

NUNTIA



JUNE 2024

ONLINE MAGAZINE OF THE
CONGREGATION OF THE MISSION

NUNTIA

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EDITORIAL

Information at the service of the Mission

by Fr Salvatore Farì CM

It is with immense joy that, for the first time, as Director of the Communications Office of the Congregation, I present to you NUNTIA, a magazine born as an expression of the General Curia, and which from today, by the will of the Superior General and his Council, becomes an expression of the whole Congregation.

To open the magazine there will be an "Editorial" signed by me, which will be followed, until the month of May 2025, and then until the celebration of the IV centenary of the foundation of the Congregation of the Mission, by a virtual journey through the Vincentian places. We will be guided by our confrere Andrés Motto, whom we thank for his availability and competence. The Magazine will be animated by the narration of the apostolic experiences of the Superior General, of the Assistants General, of the Provinces, Vice-Provinces and Regions, of the Visitors' Conferences, of the extraordinary events of the Congregation and of the news of the General Secretariat.

We commit ourselves to propose our presence in the "areopagus" of information in a significant and capillary way in order to show the beauty of the Christian journey in the perspective of service to the Gospel without protagonism or exclusivity, but with clear messages and at the service of the truth. The land of communication is "fertile ground" for sowing the Word of Life, as Jesus taught in the parable of the sower.

For the Congregation of the Mission, preaching is intimately linked to the active exercise of Charity, which is human promotion. Our preaching must be a witnessing catechesis of fidelity to the Gospel of Love. This dimension of working charity is inspired by the Word of Life, incarnated in Jesus of Nazareth. The action of the Congregation of the Mission, in fact, opens the horizons of communication to all sectors of the places and media, both material and virtual, in order to propose a Christian presence and a voice of solidarity, but in the dimension of evangelical Love.

Proclaiming the Gospel to the poor today means identifying and making appropriate use of the means at our disposal so that the "Word made flesh" becomes food and support for social redemption for all those in material need, in a situation of physical and psychological fragility, or disoriented and hungry for a spiritual richness that is different, if not the antipodes, of economic well-being.

Nuntia is a simple tool, but it aims to solicit and consolidate the full awareness of the importance of the mission of proclamation and human promotion in today's society, increasingly invaded by "words", but also in need of the "Word" that bestows love and spurs to love God and neighbour in a direct and frank way so that the Gospel communicated is proclaimed with the testimony of the Word narrated and the actions lived.



Virtual tour to Gannes

Dear confreres, in preparation for the celebration of the 400th anniversary of the birth of the Congregation of the Mission, I propose that from July 2024 to April 2025 we take a virtual tour of places that are significant for our charism. Perhaps some of you already know some of these places, have been there once or several times, and possibly others have never visited them, well, these articles are dedicated to all of you. For each one of us, these places give us "keys" to be better missionary servants of the poor.

Let us begin with the places where the Vincentian charism was born. We want to rediscover the path followed by St. Vincent. A path that we hope will also be ours, the path of the whole Congregation of the Mission. Let us remember that for us, the evangelisation of the poor is a mandate of Jesus, which is embodied in the 17th century through the experience of Vincent de Paul. It was consolidated and made permanent with the foundation of the CM. But we must update it in order to generate this new Pentecost as Father Tomaz has asked us to do. I am convinced that to change something we must begin by imagining it. St. Vincent himself was an imaginative man and was able to imagine an alternative world to the one he lived in.

Now let's get off the bus carefully. Gannes was one of the many villages that belonged to Madame de Gondi. It is 17 kilometres south of Folleville. Nowadays Gannes is a quiet village (too quiet) with nice, simple houses.

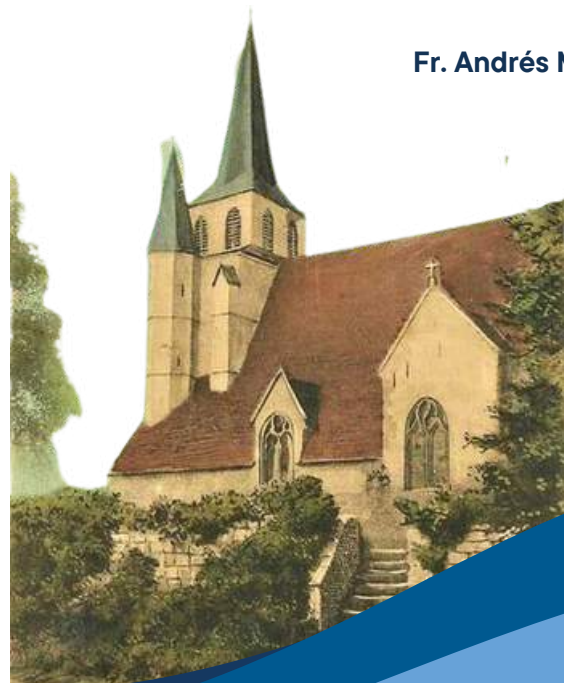
According to Abelly, it was here that Marguerite de Silly learned that there was an elderly and sick man who wanted to receive the sacrament of Reconciliation. Confession was made possible by Vincent de Paul. The dying man was so grateful that he said publicly that he would have fallen into eternal punishment had it not been for this general confession. Evidently that phrase was in keeping with the theology of the time. In any case, through this event and others, Monsieur Vincent saw in Madame de Gondi an instrument of God's Providence for the founding of the Congregation of the Mission. It is true that Monsieur Vincent had already made general confessions and had even recommended her. In other words, he had been inviting people to general confession for some time. But this one event catalysed many previous experiences and reflections.

