

# NUNNTIA

## Newsletter

of the Congregation of the Mission

2021

DECEMBER



**Congregation of the Mission**  
Communication Office



# José Willan da S. Medeiros's Priestly Ordination



On 3 December 2021, Feast of Saint Francis Xavier, patron of the missions, Deacon José Willan da S. Medeiros, who currently works in the Vincentian community of Pedro do Rosário (Diocese of Viana – Maranhão), was ordained to the priesthood in the Parish of Saint Anthony of Padua (Jardim Iracema, Fortaleza). Fernando Barbosa dos Santos, CM, Bishop of Palmares, presided over the celebration. It was prepared with a vocation triduum, carried out with the support of the Vocation Ministry of the Province of Fortaleza and its promoter, Marcelo Pontes, in the Vincentian parishes of Saint Francis of Assisi, Our Lady of Remedies, and Saints Peter and Paul.

Among those present were the mother of the ordained, his family and friends, Antônio de Assis (Visitor of the Fortaleza Province), several confreres, those in formation, and Vincentian aspirants. Also on hand were many priest friends, such as Father Francisco Bezerra do Carmo, pastor of the newly ordained priest's parish of origin and Father Armino Magalhães Duque, SSS. Others in attendance included Daughters of Charity, members of the different branches of the Vincentian Family, friends and benefactors of the formation houses of the Fortaleza Province, and many parishioners of Saint Anthony of Padua and Saint Peter of the Rosary.

In his homily, Bishop Fernando emphasized the mission of the Vincentian priest as a man of charity and mission like Saint Vincent de Paul, and one who shepherds his sheep, seeing in each of them the face of Christ, who became poor for the poor. The celebration, which began at 7 pm, was animated through the collaboration of Gilvan Manuel da Silva Sousa and the music ministry of the parish of Saints Peter and Paul, in the Quintino Cunha neighborhood of Fortaleza, where he is pastor.

In his thanksgiving speech, the newly ordained priest expressed his gratitude to all those who had collaborated in the development of his formative itinerary, especially his parents and relatives, his companions on the journey, his formators and confreres of the province. He also expressed gratitude for the many pastoral agents who, with their witness of life and dedication to the formation of the clergy, had played a fundamental role in the missionary model he had lived.

He mentioned in particular, Hesíodo Sales (the pastor), Pedro Ribeiro and Aauto Farias, and all the parishioners involved in the organization, who worked with love and dedication so that everything would run as smoothly as possible. After the Mass, a commemorative dinner was offered to the guests, animated by Father Aauto and musician friends. The day after his ordination, the newly ordained priest presided at his first Eucharistic celebration in his home parish of Saint Francis of Assisi (Archdiocese of Fortaleza), in the Jacarecanga neighborhood, where his family lives.

José Willan da S. Medeiros was born in Fortaleza – Ceará on 11 May 1994, son of the late José Wilson Medeiros de Oliveira and Suelene da Silva Costa. After beginning his formative journey in the Congregation of the Priests of the Blessed Sacrament (Fortaleza, 2012-2013) and having completed a Bachelor's of Philosophy at the Catholic Faculty of Fortaleza (2012-2014), he entered the Propaedeutic Year in the Province of Fortaleza on 3 February 2015, at the Father José Santana Formation House (Jardim Iracema, Fortaleza).

On 3 February 2016, he was received into the Saint Vincent de Paul Major Seminary in Belém do Pará to begin a Master's in Theology at the then Dom Vicente Zico Institute. His admission to the Congregation of the Mission took place on 16 January 2019, when he began the Internal Seminary Year in Belo Horizonte – Minas Gerais at the Interprovincial Internal Seminary Saint John Gabriel Perboyre. In February 2020, he returned to Belém do Pará to complete the Master's in Theology at the Catholic Faculty of Belém. That same year, on 23 March 2020, he made his Good Purposes in the Congregation.

