



A Historical Sketch of *Vincentiana*, the Journal of Vincentian Studies and Mission (1956-2026)

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Abstract

This article traces the seventy-year development (1956–2026) of *Vincentiana*, the official journal of the Congregation of the Mission, from its origins as a simple internal bulletin to a global forum for Vincentian studies. Initiated by Annibale Bugnini and encouraged by Superior General William M. Slattery, the first issue (1957) responded to the 1956 General Assembly's call for unity, communication, and missionary awareness. Initially conceived as a *Nuntia* reporting news from the Vatican, Curia, and provinces, the journal gradually evolved into a space for theological reflection, historical research, and pastoral dialogue rooted in the charism of Vincent de Paul. Over time, *Vincentiana* integrated diverse voices, languages, and contexts, becoming an instrument of communion and formation. Today, in both print and digital forms, it stands as a significant platform fostering global Vincentian identity, scholarship, and mission-oriented reflection.

Cet article retrace les soixante-dix ans d'évolution (1956-2026) de *Vincentiana*, la revue officielle de la Congrégation de la Mission, depuis ses origines en tant que simple bulletin interne jusqu'à son statut actuel de forum mondial dédié aux études vincentiennes. Lancé à l'initiative d'Annibale Bugnini et encouragé par le Supérieur général William M. Slattery, le premier numéro (1957) répondait à l'appel lancé par l'Assemblée générale de 1956 en faveur de l'unité, de la communication et de la conscience missionnaire. Initialement conçu comme une *Nuntia* relayant l'actualité du Vatican, de la Curie et des provinces, le journal s'est progressivement transformé en un espace de réflexion théologique, de recherche historique et de dialogue pastoral ancré dans le charisme de Vincent de Paul. Au fil du temps, *Vincentiana* a intégré des voix, des langues et des contextes divers, devenant un instrument de communion et de formation. Aujourd'hui, tant sous forme imprimée que numérique, elle constitue une plateforme importante favorisant l'identité vincentienne mondiale, l'érudition et la réflexion orientée vers la mission.

Este artículo repasa los setenta años de trayectoria (1956-2026) de *Vincentiana*, la revista oficial de la Congregación de la Misión, desde sus orígenes como un simple boletín interno hasta convertirse en un foro mundial para los estudios vincentinos. Iniciada por Annibale Bugnini y alentada por el Superior General William M. Slattery, la primera edición (1957) respondió al llamamiento de la Asamblea General de 1956 a la unidad, la comunicación y la conciencia misionera. Concebida inicialmente como una *Nuntia* que informaba sobre las noticias del Vaticano, la Curia y las provincias, la revista evolucionó gradualmente hasta convertirse en un



espacio para la reflexión teológica, la investigación histórica y el diálogo pastoral arraigado en el carisma de Vicente de Paúl. Con el tiempo, *Vincentiana* integró diversas voces, idiomas y contextos, convirtiéndose en un instrumento de comunión y formación. Hoy en día, tanto en formato impreso como digital, se erige como una plataforma significativa que fomenta la identidad vicenciana global, la erudición y la reflexión orientada a la misión.

Keywords: Vincentiana, Annibale Bugnini, Vincentian study, Vincentiana online.

Introduction: From the Letters of the Superior General

1. Paris, le 8 janvier 1957¹

Monsieur et très cher confrère [A. Bugnini, C.M. au Leoniano, Rome],

La grâce de N.S. soit avec vous pour jamais!

J'ai reçu le premier Numéro de "Vincentiana" et sa lecture m'a intéressé beaucoup. Cette Revue répond tout à fait au désir formulé par la dernière Assemblée générale. Je fais, donc, des vœux pour la prospérité de "Vincentiana"; je lui souhaite de nombreux lecteurs, et je demande à tous ceux qui le pourraient d'apporter leur colloration à son dévoué Directeur.

Vos bénissant affectueusement, je demeure Votre tout dévoué serviteur en Notre-Seigneur.

*William M. Slattery, i.p.d.l.m
Sup. Gén.*

2. Parisiis, die 28 junii 1958.

Carissimi Domini et confratres,

Gratia Domini Nostri sit semper vobiscum!

Praesens numerus commentarii "Vincentiana" tardius solito ad vos perveniet. Hujus morae causa fuit mutatio in administratione dicti periodici. Illi usque nunc praefuit carissimus confrater noster A. Bugnini cujus indefessae curae in hoc munere gratum libenter reddo testimonium. Sed variis occupationibus detentus, Dominus Bugnini me rogavit ut opus edendi "Vincentiana" alii committerem. Ejus annuens petitioni, quaesivi a D. Joanne Gonthier, qui residet in domo materna Sancti Lazari, ut velit oc in munere succedere D. Bugnini; et meo desiderio, non sine merito, obsecutus est. Ad illum igitur deinceps mittendum erit quidquid ad "Vincentiana" spectat.

Vestris me commendens precibus, ex toto corde me profiteor.²

*Vestrum in Domino addictissimum.
William M. Slattery, C.M.*

¹ The letter was in French and published in *Vincentiana*, No. 2, 1 February 1957, 1.

² This Latin letter was published in *Vincentiana* No. 13, Juni 1958, 1. [The following is translation from Latin] Paris, June 28, 1958. Dearest Fathers and Confreres, May the grace of Our Lord always be with you! The present issue of the commentary "Vincentiana" will reach you later than usual. The reason for this delay was a change in the administration of the said periodical. Until now, it has been presided over by our dear confrere A. Bugnini, whose untiring care in this task I gladly bear grateful testimony. But, detained by various occupations, Fr. Bugnini asked me to entrust the work of editing "Vincentiana" to someone else. Agreeing to his request, I asked Fr. Joanne Gonthier, who resides in the maternal home of Saint Lazarus, to be willing to succeed Fr. Bugnini in this task; and he complied with my desire, not without merit. Therefore, from now on, whatever concerns "Vincentiana" will have to be sent to him. Recommending me to your prayers, I declare myself with all my heart. Yours most devotedly in the Lord. William M. Slattery, C.M.