According to an old tradition, the dying man was the miller of the village. In other words, this adventure begins with the conversion of the mill owner. It is here that St Vincent begins to propose that the poor should not be left spiritually without father or mother. This place is important because there would be no Folleville if it were not for Gannes. It is not a minor fact that St Vincent did not come once and disappear, he went to this village several more times. A letter of 1633 states that he knew the village authorities and their families very well.

What to see in Gannes? The most important thing to see is the present church, dedicated to Saint Denis. Today it is a chapel belonging to the parish of Saint Vincent de Paul. The church of Gannes was a Gothic construction, but has undergone many modifications. The exterior shows a sundial from 1660.

Let's go inside. Here we can observe several things: 1. The baptismal font of chiselled stone. There is a beautiful stone representation of the united hearts of Raoul de Lannoy and Jeanne de Poix: the letters R and J intertwined by a ribbon (romantic great-grandparents of Madame de Gondi). 3. The statue of St Vincent de Paul. Built around 1940 by the parish priest at the time. The inscription seems a little anxious: "December 1616", as it should read "January 1617". There is another statue of Monsieur Vincent in the presbytery. 4. The Christ hanging at the beginning of the chancel is original and is the one Mr. Vincent saw. It has a beautiful face and the cross expresses the tree of life. 6. The presbytery is from the time of Vincent de Paul. Its ribbing is very artistic. Well, the bus is waiting to take us to Folleville. But we will see this next month.

Fr. Andrés Motto, CM



Fr. Tomaž Mavrič in the footsteps of St. Vincent de Paul from the cradle to Buglose!

The Superior General, Fr Tomaž Mavrič, accepted the invitation to participate in the closing of the Jubilee of the 400th anniversary of the Marian pilgrimage of St Vincent de Paul from his native village to the Marian shrine of Our Lady of Buglose (spring 1623). This first Saturday of the month, Father General took part in the diocesan march for Vocations Day in the diocese of Aire and Dax. In Pouy itself, in the district of Buglose, the Queen of Heaven was manifesting her power; a chapel had just been raised from the ground and many pilgrims were going to implore the merciful Virgin; was it not his duty, as a son of Pouy, to go and kneel at the feet of the glorious Virgin of Buglose" (Le Grand Saint du Grand Siècle Vol. I, 147-148).

On 31 May 2024, on the eve of the celebration, during Vespers, we remember that, on many occasions, it was lay people who led St Vincent to orientate and clarify his life project as a priest. For example, Mme de Gondi speaking to St Vincent:



"Monsieur Vincent, so many souls are being lost! And on the day of the Conversion of Saint Paul, which is the 25th, this lady asked me to preach in the church of Folleville to exhort the inhabitants to make a general confession; which I did. (SV XI, 4).

On Saturday 1st June, during Lauds, the little Vincentian family and the Christians gathered in Ranquines recalled the words of St Vincent who said: "(the Turks...)

Do you know how they pray the rosary? They do not say the Our Father and the Hail Mary as we do, because they do not believe in Our Lord and do not consider him their Lord, although they respect him and the Blessed Virgin so much that if they do not believe in him, they do not consider him their Lord.

the Blessed Virgin that if they heard anyone blaspheme against Our Lord they would condemn him to death. So they take up the beads of their rosary: "Allah, Allah, my God, my God, my God, have mercy on me; just God, merciful God, mighty God". These are the epithets they dedicate to him.

Now, if the Turks have any kind of devotion to the rosary, see if it is not reasonable that you have a great devotion to the Blessed Virgin". (ST. VINCENT X, 621)

The closing Eucharist of the Jubilee took place in the Basilica. It was presided over by the Vicar General in place of the Bishop. Here is an extract from Bishop Souchu's message: "Daring to hope in our Christian communities".

This ties in with the closing theme of this Jubilee: St Vincent and the role of the laity in the service of the most disadvantaged. The day began with the monthly vocational march from Le Berceau to Buglose. We are a people on the move, following in the footsteps of St Vincent de Paul, apostle of charity, at the service of the poorest. I hope you will enjoy the closing of this Jubilee, for which I am represented at this Mass by the Vicar General, Father Gérard de Rodat. Let us remain united in prayer".

