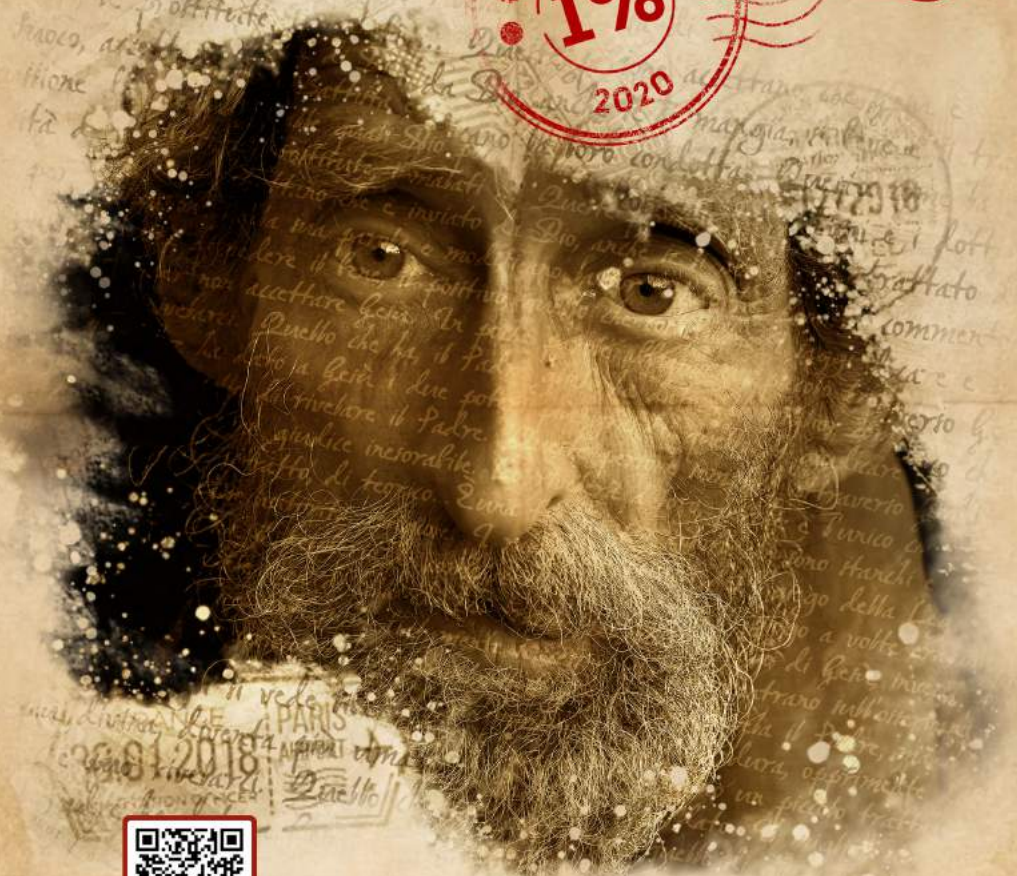


SEPTEMBER 2020



NUNTIA

Newsletter of the Congregation of the Mission



Vincenzian Missions

«Here am I, send me!»

30 new brothers will be part of the 1%,
again this year, for the Missions.
Do you want to go too?

