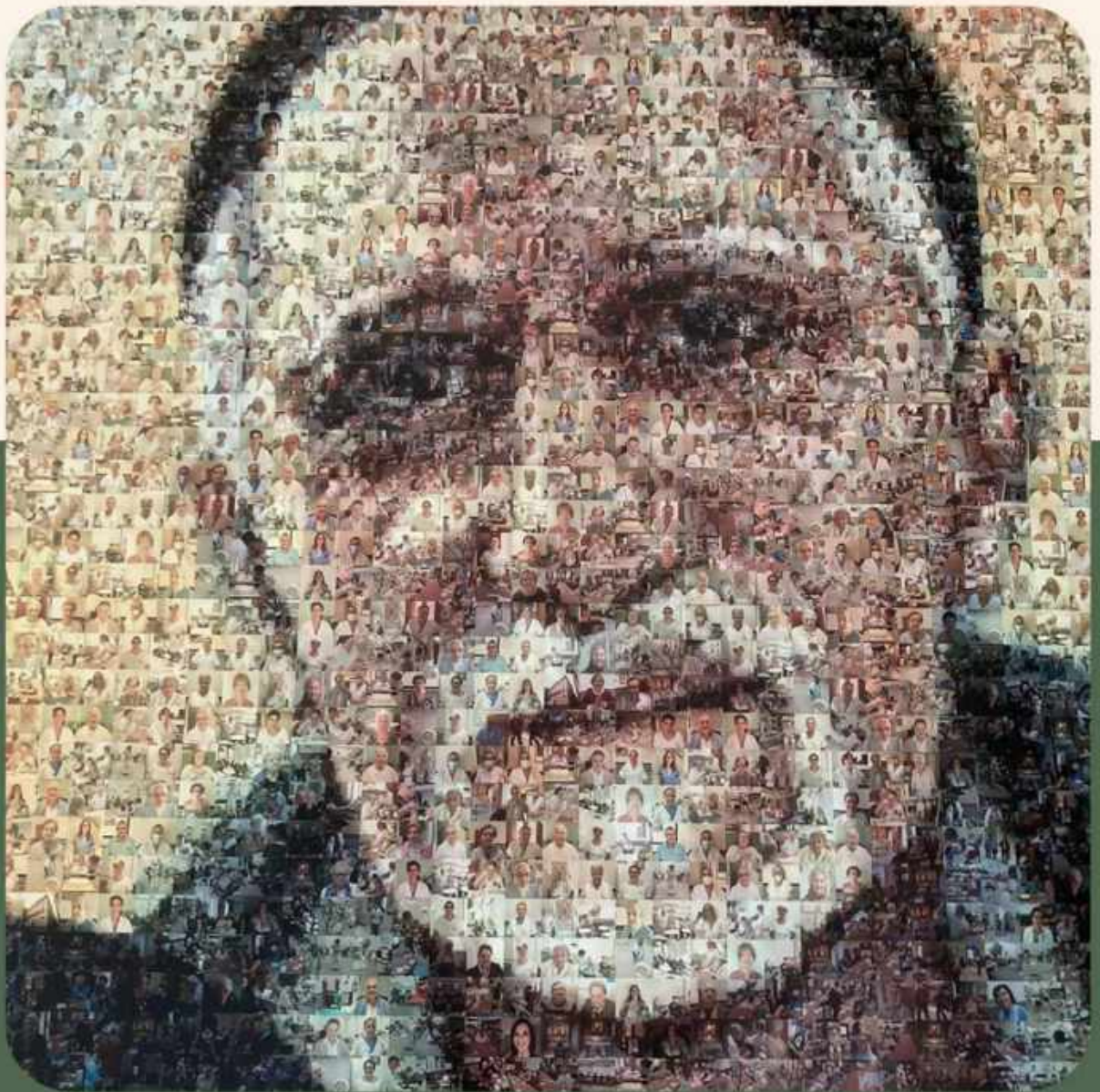


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FEBRUARY 2022



"GIVE ME A MAN OF PRAYER,
AND HE WILL BE CAPABLE OF
ANYTHING."

1150th Anniversary of the Philippine Province

Launching of the Year-long celebration of the anniversary of the Philippine Province. One hundred fifty Years seem so long but in the life of the Congregation of the Mission, it is relatively a drop in the bucket. The Philippines was founded as a Province (Province of Manila) in 1872 by Fr. Etienne, the Superior General, who appointed Fr.Valdivielso as Provincial. The latter felt himself unworthy and due to health reasons, he did not reveal his patent. Fr.Salmeron was appointed in his place.