The first issue of *Vincentiana*, published in 1 January 1957, marked a decisive step in the renewal of the Congregation of the Mission following the 1956 General Assembly. As expressed in the encouraging letter of William M. Slattery, C.M., the Superior General, the review responded concretely to the Assembly's desire to foster deeper unity, communication, and shared missionary awareness among the confreres. From the letters of Superior General above, we know that *Vincentiana* was initiated by **Fr. Annibale Bugnini, C.M.** The monthly *Vincentiana* was based in Rome (Via Pompeo Magno), while the General Curia still remained in Paris. Conceived as a “*Nuntia*” (*Monthly News*), the first issue of *Vincentiana* consisted of 12 pages and was organized into three sections: *Sancta Sedes*, *General Curia*, and *Provinces*. Its content gathered news from the Vatican, communications from the Curia, and reports from the provinces of Europe, Asia, Latin America, USA, offering a simple yet vital channel of information. This symbolic configuration already revealed its ecclesial and missionary orientation: to connect the universal Church with the international reality of the Congregation across the world. Accessible in cost (1000 Italian Lira or US\$ 2), it aimed to reach as many confreres as possible. *Vincentiana* did not emerge primarily as an academic enterprise, but as a **living bond of communion**—a dynamic space where the Congregation could recognize itself as one body in mission. It became a means of nurturing fraternal unity, sharing experiences, and sustaining a common apostolic spirit, in fidelity to the charism of Vincent de Paul.

1. *Vincentiana*: From a Bulletin to a Global Forum for Vincentian Studies

Vincentiana was initially under the title *Commentarium Congregationis Missionis*. At its birth, it was not conceived as an academic or theological journal, but rather as an official communication organ of the Congregation of the Mission. Its earliest issues recorded missionary reports, news from provinces, appointments of superiors, canonical matters, and the circular letters of the Superior General. The language of publication was primarily Latin—reflecting the ecclesial and academic conventions of the time—and later also French, Italian, and Spanish (since 1993/4).

In those early decades, the notion of *Vincentian Studies* (*Studia Vincentiana*) was still in its infancy. The articles focused largely on juridical, historical, and spiritual reflections concerning the Congregation's life and rules. Yet, several pioneering essays already hinted at a developing Vincentian theology. For example, Cornelio da Silva, C.M. wrote “*Théologie de la Charité envers les pauvres d’après saint Vincent de Paul*” (1957) exploring the theological depth of Vincent's charity, while Aloisius Pohar, C.M. proposed “*Sanctus Vincentius, Doctor Ecclesiae?*” (1960) asking whether Saint Vincent might one day be recognized as a Doctor of the Church. As we know, In 1885, Pope Leo XIII declared Saint Vincent de Paul the universal Patron of Charity. He has been honored with the titles of “Father of the Poor” and “The Inspiration of the Clergy.” Other contributions—such as “*De iuridica Vincentinorum a votis perpetuis e Missione dimissorum conditione*” by Fermin Campo, C.M. (1960)—revealed the legal and moral dimensions of Vincentian life. These early writings in *Vincentiana* already captured the tension between fidelity to Vincentian tradition and the need for *theological* renewal.

The inclusion of papal documents, such as the 1960 Letter of Pope John XXIII commemorating the 300th anniversary of Saint Vincent and Saint Louise, and Cardinal Tardini's tribute to Saint Louise de Marillac, showed the growing recognition of Vincentian spirituality within the universal Church.

The 1960 commemorative letter of Pope John XXIII for the tercentenary of Vincent de Paul and Louise de Marillac presents them as exemplary models of evangelical charity for the whole Church. The Pope highlights their profound union with Christ, expressed through concrete service to the poor, the sick, and the abandoned. He emphasizes that their charity was not merely philanthropic but deeply theological—rooted in faith and animated by the love of Christ. Their collaboration also illustrates the beauty of shared mission in the Church, uniting different vocations for the service of the needy. Writing on the eve of the renewal that would culminate in the Second Vatican Council, John XXIII points to their legacy as a guide for modern times. He calls the Church to renew its commitment to organized charity, social responsibility, and missionary zeal, seeing in Vincent and Louise enduring witnesses of Christ's compassionate presence in the world.

In his commemorative reflection for the tercentenary of the deaths of Vincent de Paul and Louise de Marillac, Cardinal Tardini presents their lives as a luminous manifestation of the Church's living charity. He does not treat them merely as figures of the past, but as enduring witnesses whose spirit continues to shape the mission of the Church. For Tardini, their greatness lies in having united contemplation and action: a deep union with God that overflowed into concrete service of the poor. In them, charity became organized, creative, and effective, revealing the true face of the Church as a servant of humanity. He emphasizes that their works—missions to the countryside, care for the sick, formation of clergy, and the founding of communities—were not simply social responses to need, but authentic expressions of the Gospel. Charity, therefore, is not secondary but essential to the Church's identity. In a world marked by suffering and inequality, their example appears strikingly relevant, calling the Church to renew its commitment to the poor with both spiritual depth and practical wisdom. Tardini ultimately invites the faithful to rediscover in these two saints a path for the future: a Church ever more faithful to Christ by becoming ever more present among the poor.

From this modest and institutional beginning, *Vincentiana* gradually evolved into a theological and *spiritual* review, becoming a global platform for reflection, research, and dialogue. Over the decades, it has transformed into a bridge linking the historical charism of Saint Vincent de Paul with the contemporary challenges of evangelization, formation, and service to the poor.

