

Introduction

Editor's Note

This issue of *Vincentiana* is a continuation of the previous issue (61st Year, October-December 2017, No. 4) in which we presented some of the documents from the Vincentian Symposium that was held in Rome (October 2017). It attempts to reflect on the Symposium from the perspective of the future, therefore, each document that is presented in the fourth part of this publication is a response to the question: *From Here to Where?* The reflections that were shared during the time of the Symposium are very numerous and very rich and require various issues in order to gather and present all of this material.

This issue begins with a presentation of official documents *from the General Curia*: the Decree of the Erection of the Province of Vietnam and the homily of the Superior General in which he explained the significance of this juridical change. In this section, one will also find the 2017 Statistics of the Congregation: the Community is present in 83 countries, distributed among 38 Provinces and five Vice-Provinces, with 504 juridical houses. The Congregation is composed of 31 bishops, 2888 priests, 60 transitional deacons, three permanent deacons, 129 brothers, and 32 incorporated members. The last document in this section is the letter of the Superior General explaining the Solidarity Plan.

The section *from the Superior General* contains the letters that were sent to the confreres: on the occasion of the closing of the Jubilee Year; the request for each province to update its information about the branches of the Vincentian Family that are ministering in each country and contact information for each branch; the Lenten circular with a reflection on Mary as one who points out the path to Jesus; and the circular about the March *Tempo Forte* Meeting.

In the third section, we present some biographical information about our confrere-bishop from Brazil, José Carlos Melo, and his missionary, priestly, and episcopal ministry, which provides us with the witness of one who loved the Church.

In the fourth section, we continue the reflection that was initiated in the previous issue: *Vincentian Family Symposium for the 400th Anniversary of the Vincentian Charism*. We present four reflections from distinct members of the Vincentian Family. Father Dennis Holtschneider, CM, begins with the question: *From Here to Where?* His reflection focuses on the urgency to continue to provide for the needs of those who are poor. The second reflection was presented by Tjeu van Knippenberg, CM, and Mr. Peter Reijers and is entitled: *Common House?* From the Vincent de Paul Center in The Netherlands, they note that the arrival of refugees in many different countries throughout the world solicits various responses. A third reflection is that of a Daughter of Charity, Sister Françoise Petit, who responded to the question: *Toward What Future?* She begins her reflection with biblical and Vincentian texts in order to provide us with some possibilities for the future as we accompany the poor on their journey. Sister highlights a fundamental conviction: the poor are at the center of our lives; a fundamental call: to overcome obstacles; a fundamental gospel attitude: reciprocal welcoming. This section concludes with the reflections of Father Matteo Tagliaferri, CM, and his response to the question, *From Here to Where? Only the person who understands himself as being poor can receive the other in his poverty. It is difficult to accept the poor without the same heart ... It is good fortune to feel loved, but it is a misfortune not to have learned to love!*

We include in this issue a review of the book entitled, *Federico Ozanam, professor en la Sorbona: su vida y obra* (originally entitled, *Frederic Ozanam, Professor At the Sorbonne, His Life And Works*, written by Kathleen O'Meara in 1876).

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