

The Editor

With the strength that the Three in One God gives us, we bring to your hands the May issue of *Nuntia*. This month we also celebrate important Marian feast days and, in many parts of the world, the role, life, work, and figure of the mother is emphasized. This woman not only has given us the gift of life, but also, for many, the gift of faith, turning it into the pillar of our vocation. Blessings for your mother, dear confrere, and prayers for those whose mothers are with the Virgin Mary in heaven, with the “all loving” God.



The Superior General

In Tanzania

From 1-11 May, he visited the Vincentian Family in Tanzania. He spent the first days with the confreres and students of this Mission of the Province South India. He had the opportunity to visit all the houses of the Mission.

The first day he travelled to Morogoro where the Seminary is. There he met the director and the seminarians. The following day he travelled 12 hours to Songea, passing by Njombe, where he met Pascal, the first Tanzanian confrere, who accompanied him to Songea. The third day he had a meeting with the Vincentian Family. The following day he visited Mbinga where there are two communities of confreres.

Then he travelled to Mwanza where the Sister Servant of the International Mission of the Daughters of Charity in Tanzania, the Visitatrix, and the Director of the sisters of this mission were waiting for him (the director is a confrere of the Province of the Congo, which is the province responsible for this mission). The following day he traveled five hours to visit the Bishop of Musoma, passing by Masanga where the sisters have the mission.



Among the works of this mission, the sisters have a school; a cultural center for integral formation that focuses especially on awareness against F.G.M., Female Genital Mutilation. It is an initiation ritual originally performed on girls in some countries of Africa, the Middle East, and others. It consists in the ablation or tissue removal of any part of the female genitalia. Though it is a cultural practice, it is also a form of violence against the woman, who remains mutilated for life.

Also among the works, they have a technical education center called Lindalva Justo, and a clinic where there are the facilities of the DREAM Project too. He also visited a place, three hours from there, where they plan to open a new mission. They have a social service center as well called Rosalie Rendu Center. The international mission there is made up of four Congolese sisters, two from Madagascar, one from India, and one from the United States. They are awaiting two sisters: one from the Congo and the other from India.



In Rome and Paris

From Tanzania he returned to Rome (12 May), where he had different works of office. He also travelled to Paris to meet with the Provincial Council of the Daughters of Charity of France North and the majority of the sisters of this province (approximately 200).

On 18 May, taking advantage of his stay in Paris, he gave a conference to the Sister Servants of different communities worldwide. On the 19th, he took part in the beginning of the *Pilot Project* for the Formation of Vincentian Leaders, organized by the Commission of Collaboration for the Vincentian Family. Thirty-five different countries participated in this. The Pilot Project is in English and it is hoped to open it to other languages in the future.

When he returned to Rome, he had the meeting of Superiors General whose theme centered on authority and obedience in religious life according to the directives of Vatican II.

In Como

At the end of the month, he made a trip with three confreres (Giuseppe Turati, Iván Sánchez, and Juventino Castillero) to visit the confreres of the community designed in Como (province in the north of Italy, on the border with Switzerland). The place is impressive not only for its natural beauty, but also for its people. There the confreres do Vincentian outreach, working in networks with the Vincentian Family and other Institutions. Together with the Daughters of Charity they care for the needs of the poorest, an example of which is the dining room for the poor. They count on the help of volunteers from the parish and other neighboring parishes. They also have a welcome center for women deprived of freedom, who are in the process of reinsertion into society.



During his stay there he also had the opportunity to share with the confreres of this community: Francesco Gonella, Giuseppe Iseppi, and Virginio Pianta, who were very excited about the visit and who could enjoy his historical anecdotes. He too had the opportunity to share with the confreres Pietro Fanzaga, Visitor of the Province of Turin, and Mario Grossi, superior of the house of Turin, as well as the theology student, Lorenzo Durandetto, who works there on weekends, and Santina, who is affiliated to the Congregation and has worked in Como for more than 30 years. He also had the occasion to meet different members of the Vincentian Family.