The celebration was a worthy tribute to the past fifty years. No less than Bishop Soc Villegas presided at the Solemn Mass together with Fr. Gregg Banaga and Fr.Manny Ginete and around 40 Vincentians and couple of hundred people, many of them members of the Vincentian Family. Five ex-Provincial Visitors were present: Fr. DelaGoza, Fr. Vargas, Fr.Peralta, Fr.Ginete, Fr. Agner. This group served around one third of the 150 years that we are celebrating. The beautiful Kyrie and Gloria were composed by a Filipino Vincentian, Fr. Francis Cruz, and the Master of ceremonies was Fr. Pura. The DC Sisters were headed by Sister Evidente, the Mother Visitatrix, several other Sisters of the Vincentian Family, the SSVF, the Ladies of Charity, Legion of Mary, etc. were all represented.

Message of Bishop Villegas. It was a very Vincentian, hopeful and inspiring message. From the very start he acknowledged his connection with the Vincentian, though he was not Vincentian trained. He said that he was with His Eminence Jaime Cardinal Sin, a Vincentian trained Affiliate, for many years and even before he was ordained, he already knew that the beautiful main building of the San Carlos Seminary of Manila where he studied, was constructed by the Vincentians seventy two years ago. At present, he has invited the Vincentians to his diocese and the beautiful Miraculous Medal Parish in Mangaldan is a witness to his great appreciation to the Congregation of the Mission. He showed his great knowledge of the Vincentian history especially relative to the formation of the clergy and noted that the Vincentians are very much needed in the Philippines today. He pointed out three missions of the CM: mystics, missions, humility—"Be ignorant professors, mystic missionaries and rich enough to tend to the poor."

Fr.Gregg Banaga thanked all those who prepared for the launching, i.e. the various committees and special mention of Fr.Regua, the Parish Priest of the Santuario. He then expressed the Community's gratitude to Bishop Villegas, not only for his acceptance to celebrate the launching but also for his generosity to the Congregation of the Mission. Finally, he invited everybody to share in a simple meal.



News from the Province of China

CM 405th Foundation

Despite the uncertainty brought by Covid-19 pandemic, the province proceeded with the celebration on January 25 for C.M.'s 405th foundation at Kangshan SVP Church in Kaohsiung City. Emeritus Archbishop Thomas Ye, a former apostolic nuncio presided the Eucharist which was concelebrated by 14 priests and by almost a hundred parishioners. Some confreres and representatives from FamVin groups decided at the last hour not to attend due to fear of infection.

Praying in SVP's Spirit translated

Fr. Labitag, the provincial visitor took opportunity of the gathering on January 25, 2022 to distribute copies of newly printed Chinese translation of the book *Praying in St. Vincent's Spirit*, a collection of prayers of St. Vincent on different themes.

To add more Vincentian reading materials in Chinese, the province sets a goal to print out Chinese-translated Vincentian materials every January 25 and September 27 in the next five years. This project was conceptualized due to growing need of knowing deeper the Vincentian spirit and charism among the lay.

Fr. John T'sAi, 96

Fr. Johannes T'sai Wei-dao, a native of Jiangxi, China passed away on February 5, 2022 at the age of 96. The oldest among confreres in the province, he spent his last years at a retirement home of Daughters of Charity in Tainan City due to worsening dementia. The province held a funeral Mass on February 12, 2022 with Bishop Lin of Tainan Diocese as main celebrant and concelebrated by 28 priests.

Fr. T'sai was the last Chinese confrere of his generation to study in the Philippines after the communists took over China. He studied in Manila at San Carlos Seminary for his philosophy degree and at Universidad de Santo Tomas for his theological degree. He obtained an MA in psychology at Ateneo de Manila before going for his first assignment in Taiwan at St. Vincent High School in Sze Hu, Yunlin. He was a procurator for a long time and had a big heart for St. Vincent High School. Known for his remarkable acumen in financial investments and with good sense of humor, he will be missed by many.

Fr. Kusno celebrates 25th

Fr. Kusno Bintoro eventually celebrated his silver sacerdotal anniversary on February 12, 2022 at St. Vincent's Church in Kaohsiung City. His 25th anniversary was supposed to be on August 27 of last year, however it was postponed due to Covid-19 pandemic. His former parishioners organized a simple celebration to honor his priestly ministry and to thank his service to local church.

