



# Nuntia

Newsletter of the Congregation of the Mission November - 2018

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## First Encounter of Vocational Promoters - General Chronicle



### José Luis Cañavate Martínez, C.M. - Province of Zaragoza

At the end of a letter which the then Superior General of the Congregation of the Mission (Vincent de Paul) wrote to Entienne Blatiron (December 13, 1647), we find the following words: "I very much approve the little assistance you and M. Martin offer one another in the daily sermons and catechism lessons you and he give [...] Labor will be sweet to them and every task easy; the strong person will relieve the weak one, and the weak will cherish the strong and obtain increased strength for him from God. And so, Lord, your work will be done as you would like, for the building up of your church, and your workers will multiply, attracted by the perfume of such charity." Vincent de Paul gave thanks to God for the apostolic communion that arose from the ministry of the two cited missionaries. This logistical and mutual support enabled them to carry out the ministry that had been entrusted to them (these missionaries were ministering in Italy). Furthermore, this perfection in the practice of charity, proper to the members of the Congregation (cf. CCD:XII:213-225), will give rise to the emergence of future collaborators in the

missionary activity of the Congregation.

Vincent's words reveal his sensitivity to the issue of vocations, a sensitivity that was rooted in the good work that was being accomplished by his two confreres. Vincent believed that the practice of charity would attract new members. Vincent's sensitivity was sustained by those elements that grounded the ministry of the members of the Congregation: mission, charity, community prayer and personal integrity ... those elements provide a framework for the life of all missionaries.

It is clear that our Founder, without any concept of a culture of vocations, rejoiced when his confreres shared their enthusiasm for their pastoral ministry. That perspective guided our reflections during the time of this First Encounter of Vocational Promoters that was held in Paris (November 19-December 1, 2018). That same perspective was expanded by a group of excellent presenters: Tomaž Mavrič, CM; Sister Therese Raad, DC; Fr. Amedeo Cencini; Andrés Motto, CM; Robert Maloney, CM; Javier Álvarez,

CM; Francisco Berbegal, CM; Frédéric Pellefigue, CM; Roberto Gómez, CM; Rolando Gutiérrez, CM; Jacek Piotrowski, CM; Jorge Luis Rodríguez, CM and Girolamo Grammatico (Office of Communication of the Congregation of the Mission). The attitude of openness and work of the participants was applauded by the Organizing Team that was led by Father Andrés Motto, CM (Director of the International Formation Center [CIF]). Without a doubt the Holy Spirit was the animator and the source of inspiration for all the participants at this gathering.

M. Blatiron, still ministering in Genoa, received a letter (November 12, 1655) from Vincent which stated: I thank God for the special devotions you are planning in order to ask God, through the intercession of blessed Saint Joseph, for the spread of the Company. I ask His Divine Goodness to accept them. For more than twenty years I have not dared to ask this of God, thinking that, since the Congregation is His work, its preservation and growth should be left to His Providence alone. Reflecting, however, on the recommendation given us in the Gospel to ask Him to send laborers into His harvest, I have become convinced of the importance and usefulness of this devotion (CCD:V:468-469).

That missionary attitude and sensitivity led to the development of a vocational pedagogy which in turn led Vincent to accept certain devotions and activities that fostered a vocational promotion program for the Congregation of the Mission. Thus, the need for the confreres to live their missionary

vocation with integrity and to give witness to the gospel... such integrity and witness attracts others to become collaborators in the mission. During the days of our gathering in Paris, we continued to be attentive to our prayer life. Morning prayer and meditation enabled us to open ourselves to the movement of the Holy Spirit and at the same time motivated us to work together with enthusiasm. The celebration of the Eucharist and evening prayer brought our day to a close as we prayed in the presence of the body of the “mystic of charity”. At the same time, the participants in this meeting often went to the chapel located on the Rue du Bac and there the missionaries reflected and prayed in the presence of the Vincentian symbols that are enshrined in that place.

We, as vocational promoters and participants in this gathering, take responsibility for and affirm this new paradigm of a vocational culture. Through means of the Final Document, which was approved during the last session of our gathering, we will promote this culture of vocations in all the places where the Congregation is present.

