

# FROM THE SUPERIOR GENERAL

## Letter on the Vincentian Family Office

Rome, 23 May 2015

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

After having reflected on recommendations from the Vincentian Family Executive Committee (VFEC), along with the responses of the Commission for the Promotion of Systemic Change and the Vincentian Family Collaborative Commission, I have arrived at the following decisions I believe will help move the Vincentian Family forward.

### *Vincentian Family Office*

The first matter is about the establishment of a new Vincentian Family Office. It will be located in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA in offices provided by the Eastern Province of the Congregation of the Mission. This Vincentian Family Office will be 'ad-experimentum' for a period of three years. I made this choice because there is space available free of charge and personnel to staff the office. The other option presented was the creation of a Vincentian Family Office in Paris, but I cannot accept that recommendation until the concept of Vincentian Family is better understood and actualized in France.

I will recommend to my successor and to the VFEC that this project in Philadelphia be evaluated after three years. At that time, they might consider moving the Vincentian Family Office to Latin America to further develop its international outreach. Another option would be to establish an office in India where the Vincentian Family is taking root. My rationale for moving the Vincentian Family Office out from Rome is to establish a greater independence from the Congregation of the Mission, and to encourage wider participation of the worldwide Vincentian Family in its operation. I trust that will happen.

This brings me to the second point: Fr. Joseph Agostino, C.M., will be the coordinator for the Vincentian Family Office in Philadelphia. He is quite experienced in a number of international Vincentian Family activities, including the Vincentian Family Collaborative Action Program, the Vincentian Family Haiti Initiative, and Wise Money Man-

agement workshops. Fr. Agostino has assisted Vincentian provinces and groups in the Vincentian Family to develop strategic planning initiatives for better use of their resources. His appointment will also be 'ad-experimentum' for a period of three years.

In time, it will be desirable to involve other members of the Vincentian Family in this Office, (either in volunteer or salaried positions), but funding is always a challenge. Thus, grants and other funding sources must be developed to make this a reality. It is my belief that the more people from the Family involved in the office, the greater our success in expanding the Vincentian Family by sharing our charism with others.

### ***"Fam-Vin" website***

Thirdly, the official web site of the Vincentian Family (<http://famvin.org/>) will become the responsibility of the Vincentian Family Office under the guidance of the VFEC. From its inception almost two decades ago until now, this web site has been the sole responsibility of the Congregation of the Mission, with limited financial support from a few branches of the Family. It is our hope that in time, the Family will assume greater responsibility for this official Vincentian Family website, especially as it implements its strategic plan to expand coverage of events, activities, and collaborative efforts in the Vincentian Family. It is timely and important that this new direction begin in time for our "Year of Collaboration in the Vincentian Family." This change will also be 'ad-experimentum' for a period of three years.

### ***Expansion of VFEC membership***

In addition to the matters regarding location, staffing and web site for the Vincentian Family Office, I have decided we should expand the Vincentian Family Executive Committee to include three more branches of the Vincentian Family. For now, the standing committee will remain the Superior General of the Congregation of the Mission and an assistant; the Superioress General of the Daughters of Charity and an assistant; the international President of the AIC and an assistant; and the international President of the Society St. Vincent de Paul and an assistant.

As we discussed in our meeting in January, I will ask that the President and/or Superior General or Superioress General participate in these meetings with the accompaniment of an assistant of their choosing. Once they accept the invitation, they would participate in the Vincentian Family Leadership workshop in Rome in January 2016. At that meeting, we will discuss simple by-laws regarding terms of office and other like matters.

I made these decisions in light of the information I received from the members of the VFEC and from Commissions of the International Vincentian Family. It is my firm belief the actions we will undertake will enhance the work of the VFEC and ultimately strengthen the Vincentian Family.

Your brother in St. Vincent,

G. Gregory Gay, C.M.  
Superior General