



Vinfam India



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MESSAGE

St. Vincent's Approaches at the time of the upheaval that occurred as a result of continual war in France

Wars, natural calamities, terroristic activities are escalating day by day. The reports of the recent war in Iraq and Syria are horrifying. Many are killed and many others are exiled in the name of religion. The majority of the victims are Christians. Atrocities against Christians are lashed out without any limit. It was reported that in a few weeks of time, more than 1,00,000 Christians had to leave their homes, churches and villages in the plain of Nineveh in Iraq and to wander to the city of Erbil in impossible conditions, trying to survive. The situation facing Christians in Iraq is getting increasingly worse, following the expansion of the forces of Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIS) to the plain of Nineveh. In last July, an ultimatum demanded Christians to convert, pay the "infidel" tax or be killed, which led thousands of Iraqi faithful fleeing Mosul, Iraq's second largest city. Iraq's so-called Christian capital of Qaragoush, situated south-east of Mosul, fell to the clutches of ISIS forces. With the escalating crisis in Iraq and Syria, Pope Francis and the Prefects of various Dicasteries of Papal Curia have called for an end to the forced exodus of Christians in Iraq and Syria and appealed for humanitarian intervention in the region.

In India too, many are thrown into the ghettos of poverty due to natural and manmade disasters. The recent flood at Jammu and Kashmir is a typical example. The flood fury unleashed more deaths and destruction in Jammu and Kashmir, claiming the lives of nearly 300 people and leaving thousands marooned. It was

considered as the worst-ever floods since 1892, wreaking havoc in several districts. Public infrastructure like bridges, roads and government buildings worth several thousand crores have been destroyed by the floods while the damage to private property including crops, like apple and paddy is estimated to be several times higher.

In the seventeenth century, St. Vincent de Paul too witnessed wars such as 'Thirty Years' War' (1618-1648), 'Franco-Spanish War' (1635-1659), 'Fronde War' (1648-1653) etc. These wars were exceedingly brutal. They brought a great devastation in France and reduced the population considerably. The war caused serious dislocations to both the economies and populations. The displacement of civilian populations and the overcrowding of refugees into cities led to both disease and famine. Pestilence of several kinds raged among combatants and civilians. Both typhus and dysentery had become endemic. The chronicles do show that epidemic disease was common and deaths from epidemics were high. A large numbers of plague-casualties had been recorded. Above all, the dove of peace, frightened by the tumult of the weapons of war, disappeared from the skies in the French Kingdom.

At the time of the upheaval that occurred as a result of continual war, St. Vincent revealed himself as a champion of charity and as an "artisan of peace", an effective and noteworthy arbitrator. As a champion of charity, St. Vincent de Paul was not satisfied with collaborating in other initiatives that had been begun but rather organized for the

collection of money and supplies and then delivered and distributed those goods to the people who had been devastated by the war. Vincent's thinking was nourished by experience and at the same time his activity was courageously directed towards specific causes. His activity was also intended to bring relief to those individuals who suffered the injustices and the devastations that were caused by the war.

As an artisan of peace, St. Vincent was not afraid to confront Cardinal Richelieu and plead for peace. Later during the winter of 1649 he risked his own life when he sought peace from Queen Anne of Austria and once against took the same risk in 1652 when he spoke with Cardinal Mazarin and reminded him about the lessons that could be learned from French history. Fearing no one and nothing Vincent revealed himself as a tireless artisan of peace.

As Vincentians what could be our approach amidst various types of natural and manmade disasters within and out of our country? Can we close our eyes and ears when the cries of the poor are louder than ever....? It is time to take a principled stand: the situation calls for concrete action, a gesture of solidarity in the face of an existential crisis—'we will either be or will not be'. As we are celebrating the feast of St. Vincent de Paul on September 27, let us venture for duplicating the strategies that he used for crisis management. While wishing you all a Happy Feast, waiting for solid advice to remedy the alarming situations in which we live.