He was incorporated into the Congregation of the Mission through the emission of his Holy Vows on 25 January 2021, at the Central House of the Fortaleza Province. At that celebration, he also received the ministries of lector and acolyte. He then joined Náirion Alécio de Mendonça in the city of São Pedro do Rosário, where he has been since 13 February 2021. Later, during the celebration of the Feast of the Visitation of Mary, on 31 May 2021, in the Parish of Saint Raimundo Nonato (Umarizal, Belém do Pará), he was ordained deacon by Evaldo Carvalho dos Santos, CM, Bishop of Viana – Maranhão.

# Communicating the Charism - Part II

## Are you familiar with Moore's first law?

Gordon Moore, co-founder of Intel, formulated his law in 1965. He described the trend of the amount of components that can be inserted in a microchip. According to Moore's observations, this amount doubled every year between 1959 and 1965 and he stated that in the next ten years the trend would be very similar. This law, briefly, tried to predict technological trends by claiming that the complexity of computer chips should double roughly every two years

Yet it seems that things are changing so fast that, in fact, in a single generation technology is likely to change so rapidly that it seems "alien" to the previous generation. To give an example, it would be as if in a family, the parents barely know how to write and the children instead use tablets. A gap that would make it difficult to manage relationships because even if the language of the family were the same, their relationship with the world would be very different.

The technological pressure is such that much of the world's funding is aimed precisely at innovations so pervasive that they increasingly have given rise to a post-human philosophy for accelerating uniqueness.

The social media platform, Facebook, is one of the most powerful companies in the world and is working on a sort of metaverse, a universe in which real and virtual are obsolete and, thanks to an "invisible" technology (because increasingly miniaturized), the human being will be able to live in a new everyday life. Companies not only such as Facebook, but also Google, Amazon, etc. are defined by some as real meta-nations capable of steering the behavior, decisions, and actions of an increasingly large multitude of people.

The predictive ability of the algorithms that run social media is increasingly accurate due to the sheer volume of data they handle, producing a general, homologated profile of humanity.

The question thus becomes, is it the algorithm that comprehends or learns to pre-see, or is it the human being who, by becoming dependent on the algorithm, begins to lose his/her freedom and becomes predictable?

But the real question is, who developed the algorithm? With what values was it developed?

The person is not predictable, not until he/she renounces his/her humanity and his/her likeness to God. The man, the new man who is Jesus Christ escapes the algorithm. He does not do it when capitalism steers our choices and our vocation.

It is no coincidence that the very company behind Instagram (which is still Facebook) knows very well, thanks to the Wall Street Journal's investigation, that social media is highly damaging to adolescents. The anxiety of having to build a(n) (aesthetically) perfect life and the continuous and incessant comparison with the (perfect?) lives of others, causes irreparable mental damage in young people. Their self-esteem declines, eating problems begin, and often even suicidal thoughts.

To give you an estimate, in the United States alone, we speak of about 22 million teenagers who access Instagram every day and many of these begin to forget who they are "inhabiting" on social media.

For this reason, it becomes essential to be present on the web to support these fragilities, to be of help and comfort; but above all, to offer real alternatives that allow young people to find a refuge that is helpful to them.

We cannot exempt ourselves from living in the digital context, knowing that if we pull out of it, young and future generations will pay the price. It is the duty of missionaries to bring Christ the Savior there as well, where there are spiritually poor who hunger for love.



However, that is not enough. While it is true that the algorithm learns from user content (and therefore it is important and necessary to spread a message of salvation), it is also true that we need an algorithm ethic that cares about the human and not the profit. This is what Paolo Benanti—Third Order Regular Franciscan and theologian—proposes with the noun of his invention: *algoritico*, which appeared for the first time in his book *Oracoli. Tra algoritica e algocrazia* [Oracles. Between *algoritica* and *algocrazia*].

Father Benanti says:

The social and ethical implications of AI [Artificial Intelligence] and algorithms necessitate as much an *algor-ethics* [sic] as a governance of these invisible structures that increasingly regulate our world to avoid inhuman forms of what we might call an *algor-crazy*.

