



## VINCENTIAN FAMILY BY-LAWS

### MISSION

Based on the common charism, “*The love of Christ urges us,*” and the common mission to serve those living in poverty, the members of the Vincentian Family Executive Board, commit to collaboration. This collaboration is more than joint efforts in ministry; it invites all members to an appreciation of who the Vincentian Family is as followers of Saint Vincent de Paul so that it becomes the consistent way of life.

### ARTICLE I

#### THE INTERNATIONAL VINCENTIAN FAMILY

##### **Section 101. Goal**

The Vincentian Family understands that collaboration means never to do alone what can best be done together. It involves thinking, planning, and prioritizing together. Collaboration needs to be fluid, based on the issues and the circumstances of each individual branch of the Family.

##### **Section 102. Membership**

Members of the International Vincentian Family are:

1. Congregations/associations founded by St. Vincent de Paul (Louise de Marillac / Frederic Ozanam, etc.)
2. Congregations/associations explicitly mentioning the charism and spirituality of Vincent de Paul as source of inspiration or Vincent de Paul as patron saint (mentioned in Constitutions)

To be registered as a member, we expect that the respective congregation/association explicitly recognize themselves as a member, willing to collaborate with other branches as far as possible.

##### **Section 103. Relationship of Branches with the Vincentian Family Executive Board**

The Vincentian Family is composed of approximately 165 branches whose vision and mission flow from the charism and spirituality of St. Vincent de Paul. As such, they share:

1. A common heritage,
2. A sense of commitment and dedication with and for those living in poverty
3. A way of living the charism of Charity.
4. The relationship of the Vincentian Family Office with the National Councils.

The Vincentian Family is incarnated in the regions encompassed, as far as possible and relevant, by National Councils. The strength of a National Council determines the vitality of the Vincentian Family’s outreach to the poor. The VFEB delegates the VFO to stay connected with the National Councils. However, in countries where no National Council can be established but where the Vincentian charism is present, the VFO will have direct contacts with the respective Branch.

#### **Section 104. The Role of National Councils**

1. As far as possible a National Council shall be established in each country.
2. National Councils (NC) represent the different branches of the Vincentian Family in the countries.
3. The (NC) ground the work of the Vincentian Family Office. The VFO assists in connecting the Councils with each other to enable mutual support in respective ministries while increasing the ability to recognize that they are a part of the International Vincentian Family.
4. The NC are responsible for sharing information from grassroots with the International Office.

#### **Section 105. Collaboration Opportunities for the National Councils**

As the National Councils collaborate, they experience:

1. Opportunities to share best practices;
2. Identification and sharing formation resources;
3. Opportunities to create effective works with and for those in poverty;
4. Facilitation of connections between NC and the branches of the VF;
5. Opportunities to know and experience the larger VF, including the Commissions and the Vincentian Family Executive Board.

### **Article II**

#### **The Vincentian Family Executive Board**

#### **Section 201. Responsibilities**

The Vincentian Family Executive Board creates enthusiasm and motivation among the branches of the Vincentian Family (VF) for the living of the Vincentian charism and spirituality. This is not a juridical body, but does make decisions or offer recommendations for, or give approval to, activities of the VF including:

1. The study of the charism and spirituality of the Vincentian Family in diverse cultural contexts;
2. The appointment of the Executive Director and team of the international Vincentian Family Office (VFO);
3. The annual themes for VF reflection;
4. The theme for international gatherings of international VF leaders;
5. The establishment of the mandates of VF Commissions;
6. The appointment of the coordinators and members of VF Commissions;
7. The study of the needs of the VF and its response to those needs, especially regarding the creation of new VF Commissions; and
8. The study of the annual VF operational budgets.
9. Representing the Vincentian Family on certain occasions or events, when asked.