At its **70th anniversary (1956-2026)**, *Vincentiana* has been guided by sixteen editors-in-chief, each contributing to its growth from a mimeographed newsletter in 1957 to an internationally respected Vincentian journal that publishes official documents, scholarly articles, and reflections on Vincentian life, mission, and spirituality in multiple languages, both in print and online. *Vincentiana* serves as a vital forum for the Congregation of the Mission and the wider Vincentian Family, fostering dialogue, formation, study and research on the Vincentian charism for readers around the world. Here they are:

Annibale Bugnini, C.M. (1957-1958), the initiator / founder of *Vincentiana* (1957) was one of the most influential figures in the liturgical renewal of the twentieth century, especially during and after the Second Vatican Council. Formed as a scholar of liturgy, he became deeply involved in the movement that sought to renew the Church's worship by returning to its biblical and patristic sources while making it more accessible to the faithful. Msgr. Bugnini served as Secretary of the Commission for the Liturgy

during the Council and later as Secretary of the *Consilium*, the body entrusted with implementing the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, *Sacrosanctum Concilium*. In this role, he played a decisive part in the reform of the Roman Rite, including the revision of the Mass, the liturgical calendar, and the sacraments. His work aimed to foster active participation (*actuosa participatio*) of the faithful, a central principle of Vatican II. Among his major works is *The Reform of the Liturgy 1948–1975*, a detailed historical account of the process and theological vision behind the reform. He also contributed to numerous liturgical documents and studies that shaped contemporary Catholic worship. Despite controversies surrounding the reforms, Bugnini’s contribution remains foundational. His vision helped the Church rediscover the liturgy as a living encounter with Christ, celebrated by the whole People of God.

J. Gonthier, C.M. (1958–1964). Fr. Jean Gonthier oversaw *Vincentiana* at its early formative stage, as it moved from Collegio Leoniano in Rome to Mother House in Paris began to evolve beyond a simple bulletin into a journal with sections including “*Studia Vincentiana*”—the beginnings of the journal’s scholarly dimension. His leadership helped establish foundational structures for documenting official texts, provincial news, and nascent Vincentian studies, laying groundwork for the journal’s future development as a forum for charism reflection and international dialogue. Jean Gonthier, C.M. was known for his creative contribution to the transmission of Vincentian spirituality and history. Through his writings, he combined careful attention to historical sources with a pastoral concern for daily spiritual nourishment. His *Éphémérides vincentiennes*, prefaced by William M. Slattery, C.M., is a representative work: it transforms archival and historical data into a day-by-day companion for prayer, memory, and formation within the Vincentian Family. Gonthier’s work reflects a distinctive Vincentian formation—rooted in fidelity to sources, yet oriented toward lived spirituality. He also wrote a book on popular mission in France.

A. Coppo, C.M. (1964–1974). *Serving as the first archivist of the Curia of the Congregation of the Mission after its relocation from Paris to Rome Italy (1963)*, Fr. Antonio Coppo, during his decade of leadership, consolidated *Vincentiana* as both a vital pastoral instrument and a growing scholarly voice within the Congregation of the Mission. Building on earlier foundations, he helped guide editorial attention toward deeper theological, historical, and formation themes, supporting priests and scholars in engaging Vincentian identity in a period of ecclesial renewal after Vatican II. His tenure supported continuity and enriched the journal’s relevance for confreres worldwide.

Giuseppe Tamagnone, C.M. (1974–1977). Fr. Giuseppe Tamagnone led the journal during a transitional period, focusing on consolidating *Vincentiana*’s editorial processes and ensuring that it continued to reflect both official documents and reflection on mission life. His contributions reinforced the balance between canonical texts, provincial life, and studies of the Vincentian charism. Through careful editorial stewardship, he maintained the journal’s integrity and accessibility during a time of broader change in Catholic communications.

Pietro Balestrero, C.M. (1977–1983). Under Fr. Pietro Balestrero’s leadership, *Vincentiana* continued to grow as a medium for sharing Vincentian spirituality, mission experiences, and historical research. His period saw an expansion of content that served both formation and scholarly interests—responding to the needs of confreres seeking

deeper understanding of St. Vincent's legacy and the Congregation's place in the contemporary Church.

Stanislaw Prosperini, C.M. (1983–1989). Fr. Stanislaw Prosperini guided *Vincentiana* during a time when Vincentian studies were gaining momentum internationally with activities of GIEV (International Groups of Vincentian Studies), fostering contributions on historical, spiritual, and pastoral dimensions of the charism. His editorship strengthened the journal's commitment to rigorous reflection, communication across provinces, and the integration of scholarly work into ongoing ecclesial mission. GIEV³ (International Groups of Vincentian Studies) represented a decisive formative initiative that eventually gave rise to SIEV (International Secretariat of Vincentian Studies), which was subsequently incorporated into the Curia as an institutional body committed to fostering Vincentian research, reflection, and formation at the international level.

John de los Rios, C.M. (1990–1993). Fr. John de los Rios shepherded *Vincentiana* at the start of a new decade, encouraging global collaboration and studies that linked historical awareness with contemporary pastoral challenges. His leadership emphasized the Congregation's international character and supported the journal's role in forming a Vincentian scholarly community across continents.

Emeric Amyot d'Inville, C.M. (1993–1998), guided *Vincentiana* through a period of deepened engagement with Vincentian identity, mission, and the discernment of social change. Under his leadership, the journal increasingly became a space where tradition and contemporary challenges met in fruitful dialogue, drawing contributions from diverse cultural and pastoral contexts and giving voice to those committed to serving the poor in the spirit of Vincent de Paul. A decisive development during this period was the consolidation—strongly urged and supported by Robert Maloney, C.M., the Superior General—of publishing *Vincentiana* in the three official languages of the Congregation of the Mission: *French, English, and Spanish*. This multilingual commitment significantly expanded the journal's accessibility and reinforced its identity as a truly international instrument of formation and communication. Such an undertaking, however, required considerable effort and coordination. The search for competent translators capable of faithfully conveying theological nuance and Vincentian spirit proved—and continues to be—a demanding task. Nevertheless, this linguistic openness remains a vital expression of the Congregation's universality and its mission to serve the poor across cultures and continents.

