

NUNNTIA

Newsletter

of the Congregation of the Mission

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Congregation of the Mission
Communication Office

EDITORIAL

Whenever we start a new year, new hopes and new dreams emerge again, almost as if something magical happened from one day to the next. One hears phrases such as "this year will be better" or "this year I will do such a thing." However, the question is, do we really believe that absolutely everything can change overnight? Many may say that this is absurd, that it is only for dreamers or teenagers who still have magical thoughts or who still believe in a God who, with a few words, in the best Harry Potter style, does everything without any effort. Perhaps they are right. We all have experienced that feeling of trying to change something for a long time and of finding ourselves with the disappointment that we still are bearing the same mistakes and sins. Yet, I refuse to stop being a dreamer, to stop thinking that one day everything truly can change, and if... Are we the ones who will have no confidence in this? It will not be!!

I believe that, from one day to the next, everything can change, because

God made me know this on the day that, with simple words such as "go, sell everything you have and give it to the poor, then come and follow me," my life changed, and, like mine, that of so many brothers and sisters on the journey.

I refuse to give up hope, because, while it is true that there are many provinces in our Congregation that seem to be fading away slowly, there are places and provinces that reflect a God who continues to trust us and keeps sending workers into his harvest.

I continue dreaming because I am witness to many young people who keep telling the Lord that they want to live their whole lives in the Congregation of the Mission, serving the poor. I persist in believing in that "one-day" change every time I see confreres kneeling before a prayerful Church that implores the gift of the Holy Spirit, giving them the diaconal or priestly ministry.

I believe in the "New Year" when I see "Brothers," worn out by the years,

connecting to a streaming platform to continue growing and encouraging this vocation and raising new challenges.

I am thrilled when I see 35 confreres departing for international missions, leaving their countries, provinces, and projects to take on, not only new cultures, but also a dream that has been alive for 404 years.

I keep dreaming, believing, and hoping because I see thousands of confreres who continue responding to the missionary call from different places and ministries, seeking to proclaim Jesus Christ, evangelizer of the poor, so that the Lord of history, together with them, may change "from one day to the next" the lives of so many.

Let us persist in dreaming together in this New Year. God does not tire of dreaming about us and we have enough reasons to do so.

Have a good 2021!

P. Hugo Vera, CM



THE FAMVIN HOMELESS ALLIANCE

reflects on three years working
to end homelessness.

This Famvin Homeless Alliance (FHA) Impact Report comes at a time of global apprehension and uncertainty. However, one thing is certain, Vincentian service for people experiencing homelessness around the world has never been more needed. The corona virus pandemic has clearly highlighted the importance and urgency for people having a place to call home. One in which to feel safe from disease, but also to rebuild one's own life. The FHA was set up in 2017 to mark the 400th anniversary of the Vincentian Charism. Its main goals are to support established and emerging

Vincentian homelessness programs around the world, and to advocate for global systemic change to end homelessness in its various forms. To do so, FHA has strived to provide a framework to foster collaboration and exchange amongst Vincentian Family branches. In 2018, the FHA organized a first conference on street homelessness, which gave rise to the "13 Houses" Campaign.

The objective was to change the lives of 10,000 homeless people in 5 years. In only 2 years, the Campaign has reached nearly half of that target, through 54 collaborative projects in 40 countries. In relation to systemic change the FHA

was active in bringing together Vincentian Family members at the United Nation. They focussed on supporting a campaign, led by the Institute of Global Homelessness based at DePaul University, aimed at raising the profile of street homelessness as a global issue.

As a direct result of this campaign homelessness became the central theme of the UN Commission on Social Development in February 2020. This is the first time in its 75 year history that the UN has focussed on homelessness and it led to a resolution, approved by the



UN General Assembly, paving the way for a reduction in homelessness to be a measurable target within the Sustainable Development Goals.

As part of this ongoing lobby FHA members also contributed to a book on "Catholic Social Teaching and Homelessness" in collaboration with the Vatican.

In response to recent events the FHA showcased the resilience and alertness of Vincentians who sprung to action as the pandemic took hold of different countries, and after the terrible explosions which left more than 300,000 homeless in Beirut. Two fundraising appeals helped the emergency efforts run by various Vincentian groups in over 15 countries.

In short, for the past three years, the FHA has been the witness of the global vibrancy of Vincentians committed to ending homelessness at all levels supported by our



14 trained FHA "Ambassadors" drawn from different parts of the Vincentian Family from across the globe.

