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## Vincentian Month for Advisors of the Vincentian Family Paris, 7-26 July 2002 Chronicle

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**Vincentian Month for Advisors of the Vincentian Family**  
Paris, 7-26 July 2002

*Chronicle*

*by Bernard Schoepfer, C.M.*  
*Province of Paris*

**An international gathering of Vincentian Family Advisors** met together for the first time from 7-26 July 2002 at the Motherhouse of the Daughters of Charity in Paris (140 rue du Bac) (around 120 participants from 46 countries). Fr. Benjamín Romo, C.M., Vincentian Family delegate for the Superior General, invited us to this intensive session in order to provide better service to the poor and true collaboration among the various branches of our Family.

***Sunday, 7 July***

The 14<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Ordinary Time (Mt 11:25-30): *Father, Lord of heaven and earth, to you I offer praise for what you have hidden from the learned and the clever and have revealed to the merest children.*

The participants arrived from the four corners of the globe. All became acquainted with their respective Motherhouses and began to feel more at ease, in spite of some language difficulties. Many services had already been put into place for the smooth functioning of this gathering.

**FIRST WEEK:  
FAITHFUL TO THE CHURCH, THE GOSPEL AND ST. VINCENT**

***Monday, 8 July***

At 8:30 a.m. we gathered in the beautiful Assembly Room of the Daughters of Charity Motherhouse. Each person took his/her place within the language group. The Spanish-speaking group was the largest. The three official languages (English, Spanish and French) were used during the entire month. This did not hinder the use of other languages such as Italian, Slovakian, Polish and many others.

After having greeted and thanked everyone for coming to this meeting, Sr. Juana Elizondo, Superioress General of the Daughters of Charity, encouraged us as we began our work with a meditation on the Our Father. She assured us of the prayers of all the Sisters of the Motherhouse (160 Sisters), especially the prayers of the Senior Sisters. She also invited us not to place more importance on the method

of our work, but to put on the Spirit of Christ as manifested in the Beatitudes. Following this we celebrated the Eucharist, presided by Fr. Robert Maloney, our Superior General. The first reading from the Book of Hosea reminded us that we are called into the desert. **God wants to allure us, entice us in order to give us his trust.** Following the liturgy we received information regarding the methods to be used and the objectives of the Session as well as some other practical bits of information. The morning ended and everyone went to the midday meal.

After a walk, a siesta or whatever one wanted to do, we reassembled again at 3:30 p.m. to continue our work. We sat according to group membership as Advisors within the Vincentian Family: **AIC, SSVP, JMV, AMM, MISEVI and others.** In a little over an hour we each quickly introduced ourselves. The Assembly Room video camera allowed us to see each person on the large front screen with each introduction. Around 5 p.m. we had our first sharings in small language groups and with each introduction we expressed our expectations of the Session. We closed the day by reciting the Vincentian Family Prayer.

### *Tuesday, 9 July*

A new day began at 8:45 a.m. and already the room was resounding with “Buenos dias, good morning, and bonjour...” inviting us to take our places and begin with a prayer. Fr. Robert Maloney began the second day. Using a methodical and simple PowerPoint presentation, he invited us to reflect on **“Some Qualities of a Good Formator”** (as a Counsellor or Advisor). It was an interactive method: reflection — silence (with gentle music in the background) — questions. We were asked to make a personal and community reflection. Various questions encouraged us forward in this activity. After a break, we gathered in our work groups and took up the questions we received. The discussions were rich but sometimes difficult due to languages. The recitation of the Angelus concluded our morning.

Our sessions reconvened every day at 3:30 p.m. Today, was Fr. Jean Landousies, Superior of the Vincentian Motherhouse in Paris, who continued our morning reflection. He reminded us of the basic teachings about **“Laity in the Church Today”** and at the conclusion we were given some reflection questions. Here is one of them: “Called to holiness and called to mission, how is the union of this double aspect of the Christian vocation lived out?” We concluded at 6:30 p.m. with a little time before the evening meal.

### *Wednesday, 10 July*

This day began with a prayer before giving the microphone to Fr. John Prager. His presentation invited us to reflect on **“St. Vincent de Paul and Lay Ministry.”** He gave us various aspects of Vincentian sensitivity marked by his

own missionary work in Panama. After spending some time in our work groups, Sr. André Menu, D.C. shared her missionary experience with the laity (AIC) while in the Cameroon. She provided us with some firm beliefs: center ourselves on Jesus Christ, accept setbacks, do not do for the laity but encourage them to do for themselves and take a secondary position. The afternoon was free and many took the opportunity to discover Paris.