José Maria Nieto Varas, C.M. (1998–1999): Fr. José Maria Nieto Varas provided focused editorial leadership during a period of transition, supporting continuity in the journal's mission and maintaining high standards for content that nourished Vincentian identity and study. His guidance sustained *Vincentiana*'s role as a trusted resource for confreres engaging in reflection, formation, and mission.

Orlando Escobar, C.M. (2000–2004). Fr. Orlando Escobar steered *Vincentiana* into the new millennium, strengthening its international presence and scholarly reach. His

³ According to Fr. Luigi Mezzadri, C.M., the first secretary of GIEV, the initiative to establish a group of specialists in Vincentian studies originated with Fr. André Sylvestre, C.M. (a French confrere), who was serving as an Assistant General at the time. At the beginning GIEV consisted in confreres from Italy, the Netherlands, USA, France, and Spain.

editorship encouraged contributions that addressed both spiritual formation and concrete mission realities, enhancing the journal's capacity to serve as a bridge between academic Vincentian studies and lived pastoral concerns.

Alfredo Becerra Vazquez, C.M. (2005–2007). Fr. Alfredo Becerra Vazquez guided the journal with a commitment to clarity and relevance, promoting content that supported ongoing formation and deepened reflection on the Vincentian charism. His editorial leadership helped maintain *Vincentiana*'s role as a platform where Vincentian spirituality and academic research meet and enrich each other.

Julio Suescun Olcoz, C.M. (2007–2011), led *Vincentiana* through a period of dynamic engagement with diverse Vincentian realities. His leadership emphasized both the preservation of historical memory and the promotion of the contemporary mission, inviting voices from different cultures and contexts to contribute to a richer and more global understanding of the Vincentian identity and vocation. An interesting moment during his tenure was the publication of articles arising from the meeting of Vincentian formators of the Asia-Pacific region, held in Indonesia (2007) and Gopalpur-on-Sea, India in 2010. These contributions focused particularly on political charity and interreligious dialogue, reflecting the lived experience of missionaries in pluralistic societies. By incorporating these reflections into *Vincentiana*, Fr. Suescun highlighted the importance of dialogue as an essential dimension of the Vincentian mission today, especially in Asia. This initiative not only broadened the theological horizon of the review but also affirmed the Congregation's commitment to engage respectfully and creatively with other religious traditions in the service of the Gospel and the poor.

John T. Maher, C.M. (2012–2015). Fr. John T. Maher's tenure encouraged *Vincentiana* to embrace rigorous scholarship and pastoral sensitivity, fostering dialogue among historians, theologians, and mission practitioners. His editorial vision helped integrate academic study with lived experience, emphasizing the importance of reflective practice in Vincentian life worldwide.

Álvaro Mauricio Fernández, C.M. (2015–2019). Fr. Álvaro Mauricio Fernández oversaw *Vincentiana* in a period of continued growth and adaptation, nurturing contributions that addressed global Vincentian challenges and opportunities. His leadership strengthened the journal's editorial quality and international collaboration, making it a reference point for those seeking to understand and live the Vincentian charism in varied contexts.

Gerardo Vibar, C.M. (2019–2020), provided steady editorial leadership at a time of profound global disruption. His tenure coincided with the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, which affected the normal functioning of ecclesial and academic life worldwide. In fact, *Vincentiana* experienced an interruption in 2020. Nevertheless, his leadership helped preserve the journal's continuity of mission, maintaining its role as a means of communication and Vincentian reflection amid crisis and uncertainty.

F.X. Eko Armada Riyanto, C.M. (2022–), together with his editorial team, now leads *Vincentiana*, bringing renewed vitality to its mission of advancing Vincentian studies through historical, theological, and pastoral scholarship. Rooted in the rich legacy of the journal yet attentive to the signs of the times, his leadership seeks to deepen engagement with the charism of Vincent de Paul while fostering a truly global

conversation among members of the Congregation of the Mission and the wider Vincentian Family. A significant development in this new phase is the creation of *Vincentiana Online* (<https://vincentiana.org>), a digital platform that complements the printed edition and responds to the evolving landscape of scholarly communication in the digital age. This initiative broadens accessibility, enabling faster dissemination of research, wider international reach, and greater interaction among readers and contributors across continents. It represents an important step in ensuring that Vincentian reflection remains both relevant and available in a rapidly changing world. At the same time, Fr. Armada and his team actively encourage emerging Vincentian voices from diverse cultural contexts to contribute and publish their work. By nurturing new writers and promoting intercultural dialogue, they contribute to the ongoing growth, renewal, and inculturation of Vincentian studies, ensuring that the charism continues to be lived, interpreted, and shared with creative fidelity today.

2. *Vincentiana* in the 1960s: Following the Signs of the Times, a Decade of Transition and Renewal

The 1960s were a transformative decade for *Vincentiana* and the Vincentian intellectual tradition as a whole. Emerging from the rigid Latin formality of the 1950s, *Vincentiana* began to echo the fresh winds of renewal sweeping through the universal Church. The year 1961 marked a defining moment: the Congregation of the Mission (CM) and the Daughters of Charity (DC) celebrated the *tricentennial* of the deaths of Saint Vincent de Paul and Saint Louise de Marillac. Pope John XXIII joined in this great jubilee, proclaiming Saint Vincent a model priest for the modern *world* and both founders as heavenly patrons of Christian charity. This papal recognition symbolized the profound vitality and ecclesial relevance of Vincentian spirituality in the postwar era.