Immediately after ordination, Fr. Kusno came to Taiwan to join the province. He was assigned to Taidong for a short time before he was he sent for studies in the U.S. After he came back from further studies, he became a pastor of St. Vincent's Church in Kaohsiung for several years. He spent 9 years serving the province as provincial visitor. He is presently finishing his doctoral degree from a theological school in Malang, Indonesia.



A SCHOOL THAT REACHES-OUT TO THE PERIPHERIES

Since October 2021, the missionary community at Saint Vincent de Paul School has broadened its outreach in order to care for people afflicted by the humanitarian and health crisis that rages in our country. It is true that the outreach of the school had been focused on "Hogar Saint Vincent de Paul", a center administered by the Daughters of Charity that provides care for some 20 elderly women (grandmothers). Many former students continue to be involved with that center. The situation of increased poverty, however, as well as fidelity to the legacy of our Founder, invite us to go further. Paraphrasing the words of Pope Francis: we want to be an educational community that goes out to the peripheries. As a result we have established a strategic alliance that allows us to support the ministry that is being done by the Piarists/Scolopi (also know as the Order of Poor Clerics Regular of the Mother of God of the Pious School) in the northern area of the city, especially in the area surrounding the school of Saint Joseph of Calasanz in El Torompillo. With the assistance of some benefactors, we have been able to provide food to some 60 who care for about 350 children, 150 adolescents as wells as pregnant women and breast feeding mothers who are guests at 3 community soup kitchen.

At the beginning of the year our donors went into action and brought their contributions to the School: Comercializadora R.O. 2019 C.A.; Comercializadora e Inversiones Karla C.A.; Flor de Luz Foundation; the Rojas Family; the Ricci Salvatore Family and representatives from our school. On Friday, February 25th, we began the distribution ... Brother Luis, Professor Cruz (Coordinator of Ministry), Professor Pedro (school administrator), a young man/collaborator (Jefferson). We were also accompanied by three members of the Board: Elizabeth Rivas, Regina Kiulkaitis and Jesús Lugo (Legal Counsel).

There was much joy in this encounter: songs, prayers for peace, distribution of the food to the women and a gift was given to each of these women (a 2022 calendar with the image of Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal). Through the generosity of a Foundation, biosecurity material was given to the school of Saint Joseph of Calasanz. It was wonderful to see people's joy and to experience how God uses us to gift those women who do so much good in the area of Cerro Gordo, Divina Pastora and Trompillo Alto.

We hope to be able to continue to rely on the generosity of our donors in order to continue to sustain this work and at the same time we also hope to see this network of generosity and love increase, a network that is being woven between Saint Vincent's School and the residents of El Trompillo. As Saint Paul states: let us not grow tired of doing good, for in due time we shall reap our harvest, if we do not give up. So then, while we have the opportunity, let us do good to all (Galatians 6:9-10a).

You can see more on our YOUTUBE channel: Pastoral colegio San Vicente Barquisimeto: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fsYDOfyIUEM>