Return to Rome



On 28 May, he had a Mass with the sisters of the Province of Rome, a farewell Mass before the birth of the new province.

On the 30th, 31st and 1 June, he took part in the celebrations of the reconfiguration of the Provinces of Siena, Turin, and Rome of the Daughters of Charity, which form a new province called Saint Vincent Italy.



Rwanda and Burundi: Two sister nations, but unequal

Zeracristos Yosief
Assistant General

Mission of the CM in Rwanda and Burundi

This is a mission I admire, in spite of its having initiated in a simple way, with slow, but sure, progress. It was Robert Maloney, the Superior General at the time (1997), who bravely encouraged the Colombian Province to open the mission of Rwanda and Burundi: two countries that emerged from the ashes of shameful tribal warfare and terrible genocide. It was a very important moment for the history of these countries.

The Assembly of the Province of Colombia, if I remember correctly, in 1997, approved the offer of Father Maloney and decided to send three missionaries to initiate this work. Of them only one, Juan de Jesús Ávila, reached his destination, because the other two did not manage to obtain entry visas for Rwanda.

Father Ávila settled in Nemba, in the north of Rwanda, in October 1998. One year later another missionary came, Rogelio Toro, who, after linguistic, cultural, and environmental preparation, settled in Rwisabi, Burundi. These two confreres shape our historical memory of the beginning of the Mission in Rwanda/Burundi. Many other Colombian confreres followed them, some are still present and others have returned to their homeland.

We are all conscious and know well that the initial moment of a mission is difficult. Father Juan remembers and counts the difficulties he had to face in beginning this mission. Once the big difficulties were overcome, the confreres developed a "*Justiniana*" missionary methodology after the manner of Saint Justin De Jacobis, who was Italian by birth, but Abyssinian by vocation. In fact, in the evangelization of Africa, to do and to give was prevalent on all sides, while our Colombian confreres presented an unprecedented face in the evangelizing work of the Church on the African Continent: **frugal, poor, simple, humble, discreet, but happy**. They did not travel by *Land Cruiser*, but on foot or with and like the local people by public transport, which, incidentally, is always crowded.

This unusual attitude of the missionaries surprised many people and the Rwandan clergy. Their equality with the conditions of the poor people, with a simple lifestyle, an evangelizing method, I would say "against the tide," for our African mentality. The people begin to ask: Who are these people? Why are they poor like us and to our measure? Father Juan told me that, at first, the people called them "*poor whites*," a beautiful name.

My Abyssinian ancestors called Saint Justin De Jacobis, "*the humble and holy white one*." We are close to that! Yes, our confreres with their humble, discreet, and poor attitude have testified to being followers of the poor Jesus, who "*has nowhere to rest his head*" (Luke 9:58). And this is not anything, they have presented the transfigured face of Jesus crucified, the content of all evangelization past, present, and future. Truly worthy of praise.





The initial objectives of our presence in Rwanda-Burundi were principally two: to supplement the lack of diocesan priests in the Church in Rwanda and to assist the Daughters of Charity in both countries. It was a moment of crisis: after the fratricidal war in Rwanda and Burundi, many parishes were without priests. This was due to the fact that the priests were either murdered or had escaped to neighboring countries.



The Church in Rwanda, emptied of its ministers, was forced to plead with religious communities to intervene on behalf of the Rwandan people. In short, the first motive of the mission was to respond to the emergency of the lack of clergy. Now after 14-15 years, the situation is totally different. The Diocese of Ruhengeri, where we opened the first mission (Nemba), today has 50 priests for 11 parishes (although there exist many centers that function as parishes). Now the question would be: What sense has our presence in Nemba, in Rwanda? What sense has our presence in Rwisabi? We can insist on these questions given the understanding that the motive for which we had opened these missions has been more than achieved. I think in a different way:

