

PROJECT OF THE SUPERIOR GENERAL WITH HIS COUNCIL

PERIOD 2006-2010

Convictions, Objectives, and Lines of Action

27 November 2006

Introduction

In order to understand this Project in its strict sense, it might be advisable to take into account its aims and characteristics.

- It deals with finding inspiration in our Constitutions, enriching ourselves with the abundant development of the Congregation begun after Vatican II and putting into practice the directives of the recent General Assemblies, especially GA 2004.
- It intends to respect and be coherent with the general principles of Vincentian government (C. 96-100).
- It is a project of and by the Superior General with his Council; not for the provinces, nor for the entire Congregation.
- It is selective, establishes priorities and is not exhaustive.
- It is open to greater and further precision. Therefore, it does not describe or exhaust all the details; these depend on the creativity of the respective persons or institutions of the General Curia or those depending on it.
- It is a work project, not a declaration of intentions.

* * * * *

1. SPIRIT, IDENTITY. Encourage the “Vincentian mystic and spirit” of the confreres, helping the Visitors in the animation of the provinces.

Convictions:

- 1) The Constitutions, especially numbers 6, 7, 8 and 9, remind us of some fundamental convictions about our Vincentian spirit. The CM spirit consists of three basic attitudes (C. 6) and expresses itself in the five specific virtues and in a specific spiritual life (prayer, vows, etc.).
- 2) “Our spirit and our ministries ought to nourish one another” (C. 8).

- 3) “The text [of the Constitutions] must now be imprinted on our hearts and lived out in our vocation to preach the gospel to the poor” (cf. Fr. McCULLEN, *Introductory letter to the 1984 Constitutions*).

Objective

To help each confrere and the Congregation to deepen and live more intensely our own specific vocation, that is, our Vincentian identity.

Actions:

1. Help the provinces promote, with intensity, fidelity and creativity, our Vincentian identity and spirituality and a strong prayer life in accord with our missionary vocation.

2. Support and stimulate a “general project” for the basic knowledge and systematic study of our Constitutions and Statutes (cf. Final Document of GA 2004, CIF, SIEV Project, USA Visitors, CPAG 2010).

3. Support the provinces (or the Visitors’ Conferences) so that they might organize initiatives (sessions, seminars, meetings) on the “Vincentian mystic and spirituality.”

2. MISSION, MINISTRIES. Deepen and develop our identity as a missionary Congregation at the service of the poor.

Conviction:

“Evangelizing is to be considered its [the Congregation of the Mission’s] own grace and vocation, and expresses its deepest identity” (cf. C. 10).

Objectives:

1) To help the Congregation and the provinces put C. 2 (continual renewal) into practice; 2) To establish and expand, in each confrere, the missionary horizon (cf. JOHN PAUL II, “Message to the Superior General: *Duc in altum*,” 2004 GA).

Actions:

4. Continue to develop the service of the Assistant responsible for the missions “ad gentes” (S. 57).

5. Promote the knowledge and study of the ***Ratio Missionum*** (2002).

6. Promote, especially during visits to the provinces, our missionary identity (awareness, spirituality, missionary apostolates).

7. Strengthen the International Missions presently dependent on the Curia (El Alto, Solomon Islands, Papua New Guinea) and work so that they might move to dependence on provinces.

8. Continue writing the “Mission Appeal Letter” annually.
 9. Open new International Missions, in the event of having steady volunteers.
 10. Pay attention to the new dimensions of the mission “ad gentes”: interreligious dialogue, countries “in a state of mission,” etc.
 11. Promote the updating and renewal of our ministries related to the formation of the clergy and help to find ways of renewing the “popular missions” and building truly missionary parishes.
- 3. COMMUNITY. Encourage the renewal and growth of the community life of the Congregation on its various levels (local, provincial, interprovincial and international community).**

The field of the community is important and far-reaching, so that one can distinguish various levels of it:

- a) the local and provincial community;
- b) the Visitors’ Conferences;
- c) the reconfiguration of provinces.