#### **Section 202. Meetings of the Vincentian Family Executive Board**

The Vincentian Family Executive Board shall meet at least twice a year with at least one of these meetings in person. Any action required to be taken at a meeting of the Board may be taken without a meeting if all members of the VFEB consent thereto in writing. Such consents are filed with the minutes. The Executive Director prepares the agenda in consultation with the President

and the VFEB. The final agenda shall be approved by the VFEB at the start of the meeting. The meetings will be presided by the president of the VFEB. He can delegate the facilitation of the meetings to another person.

A designated office staff person shall record all the proceedings of all meetings and all corporate resolutions and shall perform such other duties as shall be required.

### **Section 203. Executive Board Structure**

The Vincentian Family Executive Board is composed of

1. six permanent branches: four (4) founding branches, two (2) Federation branches,
2. and four to six (4-6) rotating branches of the VF.

Discussion with the VFEB occurs before any additions/changes occur with the rotating branches of the Family.

### **Section 204. Number of Representatives**

Each VFEB member branch may be represented by two people. One of the members is the superior general/executive director/international leader of the congregation/federation/association. A federation can delegate another sister instead of the leader of the federation, preferably a superior general. A second person can accompany the leader.

### **Section 205. Founding Branches**

The Vincentian Family Executive Board is composed of four Founding Branches including The International Association of Charity (AIC), The Congregation of the Mission, The Daughters of Charity, and The St. Vincent de Paul Society.

### **Section 206. Federation Branches**

Federation branches include: the Sisters of Charity Federation of Strasbourg (includes fourteen (14) congregations that are branches) and the Sisters of Charity Federation of North America (includes fourteen (14) congregations that are branches).

### **Section 207. Rotating Branches and the composition**

It is important to include members from diverse cultural backgrounds (Africa, Asia, South America, Europe) when possible. There should be a balance between congregations of sisters, brothers and priests and the laity.

### **Section 208. Purpose of Rotating Branches**

At least four to six (4-6) rotating branches will provide the following:

1. Continuity on the Vincentian Family Executive Board, if not of a specific person (who may go out of office), then of the branches which serve on the VFEB and at the same time.
2. Continuity is important but at the same time, a flexible schedule of renewal is essential.
3. The gift of the inclusion of additional branches which brings with it a greater ownership by the larger Vincentian Family of the work of the Board as well as new insights into the charism.

### **Section 209. Methodology and Duration for the Rotation of Branches**

1. A Branch is invited to serve on the Vincentian Family Executive Board for the duration of maximum six years. At the conclusion of the term, the board will approve the membership of a new branch.
2. The rotation of Board members should be staggered to assure continuity of the work of the Board.
3. Branches which are leaving the Board will be aware of this one year before the end of their mandate. The VFO maintains a rotation schedule.

### **Section 210. Selection of Rotating Branches**

1. Discussion with the Executive Board occurs before any new branch is invited. The board finalizes a list of three (3) branches and decides who is the priority. The president invites the prospective candidates and informs the Executive Director who informs the board and arranges the orientation.
2. Following the decision, the Executive Director sends a formal letter of invitation in the name of the Board over the signature of the President of the Board.

### **Section 211. Executive Board Members Responsibilities**

Each board member commits to the following:

1. Participates in an orientation session given by the VFO before attending the first board meeting;
2. Lives the core values and Mission of the Vincentian Family and models for the members of the respective branch;
3. Assumes an active role in the meetings including review of materials;
4. Reviews and approves the annual budget;
5. Response to requests from the VFO for information and
6. Participates in follow-up actions for the Letter of Appeal sent to all General Leaders;
7. Collaborates with Executive Director to confirm Commission members and chairpersons;
8. Stimulates members of the branches to be actively involved in the Family;
9. Determines membership and the rotation of Board members;
10. Hires the Executive Director (A Search Committee is appointed by the Board and usually includes the President or his designee).

