

Vincentian Family Leadership Meeting Proceedings

Fr. Juventino Elias Castellero Jaén, C.M.

The members of the Executive Committee of the Vincentian Family met at María Immaculada on the Via Ezio, 28, Rome on January 13, 2012. The following members were present:

International Association of Charity	Laurence de la Brosse María Eugenia Magallanes Negrete
Congregation of the Mission	P. G. Gregory Gay, CM P. Eli Chaves, CM.
Daughters of Charity	Sor Evelyne Franc Sor Rosa María Miró
Saint Vincent de Paul Society	Michael Thio, Brian O'Reilly
Coordinator of the Executive Committee of the Vincentian Family for the project of Micro-finance in Haiti	P. Robert Maloney, CM
Comisión de Formación de líderes Vicencianos	P. Joseph Agostino, CM
Office of the Vincentian Family	Sor Ana Aparecida Martins, HC P. Juventino Elías Castellero Jaén, CM

Fruits of the 350th Anniversary

Fr. Juventino Castellero shared a summary of the fruits of the celebration of the 350th anniversary, information that had been summarized by the Office of the Vincentian Family of the General Curia. This summary was made possible as a result of the reports from the different branches of the Vincentian Family, reports that were requested and sent to the Superior General.

The experiences can be grouped according to seven aspects:

- *The inter relationships of the Family were strengthened and new relationships with groups with a similar spiritual focus were initiated*

- *Deepening formation*
- *Creative expressions*
- *Strengthening of our vocation*
- *Strengthening our spirituality*
- *Drawing closer to the poor*
- *The missionary dimension of our identity was strengthened.*

After the presentation, reactions were invited. It was stated that a report should be put together and shared with the distinct branches of the Vincentian Family. Also, it was felt that some of the specific experiences should be made a part of the report.

Report of Father Maloney

Fr. Robert P. Maloney, C.M. reported on the project of the Vincentian Family in Haiti in collaboration with Zafèn and FONKOZE during 2011.

Projects

“Chemen Lavi Miyo” or the path to a better life

This was initiated on the feast of Saint Vincent, 2011 and is focused on those who are most poor in Haiti, especially those who must “survive” on less than \$1.25 USD daily. These individuals live in a situation of extreme poverty and many of them are not even registered in their country, thus they have no access to their rights (water, health, and education). It is as though they did not exist. It is projected that it will provide incentives to mothers (many of them with 4, 5 or more children) so that they can create their own income. This is an opportunity that is extended to extremely poor women so that they can slowly advance.

School Financing

This project has been expanded to include 36 schools that are connected to different branches of the Vincentian Family in Haiti. This project has focused on two aspects:

- There are about 9,000 children who receive a hot meal on a daily basis.
- Also, there is a scholarship plan through ZAFEN.

This project supports those children who are looking for a quality education so that they can become part of the sustainable economic solution in Haiti.

Proposals (Fr. Maloney)

- The budget for the year 2012 will be \$65,000.00 USD and this was approved.
- Fr. Maloney requested that he be relieved of this responsibility since he has many other activities which make it difficult for him to continue in this position. It was proposed that Fr. Joseph Agostino take up this position, and as he has accepted it, he will now assume this role.

Commission on the Formation of Vincentian Leaders

As a result of the XLI General Assembly of the Congregation of the Mission in 2010 some branches of the Vincentian Family felt that it was necessary to have a commission that would coordinate the formation of Vincentian leaders. Following this motion the Commission for the Formation of Vincentian Leaders was formed. The distinct branches were asked to delegate members to serve on this commission. The first meeting of this group was held in Rome at Via Ezio and two decisions were made:

- To form a sub-commission led by Fr. Joe Agostino, C.M. that would create formation programs for the leaders.
- To draw up an outline of the work that will then be distributed to all the members of the committee. The existence of this commission is an initiative of the Congregation of the Mission. It seeks to involve all the branches of the Vincentian Family.

This commission does **not** seek to replace the essential and on-going formation that occurs and that ought to occur within each branch of the Vincentian Family. Rather, it involves itself in an effort to facilitate a formation process for those persons who exercise a role of leadership within the different branches of the Vincentian Family.

Criteria in order to participate

Participants should have a broad knowledge of their branch and a sensitivity toward the Vincentian charism, that is, a clear identity with the option for the poor. Through this experience they should also have the ability to enrich the members of their own branch, and the branches

with which there is some form of collaboration. Therefore, it is necessary to utilize some process for selecting such individuals who will participate in these formation programs. The commission ought to guarantee that the persons who participate in these sessions fulfill the minimum criteria.

