September 25

**#1** Conference Opening (EVERYTHING IS CONNECTED)

During these days together, our prayer experience will include God’s word presented through Scripture and some reflections on aspects of System Change. For we know that EVERYTHING IS CONNECTED!

**#2 O Radiant Dawn**, splendor of eternal light, sun of justice: come and shine on those who dwell in darkness, searching for the other side.

**#3 The Bridge Builder by Will Allen Dromgoole**

An old man going a lone highway, Came, at the evening cold and gray, To a chasm vast and deep and wide. Through which was flowing a sullen tide The old man crossed in the twilight dim, The sullen stream had no fear for him; But he turned when safe on the other side And built a bridge to span the tide.

“Old man,” said a fellow pilgrim near, “You are wasting your strength with building here; Your journey will end with the ending day, You never again will pass this way; You’ve crossed the chasm, deep and wide, Why build this bridge at evening tide?”

The builder lifted his old gray head; “Good friend, in the path I have come,” he said, “There followed after me to-day A youth whose feet must pass this way. This chasm that has been as naught to me To that fair-haired youth may a pitfall be; He, too, must cross in the twilight dim; Good friend, I am building this bridge for him!”

Source: Father: An Anthology of Verse (EP Dutton & Company, 1931)

**#4** Who is your bridge being built for? How is Systemic Change a foundation of that bridge?

Systemic change requires transforming our way of thinking. By listening to those who are Poor, we rekindle the fire that has been stifled by years of pain and despair.

**#5** Systemic Change points us in the direction to:

**Go to those who are poor and listen –** Do I listen deeply with an open heart?

**#6 Do what we say we will do –** Do I keep promises and act on my word?

**#7 Show deep respect for the local culture –** Do I impose my ideas when there are differences?

So what can we do to bridge the gap between darkness and the same old way of doing things and move across into the light of a positive destiny for others.

**#8.** [**Matthew 5:13-16**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+5%3A13-16&version=ESV)

“You are the salt of the earth, but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled under people's feet. “You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.

Let your light shine, and give glory to God.

**#9** Video: **Bridge from Canyon Ellie Holcomb**

**#10** Opening day 2 – Everything Is Connected

**#11 O Wisdom of God Most High,**

**#12 …**guiding creation with power and love: come to teach us the path of knowledge.

It is important to think in concrete terms and tailor programs to the real conditions. Projects should be designed together, considering all dimensions of the human person, body, heart and spirit. Everything is connected!

**#13** [**James 2:14-17**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=James+2%3A14-17&version=ESV)

What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can that faith save him? If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food, and one of you says to them, “Go in peace, be warmed and filled,” without giving them the things needed for the body, what good is that? So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.

**#14** Why is your bridge being built? How is Systemic Change a foundation of that bridge?

**#15** Systemic Change points us in the direction to:

**#16 Walk the talk**

**#17 Give once and you elicit appreciation; Give twice and you create anticipation; give three times and you create expectation; give four times and it becomes entitlement; Give five times and you establish dependency.**

We pray for the wisdom to know which bridge to cross in service to your people, to strengthen and not hinder their future success.

**#18** **Intercession for the Marginalized**

For those deprived of their human needs, and their human rights:

that they may be given the dignity which God confers on all his people;

**We pray to the Lord: …faith by itself, without works, is dead.**

For all who are forgotten or thrown away, and especially for the poor, the sick and the aged: that God might change our hearts and move us to love them as the image of Christ;

**We pray to the Lord:……faith by itself, without works, is dead.**

**#19** For all who are lonely or afraid, for teenagers on the street, old people in nursing homes, prisoners with no one to visit them, and all whom the world has forgotten that Christ might lead us to them;

**We pray to the Lord:…faith by itself, without works, is dead.**

For all who are forgotten or cast off: that we might value each human life, as a priceless gift from God;

**We pray to the Lord:…faith by itself, without works, is dead.**

**#20** For those who are mentally disabled: that we might cherish the gifts God has given them, and in their lives hear the voice of our loving God;

**We pray to the Lord: …faith by itself, without works, is dead.**

For all those we encounter everyday;

**We pray to the Lord:…faith by itself, without works, is dead.**

**#21** For Courage to Do Justice

**Let me not be afraid to defend the weak because of the anger of the strong,** **Nor afraid to defend the poor because of the anger of the rich.** Show me where love and hope and faith are needed, and use me to bring them to those places. Amen.

**Opening Day 3**

**#22 Everything is connected…. *Happy Feast Day!***

**#23 How is your bridge being built ? How is Systemic Change a foundation of that bridge? “With the sweat of our brows and the strength of our hands.” SVdP**

**#24** The Spirit Makes The Person

**#25** The spirit makes the person **Our spirits are restless while searching for meaning in life. How to find it?** Material progress never entirely satisfies the craving of human hearts. Our spirits are restless while searching for meaning in life. The spark of God dwells in every human heart and moves to overcome the limited horizons of our daily life.

**#26 Collaboration and Collective Impact - The spirit makes the person** Collaboration is a journey of sharing thoughts and ideas, of walking with each other, sharing dreams and planning together. It is a process of learning each other’s systems of thinking and acting. It is the learning when and what to contribute for the good of the whole.

**#27** Large-scale social change comes from better cross-sector coordination rather than isolated intervention of individual organizations.

**#28** [**Galatians 3:28**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Galatians+3%3A28&version=ESV)

There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

**#29** Intercessions Almighty God, Source of all that is, Giver of every good gift: Create all people in your image and call us to love one another as you love us.

We confess that we have failed to honor you in the great diversity of the human family. May we live in freedom, without building walls between ourselves and others.

We have longed to be known and accepted for who we are, without making judgments of others based on the color of skin, or the shape of features, or the varieties of human experience.

**#30** We have tried to love our neighbors individually while yet benefitting from systems that hold those same neighbors in oppression. Forgive us, Holy God. Give us eyes to see you as you are revealed in all people.

Strengthen us for the work of reconciliation rooted in love. Restore us in your image, to be beloved community, united in our diversity, even as you are one with Christ and the Spirit, now and forever. Amen.

**#31** N Noble Saint Vincent de Paul, beloved servant of the poor,

may we follow your example and do good works among those whom society has abandoned, enslaved, or forgotten.

Inspire us to feed the hungry, to love a child, to provide comfort and medicine to the sick, to clothe those whose garments are threadbare, and to offer hope and our Lord’s words to all who need respite. Pray for us to our beloved God that we may commit ourselves selflessly to doing the same charitable acts that you did all your life, and intercede with him that we may have the favour of his guidance and strength and love upon this important and meaningful work. Amen.

Closing Prayer at 12:30pm Tuesday – 9/27/2022

**#25** Video: **Bridge from Canyon Ellie Holcomb**