**Rev. Fr. Francis Puthenthayil, CM
National Coordinator, VFI**

NEWS – NATION

1. Executive Body Meeting at Bangalore

The Executive Body Meeting of the Vincentian family was held on 27th September, 2014 at the Provincialate of Daughters of Charity, No. 5, Banaswadi Road, Cooke Town, Bangalore -5.

The following topics had been discussed at length and the decisions were taken:

1. The Systematic Change Commission would organize region - wise seminar for the members of various branches of the Vincentian family. To begin with, the seminar will be conducted for the Karnataka region and Kerala region from 25th to 27th January, 2015 and from 29th to 31st January, 2015, respectively.
2. It was also decided to probe into the area and venue of a common project

for Vincentian Family.

3. It was also decided to accept the land for the Vincentian Family as a gift from South Indian Province of the Congregation of the Mission at Mysore.
4. Fr. Gregory Gay will be addressing the General Body members of Vincentian Family on 21st and 22nd February 2015.
5. News items, reports and other relevant matters are requested for Vinfamindia, and website from the various branches of VFI.
6. Some of the regional co-ordinators were replaced by new co-ordinators.
7. It was also decided to raise funds for the Vincentian Family through various means suggested by the Executive Body.

2. Systemic Change Commission

The members of the Systemic Change Commission met at St. Vincent's Provincialate, Bangalore on 26th August 2014 under the president ship of Fr. Francis Puthenthayil. It was decided in the meeting to organize region-wise seminars to disseminate the concept of systemic change to all the members of the Vincentian Family. It was also decided to start with Karnataka and Kerala regions in the last week of January 2015. Six topics were identified and assigned to the members of the Commission for the preparation of the materials and delivery in the region-wise seminars. The prepared materials will be scrutinized and improved upon, if necessary during the next meeting of the Commission to be held at Vijayawada on the 7th of December 2014. The meeting ended with prayer.

NEWS - REGIONAL

New Regional Co-ordinators

Tamil Nadu Region

Bro. A Michael, SSVP

(former CC president of Palayam Kottai)

Andhra Pradesh Region

Rev. Fr. Abner D'Costa CM

Eastern Region

Sr. Grace Moolan DC

(former Visitatrix of North Indian Province of the Daughters of Charity)

1. Tamil Nadu Region

Bro. A. Micheal M Com, SSVP is the new co-ordinator of Tamil Nadu region. He hails from Tirunelveli. He was the President of Palayamkottai CC till last April 2014 and now he acts as the Vice President of Palayamkottai CC. He worked as "Office Superintendent / Accountant in Public Works Department, Government of Tamil Nadu, for thirty five years. He retired in the year 2007 from the civil services. Now he spends full time to promote Vincentian Family in Tamil Nadu Region.

He replaces Bro. Xavier James Raj SSVP, National Senior Vice President of SSVP in India. Vincentian Family in India, while expressing profound gratitude to Bro.(Dr) Xavier James Raj, the outgoing regional co-ordinator of Tamil Nadu Region, welcomes and congratulates Bro. A Michael, SSVP, the new regional co-ordinator of VF in Tamil Nadu Region.

2. Andhra Pradesh Region

Rev. Fr. Abner D'Costa CM is the new Regional Coordinator of the undivided Andhra Pradesh region. He hails from Bombay. He joined the Congregation of the Mission in the year 2004 and was ordained priest in the year 2012. At present he belongs to the Ukkunagaram community of the Congregation of the Mission. He is appointed as the Bursar cum Vice Principal of De Paul School, Ukkunagaram (Vishakapatnam).

He replaces Bro. (Dr) N. Krupanadam SSVP, the National Secretary of SSVP in India. Bro. Krupanadam inspite of his heavy schedule for Eluru Diocese and SSVP, extended his support to VFI as regional Coordinator. Vincentian Family in India while expressing profound gratitude to Bro. Dr. Krupanadam, the outgoing Regional Coordinator of undivided Andhra Pradesh Region, welcomes and

congratulates Rev. Fr. Abner D' Costa CM, the new Regional Coordinator of VF in Andhra Pradesh Region.

