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Letter of the Superior General to the members of the General Assembly to Communicate some Information on the 40th General Assembly of the Congregation of the Mission (Rome, April 20. 2004)

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GENERAL CURIA

Rome, April 20, 2004

To the members of the General Assembly

My very dear Confreres,

May the grace of Our Lord be always with you!

I write today to offer you some information about the 40th General Assembly of the Congregation of the Mission, whose theme is: "Our Vincentian identity today, having lived the new Constitutions for 20 years — an evaluation and three challenges for the future." With this letter I am enclosing the Working Document of the Assembly, the Directory, the postulata, and some practical instructions.

I ask all the members of the Assembly to be here in Rome at least by July 4, in order to take part in the opening session on the morning of Monday, July 5, at 9 a.m.

I am very grateful to the members of the Preparatory Commission (Manuel Ginete, Corpus Delgado, Jorge Pedroza, John Sledziona, Simão Valenga) for preparing the Assembly so carefully and so well, and also to a small organizational commission here at the General Curia (Józef Kapuściak, Elmer Bauer, José María Nieto) for working out so many of the practical details.

At its last meeting, the Preparatory Commission made a number of recommendations to the Superior General and his council which, after discussion with the Commission itself, we then acted on. The Commission recommended:

1. that Fr. Manny Ginete be named as facilitator for the Assembly. This recommendation was accepted. I have asked him to assist at all the sessions of the Assembly as facilitator with the right to speak, but not vote.
2. that the Superior General's delegate to the Vincentian Family, Fr. Benjamín Romo, be invited to be present at the Assembly, because the Congregation's relationship with the various branches of the Vincentian Family has become increasingly important and because this was the theme of the last General Assembly. This recommend-

ation was accepted. I have invited Fr. Romo to assist at all the sessions of the Assembly with the right to speak, but not vote.

3. that the Mother General of the Daughters of Charity, Sr. Evelyne Franc, be invited to speak, preferably after the election of the new Superior General and council. This recommendation was accepted. Sr. Evelyne will speak to the Assembly on the morning of Saturday, July 24. Her topic is: "What do the Daughters of Charity expect of the Congregation of the Mission?" We have also invited the lay presidents of the principal branches of the Vincentian Family to take part in a round-table discussion on the afternoon of Friday, July 23, followed by questions and answers. Each participant in the round-table will speak for ten minutes on two questions: 1) What have been the most important developments within his/her Association over the last six years, as well as the most significant problems?; 2) What does he/she ask of the members of the Congregation of the Mission as he/she envisions cooperation among the members of the various branches of the Vincentian Family in the future?
4. that in preparation for the election of the new Superior General, there be a time of retreat, with a conference. This recommendation was accepted. I have invited Fr. Fernando Quintano to give this conference.
5. that various committees and persons be named before the Assembly in order to facilitate its work: for the liturgy, for organizing social events, for translation and communication, etc. This recommendation was accepted. A list of the persons named is attached. I am very grateful to these confreres for accepting so promptly and so generously. In addition, Frs. Julián Arana and Julio Suescun very graciously accepted my invitation to put together a book of prayer for the Assembly.
6. that computers and Internet connections be available to the members of the Assembly. This recommendation was accepted. We have arranged for computers and a high-speed line both at the Collegio Leoniano and at Via Ezio, so that the members of the Assembly might maintain contact with their provinces.

As announced in my letter of March 30, 1999 (cf. *Vincentiana* 43, N° 2, pp. 87-88), simultaneous translation will be provided during the General Assembly in English, French, and Spanish only.

In preparation for the Assembly, I ask you to read the enclosed working document very carefully. It synthesizes the thoughts of the

provinces on the theme of the Assembly and suggests several challenges for the future.

The Assembly will also, as you know, elect a new Superior General. I encourage you to prepare for this election peacefully and prayerfully. My experience over the years has shown me that there are many very good men in the Congregation who are capable of exercising this office well, with the help of a good council and a good supporting team. I trust deeply that the Spirit of the Lord will be with the Assembly in its process of discernment.

I look forward very much to seeing all of you in July.

Your brother in St. Vincent,

firma autografa

Robert P. Maloney, C.M.

Superior General

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