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Of Current Interest

Vincentian Family Global Initiative on Homelessness



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Introduction

The year 2017 marks the 400th Anniversary of the Vincentian Charism. In particular, we refer to the story of the poor and ailing family in the parish of Châtillon and Vincent's realization that for charity to be effective for this family, and for others, it must be properly organized - "it is not enough to do good, we must do it well."

At the time of writing, Vincent would have had no idea how such a simple idea would grow into an international movement incorporating many different religious and lay organizations who claim Vincent as their founder and the organization of charity as their mission. Nor would Vincent have guessed at the size and scale of the works of charity currently being undertaken by the Vincentian Family globally, serving millions of the world's "poorest of the poor." Of those served by the Vincentian Family, many fall into the broader definition of being homeless – whether physically living on the streets or in shelters, refugees, asylum seekers, internally displaced people, or those living in temporary settlements such as slums or favelas. In its most recent report on the issue, the UN Settlements Agency estimates that over 1.2 billion of the 7 billion people on this

planet are homeless in one form or other and that this will grow as a result of conflict, natural disaster, and urbanization.

The attached proposed project plan was commissioned by the Heads of the Vincentian Family at their annual gathering in January 2017. It proposes that Depaul International will manage, on behalf of the global Vincentian Family, a joint project focusing on addressing “homelessness in its many guises” as the worldwide, unifying theme to celebrate our shared 400th Anniversary. In summary, the aim of this initiative would be:

- to make a real and sustainable difference to the lives of thousands of homeless people globally
- to build a strong network between Vincentian groups working across the broad spectrum of homelessness
- to support and develop existing and emerging leaders
- to share best practice across agencies
- to encourage the growth of new services and, reflecting on our collective Vincentian experiences,
- to lobby for structural change in support of homeless people at a national, regional, and global level
- to develop and make available formation materials in support of this initiative with respect to Vincentian spirituality.

Background

With some (notable) exceptions, the different branches of the Vincentian Family have often planned and managed their charitable activities in isolation from each other, along the lines of either their own particular specialisms (e.g., education, health, social work, advocacy), or their more generic mission to serve the poor (SVP), or because of their geographical or political isolation. To date, this has been an effective and pragmatic approach to the Vincentian emphasis on “action rather than words” and the need for accountable management and local ownership. However, as the world has become smaller and more connected, the Vincentian world is changing. In

particular, over the last 20 years, we have seen the evolution of two concepts within the Vincentian Family – Collaboration and Systemic Change.

Collaboration within the Vincentian Family is not an entirely new concept. It was the default management model from the very birth of the charism. The close partnership between the CMs, Daughters of Charity, and Ladies of Charity clearly allowed the early Vincentian movement to maximize the impact it had collectively for the poor at a local, national, and international level. Today, collaboration is fueled in part by the growing pace of globalization in all sectors and by technological advances that make the communication of ideas and ideologies much simpler and straightforward. Likeminded people are grouping together everywhere. In part, this coming together of the Vincentian Family is also being encouraged by a conscious or sub-conscious realization of the critical need to plan for a new future, given patterns of growth and decline of the Family in different parts of the world. More recently, academics at Stanford University have called this the ability of movements, such as the Vincentian Family, to have a collective impact.

Systemic change is at the heart of what Frédéric Ozanam hoped the Vincentian Family might deliver: the ability not just to provide charity to those most in need, but also to advocate for justice by analyzing why people need our help and working with them to change the systems that trap them in poverty. This process implies the direct involvement of people living in poverty for a better understanding and solution to the problems. This collaboration with the poor will be central to the working of this new initiative. The programs instituted by the Vincentian Family Commission on Systemic Change have built great capacity and understanding in this area.

The outstanding issue for the Vincentian Family is, having encouraged this appetite and capacity for collaboration and having

invested in training on systemic change, how will we use it? How will we manage it? How can we balance the subsidiarity of our own branch or our organizational needs and mission with the solidarity that comes with being part of the Vincentian Family?

