



**Contributions on
Salvatorian History,
Charism,
and
Spirituality**

Volume Five

**A PROJECT OF THE
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Foreward

The Salvatorian Joint History and Charism Committee (JHCC) in the United States is delighted to finally publish the English translations of some of the seminal work of Brazilian Father Arno Boesing, SDS as well as Phase One of the Brazilian Salvatorian Retreats. While these papers have been circulating for years in both electronic and loose-leaf forms, we are pleased to at last make them available in a bound volume. We trust that the richness of this research and writing will now be more accessible to our members throughout the wider Salvatorian world.

As a member of the JHCC and the translator of what appears here, I want express my personal joy that this work has finally come to fruition. This translation has been a labor of love for me. My 10-year personal experience as a member of the Brazilian spirituality team convinced me of the depth of Fr. Arno's work and the richness of the joint reflection process which birthed the collaborative Salvatorian retreat movement in Brazil. I hope that others may now be able to tap into the graced enthusiasm I've experienced while working with these texts.

In this Volume 5 of our series, Contributions in Salvatorian History, Charism and Spirituality, we present three articles authored by Fr. Arno. The first, "Our Salvatorian Mission" was written in 1987 and published in Portuguese by the Society's Generalate in the pamphlet: Charisma, Identitas, Missio. A second revised edition of that text appeared in Brazil in 1994 (CIS 25). In this monograph, the author analyzes significant elements of our Salvatorian charism. He carefully unpacks some of the terms used by Father Jordan in his Spiritual Diary and in the early rules for his foundation.

Fr. Arno's second article, "Salvatorian Spirituality, A Vast and All Embracing Concept," was published originally in Portuguese in

1991 (CIS 38/1). In 2002, it appeared in translation in *Salvatorian Key Elements, Part 1*. Because of the limited availability of both of these volumes and the importance of the work, we have reprinted it here. You will find it makes a strong case for a spirituality which is specifically Salvatorian.

The third article in the Boesing collection is a shorter work entitled “Fr. Jordan’s Original Insight: All Catholic Christians Should Be Apostles in the World.” This text is a 1996 conference given by the author to a group of vowed Brazilian Salvatorians involved in the formation of Lay Salvatorians. Since it was delivered orally as a challenge to Salvatorian religious, you will find most of the supportive documentation in the accompanying footnotes rather than in the text itself.

The last article in this volume represents the work of the Brazilian Salvatorian Spirituality Team on Phase One of the five-phased retreat program prepared for the Salvatorian Family in Brazil. It was developed by a collaborative group CIP (Inter-provincial Collaboration) which at that time was the formal entity for collaboration among the three Brazilian Provinces (two of the Congregation and one of the Society). In 1990, CIP was replaced by CIS (Inter-Salvatorian Collaboration) so as to include the Lay Salvatorians in the collaborative effort. The title of this first phase of the retreat program is: “Christ the Savior, Motivating Force of Our Salvatorian Life.” It was first published in Portuguese in September 1990 (CIP 36/2). A number of SDS women and men, whose names appear at the end of the article, contributed to the development of this phase of the Brazilian retreats. Fr. Arno was instrumental in both its editing and publication.

As translator, I have made a number of decisions which I hope reveal rather than conceal the meaning of the text for the English reader. I used The Jerusalem Bible for the many scripture quotations except when the author’s meaning is made clearer by

another translation. In documenting Salvatorian sources, I use the abbreviations common in Salvatorian publications. For other less well known SDS texts, I have translated the title of the original document so that the English reader can better understand the nature of the source. I then indicate the archival location of the original which in most cases is not in English.

Let me point out that in the early years, as Fr. Jordan's dream was born and responded to, the word, Society, had a much broader meaning. In Brazil and thus in these articles, we could say that it includes the entire Salvatorian Family. Therefore, when you encounter the word here, you can assume that the author is referring to all Salvatorian branches (lay, religious, cleric, female and male).

Finally, any piece of writing emerges from its own time and context. What you find here is obviously grounded in the Brazilian reality and its specific Church experience during the 1980s and 90s. While aspects of that reality may be somewhat dated and even foreign to readers from another culture, the JHCC believes that this unique Brazilian lens opens new perspectives for Salvatorians today from diverse cultures. We also hope it will expand our ever-evolving understanding of what it means to be a global Salvatorian community at this time in history.

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Common Salvatorian Abbreviations

SD ~ *Spiritual Diary of Francis Mary of the Cross Jordan*. Trans. Miriam Cerletty, SDS. Rome: Salvator Mundi, 1981.

EA ~ *Exhortations and Admonitions of Father Francis Jordan*, 3rd Edition. Trans. Winfrid Herbst, SDS. New Holstein, WI: Society of the Divine Savior, 1963.

DSS ~ *Documenta e Studia Salvatoriana*. Collection of original documents bound and preserved in the Archives of the Society of the Divine Savior, Rome.

Mailings I and II ~ Translations of early Salvatorian documents prepared and published as pamphlets by the Sisters of the Divine Savior in Rome in the late 1970s and early 1980s.

OUR SALVATORIAN MISSION

by

Arno Boesing, SDS

***Abstract:** Fr. Arno unpacks the meaning of the phrases “glory of God” and “salvation of souls” as they appear in the early works of Fr. Jordan and as they reveal the mission of his foundation. Following this, the author develops the idea that the Founder’s emphasis on the lay apostolate and universality further specify the Salvatorian mission.*

Initial Observations

While reading the present study be aware that:

1. It would be helpful to keep in mind the following: Each historical document should be understood in the historical context in which it arose. Due to the number of quotations in this study, it was not possible to indicate the nature of each, nor the year in which it was written. This work remains for the reader and can be done by consulting the notes at the end of the article.
2. To illustrate my point, within the quotations I have used bold print to highlight the words referring to the idea under discussion. This emphasis is not necessarily in the original text.
3. The method used in this study tries to unite deductive and inductive reasoning. Charism cannot be defined nor can it be boxed in by human logic. For this reason, after a brief

presentation in each section, I chose to simply cite the texts in chronological order, allowing the reader to verify its specific content. In this way, I try to avoid a merely personal interpretation.

Good studying!

Varzea Paulista, São Paulo, Brazil, February 2, 1987

Arno Boesing, SDS

Introduction

The Second Vatican Council invites us to enter courageously into an ongoing formation process. That is, the whole Church should renew itself. Consequently, religious life as well is especially called to renew itself. This renewal asked for by the Church is based on two pivotal but apparently contradictory points: a return to original sources and the adaptation to present times. *“The up-to-date renewal of the religious life comprises both a constant return to the sources of the whole of the Christian life and to the primitive inspiration of the institutes, and their adaptation to the changed conditions of our time.”*¹

Perfectae Caritatis speaks of a two-fold return to the sources: return to the gospel as the first norm and rule of life; and the return to the original inspiration of the institute. Our founder, Fr. Francis Mary of the Cross Jordan, in his prophetic vision long ago, insisted on the point: *“This order’s² rule of life is: to observe the holy gospel of Our Lord Jesus Christ, living in obedience, poverty, chastity and the apostolate.”*³

The 1984 edition of our *SDS Constitutions* (Society of the Divine Savior) also remind us of the importance of a constant return to the gospel. Thus, at the beginning of Chapter III, the above-mentioned words of the Founder are cited as a guiding light. Now it is important to intensify the knowledge and living of our Salvatorian charism, responding positively to the urging of the Church.

*“It is for the good of the Church that institutes have their own proper characters and functions. Therefore the spirit and aims of each founder should be faithfully accepted and retained, as indeed should each institute’s sound traditions, for all of these constitute the patrimony of an institute.”*⁴

Undoubtedly, we have already done many things to respond positively to this call of the Church. For example, we have already renewed our rule of life. The *International Historical Commission* (SDS-M) has already prepared a series of volumes with original historical documents. The *Charism, Identity, and Mission Task Force* (SDS-M) has taken good steps in the study of our Salvatorian charism, particularly in regard to the role of the lay person in the mission of the Society. However, in spite of all that has been done, there is still much to do. We still feel the lack of an adequate program on the international level that would deepen the conscious living of these values among the grassroots Salvatorian membership. Because of this, we lose much of our evangelizing strength. The urging of the Latin American bishops is significant:

*“...to stimulate fidelity to the original charism and its updating as well as its adaptation to the needs of the People of God, in order that the works achieve a greater evangelizing force.”*⁵

In this article I will try to present and analyze succinctly, some of the more significant elements of our Salvatorian charism. I will do that in an all-inclusive manner, without differentiating the varied degrees of involvement. The present study is in many ways, the result of the efforts that have been made since 1977 by CIP,⁶ which involves the communities of the three Salvatorian Brazilian Provinces. These ideas were also debated and shared in the meetings of the *Charism, Identity and Mission Task Force* in Rome. Naturally, each item mentioned will necessitate more study at a later time. Of course, I do not intend to present a perfect and complete study. What I do intend is to begin a reflection process on our Salvatorian mission at

the grassroots level. Obviously, this subject cannot be reserved only and exclusively for a small group of “specialists.”

A. Purpose of the Study

In an attentive reading of Salvatorian literature about the beginnings of the Society, it is immediately apparent that there is a marked insistence on two elements: **“the glory of God”** and the **“salvation of souls.”** Both terms always appear when the purpose of the Society is treated. At times, especially when writing on a popular level, other terms are used to express the same meaning. For example, at times, the **“glory of God”** is replaced by **“sanctification,” “example,” “life witness,”** and other analogous terms. And, as a substitute for the term, **“salvation of souls,”** we frequently find: **“knowledge,” “propagation,” “defense and revitalization of the faith,” “religious instruction,”** as well as others.

Carefully analyzing the main descriptions of the purpose of SDS, it is easy to see that Fr. Jordan and Fr. Luethen always speak of a twofold purpose. Clearly, they refer to complimentary aspects, related to the living and communication of the faith. In the following, I will try to elucidate these two fundamental and constitutive elements of our purpose. I will try to do this in a succinct manner, using as a guiding light and help a number of documents from our early Salvatorian literature as well as the Sacred Scriptures, since Fr. Jordan’s custom was often to find his inspiration in the Bible.

1. Glory of God

It is striking to see how Father Jordan insists on this term. Over and over again in his spiritual journal as well as in different editions of the rule and statutes, he insists on **“the glory of God.”** Here are some examples taken from Salvatorian literature between 1878 and 1888:

*“Purpose (of the Society): the **glory of God** and the salvation of souls. Because of this, each one should **become holy**, and spread, confirm and defend the Roman Catholic faith among all peoples of the earth...”⁷*

*“The purpose of the Society consists in dedicating and giving oneself intensely in whatever part of the world where the **greater glory of God** requires it, according to the directive of Our Lord Jesus Christ. ‘Go, teach all peoples, instructing, educating and teaching....’”⁸*

*“to promote the knowledge and the **glory of God** in the educational and teaching field....”⁹*

*“Abandoning all, they work in those places where...the **glory of God** and the salvation of souls require their presence...”¹⁰*

*“O Lord, touch the hearts of our friends, always ready to help, so that they open their hands at once when the **glory of God** and the salvation of their souls are referred to.”¹¹*

*“To the extent that the Society is able to realize its noble mission, we can affirm that the **glory of God one and three** is excellently promoted and this in the true sense of ‘thy kingdom come.’”¹²*

*“Driven forward by its zeal for the **glory of God** and the salvation of souls, the Society extends its supplicant hands to its German brothers, so that it can put into practice its great plan.”¹³*

*“By word and **example**, they (the members) hope to reanimate many other combatants, strengthening the discouraged and waking up those who have fallen asleep.”¹⁴*

*“...to show everyone and **glorify** everywhere **God the Father, his Son Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit**, in order to save immortal souls.”¹⁵*

*“As modest collaborators with ecclesiastical teaching, we hope to reveal **God one and three: Father, Son and Holy Spirit** to the world.”¹⁶*

*“If the Reign of God is to come for all of us, it is necessary that those who God calls to abandon everything, in fact announce Jesus Christ by word and **life witness**....”*¹⁷

The above quotations refer to the overall Salvatorian mission, for religious as well as lay people. For Father Jordan, the first element of our Salvatorian mission is, without a doubt, the **glory of God**. Analyzing the words stressed above, it is very clear that **reveal, show** and **witness** have identical meanings. We can try to summarize all of these expressions in the following way: We are all called to proclaim the glory of God by means of example and life witness. Or, in other words, through our life witness we reveal God to the world.

