

TEMPO FORTE CIRCULAR
(7-11 March 2011)

Rome, 22 March 2011

To the Members of the Congregation of the Mission

May the grace and peace of Our Lord Jesus Christ fill your hearts now and forever!

1. We began our *tempo forte* meeting discussing a number of issues that we will be dealing with over the next couple of years:
 - The **New Visitors meeting** planned for 2012 which we hope to revamp and give a new look. The coordinators that we have chosen for 2012 are Claudio Santangelo and Stanislav Zontak;
 - An ongoing discussion on how to **revamp the canonical visit** of the provinces in these next six years of our administration;
 - **Updating of our catalog** on line. The process is going to take some time, but we hope that it will be in place for this year;
 - The Superior General gave an updated report on the confrere, Father Jean-Pierre Mongulu, from the Province of Congo who has been sent to **Haiti** to assist the Vincentian Family in creating projects for our Zafen website. The process of development in Haiti is slow, yet, our efforts as a Vincentian Family both internationally and locally are moving ahead;
 - An updated report on the **Ratio** that we hope to develop regarding parishes. We are still expecting from the provinces the response to the survey that Father Eli Chaves and Father Stanislav Zontak sent out regarding our parish reality.
2. Curia business
 - We named a **new Director of Communications, Father John Maher**, from the Province of Philadelphia. A curriculum vitae is being prepared to share with the Visitors and the Congregation. He will be the director not only of *Vincentiana* and *Nuntia*, but also responsible for revamping cmglobal. I want to thank Father Julio Suescun for all that he has done to help improve communications in the worldwide Vincentian Community. He will be returning to his province of origin, Zaragoza, at the beginning of April.

- A report from the Vicar General **on the Statutes**. At this time, the Statutes have been redacted in Italian, the original language. The team is planning a meeting, and from there the text will be translated into the different languages.
 - The activities of **SIEV**: Among them is a proposal from one of its members, Eugene Curran, for an ongoing formation session in Vincentian Spirituality and History for our young researchers, hopefully in 2012. The project will be offered in two different sessions, one each semester.
 - Formation: Following a mandate from the General Assembly, we formed a Commission for the **Creation of a new Ratio Formationis**. The members of the Commission are the following: Orlando Escobar, coordinator, Province of Colombia; Jerry Luttenberger, Eastern Province USA; Joy Thuruthel, Province of Southern India; Negasi Ghirmazion, Province of Justin de Jacobis; Robert Petrovsek, Province of Slovenia; and Jan Martincek, Province of Cyril and Methodius. Their first meeting will be 4 June. They will be accompanied by the Assistant responsible for initial and ongoing formation, Stanislav Zontak.
 - Different members of the General Council are participating in an ongoing formation offered by the Claretians in conjunction with the Union of Superiors General for helping members of General Councils to learn their roles. Father Javier Alvarez participated in a workshop from 12-13 March on a topic dealing with *Confères in Difficult Situations*.
 - A report from the Coordinator of the **Commission on Islam**, Claudio Santangelo. The workshop is being planned for August 2011 in Indonesia, open to all the members of the Vincentian Family, dealing with the relationship between Christians and Muslims. I encourage all Visitors to consider the possibility of having *confères* participate in this most important session that is not only significant for those provinces that are in predominately Muslim areas, but also for provinces in which there is an increasing Muslim population as experienced in many parts of Western Europe.
 - We named a **new administrator to the General Curia** who will be replacing Father Mario Grossi. He is Giuseppe Carulli from the Province of Naples. I take this opportunity to thank in a very special way, Father Mario Grossi for his most generous service. He will be with us in the Curia until the end of June prior to returning to his province of origin, Turin.
3. A report from the team of the **Vincentian Solidarity Office**. The Director Miles Heinen and his associates, Mr. Scott Fina and

Ms Teresa Niedda were present to introduce themselves to us and the different projects that each of them is involved in. They have been helping to raise money for our Zafen project and they are undertaking with great concern the development of our Patrimonial Funds as well as continuing to deal with agencies when requests for different projects of the provinces arise.

