Chapter Two

First Vincentian Mission
(1852-1862)

Royal Patronage for the Vincentian Mission

Soon after the restoration of the double family of St. Vincent in Spain by the Concordat with the Holy See on March 16, 1851, Queen Isabel II, following the suggestions of the Minister of Justice, issued a Royal Decree by which a house was to be provided for the Congregation of the Mission for the residence of the Provincial Visitor. On the feast of St. Vincent de Paul, September 27, 1852, the Vincentian House in Madrid was inaugurated in the former palace of the Duke of Osuna, in Leganitos street. Twenty-two days later, on October 19, 1852, the famous Royal Cedula demanding the establishment in the Philippines of the Daughters of Charity and the Vincentian Fathers was signed by Queen Isabel II. This is considered the founding document of the Congregation of the Mission in the Philippines, and the “Magna Charta of the Vincentian Missions” in this country, as historian Fr. Manuel Gracia, C.M., fittingly calls it.¹

Although the Royal Order of Isabel II was dated October 19, 1852, it was not until July 22, 1862, or ten years later, that the Vincentian Fathers and the Daughters of Charity were finally able to set foot on Philippine soil. This was not so much due to culpable postponements, as to honest stumbling blocks and kindred difficulties in the preparation of such an important enterprise. Among the principal difficulties were the question of the suppression of the Houses of the Brothers of San Juan de Dios, the matter of financing the “adventure”, as well as the scarcity of personnel, and the delicate task of selecting the qualified staff to man the new Missions.

The financial difficulty which posed considerable problems since 1851 was solved at last on September 3, 1855. Governor General Don Manuel Crespo authorized the Ayuntamiento (City Government) to dispose from its own funds the sum of P5,000 for the travel expenses and support of twelve Sisters.²
Madrid and Manila were hoping for the quick implementation of the Queen's Royal Order of 1852. The Queen signed another Royal Decree on June 1, 1855, insisting and urging the Governor of the Philippines, Don Manuel Crespo, "to find out by all means and to propose the best way to send at once to those Islands the suitable number of Sisters..." It was found out from the Government files that the proposals made on July 23, 1851 by the Ayuntamiento of Manila, about the way of defraying the necessary expenses for this enterprise had been shelved, and nobody knew by whom. Maybe someone was interested in hindering or postponing the desires of the Queen and of the parties concerned.

On September 7, 1855, Manila Archbishop Aranguren wrote to the Director of the Sisters in Spain, Fr. Buenaventura Armengol, C.M., explaining the undue delay in the sending of twelve Sisters of Charity and some Fathers of St. Vincent de Paul to the Philippines. Some eight months later, a new Royal Order from the Queen, dated May 14, 1856, urged once more the sending of twelve Sisters of the Charity to the Philippines. The Minister of State informed the Minister of Government about the Queen's injunctions to set everything ready for that purpose, since the Governor General of the Philippines had already sent the sum of 120,664 "reales" to defray the travel expenses. This money was ready at the Office of the Overseas Department.

Thus, by 1856 it seemed that all the exterior obstacles to the Vincentian mission had been removed. Apparently, everything seemed ready, yet there remained still the most serious handicap that was to delay it for six more years: the lack of appropriate personnel, made still more acute by an internal crisis in the Spanish Province of the Congregation during those years.

The Spanish Province of the Vincentian Fathers, reestablished in Spain (after its suppression by the revolution of 1833-1836) by virtue of the Concordat of 1851, was then just beginning to gather its dispersed members and to recruit others gradually. To give a new impetus to the rising Province, Father Buenaventura Armengol, C.M., a great missionary in the United States, Mexico and Spain, was appointed to succeed Father Santassusana in the office of Provincial Visitor. Arriving in Madrid by July of 1853, he was received with great joy by the twenty-six missionaries of the newly restored Congregation in Spain. At once he visited various parts of the Peninsula, and gathered out a few Vincentians dispersed here and there. By October of that same year, he had already thirty-five priests available for active ministry, without counting Fr. Gregorio Velasco (who was to become later the first Vincentian missionary in the Philippines) and Fr. Ruiz de Tejada, who were then making their novitiate.
Internal Schism

However, the enemy of all good and the sower of dissension tried to destroy those promising hopes, and to some extent succeeded to partially spoil them. By the end of 1853, the danger of schism and separation from the obedience to the Superior General in Paris became imminent in the Spanish Province. On one side, the Spanish Government did not favor a reestablished religious Congregation dependent on some foreign Superior; on the other, there were some intriguing and ill-advised missionaries infected with the deadly plague of chauvinistic patriotism, who were favoring an internal schism in the “little Company” of St. Vincent. A spark could have been enough to ignite a conflict and a disaster.

