



March 2020

Spirituality ...

Dear sisters and brothers,

to write about spirituality is not an easy task for me but I will do my best to motivate you all to live your life in the Holy Spirit.

Spirituality is derived from the Greek word "*spirare*", this means breathing. By breathing we stay alive. So it has to do with living in a certain way. Therefore our way of living has to do with our spirituality. It is not just any kind of spirituality, it is the Salvatorian spirituality we try to live. And who is our 'Salvator', our Savior? Jesus Christ of course. So, the Salvatorian spirituality is in the first place a Christian spirituality.

In the nineteenth century there lived in southern Germany an ordinary boy who was driven by a clear charisma, based on John 17.3. His name: Johann Baptist Jordan. The Salvatorian Family originated from his charisma. We can read in the first chapter of the charter of the Salvatorian Family:

"Moved by a deep experience of God, the situation of the Church, and the reality of his time, Father Francis Mary of the Cross Jordan was filled with an urgent desire that all people know the one true God and experience fullness of life through Jesus the Savior. His vision was to unite all the apostolic forces in the Church to love and proclaim Jesus as the Savior to a world in need of God. He included people from all ages and all walks of life, working together everywhere and by all ways and means."

It was clear to Father Jordan that getting to know God and Jesus Christ is not a privilege of the clergy. To be able to contribute to that as simple lay people is a real gift. This gift given to Father Jordan, and with him to all his followers, invites us to follow that way of living.

Our spirituality is based on two pillars:

The first one is **apostolate**. To be a true Salvatorian Jesus Christ must be in the middle of our lives. He must be the meaning of our existence. We are not saints but according to our spirituality we must seek holiness from our life. As father Jordan said in his diary: *"It is true that we all need to be holy! Only humanity is holiness! It is our mission to follow Christ as the purest and most perfect mirror of all holiness! Not the soul that makes the fewest mistakes is the holiest, but the one who has love and is not afraid!"* - We should try to live this holiness and invite and support others to do the same. Try, because it is impossible for us to be saints every day of our lives. But it is important to try to follow the example of Jesus Christ, our Savior.

We can achieve this in prayer and during the things we do every day. Its means that we must be kind to all the people who meet us, forgive those who have hurt us, but also ask and receive forgiveness for our own mistakes.

Father Jordan said: "*Recognize the goodness of God, even in the smallest things. The good Lord grants you his grace so that you can do great things and complete them to his honor. God, help me to glorify your name everywhere and to save souls*".

We know the God of love through the life of Jesus Christ. He gave us the example of living this love every day. By trying to live in the way Jesus did we pass this love of God to others.

We can't do it alone. We need people who live the same spirituality. Therefore it is important that we have a community.

Another auxiliary is prayer and contemplation. When we go in meditative silence we feel Christ and God closer to us. We can tell them about everything we have in mind. They help us to live a life like Jesus dreamed and to be happy people.

Father Jordan also said: "*A man filled with zeal for the faith can put an entire nation on track. We need the fire of faith in God to bring the passion*".

This is about our own mission. We are invited to trust God, also when everything is going badly. We must continue when we have setbacks. This message is not only for us, but we must also awaken others to live as Jesus lived because it is our only rescue. It is important that others see we are Salvatorian Christians through our love and commitment to others.

The second pillar is **universality**. Salvatorian universality is more than internationality, more than globalization. It means to take attention and to take care for others. It implies commitment and solidarity for all people without distinction on 2 tracks parallel with each other: for people far away and for people nearby. It is easy to say that we have to know God and Jesus Christ and let Him known by all people as said in John 17, 3 but how are we going to do it? In the Bible we have many stories of people who meet God in their lives:

Let us think of Moses in the burning bush, of Elijah and his meeting with God in the cave, of Jesus on Mount Tabor or Paul since his trip from Jerusalem to Damascus.

If we see God as the Creator of the world we see Him in all creatures. We should have respect for nature and everything that is in this nature. This is a possibility to experience God among us and cooperate to make God and Jesus known to the world. We have to trust the promises of God, have the will to do the will of God and go beyond human wisdom.

When God said to Moses' *I am who I am* or Jesus promises us that *the Holy Spirit will always hug us*, we can trust that we are not alone and that God is with us for the happiness of the world. We only have to do what Jesus did and told us and trust that the good Lord helps us when needed. So let's try to make the dream of God with people come true. Let us try this in collaboration with our Salvatorian brothers and sisters around the world, following the example of Jesus, our Savior. In this way our founder's dream comes also true and we are a true Salvatorian family.

That all may know the Savior,
and with love and regards to all of you



Mrs. Rita Van Olmen
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