

A Word from the Postulator

Faith is a grace, a free gift from God. By means of faith we are capable of drawing near to the truth about God, that truth which Jesus Christ came to reveal: God is Love. Pope Benedict XVI reminds us that faith transforms our entire human existence and that it grows when it is lived as an experience of love. Fr. d'Alzon also teaches us, both in word and by the example of his life, that faith is above all attachment to God, with all our being, in love and obedience.

Moreover, faith is a light that lets us perceive, albeit imperfectly, the truth about God's being, about the relationship we are called to establish with him. This light is a grace from God, a gift of the Holy Spirit. But, on our part, there is always an effort to be made.

Our faith can and must grow: through prayer, study, personal effort, seeking the truth, surrendering ourselves to God's will. This is what Fr. d'Alzon asks of his disciples, religious or lay. On our lips there should always be found this prayer of the apostles, "Lord, increase our faith!"

Fr. Julio Navarro Román, a.a.

A faith that inspires love of the truth

Fr. Emmanuel d'Alzon gives a thousand and one indications of the value that he attached to faith: first of all by the commitment that he made, already in his teenage years, to defend the faith, and later by the importance he attached to proclaiming the truth in announcing the Gospel, in teaching, in catechizing, and in preaching. The refutation of modern errors played only a secondary role in his preaching; he tried above all to arm the Catholics to whom he preached-----and isn't this the best means of prevention? – with solid Christian instruction and with a piety the authenticity of which is revealed in the zeal that one demonstrates for one's salvation and that of others... The founder's desire was that love of the truth would inspire and characterize the apostolic zeal of his sons. His respect and love of the truth made him sensitive to the need for assiduous study to know the faith

better in order to live it and teach it. This preoccupation appeared very early on with Emmanuel d'Alzon; it was something he would spend a lifetime putting into practice. In the years 1835-1845 one can already notice the careful preparation he put into his preaching and the time he dedicated to study, proven by the notes he would take when reading works of theology, by the time he gave to religious instruction in the various works in which he was involved, and by the emphasis he placed on the matter when examining the newly ordained. When it came to the formation of the young, he insisted that all disciplines focus on forming Christ in souls... He wanted his religious, after having received a solid theological formation, to continue to feed their inner and apostolic lives by means of study. He insisted on this over and over again....

(Dossier on his life and the virtues he displayed, Vol I, p. 71-72).

In Fr. d'Alzon's Words

Faith is an act whereby our understanding submits to the revealed truth of God; in teaching us what we must believe, faith teaches us how to act.

(Spiritual Writings, p. 53)

«The Door of Faith»

The Year of Faith, from this perspective, is a summons to an authentic and renewed conversion to the Lord, the one Saviour of the world. In the mystery of his death and resurrection, God has revealed in its fullness the Love that saves and calls us to conversion of life through the forgiveness of sins (cf. Acts 5:31). For Saint Paul, this Love ushers us into a new life: “We were buried ... with him by baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life” (Rom 6:4). Through faith, this new life shapes the whole of human existence according to the radical new reality of the resurrection. To the extent that he freely cooperates, man’s thoughts and affections, mentality and conduct are slowly purified and transformed, on a journey that is never completely finished in this life. “Faith working through love” (Gal 5:6) becomes a new criterion of understanding and action that changes the whole of man’s life (cf. Rom 12:2; Col 3:9-10; Eph 4:20-29; 2 Cor 5:17).

It is the love of Christ that fills our hearts and impels us to evangelize. Today as in the past, he sends us through the highways of the world to proclaim his Gospel to all the peoples of the earth (cf. Mt 28:19). Through his love, Jesus Christ attracts to himself the people of every generation: in every age he convokes the Church, entrusting her with the proclamation of the Gospel by a mandate that is ever new. Today too, there is a need for stronger ecclesial commitment to new evangelization in order to rediscover the joy of believing and the enthusiasm for communicating



the faith. In rediscovering his love day by day, the missionary commitment of believers attains force and vigour that can never fade away. Faith grows when it is lived as an experience of love received and when it is communicated as an experience of grace and joy. It makes us fruitful, because it expands our hearts in hope and enables us to bear life-giving witness: indeed, it opens the hearts and minds of those who listen to respond to the Lord’s invitation to adhere to his word and become his disciples. Believers, so Saint Augustine tells us, “strengthen themselves by believing”. The saintly Bishop of Hippo had good reason to express himself in this way. As we know, his life was a continual search for the beauty of the faith until such

time as his heart would find rest in God. His extensive writings, in which he explains the importance of believing and the truth of the faith, continue even now to form a heritage of incomparable riches, and they still help many people in search of God to find the right path towards the “door of faith”.

