

TEMPO FORTE CIRCULAR
(2-9 October 2010)

Rome, 20 October 2010

To the Members of the Congregation of the Mission

My dear brothers of the Congregation of the Mission,

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

This will be the first circular of the new administration having celebrated its first *tempo forte* from 2-9 October.

We began our meeting as usual with an **ongoing formation session** wherein we had a lively exchange over the two documents of the General Assembly: synthesis and lines of action. This session was held for all the members of the Curia. The Council itself will continue further study of the synthesis and lines of action as part of the *tempo forte* sessions in order to reflect on how both documents can become more effective instruments in the life of the members of the Congregation of the Mission.

The Saturday before the *tempo forte*, the Superior General held an **orientation for the new members of the Council**. At the orientation were members of SIEV. The coordinator, Alexander Jernej, gave a presentation, joined by the input of other members. The session was followed by the Director of CIF, Father Marcelo Manimtim, explaining to the new Council members the objectives and goals of CIF as an office for ongoing formation at the international level. This was followed by a session given by the delegate for the Vincentian Family, Father Manuel Ginete, depicting how his role as the delegate might be carried out by the different members of the new Council. The final session was given by the Director of the Vincentian Solidarity Office, Father Miles Heinen.

During the week we had special presentations: a dialog with the Bishop of El Alto, Bolivia, Msgr. Jesús Juárez Párraga.; a report given by the Econome General, Father John Gouldrick; and a report on the department of Communications given by Father Julio Suescun.

1. The first matter of business was the nominating of the **new Director General** of the Daughters of Charity. That name is to be announced at a future date.
2. Then we discussed the General Assembly of 2010 in a number of different ways. First, we had an **evaluation of the General Assembly** wherein the following **recommendations** will be made in preparation for the General Assembly 2016.
 - More time will be dedicated to moments of prayer.
 - More time will be given to work in groups.
 - There will be a greater clarification of the role of the synthesizers.
 - The Directory will be redacted in order to be more clearly understood.
 - We will solicit the provinces and the local communities to work at a more intense preparation for the General Assembly, helping them to see it as an integral part of the General Assembly.
 - Time will be reserved at the beginning of the General Assembly to give an orientation, especially to the new participants.
 - A moment of interchange between the Superior General, his Council and the Assembly participants will be held.
3. The **revised Statutes: a Commission** composed of Father Alberto Vernaschi, coordinator, Javier Álvarez and Nicola Albanesi was formed.
4. We treated the **postulata that were recommended to the attention of the Superior General and his council**.
 - The first postulate dealing with an on-line catalog: the Secretary General will solicit information from various religious congregations that already have catalogs on line and will present that at a later ordinary council meeting.
 - The second postulate dealing with a Practical Guide for Parishes: the Assistants Eli Chaves and Stanislav Zontak will begin that process by preparing a questionnaire to be presented to the Visitors and their councils.
 - The third postulate dealing with the renovation of the *Ratio Formationis* of the Congregation: the Visitors will be asked to send their formation projects to the Curia.
5. We dealt with matters related to the General Curia and the assignments of the **General Assistants** to the provinces that they will visit and other **responsibilities**. The Assistants will be writing letters to the Visitors of the respective provinces.

The Secretary General will compile a list of when the last canonical visits were made. The method used for the canonical visits will be studied at the beginning of each *tempo forte* in order that we might improve the responsibility of being animators of the spirit of the Congregation.

Regarding the different roles that each Assistant will carry out:

