

# NUNTIA



SEPTEMBER 2024

ONLINE MAGAZINE OF THE  
CONGREGATION OF THE MISSION

# NUNTIA

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## EDITORIAL

### **We, Living and Precious Stones**

In this issue of Nuntia, we conclude our reflection on Vincentian spirituality, which we have described as a “great architectural organism”: the foundation (the Trinitarian relationship), the pillars (holiness, identification with the humanity of Jesus, clothing oneself in Christ, adherence to the Father's will, reliving the mission of evangelizing and assisting the poor, self-emptying).

We then continue our reflection on another element of this architectural organism: the arches, that is, the five virtues.

For St. Vincent, humility was “the hinge and foundation of all spiritual life.” Forming oneself in humility meant laying the foundations of fraternity in a community, a place where one is called to transform differences into the richness of being together fraternally.

St. Vincent defined simplicity as “my Gospel,” so dear was it to him. Simplicity, above all, unifies the missionary with God, leading him to seek only Him in his ministry. Simplicity of heart translates into simplicity of words and actions.

Simplicity combines with meekness of spirit, which prevents one from becoming a victim of instinctive reactions. Self-mastery requires inner attention and vigilance, which are summarized in the virtue of mortification.

The synthesis virtue that encompasses all dispositions of the soul is zeal, which involves bringing people to experience charity as an encounter with the Other and with others.

### AND WHAT ABOUT US?

We are the living and precious stones entrusted with the mission of giving light and beauty to the temple of humanity, following the style and spirituality of Vincent de Paul. Vincent was illuminated by the Spirit of God... The Spirit that illuminated and animated the Founder spreads through the entire Vincentian Family: the seed becomes a tree! It is the generous gift of the Spirit, which asks to be “lived” (a dynamic reality), “guarded” (we are not its owners), “deepened,” and “developed” (incarnation in history). The measure of authentic charismatic dimension is not narcissism but ecclesial extroversion, the pro-existence of the charism, its humble service to the Kingdom, and its offering to the Church to collaborate in her universal mission.

### **Fr. Salvatore Fari, CM**



# Virtual Tour of Old Saint Lazare

Dear confreres, we are about to take the most requested Vincentian tour when members of the Congregation of the Mission arrive in Paris. They say, "We want to see the old Saint Lazare!" Well, your wish is our command. As this area is vast, I will divide it into three articles.

Let's start by noting that this house was so closely associated with us that by extension, all priests and brothers of the Congregation of the Mission were called Lazarists—a term still used, especially among French-speaking countries. Speaking of the name, which Lazarus is it referring to? Leprosy hospitals or lazarettos were associated with the parable of Lazarus (Luke 16:19-31). It was assumed that the poor Lazarus, with his sores and ulcers, had leprosy. But the Lazarus of our house is another: it refers to the brother of Mary and Martha, brought back to life by Jesus (John 11:1-43). In fact, he was the one depicted in the coat of arms of the Mother House. That's why Vincent de Paul said our house should be a place of resurrection, referring to the remarkable changes the retreat activity produced. Let's say, our house was meant to be like a new Bethany.

The Location. Saint Lazare was a very old estate, dating back to the 6th century. The Saint Lazare property covered a total of 32 hectares. Later, Father Jolly, the third Superior General, bought an additional 20 hectares, making a total of 52 hectares. Our Mother House became the largest ecclesiastical property in Paris—not the wealthiest, but the largest.

Vincent de Paul lived here from 1632 until his death on September 27, 1660. During Vincent de Paul's lifetime, this house served as: the Mother House of the Congregation, the Provincial House of France, a formation house for missionaries, an internal seminary, a seminary with philosophy and theology classes for our students, the headquarters for missionaries working in the field, and a producer of goods to support the community and finance pastoral and social works. It also engaged in ministry to the outside community: 1. Retreats for ordinands (over 12,000 people from 1632 to 1660). 2. Retreats for clergy and laypeople (over 20,000 people in 20 years). 3. Host of the Tuesday Conferences for diocesan clergy. 4. Refuge for war refugees. 5. Support for famine victims. 6. Assistance for the poor of the neighborhood. 7. It was not a leprosarium but did house some psychiatric patients and some detainees from wealthy families. As we can see, beautiful works were supported here, beautifully executed. And as we meditate on these activities, may we live always to love and never to hate.