On Sunday 2 June, Solemnity of the Body and Blood of Christ, Father Tomaz presided at the closing thanksgiving Eucharist of the Jubilee in the Chapelle du Berceau. We gave thanks to the Lord for all the blessings received during this jubilee year. Three blessings caught our attention.

First of all, the physical presence of Fr Tomaž, who came to accompany and encourage us at the close of this Jubilee.

Secondly, Bénédicte, a young woman from the Landes region, who discovered her vocation to serve the most disadvantaged in the footsteps of St Vincent de Paul in June 2023, at the beginning of our Jubilee. Today he is a member of the Teams of St Vincent de Paul in Dax.

Thirdly, Fr Tomaž asked for an oak tree from the Berceau to be brought to the General Curia in Rome to be replanted on the occasion of the 400th anniversary of the Marian pilgrimage of St Vincent. He received an oak tree from the land of the Berceau. Another from Buglose for the celebration of the Jubilee of the 400th anniversary of the foundation of the Congregation of the Mission in 2025.

Praise God for all his blessings!

We look forward to welcoming you at the Cradle to take you on a wonderful journey in the footsteps of St. Vincent to the Shrine of Notre Dame de Buglose.

Fr. Emmanuel Typamm, CM



First meeting between the Curia and COVIAM

The first meeting between the Curia and COVIAM was held in Karen, Nairobi, Kenya, from 10 to 15 June 2025. It was the first time COVIAM had met since its creation, with more than 70 participants. This meeting was prepared by the Executive Council of COVIAM, Jean Pierre Bessala from Cameroon, the Secretary of COVIAM, Mekonnen BUTTA, CM Vice-President of COVIAM and Visitor of Ethiopia, Guenolé FEUGANG, CM, President of COVIAM and Visitor of Cameroon, the Visitor of Kenya, Father Edwin Mugwe, CM for the host country, and the Assistant General in charge of COVIAM, Father Dominique IYOLO, CM for the Curia. It was a rehearsal, but also a masterstroke. This meeting was preceded by another Curia meeting with the North American continent in 2023. The next Curia meeting will be with the European continent in 2025.



Tomaž MAVRIČ, CM and his Council, the meeting was not only attended by the Visitors, Regional and Mission Superiors. Councillors, Secretaries, Bursars and Communication Officers, as well as the Rector and the Econome of the Vincentian International Theologate in Enugu, Nigeria were also present. Enthusiasm and jubilation were evident as the activities unfolded, but the anxieties and questions surrounding the preparations soon gave way to serenity and satisfaction after this historic and unprecedented event, which had been well prepared and well run.

The welcome by the Vice-Province of Kenya was a great success, and the setting of the meeting facilitated the work in an atmosphere of camaraderie, friendship and fraternity.

Under the theme "Putting on the Spirit of Christ in Africa and Madagascar", the meeting had several objectives which were expressed in different ways by the speakers: to have a face-to-face meeting of the General Administration with the members of the administrations of the Provinces, Vice-Provinces, Regions and Missions of COVIAM; to better discover the realities of the Dear Company in Africa and Madagascar, highlighting the strengths, weaknesses, perspectives and challenges in relation to the revitalisation of our spiritual and charismatic identity; to evaluate the reception by each entity of COVIAM of the Priorities of the General Assembly-2022 and of the Eleven Points presented during the General Assembly by the Superior General; to dialogue with the different bodies of the Curia in the various areas of the mission so that the different members of the administrations of the Provinces,

Vice-Provinces, Regions and Missions are better equipped with good administrative practices and better able to respond to the contextual challenges they face; to create a greater awareness of the celebration of the 400th anniversary of the foundation of the Chétive Compagnie, which will be closed at the Mother House in Paris in May 2025. The diversity of the content and form of the interventions expressed all the efforts made by the different administrations to advance and bring to fruition the identity of the Congregation of the Mission in Africa and Madagascar.

This Curia-COVIAM meeting, rooted and enlightened, animated and supported by moments of mediation, prayer in the Liturgy of the Hours and Eucharistic celebrations, made it possible to realise a number of points that deserve particular attention. Firstly, the rapid and continuous growth of the Society in Africa and Madagascar, not only in terms of the number of priests and brothers, but also in terms of missionary expansion through the opening of new missions in other countries where the Congregation of the Mission is still absent. Secondly, we must strengthen our understanding of our identity while remaining focused on our essential missions of evangelisation of the poor and the peripheries, of formation of priests and laity, and of service to the most disadvantaged. Finally, it is a matter of strengthening the resources and financial management of the COVIAM countries to better facilitate their missions despite the obvious limitations of internet connectivity.

During the breaks and free time, there was an opportunity for interpersonal exchanges between the participants and to deepen certain topics during individual or small group meetings with the Superior General.