Project Proposal

The Institute of Global Homelessness (IGH), as a Vincentian Partnership between DePaul University and Depaul International, recently worked with experts from the worlds of academia, service delivery, policy, and advocacy to develop the first-ever global definition of homelessness, which has been acknowledged by the UN. It defines homelessness under three broad headings:

- (1) People without accommodation; e.g., street sleepers.
- (2) People living in temporary accommodation; e.g., refugee camps or internally displaced people.
- (3) People living in inadequate/insecure accommodation; e.g., slums and favelas, bed and breakfast, hostels.

Whilst we have no collective statistics to verify the level of Vincentian engagement in these areas of homelessness, anecdotally the Vincentian Family is known to be one of the biggest global providers of services to these differing groups, who represent some of the poorest and most disenfranchised people in the world.

As was said in the introduction, this paper proposes that the Vincentian Family might focus on addressing “homelessness in its many guises” as the global, unifying theme to celebrate our shared 400th Anniversary. In summary, the aim of this initiative would be: to build a strong network among Vincentian groups working across the broad area of homelessness; to support and develop existing and emerging leaders; to share best practice across agencies; to encourage the growth of new services; and, reflecting on our collective Vincentian experiences, to lobby for structural change in support of homeless people at a national, regional, and global level. This thematic flows naturally out of the 2017 agreed goal of

the Vincentian Family to collaborate around the idea of “I was a stranger and you welcomed me.” It is envisaged that this three-year pilot would extend into a commitment up until 2030 in line with the UN Sustainable Development Goals, in which the European Union is playing a leading role.

Project Plan

The attached project plan covers seven areas:

- Using Measurement and Data
- Planning Together
- Building Global Capacity
- Institute of Global Homelessness
- Encouraging Structural Change
- Communicating Progress
- Formation.

Budget

The budget cost for this project is USD \$550,000. It is a little over our initial estimate of \$500,000, but, having dropped into the detail, we believe this will deliver the project to the quality desired. It is envisaged that part of the core money will come from the Global Vincentian Family itself and part will come from other donations. Separate fundraising will be required for new works resulting from this initiative.

Other Issues to Consider

At the meeting of the Heads of the Vincentian Family, I was asked to address the following questions and concerns.

What is the envisaged length of time for this project? Three-five years or until 2030?

The proposed project plan is for three years at which time a review will take place by the Heads of the Vincentian Family. However, for an initiative of this kind to be effective it must take a long-term view as has been proven by the example of the Jesuit Refugee Service. With that in mind, it is recommended that the project (if the pilot proves successful) run until 2030, at the earliest, in sync with the Sustainable Development Goals.

The project must be faith based and Vincentian Values must be evident.

The central pillar of Vincentian collaboration is our shared spirituality and values. This will permeate every strategy but section seven of the project plan deals specifically with Formation. We will develop and make available spiritual-formation materials linked to this initiative.

Section 4.3 of the project plan talks about the Symposium on Street Homelessness and Catholic Social Teaching to be held at the Vatican, 30 November – 1 December, at which Pope Francis will present some thoughts on this area. The resulting Catholic Social Teaching will provide a useful framework for a faith response to homelessness in its many forms.

It must have a direct impact on the poor.

Clearly, the initiative will have failed if it does not increase the capacity of the Vincentian Family in addressing homelessness. The plan outlines a process leading to significant change for thousands of homeless people globally through careful mapping, planning, and then action. By the end of 2018, we should be in a position to specify particular output, outcome, and impact measures allowing heads of the Vincentian Family to evaluate the effectiveness of the initiative.

Governance? What is the role of the VFEC? What is the relationship of this project to other commissions within VFEC? What is the relationship to Depaul International?

The project will be managed by Depaul International and, like any other externally funded project, it will be subject to scrutiny through quarterly reports to the Depaul International Board. However, it will also be accountable to a separate commission of VFEC (the Famvin Homeless Alliance Commission) made up of members from across the Vincentian Family nominated according to their experience in ministry with one or two independent specialists. This Commission will meet four times a year – twice face to face and twice virtually. As well as reviewing progress, the commission will also help with ongoing planning and tackling any issues as they arise. The commission will report through VFEC directly to the Heads of the Vincentian Family at their annual meeting. Any changes to the agreed strategy or budget would need to be approved by both the commission and the VFEC.

With regard to the relationship of the Famvin Homeless Alliance Commission to other commissions within VFEC, we intend to work closely and ensure integrated work plans where appropriate – this is particularly the case with the Systemic Change Commission. Shared objectives and specific actions will be defined as dialogue develops.