Conviction:

“Community life [is] a special characteristic of the Congregation and its usual way of living” (C. 21, § 1).

Objectives:

- 1) To promote in the confreres the “sense of belonging” to the CM (especially among the young confreres and also in the provinces with numerous departures); 2) To promote the internationality of the CM and interprovincial collaboration.

Actions:

A) *The local, provincial and interprovincial community.*

12. Promote among the missionaries, especially among the young, a deep love of the Congregation so that it translates into a true sense of belonging and a real living out of the dynamisms of community life.
13. Promote in the local communities, during our visits to the provinces, the knowledge and realistic use of the ***Practical Guide for the Local Superior*** (2003).
14. Promote the knowledge and study, especially in initial formation, of the ***Instruction on the Vows*** (1996).
15. Help the provinces to take care of the elderly and sick missionaries, to accompany the “confreres in difficulty” and to resolve the situations of illegitimately absent confreres.

16. Promote interprovincial collaboration such that it strengthens the weak and poor provinces, contributes to their true autonomy and is a sign of real twinning.

B) *The Visitors' Conferences*

17. Promote the study of a possible "statute" referring to the Visitors' Conferences.

18. Hold periodic meetings among the General Council and the Presidents of the Visitors' Conferences.

C) *The reconfiguration of provinces.*

19. Promote the awareness of being a single, international Congregation and encourage a more intense interprovincial collaboration.

20. Promote, in dialogue with the provinces and on the various continents, a presence of the Congregation that, restructuring and expressing better all our resources, strengths and persons, can give better service evangelizing the poor.

4. FORMATION. Encourage initial and ongoing Vincentian formation.

Conviction:

CM, be what you are! "Initial and ongoing formation is a necessary condition for the CM to continue keeping alive its identity in the Church and in the world of today."

Objectives:

1) To foster the actual "general institutions" of Vincentian formation; 2) To support practically the new initiatives of interprovincial collaboration in formation (cf. the School of Spirituality CLAPVI); 3) To stimulate interprovincial collaboration in initial and ongoing formation.

Actions:

21. Encourage the provinces to use and put into practice the *Ratio Formationis of the Internal Seminary* and the *Ratio Formationis of the Major Seminary* and, in the course of these years, attempt to renew both of them.

22. Maintain and foster our international formation institutions: CIF (International Formation Center) and SIEV (International Secretariat for Vincentian Studies).

23. Support and stimulate formation initiatives (cf. Vincentian Leadership) and the formation of formators organized by the Visitors' Conferences.

- 24.** Promote the “History Project of the CM.”
 - 25.** Continue the regular “new Visitors” meetings and, in coordination with the Daughters of Charity, the meetings of “new Provincial Directors” of the Daughters of Charity.
 - 26.** Promote, through SIEV and the Vincentian Months, “specific formation meetings” (for ministries, in coordination with CIF, etc.).
- 5. SOLIDARITY. Promote the sharing of goods among the provinces of the Congregation and solidarity with the poor.**

Conviction:

We stake, in large part, our Christian and Vincentian credibility on effective solidarity with the needy. “Our temporal goods are for the Church and the poor, are common and missionary” (cf. C. 148, §§ 1 and 2).

Objectives:

1) To foster the sharing of goods among the provinces; 2) To take steps to arrive at the “self-financing” of all the provinces; 3) To go to meet the needs of the poor.

Actions:

- 27.** Maintain the actual Patrimonial Funds being set up. Begin a new Patrimonial Fund Project in favor of the provinces with fewer resources and seek new resources for this project.
- 28.** Strengthen the financing institutions already existing in the Congregation, especially the VSO.
- 29.** Study the possibility of a CM Office for Development.
- 30.** Publish a *Practical Guide for the Provincial Treasurer* (cf. Treasurer General).
- 31.** Offer to the Council basic financial information on the provinces: 1) obtain clear and accurate information on the financial situation of all the provinces of the CM (cf. Report of the Treasurer General to the Superior General and also to the Council); 2) revise the list of “poor provinces” and make a list of “poorer provinces” in order to consider them as a priority.
- 32.** In visits to the provinces, pay attention to the financial aspect (financial situation, financial commission, management, etc.).