In addition to this meeting, all participants were able to visit the Daughters of Charity in Nairobi and their Dream programme to combat and care for people suffering from HIV and malnutrition. We also took advantage of a rest day to discover the tourist, cultural and artistic richness of Kenya. The celebration of the Eucharist in the "Resurrection Garden" by the Superior General and the screening of a film by Jessica on the service to the poor in Honduras gave the Vincentian family the opportunity to meet and socialise.

At the end of the meeting, COVIAM was invited to dream big, to dream together and to be open to the Holy Spirit in order to move forward on the path of renewal and conversion to the Vincentian spiritual and charismatic identity in Africa and Madagascar. It is only in this way that putting on the spirit of Christ in Africa and Madagascar will have all its relevance and fruitfulness.

Fr. Guenolé Feugang, CM
Visitor of Cameroon - President COVIAM



Activities of Fr. Dominique Iyolo, CM in June

June 2024 was an eventful month for me. First I took part in the meeting between the General Curia and COVIAM, then in the COVIAM meeting. Finally, I visited the dioceses of Atakpamé in Togo and Goma in the Democratic Republic of Congo, where we intend to start new missions.

To put synodality into practice, a meeting was organised in Nairobi, Kenya, from 10 to 15 June 2024, between the General Curia and COVIAM. The aim was to evaluate, at continental, provincial, regional and mission level, the Final Document of the last General Assembly 2022 and the 11 points of Father Tomaz Mavric, our Superior General, which highlight certain priorities with a view to revitalising our identity. Each Visitor came with the members of his council, the provincial secretary, the provincial economer and the confrere in charge of communications. The exchanges with the Curia were fruitful. This experience is the first of its kind in Africa and Madagascar.

Following this meeting with the Curia, the annual meeting of COVIAM took place from 17 to 21 June 2024. It was mainly a continuation of the meeting with the Curia. COVIAM adopted a series of concrete orientations to ensure effective collaboration between the Provinces, Vice-Provinces, Regions and Missions of the continent.

From 22 to 27 June 2024, I went on a reconnaissance visit to the diocese of Atakpamé in Togo, as the Congregation of the Mission intends to start a new mission in this country where we are still absent. Bishop Moïse TOUHO, the local ordinary, gave me a very warm welcome. He took the opportunity to introduce me to his diocesan clergy at the closing of the pastoral year 2023-2024. I chose the parish of GLITTO, where the Province of Congo will be able to start this mission in the very near future.

From 30 June to 04 July 2024, I travelled with Father Justin EMENE, Visitor of Congo, to Goma in the Democratic Republic of Congo. This is an area torn apart by a senseless war that not only impoverishes many people, but is also a source of great humiliation for them. According to Bishop Willy Ngumbi of Goma, these impoverished people need peaceful cohesion and a message of reconciliation because they live with deep inner wounds. It is a difficult message to accept. The Vincentian presence is more than necessary in this area, where many families languish in abject poverty. Monsignor Willy is ready to welcome us, but for the moment it is difficult to go to the outskirts because of the war. We will start by settling in Goma to be close to the many displaced people and refugees. They need to live in more humane and dignified conditions. A Vincentian cannot fail to be moved by so much misery.

The collaboration between the Province of Congo and the Rwanda-Burundi Region will make this mission possible, initially in terms of personnel.

The Visitor of Congo and I could not go to Congo Brazzaville because the invitation of the Archbishop of Brazzaville arrived just when we were due to fly to Europe. The Visitor then decided to send Father Jean-Paul MUNONGO, who went there and, as an architect, is studying the environment and the terrain to make some concrete proposals. In the near future, the Lazarists of the Province of Congo will also be present in Brazzaville.

Fr. Dominique Iyolo, CM
Assistant General



New project: Vincentiana Online



In response to the call of the 2022 General Assembly in Rome to revitalize our identity at the beginning of the fifth century of the Congregation of the Mission, Vincentiana Online is created. Vincentiana Magazine is a valuable publication that presents studies and reflections of confreres on Vincentian spirituality and charism. After discussion with the board members and consultation with scholars of Vincentian studies, we proposed Studia Vincentiana, an open journal system, in addition to the printed version of Vincentiana (in three languages: French, Spanish and English). The same works are published both in Vincentiana online and in print. In 2023, Father Superior General, Fr Tomaž Mavrič CM, and his Council approved the project. The publication of the online journal is to be done in collaboration with an institution of higher education.

