

Rome, 18 October 2006
Feast of St. Luke, Evangelist

To the members of the Congregation of the Mission

The Community is continually responsible for its own development, especially as we renew the principal elements of our way of living and acting: following Christ the Evangelizer as a community... the evangelization of the poor... prayer... holding our goods in common (C 25).

Tempo Forte (2-6 October) Circular

Dear Brothers,

May the grace and peace of Our Lord Jesus Christ fill your hearts now and forever!

We began our *tempo forte* meeting of October with an ongoing formation session given by Dr. Giancarlo Gallici, member of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, who spoke to us on "The Vincentian Charism in Our Contemporary Culture."

In this circular I would like to highlight some of the more relevant issues that were discussed and decided on in this *tempo forte* meeting.

1. The Superior General will participate in a **meeting of the Provincial Councils of Italy**. The general theme will be interprovincial collaboration. Together the Superior General and the members of the council listed various recommendations for the consideration of the Visitors: cooperation in the area of apostolate, community, formation and the Vincentian Family.
2. As of this *tempo forte* meeting, the General Council assumes officially the **History Project of the Congregation of the Mission**. We have asked Fr. John Rybolt to be the coordinator of this project. He will continue to solicit the collaboration of other members of the Congregation in writing the history. We want to thank John and other members of the Congregation for the contributions they have made up to this point in this very important undertaking.
3. The members of the commission preparing the **Workshop for Confreres in Difficulty** met with the General Council and continued planning efforts for this meeting. It will be held from 10-16 January 2007 in Rome. We have asked Fr. Manuel Ginete to be the Moderator of the workshop. By this time, all the Visitors will have received the invitation to be present at the

meeting themselves and/or another confrere designated to help in these processes.

4. The final draft of the **General Council Project 2006-2010** was presented and approved. It will appear shortly on the CM Global website: www.cmglobal.org. The project is from and for the Superior General and his council. It is to be understood as a work project and not a declaration of intention. The various topics are: 1) spirit and identity, 2) mission and ministries, 3) community, 4) formation, 5) solidarity, 6) Vincentian Family, 7) General Curia Offices, and 8) General Council. Each topic includes convictions, objectives and actions to be accomplished.
5. **Procurator and General Archivist.** We made the decision to contact a professional archivist, who will be asked to diagnose the situation of our archives in the General Curia. We have asked Fr. Alfredo Becerra to assume the function of General Archivist, as well as librarian for the General Curia. Fr. Giuseppe Guerra will assume the function of Procurator General *ad interim*. Fr. Guerra has assumed this responsibility since the departure of our former Procurator General, Fr. Varghese Thottamkara, who was named Visitor of the Province of South India.
6. The General Council approved the creation of a **Development Office**. The official appointment of the confrere responsible for this office is pending.
7. We had a report from the **Vincentian Solidarity Office**. It continues to be quite successful in helping to obtain financing for macro and mini projects being carried out by the poorer provinces of the Congregation.
8. There was a report from the **webmaster** with various projects of special interest to the Congregation. One of these is the *Online Study of the Constitutions Pilot Project* (<http://famvin.org/onlinestudy/>). This online study is in English and Spanish. There are a total of 24 videos in both Quick Time and Windows formats. This is a project of the Visitors' Conference of the United States. It fulfills one of the commitments they made during the 2004 General Assembly.

With the approval of the General Council, Fr. John Freund has hired an executive assistant. Her name is Sr. Gail Reith, RSM. Among the things she will be doing is preparing some formation PowerPoint presentations.

Another significant development mentioned in the webmaster's report is that St. John's University will be providing the webmaster with a new and greatly improved server, which will dramatically increase the ability to stream movies and projects, such as the *Online Study of the Constitutions Project* and *Where in the World is the Superior General*. Thank you, St. John's.

9. The Executive Secretary of **SIEV**, Fr. Alexander Jernej, sent us his report. He will be sending out to the Congregation, as well as to the Vincentian Family, more detailed information regarding SIEV's projects. Here I want to highlight only a few of these. The council approved a manual for formation in Vincentian Studies, which will be made available to the entire Vincentian Family. The proposal that the meeting of young Vincentian historians be continued was of particular interest to the council too. This is a follow-up to previous efforts that were initiated to increase our pool of Vincentian historians.
10. In a report from the **CIF Program**, we received an evaluation of the newest addition to this program, that is, the Leadership Workshop, which took place this past summer. It received very high ratings from the different participants and will be continued next year on an experimental basis.
11. Fr. José Antonio Ubillús, the Assistant General for the Missions, has been working on the **Statutes for the International Missions** for the past few months. These were approved *ad experimentum* and will be sent to the international missions to be studied by the missionaries there.
12. The **International Mission in the Solomon Islands** has suggested beginning a house of formation for the Congregation of the Mission. This has been accepted by the Archbishop and approved by the General Council. We also received an appeal for missionaries from one of the bishops in a neighboring diocese. This will be presented in the Mission Appeal Letter later on this month.
13. Two of the newer members of the **International Mission in El Alto, Bolivia**, Frs. Cyrille de Nanteuil (Paris) and Fernando Sánchez (Argentina) are in Rome for a missiology course from now until the beginning of December. Fernando has been working for a few months now in El Alto and Cyrille will be departing for there for the first time after the course finishes.
14. We also discussed the **volunteers** who responded to the Mission Appeal Letters of previous years. We considered seven possible candidates. One will be placed immediately in the Vice-Province of Mozambique. He is a missionary from the Province of Ethiopia. Another from the Province of South India will be missioned to Tanzania. We will have further information for the other candidates after our *tempo forte* meeting in December.
15. There is one final point which was not decided during the *tempo forte* meeting, but was announced during these days; that is, the new superior and assistant superior of the Curia House: John Gouldrick and Alfredo Becerra, respectively.

O Lord, grant us the grace to be open, available, and loving in doing your will. God, our liberator, we beg this of you with confidence. Grant us freedom of mind and will so that nothing keeps us from carrying out your commandments. By working in this way, we know you will take us by the hand. You will help us to be faithful to your plan and you will lead us to glory. We ask this through Christ, Our Lord. Amen (SV XII, 242-243).

Your brother in St. Vincent,

G. Gregory Gay, C.M.
Superior General