How did Saint Lazare continue after the death of Saint Vincent de Paul? In general terms, it continued to be what it had been since the founder's time: the Mother House of the Congregation of the Mission and a solid economic base for the material and spiritual service of the poor. All this lasted until 1792. Let us not forget the mysterious popular assault suffered on the morning of July 13, 1789. The place was ransacked and devastated by a chaotic crowd. They were in search of food, wine, and weapons (the latter existed only in their imagination), and they stole everything: doors, windows, paintings, books, documents, relics, medicines, cheese, money, etc.





A looter drank so much that he drowned by falling into a wine barrel on the premises (drink in moderation!). However, they did not steal or break the crucifixes from over 600 rooms. The missionaries left the place, escaping being killed or tortured. Around 100 missionaries returned. In 1790, the House became government property. On September 1, 1792, the State ordered them to vacate the building. From that time on, we lost Saint Lazare forever. What did the Mother House become? Starting in 1794, it was a huge revolutionary prison. It remained a prison for years. At one point (possibly 1825), it was converted into a women's prison until 1932. As many prisoners were prostitutes and several had venereal diseases, a hospital for venereal diseases and a general hospital for female inmates were built next to it. Over time, it expanded from a venereal disease hospital to a general hospital open to the neighborhood. An interesting fact: Mata Hari was imprisoned here in 1917. Although she was later executed elsewhere. Saint Lazare was closed as a prison in 1932. The following year, it was mostly demolished. It remained a hospital until the year 2000. In that year, it was transformed into the Françoise Sagan Media Library.

What to See? Let's walk through the area. What remains of Saint Lazare from before the Revolution? The truth is... practically nothing. Sorry to say. The old Church was beautiful. Vincent de Paul was buried in this temple. Beatified in 1730, his body was displayed lying down, in a golden urn with a glass front, above the side altar dedicated to Saint Lazarus. This church contained about a dozen paintings commissioned after his canonization. Many bishops were consecrated in this church, both in Vincent de Paul's time and afterward. Today, we can only locate the space—it was to the right of the current Alban Satrange square.

The buildings occupied by Vincent de Paul and his missionaries were located in the aforementioned Alban Satrange square, built in 1964. The square was renovated in 2021. It is common to find quite a few people in the square, many shouting. For a productive visit, it's best to stay close to the guide. Let's go to the other end of the square. Observe the monument to Saint Vincent; it is a gray granite pedestal with a bronze medallion (a replica minted in 1960 for the tricentenary of his death). It was inaugurated on June 20, 1974. The inscription reads, "I am pained by their pain." The phrase is taken from a letter addressed to Saint Louise. But more than referring to the sorrows of Louise de Marillac, this text applies to the sea of tears that flow from the world of the poor. The monument includes Vincent's dates: 1581-1660.

The Saint Lazare coat of arms, dating back to the 13th century, was placed above the old chapel of the hospital. Only part of the coat of arms remains. The former chapel will be transformed into an amphitheater. On the wall of the former temple, there is a plaque commemorating Vincent de Paul's presence and social action. Enter the beautiful garden of the Françoise Sagan Media Library. The garden is fittingly named Saint Lazare. I became a member of the media library; it is a dignified place that promotes neighborhood culture. Let's go in and visit the ground floor (we can use the bathroom), then go up to the third floor. We can browse books, magazines, listen to music, or watch videos. From the third floor, we can see the Gare du Nord (Northern Rail Station), which was once part of the estate.



Next to the media library, there is another garden with playgrounds. Before the Revolution, it was the entrance to the farm. There was also a well that provided excellent water for the confreres. Nothing remains of this... as the song says.

Let's go to 94-114 Rue de Faubourg Saint-Denis. This was the former Mother House of the Daughters of Charity (1641-1792). Currently, nothing remains of this house. We will simply see a block with various buildings. At first, the sisters paid rent to the Lazarists, but they became owners on April 1, 1653. The sale was practically a gift from the brothers. Ah! There's a famous story of when a roof of the house collapsed on June 7, 1642. Louise de Marillac and the sisters escaped unharmed. They saw it as a providential sign of God's love for the Company. Here, Saint Louise died on March 15, 1660. One detail: there was a 14th-century statue of Mary that once adorned a gate of Paris when the city was still walled. When the gate was demolished, the statue was donated to the Daughters of Charity in 1681. It was placed in the house garden. Known as Our Lady of the Missions, the statue was stolen during the Revolution. Over time, it was returned to the Daughters of Charity and is now in the crypt of their current Mother House.