The benefits of Studia Vincentiana Online are: 1. Global accessibility and collaboration: Makes Vincentian studies and reflections accessible to a worldwide audience; 2. Preservation and digitisation: Ensures the preservation of valuable Vincentian historical and theological documents through digital archiving, respecting international standards; 3. Cost-effectiveness: Reduces printing and distribution costs associated with the printed journal, making it more economical; 4. Timely updates: Allows for faster, more frequent and timely updates of new research and reflections, keeping the Vincentian community informed with the latest perspectives. This is only a virtual front page of Studia Vincentiana. To check it out, readers can click on this URL to read and download articles:

<https://vincentiana.org/sv>

How to submit an article to Studia Vincentiana? This common question is answered in the navigation section of the website. Please take a moment to review the Vincentiana approach and scope, author guidelines and template. Papers should be submitted in WORD format and should meet basic requirements such as including a bibliography, notes and an abstract. We welcome contributions from confreres and others. If you encounter difficulties with the online submission system (click on "online submission"), you can simply send your manuscript by email to one of the following addresses:

- studiavincentiana@gmail.com (the Vincentiana Online)
- fxarmadacm@gmail.com (Director of Vincentiana)
- segretaria@cmcuria.org (Secretary General will send to Vincentiana)

Announcement of the CIF for Vincentian Writers in Paris November 2025

With the blessing of Father Superior General and his Council, we will launch a programme for Vincentian writers in collaboration with the director of the CIF in Paris. This programme, based on the recommendations of the last General Assembly, emphasises the crucial role of confreres in the revitalisation and advancement of Vincentian studies. The programme has as its objectives

1. Promote dialogue and collaboration: Facilitate the exchange of ideas among writers to enrich the collective understanding of the Vincentian charism and spirituality.
2. To engage with Vincentian history and tradition: To deepen engagement with Vincentian history and tradition in dialogue with global contexts.
3. Establish a cohesive continental group: Form a dedicated group of confreres focused on advancing Vincentian studies and reflections.

Detailed information about the CIF programme for Vincentian writers (November 2025) will be shared with the confreres in the near future. We invite all Vincentian writers to participate in this initiative.

Fr. Armada Riyanto, CM
Director of VINCENTIANA

Blessing and Inauguration of the Church of Christ the King in Bandawe.

On 29 June 2024, the community of St Joseph's parish in Sunuzi (Malawi), under the care of the Congregation of the Mission, joyfully celebrated the inauguration and blessing of Christ the King Church in Bandawe. This significant milestone event for the parish was presided over by Bishop Alfred Chaima of the Catholic Diocese of Zomba and was attended by many priests, religious and parishioners. The day's events began with a solemn Holy Mass, presided over by Bishop Chaima. The presence of numerous members of the clergy and the entire parish community enhanced the spiritual significance and communal unity of the occasion. Bishop Chaima thanked Fr Shaik Mahesh CM, parish priest, for his tireless service in the parish and for his hard work in bringing the new church to completion.

The event concluded with a joyful reception, where the attendees shared in the celebration through fellowship and community activities.

The creation of Christ the King Church is a testimony to the dedication and unity of the parish community and a sign of new life in the parish through the works of CM. The successful inauguration and blessing of Christ the King Church reflects the vibrant faith and commitment of St. Joseph's parish community. It heralds a new chapter of spiritual enrichment and community building in Bandawe.

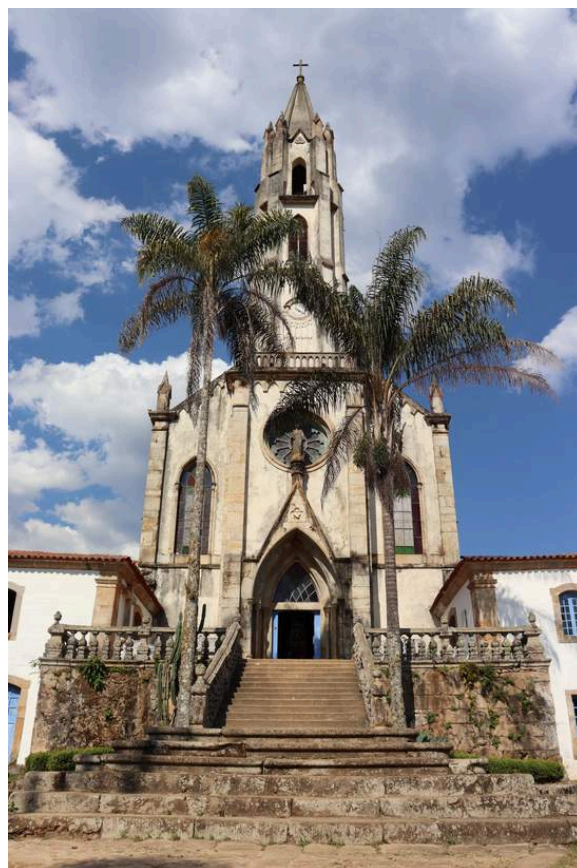


The Sanctuary of Caraça celebrates 250 years of history, mission and presence of Lazarist priests and brothers in Brazil

In 1640, St. Vincent de Paul communicated the following news to the community: "I received a letter from the Superior of Rome, Fr. Lebreton, informing me of the request of a Cardinal to send missionaries to Brazil, or more precisely to "Pernambuco das Indias". Unfortunately, due to the exigencies of the time, St. Vincent de Paul was not able to fulfil this request, or any other requests. However, years later, in 1819, at the request of King João VI, two great missionaries arrived in Brazil from Lisbon, Portugal: Father Leandro Rebelo Peixoto e Castro and Father Antônio Ferreira Viçoso.

