



APRIL 2012

***“... lay people find in
Canossian spirituality the
impulse to live their Christian
vocation fully... ”***

Opening Prayer

Psalm 117 (118)

Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good,
His love is everlasting!

Let the house of Israel say it,
His love is everlasting!
Let the House of Aaron say it,
His love is everlasting!
Let those who fear the Lord say it,
His love is everlasting!

Hard-pressed, I invoked the Lord,
He heard me and came to my relief.
With the Lord on my side, best help of all,
I can triumph over my enemies.

I would rather take refuge in the Lord
Than rely on man.
I would rather take refuge in the Lord
Than rely on princes.

The pagans were swarming around me,
In the name of the Lord I cut them down;
They swarmed round me closer and closer,
In the name of the Lord I cut them down;

They swarmed round me like bees,
They blazed like a thorn-fire,
In the name of the Lord I cut them down.

I was pressed, pressed, about to fall,
But the Lord came to my help.

The Lord is my strength and my song,
He has been my saviour.
Shouts of joy and safety
In the tent of the virtuous:
The Lord's right hand is wreaking havoc,
The Lord's right hand is winning,
The Lord's right hand is wreaking havoc!
No, I shall not die I shall live
to recite the deeds of the Lord;
though the Lord has punished me often,
he has not abandoned me to Death.

Open the gates of virtue to me,
I will come in and give thanks to the Lord.
This is the Lord's gateway,
through which the virtuous may enter,
I thank you for having heard me,
You have been my Saviour.

It was the stone rejected by the builders
That proved to be the keystone;
This is the Lord's doing
And it is wonderful to see.
This is the day made memorable by the Lord
with immense joy for us!

Please, Lord, please save us.
Please, Lord, please give us prosperity.
Blessings on him who comes
in the name of the Lord!
We bless you from the house of the Lord.
The Lord is God, he smiles on us.
With branches in your hands draw up in
procession
As far as the horns of the altar.

You are my God, I give you thanks,
I extol you my God;
I give you thanks for having heard me,
You have been my Saviour.
Give thanks to the Lord for He is good,
His love is everlasting!

The Word of God

First Letter of John 1:1-7

“Something which has existed since the beginning, that we have heard, and we have seen with our own eyes; that we have watched and touched with our hands; the Word, who is life, this is our subject. That life was made visible: we saw it and we are giving our testimony, telling you of the eternal life which was with the Father and has been made visible to us. **What we have seen and heard we are telling you so that you too may be in union with us, as we are in union with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ.** We are writing this to you to make our own joy complete.

This is what we have heard from him, and the message that we are announcing to you: God is light; there is no darkness in him at all. If we say that we are in union with God while we are living in darkness, we are lying because we are not living the truth. **But if we live our lives in the light, as he is in the light, we are in union with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.**”

Reflection

John had seen *“Jesus’ life”* during the whole of his public life. From the moment John the Baptist pointed him out as the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, till the day of his glorious ascension into heaven. What John saw of *‘life’*, according to what has been stated in verse 1, is perfect: this act of seeing is carried out by the eyes of the body and of the mind; it is also confirmed by touch and hearing. The whole of the human person partakes of this truth. The whole of the human person can verify its truth.

The aim and the reason for announcing Christ Jesus or the Word of life is revealed. Here, great attention is needed; the greatest possible. The content of the proclamation must focus exclusively on the Word of life. It must be that Word touched, heard, seen,

contemplated.

It must be the Person of the Word, in His completeness as true Man and true God.

It must be the Person of the Word, whom John touched, listened to, saw and contemplated. He contemplated Jesus, the Word, in His human life while acting and working, speaking and proclaiming, consoling and comforting, teaching and instructing, healing and soothing pain, bringing back to life and giving sight to the blind, forgiving and proclaiming the Kingdom of God. John entered into communion with this Person. Communion is unique: it is an exchange of life, enrichment of life and a change of life because it is a unique gift of life.

The Word of life gave John his life. Jesus gave him something more than life itself. He gave him His Mother. Jesus entrusted her to him while entrusting John to His Mother.

John would like every person to enter into communion with Christ and this is the goal of his proclamation. He wishes that communion may be established between Jesus and every human person so that one may live in communion and give and receive life. John knows that Jesus is the way of communion of life on earth. He proclaims the Word of life and people welcome the Word of truth and enter into communion with the Truth, Jesus Himself. He announces this truth. This Truth guides human hearts, souls, minds and spirits. This unique truth is the Word of life. If this unique communion is not established, no other communion will be possible. The disciple of the Word of life may give up even his own life, pour out his blood, but he will never be able to live communion, live in communion.

