



MOBILITY PROJECT STUDY TRIP REPORT



« FAMILY CONFERENCE » MARINA DI MASSA – ITALY

- **Number of participant:** 4
- **Age of participants:** 61, 63, 63, 65 years
- **Country of origin:** Belgium (Brussels), Hungary (Miskolc)
- **Date:** 01 to 04 May 2009

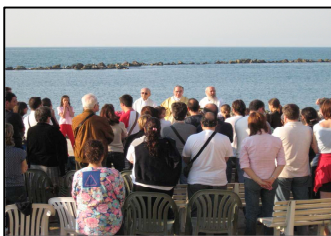


→ **Purpose of study visit:** Exchanging best practice, meetings and experiences with other Vincentians at an annual meeting in Italy of supported and supporting families. Training and exploration of a particularly 'Italian' form of voluntary work: Family Conferences, where all members of the family are involved in Vincentian activity.

→ **Activities in which you took part:** Explanation of the way in which Vincentian family conferences are organising, showing how best to work as a family with the most deprived. Sharing volunteering experiences: the richness and the difficulties found by volunteers in their contact with the families they help, supporting immigrants, etc. Many contributions on various topics such as the part played by Christian families in a multi-ethnic, multi-cultural society, with participation from an imam and from a Muslim couple. (Comparing values and practices between the religions).

→ **What effect has this study voyage had on their voluntary work?** On their return, these Vincentians decided to implement a new voluntary project based on "Family Conferences", in their own countries. The 'Journey diary' which the Belgian couple kept, gave many older volunteers the idea of gaining a similar experience and trying to help the poorest people. These four Vincentians are also going to carry on working with the Italian members, keeping in touch with the organisers, with regular updates on what is happening with the "Family Conferences" in Italy by email.

→ **Testimonies... :**



"Briefly, for me this was a journey that drew on human resourcefulness, giving me the energy to carry on with the work we do in Belgium, and trying to interest young people in it. Since my 'Italian' experience, I realise we often keep them away from our SVP work".

"The people in Italy are open and full of life, we can learn a great deal with them. We met young couples, and had many discussions with them. We now intend to try to make greater efforts in Hungary, and to convince volunteers of all ages to take part in the work of the older volunteers".