In these years, *Vincentiana* functioned primarily as the official organ of the Congregation, continuing to publish in Latin and focusing on circular letters of the Superior General, juridical clarifications, and reports on missionary activity. Yet beneath this institutional structure, a quiet but profound theological awakening was taking place. Vincentian scholars, reading the “signs of the times,” began to reinterpret the spiritual and social legacy of Saint Vincent through the lens of Vatican II’s *aggiornamento*.

This intellectual shift found a powerful echo in 1965, when *Vincentiana* published official Church documents such as *De accomodata renovatione vitae religiosae*, the conciliar decree on the renewal of religious life, which urged all congregations to return to the authentic spirit of their founders. For the Vincentians, this was not a mere canonical exercise—it was a summons to rediscover the heart of their charism: the union of contemplation and action, of charity and mission.

In this period, new scholarly voices began to emerge—figures who would later become the architects of modern Vincentian spirituality in the 1970s and 1980s. The seeds of this renewal were sown by early authors such as A. Coppo, C.M., who explored the Thomistic intellectual tradition in “*Novum testimonium de Thomismo a Vincentianis in Italia adhibito saeculo XVIII ineunte*” (1961), and Fermin Campo, C.M., who examined the canonical and ascetical dimensions of Vincentian vows (“*Votorum problema*,” 1961; “*Vincentinorum condicio ascetico-iuridica*,” 1962). These works combined rigorous scholarship with a spiritual concern for fidelity to the Founder’s vision.

The growing dialogue between theology, spirituality, and modern thought was evident in Coppo's later work, "*Saint Vincent et la Science*" (1966), reflecting a new openness to the relationship between faith and reason. Meanwhile, the circular letters (*Messieurs et mes très chers frères*, 1964; *De missionibus sedulo promovendis*, 1965) of Superior General (Fr. William Slattery, C.M.) embodied a call for missionary renewal in light of *Lumen Gentium* and *De Ecclesia*.

Parallel to these developments, in France, Fr. André Dodin, C.M., launched *Mission et Charité* (1961–1969), a pioneering review entirely dedicated to Vincentian thought (most probably there were also a *couple* publications done in those years in different languages, such as Spanish or Italian, or even other languages). Although it ceased publication at the end of the decade (1969), it nurtured a new generation of Vincentian scholars—such as Jean Morin, C.M., Miguel Pérez Flores, C.M., later Luigi Mezzadri C.M. and J.M. Romàn, C.M., etc.—who would, in the 1970s and 1980s, explore the spiritual depth and social dynamism of Saint Vincent's legacy with new historical and theological methods.

Thus, the 1960s stand as a bridge decade: *Vincentiana* remained faithful to its Latin and juridical roots, yet it *increasingly* opened to renewal, dialogue, and research. Out of this fertile ground arose the intellectual and spiritual renaissance that would define Vincentian studies in the decades to come—an era where the charism of Saint Vincent would be rediscovered, revitalized, and reinterpreted for a changing world.

3. *Vincentiana* 1970–1979: Renewal, Identity, and the Emergence of Vincentian Scholarship

The decade of the **1970s** represents a crucial stage in the evolution of *Vincentiana* and in the intellectual history of the Congregation of the Mission (CM). In the aftermath of the Second Vatican Council (1962–1965), the Church invited all religious congregations to engage in an *aggiornamento*—a renewal responding to the signs of the times. *Vincentiana*, which had long served primarily as an official organ for canonical documents and internal communications, began to reimagine its purpose: to become a space for theological reflection, critical dialogue, and rediscovery of Vincentian identity in the modern world.

At the beginning of the decade, *Vincentiana* still bore the formal, Latin character of the pre-conciliar era. The 1970 issue, for instance, contained a juridical text from the *Sacra Congregatio de Propaganda Fide* (*De contractibus incundis inter Ordinarios locorum et Instituta Missionalia in territoriis Missionum*), addressing contractual relations between diocesan bishops and missionary institutes. Yet, beneath such administrative materials, a deeper transformation was underway. Vincentian scholars were increasingly aware of the need to reinterpret the charism of St. Vincent de Paul in light of the Council's vision of the Church's mission among the poor.

This awareness came to full expression in 1977, a watershed year in Vincentian intellectual renewal. At the Collegio Leoniano in Rome, a series of meetings (in November 1976, January 1977, and April 1977) culminated in a decisive gathering dedicated to the renewal and refoundation of the *Annales de la Mission*, the historic publication of the Congregation, especially in Italian language. The participants agreed that the *Annales* should evolve into a modern scholarly journal of Vincentian studies,

capable of offering critical, theological, and historical reflection. They envisioned a publication structured in several sections—*Studies, Documents, Debates, Books, Testimonies, and News*—balancing scientific rigor with pastoral sensitivity. This new orientation signaled the birth of Vincentian studies as an academic discipline, rooted in spirituality yet open to contemporary theology and the social sciences.

The same year also marked the strengthening of the Grupo Internacional de Estudios Vicencianos (GIEV), an international research network that met in Eefde, the Netherlands (August 22–24, 1977). The group, including A. Sylvestre, C.M. (Assistant General who initiated the idea of forming this GIEF), Luigi Mezzadri, C.M. (Secretary of *GIEV*), R. Chalumeau, C.M. (Archivist of the Motherhouse), and others from Europe and the United States, coordinated efforts to foster scholarly exchange. They discussed the preparation of a comprehensive Vincentian bibliography, to be published in *Vincentiana*, and proposed two special *Miscellanea* volumes—one on St. Vincent himself and another on ecumenical figures within the double family (the CM and the Daughters of Charity). They also stressed the need to study how the Vincentian spirit is lived today in the pastoral service of the poor and in the life of the Daughters of Charity.

