

may live our vocation with a new zeal that allows the light of faith to shine forth in our daily fidelity to the gospel.

I invite all of us to rejoice together with the members of the Vincentian Family in Spain and to give thanks to God for the newly beatified, by following their example of faith, courage, and charity. In celebrating this event and living our charism, I hope all members of the Vincentian Family will find in this beatification a time of grace, gift, light, service, and happiness.

DAUGHTERS OF CHARITY MARTYRS FOR THE FAITH IN SPAIN

Evelyne Franc, D.C.

Superioress General

We bless the Lord and thank Him for the witness of heroic fidelity by twenty-seven Daughters of Charity and a Child of Mary who accompanied them even to martyrdom.

Our martyred Sisters gave a courageous witness of faith and love for Jesus Christ: their lives were put to the test in persecution, and at the bitter hour of Gethsemane, they did not back away from the supreme sacrifice.

Contemplating their simple lives totally given in humility and fidelity, we admire the marvels that the Lord did in each of the Sisters. They remained rooted in a firm faith, an intense prayer life fed by the Eucharist, a great love for the Virgin Mary and a very strong sense of the Church. Encouraged by community life that supported them, they tenderly loved persons who are poor and served them with great enthusiasm and joy; they suffered and found joy in giving the best of themselves where the Company had sent them.

Their path, in response to God's call, radiated brightly and steadfastly through an ardent faith, a joyful hope and a boundless love. The strength of the Holy Spirit shines in their martyrdom: they preferred to leave their ministries and security rather than renounce their faith and vocation as Daughters of Charity. They accepted death with joy and hope, offering the gift of forgiveness with a peaceful smile to those who persecuted and killed them.

The shining message of our Sisters martyred for the faith in the 20th century is still alive and relevant. Their memory lives on in history: they are witnesses of mercy and forgiveness for humanity that aspires to knock down the barriers dividing peoples and strongly desires to strengthen the bonds of fraternity as a prelude to a new springtime where love and justice, liberty and peace will flourish forever.

Our martyred Sisters invite us to be lights of love with persons who are poor whom we serve, with the present generation that needs a lamp to shed light on their perspective and direct their steps to Jesus, our only hope.

*"The blood of our sisters will be spilled
by those deserving of God's grace,
and it will make holy those who remain".*

(SAINT VINCENT DE PAUL, 1658, COSTE X, p. 551)