CONGREGATION OF THE MISSION
VENEZUELA REGION
VINCENTIAN FATHERS

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Caracas, June 26, 2026

Fr. Carlos Arley, C.M.
Visitor of the Province of Colombia

Dear brother in St. Vincent de Paul:

May the grace, peace, and strength of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you and with all the confreres of the Province of Colombia.

I write to you with a heart that feels, at the same time, the weight of dismay and deep gratitude. First of all, I want to thank you for the messages we have received from you and the other brothers in Colombia. Amid the anxiety and fear caused by the powerful earthquake that shook Caracas, the state of La Guaira, and other regions of the country, these messages let us know that we are not alone, and feeling your concern and solidarity so closely strengthens us as a Vincentian family and comforts our beloved Venezuelan people in their darkest hours.

I want to update you firsthand on our current situation. These have been moments of great fear and tension. However, I want to give thanks to God and share with you the immense peace of mind that all of the confreres in the three communities of Caracas, as well as our seminarians, are safe and sound, without any injuries. The Lord has extended His protective hand over us.

As for our facilities in Caracas, we have suffered damage that, while concerning, has not resulted in any serious consequences. The Regional House, La Milagrosa Church, and the Seminary have sustained some significant cracks, and we regret that several of our religious images have fallen and been broken. This is damage that, with time and God's grace, we will repair.

However, the situation is far more critical and heartbreaking in La Guaira state, an area that has been severely affected by this natural disaster. Our San Vicente de Paúl School in Maiquetía suffered very severe structural damage. Although the building did not collapse, the extent of the damage makes it completely impossible for students to return to the classrooms for safety reasons. We are waiting to conduct a thorough assessment with civil engineers to calculate the damage and map out a plan for future repairs.

But beyond the bricks and walls, what truly breaks our hearts is the loss of human lives in our educational community. It is with immense sorrow that I share with you that the principal of our Maiquetía campus lost his mother and four other family members when their home collapsed. It is an incalculable tragedy in the face of which we have rallied in complete solidarity, standing with him during this bitter ordeal. Unfortunately, we have no further information about our students, as the collapsed buildings number more than three hundred, and many of our students, teachers, and staff members lived in those areas. Let us pray to the Lord that everyone is safe and sound.

Father Carlos, I ask that you keep us in your prayers. We need that spiritual strength to be a true source of support, comfort, and hope for so many families who have lost everything today. As the Congregation of the Mission, we are called to stand firm alongside those who suffer.

I thank you once again for your brotherhood and that of the entire Province of Colombia. We place our complete trust in Divine Providence and keep alive the hope that, after this long night, the Lord will grant us a new dawn.

United in prayer and in the Vincentian charism, please accept a warm and heartfelt embrace from Venezuela.

Jorge Luis Briceño Guillén, C.M.
Regional Superior