By the end of the 1970s, *Vincentiana* had entered a new phase. It began publishing theological and spiritual essays that laid the foundation for modern Vincentian thought: Adrian Bastiaensen, C.M.'s "Mission et Charité," José María Ibáñez C.M.'s "Vicente de Paul y el Juicio de los Pobres," Luigi Mezzadri, C.M.'s "L'humilité dans le dynamisme apostolique de Saint Vincent," and Gerard van Winsen, C.M.'s "Saint Vincent et les Missions Étrangères." These works crystallized the intellectual vitality of a generation of Vincentian scholars who would shape *the* spirituality and theological identity of the Congregation in the decades to come. The 1970s thus became the decade of rebirth for *Vincentiana*—a bridge between the post-conciliar renewal and the flourishing of Vincentian studies in the 1980s and beyond.

We saw also the emergence of the Vincentian studies in the journals from the different provinces. *Revista CLAPVI* (1977) is marked by a strong pastoral and contextual theology. Rooted in Latin American realities, it integrates Vincentian spirituality with themes of liberation, social justice, and the preferential option for the poor, often engaging with post-conciliar ecclesial developments. The Vincentian Studies *Colloque* (1978) published by the Irish province represents a dialogical and interdisciplinary space. Its theological character lies in fostering encounter between history, spirituality, and contemporary mission, privileging exchange and discernment over fixed doctrinal formulations. The *Vincentian Heritage* (1979) in the United States (Chicago) adopts a more academic and historical-critical approach. It emphasizes rigorous scholarship, archival research, and systematic theological reflection, contributing to the intellectual consolidation of Vincentian studies, especially in the Anglophone world. The Spanish Vincentian journal (e.g., *Anales Vicentinos*) reflects a classical and ecclesial theology, closely tied to tradition, spiritual formation, and institutional memory within the Spanish-speaking provinces. *Bollettino Vincenziano* (now *Missione e Carità*), in Italian language primarily aimed at Italian members of the Congregation of the Mission and the wider Vincentian Family. The content focus: Spiritual formation, missionary reports, Vincentian history in Italy, devotion to Saint Vincent de Paul, and practical guidance for confreres.

4. *Vincentiana* 1980–1989: Consolidation, Global Expansion, and the Maturation of Vincentian Studies

The 1980s marked a decisive moment of maturity and internationalization for *Vincentiana*. What had *begun* in the 1970s as a movement of renewal and identity-search within the Congregation of the Mission now became a coherent and globally recognized field of Vincentian scholarship. The journal—once primarily administrative—was transformed into a platform of theological reflection, integrating historical, pastoral, and spiritual perspectives.

The early 1980s inherited the theological energy generated by figures such as André Dodin, C.M., Adrian Bastiaensen, C.M., Luigi Mezzadri, C.M., Jean Morin, C.M., Jean-Pierre Renouard, C.M., Jaime Corera, C.M., José María Román, C.M., Gerard van Winsen, C.M., Stafford Poole, C.M., Raymond Chalumeau, C.M., Miguel Perez Florez, C.M., Alfonso Tamayo, C.M., and José María Ibáñez, C.M. —scholars who embodied the post-conciliar spirit of renewal. The 1980s thus became the decade of intellectual *continuity*: *Vincentiana* no longer served only as an internal communication organ, but as a research publication of international reach. Its articles began to appear in multiple languages—French, Spanish, Italian, and English—reflecting the multilingual reality of the Congregation spread across continents.

During this decade, *Vincentiana* broadened its thematic range to include not only theological and historical studies of St. Vincent de Paul and St. Louise de Marillac, but also reflections on the Vincentian Family’s response to poverty, justice, and evangelization in a changing world. The publication mirrored the growing global presence of the CM: Africa, Asia, and Latin America emerged as active contributors to the Vincentian mission. The periodical’s new editorial direction fostered dialogue among scholars from diverse contexts, offering both academic rigor and pastoral relevance.

A major turning point came with the 1980 General Assembly of the Congregation of the Mission, which reaffirmed the Vincentian identity through the lens of evangelization and service of the poor. *Vincentiana* became the natural medium through which these reflections were shared, debated, and deepened. Articles increasingly engaged with topics such as systemic poverty, social transformation, and inculturation of the Vincentian charism. The renewed understanding of the mission *ad gentes*—now framed as evangelization through charity—deeply influenced Vincentian thought during these years.

In 1985, *Vincentiana* began to publish systematic research on the history of the Congregation, including studies on early missions, canonical developments, and the spirituality of founders and reformers. These *scholarly* contributions paralleled the growing efforts to establish national and continental Vincentian study groups, continuing the vision of the *Grupo Internacional de Estudios Vicencianos (GIEV)*. Under the editorial direction of dedicated scholars, *Vincentiana* also began to collect and translate primary documents, thus preserving the Congregation’s intellectual heritage and making it accessible to new generations.

The late 1980s brought further development through a more collaborative and synodal approach. The journal became not just a publication, but a forum for dialogue between theologians, historians, formators, and missionaries. It encouraged a spirituality

of reflection—an apostolic *intelligence* deeply rooted in practice. The journal’s tone reflected both scientific seriousness and missionary compassion, an embodiment of what could be called the “heart and mind” of Vincentian theology.

By the close of the decade, *Vincentiana* had achieved international prestige. It stood as the official voice of *Vincentian* scholarship, serving the Congregation, the Daughters of Charity, and the wider Vincentian Family. Its contents documented not only events and reflections, but also the evolving consciousness of a charism being lived and reinterpreted across cultures. The 1980s can rightly be called the decade of consolidation: *Vincentiana* became both the memory and the *mirror* of the Congregation of the Mission—a space where history, theology, and pastoral experience converged in the shared pursuit of fidelity to St. Vincent’s spirit in the modern world.

