



To the Visitors, Vice-Visitors, and Regional Superiors of the Congregation of the Mission:

Dear confreres:

With joy, we present the “**Vincentian Missionary Formation International Course**,” organized by CIF, in collaboration with the Assistant General for Missions, Father Aarón Gutiérrez. Father Aarón has prepared a *Guide* for this Course.

It provides continuity to the new impulse that was given to the **Missions Ad Gentes** during the Generalate of Father Robert Maloney, undertaking more mission areas, and developing international teams for this ministry. This second aspect has been the most original, because it includes the way in which missionaries offer to go to these missions. This new impulse for the **Missions Ad Gentes** has continued with the successive Superiors General, Father Gregory Gay and Father Tomaž Mavrič.

Several years have passed since the beginning of this positive change within the CM, but over time, some problems also have arisen. We believe that one way to improve this experience is to offer missionaries a theoretical-practical workshop that allows them to grow in missiological knowledge and maturely internalize the content.

We think that this workshop can be offered for several years, in the month of November, in Paris. However, for that, we need you to be generous, allowing confreres to be formed for the **Missions Ad Gentes**, raising vocations for these missions, and encouraging members of your provinces who already are participating in them. We know the enormous effort made in

several provinces, where vocations are scarce. We also understand that the missionaries will have little time and that it is not convenient to give them too extensive material to read. Know that the missionaries who participate will have the complete *Guide*. In this manual, we share the parts that we believe are most essential to their task.

We leave you with the usual affection and assure you of our prayer for all the missionary works that the Congregation conducts.

Andrés María Román Motto, CM
Director of CIF

Aarón Gutiérrez Nava, CM
Assistant General
Course Coordinator

0. Presentation

The Congregation of the Mission, from the moment it resumed its commitment to promote the “Mission *ad gentes*,” has wanted to provide missionaries in international missions with adequate preparation to exercise this ministry so characteristic of our identity.

The 2016 GA speaks about the need for specific training for the mission, at least in two ways:

- a. Formation for all**, especially in the areas of ongoing formation, but with special attention, through initial formation: *“To offer our students, in whatever stage of formation, concrete experiences of interculturality, inculturation, and interreligious dialogue, including the learning of languages.”*¹ This project of Vincentian missionary formation attempts to be an experience of this kind and contribute to reflection on the classic missionary themes from a Vincentian perspective and with the aim of seeking a common vision and pastoral lines, supported by the richness of our charism.
- b. Particular formation**: we have agreed that CIF, in Paris, as a **Vincentian missionary formation** center, will offer it to confreres:
- ✓ *who “collaborate” in one of the international missions,*²
 - ✓ *who “already collaborate” on a mission: be it international, be it in one’s own province,*
 - ✓ *who, for some other reason,*³ *wish to deepen the missionary aspect.*

The documents of the 2016 GA do not speak directly of this concern of the Congregation that goes back many years. The preparation due the missionaries, who will assume the responsibility of an international mission, is an aspiration of the assembly members that arose in various ways and, therefore, a pending subject from some past General Assemblies.

To a certain extent, they put off a prompt and adequate response to this desire: the haste with which the missionaries were sent; the urgencies presented in the missions; and the approach that has been given to the missions.

¹ *Final Document of the 2016 GA; 3. - Lines of Action and Commitments 3.2d. and 3.5 Formation for the Mission.*

² *See the various numbers that refer to this in the commitments of the Conferences: APVC 2; CEVIM 2 and 3; CLAPVI 1; NCV 3, 4, and 5.*

³ *For example, those who work in popular missions, or in formation of our own candidates, etc.*

Supported in the will to solve this need, and after having collected the contributions and suggestions of many confreres, we are starting this year, on the dates indicated below, the “CIFMV – International Workshop of Vincentian Missionary Formation.”

1. Target Groups

In the first part of this project, when talking about what is intended in this workshop, we already said, very concretely, of whom we were thinking when preparing it.⁴ It is very possible that, with time and according to experience, we can open it up to Sisters and other lay missionaries, who share the charism with us.

We do not rule out the participation of other confreres, who wish to deepen and grow in their missionary commitment. Many provinces are in great need of confreres who organize pastoral efforts of “Mission Animation and Cooperation” in their various works. On many occasions, parishes and dioceses invite us to transmit our missionary spirituality and to promote the conversion into output that is so valued today in the local Churches, and to which we have much to contribute. We do not doubt that your participation in the workshop will be of great value.

2. Objectives

The participating missionaries:

- ✓ *will rekindle in their own person the experience of discipleship, “of being sent” by Jesus Christ to the Mission and will share their missionary spirituality in their communities;*
- ✓ *will reaffirm and strengthen their commitment to evangelize beyond their own borders and local needs (leaving aside “Provincialism” in favor of the “Universal Dimension of the Church and the Congregation”) in a continuous discernment of the signs of the times; and*
- ✓ *will deepen and assimilate the “Ratio Missionum” of the CM in order to grow in the experience of the criteria, values, attitudes, and practices of their Vincentian missionary vocation with greater determination and radicalism.*

3. Modality and Method of the Course

We all would like to access academic formation and obtain degrees, but this is not the objective of this workshop. It is a more pastoral formation. What we offer in this project will facilitate the achievement of the proposed objectives, if we take good care of two different moments of the formation:

⁴ See subsection **b** of the Presentation.

