Vincentian Family that is not present here in Angola is the Congregation of the Mission. The needs are great, as you can see." So, I said, "I promise you the next time I visit, within the next couple of years, there will be a mission." Thank God, we are there. The mission is doing well.

In Papua New Guinea, the mission that was originally established by the administration of my predecessor, Father Maloney, has been extended to include the Trobriand Islands, the Diocese of Alotau-Sideia, where our confrere, Bishop Rolly Santos, is present. We want to give priority to the needs of the Church and the calls of bishops, but particularly bishops from our own Congregation. It seems only right that we support them, as our brothers, in carrying out their mission.

This is an example of how we can deepen our sense of internationality by promoting the international missions. I was doubtful if we were to move forward with this or not and that is why it was included in the questions for the Domestic and Provincial Assemblies. Truly, I was surprised that the overwhelming response supported continuing the international missions. Now, my brothers, it is one thing to say that it is important that we continue, but another to make it happen. Now you have to encourage confreres, from the initial stages of their formation, enkindling in them this missionary spirit and urging them to respond. In the various places where we have missions, they are made up, for the most part, of men from different provinces; this is interprovincial collaboration. These are our international missions. It has not always been easy, but it is certainly worthwhile learning how not to see cultures as differences, but rather to see them as an enrichening experience.

We have noticed the difficulties and have tried to respond by giving better formation to the mission superiors and by inviting confreres to participate in ongoing formation programs in preparation for these missions. We want to do even more along that line if we can get the financial help necessary to prepare missionaries. We do not want that to be a burden for the provinces, but rather something that the Congregation of the Mission should assume. Let us develop the sense of being missionary and encourage our young men from the beginning stages of formation to enkindle in their hearts a missionary spirit and respond to calls even beyond their own provinces.

This does not mean that I do not recognize the need for missionaries in each of our provinces. That is true, but not in every case. There are places where I think we are too comfortable. We are too installed. We are too locked into our own comfort zones. Pope Francis is saying it, but we said it years ago. Saint Vincent de Paul said it. Let us get out of our own comfort zones, move forward, and go to places where the Church needs us to respond. The overwhelming response of confreres, who have opened their hearts to international

missions, who opened their hearts to going to missionary provinces, has been that it is life changing for them. They report experiences of conversion, transformation, and the best experiences of their lives as missionaries in the Congregation of the Mission. I, for one, can say the same. My life changed radically when I went to our mission of the Eastern Province in the Republic of Panama. I can remember every year of my presence there having a striking impact on my life and calling me to a deeper commitment to following Jesus Christ, Evangelizer of the Poor. I have heard that story from many, many other confreres, who have participated in missions within either their own province or one of the international missions that we have established. Let us go forward in that sense. In our Vincentian tradition, Saint Vincent de Paul taught us that the Holy Spirit is a fire. I said this in a homily on Pentecost Sunday, in the house of the Congregation of the Mission in Jerusalem, in the presence of three members of the Province of the Orient and the Daughters of Charity from the area, as well as the members of my General Council. We need to put that fire under ourselves to get moving, to get up and get out, and truly to give of ourselves as we are called to do.

If we are tired, if we are worn out, it is because we do not give ourselves fully enough to meditation on the experience of the poor whom we encounter, finding strength in the grace of God that comes through prayer. Let me say it. We need to pray more. Every letter to the confreres, after a canonical visitation, mentions the need to deepen our sense of unity with Jesus Christ in our prayer and private meditation, as well as in our communal prayer. We need to reflect on our experience of Jesus Christ in the poor, whom we encounter, and be nourished by it. Why are we tired? Perhaps because we do not give ourselves enough to Jesus Christ in prayer so that he might rekindle the fire within us to go out and preach the Good News to those who are most in need of God's love.

Let me go onto another challenge that I see before us as an international missionary congregation; that is, the need to collaborate more fully with others who share our charism, as well as those who evangelize and serve the poor in our Church. Our Founder, Saint Vincent de Paul, together with Louise de Marillac, was among the first to promote collaboration with the laity by founding the Confraternities of Charity, followed by the Congregation of the Mission and the Daughters of Charity. Truly, from the very beginning, they worked together, as a Vincentian Family, in the promotion of evangelization.

In my opinion, it has been 12 years of hard work, taking up what my predecessor began. Somehow or other we fell away from that sense of collaboration as time went by. It is probably because we grew and each of the branches developed an attitude, "So why do we need others, when we can do this all on our own?" Those times need to end, whether we have sufficient numbers or whether our numbers diminish. We need one another as a Vincentian Family to move forward the charism that Jesus Christ has given to us through the spirit of our Founder, Saint Vincent de Paul. Enough about wanting to be the center of attention and saying that we do this and another branch does that. We do what we do as members of the Vincentian Family at the service of our lords and masters, the poor, in order to discover more deeply Jesus Christ in them and to carry the message that we do it together.

As I have said everywhere I have visited, "The Superior General, yes, he is the spiritual animator of the Vincentian Family, but he does so in conjunction with all the leaders of the Vincentian Family throughout the world. We made a great effort over the past 12 years, and particularly these last six years, to include more and more members of the Vincentian Family who participate in the charism. They want to do so. They are enthusiastic about being part of something that is bigger than they are. Many times, the resistance comes from the more traditionally established branches, including ourselves. Therefore, my brothers, let us move forward. Let us extend our arms openly to those who share our charism with us. Give them the formation they are seeking. Encourage them to collaborate with us in a common mission, as we will hear in this Assembly. I have asked a layman, the President of MISEVI-Spain, to share with us, from the perspective of the laity, what it means to have a common mission. They desire to work together with us, as we carry out the mission of Jesus Christ, evangelizing and serving the poor.

It has been a long road. There have been ups and downs. However, the Commission for the Promotion of Systemic Change, the Commission for Collaboration within the Vincentian Family, and the Haitian Initiative, developed to celebrate the 350th anniversary of the death of Saint Vincent and Saint Louise, are some of the signs that we are moving forward together as a Family.

The big question now is "What more must be done? The way that Vincent influenced change and maintained it was by framing the right questions.

It is now time to think about a bigger vision of what we are growing toward – what is going to be the fruit of our collaboration or as I prefer to say, our shared mission? Of the focus on systemic change? How will the Family continue to be visible and effective in the world?

How do we make the transition from our present reality of managing decline to one that allows our evangelization, service, spirituality, and values to flourish, grow, and endure?

What if we sponsored a symposium focusing on the next 100 years of the Vincentian Family? It could be comprised of the current leadership and past leaders who can bring wisdom to bear. We could invite contributions from other major figures in the Family and others outside the Family who see the big picture and are not afraid to articulate it.