By accepting the Word of life as one’s own life, blood, truth, essence, body, one enters into perfect communion between the one who announces and the one who receives this message.

Communion is in this Word of life in which one becomes one with the Word. One and the same life, that of the Word, flows in the one who proclaims and the one who receives

the Word. If communion is the aim and goal of proclamation, witnessing and the gift of the Word, there is no evangelical and Christian living where communion is not promoted.

Where communion is not present, this is a sign that one is outside the life of Jesus. Where there is no communion, it is a sign that the Word of life is absent. When the Word is present, in all truth, communion must always be there too. The Word may not be present in the one who announces and in this case one cannot bring about communion. But the Word may not be present in the one who receives it, either because the Word is refused or accepted wrongly, erroneously or partially.

The disciple is a bridge of communion with Christ Jesus, and Christ Jesus is the bridge of communion with the Father. In fact, John adds: ***Our communion is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ.*** Christ is the bridge of communion with the Father, but how did he create this communion? He created communion with the Father by always doing the will of the Father in every instant of his life. He created communion by announcing to every person the perfect will of the Father, which He carried out completely. After God's Word, Jesus, no other words may tell us what God's Will is. He has told us everything about the Father and the Father has told us everything through his Son.

If a disciple of Jesus wants to establish communion with Christ he must resemble in everything his Master and Lord. Like Christ Jesus, he must carry out in his life what the Word of Jesus announced to him. However, he must live it by entering into that perfect knowledge which is the work of the Spirit within him. But it not enough that he lives in communion to be in communion with Christ Jesus. He is in communion with Christ if he acts in such a way as to make Christ known to every person. If only one person, through the disciple's fault, does not come to know the will of Christ, that is the Father's will, he would not be in perfect communion with

Jesus the Lord. Being in perfect communion with Christ means being in perfect communion with the Father.

The way to enter into communion with the Father is the Word of Christ Jesus. Real communion with Christ reveals real communion with the Father. There cannot be many types of communion: Christ with the Father, the disciple with Christ, the disciple with other disciples of the Lord. There is only one communion: that of Christ with the Father and that of the Father with Christ. We must all enter into this one communion. Unity is brought about by making Christ's obedience our own, his love, mercy, compassion and pity. This communion comes about and is realised in life that is according to the Word of Christ who is the Word of the Father. This communion is realised in Christ who is the foundation of communion and the truth of every communion. Besides being the foundation, it is also the only modality of communion: obedience must be total, full, perfect, till death and death on the cross. When John says: ***Our communion is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ,*** he wants to affirm the eternal unity of communion which is also temporal. Unity derives from the Incarnate Word. Christ and the Father are in inseparable communion. Without Christ there is no communion. Since Christ is the way to the realisation of communion with God, the one who wants to establish true communion on earth must use all one's diligences and zeal so that through him true communion with Christ is created. Only the one who is in perfect communion with Christ may create perfect communion with people.

Therefore it is imperative to grow into full communion with Christ, the Word, according to the whole truth contained in Him. Consequently, it is necessary to know Christ through knowledge, wisdom and intellect, to proclaim the Word of life according to this fullness of knowledge so that everyone may know and accept Him and become one with Him in communion. Ours is an exclusive

communion which must open us to universal communion, that is, to the whole of humanity and this till the end of time.

John teaches a truth that frees Christianity from external appearances. Often we think that communion must be created by exterior expressions. **Instead, John teaches us that communion is created in only one way: walking in light.** However, it is not the light that man proposes. The light is God. The one who walks in the light of God – and there is only one way to walk in this light: putting into practice every Word of light that emanates from Christ Jesus – is in communion with others. If two people walk in the light they are always in communion, even if exteriorly they are far away from one another. Communion is not established on an earthly level, by men, but rather on a Heavenly level, in God.

The one who is in God, is in communion with the whole world. The one who walks in the light is in God. The one who walks in the light walks in the truth of Christ and observes his Word. The one who observes his Word always lives in conformity with it every day of his earthly existence. If one is not in communion with God everything is pretense, deceit, falsehood. When our communion with God becomes stronger, the Son of God gradually purifies us with his blood making us clean, limpid, pure, free from every sin. It is necessary to understand this profound truth.