We cannot end the tour without passing by the old Saint Lazare Fair. Walk 110 meters along Bd de Magenta. Stop at 85 Bd de Magenta. It was an old building. In addition to selling food, there were stage performances, games, and competitions. The Congregation owned the fair until the Revolution. Today, a public market operates in the same location: the Saint Quentin Market, built in 1866 and located west of Boulevard Magenta.

All set! We have finished the tour of the old Saint Lazare. We'll stay in the neighborhood, as we still have two more tours to do.

**Fr. Andrés Motto, CM**



# Visit of the Superior General, Fr. Tomaž Mavrič, in Eritrea

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Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord  
We the Vincentian Family of Eritrea had the privilege of the visitation of the Superior General Father Tomaž Mavrič from September 11-27, 2024. These wonderful days we experienced the presence of the representative of Saint Vincent de Paul among us.

The 11 of September for the people of Eritrea and Ethiopia is the beginning of the new year and corresponds to our 1st September 2017 and this first day of the year is dedicated to the feast of Saint John the Baptist. I am mentioning this just to remind you that in Eritrea and Ethiopia we use the Giulian Calendar instead of the Gregorian Calendar. It is special grace for us to have this visit in the first day of the year.

The Superior General arrived on Wednesday morning of the 11th September at 7:15 am at the airport of Asmara. And at 8:30 am arrived at the Provincial House and Parish of the Miraculous Medal. The parish people received him in solemn way singing and dancing it was a wonderful reception. The Superior General thanked the parishioners for the amazing reception. And after he was welcomed by the confreres and Daughters of Charity and other Vincentian Family lay branches and youth. And after resting a little, by 11:30 am he met the Archbishop of Asmara diocese Abune Mengestab Tesfamriam.

By 1 pm we had lunch Fathers and Sisters together, in the Provincial House of C.M, in honour of the Superior General. After lunch we left him to rest because he needed it after his long journey.

The following day, on Thursday morning the 12th of September mass in the Provincial House of D.C. and that day he had a day with the Daughters and we had lunch together. And in the afternoon at 5 pm meeting and chatting with lay Vincentian family in the parish hall of the Miraculous Medal. these group included the VMY, Saint Vincent de Paul Society, associations of Saint Justin and Blessed GhebreMichael and Divine Providence of Hebo.

The following day, Friday 13th of September meeting, encounter, mass, lunch with all confreres of the province of Saint Justin de Jacobis. We shared our experience with the superior General and it was a rich day. Confreres and the Superior General were excited to meet and chat with each other.

Saturday the 14th of September we stayed in the provincial house because our papers of circulation were not ready, because of feast days offices were not open on 11th and 12th of September. The problem here in Eritrea foreigners apart from their visa they need a special paper of permission to circulate outside the capital city.

Sunday the 15th of September we had mass and lunch with the novices of D.C. and the visit to the communities of D.C. in Asmara.

Monday 16th of September we began the tour to some communities outside the capital Asmara. So by 6:30 we left Asmara for the town of Dekemhare where the C.M. and D.C and other Vincentian family lay members are present. The reception in Dekemhare was amazing because as soon he arrived they dressed him like Saint Justin de Jacobis. We had mass and lunch and traditional coffee in the D.C. community all together with the Vincentian Family. And in the evening we had supper together Fathers and Sisters in the Fathers community, where he slept the night also.

The day after on the 17th of September, we celebrated mass in the parish in our oriental geez right in the parish of our lady mother of Mercy (Kidane Mehret). And during the mass the Superior general baptize a baby with the name Tomas. This was very amazing and emotional one. After breakfast Father had a meeting with confreres of C.M. community who work in Dekemhare.



By Tuesday the 17th of September by 11 am, we left for Segheneiti. There we met the bishop of Segheneiti and we had lunch with him after his invitation. And in the afternoon we left for Tekelabi, one of our C.M. communities, where they received us by dancing and chanting. In the evening we had supper with the religious working around. And Father slept the night in Tekelabi. In the morning we did the morning prayer and breakfast and Father met and chat with the confreres of the community.

