

Superior General Appoints Fr. Claudio Santangelo, C.M. to New Interfaith Initiatives



Fr. G. Gregory Gay, C.M., Superior General of the Congregation of the Mission, has appointed Fr. Claudio Santangelo, C.M. to several new interfaith initiatives for the Congregation of the Mission and the Vincentian Family. First, Fr. Claudio will serve as Coordinator of an Interfaith Working Group to promote dialogue and outreach among various religions. Along with other group members, Fr. Claudio will seek to raise consciousness in the Vincentian Family on practical ways of promoting interfaith dialogue by offering a Christian and Vincentian way to respond to current conflicts. Composed of members of the Congregation of the Mission, this Working Group will promote mutual understanding through education and dialogue.

Secondly, to prepare for the 2016 General Assembly of the Congregation of the Mission, Fr. Claudio has also been tasked by the Superior General to investigate possible ways to increase the presence of the Congregation of the Mission in predominantly Muslim countries in North Africa and Turkey. The goal of this initiative would be to promote dialogue and collaborative service projects, especially among the poor. Both the Congregation of the Mission and the Daughters of Charity have a pastoral presence in several countries in North Africa, along with Turkey.

Finally, Fr. Claudio has also been appointed by the Superior General as his representative on the Commission for Inter-religious Dialogue,

which is sponsored by the Union of Superior Generals in Rome. Fr. Gregory expressed his gratitude to Fr. Claudio for his generous willingness to assist in these new initiatives, noting that in undertaking these new responsibilities, he will remain Rector at the Leonine College in Rome. Fr. Gregory said, "I am confident that because of Fr. Claudio's prior experiences and his desire to promote interfaith dialogue, the Congregation of the Mission will be poised to move in new, innovative directions on this important, timely issue."

Ordained in 1997, Fr. Claudio is a member of the Province of Rome. He has been engaged in priestly ministry in a variety of settings, including serving at St. George's School in Istanbul for several years, and as Secretary General in the Curia of the Congregation of the Mission. He was founding chair of the Congregation of the Mission Commission on Interfaith Dialogue, which sponsored the Vincentian Family Symposium on Dialogue with Islam in Indonesia in 2011.

Finally, Fr. Gay noted that while these initiatives are sponsored by the Congregation of the Mission, they are ultimately meant to benefit members of the worldwide Vincentian Family, which consists of religious and laity who follow the charism of St. Vincent de Paul.