Unfortunately, the situation became worse when the Provincial Visitor himself, Fr. Armengol, even without realizing it, became involved favorably in the separatist movement. Father Etienne, the Superior General of the Congregation, came to know about these conditions through such worthy Vincentian missionaries as Fathers Escarre, Santasusana, Igues, and the recently elected Bishop Amat.

The Father General watched the movements of the Provincial, Fr. Armengol, who was at the same time Director of the Daughters of Charity. By 1855, the General Assembly of the Congregation was convoked according to the sexennium of the Constitutions. Fr. Armengol informed the General that he could not leave Madrid, and that the Assembly might just as well consider the Spanish Province non-existent. The intriguing missionaries had succeeded in inducing Fr. Armengol to go to Rome for their schismatic intentions.

But in Rome, he met Father General, the watchful Fr. Etienne, who relieved him of his office as Provincial of the Vincentian and Director of the Daughters of Charity, and even dismissed him from the Congregation. It was a painful and stern but necessary decision. Fr. Armengol was indeed a worthy Vincentian who worked much for the restoration of the Spanish Province. He knew how to meet those difficult times with so many political changes in the Government; and he was able to bring the fulfillment what the Queen had ordered in favor of the double family of St. Vincent. But his involvement in the secessionist movement of some ill advised missionaries posed a threat to the harmonious life and unity of the Congregation. Some strong measure was imperative.

Fr. Melchor Igues, C.M., was appointed Pro-Visitor. In May, of 1856, Fr. Etienne went to Madrid, and was received with great joy and sincere affection by the missionaries and the Sisters. God’s Providence, as always, knew how to bring forth good fruits out of serious crises. The
Spanish Province was purged of mischievous elements. A good number of undesirable members were expelled, but the best ones were left behind. The Vice-Visitor of the United States, Fr. Masnou, was appointed successor of Fr. Armengol. On January 24, 1858, Fr. Masnou wrote to the General:

“If we wish, we could accept several new foundations; but I think it better to wait for some more students to finish their studies; and for that purpose it is necessary to wait still for some 18 months. We will never be in want of established Houses if we have well trained subjects. Many Bishops and Archbishops come to visit us frequently, and some are waiting eagerly for the day when we may be established in their dioceses.”

The last Royal Order urging the immediate sending of twelve Daughters of Charity — and with them, the Vincentian Fathers — was dated May 14, 1856. A copy of the said Royal Order was sent by the Minister of State to the newly appointed Pro-Visitor, Fr. Melchor Igues, C.M. In the absence of the Sisters’ Director, Fr. Igues answered on September 1 of that year, that the Congregation could not attend properly to the services expected from them by the Government for the following reasons.

“. . . this mission cannot be sent without the company of qualified Directors, able to preserve them in the spirit proper of their vocation, without which they would not be apt to render to the Establishments of Beneficence and Schools for girls, the important services hopefully expected by the Authorities of those Islands.

“And these Directors, by disposition of the holy Founder, are the priests of the Congregation of St. Vincent de Paul; hence it would be indispensable to send some of them in the company of the said Daughters of Charity, in order to stay there, forming a community in order to attend better to their duties.

“This provision was already made by Her Majesty the Queen, when in her Royal Cedula she ordered the establishment in the city of Manila of a House of Fathers of St. Vincent de Paul. And this establishment is highly recommended by His Excellency, the Archbishop of Manila. But could such a pious disposition be achieved? . . . For the time being it is not possible due to lack of available subjects ready to take over the
Seminaries. The Congregation, even if it consists of secular priests only, suffered the same fate as the religious communities suppressed in 1836; its houses remained closed, its members, dispersed all over the world; with the passing of the years and the burden of their toils, they were reduced to very few; and since there was no possibility to receive new vocations, the Institute was little less than annihilated.