What if we created a Global Vincentian “NGO” with national subsidiaries covering the areas of education, health, and social services? I hesitate to use the word NGO, because we often misunderstand what a truly Christian, Vincentian-based NGO could feasibly accomplish. Nonetheless, I have said it. Please try to transform your understanding from a truly Vincentian theological perspective.

I would like to see the pooling of patrimonial funds to underpin it and the transfer of assets to give it strength. The Franz Foundation has encouraged us to look toward the creation of a mega-patrimonial fund in this light. I believe that today we, as a Family taken collectively, are probably among the top ten NGOs in the world but we have not taken the time to verify this, let alone use its leverage to have a voice together with our lords and masters in global debates on poverty.

Our major means of communication, FamVin, began years ago with the vision of John Freund and now continues with the work of Father Aidan Rooney. It is an attempt to bring us together in a significant way using social-media. It is incredible that, during my visits, as I ask our candidates how they learned about the Congregation of the Mission, any number of them say, “through the Internet” or “through your website” or “through Facebook.” The contact is through social media. Our call is to take advantage to promote the evangelization of the poor through our charism together with the rest of our Vincentian Family. I pray that this continue, because it is not an option, but an obligation. Minimally, our Constitutions commit us to working to promote the Vincentian Family, but beyond that, it is the best, most significant, and most efficacious way that we can be faithful

to our charism of evangelizing and serving the poor. I think I have said enough about us as an international missionary congregation, collaborating with others in a common mission to move our charism forward.

I would like to talk a bit about my hopes for the new Superior General and his Assistants. There is nothing in our Constitutions that gives a description of what the role of an Assistant General is, other than canonical visitations, participating in General Council meetings, and living in the General Curia in Rome. But over these 12 years, I have tried to lessen the centrality of the Superior General by facilitating greater participation of the Assistants General in the different responsibilities that we have. That is why I called, even prior to being elected Superior General in 2004, for another Assistant General. In the last General Assembly, in 2010, we were able to get that fifth Assistant. With all the different responsibilities that have been given to the Assistants General in order to be an extension of the Superior General in animating the life of the Congregation of the Mission and the Vincentian Family, it is necessary that we have five Assistants General, one of whom is the Vicar General. I hope we will continue to choose members who represent the geographical presence of the Congregation in the world. We have to be very conscious of where our presence is growing, is dynamic, is young, and so is in need of even greater accompaniment.

We know from the statistics that we heard that our greatest growth is in Asia, particularly in Vietnam and in both of our Provinces of India. Our growth also is in Africa. There can be even greater growth in our Province of Nigeria and our new Vice-Province of Cameroon and in our Province of Congo. We are beginning to grow even in our international missions. In the Solomon Islands, the formation of the candidates, attracted to the charism through the service the confreres have provided, has been assumed by the Province of Oceania. We hope the same for the international mission of Papua New Guinea, that its members might be given formation with the help and assistance of the Province of the Philippines. In a desire to strengthen our presence, we need a sufficient number of Assistants in order to accompany these different geographical areas.

It is clear from our Constitutions and I agree that all Assistants General are Assistants General with the Superior General for the Congregation of the Mission. There is not an Assistant General for Africa. There is not an Assistant General for Asia. But, because of

cultural similarities, it is a benefit to have that presence on the General Council in order to help us understand and discern, so the decisions we make might be best for that particular area of the world. And it works, especially when the General Assembly chooses candidates who are truly persons with their hearts and minds open to the internationality of the Congregation and a willingness to serve the entire Congregation.

In this past administration, some of the different responsibilities assigned to the Council have been significant. Together with the Secretary General and our Procurator General, the Vicar General, Father Javier, has helped us with what we consider one of our largest provinces; that is, confreres who are outside the Congregation or in difficult situations. We need to work on caring for the confreres, because, as I said at the very beginning, they are our greatest resource.

We also continue with an Assistant General responsible for our international missions who, together with the Treasurer General, works on the dispersal of our Mission Fund Distribution. The priority is always given to our international missions, as well as to Conferences of Visitors from Asia, Africa, and Latin America in those developing areas of the world.

Father Stanislav Zontak has been responsible for ongoing formation within the Congregation. He is our liaison with the CIF program and with the scholarship program for confreres who come to Rome to study. He has done a fine job. However, in our most recent evaluation, the idea arose, and I am in agreement with this, that there be an Assistant General formally named as responsible for formation, working together with the Superior General and the rest of the Council to deepen our formation in the Congregation of the Mission. It is one of our greatest needs. We lack formators and need good formation to accompany our candidates. We want to move more and more toward interprovincial collaboration or even international settings for the formation of our candidates, in order to break down that sense of provincialism and develop an even greater sense not only of interprovinciality, but also of the internationality of the Congregation. Therefore, I ask that that be a consideration. We will speak about this during the General Assembly.

One of the Assistants General, Father Eli Chaves, has done a fantastic job in accompanying, together with me, the Vincentian Family. However, in order to give greater growth to the Vincentian

Family, we separated the Vincentian Family Office from the General Curia in Rome and developed an independent one. It is operating, at least for the next two years, in Philadelphia, under the direction of Father Joe Agostino, who is here present. In addition, there is another confrere, Father Flavio Pereira, who has been generously offered to the international Congregation from the Province of Central America. This is obviously a project in collaboration with the Vincentian Family and with the help of the Daughters of Charity, Sister Marge Clifford and, hopefully, other collaborators.

The idea has grown to give greater autonomy to the Vincentian Family, still under the guidance, direction, and spiritual animation of the Superior General, but helping each of the different branches, as I mentioned, grow in its collaboration and move the charism forward, especially as we celebrate 400 years of our presence in the world. In order to help lessen, perhaps, the burden or responsibilities of the Superior General in accompanying at least three of the branches of which he is directly responsible as Director General, it might be well if one or three of the Assistants General help the Superior General by accompanying one or all three of these groups in their meetings. These groups, the Vincentian Marian Youth, the Miraculous Medal Association, and MISEVI, recognize the importance and the need for the presence of the Superior General or his delegate.

Another responsibility given to one of the Assistants General is our relationship with organizations outside the Congregation. The Union of Superiors General has a well-developed committee on Justice and Peace and the Integrity of Creation, of which we should be very active and participative. An Assistant General accompanies or serves as a link with our United Nations Representative. Father Joe Foley carried out this latter role for many years in a very fine way. He now has been replaced by a young Colombian confrere, from the Western USA Province, Father Guillermo Campuzano. Father Guillermo is moving forward with our representation at the United Nations, expanding our strength and our presence there through membership on another level that is more significant in giving us input into decisions that could benefit those living in poverty.