Wednesday the 18th of September at 9 am we left for Halay. Halay is historical place for Saint Justin de Jacobis. It was his residence from 1850 to 1860, that is until his death. And it was from Halay that he preached Hebo and surrounding. In Halay there are his original chapel and some relics as his cloths, sandals and other objects. And we arrived at Halay where we had a warm and amazing reception organized by the villagers and the parish priest. We had a mass in the Chapel of Saint Justin and we we had lunch prepared by the parish and villagers and VMY and D.C.. At the end the people gave the Superior General a gift of live sheep. From Halay we went to Awhine where there is a community of D.C.

In the evening of the 18th of September we arrived in Hebo, two hours late from the scheduled time where Saint Justin de Jacobis body lie. People were waiting for us for two hours. At last we arrived a bit dark. But all the same they did us a wonderful reception. It was great. And in the morning together with the Fathers and Sisters we celebrated mass in the altar of Saint Justin. It was amazing and emotional. For many foreigners it was not easy to arrive until the places like Hebo a bit distant from the main roads and centers.

Thursday and Friday Father prayed and visited the works in Hebo. He visited and entertained himself in the orphanotrophy even feeding himself some of the babies. He lifted up some of them some enjoying and some also crying. It was wonderful for him and for the babies. The C.M. in collaboration with D.C. have run this orphanage for 75 years, where now we are celebrating our diamond jubilee. Until two years, in Hebo we had other activities like school and clinic but this had been taken by the government. Friday morning, Father had mass, meeting and chatting with the vincentian family that are in Hebo and surrounding villages.

Saturday was the eve of the big diamond jubilee. In the morning the parish council together with the representative of Hebo, presented to Father General an Ox (bue). It was a sign of their love and respect. And in the afternoon or evening Father participated in the Vespers of prayer of liturgical singing and chanting, after which we had a supper in common.

Sunday the 22nd of September was the celebration of diamond jubilee. It was a big celebration with invited guests and major superiors. It was amazing. After mass the participants went to the parish hall for a banquet and some presentation of the jubilee program.

Sunday afternoon in the evening, Father General came back to Asmara. He, for a week had no contact with the world because no internet in the places he was touring.



Monday the 23rd of September in the morning he was in the provincial house resting or making some correspondence. But in the Afternoon we went to Shariki, one of our C.M. communities in the direction of north of Asmara about 90 km. The reception and culture was different with the people of Bilen. The reception was amazing with singing and dancing. We slept in the community house. And in the morning on Tuesday at 7 am we went to Keren, a large city after Asmara, where we were received in a cultural and traditional style by the parishioners of Holy Trinity, the D. C. and Marian youth. After that we went to the shrine of our lady of Miraculous Medal where once it belonged to the Daughters of Charity in 1895. There we said our mass of pilgrimage to our Lady of the Miraculous Medal. After mass we went to meet and greet the bishop of Keren where he received us cordially. By 1 pm we had lunch and traditional coffee and dancing in the Daughters community. In the mean time, father had time to meet the Daughters that work around Keren that came from 4 other communities. And by 4:30 pm we were in the direction of Asmara where we arrived by 6:30 pm.

On Wednesday the 25th at 9 am Father met the council members of C.M. and D.C. together and at 11 am he met the council members of C.M apart. It was very enriching.

On Thursday the 26th at 10:30 am, we had a mass and celebration of Sister Letegebriel Tesfagabir, a Daughter of Charity that celebrated her golden jubilee 50 years of vocation. Soon followed lunch and entertainment in her honour. and in the afternoon after 3:30 pm we had the evening liturgical prayer for the feast of Saint Vincent de Paul that lasted about 3 hours, where the Superior General participated for an hour. Soon followed dinner Fathers Sisters Students and other participants.

Father said the mass for the feast of Saint Vincent on the eve at 5:45 pm, in Private accompanied by two confreres, because he couldn't participate in the Mass of 27th of September, since his flight for London was early and had to go out of the house at 5 am.

**Fr. Abba Hagos Tewolde C.M.**





# Official visit to the Nigerian Province



I conducted the official visit to the Nigerian Province from August 17 to September 24, 2024. This visit was well organized by Father Cletus BEALEMABARI KPALAP, Visitor of the Province. I sincerely thank the Visitor and all the confreres of the Nigerian Province for their warm and fraternal welcome. Despite the significant insecurity in the country and the advanced state of disrepair of some roads, I had the opportunity to meet individually with the confreres. Where access to the communities was difficult due to the state of the roads, the confreres did not hesitate to travel to meet me. The exchanges took place in an atmosphere of openness, spontaneity, and great fraternity.

