

## **Guidelines for the members of Vincentian Family in India**

### **Preamble**

**We, the members of the Vincentian Family in India, impelled by the love of Christ and inspired by the spirit of St. Vincent de Paul commit ourselves to live and serve in a spirit of communion and mutual collaboration to work for the evangelization of those who live in poverty, according to the signs of the time.**

### **Part I**

#### **Nature and Purpose**

##### **Article 1. Name**

It is called Vincentian Family, because there are common elements that unite its members together as a Family, having St. Vincent de Paul as founder, patron, inspiration, or Vincentian spirit/charism and desire to serve the people living in poverty.

##### **Article 2. Our Position in the Church**

Responding to the call of Jesus to be at the service of the people living in poverty, in a direct or indirect way, in the tradition of Vincentian Charism, we are challenged to seek effective and concrete ways to address the root causes of poverty. Although we belong to different Societies of Apostolic Life or Institutes of Consecrated Life or any lay Associations, public/private, we desire to organize ourselves as members of Vincentian Family, while retaining the autonomy of each branch and their juridical status in the Church. The Vincentian Family in India is not a new movement or a juridical organization.

##### **Article 3. Vision**

To empower people who live in poverty to realize the reign of God in their lives.

##### **Article 4. Mission**

- We are:**
- **Called** to live and share the Vincentian Spirit.
  - **Chosen** to respond to God's call to evangelise and be evangelised by people living in poverty.
  - **Sent** to the whole world to witness the compassionate love of Christ.

**We Believe:** - In the presence of Christ in people living in poverty.

- In the manifestation of the love of God by being at the service of people living in poverty with affective, effective and inspiring love.
- That the source of our strength and unity is the Eucharist, the sacraments, the Word of God, prayer and the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary.
- In the strength of collaboration to bring about the reign of God here on earth.

- We intend:**
- To be prophetic witnesses in the world in word and deed.
  - To involve actively those who must live in poverty in transforming their lives.
  - To risk our lives and resources in this endeavour.
  - To work tirelessly to destroy the structures of poverty

#### **Article 5. Objectives**

- To promote collaboration, solidarity and networking among the branches of Vincentian Family in India.
- To recognize and become deeply aware of the challenging reality of those who live in poverty. To collect and circulate information about the present day realities, needs, hopes and fears of the people living in poverty.
- To develop new forms of collaboration in formation among the members of the various branches.
- To deepen the Vincentian charism in light of present day needs.
- To strengthen common apostolic endeavours among the members of the Vincentian Family.
- To undertake common ministries in light of the emerging realities of the people who live in poverty.

#### **Article 6. Principles**

- Openness of each branch within an ecclesial context of service to the marginalized.
- Respect for the autonomy and uniqueness of each branch.

- Spirit of solidarity, mutual support and equality among the different branches.
- Recognition of the experience of each branch and its contribution to the Vincentian heritage.

## **Article 7. Priorities**

- Promotion of the Vincentian tradition and spirituality by collaborating in the initial and ongoing formation programmes.
- Responding collectively in times of natural calamities and disasters.
- Undertaking common ministries for persons living in poverty.

## **Article 8. Formation programme**

### **§ 1. Formation Team**

A team of five members, excluding the chairperson shall be constituted to plan for various formation programme.

### **§ 2 Formation Chairperson**

He/she shall be elected by the General Body whose function is to conduct various programme planned by the General Body or the Executive Body. The term of office shall be for three years and can be re-elected.

### **§ 3 Common Programme:**

Common formation programme will be organized for all branches of the Vincentian Family.

### **§ 4. Special Programme**

The National Executive Body in consultation with the Regional Executive Body will help to organize special programme for a particular branch.

### **§ 5. Each branch will share the financial expenses.**

## **Part II**

## **Organization**

## **Article 9. National Coordinator**

**§ 1** To promote and foster unity and collaboration among the various branches of the Vincentian Family, there shall be a National Coordinator.

**§ 2** She/he shall be elected by the General Body from among the members of the Vincentian Family for a term of three years and can be re-elected. She/he need not be a major superior.

### **Article 10. National Secretary**

**§ 1** To assist the National Coordinator, a secretary shall be elected by the General Body for a term of three years and can be re-elected.

### **§ 2 Functions**

- a. To take minutes of the meetings of the General Body and the Executive Body
- b. To assist the National Coordinator with correspondence
- c. To keep the records of the VF
- d. To collect and prepare news for the VF magazine.

### **Article 11. National Secretariat**

To facilitate the coordination of the Vincentian Family there shall be a Secretariat which will function under the direction of the National Coordinator.

### **Article 12. General Body**

**§ 1.** It shall consist of the members of various branches which belong to the Vincentian Family in India. The members shall be:

- a. The executive body members will be ex-officio members.
- b. Major Superiors of various Societies of Apostolic Life and Institutes of Consecrated Life who share the Vincentian spirituality and charism in India
- c. National President and a few selected persons not more than 6 persons of each lay associations
- d. Regional Coordinators
- e. Chair person of the various commissions and committees

### **§ 2 Meeting**

An annual gathering of this body will be held once in a year, preferably at the last Saturday - Sunday of February.

