Joy was in the air. The long awaited visit of Very Rev. Fr. Tomaž Mavrič, CM, the Superior General, accompanied by Rev. Fr. Matthew Kallamnakal, CM, Assistant General finally became a reality on November 12, 2019. The days were short and the places to visit were far and wide and as a result the visit confined to a few houses. Yet the majority of the confreres traveled for a brief encounter with the Superior General and this was indeed a time of great joy.

The visit began in the North-eastern section of the Province where the visitors participants joined the Annual Childrens’ Day celebration at Molkon, Manipur. The following day the Superior General visited Willong – another remote mission station. The third day was dedicated for travelling to the Myanmar border. After a four hours journey, we reached Moreh where we met Bishop Felix Lian Khen Thang, Bishop of Kalay Diocese, Myanmar. During a very open and cordial discussion the bishop requested the establishment of a new mission in his diocese. The journey back from Moreh by road was a bit tiresome physically but very refreshing given the picturesque views of the mountains. The next day was filled with excitement as we celebrated the Silver Jubilee of St. Vincent’s Parish and School, Pangmoul (thus recalling memories of the beginning of our mission in the North-east section of India). The celebration began with traditional welcoming by the village elders. The Eucharist was presided over by Most Rev. Dominic Lumon, DD, the Archbishop of Imphal. The joy was enhanced with the announcement by the Superior General that the Northeastern section of the Province would now become the Northeastern Region. The Region eagerly waits the
India – North

appointment of the Regional Superior.

Dimapur (in the state of Nagaland) houses one of our Minor Seminaries. It was a matter of great joy for the seminarians to receive Very Rev. Fr. Tomaž Mavrič, CM on his visit. The celebration of the Eucharist and interaction with the confreres and the candidates in the seminary was a very enriching experience.

The visit to Kolkata – known as City of Joy – will remain a joy forever. The Superior General visited the Mother house of the Missionaries of Charity, where he witnessed the simplicity of life of Mother Teresa of Kolkata. The spiritual environment of the House while visiting the tomb of Mother Teresa, the ongoing adoration in the chapel, meeting Mother General and later visiting Shishu Bhavan (the place where Mother began her mission) … all of these no doubt will remain as cherished memories. Shishu Bhavan is a home for the abandoned who have been rescued by the Missionaries of Charity from the streets and there given much love and care.

Confreres from the canonical house of Kolkata came together and had a personal encounter with the Superior General.

Odisha provided a different set of experiences – visiting some of the parishes, hostels, schools, seminaries and retreat centers in Ganjam, Gajapati and Rayagada districts. Father also visited the tomb of Fr. Valerian Gomes, CM, one of the four pioneer Spanish Vincentian missionaries to India. He was happy to see the love and respect that the people have for Fr. Valerian Gomes, CM the people view him as a very saintly missionary.

The different ministries that our confreres are engaged in must have surely been encouraging. The interactions with confreres coming from far distances to visit the Father general was impacted by the interactions with the confreres who traveled many hours in order to meet with him.

At every stage of our journey Father visited the Daughters who collaborate with us in ministry.

The Lord has been most gracious to us. He has been accompanying us throughout the days of Father General’s visit … it is a visit that will be remembered for many days to come.

Fr. Prakash Tirkey, CM
Visitor, NIP of the Congregation of the Mission
SUPERIOR GENERAL VISITS THE INDIA-SOUTH PROVINCE

It was indeed a remarkable and grace-filled moment for the province of south India to welcome Very. Rev. Fr. Tomaž Mavrič, CM, the superior general on his first visit to India. He was accompanied by Rev. Fr. Mathew Kallammackal, the assistant general in charge of the province. On 2nd November 2019, Tomaz and Mathew were welcomed by the Visitor, Fr. Tomichan at Trivandrum. It was there that Fr. Tomaž began the formal visitation to the provinces in India. On Saturday, November 2, Fr. Tomaž Mavrič, CM, Superior General, and Fr. Mathew Kallammackal, CM, Assistant General, arrived to Trivandrum, in the Province of India South. He met the confreres working in southern part of Kerala and Tamilnadu. The next day the superior general, Tomaž Mavrič, and Mathew Kallammackal, Assistant General, along with Fr Tomichan, the visitor were in Sri Lanka in the parish of Pesalai where two of the confreres of the province are ministering. In the visit they also found time to meet the bishop of Mannar, Most Rev. Joseph Rayappu ... they discussed the possibility of opening a missionary region in that country.