The Treasurer General has the responsibility of being our link with the Vincentian Solidarity Office, which, under the guidance of Father Miles Heinen, has done a fantastic job during the years he has served and particularly the last six years of this administration. As you know well, from the correspondence you received from the Superior

General, some of our donations have fallen off, so we have not been able to give regularly to the micro-projects that the Vincentian Solidarity Office offers. However, we are trying to build it up and even build up the base for the fund of the Vincentian Solidarity Office in general. We are soliciting collaboration not just from a few select provinces, who, in the past, have been a great support to the Vincentian Solidarity Office, and I am speaking particularly of the provinces of the United States. Now we have solicited the help of more provinces. These are provinces, which might not have as many economic resources, but they want to be able to contribute and act in a way that we call solidarity. I want to be very simple and clear here. In my opinion, according to our Constitutions, the economic assistance that we give to our developing provinces is not a question of generosity. It is a question of solidarity. Therefore, even according to our Fundamental Statute on Poverty, we are called to assure that there be no differences among us as members of the Congregation of the Mission. It is a very sad thing, and I have said it before and I will say it again here, when distinctions are made between those who have and those who have not. Those distinctions should never be present in the Congregation of the Mission. Our efforts to help one another carry out our mission faithfully have to be shown through solidarity, not only with financial means, but also with sharing missionaries, who are available to go to wherever they might be called to help a province or an international mission that is in need of assistance. That is what solidarity is and you will hear more about that from our Treasurer General.

I want to draw to a close this opening address. Let me reiterate what has been my experience these past 12 years and what I see as challenges for us in the future.

Some people lament that our numbers are diminishing and, in some places in the world, that is true, but, in other places, it is not true. My hope is that our focus not be on simply maintaining the status quo, but let us be more charismatic. Let us promote creativity, through which we can allow the Congregation to grow. Perhaps it is time that those from the northern hemisphere allow themselves to be evangelized by those from the southern hemisphere. Even though the greatest number of missionaries comes from Europe, it is one of the areas most in need of evangelization at this time. The needs are great everywhere, in all the places where we are present. I hope we keep alive our call to respond to those in need of hearing the Good News of Jesus Christ.

In conclusion, I encourage you, as members of this General Assembly, to be concerned about the Superior General and his Council, not focusing only on the Superior General. One man alone cannot do the job and do it well. We need a Superior General and a Council who are collaborative and willing to open their hearts to an even greater knowledge of each of our provinces and the works together with our Vincentian Family. I encourage deepening relationships. We urge the Superior General and his Council to have the Assistants General visit the different provinces more frequently. This will allow them to get to know the province, its membership, and its concerns. They can return later to do the canonical visitation. I know that is expecting a lot in a six-year term, but it is possible. Thus, they can gather information and reflect on it together, allowing them to make decisions for the good of the provinces, for the good of the international missions, and for the good of the Congregation of the Mission in its common mission together with the Vincentian Family.

Report from the Secretary General

Giuseppe Turati, CM

Secretary General

Introduction.

In the General Assembly program there is a space reserved for the Secretary General's report. The report that I prepared for the General Assembly has three objectives:

- first of all, to present some statistics so that the members of the General Assembly can have a comprehensive and realistic view of the situation of the Congregation as a whole and in some of its major internal dynamics;
- secondly, to present briefly the tools used for the collection of such data;
- thirdly, to give some information for good communication between the General Curia and the provinces.

Based on these objectives, I will divide my presentation into three parts.

- 1). Statistical data relating to the Congregation as a whole and in some of its parts (Provinces, Conferences, Continents)
- 2). The instruments at our disposal for the collection and analysis of data (print and online *Catalog*, in addition to a *database* for the internal use of the General Curia)
- 3). Some brief information for proper communication between the General Curia and the provinces.

1. Statistical data

1.1. Data relating to persons

1.1.1. Total number of members. The members of the Congregation on 31 December 2015 were 3187. Comparing this data with that of the previous General Assembly (2010) shows an overall decrease of 112 members, with a percentage decrease of about 3.4% and an average decrease of nearly 20 confreres a year.

1.1.2. By the status of the members. Separating the total number according to the status of the members will give the following data: 34 bishops (including two Cardinals), 2919 priests, 50 deacons (3 of whom are permanent), 141 incorporated Brothers, 43 seminarians already incorporated. To these, who are full members belonging to the Congregation, must be added 227 admitted seminarians, 168 seminarians in the Internal Seminary, and 474 aspirants, for a total of 869 young men in search of their vocation.

1.1.3. By Conferences. The membership distribution by Conferences shows:

- the distribution of confreres in the world,
- the Congregation's trend in recent years (where it decreases and where it increases).
- With the help of some graphics, we can visually grasp the synchronic and diachronic distribution by Conference.
- Please note that Vietnam in 2010 was part of CEVIM (as a Region of Paris) and now is part of APVC (as an autonomous Vice-Province).

1.1.4. By Continent. If we separate the data by Continent, we have the following.

In this case, we made the decision to assign the regions to the continents on which they are located. For example, Rwanda-Burundi and Cameroon (which on 31 December 2015 was still a region of the Paris Province) were calculated in Africa.

1.1.5. Absent. A database available in the General Curia allows us to know this information in real-time, both in absolute terms and by province or type of absence (see "Absent" in the database). On 31 December 2015, 178 were absent, distributed as follows: 25 with the permission of their Visitor (C. 67), 7 with the permission of the Superior General (C. 70), 17 *ad experimentum* in view of incardination into a diocese, 128 illegitimately absent, and a special case (a confrere who disappeared and never reappeared).

1.1.6. Departures. From 2010 to 2015 (over six years) 133 confreres left, divided thus: 13 with a dispensation granted by the Superior General, 42 for incardination into a diocese, 41 dismissed (including 30 *ipso facto* and 11 with a process), and 37 received a dispensation *ab omnibus oneribus* (AOO) from the Holy See.

A database available in the Curia allows us to distribute them by type of departure or by the province to which they belonged (see "Departures" in the database).

- A fact, which I believe to be important, is that, of the 133 confreres who have left the CM, there have been almost 7 each year for incardination into a diocese: this figure is an indication of weakness in the vow of stability and, therefore, the sense of belonging.

- The *ipso-facto* expulsions (usually for having attempted marriage) are 30 (thus 5 per year): this figure is an indication of weakness regarding the vow of celibacy.

- The expulsions after two warnings (the process that is typically begun for violation of the vow of obedience) are relatively few (there are 11).

- There have been 37 laicizations, but the data must be interpreted: 37 are laicizations that led to the departure from the CM of confreres who still belonged to it. To these must be added the other 15 AOO dispensations granted by the Holy See to confreres who had already left the CM, for a total of 52 AOO dispensations (that is, laicizations).

The overall number is high, thanks to the effort made by some Visitors to resolve situations that had been deferred for years, sometimes decades.

