

INTRODUCTION

Editor's Note

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This first issue of 2014 has as its theme “Reflections on the Vincentian Missionary Parish”. If this sounds familiar, it is, as last year’s first issue focused on the qualities associated with Vincentian parishes. However, at the July 2013 International Visitors Meeting, amidst discussion of a ‘practical guide’ for confreres in parish ministry was necessary, one point emerged: there is a greater need for reflection and discussion what constitutes a Vincentian parish today.

You’ll notice a key difference in this issue. We inserted the word “missionary” and for good reason: to emphasize a central element of our vocation and apostolate. To be Vincentian is to be missionary. To be true to our charism, we must know what constitutes a “*Vincentian missionary parish*”. Those three words are distinct elements, worthy of reflection and discussion. Who knows better than Vincentian missionaries and pastors as they share their experiences?

You’ll hear from confreres serving in “Vincentian Missionary Parishes” who are from varied provinces, nations and continents. Working with indigenous peoples and people in the under-served areas, they show remarkable dedication and innovation in advancing the Kingdom of God and the Vincentian charism. Their work is inspiring and instructive, well worth reading.

Ministering to and with the laity is a key element in the life in today’s Church and our Vincentian charism. Our confrere Felix Alvarez, drawing upon the documents of Vatican II and papal and biblical texts, highlights the development of a theology of the laity. The article explores a spirituality of the laity and ways to assist in their formation. It is a “must-read” for anyone who wants to gain an overview and framework of lay ministry in the Church today.

This issue continues with ‘Meditation Moment’, a reflection on our Constitutions, and ‘Spotlight Interview’ with a confrere living our charism in a unique way. We have a new feature that will periodically surface: selected homilies of the Superior General. Fr. G. Gregory Gay logs many miles traveling the world over, meeting confreres, Daughters of Charity, and Vincentian Family members. Besides informal talks, he offers homilies and addresses that often leave his audience asking for copies of the text. So, here is a small sample, with more to come.

May 2014 truly be a blessed one, as we seek to follow the Lord Jesus and St. Vincent!