

Introduction

Editor's Note

This year, 2017, is a year of grace, a Jubilee Year for all those who are members of the worldwide Vincentian Family. This year we celebrate the 400th anniversary of the birth of the Vincentian charism, a celebration that leads us to reflect on Matthew 25:35, *I was a stranger and you welcomed me!*

This year, the four issues of *Vincentiana* will be dedicated to reflections on the various ways in which our charism continues to be vital and relevant in the present era.

In this first issue, the reader will find documents prepared by the General Curia that refer to the reconfiguration that occurred among the Provinces in Spain (Barcelona, Madrid, and Salamanca) and that resulted in the formation of the new Province of Saint Vincent de Paul – Spain. There is also a document relating to the election and appointment of the new Visitor.

This issue also includes the Decree from the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, which presents the final edition of the Liturgical Calendar of the Congregation of the Mission and the Company of the Daughters of Charity. Note: the celebration of the feast of Saint Louise is 9 May and the celebration of the feast of Saint Francis Regis Clet has been moved from 18 February to 9 July. We have also included the letter from the Holy See with regard to the granting of indulgences to all members of the Vincentian Family during this Jubilee Year.

Following the tradition established in previous years, this first issue includes the statistics of the Congregation of the Mission for the year 2016. The reconfiguration of the Provinces of Italy and France are highlighted in these statistics and the reader will also notice the erection of the Vice-Province of Cameroon and the new Region of Venezuela that is connected to the Province of Colombia.

We publish in this issue the various letters of the Superior General: his letter on the anniversary of the Foundation of the Congregation (25 January), his Lenten Message, his letter announcing the Vincentian Symposium which will be held in Rome (October 2017). This last letter contains much information for those persons who will participate in this event. Finally, there is the report of the Superior General concerning the March *Tempo Forte*.

We offer in this issue an article on Jorge Garcia Isaza, CM, Bishop Emeritus of the Apostolic Vicariate of Tierradentro, Colombia. We highlight his apostolic zeal and his life-long love for the Congregation and for the Church.

We could not ignore certain events that highlight our celebration of this Jubilee Year. The Episcopal Conference in Portugal recognized the 400 years of living the Vincentian charism and the 300 years of presence of the Congregation in that country. We also publish the message of Pope Francis on the occasion of the General Assembly of the AIC in Châtillon. It was there that 400 years ago the first Confraternity of Charity was established. We also include the words of the Advisor to the AIC in France, words that were spoken during the celebration that took place in the Cathedral of Notre Dame in Paris.

The central theme of this edition is *Mission and Charity: elements of our Vincentian charism*. This theme has been developed by various members of SIEV. Javier Álvarez, *Mission and Charity in the Congregation of Today*, (presents recent statistical information and a reflection on the various ministries of the confreres); Armada Riyanto, *Missionary Charism of Vincent de Paul in the Asian Context* (contains numerous insightful references from various Vincentian texts); Corpus Delgado, *God's Providence Has Inspired the Company with This Holy, Ingenious Means* (a reflection on the nature of those heavy labors of our state and why, in order to accomplish those works, Vincent felt it necessary to make it clear that we do not intend to be religious, but to remain always in the ranks of the clergy); Andrés Motto, *Vincent de Paul's Experience of the Charitable Mission* (a presentation of the theology of the mission and a perspective of the popular mission as a means to transmit the faith). This series of reflections concludes with an article written by Robert Maloney, *Saint Vincent as a Mystic of Charity* (an historical review of contemporary authors who address the issue of Vincent's mysticism).

May this issue of *Vincentiana* provide you with material for reflection on the charism that is our heritage, a gift from our founder, and may you be strengthened to make this charism real in all our works and ministries.

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