On November 6, Fr. Tomaž Mavrič visited the Generalate of the Vincentian Congregation, a society of consecrated life (in the Syro-Malabar Rite) founded in 1904 in India. They are a branch of Vincentian Family. Then, our Superior General had the opportunity to meet Director of Fiat Missionaries of St. Vincent de Paul (a branch of the Vincentian Family), a lay movement founded in 2008 to work for the global evangelization.

Next, he visited the Pontifical Institute of Theology and Philosophy in Alwaye in Ernakulam district, Kerala. There he met with the formators and theology students and engaged in a dialogue with them. Afterward, he came to DePaul Sadan, a house for retired priests in Angamaly, Kerala. He celebrated the Eucharist with the Confreres and met with each one of them individually. In the morning, November 7 Fr. Tomaž and Fr. Matthew arrived in the
Provincial House of the India-South Province in Mysore. The Superior General took the opportunity to address all the confères and concelebrate the Eucharist there. The next day, November 8, he went to De Paul Minor Seminary. There he celebrated the Eucharist and had a dialogue with seminarians and the seminary staff. Later, he visited the cemetery where members of the Province are buried. He prayed for all the departed Confreres of the Southern Province in India. Next, he visited DePaul International Boarding School in Mysore which is administered by the Province. In the evening Fr. Mavrič and Fr. Kallamakal left for Chennai. On 9th November Father General visited the communities at Chennai and the Internal Seminary of the Province situated at Dharkast in the suburb of Chennai. He met the confreres and the internal seminarians at Chennai. Later he travelled to Vijayawada in the state of Andhrapradhesh where he visited the confrères working in the various communities in Andhrapradhesh. Later, he travelled to Yerrupalem in the state of Telengana where he met with the confreres working in the various communities there. On 12th November he reached the Provincial House of the Daughters of Charity of the Southern Province in India and had a dialogue with various branches of the Vincentian family. He encouraged all the members of the Family affirming the fact that the charism transmitted to us by Vincent de Paul is that which unifies us as a Family and unifies us in our various ministries.

In all the meetings Fr. Tomaz appreciated the young and vibrant confreres and the various ministries that they are engaged in on behalf of the congregation. He also insisted that the nature of the congregation is missionary and encouraged all the confrères to be missionaries. A special mention was made about the missions in Tanzania and Sri Lanka.
I have recently concluded my visitation to the Provinces of India. I would like to share with you one of the encouraging events that is occurring in the Northern Province of India. This is regarding the life of Fr. Valerian Guemes C.M, one of the first four Spanish Vincentians who went to India as a missionary in 1922. Today thousands consider him as a saint and they come to his tomb to pray. Many have shared their experiences of receiving favors through the intercession of Fr. Valerian Guemes. Popular devotion is developing and the number of people coming to pray at his tomb continues to increase. It was interesting to hear that it was not the Northern Province of India or diocesan officials who began and promoted this popular devotion. It was started by the people who knew him. When people began to remove mud from his tomb (a sign of their devotion), the Northern Province of India erected a small structure over the tomb to protect it.

