One Family, One Mission:

The Vincentian Family of Panama Gathers in Volcán

"Walking Together: One Family in Service to the Poor" was the theme that brought together nearly 200 members of the Vincentian Family of Panama on September 19 at Our Lady of Charity Parish in Volcán. From Colón, Panama, Veraguas, and Chiriquí, representatives of the country's various Vincentian branches and communities gathered to share their faith, strengthen their fellowship, reflect on their mission, and, above all, dream together about the future of the Vincentian Family in Panama.

The event was attended by the Daughters of Charity, priests and seminarians from the Congregation of the Mission, as well as a broad representation of the lay branches: AIC, JMV, the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, the Miraculous Medal Association, and MISEVI, along with members of Vincentian parishes. The diversity of vocations and ministries present was, in fact, one of the most significant aspects of the gathering. Laypeople, consecrated women, priests, and seminarians were able to recognize themselves as part of the same Family which, though following different paths, shares the same charism and the same concern: to follow Jesus Christ by serving the poor.

Throughout the day, opportunities for dialogue and reflection arose regarding the reality we live in and the challenges posed by the Vincentian mission in today's world. The so-called "new forms of poverty" took center stage in these reflections, inviting us to look beyond our usual works and ask ourselves where the people are today who need our presence, our listening, and our commitment. The gathering was also a space for dreaming. Dreaming of a Vincentian Family that is more united, more participatory, and capable of pooling its gifts and resources. Dreaming of new forms of collaboration among the branches. Dreaming of communities capable of responding to the signs of the times and accompanying those living in situations of poverty, exclusion, and vulnerability.

But dreaming also means taking on challenges. For this reason, the gathering led participants to identify specific commitments and paths to continue strengthening communion and the Vincentian mission in Panama. The presence of priests and seminarians from the Congregation of the Mission also served as a reminder of the importance of spiritual guidance and formation within this great Family. The Vincentian charism, received from St. Vincent de Paul, remains today a living call to unite evangelization and service, faith and charity, prayer and action.

The gathering culminated with the celebration of the Eucharist, presided over by the Regional Superior of Panama, Fr. Emmet Nolan, CM, as we presented to the Lord the dreams, challenges, and commitments shared throughout the day. More than just a one-day gathering, Volcán was intended to be a starting point. A moment to see ourselves as a Family, to recognize all that we already do, and to ask ourselves what more we can do together. For we are different branches, different vocations, and different paths, but one Family called to keep the charism of St. Vincent alive and to place it in the service of the poor.

We walk together. One Family. One mission in the service of the poor.

Argelys Vega








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