

08.09.2017

Father Jordan: Imbued with Christ's love and filled with the fire of the Holy Spirit

In one of his letters, St. Paul reflects on his life-changing, deeply personal encounter with the Risen Lord, as a result of which he became a zealous Apostle. He writes: "For the love of Christ impels us" (2 Cor 5:14). It is precisely these words that echo in Father Jordan's *Spiritual Diary* (IV/30) in an entry made on August 20, 1916, at the conclusion of our Founder's life, only two years before his death. They vividly convey Father Jordan's experience of faith underpinned by his experience of the love Jesus Christ has for us.

Indeed, Father Jordan was imbued with Christ's salvation-giving love for us, which inspired him to make everyone else share in this love. Having personally experienced the truth inherent in the words: "Now this is eternal life, that they should know you, the only true God, and the one whom you sent, Jesus Christ" (J 17:3), he believed the goal of his life was to communicate his experience to others. The works he founded were anchored in the truth these words convey, and they were inspired by the message inherent in them. These particular words also echo in Jordan's *Spiritual Diary*, in an entry of February 14, 1904, where he says: "You are a debtor to all! Do not rest until everyone knows, loves and serves Jesus the Savior" (II/70). Two days later, on February 16, 1904, he added: "Oh Jesus, I will make known Your name. You know the pressure I feel!" (II/71).

Father Jordan's genuine experience of the love Christ has for us can be seen in his readiness to absolutely surrender to the guidance of the Holy Spirit. The Power that comes from above guided him to go out to others, as it once did in the case of the Apostles of Jesus Christ. Therefore he repeatedly stresses the universality of the Society and sets a specific task for it: to make everyone know the beauty and the depth of the love with which the Lord has loved mankind (*manifestare Dominum Nostrum omnibus et ubique*). It was the fire of the Holy Spirit burning in Father Jordan's heart that constantly prompted him to encourage the attitudes of zealotry and apostolic fervor. Were it not for this fire, Father Jordan would not have become our Founder. Were it not for this fire, we would not be Salvatorians who go through their lives always engrossed by the words: "As long as there is one person on earth who does not know God and does not love Him above all things, you dare not allow yourself a moment's rest" (*Spiritual Diary* II/1).

As I reflect on the experience of Father Jordan's life, I tend to see in it the very core of the Christian faith, as well as the very core of our Salvatorian identity. The Founder reminds us that what makes the Salvatorians who they are is the experience of the love Christ has for us. It is this love that provides the fulfillment of our deepest human desires; it is this love that is the fountainhead of our apostolic zeal. In this way Father Jordan has inspired me to be always concerned about my personal relation of love with the Lord; he has invited me to continuously deepen this relation through prayer, by listening to the Word of God, and in my sacramental life. He also encourages me to discover the marks of Christ's love in my biography and in my vocation, as well as in my present life, in the community where I live and in my ministry. Thus Father Jordan reminds me about the relevance of my openness to the Holy Spirit, who causes a

salvation-bringing anxiety in my heart and does not let it rest. Father Jordan encourages me to continuously summon the Spirit of Jesus Christ so that the words “you dare not allow yourself a moment’s rest” are not merely a beautiful chart in the past history of the Salvatorians, but are continuously materialized here and now.

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