N.B. I would like to take this opportunity to emphasize the importance that data on absences and departures be communicated by the provinces accurately and in a timely manner, otherwise the data available to the SG and his Council or that are presented on occasions such as this will not be accurate and their interpretation will be easily distorted.

1.1.7. Deceased. There were 395 deaths in the past six years, with an average of about 65 per year.

1.1.8. Newly incorporated. Over the past six years, the provinces have reported 391 newly incorporated members, broken down thus by Conference:

APVC 120, CLAPVI 102, COVIAM 82, CEVIM 63, NCV 24. We note that, if there had not been departures and expulsions, the incorporated and deceased would balance out.

1.2. Data related to the institutional organization

1.2.1. Internal Division. The Congregation is organized by provinces, vice-provinces, regions, and now there is also a canonical house that depends directly on the General Curia (like the international missions). We have a database (see “Territories” in the database), which shows easily that we currently have 41 provinces, 5 vice-provinces, 8 regions, and a house depending directly on the Curia (from 1 August 2015, Holland is no longer a province, but a house depending directly on the General Curia).

1.2.2. We also have a database (see “Missions” in the database), which gives us a picture of our presence on the missions, although it is not easy to have shared criteria of what the mission lands are today: we have listed 20, including 10 international missions, directly dependent on the Superior General.

1.3. A few brief comments on the statistical data

1.3.1. With regard to persons, the *numerical decrease* is not significant: it continues the trend begun decades ago, which sees a fall in the northern hemisphere and growth in the southern hemisphere. This means continuing the process of moving our presence toward the south of the planet. This involves at least two major challenges:

- how to stem the phenomenon of the decline of vocations in the provinces whose number is decreasing;
- how to ensure appropriate formation in provinces that have many vocations.

1.3.2. Vocational crisis? One issue that is often discussed is whether it is right or not to speak of a “vocation crisis” in the Congregation. If we let ourselves be guided by the numbers, rather than by the common places, we must conclude that, in the Congregation, there are numerical changes, but there is not a vocational crisis. If we compare the total number of *incorporated* members (3187) with the total number of *admitted* members (both those who are making the Internal Seminary and those who have already done so and have not yet been incorporated) plus the *aspirants*, we see that the sum of admitted and aspirants is 869, so almost one third of the incorporated: this is an encouraging fact about the future of the Congregation.

1.3.3. Another reflection regarding persons, concerns the *absent confreres*. Currently there are 178: which is not few. There are few who return to the Community from a situation of absence or difficulty. This fact poses two questions:

- what can be done to strengthen the vow of stability in the initial and ongoing formation,
- how to accompany the confreres in difficulty and help them remain faithful to their vocation.

1.3.4. As for the institutions, an internal *reconfiguration process* has begun among the provinces, which will continue in the coming years, in which there will be predictably constant variations in the number and juridical type of the various subdivisions among provinces, vice-provinces, and regions.

2. Cataloging tools.

Today the Congregation has two tools to gather information about the personal and statistical data.

2.1 *The printed Catalog*

2.1.1. It is known to all the confreres for its centuries-old tradition (the oldest printed *Catalog* I found in the General Secretariat dates back to the year 1874). It is certainly very practical and is used by the vast majority of confreres.

2.1.2. Unfortunately, it has some limitations: a) it is very expensive: for its production and delivery, the total cost of the last publication was over 20,000 euro (about 15,000 for printing and another 5,000 for shipping to the provinces); b) as soon as it is distributed, it is "old," because changes in the Congregation occur continuously, both for people and for houses; c) shipment is not always easy: some provinces have never received the mailed *Catalogs*, which are thus lost (moreover, some countries also put a tax on their value). These limits have not stopped the majority of confreres from asking the Superior General to continue its publication, after the last General Assembly had considered it more opportune to introduce an online *Catalog*. The resumption of printing, which had been interrupted, was a first initiative in the six-year term that is ending. To try to reduce the cost of printing the *Catalog*, we recently sought a cheaper printer and found it in the Publishing House of La Milagrosa of Madrid.

2.2. *The online Catalog*

2.2.1. The online *Catalog* was introduced after the last General Assembly and, after numerous difficulties in adapting it to the needs of the Congregation, today it is efficient and updated in real time, of course, based on the information we receive. That is the second important initiative of this six-year term.

2.2.2. This also has some limitations:

- the first is that it is not easily accessible for all, particularly for those not familiar with the computer (like the oldest confreres) or who do not have easy access to the Internet (as in countries where the connection is not good);
- the actual updating of the data obviously depends on the speed with which the provinces report changes of such data (some are very efficient, others less so, others leave something to be desired).

2.2.3. However, there are some significant advantages:

- the first is that, at least for the provinces that communicate changes quickly, their data are up-to-date (and I think I can say that, little by little, the number of these provinces is growing);
- the second advantage is that, if the *Catalog* is used well (at least by provincial secretaries), it could become the basis of the print *Catalog*. In other words, I hope that, in the future, we can publish a print *Catalog* from the updated data of the online *Catalog*, with clear advantages in terms of time, money, and also the final product, because the data would be more up-to-date and the *Catalog* could be printed periodically (e.g., every six months), maybe directly by the provinces.

2.3. *Demonstration of how to access and how to use the Catalog (if there is time and network access)*

2.3.1. It is sufficient to memorize three things:

- the url: cmdb.cmglobal.org
- your own ID, which typically consists of your last name followed by the first letter of the your first name (e.g., turatig)
- your password, which everyone chooses freely by following certain criteria that are indicated. Whoever does not remember his password or has not one yet may turn to the General Secretariat, which will see to sending it.

2.4. The recording program

2.4.1. A third important initiative of the six-year term now ending has been the introduction of a digitalized recording program. When I began my service (in January 2011), there was no computer program for the documentary archive in the General Secretariat.

2.4.2. With the consent of the General Council, it was decided to buy a package of four programs that allow for the digital storage of information on all current archival documentation (*Procollo*), individual confreres (*Personam*), historical archive (*Archivium*), and library (*Librum*).

2.4.3. Such introduction has increased the amount of work, especially due to the insertion of the data, but it offers the advantage of facilitating the search of the documents at a distance of time from their development.

2.5. Change of personnel

2.5.1. The initiatives changed the demands of the work in the secretariat, which has experienced a renewal of personnel. First of all, I point out the arrival of a confrere, Father Alvaro Mauricio FERNÁNDEZ MONSALVE (Colombian), as Vice-Secretary and editor of the magazine, *Vincentiana*. His presence ensures, among other things, that the secretarial work will continue uninterrupted during all months of the year, something that could not be ensured by one person in charge of the secretariat. Also, the return to the secretariat of Sister Ann Mary (Daughter of Charity) has enriched the staff with her expertise and her mother tongue (English), making it possible to reduce a salaried member of the previous staff, with significant cost savings.