Fr. Valerian Guemes was born on September 12, 1890 in Quintanarruz in Spain. He was ordained a priest on August 29, 1915 as a member of the Madrid Province of the Congregation of the Mission. Along with three of his companions, he began his journey to India on November 20, 1921 and reached Cuttack, India on January 10, 1922. God blessed their evangelization efforts and strong, faithful Christian communities were formed in the area entrusted to them. Fifty-six years of evangelization on the part of Fr. Guemes and others in the Southern Parts of Orissa resulted in the formation of three dioceses. Once in India Fr. Guemes never returned to Spain. The place called Mohana in Orissa, India was his favorite place because it was there that he built the first church. He spent his final days in Mohana. He died in Mohana in 1978 at the age of 88 and is buried in the cemetery at Mohana Parish in the diocese of Berhampur.
I had a talk with the Bishop of Berhampur about Fr. Valerian Guemes. The bishop himself is convinced that it is the holiness of Fr. Valerian Guemes that attracts many to the catholic faith in his diocese and in the other areas. It is the people who started this popular devotion and the bishop is ready to take his cause further.

Fr. Tomaž Mavrič, CM
Superior General
The International Commission for the Promotion of Systemic Change met at the CM General Curia in Rome on November 16-17, 2019. Highlights of the meeting included:

• the turn-over of the office of coordinator from Fr. Giuseppe Turati, CM to Jim Claffey, with the former continuing on as member of the Commission.
• an intervention from Mark McGreevy on the Famvin Homeless Alliance

The rest of the discussions focused on regional initiatives and upcoming Systemic Change workshops in Ethiopia (November 2019), Slovakia (February 2020) and Cameroon (March 2020). The Commission deeply thanks Sr. Maria Teresa Mueda, DC and Rose de Lima Ramanakavana (AIC) for their all-out work and support in promoting Systemic Change as they both end their mandate in the Commission.

May we all continue in our efforts, big or small, to plant seeds of systemic change in all our ministries and services.

Ana Maria P. Escaño
Executive Secretary
Our very first CIF workshop for the International Missionaries was held at the Motherhouse in Paris from Monday, November 11 to Friday, November 29, 2019. Sixteen confreres from eleven different counties participated: Congo, Rwanda, Cameroon, Brazil, Mexico, Guatemala, Panama, El Salvador, Spain, Ecuador and Japan. These formation sessions were directed by Fathers Aarón Gutierrez Nava, CM, Andres Motto, CM, and Emmanuel Typamm, CM.

The three-weeks of formation invited the confreres to reflect upon and recommit themselves to the call to evangelize the periphery as well as to share their experiences, challenges and hopes. Most of the sessions were conducted in Spanish with French translation, but we also welcomed one English and one Italian presenter. The formation sessions include a biblical and historical analysis of the development of church’s call to evangelize people who are marginalized … and how the members of the Congregation of the Mission, in collaboration with the entire church and especially with the members of the worldwide Vincentian family, can respond to that call. By seeing, discerning and acting in accord with the present reality, our confrere in the International Missions serve our voiceless and needy brothers and sisters.

Our dynamic interactions and reflections allowed the participants to learn from each other’s experience, culture and talents. Since this session was held at the mother house of the Congregation, the participants had the opportunity to celebrate the Eucharist with the Daughters of Charity at the Rue du Bac and at other local churches. Most of all, the participants were reminded of their missionary call to be sent out to the ends of the world.

I would like to thank the Superior General Fr. Tomaz Mavric, CM, the CIF and the members at the mother house in Paris for accommodating us, and especially thank Frs. Aaron, Andres, and Emmanuel for their leadership. We ask for your prayer as we go out the ends of the world to bring the good news to the poor.

Toshio Sato, CM
Western Province of USA
The experience at the International Formation Center was simply extraordinary... it was an experience of God passing in the midst of the life of the members of the Congregation of the Mission who participate in this session. This time was also an experience of renewal in a spirituality that is alive in the Church and especially in the Congregation. This was a month in which we were able to walk with Saint Vincent, imbibe his spirituality and travel along the paths that he walked.

Gathered together at the Motherhouse were seventeen confreres from distinct parts of the world. We were guided by the director of CIF, Fr. Andrés Motto, and the sub-director, Fr. Emmanuel Typamm, these confreres not only guided us but also translated various languages: Spanish, French and English.