"It is true that it was legally reestablished by virtue of the Concordat. But still it is, properly speaking, in its cradle, and has not even had time to form the youth it began to admit in its bosom, a little more than four years ago. They offer sure guarantee indeed to serve well, later on, in the ministries to which they may be appointed; but there is a great danger of the Congregation losing them...

"The danger lies in the law of substitutes (for military conscription), that exposes the youth of the Congregation of St. Vincent de Paul to be forced to abandon it, unless they are exempted from inclusion in the choice of drawing lots (for military service), as members of other privileged communities are exempted. It is obvious and final the disposition of said law (art. 74, nos. 3-4), in favor of professed religious and novices of six months permanence at the Pious Schools and Missions of the Philippines. Inasmuch as the Congregation of missionaries of St. Vincent de Paul has been assigned already for the missions in that country, it seems clear that such exemption should be extended also to its young members."

Fr. Melchor Igues closed this exposition declaring to the Minister of State that such petition for exemption was already made more than three years ago to the Minister of War but without any result. He was now reiterating the same request in order to be able to fulfill the orders of the Queen. The exemption from conscription for military service was finally granted to the Congregation by a Royal Order of January 14, 1857.

The same Fr. Igues wrote to the Archbishop of Manila on November 14, 1856, sending him a copy of the Exposition to the Minister of State. In his letter to the Archbishop, Fr. Igues remarked that he was informed that Fr. Armengol, the former Visitor of this Congregation had not yet answered the Archbishop's letter of September 7, 1855. And he considered it a duty not to delay further the fulfillment of this obligation imposed by the respect due to a Prelate of the Church, and the gratitude for the interest His Excellency has for the prosperity of the Vincentian Institute. He thanked the Archbishop profusely for his
desire of having in his Diocese this Congregation for the direction of the Seminary, and for the generosity with which he promised to defray the entailed expenses. However, Fr. Igues explained that having in mind all this, the project could not possibly be fulfilled at once due to the fact that the Vincentian Institute had remained almost annihilated for sixteen years that its suppression lasted, and thus there was not sufficient personnel. Since the admission of new candidates had began only three years ago, it was absolutely impossible to satisfy immediately the demands for such a mission.

Such were the causes that delayed the coming of the Vincentians to the Philippines by ten long years. At the beginning of 1858, the Provincial Masnou, who succeeded Fr. Armengol, wrote to the General that the Spanish Province was not yet in a position to accept any new missions; for that purpose it was necessary to wait still for some eighteen months. Thus, the earliest date to organise some available personnel would be in the 1860's. In fact, it was only in 1862 that the Province of Madrid was finally able to send the first Vincentian mission to the Philippines.

Selecting the Personnel

As soon as the Vincentians were installed in their new residence, in the former palace of the Duke of Osuna, they opened the Novitiate (or Internal Seminary), with Fr. Gregorio Velasco as the first novice. The admission of the thirty-six year old Fr. Velasco, an esteemed priest by his Prelate, the Archbishop of Burgos, took place that same year, on December 15, 1852 when the Vincentians were called for their Philippine Mission. That mission was postponed for ten years. The first novice became the first Vincentian Superior of the Philippine Mission.

Before the admission of Fr. Gregorio Velasco to the Novitiate, the community of Madrid was composed of eleven priests, expecting to be soon thirteen with six lay brothers and three postulants. Some six months later two priests made their novitiate. By June of 1853, the community had twenty-six priests; five months later, it had thirty-five. In October of that year, the Vincentians were ready to reestablish three of their Houses and to put up new foundations. By 1857, there were in Madrid alone, eleven priests, twelve scholastics (four of whom were already priests), twelve novices and twenty lay brothers. According to the Provincial Fr. Masnou, "a new generation was being formed in Madrid", and was slowly but steadily growing in number, animated with good spirit, piety and talent. Their vocation was then better safeguarded because of their exemption from military service, granted by the Royal Order of January 14, 1857.
In October 1861 there were already more than seventy members in the community, with nineteen students, eighteen novices, many postulants. There were some young men — very promising for their talent and virtue. The time had come at last to fulfill the long postponed order of the Queen, as well as the earnest requests and expectations of the civil and ecclesiastical authorities in the Philippines.