### **Section 212. Executive Board Relationship with Branches**

Each board member:

1. Champions the unity of the Vincentian Family in their evangelization and service of those living in poverty;
2. Creates opportunities to strengthen common efforts to serve the poor;
3. Raises the consciousness of the Vincentian Family to the existence of the Vincentian Family Executive Board, the Vincentian Family Commissions, and the Vincentian Family Office which have been created to assist all branches in their ministries.

**Section 213. Membership in the Vincentian Family, supported by the work of the Executive Board**

1. Acknowledges the value of belonging to an entity greater than one called the Vincentian Family;
2. Assists each branch in the extension of their sense of mission globally and the effectiveness of their manifestation of the Charism;
3. Provides opportunity for greater collaboration in the mission and thus may provide a cooperative base out of which the Charism may be incarnated;
4. Helps members and branches social approach always implies an ecological approach; it must integrate questions of justice in debates on the environment, to hear both *the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor.*”

**Article III**

**The International Vincentian Family Office**

**Section 301. Role of the Vincentian Family Office**

The International Vincentian Family Office works closely and collaboratively with the Vincentian Family Executive Board. The director and office staff coordinate activities, provide information, and deliver formation experiences on the heritage and charism of St. Vincent de Paul to the Branches of the Vincentian Family throughout the world. This includes promoting communication and collaboration among the various branches of the Vincentian Family, as well as opportunities for leadership to meet and develop ways to work together. The office’s focus assures timely follow through for the VFEB mandates in addition to support for Commissions and National Councils.

**Section 302. The Vincentian Family Executive Director**

The Executive Director position is full-time, and the director is responsible for developing role descriptions of all full time and part time Associate Directors needed in the office. Additional responsibilities include:

1. Assists the Executive Board in articulating and implementing Vincentian Family goals and priorities.
2. Serves as the principal liaison between the Commissions or assigning other Associate Directors to function as liaisons.
3. Directs, coordinates, and oversees the ongoing administration of the International Office, including the supervision and evaluations of the Associate Directors and other staff.
4. Facilitates communications with the Executive Board, Branches and Commissions.
5. Networks and collaborates with other Vincentian Family constituents.
6. Represents and speaks on behalf of the Vincentian Family to external publics as directed by the Board.
7. Advances the Branches of the Vincentian Family through personal contacts.

The role description of the Executive Director must be approved by the VFEB and shall be evaluated annually.

### **Section 303. Supervision of the Vincentian Family Executive Director**

The President of the Vincentian Family Executive Board supervises the Executive Director. Annually an evaluation will be taken place by the President + one member of the VFEB. They will report the outcome to the Board in an executive session. The Executive Director is responsible for evaluations of the office staff.

### **Section 304. The Vincentian Family Office with the Vincentian Family Executive Board**

The Executive Director and office staff are the vehicle through which the aspirations of the board are conducted globally. They ensure the continuity of the work of the Vincentian Family Executive Board annually.

The Executive Director shall develop a Code of Conduct, to be approved by the VFEB.

### **Section 305. Role of Vincentian Family Executive Board with the Vincentian Family Office**

The Vincentian Family Executive Board:

1. Provides the VFO's mandates;
2. Collaborates with the President in the hiring of the Executive Director and appointments of the staff;
3. Receives from the Executive Director the annual budget for all activities of the VF, including the work of the Commissions.
4. The VFO, in its communications strategies, raises the international visibility of the VF and the Vincentian Family Executive Board.

## **Article IV**

### **The Vincentian Family Advisory Council**

#### **Section 401: Role of the Vincentian Family Advisory Council**

The Vincentian Family Advisory Council (VFOAC) was established to assist the International Office with its mandate regarding the support and development of the National Councils. Members are appointed by the Executive Director and staff. The members who participate in the work of National Councils internationally, and who also come from a wide range of experience with them, help keep the office grounded in the local realities of the Vincentian Family. People chosen to be on the VFOAC are part of the Family in different countries.

