

# NUNTIA



OCTOBER 2024

ONLINE MAGAZINE OF THE  
CONGREGATION OF THE MISSION

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## EDITORIAL

### **Missionary Synodality**

This conceptual idea is increasingly emerging from fruitful ecclesial debates, especially during the recent Synods convened by Pope Francis. Enlighten, is a passage from the document of the International Theological Commission devoted precisely to the theme of Synodality in the life and mission of the Church, when it states that: 'The establishment of a synodal Church is an indispensable prerequisite for a new missionary impulse involving the whole People of God' (no. 9). The missionary logic is the synodal dynamic. "Walking together," in fact, is not only a goal to be achieved and a method to be applied in the life of the Church, but it is also the foundational logic of ecclesial relationships, necessarily based on the bond of fraternity and evangelical koinonia.

We must replace the self-referentiality of the "I" with the construction of the "we," aware that each of our existences is a pro-existence. We exist for others and with others; we are the Church because we have one Master who makes us all brothers (cf. Mt 23:8) and sends us together on mission (cf. Mt 28:16-20). It is the Holy Spirit who guides synodal discernment and inspires mission.

The Third Person of the Trinity establishes the fraternal bond and opens the Church to mission as a perpetual Pentecost that renews and vivifies the Church of God. The pursuit of harmony is the same truth revealed in the fraternity, which is the certainty of the Church's existence and action. Mission is the essence of every baptized person, integrated into the broader movement of love initiated by Jesus at the moment of the missionary and evangelizing mandate, made evident in baptism.

As we journey toward the fourth centenary of the foundation of the Congregation of the Mission, we are called to reflect on the reform work envisioned and carried out by the saint of charity, Vincent de Paul. His pastoral vision for reform begins with personal conversion and culminates in a theological conception of the Church—a Church of the people that, in turn, must be re-evangelized and reformed in the order of charity. It is this Church of the people, a synodal community amid challenges and poverty, that St. Vincent cared for, engaging men and women in a real and concrete missionary movement: the Congregation of the Mission, the Daughters of Charity, the Confraternities of Charity, the work for Ordinands, and seminaries with Tuesday Conferences.

Pope Francis wrote: "I dream of a missionary option capable of transforming everything so that the Church's customs, ways of doing things, times, schedules, language, and structures become suitable channels for the evangelization of today's world, rather than for self-preservation" (EG 27).

In this dynamic of radical renewal in communion with the universal Church, the Vincentian missionaries see the fourth centenary of the foundation not as a merely commemorative event but as an opportunity to remember the spirit of fraternity and apostolic zeal, making the prophecy of renewal visible here and now. The Vincentians are fully engaged in synodal renewal as active and responsible participants in the life and mission of the Church, collaborating with the Holy Spirit, the true protagonist of all reform and the authentic guide who accomplishes missionary synodality.

**Fr. Salvatore Fari, CM**



# Virtual Visit to the Church of St. Lawrence

Dear Confreres: A promise is a promise. Let us now embark on a virtual visit to the parish church associated with St. Lazarus. As its name suggests, this church is dedicated to St. Lawrence, the deacon, reminding us of the importance of serving the poor. This ancient church was built in the year 583, though it has undergone numerous reconstructions. The parish is located in the 10th arrondissement, a poorer area of Paris compared to other parts of the city. Each time I entered this church, I was filled with joy to see many poor people and needy immigrants coming here to pray, entrusting their lives to divine providence.

The Vincentian Connection: Let us travel back in time. In 1630, Adrien Le Bon, prior of St. Lazarus, along with Guillaume Lestocq, pastor of St. Lawrence, offered the priory of St. Lazarus to Vincent de Paul. Over time, the community of canons at St. Lazarus had lost their original purpose. With the religious aging and no new vocations, they sought someone good and dedicated to take over the property. Whom did they think of? Vincent de Paul. Initially, he hesitated to accept. However, after much persuasion and careful consideration, he agreed. Later, St. Vincent would recount his reaction to the proposal, saying: "I was stunned, like a man shocked by the noise of a cannon fired nearby... I was speechless" (ES V, 510). The imagery is as vivid as it is striking.