From local projects for street children in small rural towns, to housing programs in big cities, to advocacy coalitions at the UN. We hope this Vincentian Family mobilization will continue in the years to come. A second conference on refugees and displaced

populations, due to take place in 2020, has been rescheduled to the Autumn of 2021 due to the current health crisis. A third conference, on slum dwellers, is also scheduled for the near future. FHA aims to continue developing these and other concrete opportunities for Vincentians to serve the homeless together. We thank all of the Vincentian Family branches who have actively taken part in the FHA, the Vincentian Family Executive Board, the FHA Commission members, FHA "Ambassadors" and all donors who have made the past three years possible, keeping alive the Vincentian Charism, and bringing hope to the most marginalized.

*Mark McGreevy
FHA Coordinator*



FRATELLI TUTTI:

Taiwan Helps Congregation of the Mission again



For the second time during the administration of Fr. Tomaž Mavrič the Embassy of the Republic of China (Taiwan) to the Holy See has responded positively to a request from Fr. Tomaž to help the Vincentian Solidarity Office fund a project, this time for the Region of Rwanda – Burundi. The project is an interesting partnership arranged by our Confreres Fr. Jean de Dieu NIZEYIMANA and Fr. Samuel Ngendakumana with BEGECA (Private Limited Company for Procurement for Church-related, Charitable and Social Institutions) to purchase and install a small light powered by a solar panel in 60 households of their parish. Where electricity is plentiful and lighting

abundant, it is hard to imagine trying to accomplish something at night without adequate lighting. This small light will help the household use the nighttime hours for cooking, study, reading, performing manual labor, and improving hygiene. The families will be chosen from the devout households of the parish. The recipients will receive two days of training about how to manage their new lighting system.

You will notice that the backdrop for the picture features Fratelli Tutti, the new Encyclical Letter from Pope Francis. Ambassador Mathew Lee explained that the government of Taiwan has taken on the challenge

of the Pope by his use of the parable of the Good Samaritan. We cannot remain only with many words and explanations. Rather, we are to act on behalf of those in need. The check is a clear sign of their commitment to act.

After the formal ceremony of giving over the check, Ambassador Mathew Lee invited us to share in a lunch. The arrangement was COVID proofed by a table divided by Plexiglas shields. We were treated to a box lunch of the same type that the Embassy donated to serve the poor through the efforts of Konrad Cardinal Krajewski, the Almoner of the Office of Papal Charities. Also during the lunch conversation, Ambassador Lee heard Fr. Tomaž talk of rescheduling a 2020 trip to the Rwanda Burundi Mission to sometime in 2021 and Ambassador Lee asked if he could join Fr. Tomaž in this trip!

*Fr. Miles Heinen, cm
Assistant General*

GO TO THE “PERIPHERIES”



One of the challenges posed by Pope Francis is to go to the “peripheries!” St. Vincent de Paul, our founder, reminded us that the life of a missionary must be that of a Carthusian at home and an apostle in the field or the rural areas. That is, our works and ministries will be more fruitful for the people we serve to the degree that we put on the spirit of Chiat in order to acquire a holiness appropriate to our vocation.

Certainly, this calls for missionary activity. As Vincentian priests and brothers, we are “sent to evangelize the poor!”

In response to this call, the Congregation of the Mission in the Philippines is sending Father Kit C. Torayno, CM and Father Rogelio P. Coloyan, II, CM to become members of a ministry team at San Agustin Mission-Station, Kalagangan, San Fernando, Bukidnon. This is one of the most remote mission-stations in the Diocese of Malaybalay.

One of the responsibilities of this team is the protection of indigenous peoples and their way of life. The lumad groups usually come down from the mountains to sell their products ... but most of them do live high up on the

mountains.

To better respond to their plight, the Church aims to build a kumbento that will stabilize and give permanence to the Mission of the Church while ensuring the safety of the Missionaries as well as the lay leaders.

The project will be managed by the Mission Station Pastoral and Finance Council. The priests-in-charge will monitor the compliance of the building specification and oversee the finances. Presently, the assigned priests in the Mission-Station are living in the sacristy which has been temporarily converted into two separate small rooms.



Finally, on December 11, 2020, the ground-breaking of this new construction project took place. The leaders of the indigenous people led the services on this momentous occasion. The Diocesan Administrator of the Diocese of Malaybalay, Msgr. Noel Pedregosa blessed the construction site.

We would like to thank all those people and communities who have been part of this project: the San Marcelino community of the Philippine Province, Adamson University headed by its President, Father Manny Manimtim, CM, some of the friends of Fathers Kit and Roger and the parishioners of San Agustin Mission station who, in one way or another, contributed to this project. We hope and pray that God will continue to bless this project.