In his spiritual journal, Fr. Jordan also insists on this idea. He constantly refers to the glory of God, using this or an equivalent term. Here are some examples:

*“All for the **greater glory of God** and for the salvation of souls. A-Z.”*¹⁸

*“Consider it a very important matter to care for the recovery of your physical health, so that you may serve God better and do something for **His glory** and for the salvation of others.”*¹⁹

*“Oh, carry out the planned work, with the help of God and Mary’s intercession, for the **glory of God** and the salvation of souls.”*²⁰

*“Accomplish that work for the **honor of God** and the salvation of souls.”*²¹

*“Never forget the **wonderful works of God**. To God alone be **honor and glory** and for the salvation of souls.”*²²

*”I have **glorified** you on earth, I have **manifested** Your name to all...I have completed the work which you gave me to do (Jn. 17:4-7).”*²³

*“For the **glory of God** and the salvation of souls, I intend and resolve to make every sacrifice, even of my own life, to promote and further*

the Society. I will always act in accordance with its purpose in the name of the Lord. Amen.”²⁴

*“Seek **my glory**, seek the salvation of your neighbor; do not say anything which does not promote these ends.*”²⁵

It is true that Father Jordan’s spiritual journal is neither a rule of life nor a statute. However, it is important to note the similar language and basic aspirations in the above quotations. Father Jordan is a deeply charismatic and prophetic person opposed to formalism and duplicity in whatever form. Whatever he thinks, he says with complete simplicity and sincerity. He lives and feels deeply the reality of God as well as that of the person who desires salvation. His foundational charism appears not only in rules and statutes but also in all aspects of his life.

It is also widely known that he liked to read the human reality in light of the Word of God. When he was allowed to, he based his writings on the Sacred Scripture. And the Bible normally describes the theophany, the manifestation, that is the revelation of God by using the term **glory**. As a result, in biblical language, God’s presence and actions are revealed through the waters, the plants, the animals, human persons, the angels...Ultimately, all creatures reveal and proclaim the wonders of the Creator. All proclaim his glory. Here are some characteristic biblical examples:

*“Father...**give glory** to your Son that your Son may **give glory** to you...I have **given you glory** on earth...Do you now, Father, **give me glory** at your side...I have made your name **known** to those you gave me...It is in them that I have been **glorified**.”*²⁶

*“The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us, and we have seen his **glory**.”*²⁷

*“In (Christ Jesus) you have been richly endowed with every gift of speech and knowledge. Likewise, the **witness I bore to Christ has***

been so confirmed among you that you lack no spiritual gift as you wait for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ.”²⁸

*“and in the morning you will see **the glory of the Lord**, as he heeds your grumbling against him.*”²⁹

*“The **glory of the Lord** settled on Mount Sinai.*”³⁰

*“Yet by my life and the **Lord’s glory** that fills the whole earth, of all the men who have **seen my glory** and the signs I worked in Egypt....”*³¹

*“The heavens **declare the glory of God** and the firmament **proclaims his handiwork.**”*³²

*“The heavens **proclaim his justice** and all peoples **see his glory.**”*³³

*“Generation after generation **praises your works** and **proclaims your might.** They speak of the splendor of your **glorious majesty** and tell of your **wondrous works.**”*³⁴

In the above quotations, the terms **to give glory, make known, to see, proclaim** the glory are public signs of the glory of God. When Christ asks the Father that he be glorified in the same way that he, Christ, glorified the Father, Jesus is asking that he be known or shown as he is. Similarly, when St. John says that **we see Christ’s glory**, he is simply saying that we see his manifestation as God the Savior. When the People of God in the desert speak of **the glory of the Lord**, this is the revelation of **God with us**. And finally, when the Scripture affirms that **the glory of Yahweh** fills the whole earth, it is saying by this that all of creation speaks of God, that everything reveals God, giving witness to the work of his hands.

Father Pancratius Pfeiffer understood this first element of our charism, the glory of God, as the **long-range objective**³⁵ of the Society, that is, what in the last analysis we strive for in our Salvatorian religious life. The reason for our existence as a religious Society can be summarized in the proclamation of the glory of God.

In other words, we announce the presence and the action of God in this world through all of being and acting. Our life, therefore, is a public sign of God.

It is important to mention here briefly, the influence of St. Ignatius of Loyola and St. Francis of Assisi on Father Jordan and his Society. It is well known that St. Ignatius of Loyola had the motto: **Ommia ad maiorem Dei gloriam** (All for the greater glory of God). Father Jordan adds to St. Ignatius' motto a second element for our basic charism: **et ad salutem animarum** (and for the salvation of souls).³⁶

Fr. Jordan integrates these two elements in such a way that they become inseparable and complementary. In effect, for Father Jordan, the glory of God comes back to the salvation of the human person. His great apostolic ardor comes from this. When St. Ignatius of Loyola speaks of the glory of God, certainly he does not want to say exactly the same thing that Father Jordan does. Given Ignatius' fiery temperament, God is shown in power, in the strength of his arm. While for Father Jordan, ***“We reveal to the world God one and three”***³⁷ through all of our life and action (life witness and apostolic action), especially when we witness the ***“goodness and kindness of the Savior.”***³⁸

For St. Francis of Assisi, the revelation of God's love and goodness happens particularly through the wonders of creation. For him, the glory of God is especially revealed in the wonders of creation, including the human person: in brother sun, sister light, the human person.... All proclaim the glory of God the creator. This outlook is also familiar to Fr. Jordan: ***“Never forget the wonderful works of God!”***³⁹

2. Salvation of Souls

It is obvious that the first element of our Salvatorian charism, the glory of God, is not enough to identify us as Salvatorians. Even

though it is fundamental and very characteristic it is also quite broad and comprehensive.

However, the second element, the salvation or holistic liberation of the human person, describes our action in the Church. The glory of God refers to what we are; the salvation of souls refers to what we do. That which we do basically consists in announcing salvation. In order to clarify this statement let us examine some examples: “*Objective: the glory of God and **the salvation of souls**. Because of this everyone should sanctify themselves and **promote, confirm and defend the Catholic faith** among all the peoples of the earth.*”⁴⁰

“*In the spirit of the Apostles, the Apostolic Teaching Society proposes as its goal, to help **to propagate, defend and revive the Catholic faith** among all the peoples of the world.*”⁴¹

“*The goal of the Society is the **propagation, defense and animation of the Catholic faith**.*”⁴²

“*This Society unites people, educated as well as uneducated, priests as well as lay people in a holy alliance in order to help **in the propagation, defense and renewal of the faith**.*”⁴³

“*The goal of the Apostolic Teaching Society is to **propagate, defend and strengthen** the Catholic faith wherever it has been entrusted to do so by Divine Providence. Thus, **exercising ecclesiastical magisterium**, be it through **the written or spoken word**, it strives that all always **know** better the one true God and the One he has sent, Jesus Christ, in order that all live in holiness and save their souls.*”⁴⁴

“*The goal of the Society is to **defend, propagate and expand the Reign of God**, through the means of **religious instruction**.*”⁴⁵

“*The Catholic Teaching Society...is a religious association that seeks to promote the **knowledge of the Catholic religion**, through **the spoken and written word**.*”⁴⁶

*“We intend to work with zeal and abandon and to rejoice only in the salvation of souls and in divine satisfaction in order to reach the great aim to which we aspire in prayer to the Lord ‘Holy be your name, **thy Kingdom come!**’ For ‘eternal life is this: **that they know you, the one true God and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.**’ Truly he can only be **known** if he is **announced.**”⁴⁷*

Summarizing to a certain extent the above quotations, we can say that our ministry in the Church is to defend, strengthen and propagate the faith through religious instruction thereby making the truth known. In this way we participate in the ‘ecclesiastical magisterium,’ that is, we teach what the Church teaches. Clearly we are saying the same thing in different ways albeit with different and complementary nuances. It is the same as saying: our mission in the Church is to announce the Savior and salvation.

Father Pancratius Pfeiffer named our apostolic ministry in the Church as our **short-term goal**.⁴⁸ Using this Pancratian expression, we can say that our short-term goal is to combat religious ignorance through religious instruction, or to announce the Savior and salvation so that people are led to a serious faith commitment. Announcing the Savior and salvation through our life witness and through explicit announcement (the spoken and written word), we fulfill our long-term or final goal which is the glory of God. This is the same as saying: we manifest God through our life and apostolic action.

Over and over again in his **spiritual journal**, Father Jordan refers to this as our mission and service in the Church. Here are some examples:

*“Oh, how many children become a prey of **ignorance**, become devoured as it were by the hellish spirits, (destroyed) like blossoms during a frosty night in May.”⁴⁹*

*“I often think that most persons who are lost, are lost because of a **lack of instruction** (P. P. of Ars).”⁵⁰*

*“Consider it a very important matter to care for the recovery of your physical health, so that you may serve God better and do something for his glory and for **the salvation of others**.”*⁵¹

*“Oh, the **ignorance** of people concerning divine things!...As a field, however fertile it may be, cannot be fruitful without cultivation, even so the soul without **teaching**.”*⁵²

*“**Instruction - instruction**, do what you have in mind, do it, if it is God’s will!”*⁵³

*“Put forth every effort and be very zealous to promote **the knowledge of truth**. Consider these words: ‘To enlighten those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death.’”*⁵⁴

*“Through Him, the Crucified, in Him, the Crucified, with Him, the Crucified begin, proceed, persevere in working for the glory of God and for the **salvation of souls**. Amen.”*⁵⁵

*“It will be aimed especially at popularizing **theological truths** and so making them accessible to the people!”*⁵⁶

*“O my Lord and my God, grant that I may be able with Your help to carry out that undertaking for Your honor, so that all may be imbued with Your sacred doctrine (**instructed in your sacred teachings**) and that I, at the end, burning with Your charity, may pour out my life for You, that is, for Your glory. Amen.”*⁵⁷

These quotes drawn from his spiritual diary and written prior to any of the rules and statutes of the Society illustrate the great aspirations of Father Jordan. In a special way, they reflect his tremendous concern with religious ignorance and how to overcome it when it constituted a great obstacle to the living of the faith. In order to overcome ignorance, it is necessary to teach, to instruct so that all can recognize the truth and be saved.

Finally, in order to complete this analysis of our apostolic ministry and discover our mission in the Church, once again we need to look at some of the biblical expressions frequently used by the Founder:

*“And eternal life is this: **to know** you, the only true God and Jesus Christ whom you sent.”⁵⁸*

*“Go out to the whole world; **proclaim the good news** to all creation.”⁵⁹*

*“Go, therefore, make **disciples** of all nations; baptizing them ...and **teach them** to observe all the commands I gave you.”⁶⁰*

*“Go, and stand in the Temple, and **tell** the people all about this new life.”⁶¹*

*“...those who **have instructed** many in virtue (justice) will shine as brightly as stars for all eternity.”⁶²*

*“If one of you strays away from the truth, and another **brings the other back** to it, he/she may be sure that anyone who can **bring back** a sinner from the wrong way will be saving a soul from death and covering up a great number of sins.”⁶³*

*“My brothers and sisters, never grow tired of **doing what is right!**”⁶⁴*

Thus, our evangelizing mission in the Church consists in announcing Jesus as Savior in a language understood by the common people so that liberation and salvation happen. As a Church, it is our role to announce the Savior to all people, so that they come to an understanding of the truth and thereby live and give witness to their faith. This, in fact, means to save people.