3. Communication between the General Curia and the Provinces.

I would like now to mention briefly a few points that I think are important to ensure a good relationship between the General Curia and the Provinces.

3.1. Use of official addresses of the Curia

3.1.1. There are two official email addresses of the Curia: cmcuria@cmglobal.org and secgen@cmglobal.org. Ordinarily, one of these two should be used for all correspondence between the provinces and the General Curia. The Secretary General prints and transmits all

correspondence received to the Superior General. In urgent cases, he forwards it immediately by e-mail.

3.1.2. Why send it to the Curia? If you write personally to the Superior General, he typically forwards the email to the Secretary General for archival purposes, but sometimes the attachments are lost. Therefore, even when you write directly to the SG, it is well to add a CC to one of the two official addresses, so that all documentation can be conserved in the archives (except for strictly personal communications, which in general, however, are rare).

3.1.3. How to write. It would be best to send documents of some importance as PDF attachments: e-mail programs are the means for sending, as envelope and stamps (no one would send an open letter, without an envelope, just sticking a stamp on the top). The content of a PDF (which is like a photo) is more reserved than a simple email.

3.2. The importance of indicating accurately the subject of the communication.

3.2.1. Typically, one underestimates the importance of indicating accurately the subject of the email. In fact, when you want to retrieve an email after some time, if this is specified by the subject, it is easily found, while if the subject contains general information (such as letter to the Superior General, or greetings, etc.) it will be impossible to trace.

3.3. Communication of data and personal information

3.3.1. If the Curia has the e-mail addresses and mobile phone numbers of individual confreres in its database, they can be contacted easily and quickly by the Superior General, when needed. It would be well if every confrere (or the provincial secretariat) communicates this data, indicating whether the confrere wants them published in the online *Catalog*, or prefers them to be kept confidential in the Curia.

3.3.2. Even the *curriculum vitae* of the confreres should be preserved in the archives of the Curia. Sometimes the Superior General needs this (e.g., on the occasion of an appointment) or at the request of some bishop (perhaps in consultation in view of an episcopal nomination) and, unfortunately, we have only the three dates of the printed *Catalog* (birth, admission, ordination).

3.4. Handing over passwords to one's successors

3.4.1. When a Visitor finishes his mandate, he must leave to his successor the passwords of the province's official email addresses. It

has happened that this did not take place and mail sent by the Secretary General remained for months on the server without being read.

Conclusion. My report is finished. I thank you for your attention. I would also add that I am available during these days for anyone who wants further clarification or information on the various points that I have outlined. Thank you.

Procurator General and Postulator General

Shijo Kanjirathamkunnel, CM

Introduction

This is a modified version of the PowerPoint presentation given during the General Assembly. As without slides, this material is incomplete, I have reworked the text for clarity.

Updates from the office of the Procurator General

To avoid just giving abstract statistical data about the number of cases completed, some of the main duties are included for comprehension.

The main references about the office of the Procurator General are in the Constitutions, arts. 119, §§ 1, 2, 3, 4 and 139; in the Statutes, arts. 59, 63; and in *A Practical Guide for the Visitor*, p. 97.

Accordingly, we can summarize the duties of the Procurator General as the following: to take care of the requests for ordinary faculties from the Holy See, with the consent of the Superior General and having heard the interested Visitors; to take up with the Holy See the business of the Congregation, provinces, houses, and members. He can attend council meetings but cannot vote unless substituting for an absent Assistant. He is an ex-officio member of the General Assembly.

In a word, we can say that the Procurator General is the service link between the Vatican and the Congregation. He is the legal representative of the Congregation of the Mission and the Daughters of Charity to the Holy See.

- 1). When the Provinces write for an invitation for obtaining a visa to come to Rome, the Procurator General is called to serve. Once the letter is prepared, the Procurator General goes to the Vatican for a stamp of a seal from the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life and then walks to the Secretariat of State for another stamp. Sometimes he will wait more than an hour for a signature in the Congregation.

In the last three years (because I have been in the office only three years), we have done 114 invitation letters for the CM and Vincentian Family.

When a request is sent to the General Curia, it is important to send a copy of the passport (valid for a minimum of six months from the date of entry into Italy) and the exact days the person is going to be in Rome.

The request is to be forwarded from the office of the Visitor and not by the confreres, to make sure that the Visitor has given permission. The Superior General has recently sent detailed information to the provinces, vice-provinces, and missions regarding this.

- 2). When a province asks for a dispensation for a confrere, the Procurator General has to process the documents and submit them to the Congregation for the Clergy. After the province has collected all the documents and sent them to the Superior General, the Procurator General takes possession of the documents materially and intellectually. He checks the completeness of the documents, the veracity of the materials, the outward presentation, and summarizes the hundred pages of documents into two pages. He writes his recommendation and decides whether to submit the case to the Vatican or not. If there are missing documents or the proofs are not good enough, more supplementary documents will be asked of the province. After receiving the supplementary documents, he studies them and, if they are in order, submits them to the Vatican.

It takes about six months to a year to complete the process in the Vatican. We have done 26 processes during the last three years and the dispensation was granted for each one, thanks to the Visitors, who took the trouble of preparing the dossier according to the requirements, though I had to be a little demanding at times.

- 3). Whenever the General Curia needs a Vatican passport, a *tessera* (a kind of Vatican identity card), a *nota verbale* (a document to obtain a visa), letters to be sent through diplomatic mail, special stamps for documents, the Procurator General is asked to go to the Vatican Secretariat of State. The Procurator General goes past a half-dozen Swiss Guards, enters a wood-paneled elevator and then is led into a huge carpeted room and is

told to wait. One has to be ready to communicate in Italian, just in case, but French, English, and Spanish are acceptable.

- 4). When a province wants to sell a property, it requests the permission of the Superior General. If there is need for approval from the Holy See (there is a limit to the amount for each country, above which approval is required from the Holy See), the Superior General asks the Procurator General to submit the documents to the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life. After examining the documents and checking if everything is in order, the Procurator General writes a letter to the Cardinal Prefect, goes to the Office of Religious, and submits the documents.

During the last three years, we have completed 14 alienations for the CM. It takes about three to six weeks to complete the process.

- 5). After a beatification/canonization, we have to get approval for the liturgical texts and insert the names into our liturgical calendar with the approval of the Congregation for Divine Worship. The Congregation for Divine Worship can ask us to review the Vincentian Calendar or make some changes when there is a new norm. The New Liturgical Calendar and the change of date for the feast of Saint Louise are to be understood in this sense.

- 6). Dismissal from the CM. It can be *ipso facto* by contracting civil marriage and/or defecting from the Catholic faith, as mentioned in Canon 694 or for other reasons mentioned in Canon 696. It is done through a short or long process depending on the nature of the case. The dossier is prepared in the province and the Superior General with his Council issues the decree of dismissal, which is taken to the Holy See for confirmation.