Belonging to the Brazilian Province of the Congregation of the Mission (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil) since 1820, the Sanctuary of Our Lady Mother of Men, known as the Sanctuary of Caraça, is today a place of preservation of the common home and an important centre of missionary evangelisation in Brazil. The Sanctuary of Caraça is located between the municipalities of Catas Altas and Santa Barbara, in the state of Minas Gerais, and in the territory of the Archdiocese of Mariana, which next year celebrates the 280th anniversary of its creation as the Primatial Church of the State of Minas Gerais. It is a history full of important characters and events for Minas Gerais, for the Congregation of the Mission and for Brazil.

Scenario of great events for the Catholic Church in Brazil, centre of evangelisation, formation and mission in Brazil, the Sanctuary of Caraça started on 23rd June the celebrations of its 250th anniversary and the 30th anniversary of the Particular Reserve of Natural Heritage (RPPN).



The opening ceremony recalled the foundation and the arrival of the first Lazarist (Vincentian) priests on Brazilian soil. The unique moment brought together authorities, religious, priests and Lazarist brothers from the region, former students, visitors and the local community. The moment was marked by the remembrance of the foundation of Caraça, the years of the school and the local religiosity, and the launching of the logos commemorating the 250th anniversary of the Sanctuary.

HISTORY OF THE FOUNDATION - Brother Lourenço de Nossa Senhora

In the second half of the 18th century, in the early 1770s, the mysterious Portuguese Lourenço de Nossa Senhora chose the peak of the Serra do Caraça to isolate himself from the world and build a hermitage, with a chapel and a house to house the "hermits" or brothers.

In March 1774, already in the Serra do Caraça, Brother Lourenço obtained permission to build a church there. At first, a small wooden chapel, before the definitive hermitage, because, according to the Brother himself, the stone construction would take a long time to be "ready and it must be done to perfection". In 1806, when he was already an old man, he made a will so that the estate, donated to the Portuguese Crown, would be used as "a hospice for missionaries... and, if this were not possible, in that case the hospice would be used as a seminary for boys, where they would learn the first letters, performing arts, languages, grammar, rational and moral philosophy...".

History reminds us that, some time before Brother Lourenço arrived in the lands of Caraça, the Particular Church of Mariana was created in 1745, the first diocese built in the interior of Brazil, together with the diocese of São Paulo. Previously, all the other bishoprics - Bahia (1555), Rio de Janeiro (1676), Olinda (1676), Maranhão (1677) and Pará (1719) - were located on the Brazilian coast.

On 27 October 1819, at the age of 96, Brother Lourenço died without seeing the Fathers take possession of his hermitage. However, the penitent old man, founder of Caraça, died consoled because, according to the reports of the vicar of Catas Altas, who attended him in the last moments of his life, Our Lady manifested herself to him telling him that he could die in peace because God would not abandon his work. In fact, this was the case when missionaries were sent to Caraça at the request of the Imperial Court, King João VI, to continue the work at the sanctuary.

THE CONGREGATION OF THE MISSION AND THE SANCTUARY OF CARAÇA

In 1819, the Visitor of Portugal, Father Antônio da Silva Rebelo, responded to the request of King João VI to send priests to evangelise Brazil. Thus, at the request of King João VI, two great Vincentian missionaries arrived in Brazil from Portugal: Father Leandro Rebele Peixoto e Castro and Father Antônio Ferreira Viçoso. These two missionaries set sail for Brazil on 27 September, the anniversary of the death of St Vincent de Paul.

Arriving in Rio de Janeiro in December 1819, the two missionaries began the Congregation of the Mission's missionary journey in Brazil. While preparing to arrive in the state of Mato Grosso, the two priests were informed that the mission was already occupied by Capuchin missionaries. Therefore, Dom João VI offered Father Leandro and Father Viçoso the donation of the chapel of Our Lady Mother of Men, founded by Brother Lourenço de Nossa Senhora, where they were to preach the missions and found a seminary (school) for boys, according to his will.

Arriving in Caraça on 15 April 1820, the two missionaries founded the school and a rest house for the priests and students. In 1825, the number of pupils increased. In 1829, the first ordinations took place in the seminary of Caraça. These were the beginnings of the Lazarist missions in Brazil.

In 2020, on the threshold of the bicentenary of the arrival of the Lazarist Fathers and Brothers, the Shrine of Caraça celebrated 200 years of presence in Brazil. The Brazilian Province of the Congregation of the Mission continues its mission and its work of evangelisation in the face of the missionary and practical challenges of the present times, new technologies, polarised thinking, the formation of our clergy and laity, and new areas of evangelisation.

