

TWO CASES

Rome, 11 January 2011

To All the Visitors of the Congregation of the Mission

My dear brothers in Saint Vincent,

May the grace and peace of Our Lord Jesus Christ fill your hearts now and forever!

In the Synthesis of our General Assembly we spoke about the value of ongoing formation. It is stated in paragraph 7 that “all our persons and our possessions belong to the poor if we truly believe, beyond simply saying, that they are our lords and masters. Ongoing formation looks into disposing the best of our resources, the confreres, toward evangelization and service of the poor.”

In the following paragraph of the Synthesis we speak about “the material resources of the community [being] the patrimony of the poor, as Saint Vincent so often reminded us. The wise management of resources, on the one hand, must conform to the basic rules of justice within the community; on the other hand assure the viability of the work of mission and charity. We look for in the Congregation of the Mission an equitable and effective distribution of resources.”

My brothers, it is for this reason that I write to you today with a two-fold purpose:

1. an issue that was talked about at the General Assembly regarding the support of the provinces for the General Curia. and
2. ongoing formation at the international level.

For the first purpose we have come up with what we consider to be an equitably plan that is understood as follows:

Regarding the Provinces’ support of the Curia, we have decided to change the way in which each province is asked to contribute support for the maintenance and operation of the General Curia. As those who attended the General Assembly would know from the Econome General’s report, in the past each province was asked to contribute \$42 to the Curia for each ordained priest in the province. The amount the Curia received under this method was dependent upon the number of priests in the Congregation on January 1 of the year in which the contribution was made. Father Gouldrick pointed out in his presen-

tation that basing the amount on the number of ordained confreres put the heaviest burden on the provinces with the most members. As we look at our growth over the recent past, we are seeing that those provinces with the increasing numbers are not necessarily the provinces with the strongest financial resources necessary to withstand a higher province contribution each year.

Father Gouldrick therefore proposed at the General Assembly a new method for payment, based on whether or not a province was a recipient of aid from the Mission Fund Distribution. He actually used this method when assessing the charges for the General Assembly, charging equally the MFD-eligible provinces 35% of the total cost of the Assembly and each of the provinces not eligible for MFD contributions from the Curia 65% of the total cost of the Assembly. Only positive comments came back to the Curia for this change.

I have decided to use this same method relative to the payment of the annual contribution to the Curia to help support its operating costs. I decided, however, to make a couple of changes. First, I am asking the provinces to contribute a total of \$175,000. Further I am asking those not receiving MFD assistance to pay equally among them 75% of that total cost and each of the provinces receiving MFD assistance to pay 25% of the total \$175,000. These charges will be made to the respective province accounts in January.

I thank you for your generosity in helping to support the Curia Generalizia. As the building ages, our maintenance costs increase as well.

With regard to the second purpose of this letter, ongoing formation, that is "disposing of the best of our resources, the confreres, toward evangelization and service of the poor" we also turn to you as the Provinces of the Congregation of the Mission. As you know, the Center for International Formation (CIF) in Paris is tasked with the ongoing formation of confreres. Since the first session in 1994 more than 600 confreres have taken part in the CIF program for their personal renewal. During their time in CIF, the confreres reflect on how the Vincentian vocation and charism is lived in community life and in ministry. This reflection takes place in the experience of the internationality of the Congregation.

Confreres continue to avail themselves of the programs offered at CIF. The participation in the programs in recent years reflects the changing panorama of the membership in the Congregation. More and more the confreres come from Provinces and regions which have not only younger membership but which also sustain some hopes of continued new membership in the Congregation. There are cases, incidentally, in which these Province are also those with limited financial resources.

Ongoing formation is strategically indispensable to the Congregation's fidelity to the mission and continuing service in the Church and in the world. It is an aspect of our life that seeks collaboration from the whole Congregation. It is in this sense that I would like to invite your Province to be one of the more active partners in this collaboration.

The programs as they are run are rather costly. One factor is the high cost of living in Paris. The others are due to the expenses of translators and the travel expenses of confreres coming from different parts of the world. A greater number of participants would considerably lower the cost of participation. There would be a greater number of participants if they could be helped with their expenses.

With your help we can set up a special account in the General Curia from which the directors of CIF can disburse scholarships according to the expressed needs of certain Provinces. Let us help others who desire to deepen their living of the charism in a creatively faithful way. Presuming on your generosity, I thank you in anticipation.

Your brother in Saint Vincent,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "G. Gregory Gay, C.M." The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "G" and a long horizontal stroke extending across the middle of the name.

G. Gregory Gay, C.M.
Superior General