Thus, from 1632 to 1660, St. Lawrence Church served as the parish church for Vincent de Paul, as St. Lazarus Church was not a parish. It also became the parish of Louise de Marillac from 1641 to 1660. She, together with other sisters, used to pray and participate in the Easter mass in this Church. Pastor Lestocq sent confessors to the Motherhouse of the Daughters of Charity and assisted Louise de Marillac on her deathbed, presiding over her funeral. Though she wished to be buried at St. Lazarus, her remains were interred at St. Lawrence. Her tomb remained there for 95 years until it was transferred to the Motherhouse of the Daughters of Charity in 1755. Another pastor, Nicolas Gobillon, an admirer of Louise, wrote her first biography.

WHAT TO SEE? Let us begin outside. The oldest surviving element is a 12th-century tower. I love architecture, and the overall exterior is a "mishmash" of styles. However, the façade boasts beautiful neo-Gothic elements from 1865. At the top corner is the Trinity. Below, at the entrance, are depictions of Jesus and the apostles. The portico begins with Christ's resurrection and narrates episodes from the life of St. Lawrence, the deacon:

1. St. Lawrence serving the marginalized.
2. Pagan Romans attempting to steal Church funds.
3. The poor as the true "treasures" of the Church.
4. His martyrdom.

On the right side of the church, there is a park, the St. Lawrence Gloriette, which occupies the former parish cemetery grounds.

Let us enter quietly. The interior is more beautiful, with its exquisite Gothic design. The ceiling features delicate ribbing adorned with fascinating details, including a late-period Stations of the Cross (1657-1659).

Moving from left to right, we find the Altar of St. Louise. The stained glass depicts her with the first sisters blessed by St. Vincent. Additionally, there is a painting of St. Louise and the sisters distributing food to the neighborhood's poor, dated 1922, with the inscription: "Blessed are the merciful."

The Altar of St. Francis de Sales, deserving of restoration, features a statue of him writing, representing his excellence as a writer. The stained glass portrays him as a bishop, a model of peace and gentleness. This altar also housed the remains of St. Louise from 1660 to 1755, marked by a simple cross with the words SPES UNICA (our only hope). This was a phrase quite used in France in the crosses of the deceased. Under the Cross, an inscription says: "Here rested for 95 years the remains of Blessed Louise de Marillac, widow of Legras, founder and First Superior of the Daughters of Charity, servant of the poor and sick." Further along, we find the Chapel of the Blessed Sacrament, containing an image of Mary, Health of the Sick.

Nearby, an inscription reads: "1660. St. Vincent de Paul, founder of the Congregation of the Mission and the Daughters of Charity, often attended St. Lawrence, his parish church."

The Altar of St. Vincent is near the exit and faces the Altar of St. Louise. The most striking feature is its vibrant stained glass, rich in catechesis, dated 1934. It depicts St. Vincent, guided by the Holy Spirit, evangelizing the poor, and showcases his works of mercy: prisoners, slaves in Algiers, rural missions, the sick, and the poor. The upper section illustrates the theological virtues: Faith (a heart aflame), Hope (a ship), and Charity (the phoenix). The Congregation's motto: "Evangelizare pauperibus misit me" appears prominently. Below: we find the date of birth of Mr. Vincenzo. It's a shame that the year 1576 is indicated (it should be 1581). Who will update it? Then follows the date of his death, 1660 (that is correct, fortunately).

Our next virtual visit will be to the Parish of St. Vincent de Paul, located on what was once St. Lazarus's grounds.

### Fr. Andrés Motto, CM



# Cameroon welcomes the Superior General, Fr. Tomaž Mavrič, CM



From October 23 to 27, 2024, the Superior General of the Congregation of the Mission and the Daughters of Charity, as well as the Director General of the Vincentian Family, visited Cameroon. Initially, he visited the confreres of the Vice-Province of Cameroon, and subsequently, he met with other branches of the Vincentian Family. During this trip, he was accompanied by the Assistant General, Fr. Dominique IYOLO, CM, and the Treasurer General, Fr. Ziad HADDAD, CM.

