



Common Circular on the occasion of the 400TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ORIGIN OF THE VINCENTIAN CHARISM

Dear Members of the CM and DC belonging to the North and South Indian Provinces,

Vincentian Family worldwide is immensely happy to celebrate the 400th Anniversary of the origin of the Vincentian charism. We recall with joy the events in 1617 that led St. Vincent to realize the charism. In order to articulate the charism in a concrete and effective manner, he established a few organizations, such as Confraternities of Charity, Congregation of the Mission, Daughters of Charity and Ladies of Charity. In course of time moved by the Spirit, many men and women embraced Vincentian Charism. Today we have more than two million members around the globe promoting the Vincentian charism. It shows its immeasurable relevance today. That is why Vincentian Family feels proud of observing this year as an year of grace and wanted to undertake something concrete. The major superiors of the Vincentian Family have undertaken also a theme this year for the celebrations: “I was a stranger...and you welcomed me”.

This Jubilee year is a two-fold moment of grace for all the daughters and sons of the Vincentian Family. First of all, we give thanks for the prophetic vision of St. Vincent and for the multitudes of witnesses who have followed in his footsteps, serving Christ, the evangelizer of the poor. Second, it presents us with an opportunity to re-examine the gift of a charism which is characterized by two convictions: a) the conviction that we are part of a Movement of Charity larger than any one of us...as individuals or branches. Thus we know we must work together, each from the strength of our insight into our common charism, in the shared fight against poverty; b) the conviction that this struggle necessarily involves us in efforts to change the very systems which perpetuate poverty. Therefore, we engage in systemic activity – be it through advocacy or projects – activity intended to break the very cycle of poverty. As we renew our efforts in the areas of formation, education, health care, and social services, we lay new spiritual foundations for these traditional Vincentian works.

As we step into the fifth century of the Vincentian Movement, we continue to be guided by the Spirit “to preach good news....to set at liberty....” (Lk 4: 18-19), and to promote justice for and with the poor, our Lords and Masters.

At this juncture, being responsible to enlivening the Vincentian Charism here in our time and while reading the signs of the time, we, the major superiors of the Congregation of the Mission and the Daughters of Charity working in India together with the Bishops and head of the Vincentian Family India, appeal to each member of the CM and the DC of the South and North Indian Provinces the following:

- a. Feel proud of having a rich Vincentian legacy and appreciate sincerely to carry the Charism with its originality and creativity;
- b. Be positive towards the mission and services of the members of the different branches of the Vincentian Family and find opportunities to appreciate, support and strengthen them;
- c. To be well equipped in guiding and promoting the Vincentian Lay Associations;
- d. Take special attention - to start Vincentian Lay Associations wherever it has not been opened, to revive where it is inactive, and to settle where it is divided and functioning improperly;
- e. To find out the various branches present in the respective places and explore the possibility to relate with them in order to deepen the Vincentian Charism as well as to take up common project to break cycle of poverty;
- f. Make the Vincentian presence more meaningful in the local church by maintaining good relationship with the diocesan Bishop and with the diocesan clergy;
- g. Make use of every chance to work among the poorest of the poor and empower while using the systemic change strategies;
- h. Do something concrete for the poor to mark the 400th anniversary of the origin of Vincentian Charism together with the other branches of Vincentian Family in the locality where we are present;
- i. Organize input sessions for the clergy and the laity in the respective localities once a month or so, like the ‘Tuesday Conference’ of St. Vincent.
- j. Take effort to read and reflect on the Vincentian literature as well as bring out qualitatively excellent literature in order to maintain international standards.
- k. Create video clips or other modern means to present the Vincentian Charism or Vincentian heroes or heroines in order to attract the youth and the would be followers of Vincentian Charism;
- l. Share the news of the service to the poor in a written form to the competent major superior

While wishing you all blessings of the Jubilee year, we wish that these appeal of ours be taken seriously and do the needful at the earliest. Thanking you in anticipation

(Sd) Fr. Bijoy Kumar Nayak Visitor	(Sd) Fr. Tommichan Mattathuveliyil Visitor	(Sd) Sr. Kumari Singh Visitatrix	(Sd) Sr. Rose Chirayil Visitatrix
(Sd) + Simon Kaipuram Bishop of Balasore	(Sd) + Aplinar Senapati Bishop of Rayagada	(Sd) Fr. Francis Puthenthayil National Coordinator, VFI	