Thank you for your trust and attention. May God, through the intercession of Saint Vincent de Paul and Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal, strengthen us to live our vocation in all its fullness and in a manner that is attractive to others.

*Translated:  
Charles T. Plock, CM - Eastern Province, USA*





# Meeting of Vocational Promoters

WE ARE JOURNEYING TOWARDS RENEWED CULTURE OF VOCATIONS

## Final Document

### Introduction

From November 19th to December 1st, the seventy-five participants of the First International Encounter of Vocational Promotion Ministers, gathered together at the International Center of Formation (CIF) in the Motherhouse of the Congregation in Paris and shared the missionary joy of their Vincentian vocation. More than seventy confreres, from almost every Province, Vice-Province and Region responded to the invitation of the Superior General. We believe that reality is a reflection of the interest and the importance of this ministry of vocation promotion in the present-day life of the Congregation of the Mission. In the context of this Encounter we have expressed our option for a *Renewed Culture of Vocations* [Letter of the Superior General, January 25, 2018], which option when experienced and lived from the perspective of the gospel, revitalizes our passion to follow Jesus Christ, evangelizer of the poor (a following of Christ in every aspect of our lives). In this way we can create an *attitude, a sensitivity and a pedagogy* that will help us put in place a lifestyle that favors the establishment of a culture of vocations in each one of our local communities and that will, at the same time, allow us to cultivate a *Vincentian spirituality of being called*.

We want to present some convictions and proposals:

### Convictions:

**Present state of our missionary vocation:** the vocation of the Missionaries of the Congregation of the Mission, the vocation of the Brothers as well as the vocation of the priests, enjoys a great relevance and possesses a *mystical power of action* that if

lived in its fullness will make all our works and ministries true seed-beds of vocations. A concern with regard to the crisis of a reduced number of candidates should not be the primary motivation for our ministry on behalf of young people, rather we should be impelled by a culture of vocation and a missionary passion to proclaim *Jesus Christ, evangelizer of the poor...* this Jesus who continues to call young people today in order to continue His mission. Vocations in our provinces are always a gift from God and we ought to give thanks for that gift.

**On-going formation:** we consider the on-going formation of the missionaries a priority since it is through this type formation that the confreres will live-out their vocation in such a manner as to become persons who, through their lifestyle, “call” others to follow Jesus. It is through prayer, testimony and our missionary joy that we will be a prophetic sign for young people because *the church does not grow through proselytism but through attraction* (EG, 14).

**Accompaniment of young persons:** we are aware of the fact that it is urgent that we, as members of the Congregation of the Mission, commit ourselves to the ministry of accompanying young persons in their process of vocational discernment. Thus, an important element of our missionary charism is to support young persons and offer them the opportunity to discern their vocation from a faith perspective. At the same time our accompaniment provides them with a further opportunity to listen to the voice of God who calls them to commit their

lives to the mission of evangelizing the poor.

### **Vincentian Vocational Pedagogy and Lines of Action**

In Establishing a Vincentian culture of vocations, the commitment of all the members of the Congregation is most important. Therefore, allow us to suggest the following operational/pedagogical lines of action for each of the three distinct levels of our Congregation:

#### **Superior General and General Council**

- To create an International Commission of Vocational Promotion
- To designate one of the assistants to accompany this commission.
- To facilitate the exchange of missionaries among the provinces, thus fostering a deeper sense of solidarity.
- To create opportunities for interprovincial exchanges among those who are in the process of being formed.
- To focus the next General Assembly on the theme of a culture of vocations.
- To promote a review of the works of the provinces and to do this from the paradigm that a Vincentian culture of vocations offers us.
- In the different Conferences of Visitors to promote opportunities for formation in this area of creating a culture of vocation.

