

LCUSA National Assembly 2021 - Opening Prayer, Day 2

Led by Sr. Grace Hartzog, SC

Charity

- Enlightens the whole
- Urges us to embrace the global world

Charity is the **CEMENT** which binds communities to God and persons to one another in such a way that whoever contributes to union of hearts... binds *one* intimately to God.

Coste II, Letter 651.

Charity calls us to BE **attentive to the Spirit** working in those we serve and in discovering new ways to accompany them, to collaborate with them and others on their behalf, to discern what we can and cannot do... *to invite others who are different from ourselves to join our ranks and to accept their fresh ideas!*

“You will find that **CHARITY** is a heavier burden than the soup and bread, but you must keep your gentleness and smile. Be of **GOOD HUMOR**. They are your **MASTERS**, terribly sensitive and exacting as you will see, but the uglier and dirtier they are, the more you must give them your **LOVE!**” (words of Vincent in the film *Monsieur Vincent*)

“If God’s love is fire, then zeal is its flame; if God’s love is a sun, zeal is its ray.” At age 79 Vincent shared, “I do not feel excused from the responsibility of working for the salvation of the poor.”

Charity never tires according to Vincent: “For what could really get in the way of my doing that now? If I cannot preach every day, all right, I’ll preach twice a week. If I cannot preach more important sermons, I will preach less important ones. If the congregation cannot hear me at a distance, what is to prevent me from speaking in an informal, more familiar way to the poor just as I am speaking to you right now?”

Followers of Vincent must first discover how to allow the “Interior Heart of God” to be the essence of their heart... And, second, let zeal flame the ***fire of our hearts so that the poor receive the rays of God’s love.***

How does God’s live urge me to...

- embrace the global world?
- invite and collaborate with others who may be different and offer new ideas?
- be a servant leader with joy, sensitivity, and zeal?

God, grant that **we may walk in your steps**. Lead us to seek your kingdom and its justice, and leave all other worries in your care.

May we be intrigued by the differences we hear as we leave this assembly. May we expect to be surprised! And may we treasure curiosity more than certainty. **Amen.**