Upon arriving in Yaoundé, the Superior General stopped in Nsimalen, where he visited the hospice for the elderly run by the Daughters of Charity. October 24 was entirely dedicated to the Vincentians. On this day, the Superior General held a meeting with 37 confreres of the Vice-Province of Cameroon present and another 6 connected via video conference. During his address, Fr. Tomaž reminded the confreres of the 11 points and action lines from the 2022 General Assembly. These action lines must be a priority for all confreres as they contribute to revitalizing our charism, spirituality, and identity in the Church and the world. Faced with certain challenges of the young Vice-Province of Cameroon, the Superior General recommended three essential documents to the confreres (in addition to his counsel): the Bible, the Liturgy of the Hours, and the Common Rules and Constitutions. In the afternoon, the Superior General presided over the celebration marking the beginning of the mandate of the new Visitor, Fr. Salomon Colbert KOLLO, CM.

In the following days, particularly on Friday and Saturday, the Superior General dedicated his time to individual meetings with the confreres. He also took the opportunity to visit the Daughters of Charity at the Provincial House in Oyom-Abang, where he presided over a Eucharistic celebration in the presence of the confreres. On Saturday, the successor of Vincent de Paul met with members of the Vincentian Family, the Circle of Friends of St. Vincent de Paul (CERASVIP), and the Missionary Sisters of Hope (SME), discovering the richness of their charism and their commitment to Vincentian spirituality.

Before returning to Rome, the Superior General presided over another Eucharistic celebration at the Eucharistic Station of St. Michael the Archangel in Nkolka'a, in the Archdiocese of Yaoundé. During this celebration, he encouraged members of the Vincentian Family and invited the Christians of Nkolka'a to perpetuate the Marian devotion to Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal.

**Laurent Georges ZIBI, CM**  
**Provincial Director of Communication**



## Fr. Tomaž in Brazil for spiritual exercises with the Confreres

On April 17, 2025, the Congregation of the Mission will celebrate the 400th anniversary of its foundation. To this end, the Superior General, Fr. Tomaž Mavrič, CM, called for three years of preparation, encouraging the Little Company, present in over 100 countries, to carry out activities in anticipation of this great celebration. In Brazil, the three provinces of the Congregation formed a National Jubilee Commission, coordinated by Fr. Cleber Teodósio, CM, and planned joint activities that address prophetic, synodal, and missionary dimensions. Among these activities was the Retreat for Confreres, held at the Caraça Shrine (Catas Altas - Minas Gerais) from October 14 to 18, 2024, preached by Fr. Mavrič. Approximately 100 confreres from the provinces of Curitiba, Fortaleza, and Rio de Janeiro participated, along with students from the Province of Rio and seminarians from the International Internal Seminary (Argentina, Fortaleza, and Peru).

During the opening Mass of the retreat, Fr. Mavrič stated that he would use Vincentian simplicity in his reflections, guiding the five-day gathering along the paths of spirituality with typical practices of the Company, such as meditative silence, Bible reading, adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, and a return to foundational texts: the Constitutions, Statutes, Common Rules, and writings of the founder, St. Vincent de Paul. The conferences, supported by various excerpts from these documents and discussion questions, were drawn from the Common Rules (1st, chapters 1 and 2; 3rd, chapter 10.1-4; 4th, chapter 10.5-21; 7th, chapter 12.1-7; 8th, chapter 12.8-14) and the Constitutions (2nd, chapter 1; 5th, chapter 4.40-45; 6th, chapter 4.46-50).

The retreat was an unprecedented event in the history of the Congregation of the Mission in Brazil, uniting the three provinces of the country to pray and celebrate life in the first house of the Little Company on Brazilian soil. The presence of the successor of St. Vincent provided the gathered confreres with a much-needed sense of unity for the Congregation and the Church. The spiritual journey proposed by Fr. Mavrič included a reflection on the missionary's fidelity. In his words of thanks, Fr. José Carlos, CM, highlighted that "fidelity is the guarantee of the continuity of the Congregation of the Mission," and only in this way can missionaries respond to their vocation and mission in the world as a Church that is close, charitable, and transformative.