The Provincial Fr. Juan Masnou had been already considering and trying out possible combinations of priests and Sisters for the first Philippine Mission. At the beginning he thought of sending four Priests and two Brothers with some fifteen Sisters. Fr. Masnou contemplated on Fr. Inocencio Gomez as the best Superior of the Manila foundation. However, it was at that time that Fr. Masnou was replaced by the new Visitor of the Madrid Province, Fr. Ramon Sanz, who was appointed Provincial of Spanish Vincentians after the General Assembly in Paris in 1861. Thus, the thorny and delicate problem of assigning the pioneers for the Philippine Mission fell upon the new Visitor, Fr. Sanz. By that time, Fr. Mariano Maller was the representative before the General for the Provinces of Spain, Mexico, United States, and Brazil. Fr. Sanz wrote to Fr. Maller that this (Philippine) foundation and the possible combinations of Fathers and Sisters that should be sent have given him an exhausting work. Due to the ever recurring problem of scarcity of personnel, Fr. Masnou’s plan of sending four priests could not be carried out; Fr. Sanz decided to send only two. He agreed with Fr. Masnou in appointing Fr. Inocencio Gomez as Superior of the Mission, to be accompanied by the good and promising Fr. Gregorio Velasco.

Among the flourishing generation of Vincentians in Spain at that time, there were two lay Brothers Coadjutors, both from Burgos, who were chosen also to join the Mission to the Philippines: Brother Romualdo Lopez and Brother Gregorio Perez. Brother Lopez was born in 1830 and admitted to the Congregation at the age of twenty-four, on February 22, 1854. Brother Perez was born in 1839, and was admitted to the Congregation at the age of nineteen on September 9, 1858. Both were to spend the rest of their lives in humble ministry at the Seminary of Manila, where they served for nine and twenty-three years respectively.

By the end of 1861 everything was ready for the first Vincentian Mission of the Philippines. On December 11, 1861, Fr. Inocencio Gomez and Fr. Gregorio Velasco asked from Paris a copy of the privileges of the Congregation, the decrees of the last two General assemblies, and the Directory of Seminaries under the Congregation.

With respect to the Daughters of Charity, the usual practice was always to send abroad only those Sisters who volunteer. It was only in
exceptional cases that Sisters were ordered to go overseas by virtue of Holy Obedience, when the needs of the mission demanded it. The Superiors were not able in this case to fill up the desired number of twenty, nor could they be satisfied with only twelve, as originally requested. Fifteen were actually sent. They were:

Sr. Tiburcia Ayanz, Superior  
Sr. Teresa Bilbatua  
Sr. Francisca Gambau  
Sr. Francisca Villanueva  
Sr. Catalina Carreras  
Sr. Candelaria Albiñana  
Sr. Julita Rovira  
Sr. Eustaquia Lasa  
Sr. Casimira Marquinez  
Sr. Mariana Barral  
Sr. Juliana Azcarate  
Sr. Celestina Arroniz  
Sr. Antonia Barnol  
Sr. Maria Ana Vall Llovera  
and Sr. Victoria Mateu.

The most Honored General, Father Etienne, in his customary Circular of New Year, 1862, announced the new foundation of a mission in the Philippines.

“Our Province of Spain is busy these days with a work of great importance for the good of Religion... Upon the request and at the expense of the Spanish Government a mission of four Vincentians and fifteen Sisters is to be sent to the Philippines. This new mission is opened under the best auspices, and offers a very wide field for the works and zeal of this Province. There is in those Islands a rich crop already ripe for the harvest, and a great number of Missionaries and Daughters of Charity is needed to gather it. We are confident that the Father of the family Who entrusts us the care of this interesting portion of His vineyard, will inspire also a good number of vocations, enough to realize His merciful designs.”

Everything appeared to be settled at last. Yet, as in most of God’s works, obstacles were to be found even at the last hour. The unfortunate question of the Sisters’ toque or headdress, a ticklish trifle indeed, brought some serious trouble to this apostolic enterprise. This rather puerile problem that for long disturbed the harmony between some Provinces of the Daughters of Charity, was not yet solved at that time; it was only late in the 20th century that Pope Pius XII found a solution by going back to the original simplicity so cherished by the holy Founder.