Content

Lines that provide us with a point of departure for this work:

- Vincentian identity, which involves, history, the particular branch, charism.
- The leader: as servant, as missionary and catalyst, as advisor.

The program will be piloted in English and later at the appropriate time this material will then be translated into the other languages.

Meeting of Leaders of Branches of Vincentian Family scheduled for January 14-15, 2011

This was a time for formation as a family and a time to share the work of each group in light of the objectives of the Millennium Plan.

Representatives from the following groups were present at the meeting: International Association of Charity, Congregation of the Mission, Daughters of Charity, Saint Vincent de Paul Society, Vincentian Marian Youth, Miraculous Medal Association, MISEVI, Religious of Saint Vincent de Paul (RSV), Brothers of Charity, Brothers of Mercy, Federation of Charity (Strasbourg), Federation of Charity (USA), De Paul International and those invited for the first time are representatives from the Sisters of Saint Vincent de Paul (Gyzezem) and the Sisters of Saint Vincent de Paul (Zagreb).

The theme for reflection and formation: the witness of Frederic Ozanam and his contribution to the Social Doctrine of the church (Dr. Austin Fagan of the Saint Vincent de Paul Society and Father Mizaël Pugiolo, C.M. discussed this theme). There was to be some time allotted so that the participants can come to know the two new groups that have been invited the presentation of the projects that respond to one or more objectives of the Millennium Plan.

Projects in the Horn of Africa

In response to the call of the Holy Father, who has requested that we focus on the Horn of Africa, we are holding meetings with all the organizations that are present in the area. The St. Vincent de Paul

Society explained that some of the projects that in collaboration with the Daughters of Charity in the northern part of Abyssinia are focused on the problems of hunger and drought. Mention was also made about a project in Ethiopia that is focused on rehabilitating persons displaced because of war, people who have means to cultivate the land or other basic necessities.

In Kenya, there is another project that is focused on 5,000 people who do not have water or food. This is an agricultural project in which people are provided with seeds and other items that are necessary to farm. In these projects the Saint Vincent de Paul Society collaborates as a branch of the Vincentian Family and also collaborates with other organizations that are present in the area.

Symposium on Islam

Fr. Claudio Santángelo shared reflections on the Symposium on Interreligious Dialogue with Islam that took place in Indonesia (a country with a large Muslim population) during the month of August. The meeting took place from August 7-17, 2011 and participation included 63 members of the Vincentian Family from 30 different countries. Participants had the opportunity to listen and discuss, as well as share their experiences in working with Muslim sisters and brothers. During this gathering, persons from the Islamic faith and the Catholic faith put forth theological, philosophical and practical aspects of dialogue, collaboration and living together.

Lines of action

These lines of action were approved by symposium participants at the meeting's conclusion.

- Create an international team for interreligious dialogue.
- Deepen this theme on the level of the universities and other centers of study.
- Multiply this experience with conferences on an international and national level.

Information concerning celebration of 200th anniversary of the birth of Frederic Ozanam

The program is focused in reflections on Ozanam as a pioneer with regard to the Social Doctrine of the Church; a Eucharistic celebration in the cathedral of Paris, a classical music concert, events that promote

his canonization, etc. Sr. Evelyn Franc, D.C. suggested that there should be a joint effort to promote the canonization of Sister Rosalie Rendu and Frederic Ozanam.

Various matters for information

- Sr. Evelyn expressed her gratitude for the help that she received from the Vincentian Family in carrying out the different activities that surrounded the beatification of Sister Marguerite Rután, D.C. last June in Dax, France. This was a wonderful example of collaborating as a family.
- Sr. Evelyn also noted since the Congregation of the Mission and the Daughters of Charity have invested funds in renovation of the grounds of the birthplace of St. Vincent in Dax, the facility is more useable and it provides better service for visitors and pilgrims. It can now receive groups of the Vincentian Family and is considering opening the facility to groups of international pilgrims.
- Fr. G. Gregory Gay announced that the Vincentian Marian Youth groups are involved in a campaign of self-financing. This campaign has as its motto: *Something More From You*. This information was communicated at this meeting because the branches might be approached by the VMY for assistance.
- The theme for reflection during the feast of Saint Vincent de Paul we decided that the theme for this year will be: Collaboration and Evangelization. The motto will be: *Let us work together in order to share the Good News and the life of those who are poor*.
- Lastly, the date for the next meeting of the Executive Committee and Leaders of the International Vincentian Family are sent:
 - The Executive Committee in Paris on January 12, 2013 in Paris at Rue de Bac.
 - The meeting of the Leaders of the International Vincentian Paris on January 18 and 19, 2014. The day before, that is, January 17, the Executive Committee will meet.

The meeting concluded as we were led in prayer recited the prayer of the Vincentian Family.