6. FAMILY. Live and share the Vincentian charism with the VF.

Conviction:

The CM is a branch of the “Vincentian Family,” which recognizes itself inspired and united by the same Founder, a same spirit and charism, and, at the same time, feels itself enriched by the different ways (priestly, consecrated, lay) of living and incarnating such a charism.

Objectives:

1) To foster, together with the Vincentian Family, the evangelization, service and promotion of the poor; 2) To deepen our relationships with other branches of the VF.

Actions:

33. Go more deeply into the study of the significance and the consequences of “sharing the Vincentian charism.”

34. Maintain and foster the annual meeting of the representatives of the VF.

35. Specify, after a period of reflection, the function of the Delegate of the Superior General for the Vincentian Family.

36. Promote, together with other branches of the VF, common initiatives of Vincentian formation.

37. Encourage the CM provinces so that some confreres give themselves to accompanying the various branches of the VF (DC, AIC, JMV, SSVP, MISEVI, AMM).

38. Support financially, on the international level, the Vincentian branches who are less independent economically (that is, JMV, MISEVI, AMM).

39. Establish communication with other “new branches” of the VF.

7. GENERAL CURIA. Renew and optimize regularly the services of the General Curia.

Conviction:

The General Curia, in its persons and distinct offices, is an instrument at the service of the Superior General and the entire Congregation in each one of its provinces, institutions and persons.

Objective:

To improve the departments of the General Curia in order to better serve the Superior General and the Congregation.

Actions:

40. Maintain regular communication among the Assistants General and the respective provinces and Visitors' Conferences (reading bulletins, etc.).

41. Promote in the provinces a greater knowledge and use of the offices and international services dependent on the Curia.

42. Improve the General or Historical Archive: giving it more physical space, making progress in its computerization, devoting sufficient financial resources to it.

43. Improve communication between the General Curia and the provinces:

1) using internet as a means of communication;

2) promoting the publications' office (*Vincentiana, Nuntia, Website*);

3) developing the website of the Curia within the internet site of the CM.

44. Promote in the provinces: 1) the creation and maintenance of the Provincial Historical Archive; 2) the creation of archives of computerized data that, in the future, could be shared.

45. Evaluate and, if necessary, update the *Job Description Book of the General Curia* (Rome, 2004).

46. Constitute and maintain an Intermediate Archive. Organize, improve and protect the Vincentian Library of the General Curia.

47. Begin, with the help of the provinces and other CM institutions, a "Computerized Vincentian Library" project, which will contain and offer quality Vincentian works and be an easily accessible instrument for our formation.

8. GENERAL COUNCIL. Promote the identity of the Council of the Superior General, organ of help and advice in government (C. 115), and its "good functioning."

Conviction:

The Council of the Superior General (its members) constitutes a fundamental institution in the government of the CM (C. 115). The General Council, as a "work group" (and community of Vincentian brothers), needs, in order to accomplish its mission, a fraternal climate and a systematic method of working and making decisions.

Objective:

To help the members of the Council carry out adequately the mission that our Constitutions and Statutes (C. 102, 108, 115; S. 61, 62, 63) assign to them.

Actions:

- 48.** Establish a channel of personal and regular dialogue of the Superior General with the Vicar General, the Assistants General and the officials of the Curia.
- 49.** Evaluate periodically and regularly, in extraordinary sessions of the General Council, the climate of the Council, the work method and the work accomplished. In light of this evaluation, adopt decisions for improving the accomplishment of its mission.
- 50.** Evaluate, revise and update this “Project of the General Council” in the October *tempo forte*.