Fr. Inocencio Gomez, the appointed Superior for the Philippine Mission, in spite of his other good qualities, was known to entertain
strange and rigid ideas about the matter. The Provincial, Fr. Masnou in 1861 and his successor, Fr. Sanz in 1862, were aware of it, yet both thought that such minutiae would not hinder his fitness as Superior; and thus, upon their request, the Letters Patent for Fr. Gomez were sent by the General from Paris. When these were handed to him with a mild indication about the question of the Sisters’ headdress, Fr. Gomez immediately rejected the Letters Patent and returned them in a burst of great excitement. The Provincial, Fr. Sanz, tried to calm him down, pointing out the serious inconveniences that might follow from his refusal, but Fr. Gomez remained stubbornly adamant, and that same night, he reiterated his irrevocable decision to refuse the mission.

On February 7, 1862, Fr. Sanz wrote to Fr. Maller in Paris, informing him about the need of sending at once new Letters Patent for Fr. Gregorio Velasco, as Superior of the Philippines Mission, who was to be accompanied by Fr. Ildefonso Moral. And he added:

Fr. Velasco will surely resist to become Superior, but he is truly virtuous and obedient. I am sure he will accept the office. Fr. Moral is quite young, but of great virtue, and he is in perfect accord with Fr. General’s decisions. He profited very much with his stay in (the Mother House in) Paris.¹⁰

Fr. Ildefonso Moral, formerly belonging to the Archdiocese of Burgos, was esteemed by his Prelate, Cardinal Alameda y Brea, who had taken him along to Toledo as his household attendant. Upon finishing his 6th year of Theology, Fr. Moral decided to join the Congregation of the Mission, and was admitted in the Novitiate at the age of twenty-four, on July 15, 1858. After his priestly ordination on March 16, 1861, he was sent to the Mother House in Paris to be trained for the office of Master of Novices. He remained in Paris for about six months only, during which time he lived intensely the pious exercises of the Congregation. God’s plan was to turn him into another cornerstone of the Philippine Mission; and for that apostolate he was unexpectedly called.

The choices made by the Provincial, Fr. Sanz, of this missionary team for the Philippines were Fr. Velasco, as Superior, with Fr. Moral, and Brothers Lopez and Perez. Towards the end of February, 1862, Fr. Sanz wrote to Fr. Maller that it was providential that Fr. Gomez should not go.

Everything was then ready. The last details for the journey had been settled; so the pioneers, accompanied by the Provincial, Fr. Sanz, left Madrid for the harbor of Cadiz on March 4, 1862. The frigate “Concepcion” was supposed to leave for the Philippines on the 24th of that month, but due to bad weather, the trip was postponed to April 4.
The ship was anchored at about $\frac{3}{4}$ of a league — some four kilometers from the harbor of Cadiz. Some passengers experienced seasickness and some momentary fright before boarding the ship. Finally the Fathers and Sisters went aboard the ship. They found there the pleasant company of seven Jesuits, thirteen Augustinian Recollect missionaries, and some fifteen to twenty gentlemen and ladies, with fifty members of the Navy at the bow of the ship.

The thirteen Recollect Fathers from the College of Monteagudo were: Fr. Francisco Lenguas, Fr. Pedro Mollar, Fr. Federico Arnal, Fr. Mariano Bernad, Fr. Toribio Bonel, Fr. Tomas Gonzales, Fr. Anselmo San Juan, Fr. Francisco Castellano, Fr. Nicanor Arniega, Fr. Francisco Mesanza, Fr. Evaristo Rivero, Fr. Vicente Angos and Fr. Francisco Arcaya, who died before arriving in the Philippines.

The Jesuits were: Fr. Victoriano Martin, Fr. Venancio Legarra, Fr. Francisco Ceballos, Fr. Francisco Luengo, Bro. Gabriel Pujol, Bro. Miguel Larrañaga and Bro. Francisco Atristain.

The Vincentian family was accommodated in the lower chamber of the ship. The place was uncomfortable, poorly ventilated, and dark. The cabins had no other opening but the door. These inconveniences however afforded greater privacy to the Vincentian family, and gave them the opportunities to follow and observe better the discipline of their community life. At dusk just before leaving the ship, the Provincial Father Sanz, gave his blessing to the Philippine Mission.