In his time, Father Pancratius Pfeiffer expressed our final objective or reason for being, or our mission in the Church in the following way:

*“Exercising the ecclesiastical magisterium (through participation), by means of the written and spoken word, they (the members) propose to do this: that all know better the one true God and the one he sent, Jesus Christ. The mandate of the Society is, therefore, to instruct through the spoken and written word, to make known everywhere God the Father and his only-begotten Son, so that all people love Him more and more.”*⁶⁵

Trying to explain the long-range and short-range goals of the Society to the members, Father Pancratius writes the following:

*“As a starting point, he (Father Jordan) used the principle that religious ignorance is one of the key causes of religious decay. For this reason he wanted to instruct and clarify (short range goal) and thereby achieve the long range goal, ‘finis absolute ultimus,’ the glorification of God.”*⁶⁶

Let us note that this understanding of the glory of God and knowledge is certainly not an “invention” of Father Jordan. It is very clearly expressed in the Bible itself, especially in the 17th chapter of the gospel of St. John. Unfortunately, we have yet to plumb the depths of this entire chapter but such is not possible here. We will try to read attentively verses 1 to 3: *“Father, the hour has come: **glorify** your Son so that your Son may **glorify** you; and, through the power over all humankind that you have given him, let him give eternal life to all those you have entrusted to him. And eternal life is this: **to know** you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.”*⁶⁷

In this memorable prayer, Jesus asks the Father to glorify him (the Son), in order that He (the Son) may glorify the Father. In other words, Jesus asks that the Father show who the Son is in order the he (the Son) may show who the Father is.

In the same manner, Father Jordan asks us to show through our life witness and apostolic action who God is - Father, Son, and Holy

Spirit. It is only in this way that people will be able to achieve eternal life. And his commandment, that we teach and instruct, announcing the Savior to all people flows from this.

B. Lay Apostles

Our objective, the glory of God and the salvation of souls, is so broad that it does not give us enough of a specific identity. From this we can understand how Father Jordan himself, even though unjustly, was misunderstood by the ecclesiastical authorities of his time. They accused him of wanting to found another Church within the Church.

However, if we examine attentively the early Salvatorian literature, we immediately notice the existence of another precious element of our charism. It would appear that the ecclesiastical authorities of the time did not understand it. Without a doubt, what characterizes us most, beyond our universality, is our way of announcing or evangelizing.

Here we will look at some examples of this important aspect of our charism taken from the rules and statutes at the beginning of the Society. Careful reading of these will reveal this aspect.

*“It (the Society) aims ... to animate all the active groups in the Church, in the living out of their Christian vocation.”*⁶⁸

*“Above all, in those places where the priest is not able or should not speak..., the lay person, assuming his/her mission as an apostle, is able to do much and even possibly with more success than the priest. I repeat: the lay apostolate is of greatest importance in our days.”*⁶⁹

*“Well then, The Apostolic Teaching Society with much emphasis accentuates the lay apostolate, recalling to superiors, parents, teachers, in fact, to all who exercise any kind of leadership, the need in conscience to exercise this apostolate.”*⁷⁰

*“It (the Society) aims to help in **the transformation** of many Catholic Christians into authentic Catholics, so that they not only have the beautiful name but that they be filled in their very being with the Catholic faith... The Society also aims to **animate and instruct** Catholic Christians so that they can **defend the holy faith with energy and ability.**”⁷¹*

*“They should involve more and more people in this rapidly growing stream (movement), in order that this **apostolic spirit** can more and more penetrate in our country.”⁷²*

*“In our days more than ever, it is necessary that everyone **collaborate with all their strength** for the salvation of souls.”⁷³*

*“They should not be content with the traditional care of souls through the schools and the churches but use ... **other methods of spiritual renewal.**”⁷⁴*

*“Through word and example, they aim to **animate anew many others who struggle, strengthening those without spirit and waking up those who have fallen asleep.**”⁷⁵*

*“Therefore, we cannot accept just anyone but rather only **authentic Catholics...who in fact love and live** their faith and who are really interested in the salvation of their neighbor.”⁷⁶*

*“This section (third grade) is open to all Catholic men and women of whatever social condition as long as they are **willing to promote for themselves and for others** as far as possible, the knowledge of our holy religion.”⁷⁷*

*“By means of that which was always a sacred task for Catholics and which today is required of us with a **new emphasis**, that is, by means of **the deep knowledge and living** of the Catholic truth.”⁷⁸*

*“We want to help **enkindle in all hearts the fire** that Jesus came to bring on earth. It is this fire that he wants to see blazing!”⁷⁹*

*“In addition to these (second grade), the Society also accepts as members Catholic men and women from all social classes, as long as they are willing to lead an **authentic Christian life and transform other Christians into authentic Christians** through their apostolic zeal.”⁸⁰*

*“Following the example of **Jesus Christ and the holy apostles**.”⁸¹*

The above quotations clearly emphasize the aspect of Christian leadership, that is, the lay apostle whom we are called to form and promote. Obviously this is not referring to a simple Pious Union of Salvatorian Cooperators (PUCS). This, in fact, came into being much later (approved by the Holy Office February 26, 1898) because of the impossibility of realizing Father Jordan’s original overall plan at that time in history. We are not talking about a simple group of benefactors, as in the case of the PUCS, but true lay apostles who take up the mission of the Society in their respective lay environment.

Father Jordan uses significant expressions in this regard in his **spiritual diary**. He seems to imagine his apostles hastening through the whole world evangelizing everyone:

*“Oh Lord, in such corrupt times **exceptional means** are necessary in order, with the help of your grace, to put a stop to sin.”⁸²*

*“Oh (that there were) holy apostles hastening throughout the world, **evangelizing all!** Oh, inscrutable zeal; how often you have been scorned and suppressed with the excuse that you are meant for the select few!”⁸³*

We can clearly see that Father Jordan wants apostles hastening throughout the world evangelizing all! He wanted to form and animate vital groups in the Church, persons ready to take up their mission as apostles. For this reason in the fulfillment of its mission the Society gives special emphasis to the lay apostolate. What Father Jordan really wants is a living, authentic Christianity. He wants

Christians who live their faith as apostles, transmitting it to others. He wants Christian missionaries!

This is, therefore, our Salvatorian way of evangelizing. This is our specific characteristic. A phrase that has always been present in our Salvatorian literature elucidates this in a special way: *“Following the example of Jesus Christ and the holy Apostles.”*

We know that Jesus taught the people, curing the sick, confronting, being compassionate, pardoning, warning.... But even with all these activities with the people in general, he never neglected the formation of the Apostles. He dedicated a good part of his time to their formation and training. Christ did not act alone. In order to help him and to continue his work, he formed continuers, collaborators, Christian leaders, apostles.

The apostles, on their part, adopted the Master’s method. After the coming of the Holy Spirit, they dispersed and began to preach and establish communities. Without losing sight of the masses of the faithful, it was in these communities that they formed with loving care the new leaders who would be able to continue their work, helping and many times even substituting for the Apostles.⁸⁴

It would seem therefore that the formation and animation of lay apostles characterizes us even more closely than universality. Without a doubt in Father Jordan’s plan at the beginning of the Society this was the new element. It was this, at least in part, which caused that enormous initial enthusiasm. To the extent that we rediscover this important and extremely dynamic element of our mission we may be able to feel a new spring in the development of our mission.

C. Universality

According to the mind of the Founder, our overall Salvatorian mission should be realized in a spirit that is equally broad, open and universal.

Certainly, universality is another significant characteristic of our Society. It is true that at times this has been misunderstood. Nonetheless, it was always present throughout the first century of our Salvatorian history. Father Jordan, it seems, insists on a threefold universality:

1. Ethnic Universality

We are called to involve the greatest number of people as possible, trying to save all (*omnes et omnibus* - all and to all). We are called to try to bring salvation to all, bringing all to the knowledge of the truth. And this, without any kind of discrimination of race, color or social condition. We should announce to all that Jesus Christ is the only Savior and Liberator of people and that only in him is humankind able to realize its greatest desire for justice and solidarity.

Given the fact that this element has always been a part of our history, I will limit myself to just a few quotations:

*“...propagate, animate and defend the Roman Catholic faith **among all the peoples of the earth.**”*⁸⁵

*“...to show to **all** and to glorify everywhere God the Father, his Son Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit in order to save immortal souls.”*⁸⁶

*“Press on with indefatigable strength and vigor, so that the youth of **every nation** possible receive a good Christian upbringing, even if you must pour out the last drop of your blood for it, for the honor of God.”*⁸⁷

*“Look at the **various peoples**, countries and languages of the globe and see how much there is to do for the glory of God and the salvation of people.”*⁸⁸

*“...holy apostles hastening throughout the world, evangelizing **all.**”*⁸⁹

*“Oh, that I could save **all.**”*⁹⁰

These few examples should be enough to illustrate our ethnic universality, that is, our striving to involve all and to save all.

2. Geographical Universality

In principle we are ready to serve the Church *ubique* that is in any part of the world without discrimination against countries or nationalities. Our mission extends itself to the universal Church and not only to one or the other specific local Church.

On the other hand, it is also true that we cannot serve the universal Church without being inserted here and now in a particular local Church. Nonetheless as we do this, we must always be aware that our mission is not limited to this or that local Church. It must always be open, attentive and available to the needs of the Church in any part of the world.

Here are a few quotations that illustrate our geographical universality, the *ubique*:

*“As long as God is not **everywhere** glorified, you dare not allow yourself a moment’s rest.”*⁹¹

*“They (the members) should educate students originating from all peoples, **nations**, and languages, in upright good manners... in order that they be efficacious salt of the earth.”*⁹²

*“Be they sent **through the whole world**, according to the order of our Lord Jesus Christ: “Go and make all peoples my disciples...”*⁹³

*“The Apostolic Teaching Society proposes for itself for its objective, to help, propagate, defend, and revive the Catholic faith in the spirit of the apostles in **all countries of the world**.”*⁹⁴

*“The objective of the Apostolic Teaching Society is to propagate, defend and revive the Catholic faith **everywhere**.”*⁹⁵

*“Because of this, the Apostolic Teaching Society directs itself to Catholics **of all nations** calling out to them and encouraging them in that which supports their hopes.”*⁹⁶

3. Universality of Ways and Means

Saint Ignatius of Loyola had already seen that the Company of Jesus ought to be universal in its means. This is expressed in his motto: **All** for the greater glory of God.” This means that the Jesuit should not exclude *a priori*, using, in principle all possible means to promote the glory of God. But, like us, in fact, the Jesuit is not able to use all means. But, he should be open, choosing those means that in the specific concrete circumstances promote the **greater** glory of God.

Father Jordan explicitly and clearly establishes this principle. In the realization of our Salvatorian mission, we announce the Savior and salvation above all through our life witness (glory of God). In the explicit announcing we make use of the written and spoken word as well as whatever way or means that the charity of Christ inspires (*omnibus rationibus et mediis*).

Observe that here, the charity of Christ is the love of Christ that saves, in the same way that it is expressed in 1 Cor 13. Christ in his saving love inspires us in every situation to choose the means necessary for the greater possible glory of God, which is the salvation of people.

In principle we do not exclude any apostolic activity as long as it serves to accomplish our mission. We select our apostolic activity in accord with the circumstances of time and place (necessities of the Church, personal charisms, human means and materials...). The charity of Christ which desires to save all, inspires us to take the right step at the right moment.

Here are some examples to confirm the affirmations we have made in the above:

“Serve the members carefully and wisely in the Lord, through example, the written and spoken word and all the ways and means which the love of Christ inspires, in order to manifest to all and

glorify everywhere God the Father, his Son Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit in order to save immortal souls.”⁹⁷

*“In **all** your actions and behavior, significant and insignificant, let your guiding motto be: **All** for the greater glory of God ... and for the salvations of souls.”⁹⁸*

*“ ...Unite around yourself those who want to collaborate by uniting forces and using **all means** so that our holy religion can once again win its rightful place of honor in the world dedicating itself to the salvation of souls.”⁹⁹*

*“We intend to make use of **any and whatever means or instrument** which allows us to reveal God one and three and guide people to happiness and eternal life.”¹⁰⁰*

These few quotes should be enough to show how Father Jordan saw universality of means. However, this does not mean “to do everything” indiscriminately. Rather, we use any means or apostolic activity as long as it corresponds to our charism and is suitable to the concrete needs of the time and place. What is really important is to achieve our final (long range) objective. The permanent givens do not change: what we want (the glory of God and salvation of people); our specific way of realizing this (emphasis on Christian leadership); and ethnic and geographical universality. What does change according to the circumstances is the concrete use of the means to accomplish the purpose of our mission.

