

FEATURE:

The Encyclical Letter **Deus Caritas Est** *and the Vincentian Charisma*

Presentation

by Alfredo Becerra Vázquez, C.M.

Editor of "Vincentiana"

This year 2006, marks the fiftieth anniversary of the publication of *Vincentiana*. Without a doubt this is a cause of great joy for the whole Congregation.

In this present edition we offer six reflections on the first encyclical letter of our Holy Father, Benedict XVI. These articles are written by Vincentian confreres living in different geographical areas where the Congregation of the Mission is present.

Andrés Motto offers us a reflection that is entitled: *The Practice of Love and the Vincentian Charisma*. He presents us with a renewed Vincentian reading in regard to the practical ways of love and and examines the second part of the encyclical from the perspective of the thinking of Saint Vincent de Paul.

In the second reflection, that of **Yosief Zeracristos**, entitled: *The Encyclical Letter of Benedict XVI, Deus Caritas Est, and its African Reception*, the author shares with us his hopes concerning the new Pontificate and the challenges that the Church in Africa, in light of the encyclical, is called to live.

Deus Caritas Est in Latin America is the title of **José Evangelista de Souza's** article. He offers us some considerations that are meant

to deepen the Vincentian spirituality in Latin America. Therefore, he first of all comments on the encyclical and then examines the Papal document from the perspectiva of Saint Vincent's and Latin America's option on behalf of the poor.

The title of **Jimmy A. Belita's** contribution is *Reflections on Deus Caritas Est* and this presentation is made from an Asian perspective. The article at times hints at certain controversy.

José-Vicente Martínez Muedra in his article, *Chariy: The Exercise of Love on the Part of the Church as a "Community of Love,"* begins his reflection by insisting on the Trinitarian configuration of the Congregation. He comments on various points of the encyclical (charity as a manifestation of the Trinitarian love and a task of the Church; justice and charity, the specific outlines of the Church's activity and those who are responsible for the charitable action of the Church and then a conclusión).

Finally, **Giuseppe Guerra** in his article *Saint Vincent and Saint Louise in the Encyclical* speaks with us about the essence of Christianity: love. Christianity's teaching about the fundamental principle of love is made concrete in a lived testimony such as is seen in the life of Saint Vincent and Saint Louise. Holiness, however, ought to be a reality not only of the past but also of the present.

These are the primary lines of this present edition. We hope this will be useful to all of you to begin to walk together toward holiness.