- ⇒ Now that the emergency no longer exists, the Vincentian community, together with the entire Vincentian Family, can rethink, reevaluate, and, especially, qualify our presence. If we accept that “*substituting for the priests in the parishes*” was not even our Vincentian vocation, therefore, thanks to God, we can center on that which is specific to our Vincentian vocation, building our “valuable” Vincentian presence, as has always been done in the Church in Rwanda-Burundi. In fact, I believe that the region possesses a valuable opportunity to improve its presence in this area.
- ⇒ It is true there are many clergy now in Rwanda and Burundi, but what type of clergy, with what spirit? What will be our specific role in the midst of the Church in Rwanda-Burundi? During the time that I have been in Rwanda, I was moved to see an indigent Rwandan father. Why? His story is very particular: he, on returning from exile, after escaping the genocide, did not find any of his family. His entire family was exterminated by the genocide. This father, at not finding anyone from his family, lost his head and became indigent. Stories like these, unfortunately, abound in this place. To fill the emptiness, many are alcoholics. So much so that a confrere told me: “*we are almost like in the time of Saint Vincent.*” This is the main reason why our presence in this region can be more relevant and effective.



- ⇒ The two lungs of the Vincentian Charism are: **the Mission and the Formation of the Clergy**. If we so wish, now they can be even more visible and credible in Rwanda and Burundi. Bearing in mind the future of those native to the countries, the new forces that are arising in the region, thanks to the efforts of the Province of Colombia, they now need to sensitize and to raise awareness of the charism to the Rwandan and Burundian diocesan clergy.

COVIAM Meeting

From 1-7 May, the Visitors' Conference of Africa and Madagascar (COVIAM) met in Kigali, the Capital of Rwanda. The majority of the Visitors were present with exception of the Visitors of Eritrea and the Congo and the Regional Superior of Tanzania, because the meeting coincided with the visit of the Superior General to Tanzania. At this meeting two new members were welcomed: Sixtus Njoku Ukachukwu (Nigeria) and Alexandre Rafanomezantsoa (Madagascar).



COVIAM with the preparatory group and the philosophy students of Kagbayi



COVIAM with DC - Provincial House of Kigali, Rwanda

The board of COVIAM has changed: Getahun Fanta, Visitor of the Province of Ethiopia, is the president. The Visitor of Madagascar, Alexandre Rafanomezantsoa, is the vice-president.

The Mission of Chad is entrusted it to the Province of Nigeria, which, in the name of COVIAM, will manage the mission together with the General Curia.

Two others were bid farewell: Guillaume Leukeumo, Regional Superior of Cameroon and Outgoing President of COVIAM, and Richard Benson, Superior of the Mission in Kenya, who is returning to his homeland (USA) as professor at the DePaul University in Chicago.

The meeting was held in the house of the Dominican Sisters of Africa, a community of local foundation. It was a fruitful day. Some of the significant decisions of the meeting are the following:



COVIAM with the Internal Seminarians of CM in Kagbayi, Rwanda

COVIAM has given approval for common theological formation in Africa. As is known, this idea has been around for many years, ever since COVIAM was founded in 1994. For the first time the members of the Conference have expressed the desire to open theological formation to all African candidates in a single place. (For the present, it is only a desire, because there are several things that must be studied and decided by the competent authorities, but, at least, it is a beginning). The chosen place is Nairobi, Kenya. If everything goes well it will begin in 2015. To make this possible, COVIAM established a preparatory commission: *Sixtus Njoku Ukachukwu, Alexandre Rafanomezantsoa, and Linus Aniekan Umoren.*



Called to Be Icons in the Modern World

With the topic: "Refounding Religious Life: A call to be icons in the modern world," a seminar for young confreres organized by APVC (Visitors' Conference of Asia-Pacific) was held. The seminar took place in the Priests' Home and Retreat Seminar Center Belwadi, in Mysore, Province of South India.

This formative meeting was carried out from 21-26 April 2013 and 46 young confreres, among them one from the Vice-Province of Vietnam, participated. The warmth, the love, and the energy of the young confreres impregnated the environment in Belwadi.

The seminar began on the 22nd with Holy Mass presided by Wilson Chellan, Visitor of South India. Then Saji Pathrapankal introduced the highly competent specialist, who facilitated the seminar, Father Joe Mathias SJ, Director of the National Center of Vocational Service. He motivated and strengthened the confreres with the topic "Refounding Religious Life: A call to be icons in the modern world."