- **Father Javier Álvarez**, Vicar General, will be responsible for confreres in difficulty. He will also be a member of the editorial commission of Vincentiana and be delegate of the Curia for SIEV, that is International Secretariat for Vincentian Studies.
 - **Father Stanislav Zontak** will be responsible for initial and ongoing formation. He will therefore be the representative for the Curia with the CIF program in Paris and with the Vincentian priest students in Rome. Part of that responsibility deals with looking for scholarships for those studying.
 - **Father Eli Chaves** will be responsible for the Vincentian Family. Particularly he will be the moderator of MISEVI International. He will assist the Superior General with regard to the international mission in El Alto and Cochabamba, Bolivia.
 - **Father Varghese Thottamkara** will be the Assistant for Missions, particularly responsible for the international missions of Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands. He will collaborate with the Economy General in the work of the Mission Distribution Fund.
 - **Father Zeracristos Yosief** will be the council representative on the Commission for Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation of the Union of Superiors General. He will also be the link with the Commission for Promoting Systemic Change as well as our contact with the United Nations Representative, Father Joseph Foley.
 - With regard to the **Conferences of Visitors and/or Provinces** the Superior General will be the council representative for the National Visitors Conference of the United States; Javier Alvarez and Stanislav Zontak for CEVIM; Varghese Thottamkara for APVC; Zeracristos for COVIAM; and Eli Chaves for CLAPVI.
 - Different Assistants will participate over the course of the next two years in workshops for the formation of General Councils. Each of the Assistants will take some time this year and next to improve their knowledge of different languages.
6. We received and studied at length, with the help of a report from Father Suescun, **SIEV**. In our *tempo forte* meeting of December we will reflect on possible candidates to assume the responsibility

of the Executive Secretary of SIEV. At the same time we will study the possibility that the confrere also be the new Director of Vincentiana, Nuntia and the web pages of the Vincentian Family and Congregation of the Mission (famvin.org and cmglobal.org). We also concretized two projects of SIEV; one will be a workshop regarding Islam. A preparatory commission is being formed. Father Claudio Santangelo will be the coordinator. He will be contacting a number of confreres in order to determine their availability and then plan the first meeting. The other project of SIEV is the ongoing formation of Vincentian researchers. Both the workshop on Islam and the researchers meeting will be planned for sometime during 2011.

7. The **Procurator General**: the Superior General and his Council have appointed Father Alberto Vernaschi. He has graciously accepted. We suspended the statute that dictates that he loses his status in his province; therefore he remains a member of the Province of Rome. Father Vernaschi will work in close collaboration with Father Javier Álvarez.
8. **Secretary General**: Giuseppe Turati was nominated and has accepted. He will begin full-time at the end of January.
9. Father John Gouldrick, the **Econome General**, has also asked that we do a search for a new Econome General. Once that responsibility is filled, we will also have an assistant to the Econome General from the Congregation of the Mission in order to respond to the increasing workload that this office experiences.
10. We studied a report from the **Commission for Promoting Systemic Change** and have made the request that Father Maloney, as coordinator, be present at our *tempo forte* meeting in December to help orient the Council regarding the purpose of this Commission, and particularly the project that is connected with it, Zafen, the Vincentian Family project in Haiti.
11. The next item was a **VSO report** from the director, Father Miles Heinen who continued the orientation that he had begun previously with the new Council, explaining more in detail how the report works and the responsibility that the director has *vis a vis* the General Council.
12. We had the **report from the Econome General** wherein he presented a new process for determining the overall costs of each province for the General Assembly. We approved the method, considering it to be more just and balanced in terms of the amounts paid by those provinces who have better economic

possibilities as well as the provinces that are less financially able. A similar procedure will be presented at our next *tempo forte* regarding the provincial tax.

Of particular importance, we want to mention our gratitude to the Province of Paris for the low costs that they charged during our stay in the Maison Mère of the rue de Sèvres. Also noteworthy is that **the Daughters of Charity did not charge us anything for our use of the rooms that we had available to us** in the rue du Bac. I ask that all of us in a special way show our gratitude to the Daughters of Charity through our prayers for them and our support to the different provinces throughout the world.

Father Gouldrick also presented the economic report of the activities of the 350th anniversary. The event is considered closed with the reimbursement of monies to both the Daughters of Charity and the Congregation of the Mission who established the fund.

