

350TH ANNIVERSARY PREPARATION

Rome, 7 October 2008

To: Members of the Vincentian Family

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

May the peace and joy of Christ evangelizer of the poor be with you always!

After the meeting last February of the Vincentian Family International Presidents and Heads, we launched the celebration of the **350th Anniversary (2010) of the death of St. Vincent de Paul and of St. Louise de Marillac**. Today I am happy to send you materials on the plans and programs for this anniversary on the international level.

Our celebration will primarily focus on honoring St. Vincent de Paul and St. Louise de Marillac as witnesses and examples of love and service of the poor. Concretely in this time of grace we will seek to deepen our Vincentian charism and spirituality as well as our relationship with the poor and with one another, and to celebrate their heritage by, among other things, promoting the service of the poor through concrete projects in partnership with other organizations in the Church and in society, particularly projects that bring about systemic change in the lives of the poor.

In view of all this, we formed various committees to coordinate at the international level the activities that would carry out these objectives. Thus, the **Heritage Committee** will coordinate sessions and programs relative to reflection on and deepening of our Vincentian spirituality. The **Celebration Committee** will take care of the major liturgical celebrations during these occasions. And the **Projects Committee** will coordinate plans towards a collaborative project. These Committees, together with two auxiliary committees — **Finance**, and **Secretariat** — will assist the **International Executive Coordinators** headed by Fr. Josef Kapusciak, C.M., with the help of Sr. Palmarita Guida, D.C., and Fr. Manuel Ginete, C.M. A more precise picture of the responsibilities of these committees is outlined in the attachment I am sending you.

The above-mentioned structure for the 350th Anniversary celebration, although primarily for the international level of the

Vincentian Family, may be adopted on the continental or national levels of the Vincentian Family, if they so wish. Certainly, a similar structure will facilitate our coordination on various levels and with various branches, and thus make our celebration a truly international event.

The year 2010 is likewise the 150th Anniversary of the death of St. Justin de Jacobis, our celebrated missionary in Abyssinia (Ethiopia), on whose missiological contributions a study has been made recently. It would indeed be a wonderful occasion for all of us in the Vincentian Family to be imbued once again with the love for the poor and the mission that St. Vincent, St. Louise, and St. Justin have so beautifully exemplified in their lives and works.

Once more, wishing you the special blessings at the time of these great anniversaries, I remain

Your brother in Saint Vincent de Paul,

G. Gregory Gay, C.M.
Superior General

*"I beg the Lord to renew all of you in his Spirit,
so that all your undertakings will belong to him
and the fruits obtained will lead you to eternal life."*

(Letter to J. MARTIN, SV VIII, 333)