In the last three years, we submitted 22 dismissals of which 19 were confirmed by the Vatican. It is important to issue the canonical warnings exactly as the law demands.

One of the challenges we face is removing the names of those confreres who appear as illegitimately absent from the provinces for many years. Each Visitor has to take the initiative to begin the process of dismissal. You will get complete cooperation from the Curia to prepare the dossier.

7). With the Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith, we have some cases of apostasy, deacons attempting to celebrate the Holy Mass, etc. The first step is to issue the decree of dismissal from ministries and then inform the Curia with complementary documents so that we can inform the CDF. A preliminary investigation is to be done by the Visitor, who then awaits the decision of the CDF.

Abuse of minors: we have some cases already reported to the CDF. However, there are many other cases, which may be under trial in the civil court, but we have an obligation to inform the CDF for the ecclesiastical procedures.

- a). Competence is exclusively the right of the CDF when it deals with the abuse of minors;
- b). It is obligatory to inform the CDF about the preliminary investigation and the available documents;
- c). Fill out a table which will be provided by the CDF (available from the Procurator General);
- d). Protecting the accused by Superiors is an offence.

8). With other Congregations in the Vatican

- a). Congregation for the Oriental Churches – Internal Seminary/ordinations, etc.

We got permission for a few seminarians of oriental rite to enter the Internal Seminary of the Congregation and to receive diaconate and priestly ordination in the Latin rite.

- b). Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples – various issues.
- c). Apostolic Penitentiary. To update and request plenary and partial indulgences on various occasions important to the Vincentian Family.

9). Other duties

- a). Correspondences between the Visitors/Vice-Visitors/mission superiors/confreres;
- b). Explaining the procedure/norms/doubts when requested;
- c). Procuring tickets for a papal audience;
- d). Obtaining a Papal Blessing;
- e). Helping the provinces or confreres who want to purchase books or special magazines from the Vatican Bookstore.

10). Daughters of Charity

All official work related to the Holy See goes through the office of the Procurator General.

In the last three years, there have been 17 alienations, ten invitation letters, one passport renewal, and two donations.

**UPDATES FROM THE OFFICE OF
THE POSTULATOR GENERAL**

The Postulator General is the person who guides a Cause of Beatification or Canonization through the juridical processes required by the Roman Catholic Church. The major religious orders appoint Postulators General from among their members who are available to act on behalf of the Actors of the causes. The Roman Postulator must reside in Rome.

Reference to the Office of the Postulator General can be found in our Statutes, art. 63, § 2. The Procurator General at the Holy See, by written mandate of the Superior General, can exercise in the Roman Curia the office of Postulator General of the Congregation, according to the norm of law.

1. Beginning a cause:

Anyone can initiate a cause for beatification after five years from death and preferably before 30 years for:

- a). Reputation of Sanctity during and after the death of a confrere/member of the Vincentian Family
- b). Martyrdom for faith in Jesus Christ

2. To begin a process of beatification the following is required:

- a). Actor: responsible for promoting and financing the cause.
In our case, the Visitor asks to start the process and the province is the Actor;
- b). Postulator: We have a Postulator for the CM and DC who takes care of the procedure;
- c). Vice Postulator – appointed by the Postulator General from the province concerned;
- d). The Superior General/Superioress General can initiate a cause in the name of the Congregation/Company.

3. Two important stages:

- a). Diocesan phase: the bishop orders an investigation to gather documents and proofs on the official request of the Postulator General.
- b). Roman phase: Documents and proofs collected during the diocesan inquiry are studied scientifically and systematically in the Congregation for the Causes of Saints.

4. Active Causes for the Vincentian Family:

1. Blessed Frédéric Ozanam (1813-1853)

Antoine-Frédéric Ozanam (Milan, 23 April 1813 - Marseille, 8 September 1853) was a French scholar. He founded, with fellow students, the Conferences of Charity, later known as the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul. Pope John Paul II beatified him in the Cathedral Church of Notre Dame de Paris in 1997. A presumed miracle reported in Portugal is being studied under the diocesan inquiry for the canonization.

2. Venerable Janez Frančišek Gnidovec, CM (1873-1939)

Born in Veliki Lipovec (Ljubljana, Slovenia) on 29 September 1873, he died in Ljubljana on 3 February 1939. He was a Bishop and a great missionary. Saint Mother Teresa of Calcutta wrote about her memorable visit in November 1928. He blessed her and gave her a missionary crucifix. She says, "He was a saint, we all know that ... when I left for Skopje, he offered holy Mass, gave me communion and a blessing. He told me, you go to the missions. Give everything for Jesus. Live only for Jesus that he may be everything in your life. Now he prays for me and I seek his intercession." The *Positio super Virtutibus* was submitted to the Congregation for the Causes of Saints in the year 2000. A miracle attributed through the intercession of Gnidovec was presented to the Congregation in 2007. A presumed miracle is reported in Slovenia and the diocese is collecting all the medical documents under the diocesan phase.

3. Venerable Salvatore Micalizzi, CM (1856-1937)

Born in Naples, Italy on 5 November 1856, he died there on 14 October 1937. His life is an example, par excellence, of a missionary and a priest. His preferential option for the poor, the marginalized, and the suffering is centered in his Vincentian vocation. The diocesan process on "Virtue and the Reputation of Sanctity" was concluded in

1964. On 16 December 2006, Pope Benedict XVI authorized the promulgation of the decree on heroic virtue. A miracle attributed to the intercession of Father Salvatore Micalizzi was presented to the Congregation in 2000. A third consultation of a medical team was requested on 27 October 2010 regarding the miracle. The healing was presented with a new analysis and explanations with the testimony of Professor Andrea Tessitore of the University of Naples, because the healing presented as the miracle was judged extraordinary, exceptional, sudden, and irreversible, but not completely and absolutely inexplicable.

4. Venerable Antônio Ferreira Viçoso, CM (1787-1875)

Born in Peniche, Leira (Portugal) on 13 May 1787, he died in Mariana (Brazil) on 7 July 1875. He was a Portuguese Vincentian missionary-bishop who served for many years in Brazil. There he worked to establish the institutions of the Catholic Church on a solid basis. He opposed efforts by the government to control the workings of the Church and served the needs of the poor of his diocese. In the face of strong opposition, he ordained the first black slave in the history of the Church to become a Catholic priest. The *Positio super Virtutibus* was presented to the Congregation for the Causes of Saints in 2002. On 5 March 2013, the Theological Consultors gave it a positive vote. A study of a presumed miracle is at the Roman phase.