The prayerful atmosphere, which was the reason for the confreres' gathering, was not disrupted by moments of fraternity, such as meals prepared in a wood-fired kitchen, morning or afternoon walks along the ecological reserve trails, and the anticipated visits of the wolf that roams the grounds of the Shrine of Our Lady Mother of Men during cold or warm nights. After all, when one is with God, life itself becomes prayer. The retreat's location fostered a connection with the sacred and strengthened the spiritual life of each participant, who returned renewed to continue their work and Vincentian mission with greater vigor.

Special thanks to Fr. Mavrič, the confreres of Caraça, the team that organized and carried out the retreat, and all who responded to the call and participated in this enriching event for the life, mission, and vocation of the Congregation in Brazil. Additional joint activities are planned for 2025, including:

- a) Popular Missions in the second half of January, and
- b) A pilgrimage to the National Shrine of Our Lady of Aparecida, from March 28 to 30.

**Walking together, the Congregation of the Mission joyfully celebrates its jubilee and enthusiastically begins its 5th Century!**

**Fr. Cleber Teodósio, CM  
PBCM COMMUNICATION SECTOR**



# 3rd Vincentian Youth Pilgrimage: Pilgrims of Hope

On October 18 and 19, we had the joy of celebrating the 3rd Vincentian Youth Pilgrimage at the Shrine of Our Lady Mother of Men, located in the municipality of Catas Altas/MG. Under the theme “Pilgrims of Hope”, the event was particularly significant as it prepared us for the Youth Jubilee in 2025, which will take place in Rome at the invitation of Pope Francis.

The pilgrimage was a deeply meaningful vocational moment, marked by gathering, reflection, and spirituality for young people who identify with the Vincentian mission and charism. This event not only strengthened the bonds among participants but also renewed our vocation and challenged us to take an active role in building a better world for our masters and lords, the poor.

In its third edition, the pilgrimage brought together approximately 360 young pilgrims from eight branches of the Vincentian Family, fostering friendships, exchanging experiences, and renewing commitment to Jesus Christ, the Evangelizer of the Poor.

The first registered participant was the Superior General of the Congregation of the Mission, Fr. Tomaž Mavrič, CM, successor of St. Vincent de Paul. He celebrated the Holy Mass of the gathering. In his homily, he inspired the young people to become agents of transformation, emphasizing the importance of hope during challenging times. He reminded them that, even in the face of difficulties, strength and motivation can be found in faith and community. Additionally, he highlighted the synodality of the Vincentian Family (FAMVIN), encouraging branches to remain united as true pilgrims of hope.



During the pilgrimage, participants were invited to reflect on their journeys, share experiences, and renew their commitment to Vincentian values through workshops and outdoor activities. Each workshop provided a space for learning and growth, focusing on topics such as:

- Care for Life with Sr. Geovani de Fátima, FC, emphasizing the importance of self-care and nurturing relationships.
- Path to Holiness with Fr. Alisson Medeiros, CM, encouraging participants to seek holiness in daily life.
- Leadership with Confrere Rafael Castro, SSVF, challenging young people to take on leadership roles in our communities.
- Social Media with Fr. Cleber Teodósio, CM, reflecting on how to use social platforms to evangelize and share faith experiences.

A particularly moving moment of the pilgrimage was the vocational gathering. Despite a light breeze and gentle rain, Vincentian vocational animation touched the hearts of the youth. Each branch presented its materials and vocational work, offering insights into the Vincentian charism. The young people also had the opportunity to receive the sacrament of reconciliation, a living sign of the Church’s presence among the youth.

Filled with hope, sharing, and spiritual renewal, the 3rd Vincentian Youth Pilgrimage serves as a beacon of hope for our young people. May this energy and motivation inspire others in their homes and communities, encouraging them to embrace the Vincentian charism as true pilgrims. Events like this continue to strengthen spirituality and synodality among the FAMVIN and the youth, inspiring them as “pilgrims of hope” to live out their love for others and Jesus Christ, Our Lord.

And don’t forget: the next pilgrimage will take place from September 4 to 7, 2026!

**Brother Rafael Castro de Oliveira**

# Visit of Fr. Gregorio Bañaga, C.M., Vicar General of the Congregation of the Mission

Fr. Gregorio Bañaga, C.M., Vicar General of the Congregation of the Mission, visited the Province of Southern India from October 14 to November 9, 2024. Fr. Gregorio arrived at Bangalore International Airport and traveled to the Vincentian Provincial House in Mysore on October 14, where he was warmly welcomed by Fr. Anil Thomas Karackavayalil, Visitor, along with the councilors and confreres of the Provincial House.