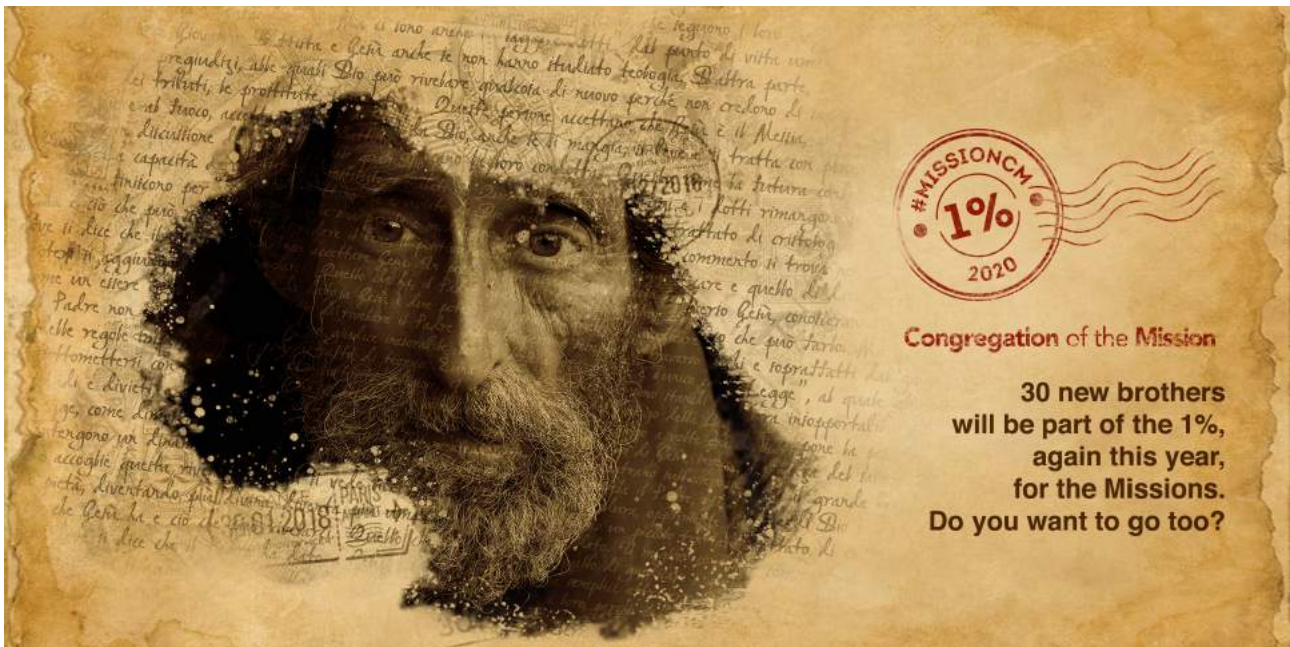


Congregation of the Mission
Communication Office



Congregation of the Mission
Communication Office

OCTOBER: MISSIONARY MONTH AND MONTH OF THE 1% CAMPAIGN



We are beginning the month of October, the missionary month par excellence ... a special time promoted by the Church, but also lived by the Congregation of the Mission in a particular way and with great enthusiasm.

Since September, we, at the Communication Office, wanted to start preparing the way for this month so that it becomes a time in which we reflect on the missionary nature of the Congregation. We know the missions in which many of our confreres are working and we seek to strengthen our missionary spirit. At the same time, we commit ourselves to the missions and many respond positively to the missionary call of the Superior General. Let us, then, go forward and take steps and say, here I am Lord, send me! (Isaiah 6:8).

As an Office, we have been working and preparing a campaign with material that will help us live out this month. We want to propose a motto, which for many, is one of those phrases of Saint Vincent that we use frequently:

"Our vocation is to go, not just to one parish, not just to one diocese, but all over the world"

This phrase evokes in us, as missionaries, a sense of walking, of setting out, of refusing to remain static,

anchored or attached to one place. In the same way, these words seek to recover our foundational charism of being missionaries, not diocesan priests. Therefore, we view the concept of "missionary" as something natural and something that is an element of our vocation. We also want to recover the international dimension of the Congregation so that wherever our missionary and congregational presence is necessary, we are willing to move out in new directions.

In this way, we want to change the present mentality that understands the missions as involvement in one of our International Missions. Viewing the missionary endeavor from this perspective impoverishes our missionary spirit. That is why we want to support the desire of the Superior General to continue the 1% campaign this year.