13. We reviewed the report from Father John Freund of the **famvin webpage** wherein he highlighted how the lines of action from the General Assembly in a number of different ways call for the implementation and use of technology that is available today.
14. We reviewed information that we received from the different **Conferences of Visitors and/or Provinces**. Of particular interest is the report from COVIAM wherein we reviewed the process for the establishment of the mission in Chad which is planned for Easter of 2011.
15. The **International mission** of the Congregation in **El Alto** presently has three confreres: Aidan Rooney, Diego Plá and Cyrille de Nanteuil. Father Diego Plá's contract with the international mission was renewed for another three-year period. We reviewed the contract between the Congregation of the Mission and the diocese of El Alto, approving it with minor modifications.
 The former superior of the mission of El Alto, Father Aníbal Vera has finished his experience of ten years of service. We thank Father Aníbal for the most generous service and enthusiastic missionary spirit that he exercised during his time in El Alto. We are also delighted to know that the province of Peru will replace Father Aníbal with another confrere, guaranteeing their presence in the mission until 2016.
16. The Archbishop of **Cochabamba**, Msgr. Tito Solari, gave us an update on the eventual assuming of a parish in his diocese, as well as the future construction of a residence for the

missionaries. In that mission at present are Father David Paniagua and Father Joel Vásquez, the former having been the previous Director of the Daughters of Charity in Bolivia and the latter, the current Director. Both will be part of this community along with a third missionary whose name will be mentioned at a later point in this circular.

17. Our mission in **Papua New Guinea**. We approved the community project presented by Homero Marin, Justin Eke and Włodzimierz Małota. Then we reviewed and renewed contracts with both the Holy Spirit Seminary, Bomana and Holy Name of Jesus Parish.
18. The international mission of **Solomon Islands**: We renewed Greg Walsh as superior of the mission. At present there are five missionaries in the Solomon Islands, the superior Greg Walsh, Ivica Gregurec, Victor Bieler, Flaviano Caintic and Augustinus Marsup. They are awaiting the arrival of three confreres. Their names will be mentioned later in this report
19. We reviewed letters from a number of **bishops who have asked for missionaries**; two are from Angola, the diocese of Sumbe and the diocese of Malanje. The decision was to include both of these petitions in the October Mission Appeal as well as writing specific letters to particular provinces who may be able to respond to these requests. We also studied a letter from the bishop of Kaolack in Senegal. This request will also be included in the Mission Appeal of October. The Superior General will write to another province who may be interested in opening a special mission there.

We studied a request from the Visitor of Puerto Rico regarding the Region of Haiti. A decision was to also include this Region in the Mission Appeal of October.

20. With regard to **candidates to the missions**, we are hoping to have a confrere in place in Haiti to help support projects of the Vincentian Family, part of the 350th anniversary commitment. With regard to the mission of the Solomon Islands, we have named a confrere from Eritrea, Father Teclemicael Tewelde, who will participate in the community working in the seminary, in Scripture. There is a confrere from Argentina, Raúl Castro, who is in Australia preparing for the mission in Solomon Islands, as well as a third confrere from Indonesia who will be named at a later date. The confrere from Nigeria to be assigned to the mission in Papua New Guinea is Father Jude Okechukwa along with Georges Maylaa from the Province of the Orient, Emmanuel

La Paz and a layman Marlon Padillo both from the Philippines. We named the third missionary for the new mission in Cochabamba who is Father Jorge Manrique Castro from the province of Chile.

I conclude this circular of our *tempo forte* meeting with the words from the homily of Cardinal Rodé on the occasion of the 350th anniversary of the death of Saint Vincent and Saint Louise de Marillac in St. Peter's Basilica, September 25, 2010. "The spirit of the Lord is upon me; he has sent me to bring good news to the poor.' These words of the Lord place us at the very heart of our celebration. These words resounded time and time again from the soul and the lips of Saint Vincent de Paul. These same words resound, indeed ought to resound, from the lips and the heart of every Vincentian who follows Vincent's path."

Article 2 of our Constitutions asks us to remain in a continual state of renewal, faithful to the gospel, attentive to the signs of the times, opening up new ways and using new means adapted to the circumstance of the time and place. Cardinal Rodé goes on to say, "This state of renewal ought to be above all else a work of the Spirit. May it be in the spirit of Jesus who makes us new creatures that we provide concrete and durable responses to the urgent demands of our time."

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 style with a large initial 'G' and a long, sweeping underline.

G. Gregory Gay, C.M.
Superior General