On October 15, he celebrated Holy Mass in the Provincial House chapel. The visit began with a council meeting presided over by the Vicar General. After the meeting, Fr. Gregorio personally met with the confreres of the Provincial House and those working in the parishes of Mariapura and Jellipalaya. The following day, he met with confreres from the communities of Poovam, Pachani, and Kanjiramgad. On October 17, he visited the De Paul International Residential School and De Paul College, meeting with the confreres serving there. The next day, he visited the De Paul Seminary in Belwadi, the Province's minor seminary, where he celebrated Holy Mass in the chapel and encouraged the staff and seminarians.

On October 19, he flew to Visakhapatnam and met with confreres from the communities of Ukkunagaram and Achuthapuram. On October 22, he traveled by train to Vijayawada, where he met with confreres from the communities of Enikepadu, Singanagudem, and Kannapuram at the Singanagudem House and visited St. Vincent's School in Singanagudem.

On October 24, he visited the communities of Yerupalem and Kethapally. On October 25, he flew from Hyderabad to Pune, where he met with the seminarians and confreres of Vincentian Vidya Sadan Pune and St. Paul's School in Nimbahera.



On October 28, Fr. Gregorio flew from Pune to Chennai, where he met with confreres in Chennai and Dharcast. The following day, he traveled to Molasur, where he met with confreres from Molasur and Orgadam. On October 29, he flew from Chennai to Trichy and met with confreres from the communities of Kallal and Periyakulathupatty. On October 31, he flew from Trichy to Trivandrum, and on November 1, he visited confreres from Vengavila, Vazhavila, Thannimood, and Kidarakuzhy in Vengavila. On November 2, he traveled to Keralapuram, where he met with confreres from Keralapuram and Nedumpara.

On November 4, he traveled by train to Angamaly, where he met with confreres from Vincentian Sadan in Angamaly, Idukki, and Mudapallur. On November 6, Fr. Gregorio visited St. Vincent's Mission House in Alwaye, meeting with confreres and seminarians.

On November 7, he presided over a council meeting and shared his observations following the visit. On the morning of November 10, he departed from Cochin International Airport, heading to Rome.

Dear Fr. Gregorio, we are deeply grateful for your visit to the Province of Southern India, for meeting with all the confreres in their ministry locations, and for your encouragement and exhortations.

**Fr. Sebastian Vettickal CM**





# From the General Secretariat

## NOMINATIONES

HADDAD Ziad	11/10/2024 (start 02/12/2024)	Treasurer General
ASHEBIR Imo Erago	02/10/2024	Director DC Ethiopia
BOUCHET Yves	02/10/2024	Director DC Belgium-France Switzerland (Reconfirmed)
GONELLA Bruno	02/10/2024	Director DC Sant Vincent - Italy (Reconfirmed)
DE LA ROSA MENDOZA Juan	02/10/2024	Director DC Spain - South (Reconfirmed)
KOLLO Salomon Colbert	24/10/2024	Visitor Cameroon

## ORDINATIONES

AMAN Adrianus	Sac	IDS	10/10/2024
ANGGA Stepanus	Sac	IDS	10/10/2024

## NECROLOGIUM

<b>Nomen</b>	<b>Cond.</b>	<b>Dies ob.</b>	<b>Prov.</b>	<b>Aet.</b>	<b>Voc.</b>
GONZÁLEZ CASTAÑO José Julián	Sac	02/10/2024	COL	47	11
MAROTO FUENTE Fermín	Sac	02/10/2024	MAD	82	66
ARCE PANIZO Laurentino	Sac	06/10/2024	COL	91	72
OYANGUREN ARREGUI Ángel	Sac	08/10/2024	CAE	96	79
LEFEVRE Daniel	Sac	16/10/2024	MAD	88	70
NEUMANN Dietmar	Sac	29/10/2024	AUG	87	67
ORTEGA ORCAJO Rafael	Sac	31/10/2024	COL	92	76

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