

APRIL – 2023

NUNTIA



P. TOMAŽ MAVRIČ

TOWARDS A CHURCH
OF THE POOR:
VINCENTIAN CHARISM
AND CHURCH REFORM

Chicago





In the context of the process towards a synodal Church, Father General was invited to DePaul University to participate in the week of world Catholicism organised every year within the activities of the university with theologians coming from many parts of the world, especially from the global south. Danny Pilario and Dominique Iyolo, John Rybolt and Guillermo Campuzano also participated in this meeting as speakers. Father General was responsible for the opening conference of this event: Towards a Church of the poor: Vincentian charism and Church reform. The event was attended by 285 people connected virtually from all continents and 60 people in the conference room.







APVC 2023 MEETING

Suva - Fiji



Last April 17 to 21, 2023, the annual meeting of the Provincial Visitors of the Asia-Pacific region (APVC) was held in Suva, Fiji with the Province of Oceania as host. This was the first face-to-face meeting of the group since the pandemic. Twelve confreres participated in the meeting, namely, Fr. Anil Thomas Karackavayalil (South India & President of APVC), Fr. Ferdinand Labitag (Chinese Province), Fr. Mathew Nayak (North India), Fr. Antonius Gigih Julianto (Indonesia), Fr. Alan Mark Gibson (Oceania), Fr. Peter Solis (Philippines). The Visitor of Vietnam was not able to join, but he was represented by Fr. John the Baptist Dang Kim Doai, council member. Also present were the Superiors of the International Missions and regions: Fr. Marcin Wrobel (Papua New Guinea), Fr. Agustinus Priharsono Heru (Solomon Islands), and Fr. Sebastian Mali (India Northeast Region), APVC executive secretary, Fr. Dario Pacheco and the Vicar General, Fr. Gregorio Bañaga Jr. Those who came early were able to participate in the opening of the Holy Door at the Chapel of the House of Formation in Wailuku in the morning of April 17, 2023, to signal the start of the celebration of the 4th centenary of the Congregation of the Mission. In the afternoon of that same day, the participants proceeded to the venue in Lami Bay, Suva where, during the evening prayer, they were all welcomed by the host, Fr. Alan Gibson, the Visitor of Oceania: "Ni sa Bula Vinaka!" (the local words to express welcome).

The days of the meeting was arranged in such a way that each day would start with the morning prayer and the celebration of the Eucharist. Each of the Visitors present took turns in leading the prayers and liturgy. The meeting proper commenced the next day, April 18, 2023, with the presentation of the Vicar General about the priorities set by the General assembly of 2022 and the Lines of Action specific to APVC. The meeting was also an opportunity to get to hear some updates from the different Provinces and International Missions as each of the participants shared some information regarding their mission activities, both local and ad gentes, formation, number of personnel and candidates in formation, areas of interprovincial collaborations, etc. The meeting proper culminated with an afternoon of sharing with the Archbishop of Suva, Archbishop Peter Hong, who shared his advocacy on climate change: "Care for the Ocean." His mission is to raise awareness among local people and abroad regarding the plight of what he called the vulnerable island nations in the pacific. The last two days were spent visiting the seminary and apostolates of the Oceania Province in Fiji. In these places, the participants were introduced to the local people and culture by letting them experience Sevusevu, the Fijian way of welcoming visitors, and witness the Meke (traditional Fijian dancing), performed by the school children in Natovi, where the confreres run a parish and a school. All in all, the gathering of the Visitors and Mission Superiors in the Asia Pacific region was fruitful as it was also reenergizing. All the participants went home, bringing with them, some lines of action to put into motion in their respective provinces and missions. As they bid goodbye to one another and the islands of Fiji, the confreres expressed their gratitude and appreciation for the great hosting done by the Oceania Province, particularly, for the works and services done by the confreres in Fiji to make the APVC meeting a successful one: Vinaka Vakalevu, Fiji! (Thank you very much, Fiji!)