3. Eastern Region

Sr. Grace Moolan DC is the new co-ordinator of the Eastern region. She was the former Visitatrice of the North Indian Province. She too was one among the pioneers to promote Vincentian Family in India. At present she belongs to the Kharagpur community of the Daughters of Charity. She is the new Directress of the Seminary Sisters of North Indian Province.

She replaces Sr. Kumari Singh DC, the Visitatrice of North Indian Province. Vincentian Family India while expressing profound gratitude to Sr. Kumari DC, the outgoing Regional Coordinator of Eastern Region, welcomes and congratulates, Sr. Grace Moolan DC, the new Regional Coordinator of VF in Eastern Region.

NEWS - FROM VARIOUS BRANCHES OF VFI

1. Sisters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul (Ranchi, Jharkhand)

A Brief History of Sisters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul

Sisters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul had a very humble origin. There was a widow named Jerolama Kavalota, who donated her property for the young women volunteers, who used to serve the poor people in the neighbourhood area of Grignasco in Italy. Eventually in the year 1740, these volunteers organized themselves into an association. The first group which emerged as a community grew under the patronage of St. Vincent de Paul. Their purpose was to serve the poor and educate the illiterate people. This community was known as the 'Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul'. They not only served the poor, but also committed themselves in going to villages for spreading the message of the Gospel.

In a similar way another group of women started their work in a close by village named Prato Sesia in Italy, in the year 1888. They also called themselves as the 'Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul'. They observed the rules and regulations of St. Vincent de Paul. In 1933, Bishop Joseph Casteli of the Diocese of Novara supported and promoted these voluntary movements. Under the leadership of Bishop Joseph Casteli, both the volunteer groups joined together and began to work together. Finally both the communities decided to amalgamate and to form as a single community. Understanding that it was the Will of God they followed the directions of Bishop Joseph Casteli. On 6th January 1939 the new community was formally recognized as a religious Congregation and received the status of the diocesan right. The new community was named after 'Sisters of charity of St. Vincent de Paul.' The community had a steady growth and began to be spread in various parts of the world. On 27th September 1977 on the feast of St. Vincent de Paul, the Congregation received the Papal approval and it was elevated as a religious Congregation of Pontifical Right. St. Vincent de Paul was chosen as the heavenly patron of the Congregation.

The main Charism of the Congregation is to serve the poorest of the poor. Hence the Congregation takes up various ministries like caring the sick and the suffering people; running orphanages, schools, visiting the rural areas to meet the poor in view of knowing their needs and desires; caring the aged people especially those who are abandoned; assisting in the parish ministry such as giving catechism classes to the young and the adults, animating the youth etc. Today the Congregation is spread in many countries with more than 200 members. In Italy the

Congregation has 12 Houses, in Brazil 3 Houses, in Africa 7 Houses, in France 1 House and in India 2 Houses. In India the Congregation is working in the dioceses of Ranchi and Simdega. The Congregation firmly believes in the words of St. Vincent de Paul who said "little flock, do not be afraid" and moves with firm conviction to serve the poorest of the poor.

2. Vincentian Marian Youth (VMY) Priest Advisor of Vincentian Marian Youth in India

Rev. Fr. Rajesh Lakra CM of the North Indian Province is nominated as the new Priest Advisor of the Vincentian Marian Youth in India in the place of Late Rev. Fr. Bimol Kumar Singh CM who passed away unexpectedly in December of 2013. Vincentian Marian Youth in India were waiting to get an energetic and enthusiastic Advisor in the person of Fr. Rajesh Lakra CM. The annual motto 2014 of VMY expresses the significant role of Priest Advisors of VMY. The young men and women of VMY cry out to their advisors to walk with them as they deepen their faith. They want the advisors to guide and share their life in good times and in bad times. The Advisors are to nourish their desire to attain a deeper knowledge of Christ and to establish a more intimate relationship with Blessed Virgin Mary. They are called to strengthen the members of VMY to be authentic agents of change and true servants of the poor. The Vincentian Family in India wishes to congratulate Fr. Rajesh, the new Priest Advisor for his new ministry and assures sincere prayers to realise the motto of VMY 2014.