### **§ 3 Functions**

- a. Review and evaluate decisions and activities /carried out in the past year / planned for the year.

- b. Plans for future involvements at the regional or national level for the current year
- c. Decides to undertake initiatives for common ministry among people living in poverty.
- d. Raises funds for the endeavours of common ministry and for the operational needs of the National Secretariat
- e. Approves the budget for each year.
- f. Elects the National Coordinator, National Secretary and members of the Executive body for a term of three years.
- g. Approves the entire formation programme planned for the members of the Vincentian Family.
- h. Proposes amendments to the guidelines for the Vincentian Family.
- i. Resolves any conflicts that may arise.

### **Article 13. National Executive Body**

**§ 1.** It shall comprise of the National Coordinator, National Secretary and **seven** members, who shall be major superiors or presidents of associations. To facilitate a wider representation, more than two members from same branch will not be elected. There should be at least one representative from the Lay Associations.

### **§ 2. Meetings**

The Executive Body will meet at least twice in a year. The National Coordinator presides over the meeting.

### **§ 3. Functions**

- a. Animates and coordinates common activities of the Vincentian Family. Communicates to the members and the General Body from time to time through annual reports, circulars, bulletins, etc.
- b. Implements the resolutions of the General body.
- c. Arranges special formation program for the members.
- d. Monitors the common involvements and prepares their documentation.
- e. Appoints committees/commissions for the implementation of projects.

### **Article 14. Regional Executive Body:**

It shall comprise of the various branches that belong to the Vincentian Family in the region. The members are:

1. Major superiors of the region or their delegates
2. Heads of lay associations – not more than 6 (For SSVP all the CC presidents and National executive members present in the region)
3. Regional Coordinator and secretary elected by the Regional Representative Body.
4. Zonal Coordinators

### **Article 15. Functions of the Regional Executive Body:**

1. Elects the regional coordinator and secretary.
2. Fosters unity and collaboration among the various branches of Vincentian Family.
3. Implements the common activities planned by the General Body and Executive Body.
4. Gathers and circulates information on present day realities, needs, hopes and fears of the persons who live in poverty and makes proposals to the General Body.
5. Monitors the functions of the Zonal and local bodies.
6. Gather news from the branches for publication in the magazine as well as on the website.

### **Article 16. The Regional Coordinator:**

Coordinates and promotes the unity and collaboration among the branches of the Vincentian Family in each region<sup>1</sup>. He/she shall be elected by the Regional Representative Body and subsequently confirmed by the General Body.

### **Article 17. Requirements for the Regional Coordinator:**

1. He/she shall be a member of the Vincentian Family but need not be a major superior.
2. He/she should have sufficient knowledge about the Vincentian Family and Vincentian charism.
3. He/she should have the necessary qualities of a good leader.
4. He/she must have a genuine interest for the causes of the poor.
5. He/she must be truly outstanding in integrity, charity and transparency.

### **Article 18. Term of Office:**

1. He/she shall be elected for a term of three years and can be re-elected.
2. He/she should not be removed except for grave reasons to be estimated by the General Body.
3. He/she can resign by submitting his/her resignation in writing to the General Body. Acceptance by the General Body is required in order for the resignation to become effective.

### **Article 19. Functions:**

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<sup>1</sup> The following are the regions: Kerala, Tami Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Western (includes the States of Goa, Maharashtra, Gujarat and Rajasthan), Eastern (includes the States of Orissa, Chattisgat, Madhya Pradesh and West Bengal), North Eastern (the seven States of North East), Bihar-Jharkhand and Northern (all other States not included in the other lists)

1. Coordinates and promotes the unity and collaboration among the branches of the Vincentian Family in the region in accordance with the direction given by the General Body and Regional Body.
2. Arranges seminars, prayer services, recollections, common feast day celebrations etc. in order to deepen Vincentian Charism as well as unity among the various branches.
3. Conducts the meeting of the regional Executive Body and presides over it.
4. Implements the resolutions of the General Body.
5. Promotes and coordinates the Vincentian Family in the diocesan and parochial level.
6. Identifying the urgent needs of the poor of the region which are to be recommended for common action.
7. Reporting to the General Body about the various activities conducted in the respective region.

**Article 20. Regional secretary cum Treasurer:**

1. Helps the Coordinator for the correspondence to various branches when needed.
2. Prepares agenda for the meeting and takes minutes of the meeting.
3. Maintains proper network with various branches.
4. Collects news for the National magazine.
5. Maintains the files and documents of the Vincentian Family of their respective region.
6. Collects information regarding causes of poverty.
7. Presents report in the regional and national meetings.

**Regional Meetings:**

Regional Executive Body meetings will be held twice a year or more often as required - on the last Sundays of Jan and July of the year?