What are the fundraising expectations?

As Depaul International is being commissioned by the Vincentian Family to manage this project, it will have no responsibility to raise the \$550,000 core funding for this project. However, it will assist groups with developing fundraising strategies for particular projects that might stem from this initiative. For example, funding for the Symposium on Street Homelessness and Catholic Social Teaching at the Vatican already has been covered entirely by the IGH as part of DePaul University alongside the other Vincentian Universities in the USA plus one global foundation.

Next Steps

After discussion and amendments, the project plan and budget were approved by the Vincentian Family Executive Committee in May 2017.

At the beginning of June, the papers will be circulated to the heads of the Vincentian Family and the Vincentian Family in general. A formal announcement of this initiative will be made at the EU Parliament event on 28 June 2017 and the launch date itself will be 14 October, during the Vincentian Family Symposium in Rome.

Homeless Alliance

Rome, 1 June 2017

Dear Heads of the Branches of the Vincentian Family

May the grace and peace of Jesus be always with us!

As announced in previous communications, the Vincentian Family Executive Committee is inviting all branches and members of the Vincentian Family to celebrate the 400th Anniversary of the Charism with multiple initiatives under the theme “I was a stranger and you welcomed me.”

Beyond this year 2017, we are called to address the cry of the people facing homelessness by working more efficiently towards ending homelessness in the world and this includes caring for refugees, migrants, street people, displaced persons, slum dwellers, etc. For this reason, on 28 June 2017, the Worldwide Vincentian Family will formally announce this Global Initiative on Homelessness at the European Union Parliament.

You will find attached the Cover Paper and the Project Plan of the FamVin Homeless Alliance. We kindly ask you to share these documents with your leadership and all your members.

As we begin this project, please let us know (if you have not done so already) if your congregation/association would like to work with us on it. It would also be very helpful to know what you may be doing already in this area. Please send your information to homeless@famvin.org.

If you have any questions regarding the FamVin Homeless Alliance, you can contact Mark McGreevy, Depaul International GCEO, directly at mark.mcgreevy@depaulinternational.org. To join the FamVin Homeless Alliance mailing list, send an email to homeless@famvin.org.

As you will see by reading the attached documents, the FamVin Homeless Alliance is a unique opportunity for the Vincentian Family to address this issue from a global perspective, in collaboration with many stakeholders within and beyond the Family, and to contribute in many ways to the end of homelessness. May the Lord bless us as we continue to live out our charism in the 21st century.

Your brother in Saint Vincent,

Tomaž Mavrič, CM
Superior General

Vincentian Family Global Initiative on Homelessness Project Plan

Our vision: is that everyone has a place to call home and a stake in their community.

Our Project Aims

- To make a real and sustainable difference to the lives of thousands of homeless people;
- To connect Vincentians working across the broad spectrum of homelessness;
- To support and develop existing and emerging leaders;
- To share best practice and research;
- To encourage and support the growth of new and innovative services;
- To support lobbying at a local, regional and global level in support of homelessness;
- To develop and make available formation materials in support of this initiative with respect to spirituality.

Our Strategies

	2017	2018	2019
<p>(1) Using Measurement & Data</p> <p>(1.1) Create a global map and database of existing Vincentian projects working in homelessness in order to analyze current investment in this area and to plan future outcome and impact measurements for the initiative.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Beginning April 1st, we will work in collaboration with the VFO (Vincentian Family Office) in Philadelphia to proactively survey and map existing Vincentian projects in the larger organizations/religious orders working in the area of homelessness. Building on the existing database of the VF Office, add information relating to homelessness and build in a functionality to deliver reports around key performance indicators. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In January, presentation of preliminary map to Heads of Vincentian Family at their Annual Meeting. Extend mapping survey to smaller organizations/ religious orders within the Vincentian Family. Continue to update database. Using the baseline information from mapping and the database produce first proposal on outcome and impact measurement for the Initiative. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approve outcome and impact measurements at January Annual Heads of Vincentian Family meeting. Complete mapping and database exercise and continue to update changes as appropriate. Map and updates to be reported annually to the Heads of Vincentian Family. Develop presentational materials for Heads of the Vincentian Family with key statistics.
<p>(1.2) Develop and update a global contacts list</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working with the VFO in Philadelphia, develop a contact list of key stakeholders in homelessness within the Vincentian Family for ongoing communication. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain and update the contact list. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain and update the contact list.

