

A Brief Outline to Begin Provincial Planning

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*“Where there is no vision, the people perish.
If you do not plan, you plan to fail!”*

The purpose of the Congregation of the Mission is to follow Christ evangelizing the poor (C & S, 1). The Provincial Plan will enable the Visitor, working in collaboration with his Council and the confreres of the province, to identify and prioritize its provincial commitments, utilizing both long and short term goals.

Provincial planning is a multi-faceted process by which fundamental decisions are made and concrete actions are taken which will shape and guide the community as it grows into its future.

Rationale

Provincial planning is an essential task for the future vitality and viability of the provinces of the Congregation of the Mission.

We are called to create new ways and to use new means (C & S, 2) to renew our energies and thus enable us to fulfill our mission into the next generations of Vincentians.

The Provincial Plan, by which this will be accomplished, will unite a province even more closely to the Paschal Mystery, for it will involve both a dying to what is now so that it might rise with Christ to a new life. As St. Vincent told us: “And that was the beginning of your Company. As it was not then what it is now, there is reason to believe that it is still not what it will be when God has perfected it as he wants it.”

Desired Outcomes

The implementation of the Provincial Plan will facilitate a province’s evaluation of its works and ministries so that it may remain in a continual state of renewal (C & S, 2).

The Provincial Plan will enable the confreres to seek, as a province, the will of the Father. Through an ongoing process of dialogue and consultation common directions will surface and develop, which will lead to making decisions about the future ministries of the province. (C & S, 37) Thus confreres will choose their future and not have it simply thrust upon them.

The Provincial Plan affirms that all of our confreres are our most valuable resource.

The Provincial Plan will empower community life, fostered by the mission, and thus promote both personal formation and communal development for the work of the evangelization of the poor (C & S, 21.2).

Methodology; *See, Judge, Act*

See

The process begins with the involvement of all the confreres, giving their input into the general themes that has been chosen as the focus of a plan.

The incorporation of as many confreres as possible in all stages of the planning process is essential for the buy-in of the province in the plan that will be promulgated.

Judge

There are many possible strategies that can be utilized in the drafting of a plan. Right the start, it is important to make clear:

- How the process will work.
- The parameters (mandate) within which the confreres are asked to work.
- The “untouchables” which are not to come to the table for discussion, and
- The fact that the recommendations received are advisory, dependent upon the Visitor’s approval.

Act

It is important to give the confreres an opportunity to respond to a proposed plan before its promulgation.

A Provincial Convocation or Meeting is a good vehicle for such a process. It is also important that the confreres see a concrete plan for

implementation, with those responsible for implementation clearly named and empowered to do this work.

Professionals in this field would usually advise that any plan, to be effective, should not last more than three to five years.