The confreres work primarily in parishes. They have three retreat centers and are dedicated to youth education, especially in schools. One confrere serves as national Catholic chaplain in the correctional service in Abuja. Some confreres work in seminaries. For self-financing, the Province is constructing a school. Numerous construction projects are underway in Ikot Ekpene (philosophate) and in Ogobia, at the Internal Seminary.

From August 28 to September 3, 2024, faithful to the tradition of the Province, all our seminarians gathered in Ogobia, where the Internal Seminary is located, for a time of mutual acquaintance, sharing, and joint reflection. For four days, I participated with the Visitor in this rich and encouraging experience. There was a total of 101 seminarians, including 10 novices, 41 philosophers, 13 having completed a year of pastoral ministry, 3 in probation, 27 theologians, and 7 deacons. We give thanks for the flourishing of vocations in this province.

On Friday, September 13, 2024, 7 confrere deacons were ordained priests at Our Lady of Lourdes Parish in Maryland, Enugu, by the laying on of hands of Bishop Isaac BUNDEPUUN DUGU, Bishop of Katsina-Ala. We give thanks to the Lord for this gift within the Congregation of the Mission.

The Provincial Assembly took place in Emene Enugu from September 17 to 21, with the theme: "Revitalizing our Identity: Towards Leadership, Followership, and Co-Responsibility in the CM." The confreres also had the opportunity to review some articles of their Provincial Norms. At the end of this Provincial Assembly, confreres Cletus KPALAP and Jacob UGWOKÉ celebrated with us all at Our Lady of Lourdes Parish in Maryland, Enugu, their jubilee of 25 years of priestly ordination.

At the end of my visit, I met individually with the formators of the Vincentian Theological Seminary in Enugu. For more effective collaboration between the CM Theologate in Enugu and the Nigerian Province, a meeting was also held between the formators, Father Cletus KPALAP, Visitor of the Province, and myself. In the Academic Year 2024-2025, the Vincentian Theological Seminary in Enugu will consist of 67 students from 10 nationalities and 4 formators.

On September 26, 2024, I returned to Rome. From September 29 to October 1, 2024, I have a meeting with the commission constituted by the Father Superior General to prepare for the Visitors' meeting to be held in Paris from May 2 to 11, 2025. Immediately after this meeting, from October 2 to 5, 2024, I will meet with the commission to restart the work towards drafting a Practical Guide for the Local Community.

**Fr. Dominique IYOLO, CM**



# Visitation of Assistant General, Fr. Gregorio Jr. Bañaga, CM to Indonesian Province August, 12th – September, 28th, 2024

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On September 2 – 28th, 2024, Assistant General for Asia Pacific, Fr. Gregorio Jr. Bañaga, CM has visited the CM of Indonesian Province. This visitation was carried out by personal communication with every confrere and visiting CM Indonesia's works in all Houses. In terms of membership, Indonesia has 99 priests and 1 brother, spread across 12 Houses throughout Indonesia and Papua New Guinea. On this occasion, Fr. Greg Bañaga, CM visited the Houses, except House of PNG. The Houses visited were Surabaya 1, 2, 3, Prigen-Pandaan, Malang, Kediri-Blitar, Bojonegoro-Magetan, Jakarta, West Kalimantan, East Kalimantan and West Papua. Before this visitation was carried out, he was also the retreat guide for all confreres, which was held on August, 12 – 23th, 2024, at the Retreat House of Griya Samadhi Vinsensus, with the theme Living the Vows of CM.

Several things were important notes in this visitation, and were conveyed by him at the meeting with all the confreres on September, 27th, 2024, namely:

1. CM of Indonesia is a province with a large number. The average age of the members is still relatively young. This quite good number can be an opportunity to develop works in the province as well as in international missions. Many of the works are intended to answer the needs of the poverty in Indonesia.

2. The involvement of young people in the work of the Indonesian province is extraordinary. Young people can be seen from the data on confreres and volunteers, including Vincentian families such as VMY, SSVP and Young People in CM Parishes. Having good formation for young people greatly develops Vincentian spirituality within them. The formation of young people also includes seminarians who are the hallmark of the congregation for the formation of future priests. This kind of enthusiasm of young people needs to be guarded and nurtured so that Vincentian values are truly rooted and animate in every young person's personal growth.