The 1% campaign seeks to encourage confreres to become involved in the mission, but not only that ... this campaign also seeks to stimulate reflection on the meaning of the Missionary Spirit in the Congregation and to recognize that our missionary dimension is not limited only to the International Missions, but extends to the missionary regions that many provinces have assumed. The presence of missionaries outside their countries of origin not only responds to the commitment that a certain province makes in light the needs of a

bishop or a particular church, but also responds to the call of the Church to engage in missions ad gentes.

Although it is true that the campaign speaks about, and will continue to speak about 1%, we do not intend to lock ourselves into the number of 30 missionaries. There are many confreres who go forth to the missions, to the international missions and regional missions in order to respond to the new needs in those places where there is no Vincentian presence.



After reflecting and viewing graphic possibilities, we have opted for a symbol that has much to do with missionaries and today, without which many could not make that dream become a reality. Our passports need a visa stamp, a seal in order to enter another country. Our passports are filled with these (we need to obtain those seals when we travel for meetings, for formation, or for vacation) ... but one seal is missing. To be a missionary, we need the missionary seal. We want to propose that you carry the 1% stamp on your passport, and that many become part of this one percent. Some may say: "But we are all missionaries" ...that being the case, now is the time to decide to concretize that reality.

The website

We wanted to renew the website dedicated to the international missions so that it included all the missionary experiences of the Congregation, including the regional and other experiences where the provinces are present. During this month, we will be presenting all these experiences through our website:

<https://cmglobal.org/en/mission-cm/>

The poster

We would like it to be found in every house of the Congregation and you can download it from the website to print and distribute it among others. The poster is very simple but it is rich in meaning. On an ancient-like sheet of parchment, the words of St. Vincent are

written in his own handwriting along with the border stamps that allow us to enter other countries, but above all there are two elements that stand out, the face of the poor which is the call of Jesus and the very specific invitation to be the 1%.

The T-shirt

We want many of you to be able to print the T-shirts in your own provinces and to distribute them so, we can get into this atmosphere of 1%, this atmosphere of mission.

Call to action

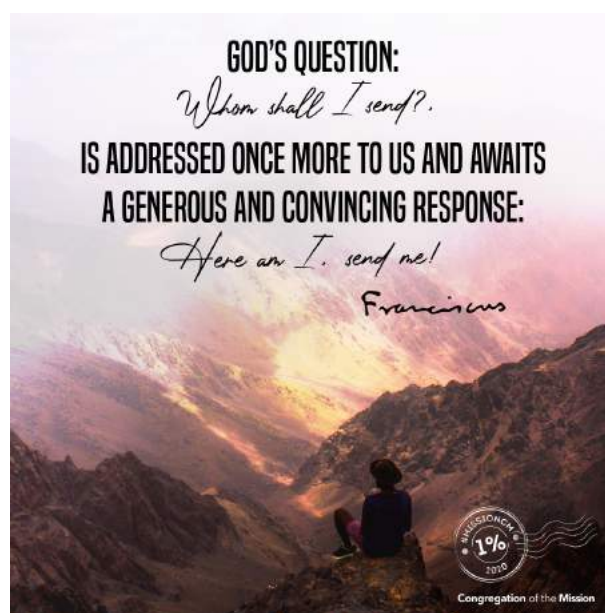
Today is very fashionable to create pages that lead to action. Usually this approach is utilized by companies that invite us to buy. Today we want this "call to action" to be very concrete so that missionaries who are motivated to go on a mission will be able to engage in direct communication with the Superior General.

<https://cmglobal.org/en/mission-appeal-1/>

Live broadcasts

Every week we will have a live broadcast from one of our missions on different continents and so with all of these elements, **let us now enter into and initiate this missionary month.**

Communication Office.



VOCATIONAL MINISTRY VIRTUAL MEETING



More than 80 confreres met on Saturday, 19 September, at 5 pm in Rome to share experiences of Vocational Ministry, generate reflection, and propose ways to energize the Vocational Culture in the Congregation of the Mission.