#### **Section 402. Appointment and Terms of the Vincentian Family Advisory Council**

The Executive Director and office staff appoint the Vincentian Family Advisory Council members. The terms of their appointment, meeting schedules, etc. are established by the Executive Director.

#### **Section 403: Responsibilities and Terms of the Vincentian Family Advisory Council**

The Vincentian Family Advisory Council (VFOAC) collaborates with the Executive Director and staff to support and develop the National Councils. Responsibilities include:

1. Developing a channel of communication;
2. Assist office with motivation and encouragement of the works of the National Council. More specifically, they:

- a) Help Councils maintain their focus on collaborative efforts on behalf of those in need, recognizing that we can accomplish more together than alone;
- b) Help Councils to receive the formation they need to function as effective Councils;
3. The first line of contact in regions where a National Council is not established.

Terms of office, meeting schedules, etc. will be established.

## **Article V**

### **The Vincentian Family Commissions**

#### **Section 501. Vincentian Family Commissions**

Based on the Vincentian values, Commission members translate a commitment to the poor into concrete projects which raise awareness among a wider public and inspire and encourage branches to make concrete commitments. Through the work of the commissions, the Vincentian Family and the core values of St. Vincent de Paul becomes more widely known and extends the work of the Vincentian Family.

#### **Section 502. Relationship of the Vincentian Family Commissions with the Office**

The VFO supports the work of the Commissions through:

1. Facilitating the sharing of information (e.g., annual reports) among the Commissions;
2. Collating the operational budget for the work of the VF;
3. Creating a data base for VF activities;
4. Seeking opportunities to foster dialogue and collaboration with one another; and
5. Assisting with advancement efforts, if needed.

#### **Section 503. Relationship of the Vincentian Family Commissions with the Board**

The Vincentian Family Executive Board works with the Commissions by:

1. Providing mandates
2. Reviewing annual reports and making recommendations;
3. Monitoring the finances included in the annual budget;
4. Collaborate with Executive Director to create a new Commission or disband existing Commission if the mandate has been fulfilled;
5. Dialogue with the appointment of coordinators and members;

#### **Section 504. Relationships of the Vincentian Family Commissions with each another**

All Commissions share a common purpose: to assist the Vincentian Family in its service of those living in poverty. Thus, it is important for the Commissions to seek ways in which each can benefit the other:

1. The Commissions share annual reports when appropriate. Each Commission will add the following components:
  - a. Explain how it has related to the other Commissions during the past year, and
  - b. Discern if there exists in the VF the need for the creation of a new commission to better meet the needs of those in poverty today.

2. The Commissions will seek to dialogue with each other to better model collaboration for the Vincentian Family. Some specific areas for dialogue include:
  - a. The use of social media;
  - b. The inter-connectivity of Commission web pages; and
  - c. The sharing of best practices and lessons learned for everyone's mutual benefit.

#### **Section 505. Relationship of the Vincentian Family Commissions with National Councils**

The Commissions share in the responsibility for the growth of the Vincentian Family with the National Councils.

1. Where National Councils exist, the work of a Commission begins collaboration with them.
2. A Commission should make every attempt not to establish an alternate structure in a country so that its specific work may continue to be developed.
3. Commissions need to always be aware of the cultural and linguistic realities of a country in the preparation of their programs.

All Commissions share a common purpose: to assist the Vincentian Family in its service of relationship of the Commissions with Vincentian Family National Councils (NC)

**Approved in Philadelphia, PA, USA**  
**June 27, 2023**  
**Feast of Saints Peter and Paul**



## **Addendum #1:**

### **Belonging to the Vincentian Family Movement**

#### ***For Branches of the Vincentian Family***

Criteria for recognition of an entity as a Branch of the Vincentian Family is that:

1. They are formally established;
2. They have written by-laws / constitutions / norms;
3. They are recognized by some competent local authority, either ecclesial or civil;
4. They have taken their inspiration from Saint Vincent de Paul and/or other Vincentian Family Founders; and
5. They define themselves as following the Vincentian Charism.