3. Sisters of Charity of St. Joseph and St. Mary (SCJM)

Sr. Lilly Pallipurath SCJM is re-elected for the second term as the Provincial Superior of the Ranchi Province of the SCJM sisters. She was born on 13th December 1960. She made her first profession in the year 1982. While she was rendering her service in nursing line, she was elected as the Provincial. Vincentian Family in India expresses deep appreciations and congratulations to Sr. Lilly.

4. Society of St. Vincent de Paul (SSVP)

1. Annual General Body Meeting – 2014

The Annual General Meeting of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul was held in Goa from 12th to 14th September, 2014 under the President ship of Bro. V.M.J Balaswamy, National President. Amidst its regular activities such as submission of Annual Report and Accounts and presentation of Reports by various officers in charge of specific activities, there were also visits to a few special projects of Goa Central Council. Bro. T. Joseph Pandian, International

Territorial Vice-President participated in the meeting on the inaugural day as representative of the Council General. He shared with the members the recent activities of the Council General and also spoke on Vincentian Spirituality. The Telugu version of SSVP Manual, translated by Bro.V.Rajeeswara Rao was inaugurated by Most Rev. Filipe Neri Ferrao, Arch Bishop of Goa.

2. Inauguration of New Conferences in Northern Region of India, Rourkela Diocese

17th August 2014 was a memorable day for the SSVP in Odisha, because four new Conferences were formally opened for the first time in the diocese of Rourkela. More than 40 lay people joined the SSVP. Rt. Rev. Kishore Kujur, the Bishop of Rourkela, Rev. Fr. Laurentius, the Vicar General and few Parish Priests were present in the formal induction ceremony. During the inaugural address, the Bishop of Rourkela extended a formal welcome to SSVP to open several Conferences in his diocese. Rev. Fr. Francis Puthenthayil CM, National Coordinator of VFI was the resource person of the day. Through power-point presentation he explained the purpose, nature and spirit of SSVP in a very simple way. Bro. John Baptist Behera, the Extension Officer of North and North Eastern Regions of SSVP and Bro. Sarath Chandra Singh, the President of Berhampur CC were present to witness the event.

SSVP is ever grateful to Mr. Leonard Ribello and Tobias Lakra for taking a lot of initiative to establish SSVP in Rourkela diocese. Moreover they have taken meticulous care to organize the programme very systematically.

Balasore Diocese

21st September 2014 was yet another memorable day for the SSVP in Odisha, because four new Conferences were formally opened for the first time in the Barbil-Joda area. Rev. Fr. Lawrence Thalikulam together with Rev. Fr. Rajesh Ddungdung organized a one-day programme to mark a formal inauguration of four Conferences in the Parishes of Barbil and Joda. Rev. Fr. Francis Puthenthayil CM, the National Coordinator of VFI through a power-point presentation explained the purpose, nature and spirit of SSVP. Bro. John Baptist Behera, Extension Officer of North and North Eastern Regions of SSVP was present to witness the event. Bro. John Baptist Behera on behalf of the National Council expressed profound gratitude to Rev. Fr. Lawrence Thalikulam the Parish Priest of Barbil, Rev. Francis Xavier Singh, the Associate Priest of Baribil and Rev. Fr. Rajesh Ddungdung, DC sisters and SABS sisters of Barbil for taking steps to establish Conferences in their respective areas.

FIAT MISSIONARIES OF ST. VINCENT DE PAUL

Fiat Missionaries of St. Vincent De Paul is a lay movement in Catholic Church working for the Global Evangelization. The charism and spirituality that drives the movement is that of St. Vincent De Paul who sent out many to spread the Word of God all over the world.

This missionary movement- Fiat Missionaries of St. Vincent De Paul- was founded by Ceetly George Mechery from Ollur, Thrissur. His life was very much influenced by the zeal of St. Vincent De Paul whose main concern was the salvation of souls.

Ceetly was deeply involved in the various ministries that sprang out from the renewal movement that swept the Church in India and especially in Kerala. Despite his involvement in the charismatic ministries he felt that something was missing and he, in the course of time realized his 'call within the call' and dedicated himself to be a fulltime missionary. He was taking care of many family business activities then, and gradually he relieved himself of all such commitments and dedicated fully to the Lord entrusting his family consisting of his wife and children to Him.

