

## “Help them unobtrusively”

"The thought of death will help you to grow in the virtue of charity, for it might be that this particular instant in which you are together with one person or another is the last one. They, or you, or I, could be gone at any moment" ("Furrow," 895)

September 30

You might tell me, 'Why should I make an effort?' It is not I who answer you, but St Paul: 'Christ's love is urging us '[1]. A whole lifetime

would be little, if it was spent expanding the frontiers of your charity. From the very beginnings of Opus Dei I have repeated tirelessly that cry of Our Lord: ‘By this shall men know that you are my disciples, if you love one another’ [2]. I did this to encourage generous souls to put it into practice in their own lives. This is precisely how we shall be recognized as Christians, if we make charity the starting point of everything we do...

I would like to help you realize that, even after twenty centuries, the Master’s commandment is still as strikingly new as ever. It is, as it were, a letter of introduction proving that one is truly a son of God. Ever since I became a priest I have very often preached that, for so many people alas, this commandment continues to be new, because they have never, or hardly ever, made an effort to put it into practice. It is sad

to have to say this, but it is true. Nevertheless the Messiah's words are quite clear. He stresses, once and for all, 'by this you will be known, by the love you have for one another!' This is why I feel I must remind people constantly about these words of Our Lord. St Paul adds, 'bear one another's burdens; then you will be fulfilling the law of Christ' [3]. Think of the amount of time you have wasted, perhaps with the false excuse that you could easily afford it, and yet you have so many brothers, your friends about you, who are overworked! Help them unobtrusively, kindly, with a smile on your lips, in such a way that it will be practically impossible for them to notice what you are doing for them. Thus they will not even be able to express their gratitude, because the discreet refinement of your charity will have made your help pass undetected (*Friends of God*, 43-44).

[1] 2 Cor 5:14

[2] John 13:35

[3] Gal 6:2

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