P. Darío Pacheco, CM
Executive Secretary of the APVC





CEVIM ASSEMBLY IN KRAKOW

Poland



The second week of Easter is marked in the annual calendar of the European Visitors for the celebration of their Assembly. Therefore, from 18 to 22 April, the twelve Visitors of Europe and the Middle East, together with three regional superiors and two assistants of the General Curia (Frs. Nelio Pita and Rafal Kopystynski) met in Krakow.

The Assembly opened with the concelebrated Eucharist in the morning on the 19th, and then continued with the previously established Agenda. It was decided to devote two days to work and a third to festive fellowship. The working days were divided between formation-reflection on the 19th and Conference business on the 20th.

Four themes were presented by the conscientious speakers, all of them intertwined by the common idea of the call to revitalise the identity of the Congregation. Fr. Antonello focused on the fruitfulness of the friendship between St. Vincent de Paul and St. Francis de Sales, a friendship that had so much influence on the affable, merciful and kind character of Vincentian evangelisation. Fr. Corpus, for his part, focused on the presentation of the Common Rules as a revitalising impulse for the missionaries. Adam Bandura called us to revitalise identity in the evangelisation of the poor and in the formation of clergy and laity. And Fr. Nelio Pita spoke of the lifestyle needed to revitalise our identity. They were all very interesting communications that aroused our attention and provoked our reflection and dialogue. In the last session of the afternoon, gathered in language groups, we reviewed the commitments of the 2022 General Assembly, which we understood to be parallel to Fr General's reflections for the next six years. The recitation of Vespers, a shared dinner with the community and a visit to the interesting Vincentian Museum closed a very full and satisfying day.





Day 20 concentrated our efforts on more practical issues specific to the Conference. The renewal of some of the articles of the Statute of CEVIM was approved. Some of the proposals received from the reflection of the linguistic groups were approved. The next meeting of young Vincentians in Portugal on the occasion of the World Youth Day to be held in Lisbon was discussed. The participation of CEVIM in the Commission for Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation, as well as in the European Institutions, was discussed. It was agreed to hold a meeting every two years for the young people of the Congregation (ordained or vowed up to 10 years, young people in initial formation, candidates, aspirants) along the lines of the one held in Los Milagros-Santiago in 2022. In this context, the next meeting will be in Paris in the year 2025, on the occasion of the 400th anniversary of the Congregation. We had an on-line communication with the Visitor of the Vice-Province of St. Cyril and Methodius (Ukraine), who had not been able to come to the Assembly because of the situation in the country. It was agreed that the next Assembly will be held in Slovenia and will be prepared by the Permanent Council of CEVIM, which will be joined by Fr. Roberto Petkovsek, Visitor of Slovenia.

The dense work of the 20th ended with the celebration of the Eucharist in Latin in the church of the house dedicated to St. Paul. Concelebrating at the Mass were not only the members of CEVIM, but also the translators, members of the community, students of the Congregation and the faithful.

Like the rest of the days, the day ended in one of the community halls in a festive and relaxed atmosphere, sharing conversations and some food and drinks provided by the community.

Friday, the 21st, was a more open day, dedicated to visits of interest. We began by concelebrating the Eucharist in the Romanesque chapel of the nearby cathedral where Pope John Paul II celebrated his first Mass. After the Eucharist, we took a guided sightseeing tour of the beautiful cathedral and understood the importance of the place for the Church in Poland and even for the country itself.

Two visits then completed our morning. The first was to the Shrine of Divine Mercy in Krakow-Lagiewniki, consecrated by John Paul II in 2002 and which maintains and propagates this devotion inspired by St. Faustina Kowalska. The second is the shrine dedicated to Saint John Paul II, erected in a few years in an area very close to the previous one and very embellished inside by Rupnik's mosaics. It also contains mementos of Pope Wojtyla, such as his bloody cassock after the attack he suffered in Rome.



