

FROM THE SUPERIOR GENERAL

Foundation Day Letter to Confreres

Rome, 25 January 2013

Foundation Day

To all the Members of the Congregation of the Mission

My dear Confreres:

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

As the Church observes the feast of the conversion of St. Paul today, we celebrate the anniversary of our foundation, as seen in this conversion experience of St. Vincent at Folleville:

“But there was such a great crowd that I could not handle it with just the one other priest who was helping me... Father Portail, another priest, and I took residence at the College des Bon Enfants... From there all three of us would go around preaching and giving missions”, Conf. 180, 2, Correspondence, Entretiens, Documents, Paris 1920-1925.

On this day, we recall with gratitude the charism and community entrusted to us by St. Vincent. The challenge before us today is this: how can we better follow Christ, Evangelizer of the poor?

The theme of the 2010 General Assembly, “Creative Fidelity to the Mission” was adapted into “Lines of Action” to guide our Congregation forward. The Curia devised a strategic plan with a theme and yearly objectives to infuse the “Lines of Action” into our provinces and works. Foundation Day is a good time to review and renew our commitment to this strategic plan.

“Creative Fidelity to our Mission and Ministries in following Christ, Evangelizer of the Poor”, is the theme guide the five years of

this strategic plan with yearly objectives and specific strategies for Visitors, provinces, and confreres. The full plan is on our revised web site, www.cmglobal.org (**I will say more about this revised web-site later in the letter!**). Today, I focus on objectives and strategies for 2013: “Dialogue with the Poor” and “Reconfiguration: Pathway to Creativity”. A brief explanation of each with their main points is below.

2012-2016 – DIALOGUE WITH THE POOR: To enable confreres to listen to the voices of the poor and make practical, ongoing efforts to participate in their lives. Specific strategies from the “Lines of Action” include:

- To favor works that promote systemic change in society;
- To provide legal assistance to defend the poor and promote justice;
- To create programs to counter human trafficking, promote access to universal health care, advocate for the environment, the dignity of women and children, and rights of migrants.

2013 – RECONFIGURATION: A PATHWAY TO CREATIVITY IN OUR MINISTRIES. Examine the necessity of regional and provincial re-configuration, and with Conferences of Visitors, provincial councils, and after input from confreres, act decisively. Specific strategies from the “Lines of Action” include:

- To make reconfiguration a local, provincial, and inter-provincial strategy for our future;
- To cultivate a vital sense of belonging beyond local and provincial communities;
- To foster personal availability and mobility to participate in new missionary projects;
- To create inter-provincial collaboration by sharing administrative and financial resources.

On this Foundation Day 2013, I ask Visitors, provinces, local communities, and confreres to focus on these dual objectives of *Dialogue with the Poor* and *Reconfiguration*. Reflect earnestly on ways you can apply them to your local community, apostolate, province, and region. This plan is meant for the benefit of our Congregation and is easily adaptable.

In addition to today’s great feast, we have another reason to “rejoice in the Lord” (Phil. 4:4). After much hard work, “CM Global”, our revised website “goes viral” today. Located at www.cmglobal.org, it is available in English, French, and Spanish

with new and exciting features. I am grateful to Miss Beth Nicol, web site technician, and to our confreres John Freund, Cesar Alvarez, and Bernard Massarini for their intense labor and fruitful collaboration – all done digitally on three different continents! They have created a great resource to help spread our Vincentian charism.

As we give thanks to God for the gift of our Vincentian vocation, we see in the life and example of our Holy Founder one with a genius for doing the “practical and possible” against great odds. Through the intercession of Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal, may we be creative in fidelity to our mission and ministries in following Christ, the Evangelizer of the poor.

Sincerely in St. Vincent,

G. GREGORY GAY, C.M.
Superior General