Missions, in most cases, lack opportunities and means for ongoing formation. Quite a few missionaries lose the healthy habits of researching, reading, writing, and preparing before any activity. They tend to be mechanical in their words and actions. The biggest problem is that they lose their creativity and simply copy or transfer ideas and practices that they have not even considered or assumed. In a word, they lose the ability to maintain themselves in formation.

For the short time that this formation project offers, let us suggest, as a method, an effort toward forming oneself. By this, we mean as an opportunity to grow in responsibility and autonomy, so frequently necessary in the mission. Forming oneself is a process in which the missionary reflects beforehand on his past experience,⁵ and allows for “critical interaction” with others, to assess his situation in the face of his missionary present, but he has to think and dream with leaning toward the future. There is nothing worse than a missionary who renounces being a “person” with his own missionary project and not just a radio “antenna,” mechanical, impersonal.

The moderators collaborate in this, giving those forming themselves the content necessary so that they have clarity in the sense of the Vincentian mission and in the challenges that are presented to the missionary; can evaluate themselves and their resources in the present; can reorder them to the mission; and can guide the community (human-Christian or pre-Christian) toward the ends⁶ we pursue as a Congregation.

Therefore, we want the missionaries to:

- ✓ *have access to sufficient, relevant, and meaningful information.*
- ✓ *experience self-referential processes, so that they focus on the Other, and on the other (poor).*
- ✓ *learn to “inter-organize themselves,” to think, speak, and act as a team, as a community in continuous spiritual and pastoral development.*
- ✓ *reflect and learn skills that make them “competent” in seeking and carrying out the evangelization of the poor.*

4. Place and Duration of the Meeting

Participants in the CIF-MV will be present at the current CIF headquarters: *Maison Mère, 95 Rue de Sèvres, 75006 Paris.* The meeting will last 21 days; that is, three consecutive weeks **“from 10-30 November 2019.”** CIF has all the facilities necessary, including Internet access.

⁵ *In which all aspects enter: human, Christian, Vincentian, community-social, intellectual (moral, pastoral, etc.).*

⁶ *The purpose is what gives meaning to the skills and qualities that the subject needs so that his participation is competent.*

Costs: We have thought of 1800 euros. However, there may be a partial or total scholarship plan for provinces that honestly cannot pay that amount.

Program of CIF from 10-30 November 2019

Calendar

Module 1 The Missionary Insertion				10-16 November 2019		
Sunday 10	Monday 11	Tuesday 12	Wednesday 13	Thursday 14	Friday 15	Saturday 16
Arrival	M1-1 Reality, basic foundations for the Mission Coordinated by Aarón Gutiérrez Nava, CM	M1-2 Mission and Human Promotion Coordinated by Giuseppe Turati, CM	M1-3 The great religions Coordinated by Anil Thomas Karackavayalil, CM	M1-4 Mission and culture Coordinated by Anil Thomas Karackavayalil, CM	<u>Workshop 1</u> The reality of my Mission Country ... By language groups: It will be said who coordinates each group.	Activity Andrés Motto, CM
Lunch and Rest						
	Continue	Continue	Continue	Continue	<u>Workshop 2</u> Pastoral themes of my Mission Country ...	
Vespers - Dinner - Rest						

Module 2 The Mission in the Bible, in theology, and in the CM				17-23 November 2019		
Sunday 17	Monday 18	Tuesday 19	Wednesday 20	Thursday 21	Friday 22	Saturday 23
Free	M2-1 The Mission in the Bible Coordinated by Derek Swanson, CM	M2-2 The Mission in Theology Coordinated by Derek Swanson, CM	M2-3 The Mission of Jesus Christ and his project of Evangelization Coordinated by Mario Yépez Barrientos, CM	M2-4 The Bible in the missionary thinking of Pope Francis (EG) Mario Yépez Barrientos, CM	<u>Workshop 3</u> The mission and the Kingdom of God ... Coordinated by Mario Yépez Barrientos, CM	Activity Andrés Motto, CM
Lunch and Rest						
	Continue	Continue	Continue	Continue	<u>Workshop 4</u> The building up of the Kingdom here and now.	
Vespers - Dinner - Rest						

Module 3 Mission, personal and community growth ...				24-30 November 2019		
Sunday 24	Monday 25	Tuesday 26	Wednesday 27	Thursday 28	Friday 29	Saturday 30
Free	M3-1 The Mission in the CM Coordinated by Andrés Motto, CM	M3-2 Missionary and Vincentian Spirituality Coordinated by Christian Mauvais, CM	M3-3 Mission and Affectivity Coordinated by John Prager, CM	M3-4 Mission and Community Coordinated by John Prager, CM	<u>Workshop 5</u> Spiritual Retreat Evangelizing according to Vincent Coordinated by Aarón Gutiérrez Nava, CM	Farewell Sending-off Eucharist
Lunch and Rest						
	Continue	Continue	Continue	Continue	<u>Workshop 6</u> My missionary life	Departure
Vespers - Dinner - Rest						

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