In the afternoon, we visit the Wieliczka salt mine, which is more than 300 kilometres long and has been worked without interruption since the 13th century. The tour is 3.5 kilometres long and contains salt statues of mythical and historical figures, chambers and chapels carved out of salt, an underground lake, a feasting hall, restaurants and very long corridors all lined on the walls and ceilings with wooden logs. After a visit of more than two hours, we went to the Vincentinum, the spirituality centre of the Polish Province in Krzeszowice, where the community treated us to a juicy dinner, the main course of which was a small roast pig. The following day, Saturday, the process of returning to our places of origin began.

At the end of the Assembly, we must highlight the rigour of the work done, the extraordinary fraternal atmosphere among all the participants, the emotion of the celebrations, the religious and cultural contribution of the visits made and the encouragement of seeing every day the good group of student theologians who are preparing themselves for the Vincentian ministry. Pawel, Visitor of Poland, and the confreres of the provincial house and of the formation house, for the warm welcome they gave us and for the availability they showed at all times to make the Assembly a fruitful one. We will certainly remember this meeting for a long time to come. And we look forward to meeting in Slovenia next spring, during the second week of Easter.



S. Azcárate Gorri, C.M.



PORTRAITS OF ANJOMOHA

Madagascar



Danielo and Faustin... without arms. It was really impressive to see poor Faustin, when we saw him arrive in Tanjomoha, accompanied by his mother, with his two arms badly burnt, blackened and even dried out, following an electrocution in the company where he worked in Tananarive. He was carrying a heavy iron bar with both hands and hit a bare electric wire that he had not seen. That was the tragedy: his hands and forearms were badly burnt and charred. It is incredible that he did not die. His boss, who acknowledged his wrongdoing, had promised him money to compensate him and help him to get treatment. But he will get next to nothing.

Not knowing what to do for him in Tanjomoha, we sent him to Henintsoa Hospital where it was decided to amputate his arms above the elbows. He was 22 years old! You can imagine the drama. When he was discharged, we admitted him to the Foyer des Jeunes Handicapés. For the first few days, he looked sad, always wearing a long-sleeved shirt to hide his stumps. He would lock himself up in his dormitory, even having his meals brought to him, and he would sometimes wander around. But I called him and told him again that we wanted to help him prepare for the future and that he should learn to write with his foot and then study sewing at the housekeeping school. This seemed to him an unattainable dream. His life seemed hopeless. But I gave him the example of Danielo, a student in his second year at the housekeeping school, who was born without arms and can do everything with his feet: washing, dressing, eating, going to the toilet, and even writing and sewing, which he does well, not to mention being a skilled football player and a dancer with lots of energy. He is your big brother," I said to Faustin, "he will guide you. He accepted the challenge, even though he couldn't believe it was possible. Danielo explained to him his "tricks" to manage on his own and now he is doing well.





I took him to the literacy room, equipped with notebooks and pens, where, under the attentive guidance of Mrs Leonie, the teacher, he practised with infinite patience writing with his foot. At first, he made slow and painful progress, drawing awkward lines, not to mention the fact that he had to adopt a tiring position and could not stay in it for too long. Assiduous, patient and focused on his writing exercises, he gradually improved, and now he writes remarkably well, as you can see in this picture. He is proud of it... and so are we! He is revising his numeracy skills and he is also starting to learn how to do... embroidery and, well, he is doing well. Next year he will go to the first year of the Household School. I'm sure he'll do well. Faustin, whose eyes are often filled with a melancholic sweetness, has found a smile. The hope that a future is possible for him has sprouted in his heart. Bravo Faustin! And bravo to you too Danielo!