(2) Planning together	2017	2018	2019
<p>(2.1) Host an International conference for Vincentians working in homelessness to build networks, share best practice and consult them in developing a work plan in the areas of street homelessness, refugees and slum dwellers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In consultation with existing providers of homeless services in the Vincentian Family, draft a proposed conference program. • Draw up a preliminary guest list. • Investigate venues and timing for the conference and on outline budget. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present conference proposal to the Heads of the Vincentian Family at January meeting for amendment and approval. • Hold the conference in the second half of 2018. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation of conference and proposed work plans in areas of street homelessness, refugees and slum dwellers presented to the heads of Vincentian Family at their January meeting.
<p>((2.2) Select a Commission of thought leaders in homelessness from the Vincentian Family to oversee and advise on the project reporting to the Annual Heads of Vincentian Family meeting.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In consultation with the VF Office and the Heads of the Vincentian Family, agree to appoint Vincentian Family members to Commission. • Develop terms of reference for the Commission 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produce a visual diagram and a list of shared objectives that indicate the relationships among the different stakeholders within the VF. • Submit quarterly report for comments and challenge and coordinate the Commission's virtual meetings. • Arrange two meetings annually with papers in advance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit quarterly report for comments and challenge and coordinate the Commission's virtual meetings. • Arrange two meetings annually with papers in advance. • Review membership and make changes as appropriate.

(3) Build Global Capacity	2017	2018	2019
<p>(3.1) Appoint Project Development Manager to oversee this initiative within Depaul International and realign existing roles in support of this project.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yasmine Cajuste will be appointed on a three-year consultancy contract from 1st April 2017. • Develop a new organizational structure for Depaul International in order to deliver this project effective 28 June 2017 (see appendix attached to this document). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appoint Communications Manager and agree on work plan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review structure and make changes as appropriate.
<p>(3.2) Produce a short film in multiple translation showcasing best practice of the Vincentian Family in the different areas of homelessness linked to an online toolkit and consultancy service encouraging groups to develop new services at an international, regional, national or local level</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree on proposal with DePaul Film School to produce and direct the film. • Agree on storyboard with the Commission • Develop a proposal for the online toolkit and consultancy services in support of the film upon release. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take forward the proposals on the film, toolkit and consultancy services to the Annual Heads of the Vincentian Family meeting in January for comment and approval. • Film Completed by June 2018 and launched at the planned conference (see 2.1). • Initial toolkit for practitioners available online at a link to both DPI and VF websites by September 2018. • Consultancy services beginning to be delivered in last quarter of 2018. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review effectiveness of the film. • Continue to add to the online toolkit. • Consider and respond to requests for consultancy.

	2017	2018	2019
<p>(3) Build Global Capacity</p> <p>(3.3) Organize and host a series of strategic planning conferences regionally and nationally and assist local family members to develop their own local plan to respond to homelessness</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a strategic planning model for a two-day workshop with regional/national gatherings of the Vincentian Family. • Agree on potential countries where the workshop might be piloted. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree on strategic planning model and one pilot country at Annual Meeting of the Heads of the Vincentian Family. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review pilot and refine model. • With agreement of Vincentian Family, agree 3-5 Strategic planning conferences annually.
<p>(3.4) In consultation with leaders of the Global Vincentian Family, agree on a protocol and delivery mechanism as to how the Vincentian Family might respond to global humanitarian crises with a particular focus on the provision of shelter and primary services such as health</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft a protocol on how the Vincentian Family might respond to humanitarian crisis in a coordinated manner globally. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share the protocol at the Annual Meeting of the heads of the Vincentian Family for comment and decision. • If approved, develop a work plan for more integrated approach. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree to work plan and deliver on the actions agreed.