*Fr. Kit Torayno, CM
Province of the Philippines*

CRONICLE OF THE MEETING OF BROTHERS

Long live the Brothers of the CM

On January 21, 2020, the Brothers of the Congregation of the Mission and other interested confreres met in a webinar in two sessions. The first session was aimed at missionaries from COVIAM, CEVIM and APVC. It started at 9:00 am, time in Rome, and was attended by 45 confreres. The second session started at 5:00 pm, time in Rome, was reserved for CLAPVI and NCV missionaries, 44 confreres attended. The activities were coordinated by Fr. Hugo Vera, responsible for the Office of Communication of the CM.

Both sessions mentioned above included the initial speech of our Superior General, Father Tomaz

Mavric, who stressed the importance of the Brothers' vocation within the Congregation of the Mission, characterizing the 'double character' of the same, clerical and lay. Father Tomaz expressed concern about the decrease in the number of Brothers, since the 1960s / 70s, when the congregation had more than 500 brothers, while today there are only 123. In this context, an international commission was brought together to design a Plan for the Promotion of the Brother's vocation in the CM. The analysis of the Plan was the main subject addressed in the online meetings

After the Superior General's speech,

according to the coordinator's guidance, those present were divided into virtual rooms by languages. In these 'chat rooms' the confreres addressed three questions that helped them to reflect on the Plan for the Promotion of the Brother's vocation and to reflect on how each one of us, as Lazarist Brothers, has lived his own vocation in the context of his province of origin. In the Groups many relevant points were addressed, of which I highlight five main points:

1) It is important to recover the relevance of the Brother's vocation within the Congregation of the Mission, not as a second-class





missionary, but as a member with full duties and rights. We have the same vows, which gives us a common vocation.

2) The figure of the Brother has disappeared in several provinces. We must do intense work to re-establish that a Vincentian missionary can also be a consecrated lay person. In this way the vocations of Brothers will arise where today they are scarce. Nobody loves what they do not know, if the possibility of lay consecration in the CM is not presented in a clear and modern way, that is, without the stigmas of the past, the Brother's vocation will continue to disappear.

3) Offer the Brothers a formation similar to that of priests, giving priority to their character as a Vincentian missionary, before offering him technical training. Giving equal attention to the formation of priests and brothers is the first step in reducing the historical differences

that have negatively marked the Brother's vocation in the CM.

4) Work in the Provincial and Domestic Assemblies on the idea that the Brother's vocation is a theologically complete vocation in itself. The Brother is not one who has failed to be a priest, but he is a missionary who has been called by God to follow Christ the Evangelizer of the Poor, as a consecrated layperson in the CM.

5) At the General Assembly, there will be a profound reflection on the clerical identity of the Congregation. Wouldn't it be time to change that identity?

After the sharing of the groups there were some announcements. Father Andrés Motto confirmed that in October, the CIF Session for the Brothers will take place (which was scheduled for last year and was postponed due to the pandemic).

In general, the sessions developed in a very harmonious and organized way. It was good to see that we Brothers, despite being few, remain alive and active in the CM. There are young faces, new brothers who want to change the negative stigma that has accompanied us in the past centuries. We hope we can. Long prosperous life to the Brothers of the Mission Congregation.

*Hno. Adriano Ferreira, CM.
Chronicle of the Brothers' Meeting*

IMPACT OF COVID 19 PANDEMIC ON VSO ACTIVITY (Vincenonian Solidarity Office)

Due to the worldwide Coronavirus pandemic, the VSO has limited funds and is experiencing longer than usual wait times for processing applications. Please keep this in mind in your planning for 2021. Work stoppages have caused shortages in raw materials affecting the global supply chain on nearly everything. Likewise, the lack of commerce has negatively impacted funds available through donations. People are afraid to part with money because future income is uncertain. The funding agencies on which we rely as well as many other charitable organizations are experiencing this shortage. The VSO is not unique in its need to adjust to the present situation. Adjustments are being made on an as needed basis to continue to accomplish goals using best practices and to keep the negative impacts to an absolute minimum.

Here are a few suggestions of action in this time of pandemic:

- 1) prioritize your projects
- 2) plan for delays in project funding
- 3) use the downturn to gain new skills in project management
- 4) take more care in presenting a detailed VSO application
- 5) look to being better project managers in the future

The pandemic will end as COVID 19 vaccines are being distributed. To make the most of this slowdown, seek ways to learn about project management. Consult the VSO webpage and become familiar with our application, process, and past projects. See the English VSO Webpage. To close, the VSO is here to address your questions and concerns, so do feel free to contact us at any time.

Our goal: To assist the Congregation of the Mission with obtaining funds for its evangelization and service of the poor.