### *Thursday, 11 July*

Feast of St. Benedict, we are called to bring unity to prayer and work in order to live peacefully. Fr. John Prager offered us another presentation on **“To Serve the Poor Spiritually and Corporally.”** Let us remember this characteristic of our service: “We must enter into the world of the poor and listen to their concerns with respect and humility; without thinking that we have all the answers.” After a break, we once again gathered in small groups allowing us time to reflect on the words of Fr. John.

After the midday meal and some rest time we continued our work in language groups. Around 5 p.m. we returned to the Assembly Room for a plenary session. Each group shared the important points that resulted from its sharings. After this, some directions were given concerning Friday, a “special day of recollection.” Before leaving, we again recited the Vincentian Family Prayer.

### *Friday, 12 July*

Today we welcomed Eva Villar and her husband Juan with their two little girls. Eva is a member of JMV (Vincentian Marian Youth) and is the President of MISEVI (Vincentian Lay Missionaries). Her experiences in Honduras and Bolivia enhanced her presentation. With the assistance of Fr. Felipe Nieto, CM, International Assistant of MISEVI, Eva explained **how to allow ourselves be evangelized by the poor.** Many principles guide this new way of living: a life marked by austerity, trust in God’s Divine Providence, an attitude of true sharing with the poor and active realism. It is only through experience that St. Vincent’s words “The poor are our lords and masters” are not reduced to a spiritual refrain. In the second part of our morning Sr. Sharon Richardt, DC, introduced the process of apostolic reflection. **It is expressing how we met God in our life this day and particularly in the persons we serve.** This method of reflection had been previously sent to us in preparation for the Vincentian Month. Around 11 a.m. we dispersed to have some time for private prayer and reflection on this topic.

To begin our afternoon meeting, we came together in our groups to share our apostolic reflections. When the sharings were finished, we discussed the important points we heard each other say and expressed this by a single word or phrase written on a large card to be shared with the rest of the Assembly during a prayer

service celebration. The celebration was simple, enriching and a source of enthusiasm. We shared a sign of peace with each other and then the “Minister of Culture and Leisure” asked us to return to the Assembly Room at 8:30 p.m. for an evening of entertainment. Dances, songs, pictures on the large screen, jokes and funny stories provided us with time to dream and laugh.

### ***Saturday, 13 July***

We began our last day of this week with a Marian Prayer accompanied by texts projected on the large screen. Today Fr. Corpus Delgado, CM, shared a short treatise on “**Marian Spirituality and the Vincentian Charism,**” an enriching doctrinal presentation. After some time for questions we rejoined our work groups. Here is the question we studied: *If Marian Spirituality consists in finding within Mary the inspiration to follow Christ, what are the characteristics of Marian catechesis and celebrations within our Vincentian Associations?*

In the afternoon, we gathered in the Assembly Room for an explanation of our last group activity of the week — determining three realities, three convictions and three commitments on the theme of the week — “**Faithful to the Gospel, the Church and St. Vincent.**” The group secretaries gave the responses to the Synthesis Commission in preparation for a Final Document concerning the Vincentian Month. We closed the day with a mediation on the Magnificat. Before leaving we viewed some digital photos on the large screen taken during the week, a remembrance of this first week’s experiences.

### ***Sunday, 14 July***

Free day: rest — relaxation — visits — National Holiday of France: parade on the Champs Elysées — Fireworks at 11:00 p.m. — 15<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time (Mt 13:1-23): *But as for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and yields, in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty.*

## **SECOND WEEK: THE BEING AND WORK OF THE VINCENTIAN FAMILY**

### ***Monday, 15 July***

Morning prayer invited us to welcome each person as a gift of God, then Sr. Margaret Barrett, DC, explained week two of our work. This week we would focus our energies in **knowing better the different branches of the Vincentian Family.** We would try to grasp the evolution of charity through the diverse experiences of our Spiritual Family. We welcomed the Presidents and their closest collaborators

