

**TEMPO FORTE CIRCULAR**  
**(6-13 December 2010)**

Rome, 22 December 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!

We began our *tempo forte* with an ongoing formation session that was led by Brother George Gallardo of the Christian Brothers who spoke to us about the project of Solidarity in Southern Sudan, an intercongregational collaboration encouraged by the Union of Superiors General of men and women.

1. Our first matter of business was a **report given by the Superior General and the Vicar General** on the most recent meeting of the Union of Superiors General which was on the evangelization in Europe. Materials were distributed to the members of the council who in turn have been asked to reflect on that material and send what is appropriate to the provinces in Europe.  
We also reflected on another article entitled “Religious Institute and the Art of Dying” written by a religious from Holland. We also, as part of an ongoing dialog, carried out a discussion on the canonical visits, each of us shared what we considered to be most essential to achieve in the canonical visits.
2. The Secretary General gave us a report on a project for **putting our Catalog on line**. Father Claudio visited a number of the General Curiae that have their Catalog on line. We already have a lot of the work done because our data base is up-to-date with regard to all the personnel of the Congregation of the Mission. It would be just a process of moving that database to an on-line status with all the security that is involved.
3. We also approved a **project of the General Archivist** regarding the digitalization of the canonization process of Saint Vincent de Paul. There are in existence only six copies of this multi-

volume work. It is recommended that we move in the direction of digitalization in order to protect the valuable information that we have in our archives, this being a prime example.

4. The Superior General discussed a letter that he has since sent to the four Universities of the Congregation of the Mission: Adamson in the Philippines, DePaul, St. John's and Niagara in the United States, regarding a **bank of Vincentian teachers**.
5. We introduced a new agenda item in our *tempo forte* meetings, a **report from each of the General Assistants**, regarding the areas of which they have been given responsibility. Father Varghese Thottamkara spoke to us about a workshop that he attended on General and Provincial Council meetings. Father Zeracristos spoke to us of a meeting that he attended on Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation. Father Stanislav Zontak gave us an update on the project of restructuring our *Ratio Formationis*. Eventually we will be naming a team of formators for the new *Ratio*.
6. We had a special orientation session with Father Robert Maloney who spoke to us on the workings of the **Commission for the Promotion of Systemic Change** as well as the international project of the Vincentian Family, Zafen, and an explanation of one of our partners in ministry and development, the Franz Foundation.
7. We then studied a report sent to us by the Director of the **Vincentian Solidarity Office**, Father Miles Heinen. As part of its responsibilities, the VSO is raising funds for our project in Haiti. The particular project that they will now be taking on has to do with feeding school children. Twenty-five schools are involved in this, nine of which are run by the Daughters of Charity. The hope is that each child will be given daily a hot meal.
8. We studied a number of **economic issues**, presented by the Econome General, Father John Gouldrick. Among these was an establishment of a set donation from the different provinces of the Congregation of the Mission in order to support the functioning of the General Curia. This topic was discussed during our General Assembly and was left to the Superior General and his council to decide on a system of donations that would be just. It is at this time of year that we approve the different budgets of the General Administration. We approved support of the International Secretariat of the JMV and a sizeable donation for the World Youth Day celebration of the Vincentian Youth in August 2011 in Madrid.

9. We had a report from the outgoing **Delegate for the Vincentian Family**, Father Manuel Ginete, who gave us, not only an update on what has taken place since the last *tempo forte* meeting but also an evaluation of his five years in the office of Delegate for the Vincentian Family. Both he and Sister Maria Pilar will be moving on to new assignments; so I want to take this opportunity to thank both of them for a very fine job in consolidating the operation of the Vincentian Family Office as well as consolidating the operation of the Vincentian Family throughout the world. Father Ginete's responsibilities as delegate will be passed on to the Assistant, Father Eli Chavez. He will have a new secretary from Brazil, as well as an assistant, a confrere from the Province of Central America.
10. Because of his new responsibility as Apostolic Visitor to Religious Life in Ireland **Father Robert Maloney** has asked to take a brief sabbatical from some of his major responsibilities in the Congregation and with the Daughters of Charity. We talked about possible temporary personnel who will fill in for him in the Zafen project as well as the DREAM project which he is connected with through the Daughters of Charity and the community of Sant'Egidio.
11. We had a video conference during *tempo forte* with Father John Freund, the **web master for FamVin**. John gave us a report on how media can be used to respond to each of the points that were developed in our Lines of Action from the General Assembly. A letter that will be written by the Superior General regarding evangelization and media is forthcoming.
12. We also had a special orientation given by Father Joe Foley, our **representative at the United Nations**. He spoke to us at length regarding his responsibility at the UN together with other members of the Vincentian Family, and his role vis-à-vis the General Council and the importance of this service in the evangelization of the poor, and the major issues that he and other members of the Vincentian Family deal with at the UN.
13. We read a report from the Directors of the **CIF program** in Paris. The last session that they had was well-received by the 15 participants including two brothers of the Congregation of Missionaries of Mercy. We also studied a draft letter that the superior General will be sending to the provinces requesting support in establishing scholarships in ongoing formation.