Only through believing, then, does faith grow and become stronger; there is no other possibility for possessing certitude with regard to one’s life apart from self-abandonment, in a continuous crescendo, into the hands of a love that seems to grow constantly because it has its origin in God.

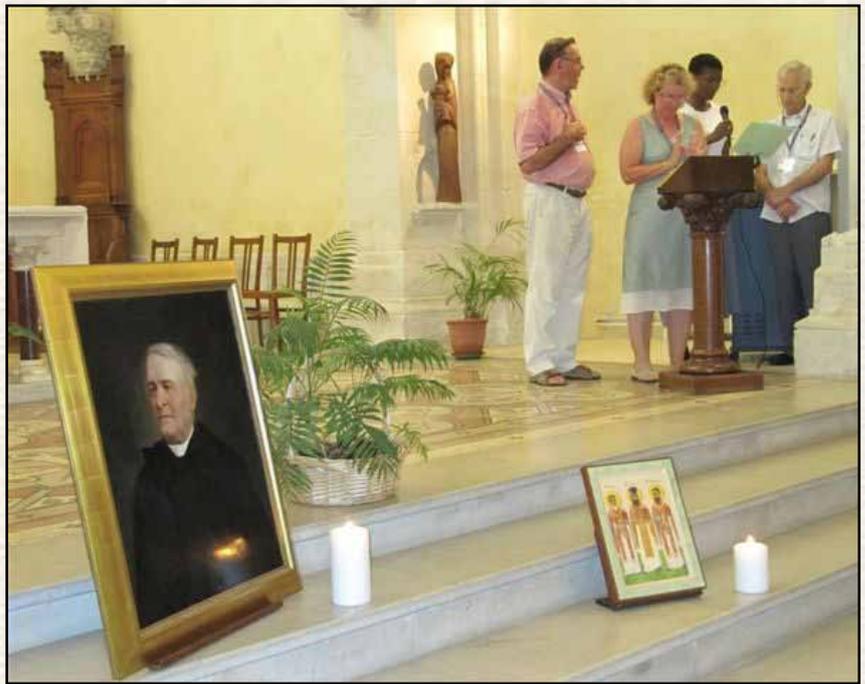
(Pope Benedict XVI, *Apostolic Exhortation « Porta fidei », # 6 and 7*)



Two new secretariates

The postulator, Fr. Julio Navarro, has established in **Kinshasa** (Dem. Rep. of the Congo), on May 19, 2013, the feast of Pentecost, a secretariate to promote the cause of Fr. Alzon, made up of two Assumptionists, Fr. Jean-Marie Vianney Katabu Kavunga and Br. Faustine Watevirwe, an Oblate of the Assumption, Sr. Marie Dolores Kalondero, and two lay Assumptionists, Mrs. Stella Kahambu Vumilia and Mr. Gabin Walingi Label.

On June 21, 2013, he also set up a secretariate in **Riobamba** (Ecuador), which includes Fr. Marco Silva and Br. Manuel Alejandro Godoy, both Assumptionists, Sr. Raquel Méndez, a Religious of the Assumption, and four lay Assumptionists: Mrs. Paula Judith Cargua, Mr. Geovanny Sani, Mr. Luis Gonzalo Vimos and Mr. Néstor Augusto Orozco.



Celebration in front of the tomb of Fr. d'Alzon in Nîmes, on the occasion of the bicentennial of his birth

Faith, in Fr. d'Alzon's Eyes

Once I possess this light of faith, it must illuminate my power of reason. It is faith that must transform me by means of everything that it shows me about God's being, my being, and the indescribable relationship that God wishes to establish between the two of us. (...) The light of faith has shown me what God is, or at least as many of his perfections as he wishes me to behold. What else can I do but cling to him and to reflect on this infinite truth and on the multitude of truths it comprises with an absolute adhesion on my part? (...)