Communion with God comes about when we accept his will and decide to live according to his Word which his Will manifests and reveals. In the Sacrament of Baptism we take part in the divine nature but we do not want to let go of our old nature. This remains within us with its greed and pride, it remains in us with the burden of the consequences of the sin committed by Adam. But strong is the will in us to be and live in communion with God progressing from light to light, from grace to grace, from truth to truth. This journey would not be possible if Christ Jesus, the Son of God, does not intervene in our lives with the intention of

purifying us from every sin with his blood. Christ's blood that we drink in the Eucharist is so powerful in grace and salvation that it gradually purifies us from our old nature, making us almost spiritual here on earth. **This is a long, long journey which is accomplished over a long period of time. However, the one who believes, prays, receives with faith the Eucharist and repents of his sin, sets out on this journey.** When a Christian has the determined will to overcome sin, to receive the Sacraments and be faithful in prayer, the blood of Christ Jesus begins to have efficacy on our old nature making it, day by day, sinless because Jesus conforms it to His glorious nature..

(Mgr. Costantino Di Bruno, Comment on the First Letter of John)



Relation of the Lay Canossian Association with the two Canossian Religious Institutes.

Reading and reflection:

Statutes n°23-24-25-26-27, pg. 29-31

Reflection may be helped by the proposed readings below.

“Today, involving lay people ... is being *faithful* to the Foundress’ charism and conformity to the fundamenta principles of faith.”

The term **faithfulness** for today’s mentality is a little old fashioned but it is worthwhile reappropriating its Biblical meaning:

- **Faithfulness of God:** God is the “rock” of Israel (Dt 32:4) and this name symbolises His unchanging faithfulness, the truth of His words, the

stability of His promises. It does not suffice to praise his faithfulness which goes beyond the heavens (Ps 36:6), but it is necessary to pray to the faithful God to obtain from Him faithfulness (1 Kings 8:56) and cease to respond to his faithfulness with our godlessness. In fact, only God may convert his unfaithful people and give them happiness, thus making faithfulness spring from the earth which is its fruit. (Ps 85:5,11 ss) (Cf. Dictionary of Biblical Theology, Marietti, entry Faithfulness)

- **Faithfulness of Jesus:** the faithful servant is Jesus Christ, the Son and the Word of God, the true and faithful one, who comes to fulfil the prophecies of Scripture and the work of his Father. Through him all God's promises are kept (2 Cor 1:20); in Him there is salvation; with Him humanity is called by the Father to enter into communion; and through Him believers will be confirmed and made faithful to their vocation. In Christ, therefore, the faithfulness of God is fully revealed (1Th 5:23) and the faithful one is reassured (2 Th 3:3) because God's gifts are for ever. (Rm 11:29) (Cf. Dictionary of Biblical Theology, Marietti, entry Faithfulness)
- **Faithfulness of man:** the term "the faithful" is apt to indicate Christ's disciples, those who have faith in Him. It surely includes the natural virtues of loyalty and good faith that Christians must practice, but it also indicates that religious faithfulness that characterises those who are moved by the Holy Spirit. (Gal 5:22)

In the new Covenant this faithfulness has a soul: it is love. Jesus insists on this point: "Remain in my love. If you keep my commandments you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and remain in His love." (Jn 15: 9) The reward of participating in the Lord's joy is reserved to those who are faithful. (Mt 25:21,23 and Jn 15:11) (Cf. Dictionary of Biblical Theology, Marietti, entry Faithfulness)

- **The Amen of God and of man:** in Hebrew, Amen, is part of the same root of the word "to believe". This root expresses solidity, reliability and faithfulness. So we understand why Amen may express God's faithfulness towards us, as well as our trust in Him. **To believe means to say 'Amen' to the words, promises and God's commandments, it means entrusting self totally to Him who is the 'Amen' of God's infinite love and perfect faithfulness.** (Cf n°1062 e n°1064 of the Catechism of the Catholic Church)

" They have to re-interpret the Canossian spirituality and align it with the secular nature of the Laity."