Organized by the General Curia, the event had as background the reflection that the Superior General has been offering on vocations since 2017 and the Meeting of Directors of Vocational Ministry, held in Paris in 2018.

In his message, the Superior General recognized that “the task of Vocational Ministry is a work that we have put in second place with regard to our missions and parishes. At other times, we have understood it with a bit of anxiety because the decrease of personnel makes us feel a certain pressure to increase vocations with the greatest possible promptness.” However, at the same time he encouraged those present to affirm that “This first meeting is a privileged moment to concretize options and commitments that can help our provinces’ Vocational Ministry and, at the same time, we can contribute from our different experiences and enrich the whole Congregation,” Father Tomáš said.

Then, it was the turn of the Vicar General, Father Javier Álvarez, who made a contextualized and analytical presentation of the Final Document of the First Meeting of Vocational Directors in 2018, which has as its title: “The Path Toward a Culture of Vocations in the Congregation of the Mission.”

The Vicar General commented on the three convictions of this document (“present state of our missionary vocation, ongoing formation, and accompaniment of young persons”). He emphasized that “Vocational Culture refers to the Vincentian charism and not to the institution of the Congregation,” and recalled the words of Pope Francis in *Evangelii Gaudium* 14: “It is not by proselytizing that the Church grows, but ‘by attraction.’”

Later, Father Rolando Gutiérrez from the Vice-Province of Costa Rica made a presentation that introduced the group work. He spoke about Vocation Ministry in times of pandemic and beyond it, presenting Vocation Ministry as an opportunity that invites us to set about seeking, in the style of Saint Vincent de Paul, who knew how to find that sense of seeking in the human heart and from there established the vocational bases of his foundations.

Three-Zoom meeting rooms were immediately arranged, one in each official language; namely, English, French, and Spanish. In these spaces, they had 45 minutes to discuss the vocational reality of the provinces and offer some ideas on possible initiatives that could be undertaken at the level of the whole Congregation. The desirability of a formative process for those responsible for vocational ministry was also analyzed.

After the plenary session in which the group secretaries presented the conclusions, there was an ultimate period of interaction and the final prayer led by Father Shijo Kanjirathamkunnel and the blessing given by the Superior General.

Communication Office.

VOCATIONAL MINISTRY OF THE CONGREGATION AFTER THE PANDEMIC



Let's begin with a fashionable theme: COVID-19. It must be said that we are no longer just aware of the changes that have been imposed upon us by ourselves, such as what we are doing right now, virtual communication, but rather, we are being challenged to see with prophetic eyes the path that we have yet to travel: What awaits us in the following months as this pandemic continues? What human and Christian lessons have we learned? What impact does this new reality have on the way we live our vocation and engage in vocation ministry?

Without pretending to give an answer to all those questions, I propose that we dialogue about these matters from the perspective that concerns those of us

who are present at this meeting: Vocational Ministry.

What aspects of the human heart has this pandemic revealed ... aspects that we should focus on in our service of vocational encouragement and vocational accompaniment?

If you allow me to attempt an answer, I would say many things can be synthesized in three elements: the fragility of the human being, the felt need of people in all areas, including those who seemed to have their lives in order, and the search for a Vaccine that is anticipated with such enthusiasm, this search has also been highlighted as a constant in the human being. This pandemic has revealed three elements in the human heart: fragility, need and search.

The first two words fragility and need. It seems to me that we can easily identify them with our own personal experience, but also, and above all, with the faces of the most fragile and needy in our different realities, those to whom the missionary of the Congregation of the Mission was called to evangelize, and whose needs have been accentuated by the socioeconomic effects of the pandemic. Certainly, from the perspective of vocation ministry this panorama becomes an opportunity to affirm the vocation to which we were called, and as a result of our witness of commitment to the poorest, we can make rays of hope shine forth in the midst of so much pain and suffering. Indeed, may hope shine forth in the hearts of people so that they might be seduced by Jesus Christ evangelizer of the poor.