14. We reviewed information from the **Conferences of CEVIM and CLAPVI and COVIAM**. We spent time discussing the new mission of COVIAM that will be established in Chad on Easter Sunday, 2011. A contract that was agreed upon by the Bishop and the Congregation of the Mission was signed. The Council discussed different ways that we might be able to help support the mission in Chad financially, through the Mission Distribution Fund as well as soliciting help from the Vincentian Solidarity Office.
15. From the **mission in El Alto** we reviewed and renewed the contract with the Diocese of El Alto. It was signed and sent to the Bishop. We appointed a new member, José Emilo Torres Motta from the Province of Peru, to the mission team in El Alto. Father Torres will begin his integration into the community of El Alto 1 March 2011. Father Cyril de Nanteuil of the Province of Paris had his commitment to the mission in El Alto extended to another three-year period. We congratulate him on his vigorous missionary spirit and his willingness to continue to work among the people of Aymara. We also reviewed information from the new mission in Cochabamba. A letter from the Archbishop informs us that three confreres have been installed in the parish, two on a full-time basis and one the Director of the Daughters of Charity on a part-time basis.
16. We reviewed a report from the superior of the mission in **Papua New Guinea**, Father Homero Marin. There are a number of confreres who will be arriving at the mission but presently are awaiting their visas and work permits from the government. The good news is that the mission is expanding and the mission has asked permission to build a small formation house. Presently the vocations that come from Papua New Guinea share their formation with the students of Solomon Island and the Province of Australia in Fiji.
17. We also reviewed a report from the superior in the **Solomon Islands**, Father Greg Walsh. We renewed our contract with the bishops of the Solomon Islands and we reviewed a letter from the superior requesting volunteer missionaries to work in the diocese of Auke. It is our hope to expand to this diocese which has the greatest number of vocations in the seminary in the Solomon Islands at present. Solomon Islands also has a number of confreres who are waiting to arrive to the mission. The first of them will be Father Raul Castro from Argentina, who by the time this circular is out, will most likely be in Solomon Islands.

18. The confrere volunteer from the Province of Congo, Father Jean-Pierre Mangulu Mabondo is being considered for a **special mission in Haiti** and he will be discussing this matter with the Superior General and other members of the General Council.
19. We received five **volunteers for missions**. Of those five, two will be placed in a new mission which will soon be announced. I take this opportunity to thank all those confreres who generously offer themselves to the international missions or to the missions of other provinces throughout the Congregation which are in need of personnel. May the Lord bless you for this willingness to go beyond the boundaries of your own province in order to serve where the Church has needs.
20. As a final point, we discussed our **calendars for January, February and March**. Just a brief run-down of the commitments of the Superior General.

In January he will be in Madrid for the international meeting of the Vincentian Marian Youth Council. Also in January he will be in attendance at the meeting of the Executive Committee of the Vincentian Family in Paris. In the second part of January he will make a visit to the Province of Ethiopia to participate in the ordination of a number of confreres and other events.

In February, the Superior General will participate in a meeting for new Visitatrix of the Daughters of Charity in Paris. From the middle of February to the end, he will visit the Province of Puerto Rico including the Dominican Republic where the northern zone of CLAPVI has its interprovincial internal seminary. The Superior General will also pay a visit to the Region of Haiti.

In March he will participate in the renewal of the vows of the Daughters of Charity on the feast of the Annunciation in Paris, and at the end of the month he will participate in the National Visitors Conference meeting in the United States. Other members of the General Council are still getting themselves rooted in their responsibilities and roles as well as learning different languages to carry out their duties.

*"Today you fill our hearts with joy as we recognize in Christ the revelation of your love. No eye can see his glory as our God, yet now he is seen as one like us. Christ is your Son before all ages, yet now he is born in time. He has come to lift up all things to himself, to restore unity to creation, and to lead us from exile into your heavenly kingdom"* (Christmas Preface II).

For this Lord, we give you thanks, we give you praise and we ask you to help us give witness by our living out of our vocations as members of the Congregation of the Mission. I take this opportunity to wish each and everyone of you a joyful Christmas and a peace-filled new year.

Your brother in Saint Vincent,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "G. Gregory Gay, c.m."

G. Gregory Gay, C.M.  
Superior General