From the Catechism of the Catholic Church n°2705

- Meditation is above all a quest. the mind seeks to understand the why and how of the Christian life, in order to adhere and respond to what the Lord is asking. the required attentiveness is difficult to sustain. We are usually helped by books, and Christians do not want for them: the Sacred Scriptures, particularly the Gospels, holy icons, liturgical texts of the

day or season, writings of the spiritual fathers, works of spirituality, the great book of creation, and that of history the page on which the "today" of God is written

From the **Decree Apostolicam actuositatem**
n° 4 The spirituality of lay people regarding the apostolate

Since Christ, sent by the Father, is the source and origin of the whole apostolate of the Church, the success of the lay apostolate depends upon the laity's living union with Christ, in keeping with the Lord's words, "He who abides in me, and I in him, bears much fruit, for without me you can do nothing" (John 15:5). This life of intimate union with Christ in the Church is nourished by spiritual aids which are common to all the faithful, especially active participation in the sacred liturgy. These are to be used by the laity in such a way that while correctly fulfilling their secular duties in the ordinary conditions of life, they do not separate union with Christ from their life but rather performing their work according to God's will they grow in that union. **In this way the laity must make progress in holiness in a happy and ready spirit, trying prudently and patiently to overcome difficulties.** Neither family concerns nor other secular affairs should be irrelevant to their spiritual life, in keeping with the words of the Apostle, "Whatever you do in word or work, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, giving thanks to God the Father through Him" (Col. 3:17). Such a life requires a continual exercise of faith, hope, and charity. Only by the light of faith and by meditation on the word of God can one always and everywhere recognize God in Whom

"we live, and move, and have our being" (Acts 17:28), seek His will in every event, see Christ in everyone whether he be a relative or a stranger, and make correct judgments about the true meaning and value of temporal things both in themselves and in their relation to man's final goal. They who have this faith live in the hope of the revelation of the sons of God and keep in mind the cross and resurrection of the Lord. In the pilgrimage of this life, hidden with Christ in God and free from enslavement to wealth, they aspire to those riches which remain forever and generously dedicate themselves wholly to the advancement of the kingdom of God and to the reform and improvement of the temporal order in a Christian spirit. Among the trials of this life they find strength in hope, convinced that "the sufferings of the present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory to come that will be revealed in us" (Rom 8:18). **Impelled by divine charity, they do good to all men, especially to those of the household of the faith** (cf. Gal. 6:10), laying aside "all malice and all deceit and pretense, and envy, and all slander" (1 Peter 2:1), and thereby they draw men to Christ. This charity of God, "which is poured forth in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who has been given to us" (Rom. 5:5), enables the laity really to express the spirit of the beatitudes in their lives. Following Jesus in His poverty, they are neither depressed by the lack of temporal goods nor inflated by their abundance; imitating Christ in His humility, they have no obsession for empty honors (cf. Gal. 5:26) but seek to please God rather than men, ever ready to leave all things for Christ's sake (cf. Luke 14:26) and to suffer persecution for justice sake (cf. Matt. 5:10), as they

remember the words of the Lord, **"If anyone wishes to come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me"** (Matt. 16:24) . Promoting Christian friendship among themselves, they help one another in every need whatsoever. This plan for the spiritual life of the laity should take its particular character from their married or family state or their single or widowed state, from their state of health, and from their professional and social activity. They should not cease to develop earnestly the qualities and talents bestowed on them in accord with these conditions of life, and they should make use of the gifts which they have received from the Holy Spirit. **Furthermore, the laity who have followed their vocation and have become members of one of the associations or institutes approved by the Church try faithfully to adopt the special characteristics of the spiritual life which are proper to them as well.** They should also hold in high esteem professional skill, family and civic spirit, and **the virtues relating to social customs, namely, honesty, justice, sincerity, kindness, and courage, without which no true Christian life can exist.** The perfect example of this type of spiritual and apostolic life is the most Blessed Virgin Mary, Queen of Apostles, who while leading the life common to all here on earth, one filled with family concerns and labors, was always intimately united with her Son and in an entirely unique way cooperated in the work of the Savior. Having now been assumed into heaven, with her maternal charity she cares for these brothers of her Son who are still on their earthly pilgrimage and remain involved in dangers and difficulties until they are led into the happy fatherland. All should devoutly

venerate her and commend their life and apostolate to her maternal care.

"The overall direction" of the Association "Lay Canossians" is the competence of the Superior General of the two Institutes ... called by the Church to guarantee the authenticity of the charism.

Let us examine a few articles of Canon Law which deal with Associations of the faithful and where the aims and the ties with Religious Institutes are set out:

- Can. 298 **"In the Church there are associations (...) strive in a common endeavor to foster a more perfect life, to promote public worship or Christian doctrine, or to exercise other works of the apostolate such as initiatives of evangelization, works of piety or charity, and those which animate the temporal order with a Christian spirit.**
- Can. 303 **"Associations whose members share in the spirit of some religious institute while in secular life, lead an apostolic life, and strive for Christian perfection under the higher direction of the same institute are called third orders or some other appropriate name."**
- Can. 304 **"All public or private associations of the Christian faithful, (...) are to have their own statutes which define the purpose or social objective of the association (...) and which determine the manner of its acting, attentive, however, to the necessity or advantage of time and place."**
- Can. 305 **"All associations of the Christian faithful are subject to the vigilance of competent ecclesiastical authority which is to take care that the integrity of faith and morals is preserved in them and is to watch so**

that abuse does not creep into ecclesiastical discipline (...).