#### ***For individuals who identify themselves as Vincentian:***

Along similar lines, for persons to describe themselves as Vincentian, the following would be necessary:

1. They are in some observable way engaged in some form of service to those in poverty;
2. They claim that Vincent de Paul, or one of the Founders, serves as their patron, model, or guide - there are ways in which this may be expressed;
3. They may or may not be directly connected with a work of the Vincentian Family. But often they may be a:
  - student or alumni at one of our schools;
  - an administrator or staff person at a Vincentian institution: hospital, university, medical clinic, social service agency, etc.;
  - a member of a Vincentian Family parish or other ministry - without belonging to a Branch;
  - a collaborator with a Vincentian Family ministry who has made the Charism their own;
  - a former member of a Branch (JMV, or seminarian, or ex-priest or ex-sister) who still lives the charism.

**May 2019**

## **Addendum #2:**

### ***Cooperative Agreement between the Branches and the Vincentian Family***

#### **Preamble**

Based on our common charism and our common mission to serve those living in poverty, we, members of the Vincentian Family, commit to collaboration. This collaboration is a way of life and is more than joint efforts in ministry: it invites us to an appreciation of who we are as followers of Saint Vincent de Paul

We understand that collaboration means never to do alone what can best be done together. It involves thinking, planning and prioritizing together. Collaboration must be fluid, based on both a specific concern as well as the circumstances of each individual branch of the Family.

#### **Vincentian Intentionality**

The VF is composed of approximately 165 active Branches whose mission and charism flow from the vision of St. Vincent de Paul. As such, they share:

- A common heritage,
- A sense of commitment and dedication with and for those living in poverty,
- A way of living the charism of Charity, and
- A way of inculturating the Gospel values of Charity and Justice.

Therefore, as an intentional member of the Vincentian Family, a Branch:

1. Affirms and celebrates its unique manifestation of our common Vincentian Charism;
2. Acknowledges the value of belonging to a Movement broader than itself called the Vincentian Family;
3. Assists other Branches in the extension of their sense of mission globally and the effectiveness of their manifestation of the Charism;
4. Provides opportunities for greater collaboration in the Mission in both the local and international arenas; thus, they establish a cooperative base out of which the Charism may be incarnated; and
5. Contributes its resources (personnel and/or financial) to those common projects of the Vincentian Family which are being undertaken.

Currently, these efforts may include, but not be limited to these endeavors:

- a. The Vincentian Family's global initiative on homelessness and the most vulnerable;
- b. The support and coordination of Vincentian Family activities through national councils;
- c. The creation of a culture of vocations in the Vincentian Family; and

- d. The decrease of the Branches carbon footprint to better respond to the call of Pope Francis' encyclical, *Laudato Si*, 49: "Today, however, we have to realize that a true ecological approach always becomes a social approach; it must integrate questions of justice in debates on the environment, so as to hear both the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor."

The Vincentian Family Executive Committee, which serves as the coordinating body of the Vincentian Family will:

- I. Work through the Vincentian Family Office to establish a methodology by which each Branch may get to know the other Branches of the Vincentian Family;
- II. Champion the unity of the Vincentian Family especially in its efforts in the evangelization and service of those living in poverty;
- III. Seek out and create concrete opportunities to strengthen our common efforts to serve the poor;
- IV. Raise the consciousness of the Vincentian Family to the existence of the broader Vincentian Family Movement, the Commissions which have been established to serve the Vincentian Family, and the Vincentian Family Office, which acts in its name.

In January 2017, to mark the 400<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the birth of the Vincentian Charism, the Vincentian Family Executive Committee approved a working paper which served to describe the relationships existent within the Vincentian Family Movement, entitled *Living into a Structure*. The above-mentioned statements are derived from this document.