The frigate “Concepcion” began to move away from the coast by noon of the next day, April 5, hauled by the steamboat “San Enrique”, so as to sail closer to the wind. After some 45 minutes, the steamboat left, the sails were extended, and the frigate moved smoothly all afternoon and night, propelled by a North wind. For some time, the passengers contemplated the fading landscape of faraway, blurry Cadiz, the last coast of the motherland they were leaving behind. But seasickness soon began to trouble them. It was one of the most annoying mortifications of their long travel. Fr. Moral, with some Sisters, had to act as infirmarian or nurses for the rest.

The Vincentian family organized the devotional life of the passengers, including the crew. Everyday, the Holy Rosary was prayed publicly, and as many Masses were celebrated, as the weather would allow. Fr. Velasco and Fr. Moral did not miss celebrating Mass, save for some ten to twelve days when either was sick or when the ship rocked too much. The Sisters were able to receive Communion more frequently than when they were at home. All the members of the Vincentian family tried hard not to waste time in vain chatting or entertainment.
Almost two weeks after the Vincentian missionaries left Spain, the Archbishop of Manila, Jose Aranguren, O.R.S.A., who had been so keenly interested in this Vincentian mission and who successfully obtained an assurance for its realization, passed away on April 18, 1862. Months before his death, his successor had already been presented to the Queen by virtue of the Royal Patronage, of July 31, 1861, and elected for the Archeepiscopal See of Manila by the Holy See on December twenty-three of the same year. He was the most Reverend Gregorio Meliton Martinez de Santa Cruz, a native of Pradoluengo, Burgos, who at that time was the Dean of the Cathedral of Pamplona. In the Seminary of Burgos, he had been a classmate and close friend of his namesake Fr. Gregorio Velasco, C.M. His promotion to the See of Manila happened to coincide with the time when the Vincentian Superiors were making the final arrangements for the mission team to be sent to the Philippines. It seems very probable that the choice of Fr. Velasco for that Philippine mission was partly made to satisfy the desire expressed by the Archbishop-elect, Meliton Martinez, who took possession of the Manila See on May 27, 1862, when the first Vincentian Mission with Fr. Velasco as its head, was already crossing the oceans on their way to the Philippines.

Almost a month before the arrival of Archbishop Meliton Martinez, the Superior Civil Government of the Islands received an official communication from the Ministry of War and of Overseas, dated January 20, 1862, about the immediate coming of the Vincentians to the Philippines. Governor Jose Lemery transmitted this communication to the Vicar Capitular of the Archdiocese of Manila, Fr. Pedro Pelaez. As the document contained the terms of the contract between the Congregation of the Mission and the Spanish Government, the text is translated in Appendix 8 in full. The terms of this contract were established by Fr. Masnou, after consulting the Dominicans and Augustinians who had lived long in the Philippines.

The Missionaries and Sisters celebrated, as best as they could, the liturgy of the Holy Week and the popular devotions of May and June dedicated to the Blessed Mother and to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. There were other simple celebrations on the birthday of the Superior (Sister Servant) Sor Tiburcia Ayanz, and on the feast-day of the frigate’s Captain, Don Juan T. As travellers, however, they had their share of physical trials. On June 27, Father Moral felt the worst internal discomfort and extraordinary lack of appetite that had bothered him for more than a month, and that lasted throughout the whole voyage, due perhaps to lack of sleep, the change of climate, and the poor ventilation of the cabin.” The third pilot, Mr. Arcos, in the afternoon of May 3, had an extensive oral hemorrhage. Father Velasco felt a “strong headache” when the ship crossed the equator.
When Mr. Arcos was seemingly on the brink of death, everyone offered to keep watch. At night it was several gentlemen and the Lay Brothers who watched over him; by day, the Sisters. He finally recovered. But the Recollect Fr. Francisco Arcaya, died on July 15, when the ship was already sailing near the Philippine waters. The travellers celebrated the liturgical funeral service, and after midday, they buried him at sea.

