



VINCENTIAN CONGREGATION



“May the Grace and Peace of our Lord Remain with us always”

Dear Rev. Fathers, Brother and Seminarians,

Prayerful Greetings from Vincentian Generalate, Edappally!

“The people who sat in darkness have seen a great light, and for those who sat in the region and shadow of death light has dawned.”

1. Sharing, the essence of Christmas

“...in Christmas, we experience the mystery of God who takes upon himself our human condition and our sins to reveal to us his divine life, his immense grace and his generous pardon” (Pope Francis, Christmas Message, 2014)

The essence of Christmas can be understood as sharing. Heaven shares its blessings with the earth. God shares his divine life with humans. There is no love without sharing. “God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.” (Jn 3: 16). God identified himself with mankind. This is the deepest and most intimate form of sharing. “The Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father’s only son, full of grace and truth (Jn 1: 14). Jesus is Emmanuel, God with us.

Jesus, through his words and deeds, was always keen to emphasize the message of sharing. He shared himself and whatever he had with us. The son of man came to give his life as a ransom for many (Mt 20: 28). Jesus devoted his time and energy to preach the Good News to the poor, to heal the sick, to comfort the afflicted, to feed the hungry and to liberate the oppressed. The institution of the Eucharist, by which Jesus gave his flesh and blood as food and drink to us, is an act of total self-gift. He gave his life to humanity by the death on the cross, the supreme and culminating act of love and sharing.

The essence of Jesus' teachings can be summarized as the exhortation to love others through sharing. The apostles understood it that way and thus followed him. "We know love by this, that he laid down his life for us and we ought to lay down our lives for one another" (1 Jn 3:16).

Consecrated life: a sublime form of sharing

Religious men and women in the consecrated life follow Jesus in the real and full sense. They do not reserve their resources and earnings for themselves. Instead, they share it with the community and the society at large. They devote their time and energy for the well-being of others.

We, the Vincentians, are heirs to this life style. We pledge and practice a life of total self-gift and thus experience the joy and beauty of sharing. We follow Jesus by placing willingly and generously all our resources and earnings at the disposal of the community (VC, St. 61-63). A life of equality and fraternity is a sign and witness before the world (St. 64).

Sharing in local communities

We live our life of sharing primarily in our local communities. Here, we share our love, time and resources with one another. Let us acknowledge the fact that we are not free from the temptation to reserve a portion of our resources and earnings to ourselves. As we carry out our responsibilities, we may be tempted to make it a "one-man-show", avoiding consultation and sharing with the superior and other members of the community. Our Domestic Meeting is an effective platform to share our news and views. Regular presentation of accounts will help us to make sure that we are doing things in a transparent manner.

Sharing beyond the community

Sharing within the community is only the starting point. There are many people around us with little or no reason for joy. The Vincentian charism of service to the poor is nothing other than sharing our resources as a community with the less privileged. If Christmas is "God placing his heart near our hearts", we, in turn, ought to place our hearts near those of the little ones.

At this Christmas season, let us reexamine the various spheres of our life of sharing and make sure that we enjoy the beauty and blessings of sharing to the full. May the Child Jesus strengthen us to follow his example faithfully so that “we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ”.

With this wish and prayer, and with great joy, I wish all of you a blessed Advent and a Merry Christmas.

2. Priestly Ordinations

This year, our Congregation is being blessed with 19 New Priests. Fr. Ajesh Thundathil was ordained on Oct 17, 2015. 18 others are getting ready to be ordained after Christmas. Our Deacons are now making intensive and immediate preparation to receive the sacred order of Priesthood. Let us encourage and strengthen our Benjamins through our valuable prayers and our presence in the functions.

3. Minor Orders and Diaconate

Our seminarians who are studying theology in different seminaries will receive various sacred orders at 2.30 pm on Dec 21, 2015 at our Generalate.

4. Family Gathering, Jubilee celebration and reception to the New Priests

On January 09, 2016, we have our annual Family Gathering at the Generalate level. On the same day, we wish to give a cordial reception to our beloved Jubilarians and New Priests. Here are our Jubilarians:

Golden Jubilee

Fr. Arackathottam Mathew

Fr. Kunnappilly George

Fr. Kariamadam Paul

Fr. Parel Joseph

Silver Jubilee

Fr. Alakakunnel Thomas

Fr. Naduviledath Francis

Fr. Azhakedath James

Fr. Orathel Abraham

Fr. Manithottil Paul

Fr. Parambil Xavier

Fr. Mullenmadackel Thomas

Fr. Parekkattil Jose

In this Jubilee year, especially on January 09, we shall offer our congratulations, best wishes and prayers to our dear Jubilarians.

Our Family Gathering is an important expression of our unity and love as members of one Vincentian family. It is also a convenient occasion to greet and congratulate our Jubilarians and New Priests. Let me invite you most cordially to this family feast.

5. Quinquennial Course

The usual Quinquennial Course will be held in De Paul Institute, Bangalore on 11, 12 & 13 of January 2016 (three full days). Let me remind all the junior priests of our congregation to make necessary arrangements in advance so that all of them can attend this course without fail. This course offers a suitable platform for our junior priests to come together and share their past experiences and dreams about the future orientations of our congregation (Coordinator Fr. George Vettapambil, Mobile No.9446143724, Email: georgexavierv@rediffmail.com).

6. Formators' Meet

A gathering of all the Formators of our congregation is scheduled to take place in the Generalate on May 18, 2016. This Gathering will seriously discuss the important challenges of formation, faced by our formation personnel. It is hoped that creative suggestions for improving our style of formation would emerge in this meeting.

7. Forthcoming Events for the Seminarians

Post Regency Program (Coordinator: Fr. George Vettapambil) and Preparation Course for Final Vows (Coordinator: Fr. Sebastian Thundathikunnel, 9846420401, sebastiantd@yahoo.com) will be as usual from the 18th of April to the 18th of May 2016. Vestition and Perpetual Profession will be held in the Generalate at 10.30 am on the 19th of May 2016.

Once again, I wish you a very happy Christmas and a bright New Year. May God, through the intercession of St. Vincent bless all of us and our ministries.



Vincentian Generalate
De Paul Nagar, Edappally
December 01, 2015

Fr. Varghese Parappuram VC
Superior General