Faith is a gift; it is God who makes the first move. We cannot enter the supernatural sphere except by faith, this gift of God (...) "When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you in all truth" (Jn 16:13). Faith is not going to show me the whole truth in an explicit way, but faith will render me capable of absorbing it.

For me to see something, it is not sufficient to place objects before my eyes; they must be placed in the light for my eyes to be able to grasp them. The same applies to faith: I must have the light of faith given by the grace of God, which enables my soul to grasp the truth.

But it isn't enough to grasp the truth; I must stick to it. And this truth is so far beyond my reach that it requires a constant effort on my part to attain it --- and it is in this effort that the virtue of faith consists... Yes, our faith can constantly grow through effort, study, prayer, the application of its principles to events in our everyday lives and through constantly bearing in mind the truths which faith teaches us and which we are able to penetrate all the more in the measure that we reflect on them, provided that we do so in a spirit of complete surrender to divine authority (*Spiritual Writings*, p. 401-402).

Favors and graces received



Bianca, today a beautiful young girl, completely healthy

Here in the community of Vieiras, in the year 2003, we were all saddened, not to mention upset, to learn of the sickness that struck one of our children, Bianca Belinato Paloma, barely 5 years old. She needed to receive treatment for a cancer that was affecting her right kidney. During the time of the treatment, the community of Vieiras began to pray that she be healed.

Many years before, we had already started a prayer group in our parish that would do a perpetual novena to the Holy Face of Jesus. Our pastor at the time, Fr. Luiz Carlos de Oliveira, an Assumptionist, gave us a prayer to Fr. Emmanuel d'Alzon and asked the group to pray for the little Bianca, requesting the intercession of Fr. d'Alzon for her healing. So it was that we made several novenas to this effect.

That same year, on May 16, 2003, Bianca underwent surgery to remove her kidney. From that date, Bianca had 156 sessions of chemotherapy. Once the sessions ended in the year 2004, she was doing extremely well, apparently healed. But seven months later, during a routine check-up, it was discovered that the chemo had affected her two lungs, especially the right one. That meant a new set of treatments --- for seven months. It was then that Bianca developed a bacterial infection in a heart valve that spread to her left kidney, the only one she had left.

Once again, Bianca was in the hospital. And once again the prayer group set about requesting the intercession of Fr. d'Alzon, and Bianca came out safe and sound!

In July 2012, a little before her 15th birthday, a lesion in her lungs was discovered during another routine check-up. The doctor decided to wait 90 days before conducting another exam and getting a clearer picture of the situation. When she did so in October, she discovered that there no longer remained any sign of sickness in the girl.

According to what her aunt has said, Bianca never hesitated to undergo the treatments; she never became discouraged by her situation. To the contrary, she was the one always encouraging her entire family. To tell the truth, we members of the prayer group have faith, and we bear witness, that it was through the intercession of Fr. Emmanuel d'Alzon, pleading before Our Lord Jesus Christ, that Bianca was healed. Today Bianca is a beautiful, young, sixteen-year woman, completely healthy.

The Holy Face Prayer group, in its weekly prayers, has not ceased to thank God for this grace received, and it continues to request, through the intercession of Fr. d'Alzon, the healing of others who are sick.

*Maria de Fátima and Dalva
Parish of Senhor Bom Jesus, Vieiras (MG),*



Father, in my prayers, I often beseech Fr. Emmanuel d'Alzon. He has often answered my appeal. Recently I prayed to him for two reasons of health and two miracles took place. I thank him with all my heart. I renew my request for his beatification. (Simone, Le Mée, France).



I want to thank all those who accompanied me in my sickness and prayed to Venerable Fr. Emmanuel d'Alzon for me. I didn't know that the entire school community at San Román was pleading to Our Lord for my healing through the intercession of Fr. d'Alzon. Today I can state that I have been cured and that I have been able to resume my daily routine. I thank the Lord, and each and every one of those who prayed for me... (Verónica, Buenos Aires).

**A publication of the Secretariate for
the Cause of the beatification
of Fr. Emmanuel d'Alzon.**

**Postulator: Fr. Julio Navarro Román, A.A.
Via San Pio V, 55 – 00165 Roma – Italia
@: postulazioneassunzionisti@gmail.com**