Here are some examples of certain means that during Father Jordan’s historical time seemed to take on particular importance:

*“They should **form students** who are the salt of the earth.”¹⁰¹*

*“... the institution of **your own organ (press)** ... the **union of Catholic groups** of the universe... the creation of **educational institutions ... schools ... missionary institutes ... orphanages ...retreat work ...***

*popular missions ... the family ... foreign missions ... associations and movements ...*¹⁰²

*“All have a great love for catechesis, especially with the little ones.”*¹⁰³

*“Begin with the instruction of capable boys, who show signs of a vocation to the priesthood and begin, besides, a printing office.”*¹⁰⁴

*“Put your main attention on forming thousands and thousands of competent (dynamic) members. Select, as far as this is feasible, the best and the most capable as formators.”*¹⁰⁵

*“Teacher training colleges for our Sisters; educate certified teachers.”*¹⁰⁶

We would be able to make an unending list of possible apostolic activities. The specific circumstances ought to say which ones will be most helpful to respond to the call of the Lord who concretely leads us.

Final Observations

History shows us that, unfortunately, Father Jordan was unable to realize and maintain in its integrity his marvelous and audacious plan. Undoubtedly, he was very advanced for his time. He was a true prophet. His idea resembled a multiform secular institute even though from the very beginning it also included the idea of a type of religious life. However, at that time there were no secular institutes. These would come into being only in our century.

Thus, it becomes understandable that much of his initiative was blocked at that time, be it on the part of the ecclesiastical authorities or through internal tendencies in the Society itself. Both groups were responding to circumstances created by the times themselves. However, today the ideal of Father Jordan is tremendously relevant

And, more importantly still, today it is the Church herself who invites us to return to our original sources.

As we return to the sources with the intuition to rediscover the richness of our institutional charism in light of a healthy tradition, it is not enough to refer to one or the other isolated documents. It is important to study the whole evolution of Jordan's plan and vision, asking oneself why this or that aspect of the Salvatorian charism was forgotten or changed with the passing of time. Clearly, in all religious institutes there are natural evolutions and forced evolutions. The former are within the spirit of the group while the latter alter and disfigure the original plan.

In truth many "little rules" exist, some of which possibly were even written by Father Jordan but which do not correspond to what he wanted. One does not have to have a deep critical sense to cite this reality. For example, one only has to read the famous introduction to the "Common Norms of the First Order" of 1884.

*"...the first norm and rule is that law which the Holy Spirit wrote in our hearts. However, since the will of God is that we cooperate and the authority of holy mother Church desires it, having invoked the Holy Spirit ..., we propose these Norms to the brothers in Christ"*¹⁰⁷

Convinced of the importance of his idea for revitalization of ecclesial life, Fr. Jordan suffered much with every kind of difficulty that he met in the realization of his plan. In order to have a sense of this, we have only to read the veiled opening of his heart, almost a complaint, that he expressed in front of the motherhouse community in Rome:

*"The last chalice, should our dear Lord ever proffer this one to you, comes to you when obstacles are laid in your path by those very persons who are appointed by God to support and protect you, even by ecclesiastical authority itself. This is the fourth and the most bitter chalice."*¹⁰⁸

Thus, faced with the vast difficulties that he met, the founder was unable to execute his entire plan or ideal, especially the part related to lay people. Seeing that it was not possible to overcome so many and such grave obstacles, he had to accept a realistic position. First of all he had to strengthen the first and second order of the first degree of the Society (congregations for male and female religious) in order afterwards to try quickly to animate his entire plan on that day when it would become possible:

*“This is what we are doing **at this time** and what, with the grace of God we **have been able to accomplish until now**. Hence, our principal activity, **at this time**, is educating and forming, for our objective, a good number of religious apostolic priests. Certainly, this is the most important and urgent task for the young Society, during a time, such as ours, which is so needy of priests.”¹⁰⁹*

And from that time on, we have continued preparing religious priests for the objective of the Society which, however, was in a certain form truncated. Now, however, it depends on us, men and women Salvatorians, to “recreate” the Salvatorian charism, basing our inspiration in the ideal of our founder. It depends on us to give new life to our Salvatorian charism, enlightened by the foundational charism, the healthy tradition of the Society and the new conditions of our times. In addition, today, it is the Church itself that gives us this stimulus:

“The up-to-date renewal of the religious life comprises both a constant return to the sources of the whole of the Christian life and to the primitive inspiration of the institutes, and their adaptation to the changed conditions of our times.”¹¹⁰

After a stage of extraordinary initial dynamism and rapid expansion of the Society, we now find ourselves in an especially important moment. We are at the customary crisis stage of religious institutes

as they move from stagnation and settling in to a renewal of the vitality of the congregational charism.

There is no other way to revitalize the ideal of Father Jordan than that which is indicated by the Church itself: to return to the sources. It is necessary to recover that unwavering faith, the apostolic ardor and that dynamism which marked the life and action of the early Society. The works of the Spirit neither survive nor grow in the despondency and settling in that destroy the spirit of struggle. We need to be willing to welcome with faith and humility the admonition of St. Paul:

*“Do not extinguish the Spirit!”*¹¹¹

In fact, those who believe in the work of the Spirit will not allow themselves to be contaminated by defeatism, fatigue, or discouragement. The Spirit gives life, courage, ardor, and dynamism. How would Father Jordan, Father Luethen and Mother Mary of the Apostles react today if with us they could contemplate the rebirth of many of the ideas and aspirations for which they sacrificed themselves? In conclusion, let us try once again to feel the fervor of a founding Salvatorian convinced that Father Jordan’s plan is really the work of the Spirit, convinced that which comes from the Spirit does not die!

“May it please God that the whole Catholic world participate in this new creation: from the teacher to the domestic helper, from the father of the family to the servant, from the master to the student, in order that its spirit penetrate the Church and the school, the classroom and the parliament, the office and the home so that along with the Founder of the Society its motto be proclaimed everywhere:

‘EVERYTHING WITH GOD AND FOR GOD FOR THE GOOD OF OUR NEIGHBOR.’¹¹²

Notes

1. *Perfectae Caritatis* (hereafter referred to as PC) 2 Vatican Council II, General Editor Austin Flannery, O.P.
2. Here we are speaking of the First Order, i.e. the men's religious congregation.
3. *Rules and General Regulations of the First Order of the Catholic Teaching Society*, 1884, *Documenta & Studia Salvatoriana* (hereafter referred to as *DSS*) I, 31.
4. *PC* 2.
5. Puebla, *Consecrated Life*, Number 772.
6. CIP stands for Interprovincial Collaboration and until 1990 was the formal entity for collaboration among the three Brazilian Salvatorian Provinces: Sisters of the Divine Savior-Sao Paulo Province; Sisters of the Divine Savior-Santa Catarina Province; and Society of the Divine Savior.
7. *The Catholic Society*, 1878, *DSS* II, 83.
8. *Smyrna Draft*, 1880, *DSS* XX.11, 8-9.
9. *Statutes of the Apostolic Teaching Society*, 1880, *DSS* II, 83.
10. *Rules for the First Grade of the Apostolic Teaching Society*, 1882, *DSS* I, 21.
11. *The Apostolic Teaching Society*, B. Luethen, 1881, *DSS* IV, 29.
12. *Ibid.*, *DSS* IV, 32.
13. *Appeal*, 1882, *DSS* IV, 59-60.
14. *God Wants It*, 1883, *DSS* IV, 88.
15. *Rules and Constitution of the Catholic Teaching Society*, 1886, *DSS* I, 49-50.

16. *The Catholic Teaching Society*, 1888, *DSS IV*, 105.
17. *Idem*, 1888, *DSS IV*, 113.
18. *Spiritual Diary of Francis Mary of the Cross Jordan*, English translation, Miriam Cerletty, SDS, Rome, 1981 (hereafter referred to as *SD*), I, 1, 3-4.
19. *SD I*, 53, 5.
20. *SD I*, 119, 1.
21. *SD I*, 149, 5.
22. *SD I*, 67, 3-4.
23. *SD I*, 186, 7-8.
24. *SD I*, 192, 1.
25. *SD I*, 192, 3.
26. John 17:1-10.
27. John 1:14.
28. 1 Cor. 1:5-6.
29. Ex. 16:7.
30. Ex. 24:16.
31. Num. 14:21.
32. Ps. 19:2.
33. Ps. 97:6; see Ps. 8, 18A, 84.
34. Ps. 145:4-5.
35. *Annales SDS*, 1933, Vol. IV, 1.
36. *SD I*, 1, 3.

37. *The Catholic Teaching Society*, 1888, *DSS IV*, 105.
38. Titus 3:4.
39. *SD I*, 67, 3.
40. *Catholic Society*, 1878, *DSS II*, 13.
41. *The Apostolic Teaching Society*, B. Luethen, 1881, *DSS IV*, 21.
42. *Idem*, 1881, *DSS IV*, 22.
43. *Statutes of the Apostolic Teaching Society*, 1881, *DSS II*, 101.
44. *Rules of the First Order*, 1882, *DSS I*, 21.
45. *Rules and Common Norms*, 1884, *DSS I*, 35.
46. *Guide to the Catholic Teaching Society*, 1888, *DSS IV*, 97.
47. *The Catholic Teaching Society*, 1888, *DSS IV*, 105.
48. *Annales SDS*, 1933, Vol. IV, Number 1.
49. *SD I*, 58, 3.
50. *SD I*, 78, 5.
51. *SD I*, 53, 5.
52. *SD I*, 170, 3 - 171, 1.
53. *SD I*, 79, 3.
54. *SD I*, 82, 4.
55. *SD I*, 118, 3.
56. *SD I*, 118, 5.
57. *SD I*, 120, 3.
58. John 17:3.

59. Mark 16:15.
60. Matt. 28:19-20.
61. Acts 5:20.
62. Dan. 12:3.
63. Jas. 5:19-20.
64. 2 Thess. 3:13.
65. *Annales SDS*, 1919, Vol. I, 211.
66. *Annales SDS*, 1933, Vol. IV, Number 1.
67. John 17:1-3.
68. *The Apostolic Teaching Society*, 1881, *DSS IV*, 21.
69. *Ibid.*, 1881, *DSS IV*, 30.
70. *Ibid.*, 1881, *DSS IV*, 30.
71. *The Missionary*, 1881, Number 1.
72. *Ibid.*, 1881, Number 2.
73. *God Wants It*, 1883, *DSS IV*, 94.
74. *The Missionary*, 1881, Number 1.
75. *God Wants It*, 1883, *DSS IV*, 88.
76. *Ibid.*, 1883, *DSS IV*, 89.
77. *Guide to the Catholic Teaching Society*, 1888, *DSS IV*, 97.
78. *Ibid.*, 1888, *DSS IV*, 100.
79. *The Catholic Teaching Society*, 1888, *DSS IV*, 105.
80. *The Catholic Teaching Society*, 1888, *DSS IV*, 107.

81. *Rules*, 1884, *DSS I*, 35; *Rules*, 1886, *DSS I*, 49.
82. *SD I*, 61.
83. *SD I*, 138, 6-7.
84. See Acts of the Apostles.
85. *Catholic Society*, 1878, Number II, *DSS II*, 13.
86. *Rules*, 1886, *DSS I*, 49-50.
87. *SD I*, 58, 1.
88. *SD I*, 63, 4.
89. *SD I*, 138, 6.
90. *SD I*, 149, 3.
91. *SD II*, 1, 2.
92. *Catholic Society*, 1878, *DSS II*, 13.
93. *Ibid.*, Number IV.
94. *The Apostolic Teaching Society*, B. Luethen, 1881, *DSS IV*, 21.
95. *Rules*, 1882, *DSS I*, 21.
96. *Call*, 1882, *DSS IV*, 59.
97. *Rules*, 1886, *DSS I*, 49-50.
98. *SD I*, 67, 3-4.
99. *Appeal*, 1882, *DSS IV*, 59.
100. *The Catholic Teaching Society*, 1888, *DSS IV*, 105.
101. *Catholic Society*, 1878, *DSS II*, 13.
102. *Statutes of the Apostolic Teaching Society*, 1880, *DSS II*, 69-70.