Various minor accidents come occasionally to break the monotony of the long travel of 110 days, causing some momentary alarm among the passengers. Once, a sudden fire broke out, which was fortunately immediately extinguished with the use of blankets. At another time, on May 3, the ship doctor was distilling some drops of ether at about 9 o’clock at night, and accidentally caused a fire to break out causing a few moments of panic. On May 21, the rocking motion of the ship was so violent that chest and benches, etc., were tossed about on all sides. The following day, Sr. Victoria Mateu was suddenly thrown down by a movement of the ship, and consequently rolled athwart without hurting herself seriously. That same day, the main-topsail of the foremast was blown away, and a big wave swept with great noise on the ship’s prow, frightening those who were sleeping. Such were the common incidents of the long, hazardous navigation in those days.

At dawn of April 15, they saw the Cape Verde Islands, in the Atlantic, off West Africa; at dawn of July 4, they discerned the uninhabited Nativity Island at the entrance of Sunda Strait between Java and Sumatra; on July 6, they reached Java where they stopped for a while.

The feast of St. Vincent de Paul on July 19, according to the old calendar, was the best day to arrive auspiciously in the Philippines. The travel narration ends with the following description of their arrival in Manila:

“On July 20, we had a strong and favorable wind, and that afternoon, before dusk, they hoped to see the neighborhood of Manila; but we could not have that pleasure until the next day when quite early we saw the coastline of Luzon, Corregidor island, and before ten o’clock they raised the flag so that from Corregidor notice might be sent to Manila about the arrival of our frigate. By noon we passed the entrance of the Bay seven leagues from Manila. Everybody was getting ready with the hope of landing on that same afternoon, but the wind was very light and we did not cast anchor until nightfall.

“In the morning of next day, July 22, when we were all ready we saw the Health officers coming for inspection. After-
wards, several commissions came to welcome the Vincentian family. The Secretary of the Archbishop, with another person of his household, arrived to greet us in the name of His Excellency. Then, the Commission of the City Government, that of the Cathedral Chapter, another of the Chamber of Commerce, another of Public Welfare, and two gentlemen of the Conferencias (Society) of St. Vincent de Paul.

"After 8 o'clock, we went out of the small wooden house and embarked together with the gentlemen of the Commissions in the feluccas (narrow fast lateen-rigged boats characterized by a sail extended by a long spar slung to a low mast) well adorned with damasks. Four of these feluccas brought all of us in a fluvial procession to the wharf. The great crowd waiting there received us with the musical harmony of the Marcha Real (Spanish National Anthem). Many of the simple and devout Filipino folks kissed piously the habit of our Sisters. The Ladies of the Conferencias (Society of St. Vincent de Paul — Ladies branch) hugged the Sisters, affectionately and led them to enter Manila passing under a symbolic festive arcade."

Fr. Moral wrote later to Fr. General: "We could hardly realize what was happening before our eyes; we were overwhelmed by emotions that are not easy to explain; some of our Sisters could hardly restrain their tears before such signs of love and enthusiasm."

They were at once brought in carriages to Santa Isabel College, whose church was used as pro-cathedral at that time. At the church door waited their Excellencies the members of the Ayuntamiento and the whole Cathedral Chapter. A Canon greeted them offering holy water upon entering, and a solemn Te Deum was sung, with one of the Canons officiating at the ceremony. The Sisters were then lodged in Santa Isabel College, while the Vincentians were received at the Mission House of the Society of Jesus. At long last the double family of St. Vincent were settled in Manila on that memorable July 22, 1862.

That same day, Fr. Velasco and Fr. Moral went to pay their respects to the Archbishop, His Excellency Gregorio Meliton Martinez, who at that time was sick. In spite of his illness the Archbishop later made an effort to personally visit and greet the Sisters. The narration continues:

"Having fulfilled our duty toward the Ecclesiastical Authority, we went to visit the Governor General, His Excellency General Rafael Echague. He welcomed us very affectionately; we
were offered all kind of attentions; both the Governor and his wife conversed familiarly with us for quite some time. Before leaving, he told us to return, both the Fathers and the Sisters heading the mission, on the next day, to deal with things necessary for our establishment in the various ministries for which we have been sent to these Islands. We went accordingly the next day, the two Fathers and four Sisters: Sr. Tiburcia, Sr. Eustaquia and two of the eldest in vocation. The Governor sent us vehicles to bring us to his Palace. He talked with us about the projects for the good of the people he and the other Authorities had in mind for us. We listened to his words of encouragement; he promised us his protection, and having received the opportune instructions, we left him filled with consolation and hope.\textsuperscript{17}

The Vincentians remained in the House of the Jesuits until their transfer to the residence of the Royal College (the Seminary) of San Carlos, whose direction was to be entrusted to them.