#### **Visitors and the members of their council**

- To commit themselves to the implementation of a Vincentian culture of vocations.
- To establish a Team of Vocation Ministers.
- From the perspective of the reality of the province and from the perspective of a culture of vocations, to develop/define a vocational promotion plan.
- To provide the opportunity for the Vocation Director to dedicate himself full-time to this ministry.
- In each work of the province, to give priority to a qualitative community life and to missionary witness.
- To ask each local community to designate one individual who will take responsibility for this service of vocational animation.
- To connect vocational promotion with the

members of the worldwide Vincentian Family.

- To guarantee the formation of formators.
- To establish a formation structure that integrates vocational discernment, initial formation and on-going formation.
- Young people and lay persons should be members of the Vocational Promotion Team

#### **Each missionary**

- To commit themselves to on-going formation so that they continually clothe themselves anew in the spirit of Jesus Christ evangelizing the poor and at the same time deepen their love for their vocation.
- To study, in depth, the Church's and the Congregation's documents on this theme of a culture of vocations.
- Through their witness and the means of communication, to make visible the vocation of the Congregation of the Mission.
- To take advantage of every opportunity to sow the seeds of vocation so that the whole life of each confrere gives witness to this culture of vocations.
- Pray personally and as a community for vocations.

#### **Conclusion**

At the feet of Saint Vincent, the mystic of charity, we, the directors and confreres responsible for vocational promotion ministry in our provinces, vice-provinces, regions and international missions, renew our commitment to the understanding of the Congregation of the Mission expressed in this document, as well as the convictions that we have pointed out... convictions that spring forth from a Vincentian vocational pedagogy which we assume responsibility for as we engage in the ministry that has been entrusted to us.

We are certain that the culture of vocations represents the dream and the mission of our Founder because we know that workers will multiply, attracted by the perfume of such charity.

*Translated:*

*Charles T. Plock, CM*





## The Visit to Benin of Father Tomáš Mavrič, CM Superior General of the Congregation of the Mission



### Sister Julienne – Sisters of Mary of the Miraculous Medal

On Saturday, November 24, 2018, Father Tomáš Mavrič's feet stepped on Benin's soil. The Fathers of the Congregation of the Mission and all branches of the Vincentian Family in Benin had the great joy of welcoming for the first time ever the Superior General from Rome. The entire Vincentian Family met in southern Benin on Sunday, November 25, the Solemnity of Christ, King of the Universe. The day began with a solemn Mass at the Sisters of Mary Chapel of the Miraculous Medal. At the beginning of Mass, Father Stanisław Deszcz, CM welcomed Father General, asking everyone at the assembly to open their hearts to the Holy Spirit so that the meeting could bear fruit. During the homily, Father General narrated a few events that the Vincentian Family had experienced since the great 400 years solemnity of the Vincentian charism. At the end of Mass the whole assembly gathered in the conference

room. There Father Stanisław invited each group to introduce themselves: the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul, the Servants of the Redeeming Love of Christ and the Sisters of Mary of the Miraculous Medal. Then Father General spoke, thanking each branch and explaining the projects of the Vincentian Family. He urged frequent meetings at the national and diocesan level. He highlighted each branch's uniqueness and contribution for the good of the whole family as well as the mutual help that must reign in the family. He presented the international office's role and hoped that the committee in Benin would maintain contact with this office. Father Stanisław finally thanked all the participants and invited them to an agape prepared by the Sisters of Mary. A few days later, on November 27, the feast of the apparition of Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal, Father General visited the branches in northern



Benin. The Eucharistic celebration took place in a village community whose chapel is dedicated to Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal. After the celebration, the Vincentian branches each presented a brief history of their foundation, their apostolate, their hopes and plans to the Father General. Present were the Vincentian Sisters of Mary Immaculate, the Sisters of Mary of the Miraculous Medal, the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul and the Confreres of the Congregation of the Mission. The meeting concluded with a communal feast. On Wednesday, the 28th, the Sisters of Mary of the Miraculous Medal had the joy of welcoming the Superior General into their community. In the shared celebration through song, dances and theater, the sisters and children of the sisters' boarding school showed their gratitude

to Father Tomáš who had come to visit them. This visit ended with the Eucharistic celebration. On the 29th, the parish community of Biro expressed their gratitude by welcoming Father General. How sweet it was to gather together! But the mission always calls us to other places. On November 30, on the feast of St. Andrew, Father General returned to the south of Benin to meet with His Excellency Archbishop Aristide, Bishop of Porto Novo, and with the Sister Servants of the Redeeming Love of Christ. After these meetings, Father General would need to go back to those other shores where the mission calls.