103. *Rules*, 1884, *DSS I*, 44.
104. *SD I*, 153a, 2-3.
105. *SD I*, 205, 3; 206, 1.
106. *SD I*, 207, 1.
107. *Rules*, 1884, *DSS I*, 35.
108. *Exhortations and Admonitions*, English translation, Winfred Herbst, SDS, 1939, 155.
109. *The Catholic Teaching Society*, 1888, *DSS IV*, 106.
110. *PC*, 2.
111. 1 Thess. 5:19.
112. *The Apostolic Teaching Society*, B. Luethen, 1881, *DSS IV*, 33.

SALVATORIAN SPIRITUALITY

A Vast and All Embracing Concept

by

Arno Boesing, SDS

***Abstract:** The author argues that a specific Salvatorian spirituality not only exists but also ought to hold a significant place among Christian spiritualities. He grounds this argument in his understanding of five specific characteristics: Christ the Savior as Exemplar, Being, Action, Methodology and Inclusive Love.*

Knowing and living the specific spirituality of a religious institute is fundamental for the efficacy of its mission in the Church and in the world. The lack of a vigorous spirituality weakens the sense of belonging among its members and often renders truly joint efforts impossible. During his lifetime, Fr. Jordan himself complained that many Salvatorians, instead of deepening and living the spirituality of the Society, sought out and were inspired by that of other religious institutes.¹

If we, Salvatorians, want to renew our life and mission, it is absolutely necessary for us to discover, deepen and love our own spirituality. All of our renewal work will be worth little if it is not guided by a spirituality that is specifically our own. In “*Annales SDS*,” the second Salvatorian Superior General, Fr. Pancratius Pfeiffer, wrote and published some reflections about Salvatorian spirituality.²

Since then, much to the detriment of our Salvatorian identity as well as the living of our charism, spirituality and mission, very little has been done to elucidate and systematize the understanding of our specific Salvatorian spirituality. In reality, it is very difficult to

be faithful to a mission and to incarnate a spirituality that is little known. A religious without a clear awareness of his/her mission and spirituality is a religious without self-identity.

Because of this need, I would like to share with the whole Salvatorian Family (women and men, lay and religious) some of the reflection that has taken place within the International Charism Commission in Rome. What I share here is the result of years of research and study by CIS (Inter-Salvatorian Commission).³ Obviously, this article is a summary that will require further development and deepening.

1. Christian Spirituality

Christian spirituality is a vast topic. It includes many aspects and challenges flowing from the life and message of Jesus Christ. It is difficult even impossible, to define it. In addition, any definition would be inadequate. What one can do, nevertheless, is to describe it in various ways. We are very familiar with some of the classic descriptions of spirituality:

- *identification with the will of the Father*
- *life directed by the Spirit*
- *life of grace*
- *following Jesus Christ*

These and other descriptions are certainly correct, even though incomplete. They describe complementary aspects. To be authentic, any description of Christian spirituality must always begin with the following of Jesus Christ. In effect, it is Jesus who reveals the Father to us. It is Jesus who sends us his Holy Spirit... On the other hand, Jesus presents himself as the Way to be followed, the Truth to be accepted and the Life to be lived. Christian spirituality originates in baptism and consists, essentially, in a growing identification with Christ in his paschal mystery.

The actual demands of following Jesus Christ make themselves known within history and within the happenings that concretely characterize human existence. In this sense, Christian spirituality is historical and is founded in the lived reality of persons. Life's events point to evangelical values which, in real life, indicate the way to follow Jesus. Because of the diversity of historical experiences, different values and emphasis emerge as important. This results in different spiritualities at different times and in different places.

Thus, within the same Christian spirituality, it is possible for diverse spiritualities to arise, even though, basically there exists only one Christian spirituality inspired by Jesus Christ. Each day, in every concrete situation, we experience the call to conversion in a different way. Thus, there arise different paths that lead to a unique following of Jesus Christ. In this sense, within a single Christian spirituality, there exist different specific Christian spiritualities. These are not essentially different from one another, for they have the same origin and identity.

The gospels show us that Jesus himself presents his followers with two distinct ways to follow him. The apostles are called to follow him more closely, leaving everything: profession, family, goods... The other disciples are to follow him while remaining in the world, with their families, practicing their professions, etc. Persons with different lifestyles and different commitments, live the same basic spirituality in a different way. Thus, we speak of a contemplative spirituality, a matrimonial spirituality, an apostolic-missionary spirituality...

2. Salvatorian Spirituality

With a foundation in Christian spirituality, as well as in values proper to religious life, notably specific Salvatorian values,

we can also speak of a Salvatorian spirituality. Our Founder perceived the necessity of a special mission in the life of the Church and for this reason founded the Salvatorian Family. Salvatorian spirituality in itself, happens to the extent that we live out our Salvatorian charism and mission. As long as the charism and the mission underlie, nurture and characterize our spiritual life, we can speak of a Salvatorian spirituality. To the extent that the Salvatorian charism and mission penetrate our spiritual and apostolic life, we constitute a Christian community with its specific spirituality.

Like charism and mission, Salvatorian spirituality is also a vast and all embracing concept. We can speak about it using five basic points of reference:

- *Christ our Exemplar*
- *Salvatorian Being*
- *Salvatorian Action*
- *Salvatorian Methodology*
- *Inclusive Love (Universality)*

2.1. Christ the Savior, Our Exemplar

Salvatorian spirituality is totally centered in Christ Jesus, the One who is consecrated (Christ) to be Savior (Jesus). Fr. Jordan is very clear when he affirms, “*He (Christ Jesus) is our mentor.*”⁴ And he insists: “*Let this be our motto: I must become like my divine model.*”⁵

The inspiration, the exemplar, of our Salvatorian spirituality is Christ the Savior. For us, He is the Christ; that is, the Anointed One, the consecrated One, the One sent to be Jesus, which is to say, Savior. He is our example, par excellence, the one who inspires our way of being and acting. He reveals to us the immense love of the Father who desires that all be saved.⁶ In him is revealed

the glory of God the Savior. *“The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us, and we have seen his glory: the glory of an only Son coming from the Father, filled with grace and truth.”*⁷

It is Jesus the Savior who integrates all the elements of human experience, guaranteeing our unity. In him and with him, we discover our Salvatorian identity. From him we learn to give ourselves in love: *“He emptied himself and took the form of a slave, being born in human likeness.”*⁸ In light of his mission as Savior, he became poor, chaste and obedient, forming community with his apostles. He freed himself from all possible chains, directing his entire life toward his mission to save all people.⁹ In order to find the strength to be faithful until the end, he sought to remain in constant union with the Father, even spending entire nights in prayer.¹⁰

Inspired by our mentor, Christ Jesus, and through the saving love of the Father revealed in him, we also commit ourselves through the profession of the evangelical counsels, taking on his life of poverty, chastity, obedience and apostolate.¹¹ Following his example, we seek to maintain a healthy balance between contemplation and action.¹² Called, attracted and finally captivated by him, we commit ourselves to a life of faith and service within community, always in light of our Salvatorian mission.¹³

In the daily effort to incarnate the example of Christ the Savior, we find in Mary, the Mother of the Savior and Queen of the Apostles, as well as in the Apostles themselves, precious examples and intercessors.¹⁴ With Mary, the humble servant of the Lord, full of grace, we glorify God for the wonders he has realized in the depths of our being.¹⁵ Together Mary and the holy apostles, anointed by the Holy Spirit, inspire us to follow the Savior.¹⁶ With them, we exclaim in the fullness of our being. *“The Father has sent his Son as Savior of the world.”*¹⁷

2.2. The Savior's Being—Our Salvatorian Being

Following the example of Christ the Savior, the primary focus of Salvatorian spirituality is the revelation of God the Savior¹⁸ in the totality of our being and action. Everything ought to proclaim the love of God the Savior, for it is this, above all that we are called to incarnate in our personal and community life.

Referring to the Salvatorian mission, the Founder speaks of proclaiming the glory of God.¹⁹ He refers continually to the glory of God in his *Spiritual Diary*.²⁰ Impelled by the Holy Spirit, we are called to “*glorify, everywhere, God the Father, his Son Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit.*”²¹ In other words, we are called “*to reveal to all and glorify everywhere God the Father, his Son Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit.*”²² Speaking to the lay people of the Society, Jordan affirms the same thing in language more accessible to them. “*...we aspire to reveal to the world God, one and three: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.*”²³

Jesus Christ, our exemplar, not only reveals the Father through his words and actions but also through his entire way of being and acting. Everything in Him reveals the love of God the Savior. Everything he is and does points to the realization of his mission. “*I have given you glory on earth by finishing the work you gave me to do.*”²⁴ He not only reveals the Father in his attitudes but also is the personal revelation of the Father. “*If you really knew me, you would know my Father also.*”²⁵ “*...and whoever looks on me is seeing him who sent me.*”²⁶ Jesus is one with the Father. “*I am in the Father and the Father in me.*”²⁷ We, as persons marked by a thirst for the absolute in the saving God, are called to follow Jesus the Savior and proclaim to all his saving and freeing love.

Thus, like our mentor, Christ the Savior, who is one with the Father, we are called to discover the integration of our whole person in

contemplation and action, stripping ourselves of all that is not eternal, of all that does not reflect our divine model. Only in this way will we be living signs of God's saving love, capable of attracting others to him and his mission. *"As you Father, are in me and I in you, I pray that they may be one in us, that the world may believe that you sent me."*²⁸ In fact, the effectiveness of our Salvatorian mission in the world depends on our practical capacity to be revelatory signs of the love of the Saving God. *"In his great mercy the Divine Savior has called us to become images of himself, to become as much like him as possible... to become holy."*²⁹

It is moving to see how Fr. Jordan pushes himself to live all that he recommends to us. He encourages himself. *"See everything in the light of faith. Let everything you think, say and do be guided by faith. The just live by faith."*³⁰ He is aware that personal liberation is the combined result of the action of God and our human efforts. For this reason, he urges the early members of the Society: *"Be men of prayer."*³¹ *"Imitate, therefore, the Savior, being men of prayer... With this you will be giving glory to God. Our times need men of prayer..."*³² In addition, for himself, he proposes seven hours of daily prayer.³³ With this deep experience of God as a starting point, one understands the ardent apostolic zeal of our Founder.³⁴

2.3. The Savior's Action – Salvatorian Action

Our apostolic action or apostolate takes its inspiration from the action of Christ the Savior, who came to bestow eternal life in abundance upon everyone.³⁵ Father Jordan points to Jesus, saying: *"Think of what the Savior himself did for the salvation of souls. Think of how the holy apostles notably St. Paul labored for the salvation of souls."*³⁶ *"In order for the reign of God to occur, it is necessary that those whom God has called to abandon everything, truly proclaim Jesus Christ through their words and life witness."*³⁷ On another occasion the Founder insists for himself: *"...so that all may be imbued with Your sacred doctrine and that I, at the end,*

burning with Your charity, may pour out my life for You, that is, for your glory. Amen."³⁸ Following the Savior, our greatest efforts ought to reflect the twofold dimension of proclaiming salvation: **to reveal** the Savior God in the fullness of our being through witness and action; and **to save**, to liberate; that is, make life happen in a way that it be permanent, eternal.

Before he proposes our mission to us, Jordan insists for himself: *"Never forget the wonderful works of God... In all your actions and behavior, significant and insignificant, let your guiding motto be: All for the greater glory of God... and for the salvation of souls."*³⁹ And he directs us also: *"We are called to work for the salvation of souls. And how are we to work if we have no zeal? ... We are called to be the salt of the earth and the light of the world."*⁴⁰

The goal of our Salvatorian mission is the salvation or liberation of the human person. In other words, eternal life; that is, life which begins here and now and transcends earthly life. *"Eternal life is this: to know you, the only true God, and him whom you have sent, Jesus Christ."*⁴¹ *"He who believes has eternal life."*⁴²

Christ the Savior shows us that eternal life happens not only through "works" but also through knowledge;⁴³ that is, through being that spills itself out in action. With the entire Church, we labor that the Savior and his salvific message be known by all, so that incarnating it they can possess eternal life.

The Savior's action is characterized by a threefold effort: discernment of the Father's will, in order to reveal it through his mission; revelation of the Father and his salvific love for all; and sensitivity to human suffering, especially among those marginalized by the society.