**18 January 2018**  
**Philadelphia**

## Addendum #3:

### Rational for National / Regional Councils

At this time in our history, those who serve in a National Council seek together to respond to the needs of the poor in the countries they represent. They are to take counsel with each other and to collaborate in works of charity and systemic change. However, any group could fulfill this needed service...so the question remains...why the model of a National *Council*?

To answer this, it is necessary to reflect on five dimensions:

1. The history of the Councils of the Church over these last centuries
  2. The history of Council/counsel as understood and used by Vincent De Paul.
  3. The Church in the Modern World and the movement of Synodality.
  4. The unique spirituality of the Councils and the needed formation of members.
  5. The call of our spirituality, as Vincentians, to be “Mystics of Charity”
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1. To examine the early and on-going development of the Catholic Church over the centuries, one cannot help but be struck by the distinct methodology that developed in the gatherings of the early members. These Councils borrowed from the different structures of the times being used to hold debates, national conversations, and making strategic decisions. But one powerful thing differentiated the early gatherings of the Christians. *It was the firm belief that the Holy Spirit was present in their midst as Jesus had promised.* Thus, the foundation of all the Councils and their perseverance through many struggles was this firm conviction in the power of the Holy Spirit.
  2. It is quite clear that Vincent also believed in this power of the Holy Spirit and in his remarkable way, established a “process” for evoking the gift of counsel in the gatherings of the Daughters in their initial foundation. He termed these gatherings ‘Councils’ and their focus and work always involved the proper discernment of God’s will through invocation of the Holy Spirit. This emphasis is deep within the culture of the Vincentian charism and is constantly in need of reflection and adjustment.
  3. One of the greatest Ecumenical Councils was Vatican II as it was the first to address the place of the Church in the Modern World. It shifted the gaze of a Council away from looking at the issues within the Church to the issues of the Church’s place in the Modern World. What is the missionary place of the Church in the trials and tribulations of all the People of God? How is the Church called to identify and discern, together, these injustices calling out to God? Today, we are gradually coming to understand “Synodality” as the process most needed in our Church. Synodality reaches into the understanding that all the People of God are to be included in this discernment of God’s will for our corporate and global future.

4. Given all the above, the choice of a National Council flows easily out of our tradition. But it is a challenge to be much more than a group of people, deciding together what is needed to address the concerns of a country. Rather, the members of the Council are called to be deeply rooted in the ways of the Holy Spirit. Theirs must be a formation going beyond textbooks or intellectual knowledge. A Council calls for a formation steeped in understanding the Spirit of God and the many gifts and virtues needed to see God's will for a country, a state, or a geographic location. It is a corporate discernment beyond strategic planning and collaboration, both of which must flow from the direction of the Holy Spirit. The result of this taking counsel will be seen in the fruits of the actions.
  
5. There is a spiritual call to conversion of those who serve in the National Councils. This spiritual conversion is focused on the reality before them. They are not called to only respond together to the needs of the poor, but to learn as Vincent did, that the profound love of God flows through them to those who are most abandoned. Without a very deep personal relationship with this Christ, good works remain but that, good works. This call to deepen in Christ's love is both individual and as a Council. The counsel that they seek from their brothers and sisters flows from this reality. The willingness to grow and deepen in this deep, passionate love of God, is the first criteria for membership. All other skills flow from this mysticism.

“This mysticism enflames the charism received and transmitted by Vincent de Paul, makes it dynamic, attractive, and capable of faithful and bold recreations. ***This dynamic occurs within the different situations and contexts in which we, members of the Vincentian Family, are challenged by the cries of the poor, the calls of the Church and the signs of the times.*** Without a renewed mysticism that is nourished by a profound experience of God, the Vincentian charism and the mission that originates from it would lack principle, vitality, and a prophetic dimension ... it would be like a house built on unstable and sandy terrain.” <http://vincentians.com/en/saint-vincent-de-paul-mystic-charity-mission/>

**Addendum #4:**

**Mission of the Vincentian Family Office**

The Vincentian Family Office,  
as the administrative arm  
of the Vincentian Family Executive Board,  
accompanies the Vincentian Family  
in its development and growth  
of our shared  
Vincentian charism.

