**MESSAGE FOR 27th SEPTEMBER 2020 – FEAST OF SAINT VINCENT**

Dear sisters and brothers in Saint Vincent,

May the Grace and Peace of the Lord be with you!

It is with joy that I am writing to you to wish you a nice feast on 27th September. Saint Vincent de Paul has always been there for us, especially during this very difficult year. Our commitment, our passion and our love for those living in poverty have grown thanks to our faith.

We are fortunate that the Vincentian charism accompanies us and guides us towards the path to follow in order to listen, share and respond to the multiple needs of disadvantaged and excluded people, who have experienced all kinds of difficulties lately.

But the glimmer of hope is finally there: hope, faith and enthusiasm. We will now turn to the future, to a better world. Throughout this year of crisis, what a joy and inspiration it has been to see volunteers from all continents working tirelessly to help the most disadvantaged, the sick, the elderly, all those who have suffered loneliness, hunger and ill health. Thank you to all of you. We are following what Saint Vincent experienced during the plague epidemics of his time.

How can we not be sensitive to the impulse of solidarity to help the population of Lebanon? This powerful union of all the branches of the Vincentian Family demonstrates our Vincentian spirituality and intuition, and this fervor brings us all together. There is a lot to be done, but collaboration and a wave of solidarity exhort us to move forward in order to build this world of hope in the post-crisis era, together with our brothers and sisters in need.

Let us entrust all our projects to the hands of the Blessed Virgin and Divine Providence and let us conclude the celebration of this day that is so important for us with the following prayer:

*“Saint Vincent de Paul, Apostle and witness of Christ's Charity to the poor, grant that we may love God with the strength of our arms and with the sweat of our brows. Help us to abandon ourselves to his Providence and remain faithful so we may discover his action in all the events in our lives. Support us in our desire to discern and fulfill the Will of God. Give us a tender and compassionate heart for the miseries and sufferings of others, especially the poorest of this world. Accompany us in our service to others and intercede before the Son of God, so that in our work, our family, our neighborhood, our parish and our communities, we may become fervent witnesses of his Gospel of Love. Amen.”*

This year, in order to celebrate Saint Vincent in a different way, the AIC Training Committee has chosen a new style of training material, asking AIC volunteers, Daughters of Charity and Fathers of the Mission to present you short videos on Vincentian virtues.

The Vincentian charism is inspired by the values proclaimed and lived by Jesus in the Gospel. And it is characterized by three fundamental and absolutely necessary virtues: **simplicity, humility and charity.** We must know them and be able to identify them in the life of Jesus Christ, as well as in the life and doctrine of Saint Vincent de Paul. Inspired by Jesus and Saint Vincent, our challenge is to try to make these virtues present in our way of life and in our service to people living in poverty.

So in the days leading up to 27th September, you will receive the videos, each accompanied by the translation in your language, in the following order:

1. On **24th September**, 3 videos on **humility** presented by Fathers of the Mission:
   1. in French, Father Bernard Massarini, CM
   2. in English, Father Robert Maloney, CM
   3. in Spanish, Father Benjamín Romo, CM
2. On **25th September**, 3 videos on **charity** presented by AIC volunteers:
   1. in French, Rose de Lima Ramanankavana
   2. in English, Suzanne Johnson
   3. in Spanish, Alicia Duhne
3. On **26th September**, 3 videos on **simplicity** presented by Daughters of Charity:
   1. in French, Sister Marie Julia Rasoaritiana, DC and Sister Eloisa Trujillo, DC
   2. in English, Sister Marge Clifford, DC
   3. in Spanish, Sister María Doris Angel Lopez, DC

A huge thank you to the Training Committee for having designed this training material and to all those who accepted to record their reflections in these videos.

May these messages and the life of Saint Vincent inspire us in our daily work!

Kindest regards,

**Rose de Lima Ramanankavana, International President**

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AIC, an international network that fights against poverty, which works primarily with women*.*

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