3. The Vincentian Family in Indonesia consists of 14 religious and 7 lay groups. Cooperation between the Vincentian families continues to be guarded so that Vincentian spirituality increasingly imbues the spirit of service for the entire Vincentian family. Training for all Vincentian members by holding regular age level meetings is a good thing, so that all members complement and inspire each other for their respective characteristics of service.

4. CM Indonesia's social media such as the YakobisTV YouTube channel, Instagram (@iamcm\_indo), Facebook and the Website (<https://cm-indonesia.org/>) are appropriate to be developed as a means of promotion and introducing CM to social media users. With this social media, it is hoped that there will also be more and more new vocations for CM Indonesia.

5. Many lay groups or lay peoples support the financial CM Indonesia's mission work. Their contributions are so helpful for works of charity. They are involved in the mission of the church, especially missionaries in difficult places.

In Indonesia, Fr. Greg Bañaga, CM also celebrated Feast Day of St. Vincent de Paul and gratefully for the 60th Anniversary of the Arrival of the Italian CM Missionaries to Indonesia, at the Church of the Nativity of St. Virgin Mary, Surabaya. On the speech, he reminded all Vincentians that there are two ways to be grateful for the example of St. Vincent, the first is to celebrate the feast day of St. Vincent, honored him with prayers, and invoked his intentions through his intercession. Second, namely by imitation St. Vincent's life. St. Vincent is a model and inspiration for holiness of life. In reflections on holiness, St. Vincent reminds us that God comes in the poor. The encounter with the poor is a direct encounter with the invisible God who becomes visible. On the back of face of the poor, God is there, so that the poor are a sacrament of God. St. Vincent once said, 100x you go to the poor, 100x you meet Christ. Being a Vincentian is not a title but a challenge to be like St. Vincent.

This visitation was very warm received by the Indonesian CM confreres. The confreres were further strengthened to work for the poor and getting some refreshing insights. The various opportunities can become an oasis amidst the various challenges currently occurring in Indonesia. In the end, we would like to say thank you to Fr. Greg Bañaga, CM for his visitation. After completing his visitation in Indonesia, he returns to Rome on September, 28th, 2024.

### **Fr. Habel Melki Makarius, CM**





# A Joyful Celebration of Faith

On a historic day, September 13th, 2024, the Congregation of the Mission Province of Nigeria witnessed an important event in the lives of seven Confreres and Deacons who were raised to the order of Sacred Priesthood. The sacred ceremony took place at Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Church, Maryland, Enugu State, and was presided over by His Lordship, Most Rev. Isaac Bundepuun DUGU, Bishop of Katsina-Ala Diocese, Benue State, Nigeria.

The Newly Ordained Priests are:

Rev. Fr. Omamogho Eugene, CM  
Rev. Fr. Okoye Anthony, CM  
Rev. Fr. Ahumibe Uchechukwu, CM  
Rev. Fr. Anyanwu Henry, CM  
Rev. Fr. Akhigbemidu Collins, CM  
Rev. Fr. Ibeabuchi Pius, CM  
Rev. Fr. Nweze Isreal, CM

The ordination ceremony was a joyful celebration, graced by the presence of esteemed guests, including our Assistant Superior General, Rev. Fr. Dominique Iyolo Iyombe, CM and Rev. Fr. Cletus Kpalap CM, the Provincial of Nigerian Province. The church was filled with many priests and sisters who came to witness this significant event. The Catholic community, family, and friends of the newly ordained priests were also in attendance, adding to the festive atmosphere. This momentous occasion marked a significant step in the lives of these dedicated Confreres, and the Congregation of the Mission Province of Nigeria.

**Fr. Anakwe Kingsley, CM**



# Vincentian seminarians' reunion with the Visitor Province of Nigeria. 28th august – 3rd september 2024 (Third Edition)

The Seminarians of the Province of Nigeria during the long holidays look forward to their annual reunion with their Provincial Superior. This is a rich experience brought to light by the present Visitor of the Province of Nigeria Very Rev. Fr. Cletus Kpalap, CM. It offers a great opportunity to the seminarians whether admitted or incorporated to know themselves, have one on one interaction with the Visitor, have refresher courses on the Vincentian charisms and mission. Before hand, this program started as an annual encounter between the seminarians studying philosophy and those studying theology with their respective Formators for a few days. This encounter that has been an age long tradition was eventually rebranded as "reunion" and given due attention as a way of enhancing the Vincentian formation. This program is now designed and organized by the Vocation's Director of the Nigerian province, to keep every admitted member, abreast with the spirit of the Vincentian Formation, in the course of which, seminarians are evaluated, feedbacks are given and received while projections are made for the next academic/formative year.



