

5-2003

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Recommended Citation

(2003) "The Visitors' Conference of the C.M.: Presentation," *Vincentiana*: Vol. 47: No. 3, Article 6.
Available at: <http://via.library.depaul.edu/vincentiana/vol47/iss3/6>

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The Visitors' Conference of the C.M.

Presentation

The Editorial Board of our *Vincentiana* magazine considered it opportune to dedicate one of the issues to a new reality of the Congregation of the Mission: the existence of the Visitors' Conferences, which may be seen as the “five faces of the Congregation” as Fr. José María Nieto had suggested in his presentation about the Visitors' Conferences in Dublin in 2001 on the occasion of the Visitors' (Cf. *Vincentiana* 46 [2002] 239).

CLAPVI (the Latin American Conference of Vincentian Provinces) was born in Santandercito, Colombia, in 1971 and groups together 14 provinces (Ecuador, Central America, Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Curitiba, Rio de Janeiro, Fortaleza, Mexico, Peru, Puerto Rico and Venezuela).

CEVIM (the European Conference of Visitors of the Mission) came into existence in Paris, France, in 1990 and is made up of 20 provinces (Austria, Sts. Cyril and Methodius, Paris, Toulouse, Germany, Ireland, Barcelona, Zaragoza, Madrid, Salamanca, Holland, Hungary, Naples, Rome, Turin, Portugal, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia and the Orient).

APVC (the Asian-Pacific Visitors' Conference) came to be in Sydney, Australia, in 1994 and brings together six provinces (Australia, Indonesia, Southern India, Northern India, the Philippines and China).

COVIAM (the Conference of Visitors of Africa and Madagascar) was constituted in Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of the Congo, in 1994 and gathers together six provinces (Ethiopia, Congo, Madagascar, Mozambique, Nigeria and St. Justin de Jacobis).

The NCV (the National Conference of Visitors of the United States) had its unofficial beginning (see the history of this conference in this issue of *Vincentiana*) in Chicago in 1973. In 2002, in Rome, Fr. Robert Maloney, Superior General, “having consulted with the USA Visitors and with his own Council, established the National Conference of Visitors of the United States” (Cf. Statutes of the NCV, I. Introduction). This Conference brings together five provinces (Southern, New England, Midwestern, Western and Eastern).

“Visitors' Conferences are clear and important expressions of this interprovincial collaboration, of collaboration between confrere Visitors, and between members of provinces on the same continent (...). They arose out of necessity, the desire for mutual acquaintance, and from a common

communitarian and apostolic problematic, from the need for reciprocal aid, from a search for more global and efficacious solutions” (Cf. J. M. Nieto: “The Visitors’ Conferences,” in *Vincentiana* 46 [2002] 232).

In this dossier we offer you a history and the Statutes of each of these five Visitors’ Conferences (or “Conferences of Provinces” as is the case with CLAPVI). We thank all those who have collaborated in the writing of this article, especially with the historical part. We hope this will be useful information for the confreres: material that will help us know better the Latin American, the Asian/Australian, the European, the African and the United States “faces” of the Congregation of the Mission.

(JOSEPH V. CUMMINS, C.M., translator)