Following the example of our mentor, Jesus Christ, Savior of the World, our preaching begins in lived experience. *"What we have*

*seen and heard we proclaim in turn to you so that you may share life with us. This fellowship of ours is with the Father and with the Son, Jesus Christ.”*⁴⁴ Because, *“We have seen his glory: the glory of an only Son coming from the Father, full of grace and truth.”*⁴⁵

To the extent that we **incarnate** gospel values in our life, following the Savior’s example, we necessarily **radiate** them to others. In the same way, by its very nature yeast exists to ferment and light to illuminate.⁴⁶

The apostles’ example, in their times, was rooted in the example of Jesus. In our day, we are also called to **evangelize through our life and work**, showing everyone the goodness and love of God for all people.⁴⁷ We can understand why Fr. Jordan insisted so often on complete availability, apostolic zeal and a love that saves. *“Therefore again and again, I recommend to you zeal for souls.”*⁴⁸

True apostolic zeal takes its inspiration and nourishment from the experience of the love of a God who saves here and now. *“Even if I speak in tongues..., have the gift of prophecy..., distribute my goods to the hungry..., hand over my body to be burned, if I do not have love, I gain nothing.”*⁴⁹ The example of our mentor, Jesus Christ, also calls us to give special attention to the poor and those in need: *“When we see the poorest, most abandoned, the lowest of men, we must behold in him an immortal soul for which Christ died and shed the last drop of His blood.”*⁵⁰

2.4. The Savior’s Methodology - Our Methodology

The approach which should characterize our life and apostolate also finds its inspiration in our model, Jesus Christ. *“May each one of you be able to say, no matter where he may be, what St. Paul said of himself: ‘Be ye followers of me, as I also am of Christ’.*⁵¹ *Thus you will exert great power of attraction.”*⁵²

Reading the writings of Fr. Jordan that refer to the Salvatorian mission, we note a striking characteristic: the insistent call to form lay persons to be **apostles** or to always **involve more people**.⁵³ Looking towards the future of his group, he envisions: *“Oh holy apostles hastening throughout the world, evangelizing all! Oh, inscrutable zeal! How often you have been scorned and suppressed with the excuse that you are meant for the select few!”*⁵⁴ In the person of Jesus Christ, the Father reveals to the world his immense and saving love. Jesus became incarnate to reveal the goodness and love of God the Savior to all people.⁵⁵ We are called to follow the Savior’s example, using the same approach that he, our Master and Lord, used. The one who is the light of the world⁵⁶ says to us as well, *“You are the light of the world....”*⁵⁷

We know that Jesus does not choose to act alone. From the beginning of his public life, he calls persons to follow him and to be his disciples. He calls, persuades, motivates and prepares people. And he makes them his **followers, leaders and successors** to continue his mission. Jesus calls the twelve to learn from him. They go to him. He teaches, forms and sends them forth.⁵⁸ He forewarns them of the inevitable persecutions.⁵⁹ He encourages them to speak openly, without fear.⁶⁰ He tells them simply that to follow him, self-denial is necessary.⁶¹ He sends them forth as his representatives.⁶² And confides his mission to them.⁶³ And then, he continues to accompany them through his Spirit, who teaches all truth.⁶⁴

The most important methodology of Jesus that we are called to follow is the appreciation and love of the human person. It is the person who is the center of his preaching, to whom he directs all of his saving action. With his disciples, Jesus created a living community that was centered in him as a person. He, Jesus, is the center of gravity in the lives of the disciples, their destiny and their lifestyle. He, in himself, is the methodology, the way to follow. It is primarily through his lived experience that he forms his disciples.

Proposing the reign of God, Jesus presents himself as the exemplar to be followed. Proposing the beatitudes,⁶⁵ he expresses his own experience and spirituality.

In his mission with the people, Jesus teaches, cures, has compassion, pardons.... Even though his life is full of these formative activities directed toward the people in general, and especially the poor, he does not neglect the specific **formation of the apostles**. He sets aside a good part of his time for their instruction and training, giving them special explanations.⁶⁶ Jesus educates not only by teaching but also by being Master.⁶⁷

Jesus does not hide the exacting requirements that he proposes for those who follow him. He demands that they not only be students but servants, following the example of the master.⁶⁸ He demands commitment to follow him,⁶⁹ in insecurity,⁷⁰ through trials⁷¹ and to wherever he will go.⁷²

Faith represents a fundamental value for Jesus. *“Do not persist in your unbelief, but believe... Blest are they who have not seen and have believed.”*⁷³ And on another occasion: *“Why this fear, people of little faith!”*⁷⁴ Prayer constitutes a central element in the relationship of Jesus with the Father and with human persons. He teaches the disciples to pray as he prays.⁷⁵ The great commandment in the following of Jesus is love: *“remain in my love.”*⁷⁶ *“There is no greater love than this: to lay down one’s life for one’s friends.”*⁷⁷ Jesus must always be the first love in the life of a disciple.⁷⁸ This implies renunciation, even the cross: *“If you want to follow me, deny yourself....”*⁷⁹

Inspired by the example of the Savior and the apostles, who were concerned with forming disciples to work with them and eventually replace them in their mission, we are called to take on this characteristic in our Salvatorian mission. We must **involve others**,⁸⁰ making use of the same dynamic as the Master,⁸¹ applying his methodology in order to lead others to a commitment. Therefore, as

Salvatorians, religious and lay, we cannot act alone or in isolation. We need to unite our energies,⁸² involve⁸³ and form others in order to activate their participation and communion.

Jordan invites us to announce the Savior and salvation, letting ourselves be inspired by *“the charity of Christ,”*⁸⁴ allowing ourselves to be infected by the love that saves. In this respect, we understand why Fr. Jordan insists so much on love as a fundamental element in our spirituality.⁸⁵ For this reason, we also understand Jordan’s great trust in **Divine Providence** as well as his confidence in others, giving them responsibilities. We ought to see persons through the eyes of the Savior, teaching as he teaches, involving them as he involves them, evangelizing as he evangelizes, using the approach he uses.

2.5. The Savior’s Inclusive Love–Our Inclusive Love (Universality)

The spirit of the Savior is grounded in an inclusive love which desires salvation for everyone. This all inclusive or universal love is a basic characteristic of our Salvatorian spirituality. The glory of God is the salvation of all men and women. What is important is the person to be saved. *“But love, I might say, should also be like a mother towards her child. It should be true, ready to make sacrifices, patient, attentive.... It should embrace all.... If our love is from God, then we shall love all.... This universal love is especially and specifically for our Society.”*⁸⁶ *“Christ died for all; because of this, our Society possesses a universal character....”*⁸⁷ *“Therefore, open wide Your hearts and exert yourselves to be all in all, in order to win all for Christ.”*⁸⁸

Thus, inspired by the love of Christ who saves,⁸⁹ we seek to include all persons, without distinction of race, color, class, nationality or apostolic activity. Just as we cannot exclude any person, we also cannot absolutize any apostolic activity, not even “ours.” As a result, we welcome any activity, especially that which corresponds

to the real needs of the Church and the people. In doing this, we are attentive to the concrete circumstances of time and place, opting always for *“the little ones.”*⁹⁰ the poor.

Our apostolic life is guided by the goodness and love of God for all, revealed in the person of the Savior.⁹¹ This helps us to be faithful to the Founder’s insistent plea which springs forth from the depths of his apostolic heart: *“Would be to God, that I could save everyone!”*⁹² Inspired by the attitudes of the Savior, he wants us to always keep in focus the human person who is to be saved. Everything else is secondary. Jordan often says: *“Everyone,” “to everyone.” “through all ways and means....”*⁹³ Everyone ought to be an agent of transformation, reaching out to everyone, making use of all the ways and means that the love of Christ inspires.⁹⁴

Hence, we are called to work for the liberation and salvation of all people without distinction, as well as the whole in all her/his dimensions. In order that this happen, we ought to include everyone; that is, the greatest number possible. Embraced by the love of Christ who saves, we seek to dynamically develop all the possibilities of ongoing (eternal) life. In this, we always work toward the wholeness of the human person in all his/her dimensions. We are open to all and in principle make use of all ways and means that the love of Christ inspires.⁹⁵

To the extent that we know how to relativize all that is not for the greatest glory of God and the salvation of people, we are unmistakably marked by a simplicity of life. The more we grow in eternal values, the simpler we become. This requires the constant rejection of counter values, so proclaimed and exalted by the world around us. Fidelity to the mission demands its price in suffering. *“Our holy Redeemer became incarnate, took on a life of suffering, accepted a painful passion and death in order to save us. And the only mission that he confided to his apostles was the salvation of human beings.”*⁹⁶

Here, we see the key to understanding the asceticism of the cross so characteristic in the life and work of Fr. Jordan. He is convinced that, *“The works of God prosper only in the shadow of the cross,”*⁹⁷ For him, the cross is a powerful expression of salvific love and an instrument of liberation.⁹⁸ Truthfully, the cross is an indispensable condition for the following of Christ. *“If someone wants to come after me, they must deny themselves, take up their cross and follow me.”*⁹⁹ It is the price of a greater love.¹⁰⁰ Love and the cross journey together and complement one another. Both are inherent to life and both are instruments of salvation. The more one loves life and the more one suffers when it is threatened or suffocated, the less one feels the weight of one’s own suffering. Love liberates. *“My yoke is easy and my burden light.”*¹⁰¹

Notes

1. “Each institute has its own spirit; and just as soon as one deviates from it, he finds himself on the wrong road. An apple tree is not a pear tree. And a Franciscan is not a Dominican, a Jesuit is not a Trappist.” *Exhortations and Admonitions of the Founder (EA)* English translation, Winfred Herbst SDS, 1939, p. 94.
2. See *Salvatorianer Chronik*, year 3 number 3, May 1, 1919, and following.
3. CIS (INTER-SALVATORIAN COMMISSION). This is the new name for CIP (Interprovincial Collaboration). With the beginning of the Association of the Divine Savior (the Lay Salvatorians), the name was changed in general assembly, November 1990. CIS represents the collaborative efforts of the four Salvatorian units in Brazil: Association of the Divine Savior; Sisters of the Divine Savior-Sao Paulo Province; Sisters of the Divine Savior-Santa Catarina Province; and the Society of the Divine Savior.
4. *EA* “Er ist unser Vorbild.” This sentence was left out of the English translation but can be found in the original *Wortes und Ernahrungen*, 1938, p. 189.
5. *EA* p. 13.
6. “This is good and acceptable, and God our Savior is pleased with it, for he wants all to be saved and to come to know the truth.” (1 Tim. 2:3-4).
7. John 1:14.
8. Phil. 2:7.
9. In order to be totally free and to dedicate himself entirely to his mission as Savior, Jesus freed himself from all that in one form or another, could impede or limit his total availability. See *The Constitution of the Society of the Divine Savior*, 1984, 105.

10. See Matt. 14:23; 26:36. Mark 1:35. John 6:14.
11. See *Const. SDS*, chapter 3.
12. See *Ibid.*, 501.
13. See *Ibid.*, 403.
14. See *Ibid.*, 304.
5. See Luke 1:46-55.
16. See John 20:21; Acts 2; *Const. SDS*, 101, 102.
17. John 4:14.
18. See 1 Tim. 1:1; 2:3; 4:10. Eph. 5:23. Phil. 3:20. Titus 1:3; 2:10; 3:4.
19. See *The Catholic Society*, 1878, *DSS II*, II, p. 13; *Smyrna Draft*, 1880, *DSS XX.11*, pp. 8-9; *Donauwörth Draft*, 1880, A-1, *DSS II*, p. 67; *The Apostolic Teaching Society*, B. Lüthen, 1881, I, pp. 11.14, *DSS IV*, pp. 29-31; *Rules of the First Grade of the Apostolic Teaching Society*, 1882, p. 3, *DSS I*, p. 21; *Rules and Constitutions of the Catholic Teaching Society*, 1886, i, 3, pp. 3-4; *DSS I*, pp. 49-50; *The Catholic Teaching Society*, 1888, p. 3.11, *DSS IV*, pp. 105, 113; *Constitutions of the Catholic Teaching Society*, 1891, I, 3, pp. 1-2.
20. See *Spiritual Diary of the Founder (SD)*, English translation, Miriam Cerletty, SDS, 1981, I, I.3; 53, 5; 56, 4; 67, 4-5; 119, 1; 149, 5; 186, 7; 192, 3.
21. *Rules and Constitutions of the Catholic Teaching Society*, 1886, I, 3, pp. 3-4, *DSS I*, pp. 49-50.
- 22: *Ibid.*
23. *The Catholic Teaching Society*, 1888, I, p. 3, *DSS IV*, p. 105.
24. John 17:4.