The Vincentian Month of 1984 was a significant moment in the life of our Congregation’s scholarly and spiritual journey. It brought confreres together in Paris for deep reflection on the Vincentian charism, not merely to interpret St. Vincent’s words and works, but to be spiritually enriched and united in mission. Under the guidance of the group of GIEV and other experts, participants shared insights into our common heritage, fostering communion across Provinces. This month of study and prayer strengthened bonds within the Vincentian family and helped renew a shared commitment to living and promoting the Vincentian charism in the world.

5. *Vincentiana* 1990–1999: Global Renewal, Theological Depth, and Digital Accessibility

The 1990s marked a period of remarkable renewal, globalization, and theological maturation for *Vincentiana*. Emerging from the vibrant intellectual and spiritual groundwork of the 1980s, the journal entered a new phase in which Vincentian studies became systematically theological and globally integrated. Under the guidance of the Superior General, Fr. Robert P. Maloney, C.M., and with the *continuing* collaboration of scholars such as Luigi Mezzadri, C.M., José María Román, C.M., José María Ibáñez, C.M., Hugh O’Donnell, C.M., and Raymond Chalumeau, C.M., John Rybolt, C.M., *Vincentiana* evolved into both a scholarly review and a spiritual instrument for ongoing formation throughout the Congregation of the Mission and the Vincentian Family.

The early 1990s were characterized by the call to reread St. Vincent de Paul’s charism in light of the post–Vatican II *ecclesial* renewal and the social transformations taking place after the fall of the Berlin Wall and the emergence of new forms of poverty. *Vincentiana* responded by promoting a dialogue between tradition and context. It published in-depth studies on Vincentian spirituality and social ethics, inculturation, justice and peace, and the theology of the poor. Articles examined how St. Vincent’s insights could inspire creative pastoral and social responses to global inequality, urban poverty, and migration.

The Vincentian Month of 1990 for the directors of the Daughters of Charity, led by the International Secretariat for Vincentian Studies (SIEV) with members such as Mezzadri, Robert Maloney, Van den Berg, John Rybolt, Van Winsen, Davitt, Román, and Renouard, was a pivotal moment in deepening our understanding of the Vincentian charism. Building on earlier gatherings, this month focused on shared reflection, study, and spiritual communion among confreres dedicated to the heritage of St. Vincent de Paul

and St. Louise. Through dialogue and study, it helped broaden the scope of Vincentian research and enriched *Vincentiana* as a forum for ongoing theological and historical insights into our mission and identity.

A hallmark of this decade was the broadening of authorship: contributors from Asia, Africa, and Latin America joined European and North American scholars. This marked the truly global phase of *Vincentiana*. The Congregation's growing presence in the Global South found intellectual expression in these pages. Themes such as evangelization in plural societies, contextual theologies of service, and the Vincentian option for the poor became central.

Meanwhile, the General Assemblies of 1992 and 1998 profoundly influenced the content and orientation of *Vincentiana*. These assemblies, centred respectively on "New Evangelization" and "Creative *Fidelity* to the Charism", inspired series of reflective essays that examined the Vincentian identity as missionary and servant in a rapidly globalizing world. The journal became the main vehicle for disseminating the Superior General's circular letters, theological reflections, and the deliberations of these assemblies, thus serving as the living memory of the Congregation's collective discernment.

The editorial structure also became more collaborative. Each issue was carefully organized around special *themes*: *The Missionary Identity of the Vincentian Priest*, *The Challenges of Global Poverty*, *Formation for the Service of the Poor*, or *The Vincentian Family Today*. *Vincentiana* thus served as both a theological compass and a pedagogical tool, sustaining the ongoing formation of confreres, seminarians, and lay collaborators.

By the end of the decade, *Vincentiana* had become not merely the official journal of the Congregation but a recognized international review of Vincentian studies, combining academic *excellence* with pastoral commitment. Its articles shaped the renewal of Vincentian formation, influenced emerging Vincentian universities and research centres, and promoted the early integration of digital accessibility through *Via Sapientiae* (By DePaul University, Chicago).

Digital Accessibility was initiated by creating the so-called website of the CMglobal. Fr. John Freund, C.M. was the confrere who created **famvim.org**. Claude Lautissier, C.M., our archivist who lived here in Maison Mere, was also very enthusiast to put the Texts of Saint Vincent online in the Digital world. The team of DePaul University also helped significantly to make the Vincentian text digitalized possible. Fr. Ed Uduvic, C.M. and John Rybolt, C.M. also involved in this enterprise. The 1990s were the decade of global expansion and theological deepening. *Vincentiana* became a voice of discernment, a witness of global communion, and a bridge between the Vincentian past and the new millennium—faithful to its origins, yet boldly open to the signs of the times.

6. *Vincentiana* 2000–2009: Global Reach and Digital Transition

The first decade of the 21st century saw *Vincentiana* entering a new phase of global connectivity and digital innovation. While retaining its core mission of deepening the study of Vincentian charism and spirituality, the journal increasingly responded to the challenges of a globalized *Church*, engaging contributors from every continent. This

period emphasized not only the academic rigor of Vincentian studies but also their pastoral application in diverse socio-cultural contexts.

The early 2000s continued the trend of thematic issues, exploring topics such as *Vincentian Formation Today*, *Missionary Life in the Global South*, *Vincentian Social Doctrine*, and *Spirituality in the Service of the Poor*. Scholars, both clerical and lay, brought interdisciplinary perspectives, *combining* theology, history, sociology, and pastoral praxis. The engagement of confreres from Africa, Asia, and Latin America reflected the shifting demographics of the Congregation and enriched the journal with new insights into the lived experience of Vincentian ministry.