The Congregation of the Mission has always striven to work in harmony and alongside the hierarchy of the Catholic Church, collaborating intensely in the formation of the clergy, the laity and the missions. The history of the archdiocese of Mariana is intertwined with the history of Caraça, the first home of the Lazarists in Brazil, since it was present, above all, in the historical-cultural and educational context, in the life of the seminaries and in the formation of the clergy of Mariana, being responsible for its seminaries from 1853 to 1965.

Within the Brazilian territory, the Lazarist (or Vincentian) missionaries have worked with great dedication since the arrival of the first two missionaries. Many other Lazarists came to Caraça. After 1845, when it became a College and then an Apostolic School, it was a house of formation from which came eminent public men, numerous bishops and priests dedicated to evangelisation throughout Brazil.



Present in Brazil since 1820, the Congregation of the Mission is active in several Brazilian states and is organised into three large groups, called provinces: the Brazilian Province (PBCM), the Southern Province (CMPS) and the Province of Fortaleza (PFCM).

The Brazilian Province of the Congregation of the Mission was officially founded in 1827. In its desire to be faithful to the missionary witness of St. Vincent de Paul, it has stood out throughout its history for its work in the popular missions, the formation of the clergy and the education of young people.

Today, 250 years after its foundation, Caraça is a religious and ecological sanctuary that attracts people from all corners of Brazil and the world for its natural, historical, cultural and religious attractions. "Ideal of Brother Lourenço, Reality of the Congregation of the Mission, Wealth of Minas and of Brazil", Caraça rejoices in prayer with the 280th anniversary of the Diocese of Mariana. A history of deep respect, whose knowledge, admiration and gratitude for its characters and its achievements generate in each of the present members and candidates of the Congregation of the Mission in Brazil the responsibility to continue to concretise and carry out with care and zeal the Vincentian Mission in the country.

Fr. Ramon Aurélio, CM
Fr. Paulo Venuto, CM

Voces vicentinas en el Foro para las Cuestiones Indígenas de la Organización de las Naciones Unidas

In January 2019, Pope Francis sent a video message to indigenous youth from Latin America who gathered at our Vincentian mission in Soloy, Panama. The young people gathered to celebrate the indigenous face of the Catholic Church and to discuss urgent issues, such as the loss of cultural identity, the urgency of caring for their territories and protecting Mother Earth, and the importance of being protagonists in building a more just world. The Pope's words encouraged them on this journey, "I urge you to make it an opportunity to respond to the invitation made to youth in other moments to be grateful for the history of your peoples and courageous in the face of the challenges that surround you in order to move forward full of hope in the construction of another possible world.

May your actions, your awareness of belonging to your peoples, be a reaction against this culture of discarding, against this culture of forgetting your roots, projected towards a future that is ever more liquid, more gaseous, without foundation. Take charge of your cultures! Take charge of your roots!". Two young people in that crowd who were surprised to receive the Pope's message were Enith Sanchez and Rafael Mitre, from the Ngäbe people of Panama. These active members of the Soloy parish youth programmes worked tirelessly to organise this event for indigenous youth while juggling their university studies in the face of many obstacles. Five years later, Enith and Rafael, now educators on the Ngäbe indigenous reservation, found themselves again listening and talking about the issues raised at the Solo and Catholic indigenous youth gathering.



This time, however, the setting was not their local indigenous community, but the United Nations headquarters in New York, where they were participating in the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. Jim Claffey, the NGO representative of the Congregation of the Mission to the United Nations, invited them and me to participate in this year's forum.

The objective of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues is to provide expert advice and recommendations on indigenous issues to UN programmes, funds and agencies; to raise awareness and promote the integration and coordination of activities related to indigenous issues within the UN system; to prepare and disseminate information on indigenous issues; and to promote respect for and full implementation of the provisions of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. The Forum meets annually on around a specific theme of interest to indigenous peoples, and this year's theme was "Enhancing Indigenous Peoples' Right to Self-Determination in the Context of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples: Highlighting the Voices of Indigenous Youth."

Enith and Rafael had many opportunities to share the specific realities and challenges faced by the Ngäbe and other indigenous peoples of Panama in relation to self-determination, in particular the threats to their ability to continue living their intimate relationship with the land and ecosystems that have sustained them for generations.

In addition to the official programme inside the UN headquarters, we were blessed to participate in other events outside the UN in collaboration with religious congregations, environmental church networks and the anti-mining working group. These spaces allowed us to hear testimonies from indigenous people from around the world. These encounters facilitated the establishment of relationships with church and civic bodies in other regions committed to the common goal of promoting indigenous rights and protecting Mother Earth. Enith and Rafael also visited several anthropology classes at New York University to share aspects of the Ngäbe relationship with creation and the decades-long struggle to protect Ngäbe territory from mineral mining.