5. Servant of God José María Fernández Sánchez, CM, and 38 Companions

Born in Oviedo, Spain on 19 January 1875, he was martyred in Vallecas on 23 October 1936 during the Spanish Revolution, together with 38 companions. The diocesan inquiry from Madrid was submitted to the Congregation in 2006. The *Positio super Martyrio* was submitted in 2009. This matter is before the Theological Consultors awaiting a vote. Of the 39 martyred, 17 were priests, 16 were brothers, and six were members of the Miraculous Medal Association.

6. Servant of God Vicente Queralt Lloret, CM, and 20 Companions

Born in Barcelona, Spain on 17 November 1894, he was martyred in that city on 30 November 1936, during the Spanish Revolution, together with 20 other martyrs. The diocesan inquiry was submitted in 2006. The *Positio super Martyrio* was submitted in 2009. Among the 20 companions killed were confreres, Daughters of Charity, and lay Vincentian collaborators.

Both these causes are reaching a conclusion and are at the last stage of the Roman phase. If everything goes well, Pope Francis will sign the decree before Christmas. Beatification is expected in the summer of 2017.

7. Servant of God Justa Domínguez de Vidaurreta y Idoy, DC (1875-1958)

Born in Azpeitia (Spain) on 2 November 1875, she died in Madrid on 18 December 1958. In 1932, she was named Provincial for Spain, a dark period in the history of Spain for the political situation and persecutions. She gave witness to human virtues, moral and spiritual courage, intellectual capacity, and love for everyone. She visited the missions in India, Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines. At the time of her death, there were 11,500 sisters in the Province of Spain. The *Positio super Virtutibus* was presented to the Congregation for the Causes of Saints in 2001. It is currently awaiting a vote of the Theological Consultors. A miracle attributed through the intercession of Sister Justa was presented in 2003, and the medical team gave it a positive vote, in view of the future medical consultation (seven doctors), which will take place after the Decree is issued on the Heroic Virtues. The study of the *Positio* is almost completed and, if everything goes well, she will be declared venerable in 2017 and, after the study of the miracle, beatified.

8. Servant of God Santiago Masarnau Fernández (1805-1882)

Born in Madrid on 10 December 1805, he died there on 14 December 1882. He was the founder of the Conferences of Saint Vincent de Paul in Spain. The diocesan inquiry was concluded in 2000. The *Positio* was submitted in 2006 and the Historical Consultors voted positively in 2007. It is currently awaiting a vote from the Theological Consultors.

9. Servant of God Bonaventura Codina y Augerolas, CM (1785-1857)

Born in Hostarlic, Spain on 13 July 1785, he died at Las Palmas, Canary Islands, Spain on 18 November 1857. He was a Bishop at a difficult time in Spain, when there were many problems between the Catholic Church and the State in the 19th century. His extraordinary talent as a pastor with his missionary dimension and his heroic life of virtue are famous even today. The diocesan inquiry started in 1995 and was presented to the Congregation for the Causes of Saints in 2001. After obtaining the validity of the diocesan inquiry on 1 February 2002, the writing of the *Positio* is underway.

10. Servant of God Emilio Lissón Chaves, CM (1872-1961)

Born in Arequipa (Peru) on 24 May 1872, he died in Valencia, Spain on 24 December 1961. He was a Bishop, great missionary, and faithful to the teachings of Saint Vincent. He was a pastor who knew his sheep. The diocesan inquiry on the reputation for virtue and sanctity began on 20 September 2003 and was given to the Congregation for the Causes of Saints in 2008. After obtaining validation on 2 July 2010, the work of the *Positio* is almost completed.

11. Servant of God Gabriella Borgarino, DC (1880-1949)

Born in Boves, Italy on 2 September 1880, she died in Lucerne on 1 January 1949. Her reputation for sanctity is known through love for the Sacred Heart of Jesus and faith in the providence of God. The diocesan inquiry was presented to the Congregation for the Causes of Saints in 2004 and the decree of validity was given in 2005. A miracle attributed to the Servant of God was presented on 5 December 2012 and is awaiting validation. The work of the *Positio* is almost complete.

12. Servant of God Anna Cantalupo, DC (1888-1983)

Born in Naples, Italy on 3 September 1888, she died in Catania on 17 March 1983. Her self-sacrifice, unceasing love for the poor, the sick, and the hungry are well remembered by the people even today. She used to reach out to these people by walking through the city comforting them and leading them to God. The diocesan inquiry opened in 1997, concluded in 2008, and was approved by the Congregation for the Causes of Saints on 18 September 2009. Work on the *Positio* is underway.

13. Servant of God Francesca Benicia de Oliveira, DC (1896-1966)

Born in Redencão, Brazil on 23 August 1896, she died in Baturité, Brazil on 6 July 1966. Her love for the poor and her charity are praiseworthy. The diocesan inquiry started in 1995 and was given to the Congregation for the Causes of Saints in 2001. It was approved on 16 March 2012. The work on the *Positio* is about to begin.

14. Servant of God Cecilia Charrín, DC (1890-1973)

Born in Saint Etienne-des-Oulliers (Rhone, France) on 17 February 1890, she died in Guatemala on 13 July 1973. Hailing from an aristocratic family in France, she dedicated her whole life in Guatemala and the Guatemalan society called her the “sister of the poor.” In 2006, the diocesan inquiry began, and was handed over to

the Congregation for the Causes of Saints in September 2013. The diocesan inquiry is complete and awaits validation.

15. Servant of God Frans Schraven, CM, and Eight Companions (Martyrs in China)

Born in Lottum, Limburg on 13 October 1873, he died on 9 October 1937. He was a Bishop. These Vincentian martyrs died defending the life of young girls who were taken to be abused by the Japanese soldiers. The diocesan inquiry was completed in the Netherlands and was sent to the Congregation for the Causes of Saints on 10 February 2014. The diocesan investigation awaits validation.

16. Servant of God Ján Havlic, CM (1927-1965)

His hometown is Vlčkovany (now Dubovce). Ján Havlik entered the Congregation as a young and promising novice at the beginning of the totalitarian regime, which perpetuated the crudest persecution of believers in the history of the Catholic Church in Slovakia. This situation made impossible his greatest desire in life: to become a priest. However, he did not give up his decision to become a novice with the Vincentians. Rather, he accepted the situation as his vocation and remained faithful until death, even at the cost of 11 years in prison and inhuman toil in the uranium mines of Jáchymov. The diocesan inquiry is complete and translation into Italian is being done.

17. Servant of God Józef Florko, CM, and Ten Polish companions, martyrs

Born on 8 May 1915 in Winnikach (Leopoli), he was martyred in the concentration camp of KL Bergen-Belsen in Lower Saxony on 25 February 1945, under the Nazi persecution. The diocesan inquiry started in Krakow on 17 September 2003. This cause is included together with other martyrs of the diocese in Poland.