*Translated by Dan Paul Borlik, CM  
Western Province, USA*



## Superior General was present at the Ongoing Formation Meeting in Zaragoza, Spain



### Santiago Azcárate Gorri, C.M.

The usual Ministries' Meetings that takes place every year in the Province of Zaragoza aroused special interest on this occasion because it was to be guided by Father Tomaž Mavrič, CM our Superior General. Up to 30 missionaries from all the communities gathered in Casablanca on the afternoon of Monday, 5 November, to share these two days of formation and open themselves to the universality of our Congregation.

On Tuesday, the 6th, after an intense moment of prayer, the day began with the Visitor's greeting to the Superior General and the warm welcome of all those present. Getting right into the matter, the Superior General explained some of the aspects that were defining his ministry: the opportunity that the Fourth Centenary of the charism presented for the revitalization of our spirit; the importance of communion and work with the entire Vincentian Family; the universality of the Congregation, etc.

All these themes elicited reactions and questions from the missionaries that made possible a greater approach to the reality of the Congregation and its current situation in the world. At the stroke of one o'clock, accompanied by the Visitor and the Director of the Sisters of the Province of Eastern Spain, the Superior General went to the Provincial House of the Daughters of Charity. There the Visitatrix, Sister Juana María Belzunegui, and the entire Council were waiting to greet him and share the meal with the community of the provincial house. It was a hopeful time for charismatic communion and a joyful gathering.

In the afternoon, Father Tomaž Mavrič, CM focused on the aspect of the mission "ad gentes" from the last letter he addressed to the entire Congregation on the subject. This issue also attracted the attention of the participants at the meeting, who were interested in the different geographical areas where we are

present and the growth prospects that are opening in one country or another. The day concluded with the celebration of the Eucharist, together with the groups of the Vincentian Family of Saragossa, in our Saint Vincent de Paul Parish. The Vincentian Family Commission, in collaboration with the parish, had prepared everything. It was a simple, moving, very participatory, and joyful celebration. Songs, signs, and joys multiplied. In that same environment of a happy and united family, we continued later in the parish hall sharing some appetizers and happily chatting among ourselves. We all ended the day with the aftertaste of gathering and joy.

On Wednesday, the 7th, after celebrating the Eucharist, the entire morning was dedicated to an open dialogue with the Superior General. The time was short for all the questions and contributions.

A profound interest in the Congregation, a keen sense of identity, and a deep desire to belong was observed. The fraternal meal, in an atmosphere of joy and closeness, provided a cordial climax to this meeting. Without a doubt, Father Tomaz enjoyed his presence in this Province of Saragossa, which showed him its respect, affection, and communion. All the missionaries delved into our sense of belonging to a universal Congregation and the joy of our Vincentian identity. The topicality and dynamism of our charism encouraged in all of us the decision to continue giving ourselves to the service of Christ in the evangelization of the poor. At the end, there was a unanimous feeling of gratitude to the Superior General for his presence in the Province and for having brought us closer to the reality of the Congregation with realism and hope.



## The Voices -cries- of the Poor... Who Will Listen?



Guillermo Campuzano, CM - Internacional Coordinador of VIN - JPIC - UN Office

On November 18 we will celebrate **the second World Day of the Poor**, instituted by Pope Francis to raise ecclesial and social awareness of the importance of fighting together against poverty in solidarity with the poor. The World Day of the Poor is meant to be a small contribution that the whole Church can make so the poor may know their cries have not gone unheard, the Pope said in his message.

The slogan of this day **“This poor man cried out and the Lord listened to him”** (Ps 34,7) is explained by the Pope in this way: “The Lord listens to those who, trampled in their dignity, still find the strength to look up to him for light and comfort. He listens to those persecuted in the name of a false justice, oppressed by policies unworthy of the name, and terrified by violence, yet know that God is their Savior... This experience, unique and in many ways undeserved and inexpressible, makes us want to share it with others, especially those who, like the Psalmist, are poor, rejected and marginalized.