In 2022, the Seminarians of the province all converged at the Philosophy house, in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. Series of sessions on Vincentian formation were held and the Visitor had a one-on-one encounter with the students. In the second encounter, the program took place at the Novitiate house of Formation, Ogobia, Benue state, Nigeria in the year 2023. Significantly, the second engagement, was garnished with the witnessing of the Bon Propo of the Seminarists. The encounter of the year 2024 also took place in the Novitiate with all the admitted members, Seven incorporated members (Deacons of the Province), joining in solidarity to grace the novel Bon Propo of Ten Seminarists. We had one hundred and one (101) seminarians in attendance. Five Vincentian priests (Frs. Gabriel Ugwunwangwu CM, Leonard Akachukwu CM, Callistus Mede CM) The Vocation's Director, Fr. Celestine Ezenwa CM and the Visitor, Fr. Cletus Kpalap, CM.

Summarily, the reunion this year was a huge success and it takes place yearly, shortly after the canonical apostolic works of the seminarians. In our midst this year was the Assistant Superior General Fr. Dominic Iyolo, CM who was on Canonical visit to the Province of Nigeria and the Bishop of the Diocese of Otukpo, Most Rev. Dr. Michael Apochi.

**Fr. Celestine Ezenwa, CM**  
**(Director of Vocations)**

## Like too many worldwide, Panamanians are facing challenges that call for Mary's intercession

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In Panama, critical issues revolve around access to water, mining operations, and housing, all of which are deeply interconnected. Mining, which has captured significant attention, threatens to displace the country's most marginalized populations and pollute their environment.

"These are small chapels in faraway places," notes Fr. John Carney, CM, emphasizing the vulnerability of these communities.

Additionally, there is a push to create reservoirs for clean drinking water and canal operations, which also risks displacing people and highlights the limited water resources available.

In response, various religious communities and organizations, including the Vincentians, have united to advocate for those most affected by these crises.

An example of this collaborative advocacy can be seen in The Episcopal Conference of Bishops Panama's Pastoral Letter on Integral Ecology. The letter introduces "integral ecology," which seeks to restore "balance among human beings, neighbors, the earth, and God," and stresses that the lives of people are more important than the economy. You can read it in Spanish or the Sisters' of Mercy English summary, *A Cry for the Earth: Panama and the Pastoral Letter Integral Ecology*.

Beyond advocacy, Fr. Carney said priests in Panama are primarily focused on youth ministry, charity, and being delegates of the Word.





# From the General Secretariat

## NOMINATIONES

COLICHÓN VEGA Félix Edgardo	04/09/2024	Director DC Peru
PLASCENCIA CASILLAS José de Jesús	04/09/2024	Director DC Mexico
PUTHENTHAYIL Francis	04/09/2024	Director DC North India
BÓSIO Clístenes Natal	04/09/2024	Director DC Recife (Reconfirmed)
MOLINA ROBALINO Guido	04/09/2024	Director DC Ecuador (Reconfirmed)

## ORDINATIONES

GÓMEZ GÓMEZ Marvin Antonio	Sac	AMC	07/09/2024
AHUMIBE Uchechukwu Iheanacho	Sac	NIG	13/09/2024
AKHIGBEMIDU Collins Osemekhian	Sac	NIG	13/09/2024
ANYANWU Henry Obinna	Sac	NIG	13/09/2024
IBEABUCHI Pius Ezenwa	Sac	NIG	13/09/2024
NWEZE Israel Azubuikwe	Sac	NIG	13/09/2024
OKOYE Anthony Tochukwu	Sac	NIG	13/09/2024
OMAMOGHO Eugene Aghogho	Sac	NIG	13/09/2024

## EPISCOPATES

GETAHUN Fanta Shikune (AET)	Ep	Vic. Apost. Nekemte	22/09/2024
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## NECROLOGIUM

Nomen	Cond.	Dies ob.	Prov.	Aet.	Voc.
TEWOLDEBERHAN Kidanemariam	Sac	05/04/2024	SJJ	70	45
LAUTISSIER Claude	Sac	15/09/2024	FRA	92	73

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