of the various branches: AIC, SSVP, JMV, AMM, MISEVI. After some practical information we began the topic of the day. Professor Asdrúbal J. Baptista, originally from Venezuela, Doctor of Law and Economics, led us in the theme of the day: **“The Commitment of the Laity in the World and the Church Today.”** A presentation in two parts, one in the morning and the other in the afternoon, led us along the pathway of a description and analysis of the complex universe of economics and the relationship between rich and poor countries. “No generation has had an easy time of living. Accepting this allows a spirit of peace to act.” The temporal and spiritual orders meet within action and hope. In Jesus, who is the Way, the Truth and the Life, we find the key to help us read history. Our commitment must be focused in two areas: social and personal. During our group work sharings on the social teachings of the Church and the question and answer time in the plenary session, each participant was able to understand the elements of analysis and the principles given during the presentation. In the evening, Sr. Juana Elizondo, DC, gave a presentation on the Company of the Daughters of Charity throughout the world at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

### *Tuesday, 16 July*

“Awake, Latin America, a new day is shining on your mountain tops,” this refrain encouraged us to pray for the women and men of our day, especially the people of Latin America. Patricia de Nava, International President of the AIC, led our day. She provided us with our first conviction: **“If we are here, it is because we believe that we must be participants in changing the living conditions of the poor.”** We can already affirm that behind every good volunteer there is a good Advisor. From the time of St. Vincent to our day, the manner of exercising “charity” continues to evolve. What is lasting is the experience of the poor. We must move from handouts to the poor to participation of the poor. This is the pathway of self-advancement and the dynamism of true solidarity. We must renounce our complaisant and paternalistic attitudes towards the lowly. After a time for questions and answers and a break, we were shown a process for understanding this evolution of charity. “Working in the Form of Projects” was displayed on the large screen and then explained. The stages of the project were classified according to an order established by the service experience in order to succeed in transforming the poverty situation. Evaluating the project is an essential step of the process.

We were in our work groups for the afternoon. We used a process entitled “Debono’s Hat” to facilitate our work and the ensuing results. Three concerns, three expectations and three suggestions from the perspective of an Advisor were then shared in the Assembly Room. Let us recall this additional remark from Patricia de Nava: **“We do not work with the poor because we are honorable but because they deserve our assistance. We owe them a debt of justice.”**

Around 5:30 p.m., Sr. Marie-Geneviève Roux, DC, guided us on a tour of our spiritual sources embodied within Louise de Marillac, Vincent de Paul and Frederick Ozanam. By way of a slide presentation she described the origins of the “Vincentian tree” in Paris. Tomorrow we would make a pilgrimage to places of the Founders of the Vincentian Family. Each person received a small booklet with additional information.

### *Wednesday, 17 July*

A beautiful day was forecast and the sun was shining on Paris. The route we took was filled with Family memories. The prior evening, Sr. Marie-Geneviève told us that **the spiritual life enters through our eyes, ears and even our feet!** The face of Paris has completely changed in three centuries — with the exception of a few Churches where we stopped. We tried to relive in our imaginations the events that took place wherever we stopped. It was during “the time of the horse-drawn carriages” that already made traffic difficult enough! From place to place we took time to discover, remember and pray. This pilgrimage was a “return to the sources”... At Saint Nicholas des Champs, we recalled the personal grace that Louise de Marillac called “the grace of Pentecost” (4 June 1623). We read St. Louise’s account of this “interior light.” Like Louise, we asked God to enlighten us in order to accomplish his will.

In the afternoon we headed to Clichy. The commentaries provided by our guides helped us to know the capital and the sun brightened the splendor of Paris. At 4 p.m. we celebrated the Eucharist at the Church of Clichy. St. Vincent reconstructed the little church that still exists today and is connected to the current large parish church of Saint Vincent de Paul. Within his journey towards the poor, Monsieur Vincent had, here in this place, the joy of experiencing that living with a people is a source of development for every vocation. It was on 2 May 1612 that Monsieur Vincent arrived as pastor of Clichy. It was the first time in 15 years that he found himself among the honest and simple people of the country. He was 31 years of age! Following Christ, in the way of St. Vincent, we asked God our Father in the Eucharist, to grant us perseverance, courage and patience in our encounters with life’s wounded. Upon leaving, we were given cards reminding us of the events here. We headed back on the road and the atmosphere on the bus was joyful, with songs along the way. We made one last stop along the Esplanade of the Trocadéro where we admired the Eiffel Tower and the Champ de Mars. It was magnificent!