25. John 14:7.
26. John 12:45; See John 14:9-10.
27. John 14:11.
28. John 17:21.
29. *EA* pp. 12-13.
30. *SD* I 136, 5-6.
31. *EA* p. 21.
32. *Ibid.*, p. 22.
33. See *SD* I 197, 6-12; 198, 1-5.
34. See *SD* II 1, 1-6; 2, 1-5.
35. See John 10:10.
36. *EA* p. 124.
37. *The Catholic Teaching Society*, 1888, p. 11; *DSS* IV, p. 133.
38. *SD* I, 120, 3.
39. *Ibid.*, 167, 2-5.
40. *EA* p. 124.
41. John 17:3.
42. John 6:47. See John 5:24.
43. The biblical meaning of the term, “knowledge,” connotes a “lived experience,” See John 17:3.
44. 1 John 1:3.
45. John 1:14; See *SD* II 2,3.
46. See Matt. 5:13-16; 13:33. John 8:12.

47. See Titus 3:1-7.
48. *EA* pp. 124-125.
49. See 1 Cor 13:1-13.
50. *EA* p. 124.
51. 1 Cor 4:16.
52. *EA* p. 164.
53. See *The Missionary Magazine*, 1881, year 1, no. 2, pp. 10-13.
54. *SD I* 128, 6-7.
55. See Titus 3:4. I Tim. 4:10.
56. See John 8:12.
57. Matt. 5:14.
58. See Matt. 10:1-41.
59. See Matt. 10:17-25.
60. See Matt. 10:26-36.
61. See Matt. 19:37-39.
62. See Matt. 10:40-42.
63. “Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations...” See Matt. 28:18-20. “Go into the whole world and proclaim the good news to all creation.” See Mark 16:15.
64. See John 16:13-14.
65. See Matt. 5:3-12.
66. See Mark 4:3-28.
67. See John 13:4-20.

68. See Matt. 10:24-25.
69. See Matt. 11:29-30.
70. See Luke 9:57-58.
71. See Luke 22:22-28.
72. See John 12:26.
73. See John 20:24-29.
74. Matt. 8:26.
75. See Matt. 6:5-12. Lk. 11:1-4.
76. John 15:9.
77. John 15:13.
78. See Matt. 11:37-39.
79. Mark 8:34.
80. See *The Missionary Magazine*, year 1, no. 2, October 1881, pp. 10-13.
81. “Following the example of Jesus Christ and the holy apostles.” See *Rules and Norms of the Catholic Teaching Society*, 1884, p. 7; *DSS I*, p. 35. This expression was retained in each of the later editions of our rule of life.
82. See *Donauwörth Draft*, 1880, *DSS II*, A-1, p. 69.
83. See *The Missionary Magazine*, year 1, no. 2, October 1881, pp. 10-13.
84. See 1 Cor. 13:1-13.
85. “This universal love is especially and specifically for our Society.” *EA* p. 100.

86. Ibid.

87. Fr. Pancratius Pfeiffer, SDS, *Father Jordan and His Foundation*, p. 291.

88. Ibid.

89. See 1 Cor. 13:1-13.

90. See *Rule of the Apostolate, Rules and Norms of the First Order of the Catholic Teaching Society*, 1884, DSS I, pp. 33-34. Translator's note: In Jordan's writings, the term "little ones," does not refer only to children but rather to anyone marginalized by the society; i.e., the poor ones. Many early translations to the Portuguese and English have used the word, "children," thus restricting our understanding. See also: Matt. 11:5; 18:2-3; 19:3; 1:14-20; Gal. 4:3; 1 Thess. 2:7.

91. See Titus 3:4. 1 Tim. 4:10.

92. SD I 149, 3.

93. "Omnes," "omnibus," "omnibus rationibus et mediis."

94. See Fr. Pancratius Pfeiffer, SDS, *Annales SDS*, 1919, Vol. I, pp. 211 ss.

95. See *Rules and Constitution of the Catholic Teaching Society*, 1886, pp. 3-4, DSS I, pp. 49-50.

96. *Statutes of the Apostolic Teaching Society*, 1881, p. 3. DSS II, p. 101.

97. SD I 163, 6.

98. See SD I 179,3-5; 180,1-4.

99. See Mark 8:34-38.

100. John 15:13.

101. Matt. 11:30.

FR. JORDAN'S ORIGINAL INSIGHT: ALL CATHOLIC CHRISTIANS SHOULD BE APOSTLES IN THE WORLD

by

Arno Boesing SDS

***Abstract:** In 1996, Fr. Arno Boesing addressed this talk to a group of Brazilian Salvatorian religious men and women who were accompanying the groups of Lay Salvatorians in Brazil at that time. As such it is addressed specifically to Salvatorian religious about their role in the formation of Lay Salvatorians. Fr. Arno attempts to place their formative role within the context of the overall Salvatorian mission.*

Father Jordan was a zealous apostle and a prophet. He was a man of God who allowed himself to be taken over and “seduced” by God.¹ The tremendous hardships that he encountered during his childhood as well as his acute awareness of his own limitations led him to an experience of the “suffering servant of God.”² As a faithful follower of Christ, he learned early in life how to empty himself³ and how to live with his own poverty as well as that of others. As a result, he learned how to truly value life and in this process came to understand that God the Savior passionately loves and defends life.⁴

From his experience of God as Creator and Savior, Fr. Jordan became aware of the breadth of Jesus’ mission to glorify the Father and to give eternal life to those entrusted to him.⁵ In Fr. Jordan’s apostolic

missionary zeal,⁶ he founded the Salvatorian Family and entrusted it with the mission to know and make known the Divine Savior.⁷ In keeping with this mission, the Salvatorian Family should strive for a ministerial and missionary Church where lay persons have an important place as agents of evangelization and apostles in the world.

A. Basic Objective

The desire of Jesus that everyone experience life in its fullness (eternal life) is also the basic objective of the work envisioned by Fr. Jordan.⁸ Jesus always seeks the glory of the Father and never his own glory. It is the Father who is glorified when life is promoted, saved and enhanced. This is why the Founder works together with us toward the salvation of all.⁹ This is also why he placed himself entirely at the service of the Divine Savior and invites us to do the same.¹⁰

Inspired by Christ the Savior, Fr. Jordan also never sought his own glory but always that of the one and triune God and the One whom God sent, Jesus Christ.¹¹ This is why the Salvatorian Family should strive with an apostolic passion so that all know, love and serve God the Creator and Savior.¹² Fr. Jordan enjoins the Society (whole Salvatorian Family) to make the Reign of God happen by evangelizing all.¹³

When we speak of the Reign of God, the implication is that all of reality must be transformed. This includes not only the transformation of people's personal lives but also that of the society and even the cosmos. Fr. Jordan places no limits on apostolic and missionary zeal. Following the example of the Divine Savior, the Salvatorian should always be sensitively present to the needs of people in all the areas of their lives be they physical, psychological, intellectual, or spiritual.¹⁴ This requires a love that is in the same measure as that of the Savior which is to say, without limits. This means, among

other things, to make use of all the ways and means inspired by the salvific love of the Savior.¹⁵

B. Starting Point

Guided by the spirit of Jesus, Fr. Jordan realized that the whole Church must be ministerial and missionary in order to realize the fullness of its mission. He understood that Jesus entrusted the responsibility of evangelization to the whole Church and not exclusively to its bishops and priests.¹⁶ The love of Christ, who desires the salvation of all,¹⁷ inspires the Church to be ready to take up “ever new and youthful forms.”¹⁸

For this reason, in the Society founded by Fr. Jordan, men and women in both the religious and lay life are called to passionately strive so that all the vital forces and groups within the Church, including the laity, take up their vocation and Christian mission.¹⁹ In order to do this, all Salvatorians must continually up-date themselves always seeking new paths and new methods.²⁰ In this process of on-going renewal, the laity have a tremendously important role.²¹ They are to be the salt of the earth and the light of the world,²² awakening and maintaining alive the flame of apostolic zeal in the hearts of others.²³

In order for lay persons to fulfill this role in the Church, they will need information, formation and opportunities to grow and develop as apostles. This is precisely why the Salvatorian religious congregations exist. Their principle function is to unleash the dynamic process of evangelization. The religious are to inform and form lay persons in a process which involves them in diverse Church ministries in such a way that even more people will become involved in the mission of the Church.²⁴ From this perspective, it is even possible to say that the primary mission of Salvatorian religious is to animate the lay apostle.²⁵

C. Key Idea

Given all of this, we can say that the key idea in Fr. Jordan's foundational charism is the lay apostle. Using the language of today's Church, we can say that the lay person is the protagonist of the New Evangelization.²⁶ The lay apostle is the center or nucleus of the vast plan for transforming the reality of our world. If we want to be faithful to our foundational mission, we need to be seriously committed to the involvement and formation of lay persons who are "willing to lead an authentic Christian life and transform other Christians into authentic Christians through their apostolic zeal."²⁷

This imperative to work so that Christian lay persons become apostles in today's world seriously demands that we not be content with "the traditional care of souls" in our apostolic activities.²⁸ Individually and as a Salvatorian Family, we need to seriously examine our consciences about the way we have been responding to this demand of our Salvatorian mission! We have the sacred mission to animate and energize lay apostles. This will mean forming lay people and involving them in Church ministries with the clear objective of transforming the world in which we live in light of the Gospel.

Fr. Jordan's original intuition that "all Catholic Christians should be apostles in the world" ought to be the central objective in all our apostolic activities. It is necessary that our works more clearly reveal this essential characteristic of our Salvatorian mission. In order that our apostolate be more powerfully what it is meant to be, we need to invest more in the Lay Salvatorian. No one evangelizes the laity better than the laity themselves! As a result, we would realize our Salvatorian mission more effectively if we were able to form and involve a greater number of Lay Salvatorians in it.

In order to do this, we often need to overcome a certain inertia and attitude of "protectionism." Both of these at times can keep us from

taking the necessary risks and trusting in the laity and the rightful decisions they will make. Either or both of these factors may be part of the reason why some Salvatorian religious are reticent about becoming involved with groups of Lay Salvatorians. Perhaps these factors are also behind why many lay people do not take up their rightful place in the Church. For us Salvatorians, it is a question of being consistent with our Salvatorian vocation and mission. It is a question of conviction! It is a question of faith!

Sao Paulo, Brazil
May 1996

Notes

1. “You have seduced me, Yahweh, and I have allowed myself to be seduced” Jer. 20:7.
2. “You are my servant, I have chosen you and have not cast you away,’ fear not, for I am with you...” Is. 41:9-10; See Is. 43:10-12.
3. “But emptying himself, he took on the nature of a servant, made in human likeness” Phil. 2:7.
4. “... I give them eternal life.” John 10:28; See *Spiritual Diary of Fr. Francis Mary of the Cross Jordan II* 21, 4 (*SD* in future references).
5. See John 17:1-2 “After Jesus had spoken these words, he looked up to heaven and said, ‘Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son so that the Son may glorify you, since you have given him authority over all people, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him.’”; *SD I* 186,7 “I have glorified You on earth, I have manifested Your name to men ... I have completed the work which You gave me to do. John 17: 4, 7.”
6. “He who is not on fire does not enkindle fire” *SD I* 186, 8.
7. “...so that they may know, love and serve Him and themselves find salvation” *SD I* 202,4; 1Tim. 2:4.
8. “I have come that they may have life, life in all its fullness” John 10:10.
9. “He wishes all ... to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth” *SD I* 176, 9; See 1Tim. 2:4. “O Father, I want to save all!” *SD II* 46, 4.
10. “O Jesus, O Savior of the world, look, look, here I am! Help me!” *SD II* 47, 3.
11. “He has only God’s honor in sight, never his own” *SD I* 172,4. “... glorify everywhere God the Father, the Son Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit...” *Rules and Constitution of the Catholic Teaching Society* 1886, *DSS I*, 49.