In the beginning he was very confused about the course of action to be taken. All that he was sure was that all should know the Lord, especially those from outside Kerala. The only refuge and consolation was the prayer. He used to spend days in prayer in churches outside Kerala where he felt there was need for evangelization. These endeavors with real life situation in the states outside Kerala prompted him to start a magazine 'Fiat' to familiarize these mission areas to the church in Kerala.

FIAT MISSION:

In the year 2008 Ceetly, founded FiatMission with some others who were willing to be fulltime missionaries for the spread of the Kingdom of God. Those were the days; the Christians in Orissa were cruelly persecuted. Fiat Missionaries went out to Orissa to pray for the tortured Christians there. The Lord responded to the ardent prayers in front of the Blessed Sacrament. Though the situation there now is peaceful Fiat Mission is still continuing the intercessory prayers. The Lord has blessed and

anointed Fiat Mission and it has spread out to ten other states in India and many places outside India and the intercession for the evangelization of the world is going on.

BIBLE PROJECT

The interaction with the faithful in the mission areas leads to the painful realization that they do not have the Word of God sufficiently available. St. Vincent De Paul says that 'by giving the Word of God you are giving Lord Jesus Himself' and this prompted Fiat Mission to prepare, print and distribute the Catholic Bible in the mission areas. It was a disheartening fact that there were many faithful who had no access to the word of God in their mother tongue. This was put before the Lord and prayers on that enabled Fiat Mission to deliver Bibles in the languages of Maram, Karbi, Oriya, New Testament and Complete Bible in Hindi. The process is on for the making of the Bible in the languages Bengali (Bengal, Bangladesh) Bodo (Assam), Tangkhul (Manipur), Wancho, Adi (Arunachal Pradesh), Malagasy (Madagaskar-Africa), Kimeru (Kenya).

RETREATS

The Lord has blessed Fiat Mission in such a way that there is always at least a retreat going on in some part of the World. Fiat Mission has decided to conduct retreats in areas where the people cannot even afford the conveyance. Fiat Mission is also conducting retreats for the priests and the religious enabling them to rediscover their dedicated life so that they proclaim the Word of God enthusiastically which according to St. Vincent De Paul, is the charism of priestly call.

The training program conducted by Fiat Mission ensures that the people who come across the Word of God are equipped to live the life of a true disciple. Each training program lasts for months and hundreds of such people trained by Fiat Missionaries of St. Vincent De Paul are working for the spread of the Kingdom of God in various parts of the world.

The main areas of focus of Fiat Missionaries of St. Vincent De Paul, by the infinite grace of God, can be summarized as below.

FIAT MISSION BIBLE MINISTRY

This ministry aims at the making and distribution of Bibles in languages where the word of God is scarcely available or not available.

- + The Bibles are distributed at highly subsidized rates and if needed free of cost.
- + 20,000 Bibles are released monthly

FIAT MISSION DISCIPLESHIP TRAINING PROGRAM

People who have encountered the Lord are trained to be true disciples of the Lord.

- + Three month long program of retreat and witnessing conducted at different venues moulding the participant to live for the Gospel of the Lord and bear true witness to the Lord.

- + 11 such programs are already completed.

FIATMISSION INTERCESSION MINISTRY

This ministry aims at the salvation of the souls, Global Evangelization and seeking intercession for those who are in need of prayers.

- + Prayer centers in ten states in India.
- + 19 adoration centers where Fiat Missionaries are interceding.
- + Prayer centers in Kenya and Madagaskar in Africa.

FIATMISSION MEDIA MINISTRY

- + Fiat magazine distributed free of cost.
- + Amulya children's magazine for imparting the values of Christ to the Hindi readers.
- + Daily Word of God SMS service to 20,000 people.

FIATMISSION RETREATS

Retreats are conducted at various parts of the world

- + Retreats in inaccessible remote villages where no retreats are conducted till date.
- + No retreats in Kerala.
- + Retreats exclusively for priests and religious.

CEETLY GEORGE



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