### *Thursday, 18 July*

The beautiful melody of a Brazilian song opened the day. After a moment of reflection, we prefaced the day’s work with information regarding the end of this second week. Today, we would take the time to become acquainted with the

foundations, spirit, objectives and organization of the different branches of the Vincentian Family. Each representative of the various branches (AIC, SSVP, JMV, AMM, MISEVI) shared for 20 minutes, in his/her own way, the composition of his/her respective Association. It was evident that all desire to serve the poor and that all desire to collaborate. Yet, like the saying of a modern-day theologian, “truth is a symphony,” we could paraphrase this in saying that “charity, with the many agents of the Vincentian Family, can become a beautiful symphony.” The harmony is comprised of many sounds: “The AIC wishes to be a transformative force in society toward and with women of the entire world; but also a critical force giving value to their dignity.” “In following Frederick Ozanam, we desire to enfold the world in a network of charity, in prayer, action and thought.” “An experience for and with young people with a view to creating places to live, share and receive education, choosing Mary as a companion for the journey.” “Those who wear the Miraculous Medal are already a member of the AMM. Nothing is ready yet; everything is just beginning to be planned. We are developing a way of living charity through communication, formation and collaboration.” “MISEVI calls itself the youngest member of the Family. The missionary experience among young people is a special orientation for service with and for the most deprived.” At midday we prayed the Angelus in Portuguese.

Around 3 p.m., we gathered in the garden of the Motherhouse of the Daughters of Charity for a group photo. This was followed by a plenary session of questions and answers with the Presidents of the Family Associations. Fr. Romo gave God thanks for this meeting and, in the name of Fr. Maloney, extended his gratitude to the international leadership for their active presence: “As Advisors, you form us and we thank you.”

At 5 p.m. we celebrated the Eucharist in the Chapel of the Rue du Bac. We recalled the first apparition of the Virgin Mary to Catherine Labouré, the night of 18-19 July 1830. Fr. McCullagh, CM, invited us to listen to the sounds of silence. Silence guides us towards the contemplation we need in order to listen to the new sounds and new voices in a climate of contemplative silence. **“Too often we ask for what we want, but not often enough for what God wants,”** St. Catherine said to a companion.

During an evening celebration, the community of the Daughters of Charity of the Motherhouse invited us to pray with Mary and like Catherine. The Chapel was full and the pilgrims remained in silence for a long time. “Yes, Mary, I want to sing this prayer for you. I want to present to you the cries of all my brothers and sisters.”

*Friday, 19 July*



“We ask the Lord of the harvest to send laborers into his harvest.” It was through these words that we directed our prayer to God. We are able to follow Jesus Christ with our differences, our weaknesses and our talents. Christ is the rule of the mission. A beautiful Lebanese song concluded our morning prayer. **“Unifying Elements of the Vincentian Family”** was the morning presentation. The Vincentian spirit has developed further than our Founders could have ever imagined. It is not used up or exhausted within any branch of our Family. It is a combination of unity and diversity. Fr. Romo provided us with thoughts for reflection in order to better achieve unity without falling into uniformity. The Vincentian spirit cannot be bound into a theory. Group work then continued this simple yet enlightening presentation. We gathered in regional or country groups to share our ways of collaborating among the various branches of the Vincentian Family.

The afternoon continued with Sr. Elisabeth Charpy, DC. She shared on one of the aspects of Louise de Marillac’s life: **“Louise de Marillac: Animator of the Confraternities of Charity.”** Three qualities of being an animator came out of the presentation: attentive listening, respect for others and adequate competency. But some stumbling blocks must be noted as well: activism and discouragement. Again, we had sharing within our groups to suggest ways to better animate the groups and teams we accompany. During the evening we took some time to rejoice a bit. The air was filled with “peals of laughter.” The “Cultural Minister,” Fr. Diego Luis Vásquez, CM, transformed himself into a eminent professor!