- In the section of Canon law relative to Institutes of consecrated life we find in **Can. 578** "The designs of the founders (...) regarding the nature, purpose, spirit, and character of an institute, (...) which have been sanctioned by competent ecclesiastical authority, and its sound traditions, all of which constitute the patrimony of the same institute."



Conformity with the Great Models: Christ Crucified and Mary, Mother of Sorrows

*It is necessary to animate our spirit
And more than ever to conform ourselves
In all things to those Great Models:
Jesus Crucified and Our Lady of sorrows.*

To conform ourselves to Christ means to go out of self to become Him. This does not mean to annihilate our identity in God, but to find it again in its fullness, because we are never so much our true selves as when we abandon or surrender ourselves to God the Creator.

All creatures are truly themselves in as much as they remain or become as God has thought and willed them to be.

If the sea wished to become air, it would lose its identity. If the flower wished to become a bird, it, too, would lose its identity.

To be and to remain what God wishes it to be is for every creature to affirm its own identity.

However, unlike all other creatures, man is a being destined by God to transcend himself. His identity is realised in his becoming what God has thought of him.

God from all eternity has thought and desired that man might become God. He is not jealous of His own greatness. God transcends all creatures and is also the One who calls man to become like Him.

This is the final destiny of humanity. God has no other plan than this for each one of us.

The human person can decide on another destiny for himself, but acting in this way one always chooses his own death. God has created man to His image and likeness. (cf Gen 1,26).

To be an image of something or someone is to represent more or less exactly the reality of that thing or person. **I am the image of God.** He has created me as a reflection, a visible and sensitive radiation of himself, an expression of His power and His glory.

I am but a fragment of His unfathomable mystery in the world. But this image is endowed with intelligence and free will.

Christ is the new man. Mary is the new woman, the channel of grace, the way of entry of the Word and the way of return to God in Christ Jesus. We find again in these creatures given by the goodness of the Father, the models to become again what God had always willed man to be.

The path of conforming to Christ and Mary passes through the cross. We become like Christ and Mary when we receive the Word that purifies us and introduces us into the mystery of his death and resurrection. Called to communion with the Son of God "we are being changed into His likeness from one degree of glory to another; for this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit." (2 Cor 3:18)

"Prayer ... is the exercise by which the soul becomes ever more disposed, and enkindled with the desire to love Jesus Crucified in order to imitate Him." (Magdalene)

Prayer is an exercise in listening to God's word, and listening implies a direct relationship with Him. God has put Himself in relation with me from the day of my conception. His creative Word drew me from nothing, called me by name and in that name

He enclosed a plan of love that requires the whole of my life to be accomplished. **I am His word in the process of becoming.**

But this process, according to His plan, is linked to my free and responsible response.

I shall become what He has planned for me, if my listening be unconditional, faithful and constant. In His Son God has made Himself the Word and expects from me an attentive, humble and loving listening. The attitude of a servant is the only attitude possible for a creature in God's presence.

To contemplate the life of Jesus Christ means for Magdalene to prepare herself to re-live the spirit with which He has lived and continues to live His passion. Christ prepares Himself in obscurity for 30 years to live the last 3 days of His life. His love on the cross would not have been effective in pardoning His executioners if He had not, as a man, practised and trained Himself during His life to pardon every offence directed towards His person. He would not have been able to give us His Mother if He had not prepared Himself for detachment from all and everything. He would not have been able to offer paradise to one who had always lived in wrong doings and crime if He had not thrown His heart wide open to the mercy proper to God.

He would not have been able to say "all is accomplished" if He had not all His Life sought and done the will of the Father. The degree of love seen in Christ on the cross conceals an exercise, even a human one, of virtues lived for the greater part in the silence of the 30 years of Nazareth and during the 3 years of community life with men so slow of heart and head and so timid that two of them took the road of denial, and the others that of escape. Real virtue does not come all of a sudden without a long and persevering training.

