



Caridad - Misión  
VICENTE  
DE PAUL  
1660  
2010  
LUISA DE  
MARILLAC  
350° aniversario

Famille Vincentienne Internationale  
Familia Vicenciana Internacional  
The Worldwide Vincentian Family



Rome, March 26 2010

*To the entire Vincentian Family*

My brothers and sisters of the Vincentian Family,

May the grace and peace of Our Lord Jesus Christ fill your heart now and forever!

The following attachment is an abbreviated version of the minutes of the meeting that was held in Paris 28 – 31 January 2010 for the International Vincentian Family Leaders. As mentioned in the report itself, there were some new developments as to how we went about celebrating this Assembly. We have formed a new dimension of the Vincentian Family leaders, the Executive Committee of the Vincentian Family, made up of the three original groups founded by Saint Vincent de Paul: the AIC, the Congregation of the Mission, the Daughters of Charity and a fourth group, the Society of St. Vincent de Paul. The reason for this is explained in the abbreviated minutes.

The second event that I would like to highlight was the ongoing formation session of all the Vincentian Family leaders that were in attendance, and whom we hope to invite every two years for this ongoing formation. As the reports points out, I find this extremely important, especially to help all of us of the Vincentian Family to have a richer experience of how the charism is being lived today. We will do that by inviting a new group of the Vincentian Family every two years and we will ask those who have participated previously to share some unique and creative ways that we are being faithful to the charism.

I personally am excited about the fact that every year we are moving forward and coming to know one another better. Over time, once we do get to know each other better, there will be greater confidence and greater ability to work together with the poor and on their behalf.

As we have mentioned in a number of different places, one of the goals of our 350<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration is precisely to focus on the collaboration that took place in a very unique and special way between our Founders and others of their time. One of the outcomes of our collaboration has to be greater communion among us, rooted in the person and centrality of Jesus Christ as followed and understood by our Founders

Saint Vincent de Paul, Saint Louise and others who have lived faithfully our charism of charity and mission.

During our international meeting, which was shortly after the devastating earthquake in Haiti, much of our attention and certainly our prayer was focused on our brothers and sisters in Haiti and the Vincentian Family membership there. We, at this time, have more information concerning those who were victims of the tragedy and we pray in a special way for the different members of the Vincentian Family who lost their lives or lost family and friends in the earthquake.

As you can see from the minutes, there was an opportunity for Father Maloney to share with us the activities of the Executive Committee of the Vincentian Family for the micro-credit project in Haiti. We can understand from our own Vincentian heritage how providential our choice was of selecting Haiti as a 350<sup>th</sup> anniversary project. At this time we are focusing on immediate help as well as other recovery projects that are being developed by the Vincentian Family in Haiti. Along with that is the project itself, for which we have received, and continue to solicit seed money. The highlight will be the opening of the web page. The webpage address is [zafen.org](http://zafen.org) which will be launched world-wide on 1 April. It is a unique opportunity to make a long-term difference in Haiti. Zafen is creole for “It’s our business.” So soon we will offer you the opportunity to lend or contribute to the sustainable economic development projects in Haiti conducted by the Vincentian Family and to provide support to micro-, small- and medium-size enterprises so together we can bolster the Haitian economy, creating new jobs and improving the lives of those living in some of the poorest conditions in the world. The Vincentian Family Haitian project is a systemic change project.

Another highlight of the gathering of the International Leaders of the Vincentian Family was the two conferences that were delivered to help us deepen our spirituality. The first was delivered by Sister Antoinette Marie Hance who spoke about Saint Louise de Marillac’s life, commitment to collaboration and spirituality. We could easily imagine Louise de Marillac as a very capable organizer and excellent administrator, deeply spiritual, great collaborator with Vincent de Paul and Confraternities of Charity, a very credible model for our own times.

The second conference was delivered by the former Superior General, Father Robert Maloney. Using the horizon shifts of the last 50 years as a context, he spoke of how the Vincentian Family can approximate the ways of the great saint by becoming contemplatives in action and continue to collaborate in the evangelization and development of the poor, joining forces with them in the fight for justice, putting into practice the process of systemic change and being active promoters of peace.



I believe that we accomplished our goal of this ongoing formation session to help us to reflect more deeply on our Vincentian spirituality and the need to collaborate more intensely following faithfully the example laid out for us by our holy Founders.

Let me take this occasion to wish all of you, as members of the Vincentian Family, a happy and holy continuation of our Jubilee Year. From now until the feast of Saint Vincent de Paul which will conclude our activities, I pray that our lords and masters the poor, will forgive us for the meager and humble attempts that we make to show them God's love in and through our accompaniment of them.

Happy Easter to all of you.

Your brother in Saint Vincent,

G. Gregory Gay, C.M.  
Superior General