4. The last **economic report** given by our Econome General, Father John Gouldrick. Present with him was the new Econome General, Father Joseph Geders. We did some pre-preparation for the Mission Distribution Fund as well as review of the budget for the operations of the Congregation of the Mission. Budgets were approved from the different international missions as well as the budget for the local community. I take this opportunity to thank Father John Gouldrick for his service as Econome General these last four years. He returns to his province of origin, Eastern Province USA.
5. A report from Father Eli Chaves, the Assistant responsible for the **Vincentian Family**. He presented the plan of action for the new Vincentian Family team of Father Juventino Castellero, Sister Ana Aparaceda and Father Eli Chaves dos Santos. One of the major thrusts of the Vincentian Family's new plan is to involve all the members of the General Council in the promotion of the relationship of the Congregation of Mission with the other branches of the Vincentian Family.
The new team of the Vincentian Family is interested in working together with those responsible for the web page famvin.org. They will help support the promotion of a project for Vincentian leaders, which the Superior General has undertaken with people from different branches of the Vincentian Family.
6. Father John Freund of the **web page** has begun to develop a plan of action that coincides with the *Lines of Action* of the General Assembly document. Forthcoming will be another communication from the Superior General as to how that project might be implemented in different ways and for different purposes such as initial and ongoing formation, and the improvement of communication at all levels.
7. From the **representative at the United Nations**, Father Joseph Foley. In his report, he highlighted for us three areas: the Commission for Social Development, the World Interfaith Harmony Week, and the work of the NGO Committee on Mining. A brief aspect of each of those developments:
 - The permanent representative for the Social Development Commission emphasized how a new model for social

development needs to be created, one that is human-centered. The aim is to achieve social justice through social inclusion, equity and active participation of the peoples.

- The first week in February of each year is known as World Harmony Week and it aims to encourage governments to promote that harmony among all peoples regardless of their faith. One of the things discussed was the importance of weakening the impact of extremists and strengthening the authentic and moderate voice of the religious traditions. 87% of the people of the world belong to some form of religious community. Religion is the second largest infrastructure in the world.
- The NGO working group on mining: The Commission on Sustainable Development has made it clear that while the resources produced from mining are often necessary for modern life, and while people in mining communities need jobs, mining practices show little regard for people or the environment. In most parts of the world conflicts between corporations and local communities, especially communities living on indigenous lands, are usually resolved through violence and bribery. This Committee attempts to address the environmental, economic, health and social impacts of mining.

Father Foley asks if there are confreres involved in development work, interfaith dialog and cooperation or mining, he would be happy to know who they are in order to work together with them.

8. A report from our **CIF** directors, Father Marcelo Manimtim and Father José Carlos Fonsatti:
 - In order to try to reduce costs and at the same time intensify the work of the ongoing formation sessions, the team of CIF has reduced the three-month session to two months, which will be done on an experimental basis.
 - Besides the two-month session, this year there will be held a one-month heritage session designed for older confreres where the emphasis is not so much on input that they get from conferences, but on sharing experiences which older confreres have in greater depth and richness.
 - The special program that they will have this year is the Servant Leadership Session for local superiors or future superiors.
 - In the next years they hope to do other sessions on topics such as formation, popular missions, special session for Eastern Europe and other developments, specifically for the Vincentian Family. At this time I put out a request to all the confreres who read this circular. If there are topics of particular interest that

should be treated in the CIF session and that are not handled by the Conferences of Visitors and/or Provinces or in other ongoing formation session in different places, please feel free to let the directors of CIF know, or directly the Curia, addressing your comments to Father Stanislav Zontak, our link with the CIF team in Paris.

- The Superior General sent out a letter a number of months ago making a request for scholarship funds. We hope that the provinces see ongoing formation as an essential part of who we are, as was clearly stated in our final document of the General Assembly, and we ask that they continue to be generous in helping to support confreres who are coming from developing countries who find it very expensive to travel and pay room and board in the Western part of the world.
9. Information received regarding the **Conferences of Visitor and/or Provinces.**
- The Assembly of **CEVIM** will be held in Celje, Slovenia 2-6 May. Part of the focus of the sessions will be on ongoing formation, the renewal of the *Ratio Formationis*, reconfiguration and the final document of the General Assembly. From the General Curia both Father Stanislav Zontak and Father Javier Alvarez will be participating.
 - **CLAPVI**: a report was given following the session on the school of Vincentian Spirituality held in Curitiba 16 January - 11 February. Eleven confreres from different Provinces in Latin America participated.
 - **COVIAM**: the discussion focused mostly on the new mission that COVIAM will be initiating in Chad beginning Palm Sunday with two confreres, one from the Province of Nigeria and the other from the Province of Paris-Cameroon.
 - A report from the **APVC** included the schedule of their annual meeting which will be held 14-18 March. Present at the meeting was the General Assistant Father Varghese Thottamkara. Attending are not only the provinces of the Asia-Pacific area, but the regional superior of Vietnam as well as representatives from Solomon Islands and Papua New Guinea. The assembly was held in Manila, Philippines.
10. With regard to our **international missions:**
- We are happy to announce the arrival of a new missionary in the mission in **El Alto**, Bolivia, Father Emilio Torres, having reported to this mission on 1 March and joining the other three members of that mission, Cyril DeNanteuil, Diego Pla and Aidan Rooney, the superior of the mission.