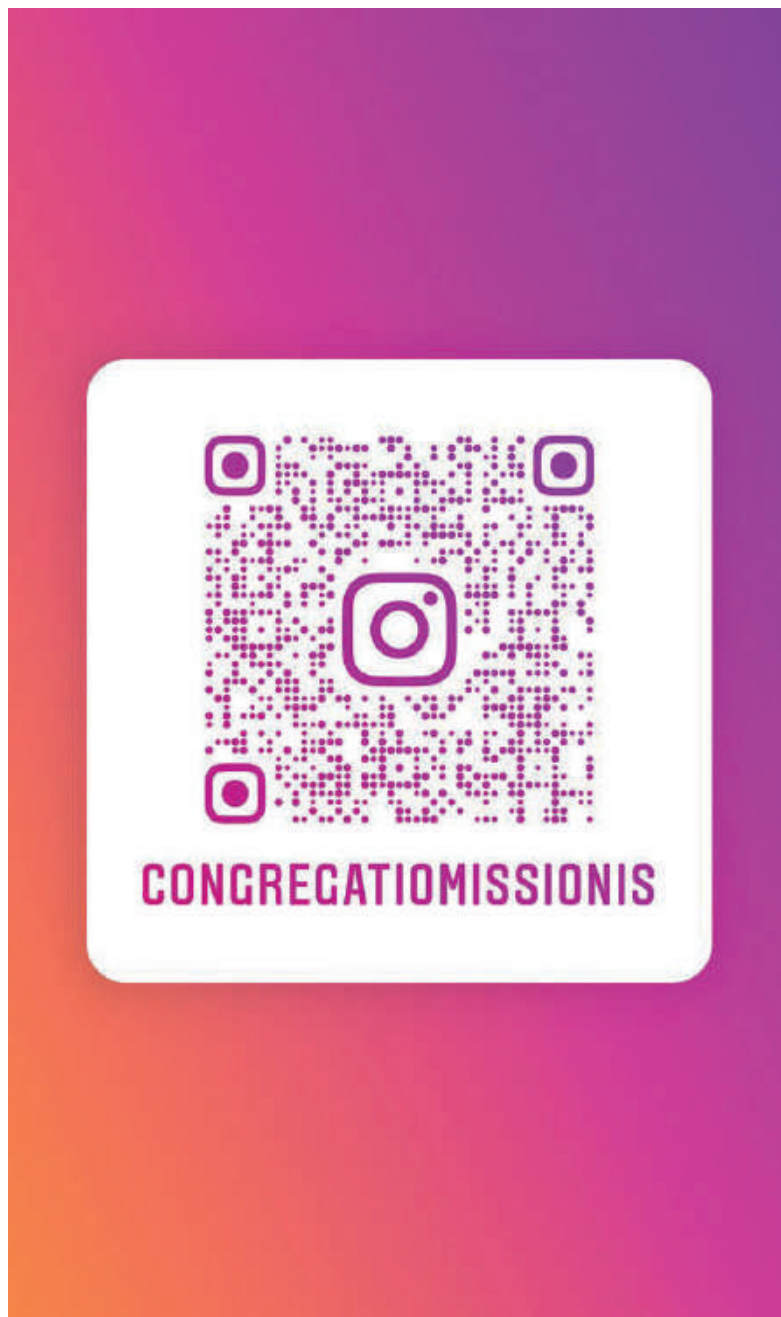
NEW COMMUNICATION CHANNEL

Pope Francis from the first day of his pontificate invites us to go out to the periphery. We understand that many times it is not a physical place but all the places and situations that often remain on the margins of society and the Church.

That is why we have decided to continue going out to the peripheries and announce the Gospel from what we are and what we do on Instagram.

We invite you to follow us and share from March 1 life and faith.

<https://www.instagram.com/congregatiomissionis/>





Vincentian Solidarity Office

February 2022 Bulletin

Credits To Grassroots Communities, Where Credit Is Due

In Kenya, the COVID-19 crisis has left many vulnerable households in even greater peril. Fr. Gary Mueller, C.M. and fellow confreres in Kenya recognized a need in their community for income. They developed a plan to use VSO microproject grant funds to establish a microcredit program. A microcredit is a loan of a small amount of money at a low interest rate to a small business. This program included training for the participants in business management and development. They were particularly focused on helping the women of three parishes: St. Vincent DePaul Giathugu, St. Kizito Matisi, and Our Lady of Assumption Indangalasia. All three parishes are located in rural areas with little infrastructure. The participants were all small-scale farmers with no other income sources, who would not otherwise have access to loans or banking.

Parishioners and local leaders helped with the selection process. While initially their focus was on women, they found a few men who met their criteria. 43 people, 38 women and five men from three parishes were selected. These 43 participated in a training program where they learned how to run their own businesses. After completing the training, all participants received a loan to finance their new businesses. Site visits by development officers assessed progress.

Some of the businesses included the selling of fruit, fish or even fresh-cooked chips. With their loans they have bought fertilizer, animal feed, or inventory. All the business owners continue to meet within their parish groups to share stories of success and overcoming challenges. By sharing these stories, they continue to learn from one



The pastor from St. Vincent DePaul Parish, Fr. John Mburu C.M. witnesses as Mr. Ezekiel (left) receives his supplies for farming business



Group photo of participants from St. Kizito, Matisi Parish

another. They are encouraged to expand their businesses and continue to receive training on money management. Especially popular is the savings component of the loan administration. The participants have become more confident in their business activities and feel they will be more resilient when facing difficult times. They now have hope for the future.