No one should feel excluded from the Father’s love, especially in a world that often presents wealth as the highest goal and encourages self-centeredness. (Message of Pope Francis for the

Second World Day of the Poor). Poor people enjoy to a much lesser extent the fundamental rights of human beings than those who are not poor... ordinarily their voices are ignored with cynicism in our society. This situation causes the poor to cry out to God for help, since he knows that God always listens to him/her! This journey of the poor is an extraordinary opportunity for the Vincentian Family to remember its fundamental vocation: to be close to the poor, to hear their cries and from there be the presence of God who, with our ears, listens to them, and who also helps them by using our own hands, our compassion, our systemic action and our political advocacy. The links between poverty and rights are not evident to those who do not live in poverty. A few years ago, the World Bank conducted a study entitled, “The Voices of the Poor,” for which they interviewed 20,000 poor people around the world. One of the most striking conclusions was that poor people often mention their sense of helplessness and lack of rights. The problems cited by the poor tend to surprise those who are not poor: crime or local corruption, the attitudes of social and public employees, being ridiculed when expressing themselves about oppressive social conditions, husbands stealing property from their wives, etc.

There are many traps of poverty and vicious cycles that keep people in a state of inhumane poverty. This poverty of many -the majority- benefits a few because in our current economic system poverty is functional, it is a part of a complex scheme that needs poor people to fulfil its goals. The cycle of poverty is not broken if the possession of land, health, nutrition, basic education, credit and insurance, access to new technologies, a stable and non-degraded environment, personal emancipation, political participation, etc. are an exclusive right of the so-called privileged of the land. The Sustainable Development Goals (UN Agenda 2030) are based on the human desire to eradicate poverty by creating social, structural and environmental conditions that allow the life of the poor to flourish from the fundamental respect of all their rights and the rights of the planet.

Poverty is pain, a pain that causes poor people to cry out. Poor people suffer physical pain that can be caused by hunger, sickness and long hours of work; emotional pain stemming from the daily humiliations of dependency and the lack of power, and the moral pain of being forced to make decisions, such as using all of life's savings to save the life of a sick family member or using those same funds to feed their children. If poverty is so painful, why are the poor still poor? The poor are not lazy, stupid or corrupt. Why, then, is poverty so persistent?

### **These are some of the causes of the persistence of poverty in the world:**

1. States are largely ineffective in addressing the basic needs of the poor... corruption and lack of political will are the main causes. 2. The role of NGOs and charitable groups in the lives of the poor is limited, and the poor depend mainly on their own informal networks. 3. Households are collapsing under the stress of poverty. The home as a social institution is crumbling under the weight of poverty. 4. The social fabric, the only "safe" of the poor, is falling apart ... due to growing inequalities, exclusion, lack of education, discrimination, lack of opportunities. 5. The

inequality gap between the poor and the rich grows at a scandalous rate with the complicity of political leaders and it is motivated largely by an unlimited greed of the powerful of the land...

### **Listening to the voice of the poor in this context means coming to terms with these realities:**

1. Starting with the realities / needs of the poor ... listening to their voices 2. Investing in the organizational capacity of the poor ... leading them out of poverty. 3. Changing social norms, especially those rules of exclusion, indifference, lack of opportunities. 4. Supporting the creativity and leadership of the poor, trusting the ability of the poor to find their own way ... 5. Involve political and social leaders, and politically influence sustainable systemic change ...

It seems to me that Psalm 34, used as a slogan in this year's journey, gives us an essential clue in our work for and with the poor. We have written a lot about the faces of the poor, and not enough about their voices. The most radical act of solidarity with the poor today is to see them (to be conscious) but above all to listen to them, to hear their cries, to know their needs, to hear their voices! This listening produces the dialogical perspective, the encounter and therefore the humanization of all actions, on the side and in favor of the poor, as Pope Francis has articulated it in his message this year. Our ultimate goal can be to stop being the voice of the poor so that the actual voice of the poor, their cry, is heard for itself, without intermediaries.