- We received word that Father Jorge Manrique will join the team in **Cochabamba**, Bolivia, of Father David Paniagua, and Superior Father Joel Vasquez.
- In the **Solomon Islands** we have received regular communication from the mission superior, Father Greg Walsh. The members of that community, Victor Bieler, Flaviano Caintic, Ivica Gregurec and Augustinus Marsup have been joined by Father Raul Castro from the Province of Argentina and Father Tewolde Teclemicael of the Province of Justin de Jacobis. At this time, Father Simon Kaipuram, from the India North is there teaching scripture for two and a half months. There is a new confrere from the Province of Nigeria, Joachin Nwaorgu, who is next to arrive in the mission together with Father Agus Setyono from the Province of Indonesia who is currently in Australia studying English. I take this opportunity to thank Father Drago, from the Province of Slovenia who regularly is present in the Solomon Islands giving classes and at the same time working to collect funds to support the mission there.
- **Papua New Guinea:** We received a report from Father Homero Marin, the mission superior, working together with Father Justin Eke and Father Vladimir Malota. Two other confreres are waiting now for their visas, Father Emmanuel LaPaz from the Philippines and Father Georges Maylaa from the Province of the Orient. Eventually another confrere from the Province of Nigeria, Father Jude Lemeh will join them.
- The Superior General, together with his Council have opened a **new international mission** on an experimental basis in Tunisia in the city of **Tunis**. In September, two confreres will begin that mission. They are Father Firmin Mola, Congolese from the Province of Toulouse, presently working in Algiers and Brother Henry Escurel, Province of the Philippines. The mission presently is being manned by a member of the province of Toulouse, Father Jordi Llambrich who will help the confreres transition in to this new apostolic experience in a country very much a part of our Vincentian heritage. The Cathedral of Tunis is named St. Vincent de Paul. In my visit to the Cathedral, I saw that the cupola is a painting of St. Vincent in heaven with the missionaries to his left and the Daughters of Charity to his right, serving in the center the slaves of the area of Tunis.

11. **Other missionary news:**

- A recent volunteer is a confrere from Madagascar, Father Sedy Rabarijaona, who will be joining the Province of Puerto Rico to help serve the Haitian population.

- We have taken into consideration a letter from Archbishop Tomash Peta from Astana, Kazakhstan requesting missionaries.
 - We also studied the requests of two confreres who wish to volunteer for missions.
12. We reviewed our calendars from now until the next *tempo forte*. Here I will mention briefly the **commitments of the Superior General**:
- in March at the meeting of the National Conference of Visitors in the United States (29-30);
 - in April visit to the two international missions in Bolivia, El Alto and Cochabamba (8-15);
 - Holy Week in a city in southwest Missouri in the United States with a Latin American community (17-24);
 - visit to the Vice-Province of Cyril and Methodius, the Ukraine, Belarus and Siberia (28 April - 15 May);
 - ongoing formation with the Daughters of Charity in Paris (19-21 May);
 - the new mission of COVIAM in Chad and the community of Daughters of Charity as well as the confreres in Central Africa (23-30 May);
 - the *tempo forte* meeting (June 6-10 June);
 - the beatification of Sister Marguerite Rutan in Dax, France (18-20 June).

I close this circular asking that we all might join in solidarity with different situations of unrest, violence and destruction caused by humans or natural sources: in northern Africa, particularly in Egypt and Libya and for the many victims of the earthquake/tsunami/nuclear fallout in Japan. As members of the Congregation of the Mission we look to respond to the needs of those most vulnerable.

I take the opportunity to wish you all a fruitful Lent and a life-giving Easter season.

Your brother in Saint Vincent,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "G. Gregory Gay, C.M." The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

G. Gregory Gay, C.M.
Superior General