## Addendum #5:

### Role Description: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The Executive Director is the senior executive officer of The Vincentian Family Office. In this full-time position, the director is responsible for working collaboratively with the office staff and all constituents to commit to the common charism, "*The love of Christ urges us*" and the common mission to serve those living in poverty.

#### MAJOR RESPONSIBILITIES

- Hires Associate Directors and staff as needed based on budget approved by the Vincentian Family Executive Board (VFEB)
- Directs, coordinates, and oversees the ongoing administration of the International Office, including the supervision and evaluations of the Associate Directors and other staff.
- Assists the (VFEB) in articulating and implementing Vincentian Family Movement goals and priorities.
- Prepares the agenda in consultation with the VFEB and ordinarily facilitates the board meetings.
- Serves as the principal liaison between the Commissions and task forces or assigning other Associate Directors to act as liaisons.
- Facilitates communications with the Executive Board, Branches and Commissions.
- Networks and collaborates with other Vincentian Family constituents.
- Represents and speaks on behalf of the Vincentian Family to external publics as directed by the Board.
- Advances the Branches of the Vincentian Family through personal contacts.
- Engages with Advancement / Fundraising Boards – European Association and actively seeks opportunities for fundraising where possible.
- Collaborates with Associate Directors for direct contact with superiors general/international leaders and national / regional councils globally.

#### QUALIFICATIONS

- Knowledge of charism and commitment to the promotion of charism
- Well organized
- Ability to initiate and organize new projects
- Ability to collaborate with others
- Ability to plan and host meetings
- Good listening, relational and process skills
- Ability to communicate with various publics
- Good energy level for long hours and multi-tasking
- Willingness to travel
- Basic computer skills
- Working knowledge of country in which the Office is located and at least one additional language

#### ACCOUNTABILITY

The Executive Director is accountable to the Vincentian Family Executive Board and is evaluated annually by the Vincentian Family President in collaboration with the VFEB. **June 2023**

## **Addendum #6:**

### **VINCENTIAN FAMILY OFFICE ADVISORY COUNCIL (VFOAC)** *Terms of Reference*

The Vincentian Family Office Advisory Council (VFOAC) assists the Vincentian Family Office (VFO) with its mandate to support and develop National or Regional Councils (NC). Its members come from a wide range of experience and are indicative of the local realities of the Vincentian Family (VF).

A VFOAC member is committed to the Vincentian Charism and serves in the Vincentian tradition. The Vincentian tradition includes a common incarnational spirituality that experiences God in encountering and serving those living in poverty. Members reflect a diversity of cultures and languages which mirror the areas in which the Vincentian Family serves internationally.

The VFOAC identifies and builds relationships among the VF branches and within the national or regional coordinating groups. The VFO appoints members of the VFOAC and informs the Vincentian Family Executive Board. Terms of office, meeting schedules, etc. will be established by the Council Members.

#### **Qualifications:**

- Member of the VF,
- Committed to attending meetings,
- Follow through on goals/objectives on a timely basis,
- Committed to developing national and regional councils within designated area(s), and
- Reflects the diversity of the international VF.

#### **Responsibilities:**

1. Assists the VFO Team in its support and development of the NC, especially through:
  - a) At least bi-annual contact with national/regional presidents/coordinators,
  - b) Annual update of Council members' names, projects, and organizational information, and
  - c) Annual assessment of a national/regional council for growth.
2. Forms a channel of communication:
  - a) From the VFO: to help motivate and encourage the work of the NC, especially making them aware of resources that may be available to them on the international level, and
  - b) From the NC to the VFO: to share information and recommendations from the grass roots to the VFO.

**May 2023**