



**International Confederation
Society of Saint Vincent de Paul
Council General International
16th President General International**



Letter 42/2023
Paris, June 5th, 2023

*Dear National Presidents,
Dear members of the Council General,
Dear candidates for the service as 17th President General,
Dear staff members of Paris,*

Praise be to God.

It is with great pleasure that I inform you all that we are preparing, with great care and attention, our General Assembly of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul, which will take place from June 12-18, 2023, in Rome (Italy). The general theme of the event is **"Fraternity, communion and mission: following in the footsteps of the seven founders"**.

The choice of this theme could not have been more appropriate, considering that during the Assembly we will have the opportunity to meet our friends, strengthen our friendship and share experiences, after having overcome a pandemic that affected all of humanity and which required exceptional measures. **All this hopefully in an atmosphere of joy, unity, and peace, which are the main characteristics of Vincentians.**

The Assembly is of singular importance because we will choose the new President General who will lead the Council General from 2023 to 2029. **It is one of the important milestones in the history of our Society, a milestone worthy of celebration and joy!**

Thank God, the candidates that have presented themselves are well prepared for this noble mission, and we pray to the Holy Spirit that God will choose the most suitable person for the present moment.

I take this opportunity to thank the Electoral Board for the hard work done so far, and we are sure that the elections will take place in an **atmosphere of harmony, serenity, and fraternity.**

I know that entering Italy, where the rules for granting visas have become stricter, has been difficult for some of our National Presidents. So, if you really cannot be with us in Rome, please send your vote by mail or by proxy, as directed by the Electoral Board.

In addition to the Presidential election, our event will consider the modernization of the Confederation Statutes, with eight amendments that will make the Council General **more democratic, more transparent and with better governance**.

During the Assembly, the members of the Council General's board will present their annual and financial reports for the consideration of those present. Many resolutions will be voted on, as usual.

Father Bertin Sanon, Superior General of the Religious of St. Vincent de Paul (RSV), will be the special speaker, addressing the general theme of the Assembly. Father Tomaz Mavric, Superior General of the Congregation of the Mission (CM), has also confirmed his presence during the Election Day (13th June), which will be an honor for us.

In addition to all this, five new publications will be launched: the "Global Report", the booklet on revitalizing the Conferences, the manual on creating Youth Committees, the e-book "Holiness in the Vincentian Conferences" and the book "Circular Letters written between 2017 and 2023".

The "Charity of Hope" medal will be awarded to the Order of Malta. A cooperation agreement will be signed with the Order of Malta too, and a "Letter of Intent" will be signed with the World Union of Catholic Women's Organizations (WUCWO), institution from the Vatican.

The first edition of the "Ozanam Prize of Journalism" will be given to the journalist Paolo Ruffini, prefect of the Dicastery of Communications of the Holy See. The director of the newspaper L'Osservatore Romano, Andrea Monda, will also pay us a visit.

Another highlight of the event will be the Papal audience on Wednesday, June 14, when participants will have the privilege of following the Holy Father's catechesis in St. Peter's Square.

Three other events will take place in the same week in addition to the Assembly. There will be the traditional "Annual Meeting of Territorial Vice-presidents", the 3rd Lusophone Summit, and the 1st Workshop for National Presidents. There will also be the ceremony to renew the "Concordat" for the next three years.

As you can see, our week in Rome is packed with activities! It will be a memorable week, hopefully the best of our Assemblies!

Everything will be broadcast live on Ozanam TV, extending the proximity of the Council General to all the members of the world, who will be able to follow and participate in all the sessions and plenaries. Official photos of each day will be available on the Internet. Reporters from local Catholic channels will also accompany live our events.

For all this, I ask for your prayers for the success of our General Assembly in Rome. In addition, I thank you sincerely for the support I have received during our mandate, wishing the new administration that will take office next September 9th, 2023, absolute success.

During our term, I have tried to do my best, dedicating my time entirely to the Council General International. With the support of a fantastic board, the Superior Councils, and the staff in Paris, we have been able to make good progress with our strategic plan.

These have been seven years of hard work and challenges, but also of many achievements and accomplishments, the joy of which I share with you all.

Now I intend to dedicate myself more to my family, my academic studies, my professional work, my health, and, of course, to the Conference I belong in Brasilia, where I can, in the home visits to our friends in need, contemplate the face of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

Thank you, thank you, and thank you! May God bless us and shine on us in Rome. May the Miraculous Virgin protect us from all evil!

Vincentian greetings. With Vincent, Gossin and Ozanam,



Brother **Renato Lima de Oliveira**
16th President General International