This year's forum paid special attention to the voice of indigenous youth, and throughout the many official events and side events, the importance of enabling indigenous youth to be protagonists in the future of their peoples was highlighted. Many young people spoke of the difficulties of existing "between two worlds", but confirmed their commitment to work for a just future in which indigenous traditional knowledge and practices are respected and valued, offering not only indigenous peoples but all peoples the hope of societies in harmony with each other and with all of God's creation.

The testimonies and themes shared during the UN forum, which focused on indigenous peoples' self-determination and the right to their ancestral territories as an essential aspect of this, echo the words of Pope Francis in *Laudato Si'*, in that for indigenous peoples "land is not an economic good, but a gift from God and the ancestors who rest on it, a sacred space with which they need to interact to sustain their identity and values. When they remain on their territories, they are the ones who take the best care of them. However, in various parts of the world, they are under pressure to abandon their lands in order to free them for extractive and agricultural projects that pay no attention to the degradation of nature and culture" (LS 146).

As stated in the post-synodal apostolic exhortation *Dear Amazonia*, colonisation is not over. "In many places it is transformed, disguised and disguised, but it does not lose the but it does not lose its arrogance against the life of the poor and the fragility of the environment" (QA, 16). Even well-intentioned development initiatives often fail to take into account what communities conceive of as a dignified life based on their particular worldviews and experiences.

When megaprojects promise jobs or infrastructure, it should come as no surprise that indigenous peoples reject the idea of destroying forests and rivers in the name of a supposed "better life". They are often willing to give their lives to protect a way of life that is in harmony with creation, the human family and God. Indigenous peoples cry out loudly for "an end to the mistreatment and extermination of Mother Earth. The earth has blood and is bleeding, the multinationals have cut the veins of our Mother Earth" (QA, 42).

Especially in the side events organised by religious congregations and church networks, there was a sense of purpose, of standing with the indigenous people and walking with them. The voice of indigenous peoples was central. Recognising indigenous and other marginalised communities as protagonists in their wellbeing and evangelisation reorients us to think and act differently as a Vincentian Family. Knowing a vision of a healthy future for indigenous peoples and the global community requires on our part, as non-indigenous pastoral agents, an openness to authentic dialogue, which not only favours "the preferential option for the defence of the poor, the marginalised and the excluded, but also a preferential option for the defence of the marginalised and the excluded, but respects them as protagonists" (QA, 27). In this vision, non-indigenous members of the Vincentian Family could better accompany indigenous communities as facilitators or collaborators in processes that have at their heart the dream and vision of the people, in the light of the Gospel. We do so in the certainty that "it is always possible to overcome the various mentalities of colonisation in order to build networks of solidarity" (QA, 17).

Let us give thanks to God for the courageous voices from the margins who invite us to a continuous conversion in our diverse contexts, indigenous Vincentians like Enith and Rafael, who, by caring for their roots, traditions and ancestral knowledge, have much to teach us. Let us not only listen but humbly accompany them in their arduous struggle for justice. May our advocacy, whether in local villages or in the halls of the United Nations, always be a synodal journey, a journey that we truly undertake together as brothers and sisters.

Francis (2019). Pope Francis' video message to the World Meeting of Indigenous Youth.

Francis (2015). Encyclical *Laudato Si'*: On care for our common home.

Francis. (2020). *Dear Amazonia*. Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation.

Fr. José Fitzgerald, CM



From the General Secretariat

NOMINATIONES

GALLEGOS Stephen	04/06/2024	Director DC St Elizabeth Ann Seton
GIL YÉPEZ Luis Hernando	04/06/2024	Director DC Cali
ARIAS GUZMÁN David	27/06/2024 (start 27/09/2024)	Visitor America Central
WANG John Cheng-Chien	27/06/2024 (start 27/09/2024)	Visitor China Province

ORDINATIONES

KUJUR Manoj	Sac	INS	21/01/2024
NOEL Djony	Sac	CUR	27/01/2024
MEDEIROS Alisson Bruno Felipe	Sac	CUR	03/02/2024
ULBRICH Leonardo	Sac	CUR	10/02/2024
PIÑERO PÉREZ Douglas Daniel	Sac	COL	08/06/2024
QUINTERO RIVERO Luis Enrique	Sac	COL	15/06/2024

NECROLOGIUM

Nomen	Cond.	Dies ob.	Prov.	Aet.	Voc.
HLOND Waclaw	Sac	04/06/2024	NAN	94	72
GARCÍA ISAZA José Samuel	Sac	14/06/2024	COL	84	66
LEVESQUE Joseph L.	Sac	23/06/2024	ORL	85	65
ESTRADE Jean-Marie	Sac	24/06/2024	FRA	92	72
SANZ GONZÁLEZ Valentín	Sac	24/06/2024	CGN (Cuba)	73	48
FUNKE José	Sac	28/06/2024	COS	93	72

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