The following confreres participated in this session: Daniel Arturo Vásquez Ordoñez and Julio Cesar García Hurtado (Colombia), Victor Filippino (Argentina), Gastón Parada (Chile), Vincensius Feresius Mariyanto and Agustinus Sukaryono (Indonesia), Abadu Ghebremedhin, Berhe Jawid (Eritrea), Edward Gallagher, (United States), Davis Kachappilly, Antony Merlin Soosai and Michelle Chandrankunnel (India), Kusno Bintoro (Taiwan), Bienvenido Disu Phillippines), Peter Sun Huaping (China), Lenard Koshwa (Kenya), Pierre Calvin Tsimangoy (Madagascar).

The goals of CIF are clear: strengthen the following of Jesus Christ, evangelizing the poor; appreciate the richness of our spirituality; deepen the sense of community; communicate to others what we have experienced here at CIF.
The methodology was the following: [1] conferences that involved an enthusiastic but realistic vision of our spirituality, [2] visit the vincentian places of interest both in Paris and outside the city [3] an appreciation for French culture [4] personal prayer and common life [5] experience of community among the participants and with the other members of the Vincentian Family [6] free time: know important places in Paris and in nearby cities, visit museums, enjoy French cuisine.

1. Conferences (a brief commentary on each of the conferences ... not necessarily that which is most important, but a taste of the various presentations.

We began our Vincentian heritage month with a Vincentian biblical update that was offered by Father Robert Gómez, CM (superior of the Motherhouse). We should approach the biblical text with three questions: (a) what is the text saying (b) is this narrative stating the truth .. did it really happen (c) what is this text saying today ... what is it telling the Church.

Father Andrés Motto then gave an introduction to our Vincentian studies. This took place during various sessions throughout the month. First, he spoke to us about Vincent’s christology and stated that the Jesus of Vincent de Paul is not one who worshiped the Father or the Risen Christ, but rather is Christ, the missionary, Christ incarnate and servant of the poor.

Father Luigi Nuovo, CM developed the five characteristic virtues and also spoke about the life and the theology of Louise de Marillac. He stated that the characteristic virtues for the Daughters were three (humility, simplicity, gentleness) and the characteristic virtues are intimately bound up with charity. Saint Louise is a saint because of her own merits, that is, she knew how to respond to the grace of God (we do not know Louise in the manner that we should).

Father Motto introduced us to the history of the Congregation: first from 1660 until the time of the French Revolution and then from the time of the French Revolution until the appointment of Father Pierre Joseph Wailly (1826) as superior general. There was not enough time to go into the more recent history of the Congregation.

Father Giuseppe Guerra helped us to dre-
am about holiness and to understand the process of canonization in the Church. He then spoke about some of the individuals whose cause for canonization is pending. In 1835 Father Verdier, superior general, wrote a circular letter in which he stated that for reasons of humility the Congregation would not present any case in Rome. Today, holiness is no longer viewed as something that should be kept hidden but rather is seen as a testimony of one’s dedication to Christ in service of those who are poor. The Church is clear in pointing out that in order to initiate a process, the bishop must verify the holiness of the individual or the veracity of an individual’s martyrdom ... and also that this cause is in the interest of the faithful. Among the causes that are pending is that of Marguerite Naseau.

We then dealt with prayer which was presented by Father Typamm. Vincent urged his followers to empty themselves so that God could enter into their life. Without God one cannot grow. Also it is necessary to take resolutions during prayer so that we can move from contemplation to action ... thus allowing grace to act.

Father Tomaž Mavrič spent a day with us and spoke about our identity, the Constitutions, the Common Rules, the need for good vocational promotion ministry, the worldwide Vincentian Family and the need to go out to an encounter with those who are poor.

The last conference was that of Giuseppe Turati who dealt with three themes: the option for the poor, systemic change and the Vincentian Family. He spoke about reading Scripture from the perspective of the preferential option for the poor ... and the poor are all those who find themselves in an inhuman situation (lack of work, food, housing, access to education). He reminded us about Pope Francis’ desire to create a poor church for the poor. When speaking about systemic change he insisted upon the fact that the people whom we serve must be brought into every step of this process ... otherwise we will not be able to achieve our desired end. This process is a matter of charity and justice ... we must look at the root causes of poverty, seek solutions, change attitudes and structures. With regard to the Vincentian Family, Father spoke about our numbers and the fact that we are present in some 153 countries and are represented by some 304 institutes. We must work together on behalf of the poor ... we must create a network. (A dream you dream alone is only a dream. A dream you dream together is reality – John Lennon).