P. Emeric Amyot d'Inville



BEHIND BARS, MEN IN SEARCH OF PEACE

Italy



"It has been a very intense two months, so intense that it feels like two years have passed! I can say that I have never felt like a priest as I do now". Father Lorenzo Durandetto, chaplain of the Udine prison, recounts the experience of spiritual assistance to the inmates of the via Spalato prison, the fruit of the assignment recently entrusted by Archbishop Mazzocato to the Vincentian Fathers. Claudio Santangelo, also a prison chaplain, but in Tolmezzo. The two priests recounted the impressions and emotions they have experienced in these first months of service in prison, on Thursday 23 February, at the meeting "I was a prisoner, you came to see me", organised and hosted by the "Paoline" bookshop in Udine. On this occasion, the two Vincentian Fathers presented the "Gospel in suspense" initiative, which provides for the possibility of buying copies of the Gospel, or prayer books, to be given to prisoners who wish to receive them. "In this place, I have met people who have a great need to find peace. People who are looking for a dialogue, a handshake or even just a look. That look that translates into 'I'm there', 'I'm listening'". Father Lorenzo and Father Claudio regularly celebrate Sunday mass in the prison. "It is a very special moment," says Father Lorenzo, "of great simplicity, but also of great resonance. From the beginning I was struck by the great serenity of the celebrations. The meeting with the prisoners is very direct. I usually arrive a little earlier, accompanied by an officer, because of the need to open the entrances to the different sections". When Fr Lorenzo arrives at the chapel, he waits for the first prisoners to arrive. "They are also accompanied in groups by the officers. I greet them, ask them how they are, we chat.



Some ask for clarification on a passage from the Bible, others have a personal story they want to talk about, others ask for prayers for the deceased? It may seem paradoxical, but my impression is that prison is a place of great sincerity, where emotions are experienced in a 'real' way. Behind those bars", concludes the priest, "one encounters a great humanity, a humanity that makes the true face of Christ disappear".

Valentina Pagani and Bruno Temil
of "La Vita Cattolica", Udine weekly



HOUSES | MAISONS | CASAS

**ALEJANDRA'S STORY:
"MOTHER, FIGHTER,
WARRIOR"**

After arriving in Colombia, Alejandra started a small business selling arepas and coffee. However, a lack of a stable job and being unable to afford to pay the costs of rent, food and other expenses for her children meant that Alejandra found herself alone, at an increased risk of homelessness. During the pandemic, the Daughters of Charity in Cali and good-hearted people, helped her manage these expenses by guaranteeing her temporary housing.

Sister Luz, Daughter of Charity based in Cali, still remembers when she met Alejandra for the first time: '[...] Alejandra was alone with her children, tired and hungry, with only one mattress and four bags without any place to stay...'.

The Daughters of Charity wanted to support Alejandra's dream to be independent and have a home for her children. They knocked on several doors locally and internationally, and one of the positive responses came from the "13 Houses" Campaign. The project – thanks to the funds collected by the Sisters and the contribution of the Solidarity Fund – saw the purchase of a new house for Alejandra.



The project started in December 2020, and overcame several challenges in its development. For example, water infiltration and other maintenance work was needed in the house. Alejandra's residence documents also needed to be regularized, and there was some bureaucracy linked to ensuring the title of the house was in her name.

Today, thanks to the support of the Daughters of Charity, Alejandra and her children have a new home where they can start their lives again with dignity. The children have gone back to education and Alejandra maintains her small business.

Sr. Luz, "13 Houses" Project Coordinator said: 'Alejandra is a mother, a fighter, a warrior, with immense faith and a great desire to help her children get ahead'.

We thank God, the Daughters of Charity, Alejandra and her children and all those who made this project possible. We pray that together we can end homelessness, one house at a time!



Thank you to everyone who made this project and this wonderful dream possible, I don't know how to express my gratitude. Thank you because I now have a happy and dignified place to stay.

Alejandra

NECROLOGIUM

Nomen	Cond.	Dies ob.	Prov.	Aet.	Voc.
DE MAAT Jozef (J.J.P.)	Sac	10/04/2023	CGN (HOL)	97	76
PALÚ Lauro	Sac	11/04/2023	FLU	83	66
KETTERN Egon	Sac	14/04/2023	AUG	85	64
KAŻMIERCZAK Zdzisław Leon	Sac	17/04/2023	POL	66	45

MOVEMENTS

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