## Summary of the International Meeting of the Famvin Homeless Alliance



From November 26-28, 2018, the International Meeting of the FAMVIN Alliance with the Homeless was held in Rome at the house of the Daughters of Charity. This Alliance was established last year to commemorate the 400th Anniversary of our Vincentian Charisma and a report on undertaking was presented to Pope Francis.

### The Conference focused on three aspects:

1. Homeless people who are refugees, displaced people and those who are homeless because they had to flee war or some natural disaster.
2. People living in slums and those living in the cities but in inadequate housing.
3. Homeless people living on the street and those who, because of different circumstances, sleep on the streets or in shelters.

This meeting gathered more than 100 people, including experts who shared their experiences and explained how we can improve our service to the poor. The head of this Alliance, Mark McGreevy, gave a presentation as did Father Robert Maloney CM (Spiritual Advisor of the International Council of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul), Father Aáron Gutiérrez, CM, (Assistant General of the Congregation of the Mission), Sister Kathleen Appler, DC, (Mother Superior of the Daughters of Charity), Father Joseph Agostino, CM International Coordinator of the Vincentian Family Office), as well as other unnamed members of various branches of the Vincentian Family. There was a large representation of National Presidents of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul (Australia, Brazil, Spain, United States, Lebanon, Malawi, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Guatemala, India, etc.). Some of the issues that were discussed revolved around slavery and

homelessness, how to raise funds in order to build homes, how to improve health services for the homeless and how to make this issue a greater priority on the agenda of the UN and of the Church. The participants also addressed the issue of giving greater voice to the poor. Furthermore, they submitted specific instances of cooperation among the branches of the Vincentian Family in some countries, especially in Latin America, where the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul is present in almost all the projects of this type. This project is rooted in Pope Francis' encyclical, *Laudato Si*, which Monsignor Bruno María Duffe, Secretary of the Dicastery for the Promotion of Integral Human Development, explained in a very powerful manner. The underlying idea is that with the cooperation of the whole Vincentian Family, we work together to make a real and sustainable difference in the lives of homeless people; that we promote the establishment of new services, build a network among the Vincentian groups, and support and develop leaders who carry out these activities. The idea is also to share the best practices that can be found in the Vincentian Family. All of this is to be done from the perspective of Vincentian spirituality and should be based on the encyclical, *Laudato Si*. The project has been named "13 Houses" because it is inspired by the first thirteen houses built by Saint Vincent de Paul. The Alliance invites us to promote this concern in dialogue with the national or local coordinators of the FAMVIN and thus explore ways to initiate a joint project for the homeless. The date of this meeting coincided with the anniversary of our Lady of the Miraculous Medal, and therefore a solemn Eucharist was celebrated in the Apostolic Leonian College of the Congregation of the Mission, (presided by Cardinal Angelo de Giorgi, Vicar General of His Holiness).

Source: <https://vincentians.ssvpglobal.org/>

## General Information



### NOMINATIONS / CONFIRMATIONS

MBATA Cyril Nnamdi	22/11/2018	Visitor of Nigeria (Reconfirmed)
BARBOSA DE OLIVEIRA Vandeir	09/11/2018	Director DC Río de Janeiro

### ORDINATIONS

PAVOL Dominik	Sac	SLK	23/06/2018
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### NECROLOGIUM

Nomen	Cond.	Dies ob.	Prov.	Aet.	Voc.
RYMARZ Marian	Sac	01/11/2018	POL	76	57
CHACÓN MINA Daniel Antonio	Sac	02/11/2018	AMC	81	62
ESCUADERO GALDEANO Fernando	Sac	03/11/2018	COL	87	68
POROSSA Krzysztof	Sac	07/11/2018	POL	77	58
VAN WEZEL Jan (J.F.M.)	Sac	07/11/2018	CGN (HOL)	83	66
PÉREZ SÁNCHEZ Victoriano	Sac	27/11/2018	POR	90	26

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