2. Pilgrimages
We visited Gannes, Folleville, Amiens, Metz, Richelieu, Chateau l’éveque, Périgueux, el Berceau, Buglose, Dax, Pouy, Lourdes, Toulouse and Clichy. These pilgrimages invited us to contemplation and also to expressions of gratitude. It seemed that these were more places of pilgrimage than places of mission.

We express our gratitude to the Congregation of the Mission for providing us with this opportunity for on-going formation, for deepening our roots, our historical, cultural, and geographical knowledge, as well as our understanding of our charism and our spirituality. We express our gratitude to our provinces for providing us with this time and to Father Andrés Motto and Father Emanuel Typamm for their commitment and generosity, their witness and their wisdom. Thanks also to Father Diego Luis Vásquez, the Visitor of Colombia, who gave me this opportunity as a gift at the time my 25th anniversary of ordination .... May God bless him and may Saint Vincent protect him!

P. Julio César García H. CM
Province of Colombia
Young men and women from different parts of Colombia and Venezuela gathered together (November 1-4) at Providence Major Seminary in Espinal, Tolima in order to participate in the VI Vincentian Youth Convention.

The gathering began on Friday afternoon as the young members of the Vincentian Family began to arrive at the seminary. With the sounds of music and in an atmosphere of profound relaxation, the meeting was initiated.

The following day (Saturday), we began with the celebration of the Eucharist during which the young men and women, in the midst of song and dance, remembered the deceased, especially Cristian David, a member of the Young Vincentian Volunteers who went home to God a few days prior to the meeting. After some snacks and a short break, the young men and women participated (in groups) in the catechesis that revolved around the words of Pope Francis regarding holiness. Some of the themes that were touched upon: the joy of being Vincentian, God lives and want you to live, the cries of the earth are the cries of the poor, Mary as one who influences, wake up the world with holiness and with Jesus Christ.

Music and song were present at all times, often introducing the different activities, in this case, introducing the Panel: EJV - JMJ. The objective of the panel was to share their experience of World Youth Day and the Vincentian Youth Meeting that took place in Panama earlier this year. This sharing proved to be very inspirational.

After a short break, an integration activity was carried out in which members from different places were mixed together in order to participate in the Vincentian Challenge, in which teamwork and joy were essential elements. Later, at nightfall, a youth vigil was held ... a time for reflection during which the young people had a personal encounter with Jesus through their participation in the sacrament of reconciliation.

Sunday morning began with a prayer in the chapel. Then, once again in groups, the young men and women participated in Lectio Divina that was guided by the advisors ... the text was Exodus 3:1-14. In the afternoon, two buses transported the young
people to the Saint John Paul II Center, where the “meeting” was now carried out into the streets of various neighborhoods. After walking through the streets of Espinal, the young people and several residents of the community gathered at the Worship Center to participate in the rosary that was prayed in the park. At the end of this, the Eucharist was celebrated and presided by Bishop Orlando Roa, Bishop of the Diocese of the Espinal ... around 250 people participated. At eight o’clock at night the young people returned to the Seminary to eat and prepare for the evening’s activities. Around nine thirty at night, the young people gathered in the central courtyard of the seminary for a Cultural Night, at which time the art and customs of the various regions was recognized. The night concluded with time for dancing and sharing as brothers and sisters. The VI Vincentian Youth Convention concluded with a Eucharist of promises and consecrations of the young men and women, members of the JMV and VJV. Gratitude was expressed for the wonderful experience of this weekend and for the participation of so many young Vincentians. This was a gathering in which the bonds of friendship were both created and strengthened.
ORDINATIONES

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