The risk that techno-corporations may capitalize on faith through the services offered by the algorithm is ever greater, and it is the task of believers not to submit passively to the logic of the artificial intelligence market, but on the contrary, to form themselves so that the opposite happens.

Companies like Facebook know that there are over two billion Christians in the world and Vincentians are in the millions. That is why they are thinking about services to facilitate a sense of community among believers and allow them to take advantage exclusively of options designed for religions. In fact, in 2017 in the United States, Facebook began a loyalty campaign for reformed Christians.

While it is useful to have technology that breaks down physical distances, it is also important to recognize that social media platforms have only one goal: to remain on the platform as much as possible. However, as we know, the experience of the divine is a real, intimate experience that starts with the body and extends to all dimensions of the human.

Social media is a great tool to reconnect to the social fabric worn down by the pandemic and to draw close to the younger generation, but the ultimate goal of a missionary is to bring a person's journey back to a present and everyday mystique.

Ignoring social media—today—is very risky because they have become intertwined totally with the reality of the senses. As Luciano Floridi (the father of information philosophy) says: a large part of the population lives in the *onlife*, a life that no longer distinguishes between online and offline.

Is an *onlife* mission possible?

Yes, thanks to the Vincentian virtues and constant formation it is possible to carry out the project of salvation foreseen for every human being. Many studies show that the algorithm is highly discriminating for certain categories, so it follows that even in the *onlife* there are those (invisible) to whom the mission can address itself!



## PRAYER FOR THE 43rd GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF CONGREGATION OF THE MISSION

Almighty Father,  
God of Mercies,  
you sent us  
your Son to be our Savior and Evangelizer of  
the poor.

As our Little Company advances into the  
dawn of its 5th centennial,  
we thank you for the preservation of our missionary vocation  
to follow your Son, Jesus,  
evangelizing the poor,  
after the spirit of St Vincent.

In our 43rd General Assembly,  
we ask you to make us more docile  
to the guidance of your Spirit that,  
strengthened by and imbued  
in the evangelical counsels and the Vincentian virtues,  
we may deepen our relationship with  
you in our prayer life and in our ministry to  
the peripheries and to the Church.

Renew in us the spirit of evangelical joy,  
missionary conversion,  
mutual dialogue,  
unity and collaboration so that we may come  
and work together as the Company of dear friends,  
dauntless witnesses of the Gospel  
and zealous missionaries inspired  
by the exemplary lives of our forerunners.

Abide in us so that whatever we do  
will always be for the honor and  
glory of your name.  
We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ in  
the unity of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

O Mary, conceived without sin,  
pray for us  
who have recourse to you.  
All Vincentian Saints and Blessed,  
pray for us.



## Introduction

The VSO Pilot Training for Vincentian Development work helped confreres gain capacities for collaboration with the VSO. From Sept. 30 –Nov. 30, the VSO presented its pilot VSO Training to eight confreres from the two provinces of India and its Regions in northeast India and Tanzania. The purpose of a pilot program is to test assumptions about teaching method, learning objectives, and required assignments or outputs. The participants had been involved in some form of development work; nevertheless, it was the first time for everyone involved to learn how to collaborate in project based fundraising. Hence, we did not deal with other aspects of development, such as, soliciting funding from private donors. Topics covered project design, development of a budget and funding plan, implementation, and reporting. The VSO led the participants through ten interactive sessions, with two outputs of a written VSO Application and Project Concept. The latter is a document that briefly elaborates the project; it is useful for engaging stakeholders and donors.

