

THEME:

The Vincentian Missionary Parish of Today

Editor's Note

The theme of this issue is “Reflections on the Vincentian Missionary Parish”. To assist in properly presenting them, we have received essays detailing the experiences of a Visitor, pastors, and missionaries. We have called upon confreres from various continents, countries, and missions for their view on what constitutes a Vincentian missionary parish. Those ‘laboring in the vineyard’ have a uniquely authentic perspective to contribute to this discussion; well worth reflecting upon by our readers.

However, before reading the excellent submissions of our confreres, it is important to know the criteria they were asked to reflect upon. Below are listed some key criteria presented at the July 2013 Visitors meeting for establishing and maintaining a Vincentian missionary parish.

PROFILING A VINCENTIAN PARISH: Some Crucial Criteria

- *It is in a permanent state of mission, and committed to the urgent needs of the poor.*
- *It is among the poor, oriented to serving them, and attends to new situations of poverty.*
- *It fosters Vincentian and Marian Spirituality and Trinitarian faith.*
- *The commitment to serve is set by contract with the local bishop for a limited time.*
- *It is done as a work with the laity and the Vincentian Family.*
- *It promotes study and application of systemic change & the Church’s Social Doctrine.*
- *It enables the implementation of popular missions.*
- *It develops and implements a parish pastoral plan.*
- *It encourages popular devotion and piety, and affirms the cultural realities of its people.*
- *It creates small parish communities by inter-personal evangelization and home visits.*
- *It is a model of fair and just treatment to all people, especially the poor.*

What follows on these next pages are essays from confreres engaged in parish pastoral in Latin America (Argentina and Bolivia), Central America (Panama), Africa (Cameroon, Chad and Tunisia), and Northern India. Requests for essays went to confreres from twelve missions, but these seven missionaries responded. As you will see their ideas and pastoral practices help advance our understanding of what truly constitutes a “Vincentian Missionary Parish” today.