Fr. Moral’s narration concludes:

“The first days, Vincentian Fathers and the Sisters, received many visits from the most important families of the city, from whom they received the most sincere tokens of affection and all sort of attentions.”

The Sisters were provisionally installed in a country house that the President of the Ladies Branch of the Conferencias (Society of St. Vincent de Paul) had prepared for them even before their arrival. Everyday, the Holy Mass was celebrated there. At present, the Sisters are preparing and arranging matters for their transfer to the establishment where they are to work.”\textsuperscript{18}
Pope Pius IX (1792-1878) was the reigning Supreme Pontiff (1848-1878) when the Vincentian Missionaries were sent to the Philippines.
QUEEN ISABEL II OF SPAIN (1830-1904)
Ordered the establishment of the Vincentian double family in the Philippines (Royal Order 1852)
VINCENTIANS WHO WORKED IN MADRID FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE DOUBLE FAMILY OF ST. VINCENT IN THE PHILIPPINES

Fr. Buenaventura Codina (1785-1857), C.M. Provincial and D.C. Director who in November 1847 started the talks with the Spanish Government for the establishment of Daughters of Charity and Vincentians in the Philippines. He was elected Bishop of Canary Islands and consecrated on February 20, 1848. He obtained the restoration of Vincentians in Spain by the Concordat with the Holy See (March 16, 1951).

Fr. Ignacio Santasusana (1787-1867), succeeded Fr. Codina as C.M. Provincial and D.C. Director. He saw the restoration of Vincentians in Spain on July 23, 1852 and the Decree of Queen Isabel II for the establishment of Daughters of Charity and Vincentians in the Philippines (October 19, 1852).

Fr. Buenaventura Armengol (1800-1873), C.M. Provincial and D.C. Director from 1833 to 1856. He saw the last steps given by the Spanish Government in Madrid and in Manila for the quick implementation of the Queen's Orders of 1852 and 1855 urging the establishment of the double Vincentian family in the Philippines.
Fr. Juan Masnou (1813-1893), C.M. Provincial and D.C. Director who succeeded Fr. Armen­gol from 1857 to 1862. He made the final arrangements for sending 6 Vincentians (4 Priests and 2 Brothers) with some 15 Daughters of Charity to the Philippines.

Fr. Ramon Sanz (1799-1869), succeeded Fr. Masnou as C.M. Provincial and D.C. Director from 1862 to 1866. He sent off the pioneer Vincentian Mission of 4 Vincentians (2 Priests and 2 Brothers) with 15 Sisters, aboard the frigate “Concepcion” on April 4, 1862 at the harbor of Cádiz.

Very Rev. Fr. Mariano Joaquin Maller, C.M., Visitor of the Vincentian Province of Madrid (1866-1892), who with his predecessor, Fr. Ramon Sanz, were truly the Founding Fathers of the Philippine Vincentian Mission.
Most Honored Fr. JOHN-BAPTIST ETIENNE XIV Superior General of the Congregation of the Mission from 1843 to 1874. He established the Vincentian Mission of the Philippines in 1862.
FR. GREGORIO VELASCO, C.M. (1816-1891)
First Superior of the Vincentian Philippine Mission. He worked in the Philippines from 1862 to 1875.

Fr. ILDEFONSO MORAL C.M.
(1835-1907)
Pioneer Vincentian of the Philippine Mission. First Rector of the Seminaries of Naga, Jaro, and Vigan, worked in the Philippines 23 years (1862-1885).
Most Rev. GREGORIO MELITON MARTINEZ, D.D. (1815-1885), Archbishop of Manila, who received the Vincentians in the Philippines and entrusted to them his Archdiocesan Seminary on August 2, 1862. On August 24 of the same year he was granted the degree of Doctor in Canon Law by the University of Santo Tomas.
Sor TIBURCIA AYANZ, D.C. (1822-1898)
Pioneer Sister who came in 1862 with 14 other Sisters to the Philippines as first Vice-Visitatrix of the Philippine Sub-province. She directed the establishment of 11 Houses during the whole period of the Spanish regime.