

May 31, 1996

*To all the Visitors of the Congregation of the Mission*

My very dear Confreres,

May the grace of Our Lord be always with you!

SIEV, during its annual meeting last July at the General Curia, proposed to the General Council the idea of organizing a VINCENTIAN MONTH for July 1997 on the theme of "Popular Missions." The objective of such a "month" is different than that of CIF because it does not aim at a global formation, but treats a particular theme in the space of four weeks, and there is not an age limit for the participants. Thus, with all the members of the Council, I felt it was opportune to propose to the entire Congregation this formation session centered on a ministry which is so important and significant for us.

Therefore, I invite you to send from one to three confreres, according to the size of your province, to participate in this Vincentian Month which will take place in Paris, from July 7 to August 2, 1997. They should be chosen from among those who have experience in the popular missions. The confreres will be accepted according to the places available.

You will find enclosed a reply form for giving the names of the participants from your province. Please send it, by October 15, 1996, to Fr. Emeric Amyot d'Inville, Curia delegate for SIEV and member of the preparation team for the "Month." When we have received the names, the preparation team will write to them to ask them to describe briefly their mission experience, their specialties, their needs, and their desires. They will also be encouraged to bring missionary materials, videos, etc. to share with the others.

The meeting will employ a largely inductive method which begins with the experiences and the questions of the confreres, while giving appropriate place to theological, scriptural, and Vincentian reflection. This will surely be an extraordinary occasion for fruitful sharing among the confreres engaged in this ministry; each participant will bring his experiences and his ideas, and will learn from those of others. It will also be an opportunity for each one to take stock of his way of living the mission in face of present challenges and to find new strength in service of this particularly Vincentian work.

Your brother in St. Vincent,

Robert P. Maloney, C.M.  
Superior General