



## PRESS RELEASE

From January 8-12, 2020, for the first time in the history of the Vincentian Family, those responsible for more than 150 Entities and Institutions that compose this Family and that represent more than two million people, will meet in Rome.

This event, of historical importance for the Vincentian Family, will take place in Rome, from January 8 to 12, 2020. For the first time, the Superiors and Presidents of the more than 150 branches that make up the Vincentian Family will come together and meet. Coming from all over the world, they will meet at the Patristic Institute Augustinianum, where they will discuss and, above all, lay the foundations for a common path to follow together. The Vincentian Family was born from two intense lived experiences of Saint Vincent de Paul in 1617, in France: in the town of Folleville, the French priest discovered the spiritual poverty of the rural population and in the city of Châtillon, he encountered material poverty. Those two events marked the beginning of his personal conversion.

As a result, he began to respond to the urgent needs he had discovered. His approach was to care for the person as a whole: spiritually, emotionally, physically, and materially. Born from that small mustard seed in 1617, the Vincentian Family has today become a large tree, made up of more than 150 branches (lay associations and congregations of consecrated life) with about two million members in more than 150 countries. The family is also composed of men and women who, although they do not formally belong to a particular branch, are inspired by Vincent de Paul's example of service on behalf of the poor.

At the beginning of the fifth century of their existence, the members of the Vincentian Family look toward the future, aware of the urgent need for a closer synergy with all those realities that flow from the seed that was planted by the Founder.

This four-day program will begin on Wednesday, January 8, 2020 with a papal audience. The formal work sessions will begin that afternoon and will be directed by those who have served as reference points on the international level. Here we are speaking about Father Tomaž Mavric, CM (President of the Executive Committee of the Vincentian Family and Superior General of the Congregation of the Mission); Father Joseph Agostino, CM (International Coordinator of the Office of the Vincentian Family); Father Robert Maloney, CM (Superior General of the Congregation of the Mission from 1992-2004; he will trace the history of the Family and offer a general overview). The Moderator of the meeting will be Sister Mary McCormick, SCNY.

Beginning at 08:30am there will be a Eucharistic celebration in the Basilica of the Santo Spirito (Holy Spirit) in Sassia, followed by morning and afternoon conferences as well as group work of the participants.

Different themes will be presented every day as well as the Vincentian reality and the activities that the members are engaged in (the detailed program and speakers are attached).

We will begin on the 9th with an introduction about the mission of the Vincentian Family and a presentation by the Team from the International Office. Then, the topic of communication in the Vincentian Family will be addressed. The participants will share the experience of the Film Festival of the Vincentian Family, which took place last year and then continue and end the day with a presentation on one of the main initiatives of the family, namely, the FamVin Alliance on

behalf of the homeless. On Friday 11th, there will be a discussion on the culture of vocations and the transmission of the charism.

On Saturday we will explore question of next steps: there will be panels and there will also be time for reflection on the potential of the Internet and the challenge it represents for the future. The morning of Sunday 12 will be dedicated to gathering together the suggestions that arose from the "4 days" and to assign specific tasks and responsibilities.

A final thanks and some concluding observations will be offered by Father Joseph Agostino CM. The event will conclude with the Eucharistic celebration, presided by Father Tomaz Mavrič CM and animated by Gen Verde.

#### Accreditation Procedure

Journalists and media operators will be able to follow the opening session in the afternoon of January 8 by sending a request through the Holy See Press Office's online accreditation system ([press.vatican.va/accreditations](http://press.vatican.va/accreditations)), once the event is available on the calendar.

#### Interviews with participants

Interviews will be allowed during the work breaks. For further information, please contact Elena Grazini of the Vincentian Family Press Office, email: [elena@elenagrazini.it](mailto:elena@elenagrazini.it) - Cell. +39 338 190 24 36

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