### *Saturday, 20 July*

The Polish, Slovakian, Slovenian and Ukrainian languages began our morning prayer. We prayed with Our Lady. The Wedding Feast at Cana and a song to the “Black” Madonna formed our time of reflection. We need to bless others more and there will be more peace throughout our world. Fr. Mikhaylo Talapkanych, CM, shared a Ukrainian proverb that states, “Whenever a priest gives a blessing, all hell trembles!” Fr. Orlando Escobar, CM, then presented the **Web Site** ([www.famvin.org](http://www.famvin.org)). He made us aware that this is a means of service of the poor. Through this information web we can create local pages, send information and formation documents, and create links between local pages. We have there a summary of what is and what can be of the Vincentian Family. The challenge is to give access to this means of networking to the greatest number of people (rich and poor alike). Pope John Paul II, in his message for the 2002 World Day of Communications asks us: *The Internet causes billions of images to appear on millions of computer monitors around the planet. From this galaxy of sight and sound will the face of Christ emerge and the voice of Christ be heard?* A projection of numerous photos of our second week on the large screen helped us marvel at the richness of our Family life. The work groups were reformulated for a final sharing among members of the same branch of the Vincentian Family: three realities, three

convictions and three commitments to improve the work of our Family were studied.

### *Sunday, 21 July*

A day filled with sunshine — Free day — 16<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time (Mt 13:24-43): *The kingdom of heaven may be compared to someone who sowed good seed in his field....*

## **THIRD WEEK: THE ROLE OF THE ADVISOR**

### *Monday, 22 July*

We are now coming to the final stretch. During this third week of the Vincentian Month, we studied the role of the Advisor. We began with a prayer. A Hindi song centered our praise: “The Lord comes to dwell with us. Let us bring flowers to our worthy guest. Let us sing songs of praise.” Sr. Margaret Barrett was delighted with this exceptional session: **a way of a real promotion of the Vincentian charism has been proclaimed.** In a simple and clear teaching method, Fr. José Antonio Ubillús, CM, Assistant General, provided us with indicators in order to exercise **our role as advisor in the Vincentian Family groups.** Having a spirit of John the Baptist is the true attitude for all advisors: “He must increase; and I must decrease” (Jn 3:30). Jesus’ teachings, as advisor of the 12, open our hearts and minds in accomplishing the “ministry of accompaniment.” We had a break to take advantage of the sunshine and quench our thirst, then we returned to our work groups. Meeting as advisors of the same branch, we shared the realities, difficulties and suggestions inherent in our responsibilities.

It is beautiful and warm in Paris but we must continue our work. Edurne Urdampilleta, member of the JMV International Council, assisted us in reflecting upon **“The Advisor and the Spiritual Life.”** The essential point is to develop faith in Jesus Christ and not in the Advisor. After an analysis of our information age and its repercussions on people’s lives, various components of discernment and accompaniment were presented. Once again we came together in groups to discuss the Advisor’s function in the spiritual life of the group and the individuals in the group. In a spirit of joy, we departed to our respective Motherhouses for the evening meal. For many, the evening was a time of recuperation, as yesterday many went sightseeing and fatigue was beginning to set in.

### *Tuesday, 23 July*

In union with the Church liturgy, we celebrated the feast of Saint Bridget, Co-patron of Europe. After some announcements, we began our morning with a reflection on **“The Advisor and Formation.”** Here are a few elements given by Edurne Urdampilleta regarding the role of the Advisor: assure the implementation of a good formation program, encourage the animators, help to develop personal life plans, and accompany the team process. In order to deepen our understanding of the topic, we shared, within our groups, the Advisor’s function relative to the holistic formation of the members.

The afternoon session opened with a brief presentation of the Sisters of Charity of Strasbourg. Sr. Denise Baumann, SC, also introduced us to the Federation of 11 German-speaking Congregations living and working in the Vincentian Spirit. This was followed by a presentation from Fr. Jaime Corera, CM, International Spiritual Advisor of SSVP: **“The Advisor and the Apostolic Mission of Lay Vincentians.”** This responsibility of accompaniment and animation requires the ability to listen and be attentive in regard to those who have been confided to us. Note these closing words of the presentation: *The Advisor should also be open to learn how to allow him/herself be called by the members of the Vincentian institution or group being accompanied.* Around 6 p.m. the various representatives of the Vincentian Family were available for questions that had been previously deposited in a box. After this simple and concrete exchange, we closed with a prayer and wished everyone a good evening.

### ***Wednesday, 24 July***

We are already giving thanks for this Vincentian Month. It was through the “Our Father” that we concluded our thanksgiving. Some announcements were shared in order to accomplish the closing work. Then Fr. Alberto Vernaschi, CM, presented the most important points of **“Vincentian Family Associations: Juridical and Canonical Dimensions.”** He, simply and accurately, explained the statutes of the Associations in relationship to the Church. The statutes are a means and not an end in themselves. The categories of Public and Private Associations have their usefulness for Church unity and apostolic fruitfulness.