The virtue that dominates and is outstanding in the life of Christ is humility and it is of this virtue that the Daughters of Charity "should make a special profession." The humility that Christ had as Man reveals and reflects the attitude that He has always had

in His relationship with the Father as Word.

The Word generated by the Father is the Only-Begotten Son who lives wholly and only in the Father and for the Father. The Word is the person in whom the Father dwells wholly. There is no space and not even a corner that may be reserved by the Son for Himself. He is totally of the Other and for the Other. Christ is totally in the will of the Father in his saving plan for sinfull and impotent huma-nity. Christ is the God-Man who embraces all the interests of the Father, completely forgetting Himself.

The interior attitude that Magdalene asks from her Daughters, and each one of us, is that of seeking God alone in imitation of Jesus Christ Crucified. It is not possible to become like Christ without imitating Him in this virtue: "... learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart." (Mt 11:29)

Humility is the virtue common to all Saints. It is especially the virtue of Mary, the one closest to Jesus Christ: **"Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord."** (Lk 1:38)

Magdalene, faithful disciple of Christ, warmly recommends this indispensable virtue to all of us, teaching us even the way of practising it: **"... they will hide their private, individual and common endeavours to reserve them only for the eyes of God."** Without humility God is not God and man is not holy, because humility is love that makes place within itself for the Absolute.

The Lay Canossian, follow-ing the example of Jesus as well as that of the Foundress, is a person who lives like Christ to give glory to God and to fulfil on earth the work given to Him. (cf. Jn 17:4)

To contemplate Christ-the-Way means to want the truth of life.

Magdalene teaches us the shortest and most direct way: "the assiduous contemplation of the life and passion of Jesus Christ ... this Institute would be off the path if we wanted to propose any other aim but this."

Paul, too, admonishes us.

Go along “the way that I have shown you in Christ” (1 Cor 4:17) and you shall see the divine glory shine on your face (cf. 2 Cor 4:6) and in the joy of loving Him you will find the strength to serve Him right up to Calvary.



Questions for reflection

- **In his reflection**, Mgr. Di Bruno talks of excluding people from our communion of love. Thinking of our “failures in living communion”, both family and community, which elements, how much individual responsibility do we have?
Do I share the causes indicated by Mgr. Di Bruno?
- **Being faithful to God** and Magdalene, today. Which factors, in our personal, family and community living, may be useful in confirming our journey of faithfulness?
- **Prayer** is to be understood as meditating on daily events that God permits, as suggested by the Catechism of the Catholic Church; are we able to re-interpret Canossian spirituality in this way?
- **Spirituality**, as proposed by the Decree Apostolicam actuositatem, includes active participation in sacred liturgy, but also indicates a new understanding of spirituality: giving more attention to the family and temporal affairs. How is it possible to see in every event God’s will and Christ in every person, near or far? Mary is seen as a perfect example of this spirituality. Are we able to imitate Her?
- **Faithfulness** to the charism of Magdalene is a responsibility which questions Lay people and Religious. How

much are we living it? Is the bond with our Religious Institutes, sometimes too tight for certain people, perceived to be an effective guarantee of the authenticity of the charism? Otherwise, are we really running the risk of “charismatic subjectivism”?



Final Prayer

Lord,

You stay at the door and knock:
grant us that we may open
when we hear your voice,
but even if our doors remain close,
may you conquer our fear
and come just the same,
because from your Resurrection
may we have the fullness of life
and your peace.

Lord,

you know our heart better than we do
and you know that truly it does not search
and desire anything but You.
Make us able to respond
to your call
and may we be led to the place
that You desire,
because in us may Your design
of love and tenderness
be accomplished in us.

Lord Jesus,

Good Shepherd,
teach us to listen to your voice,
to recognise it amidst a thousand others
which promise but do not keep their
promise,
and follow the way of truth and life in You
that bring us to the Father.

Personal Notes

Father,

who in the Passion and Resurrection
of your Son,
You showed us your great love,
grant that we may learn
to make our lives a gift to You,
according to Your example of love,
because we believe and
may the world believe that
You sent Him to save us.

Lord,

grant that through the light of
your Spirit, we may recognise You
present in us
and may Your word be rooted in us and,
each day, bring forth the fruit of life.

Father,

you have always called us
to communion with Yourself,
reveal to us the path Christ,
Your Son, followed,
so that we may return to You
with trust and the heart of a child.

Lord,

You promised not to abandon us,
send us Your Spirit,
so that He may guide us
to the fullness of truth
and to the knowledge of the inestimable
gift of your call and friendship.

Amen!