18. Servant of God Barbara Samulowska, DC (1865-1950)

Born in Woryty, near Gietrzwałd (northern Poland) in 1865, she died in Guatemala City on 6 December 1950. She is one of two to whom the Blessed Virgin Mary appeared toward the end of the 19th century in a small village in northern Poland. At a time in Guatemala when the government allowed only the Daughters of Charity among the religious in the country, Sister Barbara was a great model for serving the poor, especially in the city hospital. The diocesan inquiry opened on 2 February 2005. Another religious congregation promotes this cause.

19. Servant of God Leopoldina Brandis, DC (1815-1900)

Leopoldina Brandis was born on 27 November 1819 in the city of Graz, Austria. In her family, Leopoldina received the gift of compassion for people in need. Facing human sufferings created a desire in her heart to sacrifice her life for the poor and the sick following the example of Saint Vincent. She was the first provincial of the Province of Graz. She led this province for 50 years. Leopoldina sacrificed her social status, used all of her talents, her education, and her contacts for the sake of serving the poor and the sick, like her spiritual father, Saint Vincent de Paul. The beatification process began in December 2015 in Graz, Austria.

20. Servant of God Teresa Tambelli, DC (1884-1964)

Sister Teresa Tambelli was born on 17 January 1884 in Revere di Mantova, Italy. Teresa entered the Seminary (novitiate) in Turin on 1 November 1904. After serving three years in Casale Monferrato, in 1907 she was sent to Cagliari in Sardinia to serve in a Navy Asylum where she stayed for 57 years. In 1914, she met Sister Giuseppina Nicoli (future Blessed). During World War II, her heroic charity ensured safety to thousands of poor. Thanks to her passion for education, she assured concrete, spiritual, and faith education to children and girls of all ages. The beatification process began in December 2015 in Cagliari, Italy.

21. Servant of God Jorge María Salvaire, CM (1847-1899)

His father would have wanted his son to be a lawyer but Jorge María preferred to enter the seminary of the Vincentian Fathers in Paris. He was ordained on 3 July 1871. In September of the same year, his superiors sent him as a missionary to Buenos Aires in Argentina. On 3 December, he visited for the first time the Sanctuary of the Virgin of Luján, participating in a popular pilgrimage motivated by the epidemic of yellow fever that was ravaging the country. In 1872, when the Parish and the Shrine of Luján were entrusted to the Congregation of the Mission, Salvaire was there to help the parish priest. He taught in the seminary and was in charge of the work of renovation of the old church. In November 1873, Father Salvaire was sent by his superiors to organize, together with Father Fernando Meister, the Azul (Blue) mission to evangelize the Indians who inhabited those lands. The beatification process was begun in 2016 in Argentina by the Archdiocese of Mercedes-Luján.

General Information Communication Office

Jorge Luis Rodríguez B., CM

1. Presentation of the Project

1.1 Project Name and purpose

The CM-Communication Project promotes engagement within the worldwide Congregation of the Mission by improving the quality and effectiveness of all channels of communication necessary in our mission of evangelization.

1.2 Project Vision Statement

“The Congregation of the Mission communicating, collaborating, and evangelizing.”

1.3 Project Mission Statement

The CM-Communication Project creates and employs available media and emerging technologies to connect and to collaborate in evangelizing those on the peripheries, and equips persons to engage in our mission.”

2. Goals

- 1). Conduct a preliminary assessment of the channels of communication used by the Congregation in this digital age.
- 2). Sharpen the focus of communication so that confreres will engage with the themes of Multiculturalism, Solidarity, and Collaboration of our General Assembly.
- 3). Ensure that all forms of communication are attractive, relevant to the missionaries' lives, and timely.
- 4). To form a working group in an atmosphere of collaboration and participation, so that each member dedicates to serving through his skills and abilities.
- 5). Collaborate with and assist various Curia personnel and heads of various standing commissions to improve their use of the various channels of communication, especially social media.

- 6). Explore additional sources of funding to supplement, if necessary, what the Congregation can offer so that we can develop a fully functioning international communications team, possibly even as soon as the General Assembly.

3. Achievements:

- 1). The Congregation of the Mission is making steady progress in understanding the importance of communication in the inner life of the community and its evangelizing mission.
- 2). General Curia has given great importance to communication.
- 3). The Curia, understanding the importance of communication, made the office of communication independent from the publications.
- 4). Lots of provinces have media presence in different ways: from bulletins and magazines, to radio and TV, to digital media and social webs.
- 5). Lots of provinces have digital media (websites) and interact in social webs.
- 6). The website, cmglobal.org, shows an increase in visits, pointing out the presence of the Congregation on the web.
- 7). Moreover, the quality and content of products of communication have improved with information, reports, and videos of the Superior General.
- 8). Communication is beginning to take shape in the dynamic of the Congregation of the Mission.
- 9). *Vincentiana* is being continually enriched by the contribution of a great many confreres.

4. Challenges:

- 1). To continue raising awareness and involving all provinces in formation with regard to the opportunities communication presents for evangelization.
- 2). To overcome the thought of seeing communication as purely instrumental or banal in the life of the missionaries.
- 3). To share information about the life and activities of the province in order to contribute to communion, solidarity, and collaboration in the whole Congregation.

- 4). To raise awareness of the importance of recording and making known the history of the missionaries, works, and provinces, both on the local and universal levels.
- 5). To develop a school of reflection and writing on Vincentian and other themes in order to communicate our spirituality and to overcome the lack of writing.
- 6). To make inroads into the digital world without fear and with the human and financial resources necessary to ensure a significant community presence.
- 7). To promote a community culture of formation in communication, developing ongoing formation programs and specialized studies in this area.
- 8). To offer confreres (seminarians, brothers, priests) an initial and ongoing formation process in comprehensive communication to enable them to dialogue and use the means of social communication appropriately for evangelization.

5. What we hope to achieve in the next three years:

- 1). Forming a communication team among confreres that can offer reflection, formation, and communication policies.
- 2). Having the confreres feel more involved and participative in the field of information, formation, and communication.
- 3). Having the members of the General Curia feel increasingly committed to communication.
- 4). Getting scholarships so that confreres are prepared in languages and the specific ministry of translation.
- 5). Carrying out ongoing reflection regarding our relationship with the means of communication and their contribution to the mission.

What the Congregation needs to support its ministry:

- 1). That there be greater support for communication issues from the provinces.
- 2). That reflection on Vincentian spirituality, Vincentian communication be promoted among the confreres.
- 3). That seminarians have more practice writing scientific papers, so that they acquire these skills from formation.

- 4). That the Superior General's ordinance about learning an alternate language from the mother tongue be restored.
- 5). That the provinces, through the provincial secretaries, give more information about their events.