Participant Brigitte describes her chip cooking business

Welcome Fr. Joel

Please join us in welcoming our new Executive Director, Fr. Joel Bernardo, C.M. Fr. Joel Bernardo is a Filipino Vincentian who has served in the international Mission in Papua New Guinea (PNG) for the past six years (2015-2021). He worked with the Divine Word Missionaries (SVDs) as the Head of the Research and Education Unit of the Melanesian Institute (MI) in Goroka, Eastern Highlands Province. He practices Social Anthropology, with academic studies from the University of the Philippines and University of



London (London School of Economics), and promotes grassroots development alternatives, using Participatory Action Research (PAR) approaches, adult learning principles and cultural critique-revaluing processes.

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

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Vincentian Solidarity Office
www.cmglobal.org/vso

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Bridging the Rural Digital Divide and Access to Employment

The country of Mozambique in southeastern Africa is among the poorest countries in the world. According to the World Bank, two-thirds of the population live and work in rural areas. For most children here, education is only available until age 12. Once they finish school, there are very few opportunities for the children. Because of this, the community of Chirrundzo and the Parish of St. Vincent founded a vocational school in 2014 to serve the adolescents and young adults of their region. It is located in the rural village of Chinhacanine. Because most of the population are subsistence farmers, the school is focused on agriculture.

The Vincentian Community was looking for ways to improve the opportunities for the young people in the area. With the help of the VSO, they were able to add a computer lab to the school. They purchased six computers, a tablet and a printer. A carpenter helped with tables and chairs. They employed an instructor and added computer studies to the curriculum. With their new computer skills, the graduates will have better prospects for employment. While still in the early stages, it is off to a good start and has enriched the curriculum for the 60 participating students.



Computer room already set up with students and the computer teacher, explaining how to take care of computers.



Students and Father Cinema C. Inueiva, C.M. at the Institution's Main Entrance

A Cooperative Response to the 'Chicken and Egg' Cycle of Poverty

The Parish of Alem Tena, Ethiopia, has many women who have been left alone after the frequent natural disasters and civil wars that plague the region. These women have children and elderly people who depend on them. Their prospects for the future and ability to care for others are challenged. Fr. Zecharias Haile, C.M., parish priest of Alem Tena, developed a plan to build a chicken coop where they would raise hens for eggs that could be both distributed and sold for a profit. With their grant, the parish hired a local contractor who in turn employed some of the local youth. After the coop was built, they stocked it with a breed of chicken recommended by a local expert. In addition to

generating income, this project will help improve food security for both the local poor and the local confreres.



Egg laying hens in new chicken coop at the Parish of Alem Tena

Fr. Joel's Solidarity Notes

What can be considered as building blocks of Vincentian solidarity building for and with the poor?

After nearly 20 odd years of solidarity work, the VSO can share a few:

- *Solidarity builds on Subsidiarity* (building local/internal capacity and not external/perpetual dependence)
- *Solidarity builds up Eligibility* (enhancing accountability and not outright entitlement)
- *Solidarity builds on Micro-Projects* (consolidating benefits and transformative impacts for systemic change)

The VSO is grateful to the donors and agencies that make our work possible, including:

The Franz Foundation
 Congregation of the Mission Western Province, USA;
 Congregation of the Mission Eastern Province, USA;

Congregation of the Mission New England Province, USA;
 Fr. Sy Peterka's Africa Appeal;
 The Provinces and Houses of the Congregation of the Mission who contribute to the Vincentian Solidarity Fund;
 USA Donors;
 And donors to VIMS for their support.



www.VIMS1617.org

NOMINATIONES / CONFIRMATIONES

GIBSON Alan Mark	25/01/2022	Visitor Oceanía
NAYAK Mathew	14/02/2022 (start 01/03/2022)	Visitor North India
MEKONNEN Butta Muleta	16/02/2022 (start 26/02/2022)	Visitor Ethiopia
FEUGANG Guenolé	18/02/2022	Visitor to Camerún (Reconfirmed)
HAGOS Tewelde	23/02/2022 (start 28/04/2022)	Visitor San Justino di Jacobis

NECROLOGIUM

Nomen	Cond.	Dies ob.	Prov.	Aet.	Voc.
T'SAI Johannes Baptista Wei-Dao	Sac	05/02/2022	SIN	95	74
LESME Francis	Sac	06/02/2022	FRA	81	56
SECCI* Claudio	Fra	20/02/2022	ITA	81	55

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