In sessions he addressed: the challenges the Church faces; how the consecrated person can be aware of apostolic efficiency through creative fidelity and thus turn into a passionate lover of Christ; and adequate motivation in relation to vocation, formation, and mission in the journey toward self-discovery. The seminar concluded with an entertaining get-together and picnic in the GRS Fantasy Park in Mysore.

Congratulations and blessings to the participants in this seminar, as well as to the members of APVC, organizers of such an important formative activity.

New missionaries in South India

On 17 May 2013, twelve theology students of the Province of South India made their definitive incorporation in the Congregation of the Mission. On the 18th, they were ordained deacons by His Excellency Thomas Antony Vazhapilly, Bishop of Mysore. These were days of great blessing for the Province. Confreres and other religious, as well as members of the various branches of the Vincentian Family, participated in the celebration. Congratulations.





Seminar on International Mission for Seminarians of the Province of Nigeria.

Between 21 January and 1 March 2013, Justin Eke visited the formation houses of the Province of Nigeria (Internal Seminary in Ogobia, Postulatum in Amakom, Theology in Enugu, and Philosophy in Ikot Ekpene).

He also visited the Minor Seminar in Abuja, run by the Vincenians. During his visit to the province's houses of formation, he shared with the seminarians his experience in the International Mission of Papua New Guinea (PNG). His aim, based on an idea suggested by the Superior General, Gregory Gay, was to introduce the seminarians to the importance and reality of the foreign missions and the need to be willing, upon ordination, to go in search of souls in difficult, yet needed, places.



In his presentation, Father Justin focused primarily on the very reason for the original mission of the Congregation – reaching out to those in need of salvation. He reminded the seminarians that Father Vincent wanted, together with his brothers, to bring Jesus to those who had been abandoned.

During the different seminars, Father Justin explained the status of the International Mission in a very simple way, so that seminarians and future missionaries of our Congregation could understand what is entailed in applying for the mission. He explained the difference between the “International Missions” and other foreign missions. While he referred to all the International Missions, he emphasized the pastoral and missionary requirements in PNG, the place where he had worked. In the same way he presented the challenges of this mission and the spiritual benefits, not just for the missionary, but mainly for those to whom the mission is addressed. He indicated the need for missionaries in these areas and how evangelization would be possible with volunteer missionaries for these missions.

He stopped to explain the realities of “cultural shock” involved in the missions. With the help of personal examples of his mission in PNG, he referred to the great challenges for the mission. He reminded the seminarians that no culture is really better than others. He maintained that the missionary spirit would reveal this hidden reality.

In his final words to the seminarians, Father Justin said: “Think of Mission, as you contemplate ordination.”



Nominaciones / Confirmationes

KOPYSTYNSKI Andrzej Rafał	29/04/2013	Visitor U.S.A. New England
NWANKWO Damian Ikechukwu	29/04/2013	Director DC Nigeria
ROCHE Paul	29/04/2013	Director DC Great Britain
PASSERINI Giancarlo	31/05/2013	Director DC Saint Vincent -Italy

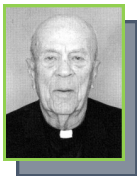
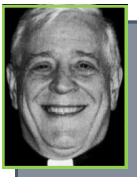
Ordinationes

DULSKI Tomasz	Sac	POL	25/05/2013
HILER Jakub	Sac	POL	25/05/2013
JAKÓB Paweł	Sac	POL	25/05/2013
SEJBUK Adam	Sac	POL	25/05/2013

Necrologium

Requiescat in pace



Nomen	Cond.	Dies ob.	Prov.	Aet.	Voc.
GORMLEY William J. 	Sac	02/05/2013	Orl	91	70
ABDEL MASSIH HANNA Alfy	Sac	13/05/2013	Ori	63	33
DENIG Stephen J. 	Sac	22/05/2013	Orl	64	44