But I would like to ask you during this meeting to focus for a few moments on the third word search .

We are at a time in which the great powers of the world have concentrated all their efforts on a search for a solution to COVID-19. We all are aware of the tensions that have been generated between countries that are engaged in the search for a vaccine that immunizes against the virus that has changed the life of the entire world. Yes, we are aware of the economic interests involved, but that is not the subject of this present reflection.

I have the impression that it was this sense of search that Vicente de Paúl discovered among the poor and among his collaborators: for many people of the 17th century, the poor represented a real problem: they were people who were uneducated and were viewed as the cause of all the ills that afflicted society [for its poor education and its high demand for solutions].

Vincent de Paul progressively found people eager to be encouraged with hope for a different life. He discovered that the poor were seeking a dignified life, but they did not have the tools or the formation and therefore were often left to the most instinctive means.

That is the state in which Vincent found the women in Chatillon, persons with whom he initiated the Confraternity of Charity. That is also the state in which he found his first missionary companions, especially M. Portail, and Marguerite Nasseau and the first Daughters of Charity. Vicente found that difficult times reveal a sense of search that is at the heart of the human person ... and that was the key to his vocational project.

Vincenian vocation ministry exists to the extent that there is a commitment to search, to go beyond the few or many pastoral structures that we have ... such ministry reaches out because Jesus Christ evangelizer of the poor provokes us to summon more of his followers in his project of Salvation.

It seems to me that it must be recognized that this idea of search has been a very insightful intuition of the Superior General since 2017. Previously there were initiatives in the Congregation but they have become more specific in recent years and especially since the Meeting of Vocation Directors that was held in Paris at the end of 2018.

But, since this vocational search involves a constant growth within ourselves and outside ourselves, that is, a challenge to proclaim the Gospel of the Vocation in the world, then let us ask ourselves what we are searching for today in Vocational Ministry and in the midst of this pandemic, when:

A. The Congregation of the Mission presents us with a decrease of 65 houses and almost three hundred missionaries in two decades.

B. When the most recent synod has told us that young people speak about an enormous need for “reference points” (Cf. CV99).

C. When congregational statistics tell us that 1,017 confreres are dedicated to parish ministry, more than a third of the active confreres, followed by 325 retired or sick missionaries... and yet during the Synod young people stated that: **“While parishes remain the primary and principal way of constituting the Church in any particular area, it was also observed that parishes struggle to appeal to young people and that their missionary vocation needs to be rethought”** (DF Synod #18).

And with all this and the many other things that we could say about our context, we ask: **What are we searching for?**

The fragility, need and search that the pandemic has brought us: **What direction should our vocation ministry take?**

Certainly, virtual communication was imposed on us, I would almost say that we had no choice, even those who were less inclined toward the digital world were forced to utilize this new means of communication. But how are we going to take advantage of this opportunity? How are we going to apply systemic change to our vocation ministry inspired by this new reality? What can we do beyond what we are doing and what should we stop doing ... among the many things that we are doing, what should we put aside?

When we are able to allow ourselves to be

questioned by reality and we respond from the heart of the Vincentian charism, that is, with mysticism, with missionary passion and a deep sense of community; then vocational ministry not only results in the entry of young people into our formation houses, but even more, it makes us feel the rejuvenating strength of the Vincentian vocation, that strength that makes us feel young that we must apply for the Vocational Ministry of our congregation. Pope Francis tell us:

“Young people are not meant to become discouraged; they are meant to dream great things, to seek vast horizons, to aim higher, to take on the world, to accept challenges and to offer the best of themselves to the building of something better” (CV15).

It is time to rejuvenate our Little Company from the perspective of vocation ministry that has been entrusted to us. Therefore, it is important to listen to each other and allow ourselves to be questioned by this new reality. That is exactly what we want to do in the following group work.