Today was our last day for sharing with the different branches of the Vincentian Family. Each group was able ask questions on points from the presentations that had surfaced or not surfaced. Alas! Yes, the session was nearing the end. Tomorrow would be another time of enrichment. To close the day, Fr. Roberto Lovera, CM, shared the **financial accounts of the Vincentian Month with us.** The costs, the financial assistance received, the numerous free services provided and the cost per participant were the topics of this financial summary. We thanked Fr. Lovera for this presentation and for his assistance. He was also the official photographer of the Session, but tonight, Br. John Gaven, CM, had a surprise for him — we needed a photo of our “Father Treasurer!”

### *Thursday, 25 July*

We wished our Spanish Brothers and Sisters a happy feast on this day of St. James. The participants from the United States invited us to pray with Louise de Marillac: “Lord, grant me the grace to imitate your way of living and acting. Teach me to always have great esteem for my neighbor.” We were almost at the end of our Vincentian Month. It was time to review our three-week experience of enthusiasm and renewal in order to envision our commitments. Fr. Romo guided us in this work: **“How to Communicate the Lived Experience in One’s Own Country.”** From this question, we were to bring forth the most important elements to be communicated within our respective countries. As Fr. Maloney remarked to us at the beginning of the Session: “A good formator is someone who communicates his/her experience.” A phrase from St. Vincent parallels this: “It is not enough to love God if my neighbor does not love God.” The richness of the Vincentian spirit not only helps us to live our vocation but also to allow others to participate in it. In order to review these days of formation, we were grouped by country for the first work activity and then by continent for the second. At the end of the morning we shared our thoughts in a plenary session. A suggestion was made to send a letter of thanksgiving and encouragement to the various leaders and their councillors in the name of all the participants in order to deepen together our lives in the Vincentian Family. A second suggestion was to develop a meeting such as this on our own level (continent, country, region) for a week’s duration, for example. Before leaving for the midday meal we prayed the Angelus in English.

This was the last afternoon of Session work. It was also the first time we heard Fr. Gherardo Armani, CM, speak about the Vincentian Family Project **“The Globalization of Charity: The Fight Against Hunger”** that has been proposed throughout the world since 27 September 2001, and of which there are more than 100 projects in progress. The presentation of this project gave us a view of this activity against hunger on the outskirts of Kinshasa with the Vincentian Family of Italy and the Congo. After the break we returned to our work groups. Our afternoon work consisted of studying the draft of the Vincentian Month’s Final Synthesis and evaluating the last three weeks.

### *Friday, 26 July*

It was in the quiet that God’s dream for each of us took shape. Here, at the Motherhouse of the Daughters of Charity, the Virgin Mary welcomed us during the three-week Session. Thank you for this graced time! We thanked God in our prayers for his love and the work accomplished. Everything has an ending, even the Vincentian Month. This last gathering in the Assembly Room allowed us the time to become familiar with the draft of the **Final Synthesis**. It will be shared with all the Session participants and with the different leaders of the Vincentian

Family. The entire document was displayed on the large screen and the Assembly became aware of the great amount of work accomplished by the Synthesis Commission. We extended our gratitude to its members. Following this began a series of thank you's for the overall smooth running of the meeting. The various services received a round of applause. A special "thanks" was given to the 14 translators for the different languages represented at the Session and to Sr. Sharon Richardt for her role as "facilitator." And, infinite gratitude was extended to each member of the Preparatory Commission by the Assembly: "Words cannot express all that you have done for us over the past two years."

After a few last announcements we all went over to St. Vincent's Chapel at Rue de Sèvres for the Eucharistic Celebration, presided by Fr. Romo. Let us recall these words from the homily: *Jesus and St. Vincent invite us to incarnate this attitude of the Good Samaritan. In our service of the laity, we are called not only to "bend down" and care for the wounded but also to help others, the laity, care for the wounded. It is for us to show one another the journey of service.* A beautiful offertory procession, with a background of African music, moved us to a moment of thanksgiving for all the gifts received during the Vincentian Month. It was with greetings, "thanks" and peals of laughter that we dispersed to take up once again our everyday lives and now live out our role as Advisors in the Vincentian Family with patience, perseverance and certainly ... a good dose of humor!

(Translation: TRANSLATION CENTER – DAUGHTERS OF CHARITY, Paris)