

Jesus has sent the Spirit to teach us how to do this. It is up to us to communicate with each other so that we can put on the mind of Christ to move forward as the one Body of Christ.



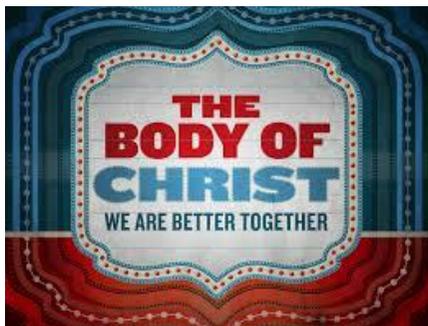
Apostles for Today

Prayer and Reflection - February 2017

Questions for our reflection:

1. How can we grow as one body in the Union of Catholic Apostolate and in the understanding of our different vocations through the use of dialogue?
2. How are dialogue and collaboration associated with each other as assets to the development of the Union of Catholic Apostolate?
3. In what ways will dialogue assist us to acknowledge and better understand the essential role of the layperson in the Union and in the Church?
4. What can we do to deepen our experience of ourselves as the Body of Christ and to broaden our knowledge of the different vocations within the Union – to use everyday actions as a means to a more effective apostolate?

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General Introduction

With this edition, we are beginning a series of reflections over the coming months around the theme of *dialogue* in the light of the charism given to the Pallottine Family through St. Vincent Pallotti.

Communion is at the very heart of our charism, and St. Vincent is rightly described as a prophet of a spirituality of communion. Dialogue is an expression of communion and a means to create it; a means to deepen it where it already exists and also to repair it where it has been damaged.

It is a means of entering into relationship with others, to share deeply the truth of our experience of life and faith, while opening ourselves to listen deeply to the experience of others and to being touched and changed by this experience.

It is a means to constructing and deepening relationships of love and mutual respect and justice among ourselves as a Pallottine Family and with the wider Church and society.

Dialogue is also a particular characteristic of the wider Church today and is Pope Francis constant invitation. We are called in a special way through our charism to play our part in creating a culture of dialogue in the many and varied dimensions of our lives and world.

DIALOGUE AMONG VOCATIONS



[The Union of Catholic Apostolate] is like an evangelical trumpet, perpetually calling everyone ... and awakening the zeal and charity of all the faithful of every class, rank and condition (OOCC, I, pp. 4-5).

It is vital that we continue to grow in our awareness that the Union of Catholic Apostolate is made up of “all the faithful of every class, rank and condition.” Such a composition requires an ongoing dialogue among the vocations because the approach to the apostolate – and therefore to the imitation of Jesus Christ in our lives – will vary from vocation to vocation.

Obviously the life of a layperson compared to that of a priest will have different challenges as well as differences in lifestyles. Similarly, the single and married person will approach life itself from a different view depending on the structure and duties that are present. The contemplative and active form of religious life differ from one another. When we look at the “universality” of the membership, It becomes clear that in order to strengthen the relationships among the members there is indeed a need for dialogue. This dialogue is not only necessary among the vocations for a strengthening of our understanding of one another but also for greater effectiveness in our basic calling within the Union.

Every Catholic ... should rejoice because, if with their talents, knowledge, learning, studies, strength, nobility, profession, skills, earthly goods, riches, service

and prayers ... they do all they can to revive faith and rekindle charity ... , they can acquire the merit of the apostolate (cf. OOCC, IV, p. 326).

As we study the foundation of the charism that was given to our Founder, St. Vincent Pallotti, in terms of the broad vision of membership in the Body of Christ, we are reminded that the daily activities of each person can be a source of the apostolate – the life of Jesus Christ, Apostle of the Father -- that continues through the power of the Spirit at work in our own lives.

This calls for a deeper understanding of one another and of our role in this most basic involvement in evangelization: to give new life to faith, a new spark to love and a new thrust to unity. How else can we come to this essential knowledge of the “Body” unless we dialogue?

What better way is there to “connect” each part to the body that is working as a unit in this apostolic response to which God is calling the Union of Catholic Apostolate?

The idea of apostolate and the name apostle, according to the scriptures, is not such that it cannot be separated from ecclesiastical jurisdiction ... Therefore, one who is not a priest can be honoured with the name “apostle” and the work can rightly be called an “apostolate”. (OOCC, III, p. 140)

Dialogue and effective collaboration are intertwined. When Vincent Pallotti lists the vocations, talents and activities of individuals, he is doing so with a vision that embraces the one body and its many parts. He sees the work of each one as a part of the whole. It is therefore not in isolation that we respond to the call of God, but in communion with one another. If every person is a part of the one body, then every activity becomes a part of universal outreach for the salvation of the world. This is the charism that we have inherited and it is up to us to develop it effectively for our own times through dialogue and collaboration.