*Rolando Gutiérrez CM.
Vice Province of Costa Rica*

FIRST VIRTUAL MEETING OF VOCATIONAL MINISTERS SEPTEMBER 19, 2020



Through this virtual means of communication, I take this opportunity to all of you at the time of this first meeting of vocational ministers. In a few minutes I will speak about the Final Document from the meeting of vocational promoters (Paris 2018).

That document is sufficiently general in order to frame and orient vocational ministry. This document was seen and approved by the General Council (with some observations). The final document complements the second chapter of our Ratio *Formationis* and is grounded on two fundamental

elements: convictions and lines of action (“pedagogy” in the final document).

I want to point out three important convictions that are highlighted in the document:

1° The purpose of vocational ministry.

The purpose of vocational ministry is not the survival of the Congregation or the survival of any of its provinces, nor is it to guarantee the functioning of our ministries. Rather the

purpose of vocational ministry is to sustain and develop our charism ... a charism that today is perceived as necessary for our Church and for our world. Vincent de Paul was firm with regard to this conviction, to the point that during the first years after the establishment of the Congregation, he was not concerned about the number of aspirants despite the increase in work. He became concerned when he realized that this vocation was necessary in order to evangelize and serve the poor. In other words, according to Vincent's understanding, vocations are more related to the charism than to the institution. This then leads us to seek quality vocations and not simply the continued existence of the institution. Thus, quality is more important than quantity. When vocations are related to the institution, then one begins to seek numbers in order to cover a series of positions (quality is not a concern from this perspective). On the other hand, when vocations are related to and viewed from the perspective of the charism, quality is sought, prophetic voices are sought (and less emphasis is placed on developing various works).

I believe it is necessary to be attentive to this point because in those places where there are few numbers, there is the temptation to connect vocational promotion with preserving the institution. Such an attitude runs the risk of lowering and relaxing admission standards. From this perspective, vocational promotion becomes recruitment of candidates rather than a ministry that seeks the renewal of the charism as a result of the creation of a vocational culture. Vincent often stated: **"two or three times every day I ask God to destroy us if we are not useful for his glory"** (CCD:XI:2)

2° Vocational ministry involves all the members of a province.

No one can remain on the fringes of vocational ministry or hide behind those responsible for this ministry. The Church is also very aware of this reality. Thus, she speaks about **"a concerted effort" which involves the whole religious or parish community, the whole institute or diocese, every priest or consecrated person or believer** (*New Vocations for a New Europe, #13c*).

We are not revealing any secret when we say that in some missionaries there is much passivity in this regard. Others prefer not to become involved in this ministry because they find it difficult or demanding. However, the documents of the Congregation and of the Church are insistent in stating that this ministry involves a concerted effort of the entire community and of each missionary. Without such an involvement it becomes difficult to establish a vocational culture. In many cases, confreres will say that **there is a confrere responsible for that ministry** ...which can be interpreted as ignoring this vital ministry. The Director of

Vocations and his team will be unable to accomplish much unless all the missionaries in the houses and the specific works of the province collaborate. Here, then, is a great challenge for the Visitor and for the Provincial Director of Vocations: what to do in order to move beyond this inertia and passivity and involve all the missionaries of the Province in vocational ministry and in the creation of a vocational culture.

How far can one go in this work as Vocational Director and raise awareness in the province about the importance of vocational ministry. I would say one can move even to the point of promoting the revision of works, if necessary. Why do I say this? If a Province wants to create an environment favorable toward vocations, there is no other way than to have some of its ministries (which are neither parishes nor large institutions) positioned so that some of the missionaries are involved with people who are poor. This is our strength. Ministries with popular missions, missions ad gentes, or direct ministry with the poor ... all of these give witness to the identity of our charism.

3° On-going formation for those involved in vocational ministry.

