



Reflections on Evangelization For Lay Vincentian Volunteers

based on an essay by
Lottie Espinosa de Pivaral



Throughout his life St. Vincent de Paul imitated Jesus; opted for the poor; taught the poor to love Jesus and to open themselves to an encounter with Jesus. And he used Vincentian volunteers, volunteers like ourselves, to help him in this ministry on behalf of the poor.



Sometimes our neighbor living in poverty has not been loved and therefore does not know how to love. We, as volunteers, are challenged to share love with him. We must learn how to evangelize him so that he comes to know the love of God and how God loves him personally.



Charity involves helping our neighbor to come to a knowledge of God's will, and also helping our neighbor to love God.



The church has always accompanied the preaching of the Gospel with charity toward those who are most in need. We cannot have one without the other and it would be a serious mistake to put aside one of those two realities.



We cannot be satisfied with providing the sinner with just bread and water but we must also offer them the bread that has come down from heaven.



Who would raise their voice calling for people to respect their neighbor, and yet not offer the gift of salvation to the neighbor?



Since our origins as lay Vincentian volunteers are rooted in the Church: in the Church we were gifted with faith; in the Church we have developed and grown in faith; as members of the Church, God has called us to this vocation of service on behalf of those persons who are most poor and most vulnerable...



...in turn, our charitable action, our transformative efforts and our commitment to justice and charity are the best arguments and the best witness that make the Church credible.

Indeed, we can ask what does it mean for us to love God if those who share life with us on a daily basis do not find us to be true evangelizers as a result of the attitudes that we communicate? We would become like the rock that causes people to trip and fall; we would become a scandal to those whom we are called to communicate the faith and the love of Christ and the Church.

Scripture readings, Quotes and Reflection

We seek the conversion of everyone; we desire the conversion of everyone; we make every effort, if necessary, to bring about the conversion of everyone. There is no other way to be faithful to Christ. We are not about winning debates or making ourselves pleasing to our brothers and sisters. We are about saving souls and there is one name that is given to men and women who want to be saved: Jesus Christ. (Acts 4:12)

Are we to preach only with words? No, our works give witness to God. Jesus said: “Your light must shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your heavenly Father.”
(Matthew 5:16)

“What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if some people say that they have faith but do not have works? Can that faith save them? If a brother or sister has nothing to wear and has no food for the day, and one of you says to them, ‘Go in peace, keep warm, and eat well,’ but you do not give them the necessities of the body, what good is it?”

(James 2:14-16)

“If I preach the gospel, this is no reason for me to boast... for an obligation has been imposed on me, and woe to me if I do not preach it.”

(1 Corinthians 9:16)

“It is not enough for me to love God if my neighbor doesn’t love him.” St. Vincent de Paul (CCD:XII:215)

“if we have love, we should show it by bringing people to love God and the neighbor, to love the neighbor for God and God for the neighbor.”

St. Vincent de Paul (CCD:XII:215)

Reflection:

In our service, what creative and innovative things can we do that will give life to this evangelizing love that we have learned from our Vincentian charism?

Source:

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Text: Lottie Espinosa de Pivaral

Translation: Father Charlie Plock, C.M.

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