

11-2002

Creation of the Vincentian Solidarity Office (VSO) (Rome, October 20, 2002)

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Recommended Citation

Maloney, Robert P. C.M. (2002) "Creation of the Vincentian Solidarity Office (VSO) (Rome, October 20, 2002)," *Vincentiana*: Vol. 46 : No. 6 , Article 5.

Available at: <https://via.library.depaul.edu/vincentiana/vol46/iss6/5>

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Rome, October 20, 2002

To the members of the Congregation of the Mission

My very dear Confreres,

May the grace and peace of God Our Father and the Our Lord Jesus Christ be with you!

For some time now, we have been considering in the General Council the creation of a new office in the Congregation to assist poorer provinces, vice-provinces and missions in seeking assistance from international funding agencies, since sometimes, for a variety of reasons, confreres may not know where to seek funds or how to write successful grant proposals for projects they are undertaking.

After receiving a positive reaction to this idea at the meeting of all the Visitors in Dublin, I decided, on June 15, 2002, with the unanimous consent of the members of the General Council, to establish the Vincentian Solidarity Office (VSO) and appointed Brother Peter A. Campbell, C.M. to be its first administrator. The goal of the VSO is:

To assist the poorer provinces, vice-provinces and missions of the Congregation of the Mission with writing successful grant proposals to funding organizations for their works and needs.

The VSO is an optional service that these provinces, vice-provinces and missions can use. It is not my intention, in creating this new office, to centralize all grant proposals through the VSO. On the contrary, provinces, vice-provinces and missions should feel quite free to continue to send proposals directly to funding organizations or to donors.

Brother Peter will be making a presentation about the VSO at the meeting of all the Provincial Treasurers which will be held in Rome on November 4-9, 2002. At that time he will distribute the VSO brochure and the VSO Project Application Form (projects submitted to the office must always be approved and signed by the Visitor or Vice-Visitor). He will also be available to answer questions on how to use the services of the VSO. Immediately after the meeting he will be writing to all the Visitors, offering more detailed information about the VSO and providing them with other copies of these same materials.

The VSO will be located at the following address:

Brother Peter A. Campbell, C.M.
Vincentian Solidarity Office
St. Vincent's Seminary
500 East Chelton Avenue
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19144
USA

The working language of the office will be English, since grant proposals can now be submitted in English to almost all fund-raising organizations. The VSO will open officially on January 1, 2003. The completed VSO project application forms can be submitted at any time after that date. Beginning on January 1, 2003, you will also find detailed information about the office at the following web site: famvin.org/vso

With you, I pray that the Lord will bless this undertaking whose aim, as is evident, is to help all of us to serve the poor more effectively.

Your brother in St. Vincent,

Robert P. Maloney, C.M.
Superior General