The Final Document from the meeting in Paris calls for on-going formation for those involved in the promotion of vocations. The document states: we consider the on-going formation of the missionaries a priority since it is through this type of 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. The ultimate meaning of on-going formation is not so much to instruct the intellect but to provide freshness and life to the vocation that one has received (the Vincentian vocation). It would be a countersign to be involved in vocational promotion ministry and not be enamored with one's vocation (that lack of satisfaction in one's vocation would be transmitted to others). *Evangelii Gaudium* states: It is not by proselytizing that the Church grows, but by attraction (#15).

In his book on vocations, Father Rolando Gutierrez makes a proposal with regard to the on-going formation of those involved in vocational ministry. He proposes thirteen extensive, but very interesting themes which are valid for every cultural context. I imagine that during his presentation he will speak about this theme. I only want to say that this initiative of on-going formation flows directly from the 2018 gathering in Paris. May your work be successful!

Fr. Francisco Javier Álvarez, CM
Vicar-General

WHO'S THE BOSS



A number of years ago, my sister, a critical care nurse with a prominent Home Health Care Agency, wrote a piece for a local newspaper about care for homebound patients. She called it “Who’s the Boss,” cleverly sharing the name of a then-popular TV SITCOM.

Her point was that patients must have a say in their treatment protocol if it is to be successful. That caregivers must listen to patients and take their opinions seriously, instead of an instinct a trained professional might have to simply decide what must be done, and how. After all, he or she is the expert here and what was all that schooling for?

I thought of this recently while reading *Street Homelessness and Catholic Theological Ethics*, co-edited by Mark McGreevy who chairs the Vincentian Family’s Homeless Alliance (FHA). The Alliance is the unique common project of the 160 branches of the Family of St. Vincent de Paul, the Universal Patron of Charity for the Catholic Church. The Family currently serves in 156 countries.

Expecting chapters filled with calls for advocacy and structural change to eliminate systemic homelessness as a necessary component to end poverty, the first section speaks of “encountering and accompanying” the homeless as part of a “revolution of tenderness” that Pope Francis calls for. It went on to talk about Empathy, Humanity and Hospitality.

My first thought was “oh no, please don’t overly spiritualize a critical social problem.” Like offering “thoughts and prayers” following yet another shooting incident, without any effort to deal with the issue concretely.

How wrong can one be? I had momentarily forgotten what St. Vincent taught us: that it’s not only about doing good in the world, but doing it well. As he said about feeding the hungry, give them bread and soup, but also give a cup and spoon and even a napkin, so they can eat with the dignity they deserve.

Challenging systemic homelessness, indeed all forms of the poverty that dehumanizes so many, is rightfully the goal. But it’s also necessary to begin with the right method by “listening and accompanying” because how we go about change is critical.

Many of us have learned that true and lasting change of the systems that entrap so many in poverty comes from the bottom up, not top-down. Not from those in powerful positions, not from governments. Poverty, including homelessness as one key component, cannot be erased by decrees and it certainly will not come from political promises. It will come from the victims of injustice, from the people who suffer the problem, who are the real “experts” on the issues. They must be heard, they must be involved, and they must act. But they will not unless approached, listened to, accompanied and taken seriously.

The authors of chapter one give powerful testimony about their encounter with the homeless. Doing street outreach they found is not primarily about giving help but building relationships. Not developing new social circles or replacing one’s friends, but developing friendly relationships of trust and respect with those experiencing homelessness. One description later in the book summarizes it beautifully:

“It all begins with one-on-one, human-to-human connections. It doesn’t come about when the person of relative privilege seeks to save or change the person who is suffering. Instead, there must be a deep listening for the words, the dreams, the hopes that are already within the individual.”

That kind of listening does not come easily to most of us now with limited attention spans and 24/7 information overloads. But if we engage in the process of true accompaniment, both persons may be significantly and positively changed. Maybe even “converted” in the Vincentian way: we evangelize and serve the poor and are ourselves converted in the process.