**Article 21. Zonal Bodies.**

In order to realize the Vincentian Family in grass root level, the regional coordinators shall form Zonal bodies.

**Article 22. Members:**

The Zonal body consists of all the local superiors/heads of the various branches of Vincentian Family in the area (for SSVF all the presidents of the Area Council and the local Conference).

**Article 23. Meetings:**

Will be conducted twice a year and will be presided over by the Zonal Coordinator.

**Article 24. Functions:**

1. Elects the Zonal coordinator and secretary
2. Fosters unity and collaboration among the various branches of Vincentian Family.
3. Collects and circulates information on present day realities, needs, hopes and fears of the people who live in poverty and makes proposals to the Regional Coordinator.
4. Organizes common celebration of feasts of the Saints and Blesseds of the Vincentian Family.
5. Evaluates common endeavours and presents future plans.
6. Organizes prayer services / recollection for special occasions.

**Article 25. Qualifications for the Zonal Coordinator:**

1. He/She shall be a member of the Vincentian Family.
2. He/she should have sufficient knowledge about the Vincentian Family and Vincentian charism.
3. He/she must have a genuine interest for the causes of the poor.
4. He/she must be truly outstanding in integrity, charity and transparency.

**Article 26. Term of Office:**

1. He/she shall be elected for a term of three years and can be re-elected.
2. He/she should not be removed except for grave reasons.
3. He/she can resign by submitting his/her resignation in writing to the Regional Body.
4. Acceptance by the Regional Body is required for the resignation to become effective.

**Article 27. Functions:**

1. Coordinates and promotes the unity and collaboration among the branches of the Vincentian Family in the diocese/zone in accordance with the direction given by the Regional Body.
2. Arranges seminars, prayer services, recollections, common feast day celebrations etc. in order to deepen Vincentian Charism as well as unity among the various branches.
3. Convoques meeting of the Zonal body and presides over it.
4. Implements the resolutions of the Regional Body.
5. Promotes and coordinates the Vincentian Family in the parochial/local level.
6. Identifies the urgent needs of the poor of the region which are to be recommended for common action.
7. Reports to the General Body about the various activities conducted in the respective zone.



### **Article 28. Zonal secretary cum Treasurer:**

1. Helps the Coordinator for the correspondence to the various branches when needed.
2. Prepares agenda for the Zonal meeting and writes the minutes of the meeting.
3. Maintains proper network with various branches.
4. Collects news for the National magazine.
5. Maintains the files and documents of the Vincentian Family of their respective Zone.
6. Collects information regarding causes of poverty.
7. Presents report in the regional meetings.

### **Article 29. Local Units**

In order to realize the Vincentian Family in grass root level, the Zonal coordinators shall form local units.

### **Article 30. Members:**

The local body consists of all the members of the various branches of Vincentian Family in the parish/ deanery

### **Article 31. Meetings :**

Will be conducted at least twice a year and will be presided over by the local Coordinator.

### **Article 32. Functions:**

1. Elects the Zonal coordinator and secretary
2. Fosters unity and collaboration among the various branches of Vincentian Family.
3. Collects and circulates information on present day realities, needs, hopes and fears of the people who live in poverty and makes proposals to the Zonal Coordinator.
4. Organizes common celebration of feasts of the Saints and Blesseds of the Vincentian Family.
5. Evaluates common endeavours and presents future plans.
6. Organizes prayer services / recollection for special occasions.

### **Article 33. Requirements for the local Coordinator:**

1. He/she shall be a member of the Vincentian Family.
2. He/she should have sufficient knowledge about the Vincentian Family and Vincentian charism.
3. He/she must have a genuine interest for the causes of the poor.

**Article 34. Term of Office:**

1. He/she shall be elected for a term of three years and can be re-elected.
2. He/she should not be removed except for grave reasons.
3. He/she can resign by submitting his/her resignation in writing to the Zonal Body.

**Article 35. Functions:**

1. Coordinates and promotes the unity and collaboration among the branches of the Vincentian Family in the local in accordance with the direction given by the Zonal/local Body.
2. Arranges seminars, prayer services, recollections, common feast day celebrations etc. in order to deepen Vincentian Charism as well as unity among the various branches.
3. Conducts meeting of the local body and presides over it.
4. Implements the resolutions of the Zonal Body.
6. Identifies the urgent needs of the poor of the locality which are to be recommended for common action.
7. Reports to the Zonal Body about the various activities conducted in the respective locality.

**Article 36. Local secretary cum Treasurer:**

1. Helps the Coordinator for the correspondence to various branches when needed.
2. Prepares agenda for the meeting and takes minutes of the meeting.
3. Maintains proper network with various branches.
4. Collects news for the National magazine.
5. Maintains the files and documents of the Vincentian Family of their respective locality.
6. Collects information regarding causes of poverty.
7. Presents report in the Zonal meetings.

**Article 37. Fund**

In order to meet the operational and administrative expenses of the National Executive body each branch shall contribute a sum as decided by the general body from time to time.