How to contact us:

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Vincenonian Solidarity Office

PRIESTLY ORDINATION IN THE PROVINCE OF MADAGASCAR

The Province of Madagascar is pleased with the priestly ordination of three confreres who have completed their formation at the Seminary of Enugu, Nigeria. They received the sacrament of the priestly order on Sunday, 10 January 2021, the feast of the Baptism of the Lord, from the hands of Bishop Gaetano Di Pierro, Bishop of the Diocese of Farafangana.

The ordination took place on the grounds of the School of the Daughters of Charity, Parish of Saint Joseph, ECAR Vangaindrano, Diocese of Farafangana, in southeastern Madagascar. It was a grace, as two of the newly ordained, Father Luke and Father Maharavo, are sons of this diocese. They come from two pastoral jurisdictions, Manambondro and Ranomena, which are about 50 kilometers away, forming a triangle with the Parish of Saint Joseph, the center of the diocese's Southern Region. Father Mamy, although born in the Diocese of Fort-Dauphin, joyfully joined the celebration. Many branches of the Vincentian Family were present and actively participated in thanksgiving for these new servants to the Church.

Since 2015, COVIAM (Conference of Visitors of Africa and Madagascar) had decided to begin a common project of formation in theology in Enugu (Nigeria). The Province of Madagascar sent three candidates in August 2015: confreres Lucas Arseni Rakotonirina, Mamonjisoa Mamy Tsiba and Copertino

Robert Ramaharavo. Due to a lack of documents, they were blocked in Nairobi, Kenya until April 2016, which is why they were unable to join the entire academic formation year in 2015-2016. In April 2016, they arrived in Enugu at the common seminary for Africa and Madagascar. There they continued their priestly formation for four years (2016-2020).

2017: They received the Ministry of Lector

2019: They received the Ministry of Acolyte

25 September 2019: They made their definitive incorporation.

21 December 2019 the Diaconate for Mamy and Lucas and 16 January 2020 for Maharavo (health).

Last year, due to the restrictions on international flights between Nigeria, Addis Ababa, and Madagascar because of the Covid-19 pandemic, they were able to return to their homes only on 30 October 2020, by means of a repatriation flight organized by the Malagasy State with the embassy in Ethiopia. For this reason, they could not join the other group ordained on 13 September 2020 (six confreres) in the Parish of John Paul II in Fianarantsoa.

Consequently, at the Provincial Council meeting in November 2020, the Visitor, Father Alexandre Zéphirin Rafanomezantsoa, and his Council decided to look for a new date for the

event. According to Monsignor Gaetano Di Pierro, Bishop of the Diocese of Farafangana, they decided to hold the ordination on 10 January in the Parish of Saint Joseph, ECAR Vangaindrano.

Another grace that the Province will experience will be the ordination of confreres Nicolas and Sitraka Cuéllar, who have finished their studies in the Seminary of Saint Vincent de Paul in Fianarantsoa. The ordination will be presided by our dear confrere, Monsignor Benjamin Marc Ramarason, Archbishop of Antsiranana, on 21 January. Before this ordination as deacons, they will make their definitive incorporation into the Congregation of the Mission. Both come from this Archdiocese of Fianarantsoa.

In summary, the same expression is repeated on our lips: Thank you Lord for your blessings. To You, glory and eternal praise.

*Father Andriamifidisoa Alin Michel, CM
Province of Madagascar*



GENERAL INFORMATION

NOMINATIONS / CONFIRMATIONS

NKEE MOKELO-MO-EYALI Jean Rufin	13/01/2021	Director HC - Congo
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ORDINATIONS

PEREIRA Lorenzo	Sac	ARG	12/12/2020
WOJCIESZAK Artur	Sac	POL	23/01/2021
KOTONIRINA Lucas Arsèni	Sac	MAD	10/01/2021
RAMAHARAVO Copertino Robert	Sac	MAD	10/01/2021
TSIBA Mamonjisoa Mamy	Sac	MAD	10/01/2021

NECROLOGY

Nomen	Cond.	Dies ob.	Prov.	Aet.	Voc.
SARMIENTO FRANCO David	Sac	01/01/2021	COL	89	70
CASTILLA GARCÍA Pablo	Sac	03/01/2021	SVP	94	78
DODIK RISTANTO Agustinus	Sac	11/01/2021	IDS	48	27
PEÑA MERINO Benjamín	Fra	18/01/2021	SVP	90	72
ZOPPI Ettore	Sac	25/01/2021	ITA	93	75
VENCES GARCÍA Delio	Sac	28/01/2021	COL	92	73
MILAD Youssef	Sac	30/01/2021	ORI	63	31
PEÑA MERINO Jeremias	Fra	31/01/2021	SVP	82	64

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