

## SPIRITUAL FORMATION FOR A ZEALOUS HEART

### CHARITY

**THE GREATEST COMMANDMENT; PURPOSE OF CREATION** "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind... and the second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself." (Matt 22:37-39) - Love is the purpose of creation: "We are created to love and to be loved." (Mother Teresa)

#### **WHAT IS AUTHENTIC LOVE?**

##### **1) Love desires the greatest good for the beloved.**

- Counterfeit definitions of love: warm feelings, being nice, etc.
- We evangelize because we love people and we want what is best for them. What is their greatest good? Jesus - a relationship with Christ - His gift of salvation, Faith, Hope, and Love

##### **2) Love is moved by the needs of others.**

*"When he disembarked and saw the vast crowd, his heart was moved with pity for them, for they were like sheep without a shepherd; and he began to teach them many things." (Mark 6:34)*

- Jesus had compassion for people. They moved his heart. Ex. Jesus wept over Jerusalem.

##### **3) Love is Sacrificial - The Love of the Gospel is a sacrificial love. Love to the Cross.**

*"The way we came to know love was that He laid down His life for us. So we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers." (1 John 3:16)*

- Paul said "I will most gladly spend and be utterly spent for your sakes." (2 Cor 12:15)
- *"I am prepared not only to be bound, but even to die... for the name of the Lord Jesus." (Acts 21:13-14)*
- Willingness to sacrifice is the true test of love

##### **4) Love is Zealous and compels us to act, to share what we have been given.**

*"...a zeal inspired by the love of Jesus for all mankind. It takes the form of concern, tenderness, compassion, openness, availability and interest in people's problems." (John Paul II, Redemptoris Missio, 89)*

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##### **5) Love Reveals God**

- When you do something kind for one who doesn't deserve it, you reveal God, for "God is Love." (1 John 4:16)
- Love in such a way as to get people's attention for God. The greatest ad for Christianity is love/holiness.

##### **6) Without Love, we have nothing...**

*"I can have all the theology in the world, know every teaching of the Church, apologetic argument... but without love "...I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal... I am nothing... I gain nothing." (1 Cor. 13:1-3)*

- Without love...We are a ministry team that blows in, blows up and blows out, and blows away - with no lasting fruit.

##### **7) With Love we have everything - It is the fulfillment of all the virtues.**

*"Love is patient, love is kind. It is not jealous, love is not pompous, it is not inflated, it is not rude, it does not seek*

**PRAYER:** Ask for the grace to love without counting the cost.

**ACTION:** Consider visiting a home for the elderly to visit with a resident who has no one to visit them. If you want to challenge yourself, make a commitment to do it on a regular basis.

