August 10th: Feast of Saint Lawrence, Deacon and Martyr

Gospel text (*Jn* 12:24-26): Jesus said to his disciples: “Amen, amen, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains just a grain of wheat; but if it dies, it produces much fruit..."

Saint Lawrence, deacon and martyr (+Rome, 258)

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Today, St. Lawrence, deacon and martyr, materializes as an example of the bountiful action lived by the Church since its origin. As he was entrusted with the charities of the Church to the poor of Rome, after his colleagues and Pope Sixtus II had been imprisoned, St. Lawrence was allowed some time to collect the treasures of the Church and hand them over to the authorities. But St. Lawrence distributed all the available money to the poor and then presented them to the authorities as the real treasure of the Church.

The Church is not an NGO. Its charitable activity must be, primarily, based on the experience of a personal encounter with Christ, whose love has touched the believer’s heart, awakening in him the love for our fellow human beings. St. Lawrence followed this path to the last consequences, by freely accepting martyrdom, in a supreme proof of faith and charity.

—O Lord, through St. Lawrence’s mediation, we ask You to inflame our hearts so that we may love as You have loved us, by carrying the Cross every day for all of us.