



## DOMESTIC ASSEMBLY OPENING RITUAL MESSAGE

(Sr. Maria Ana Rosario G. Evidnete, DC)

Coming together through this Prayer Ritual to signify the opening of our Domestic Assemblies is a God-given opportunity for me to share a few thoughts to ponder on.

- “Let us enter into the process of the Domestic Assembly with open and faith-filled hearts.” The Domestic Assembly is a significant moment of grace in our life in the Company. It is not just a questionnaire to be answered or work to be accomplished. It is inviting the Holy Spirit to shed light on who and how we are as consecrated women. It is a moment of truth as we discover what more must we do to be truly and effectively given to God as Daughters of Charity.
- “Let us take time to reflect on the theme and important issues for the future of the Company.” What needs to be opened up in us? In what ways can we contribute to the future of the Company? For as long as we are on earth and benefitting from the provisions of the Company, we need to exert effort to continuously promote and live the mission of charity which is our major commitment to the Church. We do not stop bringing the light of faith, hope and joy to the poor. Hence, we must envision what the Company will be like in the future and how must we live today in order that the future which is in God’s hands may become a reality.
- “Let our ideas converge around the culture of encounter.” Some persons are afraid to reveal themselves, their innermost being to others, because it makes them vulnerable to ridicule and the probability that their revelations may be used against them. Let us know how to share our stories and to patiently listen to the stories of our companions for these stories are our gifts to one another.
- “Let the atmosphere of our meetings be characterized by prayer, reflection and discussion” or sharing in a sisterly exchange of inspirations, insights and commitments. We come to the DA ready and prepared because we have listened in prayer to the Holy Spirit. During the sessions, we listen to our Sisters’ sharing so that together, we may discern the movement of the Holy Spirit – particularly where Divine Providence is leading the Community.
- “Let this process be a source of conversion and renewal for each one of us.” Starting with the Sister Servant who entrusts her whole self to be guided by the Holy Spirit, we are invited to encourage each other to participate, to be part of and not to dominate, to share and not simply to receive, to accept what others think so that the horizons of our own thinking may expand.
- “Let this Assembly lead us to break through the doors that isolate us so we may go out towards our suffering brothers and sisters and in encountering them, let us take up the challenges of the world today with them.” How respectful are we of the rights of others? How consistently do we care for God’s creation? How deeply in harmony are we with everyone, particularly our very own Sisters in community? How creatively generous are we in passing on to the next generation the values and treasures we have accumulated in our lifetime?

My dear Sisters, the time of the Assemblies is precious time. This is a time that will never return in our lives. Let us use this time well. Let us give to it the very best of ourselves. Lord, open our eyes, open our ears, open our minds and hearts to the grace of these precious moments of our Assemblies that we may see, hear and act on Your Word active and present everywhere especially in the poor!



**WELCOME MESSAGE**  
**at the UNIFICATION of the Province of Thailand**  
**with the Province of St. Louise de Marillac - Asia**

My very dear friends in Christ,

I welcome and greet you all with joyful gratitude to God who has brought us to this day of union!

There is a consistency about change that underlies our human condition. The molecules of our physical bodies are constantly in motion, evolving, expanding, contracting. Our brains interpret what our senses receive and spur our bodies to respond according and to store the memories of our experiences. Socially throughout our life, we meet hundreds or even thousands of persons and we choose whether to interact, engage, or ignore them. Yes, we change with each passing consistently constant and unchanging.

Today, we are here to witness a significant change – and it is this change that I invite us all to welcome because it is what God wants. Fifty years ago, when our two Filipina Sisters set foot in Thailand to collaborate in bringing the DC brand of service of the poor, those of us who were already in the Company then, never imagines what that new beginning would lead to. Through the years, several Sisters have set forth and some have returned, each one making and leaving the footprint of her charity in God's vineyard in Thailand, Laos, Cambodia. God saw the fruits of their labors... and seeing how blessed they were, we all rejoiced and said: *"God is good!"*

Today, we welcome you, my dear Sisters of Thailand, Laos, Cambodia, and celebrate not simply a coming home... but a union... planned by God from all eternity. God alone knows why this must be so. It is thus trust in God's Providential love that I enjoin us all to welcome anew. Allow me to recall to us all the image of the rainbow: each color is uniquely beautiful, useful and favored... but when they blend in harmony... then hope is born! The rainbow, then, is a reminder that we are all important and can live in peace and bringing beauty and joy to the world!

Today we welcome our unity. Diversity, inclusion, tolerance, acceptance and appreciation are all great words, but we need to act and live these truly for only then will we have the power to create a community that is truly God – like.

Today, in greater number, we resume our journey of putting extra focus on finding that thread of universal love upon which the entire universe is woven. What are we called Daughters of Charity for if not to be bearers of God's Love to everyone? Paraphrasing Mahatma Gandhi, "Our ability to reach unity in diversity is the beauty and test of our charity" ... to this challenge, may we all readily say: *"Yes, we can!"*

For us present here today as well as for those who cannot come but know why we are gathered for its occasion, may we all welcome this union as a special sign

of predilection of God by whose love we have been called and gathered and whose compassion we shall jointly and as one bring to all peoples to whom God's Spirit has sent us forth...

We welcome being of one heart -

for we are all women gifted with capacity to love....

being of one spirit -

for we are all daughters of one Father....

being of one mission -

for we are all sisters embracing one servanthood

in the name of Christ following the footsteps

of our Holy Founders, Sts. Vincent and Louise

Today, we pray for God's blessings that we may be constantly faithful to the mission ahead of us!

  
Sr. Maria Ana Rosario G. Evidente, DC  
27 September 2019