

DECEMBER 13, 1651 – ACT OF ASSOCIATION – APPROXIMATES VOW OF POVERTY

On this day Francoise Eyraud, Clauda Chastel, Marguerite Burdier, Anna Chalayer, Anna Vey, and Anna Brun signed the contract of association, allowing them to hold goods in common. This approximates the vow of poverty. Prior to this, vows taken by religious women were solemn vows of those living a cloistered life. These women were associated with the Montferand Hospital for orphans and widows in Le Puy. Clauda Chastel was the only one who could actually sign her name.

READING

Mid-17th century France was a time of desperate violence and apathy. In the face of overwhelming counter forces, countless little groupings of women and men seeking not only to help the helpless and hopeless, but also to find God in the misery of it all, sprang up all over France. The first communities of St. Joseph were among these. Most of these early groupings had as their central focus the spiritual and corporal works of mercy. In this, communities of St. Joseph were no different. They did, however, take their intention a step further. They also wanted to work for meaningful relationships among themselves, with the neighbor, of their neighbor with others and themselves, and all with God. Their actual mission was to be agents of unioning love in their world – the chaotic 17th century.

*See Marcia Allen, CSJ, Stimulating Communion: Life in the Trinity – Part II
Bearers of the Tradition – 2005*

When have I been an agent of unioning love in my family, community, neighborhood, world?

CLOSING SONG

Song: Standing on the Shoulders *by Joyce Johnson Rouse on Love Large*

I am standing on the shoulders of the ones who came before me.
I am stronger for their courage. I am wiser for their words.
I am lifted by their longing for a fair and brighter future.
I am grateful for their vision, for their toiling on this Earth.

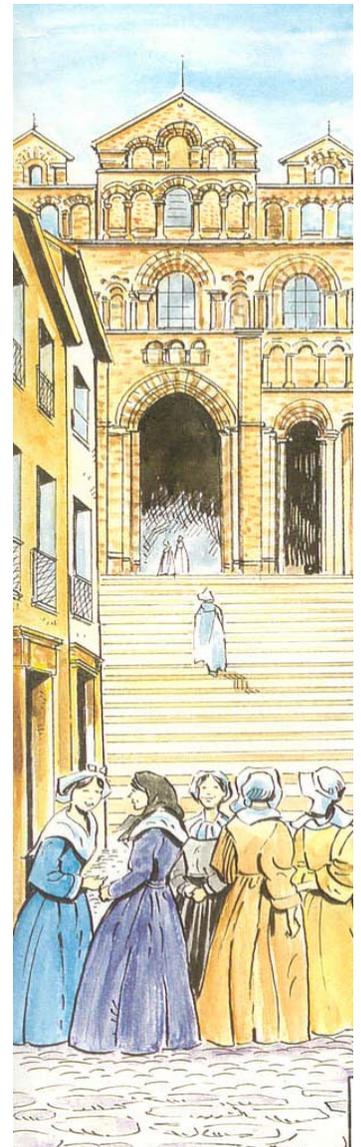
We are standing on the shoulders of the ones who came before us.
They are saints and they are humans; they are angels they are friends.
We can see beyond the struggles and the troubles and the challenge
when we know that by our efforts things will be better in the end.

They lift me higher than I could ever fly carrying my burdens away.
I imagine a world if they hadn't tried, we wouldn't be here celebrating today.

I am standing on the shoulders of the ones who came before me.
I am honored by their passion for our liberty.
I will stand a little taller. I will work a little longer.
and my shoulders will be there to hold the ones who follow me.

They lift me higher than I could ever fly carrying my burdens away.
I imagine a world if they hadn't tried, we wouldn't be so very blessed today.

I am standing on the shoulders of the ones who came before me.
I am honored by their passion for our liberty.
I will stand a little taller. I will work a little longer
and my shoulders will be there to hold the ones who follow me.
My shoulders will be there to hold the ones who follow me.



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Official theme song of 75th
Anniversary of Women's Suffrage
honoring the 19th Amendment to
the US Constitution