## Evaluation of Program by Participants

In our evaluation after the completion of the VSO training, participants were asked to rank learning of the 10 objectives. The composite response of all the objectives were as follows, 77% definitely attained; 23% said somewhat; and 0% stated not at all. The response of somewhat may be attributed to the fact that two confreres were new to collaboration with the VSO and project management. Despite the challenges of the material, beginners with no experience gained skills to present a VSO Application and Concept Paper of their project. Also, experienced project managers learned how to better collaborate with the VSO. Further, the survey revealed two topics that require more attention: (a) role of provincial project manager; and (b) identifying the different sources of local contribution. The participants were satisfied with the number of sessions, schedule, and content. The method of instruction was beneficial to all the participants. Slides were used to present the topic, review of previous week, and focus group discussions. All participants were able to ask questions and share comments about the topics. The presentation of their projects to the group helped to develop the project Concept Papers and VSO Applications.

## Summary and Invitation

In short, the VSO successfully assisted the participants and identified an effective means of improving collaboration with our local project managers. Additionally, the VSO also was able to refine our instruction and identify gaps in the instruction. The Office is currently translating the slides into French and Spanish. Our hope is to find French and Spanish speaking collaborators to work with the VSO. If you are a bilingual confrere, with knowledge of English and French or English and Spanish, we encourage you to contact the VSO so that we may offer the training in two more languages. Finally, Visitors and confreres with interest in future VSO Training may contact the VSO.

## Participants and VSO Presenters

Lauren Lynch, allenatore di VSO  
 P. Gregory Semeniuk, C.M.  
 P. Babu Sebastian, C.M.  
 P. Sebastian Vettickal, C.M.  
 Fr. Shalby Thelliankal, C.M.  
 P. Shyamal Das, C.M.  
 P. Cino Thonakkara, C.M.,  
 P. Stephan Antony M, C.M.  
 P. Thomas Zou, C.M

## The participants comments are found below:

"Project management is new to me; however, I was able to write a VSO Application." Fr. Shyamal Das, C.M.–North India Province

"I learned three things: (1) how to develop projects; (2) the process for developing projects and identifying a problem; and (3) understood the stages of project management and how each of the activities are connected." Fr. Shalby Thelliankal, C.M.–South Indian Province

"This was the first VSO application that I ever presented. I am confident about the basic items for preparing a project." Fr. Thomas Zou, C.M.–Region of Northeast India

## NOMINATIONES / CONFIRMATIONES

LABITAG Ferdinand	04/10/2021	China Provincial Visitor (Reconfirmed)
GIGIH JULIANTO Antonius	26/11/2021 (beginning 25/01/2022)	Visitor Indonesia
NGUYEN THANH François Xavier Ly	16/12/2021	Visitor Vietnam
KPALAP Cletus	13/12/2021 (beginning 25/01/2022)	Visitor Nigeria
EMENE NZENGI Justin	31/12/2021 (beg. 07/02/2022)	Visitor Congo

## ORDINATIONES

DA SILVA MEDEIROS José Willan	Sac	FOR	03/12/2021
URQUIOLA VERDE Jonathan Enrique	Sac	COL	13/11/2021
MUÑOZ VILLAFRANCA David Fernando	Sac	COL	04/12/2021
MUGISHO LURHAKATWIKI Gabriel	Sac	COL	08/12/2021
LONDOÑO GONZÁLEZ Rigoberto	Sac	COL	10/12/2021
MARTÍNEZ Luis Gabriel	Sac	COL	10/12/2021
PÁEZ DÍAZ Oscar Andrés	Sac	COL	10/12/2021
GUILLÉN ARAUJO José Luis	Sac	COL	18/12/2021

## NECROLOGIUM

Nomen	Cond.	Dies ob.	Prov.	Aet.	Voc.
REVOREDO RUIZ Raimundo	Ep	01/12/2021	PER	93	78
KENNEDY Thomas R.	Sac	12/12/2021	ORL	86	65
TROTTA Louis P.	Sac	19/12/2021	ORL	97	76
SANTAMARÍA FRANCO Jesús María	Sac	22/12/2021	SVP	83	66
GONZÁLEZ MAGAÑA Marcos Antonio	Sac	23/12/2021	MEX	58	35
CARRACEDO VIÑAS Rafael	Sac	27/12/2021	SVP	96	74
SÁNCHEZ CID Prudencio	Sac	30/12/2021	POR	87	71