A major development was the integration with DePaul University's Vincentian Heritage Collection *Via Sapientiae*, which allowed articles, Correspondences, Conferences, Documents of Saint Vincent de Paul (English translation) to be accessed online by a global audience. This digital repository enabled Vincentian scholars and students worldwide to read, cite, and build upon the work of others, fostering continental and international collaboration. It also ensured the preservation of historical documents and critical studies, creating a bridge between traditional print publication and modern digital scholarship.

The decade also strengthened editorial collaboration. Contributors were encouraged to engage with peer review processes, work in thematic clusters, and share research methods. This collaborative culture *supported* the revitalization of the Vincentian charism, ensuring that new studies were not only academically sound but also spiritually and pastorally meaningful.

By 2009, *Vincentiana* had firmly established itself as both a global academic journal and a living instrument of formation, maintaining continuity with its historical roots while embracing the possibilities of digital scholarship through *Via Sapientiae*. The journal became a hub where Vincentian writers *could* collaborate, innovate, and contribute to the sustainable promotion of the Congregation's mission worldwide.

7. *Vincentiana* 2010–2025: Digital Expansion, Global Collaboration, and CIF for Vincentian Writers

At a couple of years within this decade, the regular publication of *Vincentiana* was interrupted for particular reasons. During those periods, the journal was reduced only to republications of the letters from the Curia, without offering theological or scholarly contributions in the field of Vincentian studies. However, after the interruptions, the period from 2010 to 2025 marks a dynamic era in Vincentian studies, characterized by digital innovation and international collaboration. *Vincentiana* continued to publish scholarly articles on Vincentian spirituality, charism, formation, mission history, and pastoral theology, drawing contributions *from* both confreres and lay collaborators. The journal emphasized rigorous research with *peer* review, footnotes, and references, ensuring that each publication contributes meaningfully to the ongoing study of the Congregation of the Mission.

<https://vincentiana.org>

The creation of this online platform of open journal system of *Studia Vincentiana*, vincentiana.org (initiated by Armada Riyanto C.M. and his board team since 2023 and approved by the Superior General and his Council), has allowed articles to be accessed globally, anytime and anywhere, facilitating participation from authors across Europe, the Americas, Africa, and Asia. Complementing this, fontecm.org (under construction), the Congregation's digital repository (besides DePaul's digital Vincentian heritage), provides spaces for previously unpublished mission documents, historical records, formation materials, and studies in multiple languages. Together, these platforms create a living Vincentian archive, strengthening research and reflection.

A key milestone in 2025 was the CIF for Vincentian Writers, scheduled in Paris from November 9–19. This gathering brought together Vincentian scholars and writers from around the world for workshops, group discussions, and small-group sharing. Participants are invited to collaborate on research projects and *papers*, exploring the revitalization and promotion of Vincentian charism. CIF fosters both continental and global collaboration, ensuring Vincentian studies were sustainable, innovative, and relevant to contemporary mission challenges.

By 2025, *Vincentiana*, supported by its digital platforms and CIF initiatives, represents a comprehensive *ecosystem* for Vincentian scholarship, where research, dialogue, and formation converge to revitalize and promote the Vincentian charism worldwide.

Digital Resources:

Today, Vincentian research benefits greatly from **reliable and rich digital sources** that make foundational texts and scholarly work broadly accessible. In addition, digital collections such as the **Vincentian Digital Library** and DePaul's university repositories house digitized primary sources, books, and archival materials that support deep study and global collaboration in Vincentian studies, and so forth.

English:

<https://vincentiana.org> (the Online Journal System of *Studia Vincentiana*)

<https://congregatiomissionis.org> (Website of the CM)

<https://via.library.depaul.edu/vhc/> (DePaul University's Vincentian collections)

<https://www.docsvincentiens.fr/telechargement> (Vincentian resources in French)

<https://famvin.org> (Vincentian family's website)

<https://vincentians.com/en/>

<http://www.diskon.ie/colloque.html> (Journal of Colloque of the Irish Province)

<https://via.library.depaul.edu/vhc/>

<https://vinformation.org/en/>

<https://vinflix.net/>

<https://famvin.org/vfo-en/vincentian-family-branches/>

Español:

<https://vincentians.com/es/>

<https://vinformation.org/es/>

<https://www.corazondepaul.org/>

<https://vinflix.net/es/>

Français:

<https://vincentians.com/fr/>

<https://www.oeuvre-berceau-st-vincent.fr/saint-vincent-de-paul/approfondir-la-spiritualite-vincentienne/>

<https://www.docsvincentiens.fr/>

https://vinformation.org/en/resources-in-other-languages/tagged_francais/

<https://vinflix.net/fr/>

Italiano:

<https://vincentians.com/it/>

<https://vinflix.net/it/>

Today, Vincentian studies benefit from a growing range of digital archives and online resources in different languages, including multilingual sites and digital exhibits maintained by various branches of the Vincentian Family, which provide accessible primary sources, historical documents, articles, and multimedia that support research and deepen understanding of the Vincentian charism worldwide. Let us remember the letter of Pope Francis to the Congregation of the Mission in congratulating the 400th of its existence:

“Four centuries after the establishment of the Congregation of the Mission (1625-2025), there can be no doubt that the charism of Saint Vincent de Paul continues to enrich the Church through the varied apostolates and good works of the entire Vincentian family. It is my hope that the centenary celebrations will highlight the importance of Saint Vincent's vision of service to Christ in the poor for the renewal of the Church of our time in missionary discipleship and outreach to the needy and the abandoned in the many peripheries of our world and the fringes of a shallow, throwaway culture. I am convinced that the example of Saint Vincent can especially inspire the young, who in their enthusiasm, generosity and concern for building a better world, are called to be bold and courageous witnesses of the Gospel among their contemporaries and wherever they find themselves” (Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Christus Vivit* [25 March 2019], 178).

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