

FEATURE

St. Vincent and the Priesthood

Presentation

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From June 2009 to June 2010, we are living the “Year for Priests” as asked by his Holiness, Pope Benedict XVI. In a letter from the Congregation for the Clergy that was addressed to the leadership of Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life we are encouraged to celebrate the “Year for Priests” with enthusiasm. This same letter refers to the Holy Father’s letter that was addressed to all priests throughout the world in which he invites them to an interior renewal for the sake of discovering their own identity. He also invites them to contemplating with all the People of God, the beauty and the importance of the ordained priesthood and to contemplate with awe and gratitude the work of the Lord who on the eve of his passion desired to institute the priesthood and essentially united it to the Eucharist.

The above cited letter from the Congregation for the Clergy, after pointing out by way of example some objectives states that *the Spirit will bring forth, as the fruit of meditation on the Holy Father’s letter, the most opportune initiatives in order to offer a providential service on behalf of the priesthood.*

In the *tempo fuerte* of October 5-9, 2009, the Superior General and his Council expressed the desire that this “Year for Priests” be *lived in relation to our Jubilee Year of the 350th anniversary of our Founders, particularly Saint Vincent whom we know as the “light of the clergy.”* The Assistant General, Father José Antonio Ubilliús, has been asked to

coordinate different activities and articles that will be published on the www.cmglobal.org web page concerning the "Year for Priests." The desire was also expressed that VINCENTIANA publish an issue dedicated to Saint Vincent and the priesthood. Since several months of the celebration of the "Year for Priests" had already passed, it did not appear, at first, to be easy to fulfill this wish, especially since VINCENTIANA, with its demands of translation into three languages, needs time to accomplish such programs. But through the efforts of all involved, this edition on Saint Vincent and the priesthood is ready to be published at a time when it can help us to make this year of reflection on our priestly fidelity to Christ, the priest, a time of renewing our commitment to follow the example of the priest, Vincent de Paul.

This is not the first time that VINCENTIANA has focused on the theme of Saint Vincent and the priesthood. On the occasion of the 400th anniversary of Saint Vincent de Paul's ordination VINCENTIANA published five articles (# 3, May-June 2000). The same theme was continued as Rev. Robert Maloney published an article entitled "Vincentian Priesthood as Missionary" (# 6, November-December 2000).

The reading of this edition of VINCENTIANA cannot leave us indifferent to any of the priests of the Congregation of the Mission. It is a reading that will both challenge us and commit us. The others, the Brothers of the Congregation, members of the Vincentian Family and all our friends who receive this edition will find in it a call to ask Christ, the priest, to gather into his heart all of the priests of the Congregation so that they might be witnesses of his merciful love in this world, as Vincent de Paul was among the poor and as the Curé of Ars was in his parish.

Finally, VINCENTIANA speaks about itself. Specific circumstances, easily imaginable, have led us to make a decision to reduce the frequency of this publication, so instead of publishing bi-monthly we will now publish quarterly. This new schedule will also entail an adjustment in the subscription rate, as noted at the end of n. 6, 2009. This small change allows us to take advantage of this opportunity to review all that VINCENTIANA has accomplished during the past fifty-three years, and in particular, these last fifteen years when we have published each edition in three languages. As affirmed in our study: *VINCENTIANA has, without a doubt, resulted in being a serious and ordered collective instrument of reflection and study throughout the long history of the Congregation of the Mission.*