	2017	2018	2019
<p>(4) Institute of Global Homelessness</p> <p>(4.1) Align the resources of the Institute of Global Homelessness to serve this Vincentian Family initiative in providing training for emerging and existing leaders, giving access to the planned Online Homelessness Hub (of research and best practice), and invitations to issue based (e.g. advocacy or fundraising) and/or geographically focused symposiums.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extend an invitation to emerging leaders within the Vincentian Family to attend the emerging leaders program held annually at DePaul University. Invite established leaders in homelessness within the Vincentian Family to the IGH bi-annual conference sharing best practice and ideas. Invitations to Vincentian Family members to locally based events in countries where the IGH is working. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Launch of the IGH Online Homelessness Hub sharing up to date research and best practice translated into the principal world languages. See previous column. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See previous columns.
<p>(4.2) Invite the Vincentian Family members in cities which are part of the IGH 150 cities campaign to play their part in ending homelessness.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Connect with the Vincentian Family in the initial 10 pilot cities (e.g. Adelaide) to discuss what part they might play in helping to end homelessness in their cities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Help to develop an action plan for the VF in those cities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the involvement of the VF in advance of the next 25 cities being announced.

<p>(4) Institute of Global Homelessness</p> <p>(4.3) Plan and deliver a Symposium on Street Homelessness and Catholic Social Teaching at the Vatican to promote debate and action within faith groups and beyond.</p>	<p>2017</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In November, the IGH along with DePaul University and the other Vincentian Universities globally will host and finance a Symposium on "Street Homelessness and Catholic Social Teaching" at the Vatican. This is being highlighted as a celebration of the 400th Year of the Charism and as one of the launching pads for the initiative. Members of the Vincentian Family will contribute papers as will Pope Francis. 	<p>2018</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publish the papers from the conference with potential for either an encyclical or a world peace day message. Disseminate the key conclusions through a media campaign both to church institutions and a wider audience e.g. UN, EU. 	<p>2019</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to follow through to ensure action results e.g. conferences, keynote speeches at events.
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	2017	2018	2019
<p>(5) Encouraging Structural Change</p> <p>(5.1) Assist in the hosting of an event at the EU to officially announce the homeless initiative and begin to develop lobbying and funding capacity in this forum.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assist in announcing the initiative at an event for the Vincentian family at EU Parliament on 28th June. Establish ongoing contacts with the European Union Parliament/Commission. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to meet and lobby at the EU on behalf of homelessness and in particular for more resources. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See previous column.
<p>(5.2) In consultation with the existing Vincentian Family delegations at the UN, agree to a work plan in the area of global homelessness linked to concrete outcomes (e.g. a measurement of street homelessness as part of the Sustainable Development Goals)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preliminary meeting with the Vincentian Family delegations at the UN in New York in early June agree to a protocol to work together. Produce a work plan for agreement by the Heads of Vincentian Family. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Circulate plan for approval to Heads of Vincentian Family at their Annual Meeting. Put the plan into action. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to deliver action plan. Review the collaboration agreement.

(6) Communicating Progress	2017	2018	2019
(6.1) Appoint a Communications Manager and develop a strategy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop role for a Communications Manager. • Agree on a draft strategy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appoint Fill the position. • Fine tune the strategy. • Deliver action plan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to deliver action plan.
(6.2) Create a portal within Depaul International and FamVin website as the focal point for the project.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consult as to best way to display webpages in translation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approve plan at Heads of Vincentian Family annual meeting. • Develop site and populate. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to develop and review.
(6.3) Produce a twice-yearly newsletter and annual report for leaders of the Vincentian Family.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree to launch materials for 400th Anniversary Vincentian gathering in Rome at end of October. • Agree on format and content for a Christmas newsletter. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publish twice-yearly newsletter drawing stories from across the Vincentian Family. • Publish annual report. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See previous column.
(6.4) Produce publicity materials for members of the Vincentian Family to promote initiative within their forums.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produce initial launch materials (see 6.3 above) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produce a short annual power point presentation with supporting text for Vincentian Family leaders to download and inform members. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See previous column.

(7) Formation	2017	2018	2019
(7.1) Develop and make available spiritual formation materials in support of this initiative.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a work plan for discussion by the Vincentian Family Commission. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and circulate formation materials. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate and adapt as necessary.
(7.2) Develop and circulate project training materials.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a work plan for discussion by the Vincentian Family Commission. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and circulate training materials. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue circulation of training materials and review feedback and adapt.