This is the “culture of encounter” Pope Francis speaks of. It’s the Beloved Community of Martin Luther King Jr.

It’s a slice of the Kingdom of God we’re supposed to build on earth.

It means no one is home until everyone has a home. It means authentic listening to the real experts here. And how we get there depends on how we start.

Jim Claffey

*UN NGO Congregation of the Mission representative
Addendum: Concerned about homelessness? Visit
www.vfhomelessalliance.org to learn more or to join
the “13 houses” campaign.*

RELIVE THE GEN VERDE CONCERT WHICH WAS HELD ON THE FEAST OF SAINT VINCENT DE PAUL



More than 10,000 people were present at the online concert of the group, Gen Verde. On September 27, the feast of Saint Vincent de Paul, this group presented the concert as a gift to the members of the Vincent Family

Gen Verde spoke about the origin of the wonderful project:

If the pandemic had not changed our plans, on September 27th we would have been in St. John’s

University in New York to start our 2020 U.S. Tour. So, we wanted to find a way to be present just the same, across the miles. “One in Hope” is a special hour-long online concert which we have prepared in collaboration with a team linked to the Vincentian Family Office based in the U.S. The program will feature testimonies and songs in various languages on the themes of solidarity and universal fraternity, including a new song especially dedicated to St. Vincent de Paul. In this moment of world-wide crisis, it will be a moment to walk together, united in our diversity, a sign of hope for many.

You can view this concert once again at the following link:

<https://youtu.be/WyMHyK-L-TU>

*Javier F. Chento
FAMVIN*

NOMINATIONES / CONFIRMATIONES

BREZÁNI Tomáš	14/09/2020	Visitor Slovakia
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ORDINATIONES

DA SILVA SOARES João Miguel	Sac	LUS	11/06/2020
EBODE ONANA Jean Marc	Sac	CAM	05/09/2020
KAMWA KOUAM Gervais Lévis	Sac	CAM	05/09/2020
MPECK MPECK Gaël Fabien	Sac	CAM	05/09/2020
NNOMO Christian Wullibrodt	Sac	CAM	05/09/2020
SAPI TAFOFU Beauhero	Sac	CAM	05/09/2020
DELGADO MÉNDEZ Aarón Esaú	Sac	CAE	06/09/2020
ALIZAFY Prudence	Sac	MAD	13/09/2020
FAKIRANIAINA Oliver Jean Ferlin	Sac	MAD	13/09/2020
HASINARIVONY Xavier Léon	Sac	MAD	13/09/2020
RAKOTONOMNJANAHARY Yves Nathanaël	Sac	MAD	13/09/2020
RANDRIAMANANJARA Jean Rodolphe	Sac	MAD	13/09/2020
RASOLOFOMANANA Mandefera	Sac	MAD	13/09/2020
JOSEPH Julius Maina	Sac	OCC	19/09/2020
MASITA Michael Mogusu	Sac	OCC	19/09/2020
AGBOM Raphael Osinakachukwu	Sac	NIG	25/09/2020
AGINA Isaiah Chibuike	Sac	NIG	25/09/2020
ALIZAFY Prudence	Sac	NIG	25/09/2020
EZIKA JohnPaul Ikechukwu	Sac	NIG	25/09/2020
UDO Francis Mathias	Sac	NIG	25/09/2020
UMOH Camillus Francis	Sac	NIG	25/09/2020

NECROLOGIUM

Nomen	Cond.	Dies ob.	Prov.	Aet.	Voc.
MASIDE NOVOA César Manuel	Sac	20/03/2020	SVP	85	67
CARVEN John W.	Sac	11/09/2020	ORL	88	68
ZUROWSKI* Joseph	Fra	11/09/2020	NAN	82	62
MAZUELAS MORILLA José	Sac	17/09/2020	SVP	61	43

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