12. See *SD I 202*, 4 “The creature, trusting with all his powers in the help of the Almighty, not in that of man, submits to His reign the whole world, i.e., all persons who now or later live, so that they may know, love and serve Him, and themselves find salvation.”; John 17:3 “And this is eternal life, that they may know you, the one true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.”; *Rules of the First Grade of the Apostolic Teaching Society*, 1882, in *Mailing II-B-2.1* Rome, Salvator Mundi 1980, p.1 “The purpose of the Apostolic Teaching Society is to spread, defend, and strengthen the Catholic faith everywhere in the world, according to the dispositions of Divine Providence. Hence, through the exercise of the ecclesiastical magisterium both by the spoken and by the written word, it intends to achieve this: that all men come to a fuller knowledge of the one true God and of Him whom he has sent, Jesus Christ; that all live a holy life and save their souls.”

13. Zeal is given too little attention in the schools! Oh, [that there were] holy apostles hastening throughout the world, evangelizing all! *SD I 138*, 5-6.

14. “The Catholic Teaching Society...by no means underestimates profane knowledge, but rather fosters it most zealously in order to lead the young to the knowledge and glorification of God also through the understanding of nature and human experience...” *Statutes of the Catholic Teaching Society*” 1880, in *Mailing I-B-1.2*, Rome, Salvator Mundi, 1980, p. 2.

15. “Carefully and wisely serve in the Lord through example as well as the written and spoken word and through all the ways and means inspired by the love of Christ in order to manifest to all and glorify everywhere God the Father, his Son Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit for the salvation of immortal souls” *Rules and Constitution of the First Order of the Catholic Teaching Society 1886*, *DSS I*, 49.

16. “The official organs of the Catholic Magisterium are the bishops and priests; they are the successors of the Apostles. However, who does not know the importance of the lay apostolate today.... Well, then, the Apostolic Teaching Society places great

stress on the lay apostolate...” *The Apostolic Teaching Society 1881* in *Mailing I-C-1*, Rome, Salvator Mundi, 1980, pp.14-15.

17. “You cannot build the Church on the ruins of charity” *SD III* 4, 5; See *DSS I*, 49.

18. “The Catholic Church is not an inert corpse, but a living organism which, unchangeable in its essence, yet appears in ever new and youthful forms. The Spirit of God dwelling within her knows at all times how to raise up just the right institutions to meet the needs of the times...” *The Apostolic Teaching Society*, 1881, p. 1.

19. The Society tries to “fill with the fire of enthusiasm for their vocations all the ‘living’ forces that are already active in the Church...it would unite sanctify and imbues with apostolic spirit all these factors of the Catholic teaching office” *Ibid.*, p. 2.

20. “They should not be content with the traditional care for souls in the schools and in the Church, but should apply other methods of spiritual renewal” *The Missionary*, 1881, #1.

21. “Particularly where a priest cannot or may not speak, ... there a lay person can often and with great blessing take on a mission as an apostle with reason to hope for better results. Once more: the lay apostolate is of very great importance in our times” *The Apostolic Teaching Society*, 1881, p. 15.

22. “...so that they become the salt of the earth with which it shall be well salted” *Thoughts about a Catholic Society* in *Mailing I-B-1.1*, Rome, Salvator Mundi, 1980, p. 1.

23. “We want to help enkindle in all hearts the fire that Jesus came to bring on earth. It is this fire that he wanted to see blazing!” *The Catholic Teaching Society*, 1888, *DSS IV*, p. 105; See Luke 12:49, “I come to bring fire on the earth, and how I wish it were already kindled!”

24. “They should always involve more and more people in this movement so that this apostolic spirit can more and more penetrate our country” *The Missionary*, 1881, #2.

25. “It (the Society) aims to help in the transformation of many Catholic Christians into authentic Catholics, so that they not only have the beautiful name but that they be filled in their very being with the Catholic faith... The Society also aims to animate and instruct Catholic Christians so that they can defend the holy faith with enthusiasm and ability” *The Missionary*, 1881, #1.

26. “That all lay persons be protagonists of the New Evangelization, Human Promotion and the Christian Culture” *Santo Domingo Document*, #97, 103, 293, and 302.

27. “...the Society also accepts as members Catholic men and women from all social classes, as long as they are willing to lead an authentic Christian life and transform other Christians into authentic Christians through their apostolic zeal” *The Catholic Teaching Society*, 1888, *DSS* 10, 107.

28. See note #20 above.

**SALVATORIAN RETREAT
PHASE ONE: CHRIST THE SAVIOR
MOTIVATING FORCE OF OUR
SALVATORIAN LIFE**

by

Arno Boesing SDS

***Abstract:** This five-day retreat is meant to serve as an overview of the key aspects of the Salvatorian charism. The format allows it to be used for either community or personal reflection. Each day of the retreat has its own sub-theme which is developed in two sessions using biblical and Salvatorian sources. Suggestions for personal reflection appear at the end of each section and ideas for a synthesis of the day follow each sub-theme.*

*“When the kindness and love of God,
our Savior were revealed, he saved us” (Titus 3:4)*

Preface

It is with great satisfaction that we are able to place this Inter-provincial Collaboration (CIP) publication in your hands. This First Phase of the Salvatorian Retreats (CIP, #36/2) contains reflections developed by CIP’s Project 4, The Spirituality Team, along with the help of other Salvatorian collaborators.

Its theme, **Christ the Savior: motivating force of our Salvatorian life**, points to the center, the nucleus of our Salvatorian spirituality.

Christ the Savior is the one sent by the Father to reveal to us the love of the Saving God, the God who desires life, the fullness of life for all.

We develop this general theme in five sub-themes focusing on the fundamental aspects of our spirituality:

1. The Savior's Being
2. The Savior's Action
3. The Savior's Methodology
4. The Savior's Inclusive Love (Universality)
5. Essential Elements of our Salvatorian Spirituality

This first phase of the retreats with its sub-themes are a synthesis of our spirituality. The topics are quite broad and their content will never be exhausted during a retreat of a few days. Through these general reflections we hope to offer material for your ongoing personal and community work throughout the year(s), especially until the next phase of the retreat. An isolated retreat is only able to accomplish its objectives if the work it began is taken up later on a daily basis.

Because of this, we urge you to use this material in ongoing reflection, meditation, and contemplation throughout the year. This can be done through a daily or monthly rhythm according to the practices of each unit. This review can be done either as individuals or, better, as a community, by looking at the suggestions given at the end of each day of the retreat. This re-consideration as a group is especially helpful where all the members of the community have already made the first phase of the retreat.

In the last analysis what is really important is that we do our personal ongoing renewal in light of our Salvatorian spirituality. The efficacy of our mission depends on the living out of our spirituality. This is what sustains our Salvatorian mission! Finally, we hope that this

CIP publication will be useful to the entire Salvatorian Family in Brazil strengthening the awareness and the living out of our common mission.

São Paulo, Brazil, September 8, 1990
Arno Boesing, SDS - for the team

Day One

I. A. The Savior's Being -- Our Being

We are called to proclaim the glory of God and to reveal this God to the world through our way of being and acting. We discover our Salvatorian identity in the **Savior's being**.

1. God is the fullness of being:

God is the fullness of being. God's existence is the fullest possible experience of being. We can know something about him when he reveals and shows himself to us. God then becomes someone palpable, knowable to us, taking on features that allow us to get a glimpse and, then, to know him. God is revealed as love, communion, spirit and life. It is necessary to enter into contact with God in order to be in communion with the fullness of God's being. It is necessary to contemplate the source of life, the one who is the origin of all, the divine principle. It is only through this approach that we will be able to experience, to grasp fully that our origin is divine. "*When the kindness and love of God, our Savior were revealed, he saved us...*" (**Titus 3:4**).

2. We can see God's self-revelation:

a) Through creation: All created beings show and reveal something about God. They are all in some small, limited and incomplete way a reflection of or description of who God is. Among God's creatures, the human person is called to reveal

God in a conscious and unique way. *“You have made [the human person] a little less than a god,...crowned with glory and splendor” (Ps. 8:5).* *“The heavens declare the glory of God, the heavens proclaim the work of his hands” (Ps. 19:2).* Jesus illustrates his teachings with examples taken from creation: *“Look at the lilies of the field...the birds of the air...” (Matt. 6: 28-29).*

b) Through events: God is revealed through happenings in the inorganic, vegetable, and animal worlds as well as in the events of our own and others’ lives. Everything that happens in our lives has meaning. Nothing happens by accident. It is often necessary to know how to penetrate these happenings in order to discover what God wants to reveal through them. It is important to know how to read, how to pray these events. How sensitive are we to these manifestations of God? How do we receive and communicate them? How do we perceive and communicate the glory of God? *“In the morning you will see the glory of God because He heard your grumbling against Him” (Ex. 16:7).*

c) Through our life: we communicate who we are. Our way of being constantly reveals our inner self, our person in all of its dimensions. Whether we want to or not, we reveal that which we are. Here it is important to remember our personal growth on all levels: physical, psychological, spiritual, and religious. I am called to reveal God in the totality of my being. To the extent that I live these values in the totality of any of these dimensions of my life, I become more able to live the others. Before I can manifest God to others, it is necessary to meet and experience God. I must be in communion with Him to be able to announce Him. It is necessary to be in touch with the source of salvation in order to bring the Savior to the world. It is necessary to be light in order to illuminate, *“...so that seeing your good works they may give praise to your Father in heaven” (Matt. 5:16).*

Following the example of the Savior, I am called to be transformed, to transcend myself and to grow toward the one who is my reason for being. According to his example, I am called to be love, kindness, mercy, justice.... From him I understand that my spirituality has to be all inclusive, involving my whole being, my entire life in all its dimensions.

d) Through the Scripture: The whole Bible narrates salvation history. It is a sacred history that shows the loving plan of God for His people through a faithful and unlimited love (see **Heb. 11**). The Bible tells of the creation of the world and humankind as well as the consequences of its subsequent fall from grace. Scripture also points to the origins of the world and its hopes for the human race (see **Gn. & Ps. 77, 104, 105**). In addition, it reveals to us various manifestations of God, most markedly in the Son who is the brightness of God's glory and the expression of God's very being (see **Heb. 1:14**). Each day, Christian people discover the treasure of the sacred books as the revelation of God on life's journey, as the word of God becomes a true "*lamp for the feet and light for the path*" (**Ps. 119:105**).

e) Through Christ the Savior: He is the Word, the revelation of God. "*He is the image of the unseen God and the first-born of all creation, for in him were created all things in heaven and on earth...*" (**1 Col. 1:15-20**). Christ is the mediator of the whole of salvation history; he is its center and its unity. "*In him we have been redeemed and God has revealed the mystery of his will...*" (**Eph. 1:7-9**). Jesus himself states that he has come from heaven (**John 3:13**) and existed before Abraham (**John 8:54**). On the night of his passion he asks the Father to glorify him with the glory that he had with him "*before the world was*" (**John 17:5**). Because to reveal and glorify the Father is the fulfillment of his mission, he prays: "*I have glorified you on earth and finished the work that you gave me to do*" (**John 17:4**). "*I have made your name known to the people*" (**John 17:6**). "*They have truly accepted this, that I came from you, and have believed that it was you who sent me*" (**John 17:3**).

3. We are called to be free:

The Salvatorian is called to be free so that he/she can be a channel of liberation or salvation. This is what we try to communicate through our vows/commitment and brotherly/sisterly life witness. We are free from all that is not eternal in us so that we can announce eternal life. *“Encourage as much as possible mutual love in order that united by bonds of peace in the Holy Spirit, you show yourselves to be companions of the Apostles, applying to yourselves the words of our Master Jesus Christ as he left this world. ‘I give you a new commandment: love one another. Love one another as I have loved you!’ Be kind in your living together, supporting one another in patience and humility and humbly allowing yourself to be corrected.”* (*Apostolic Teaching Society—First Grade, 1882, DSS I, 19-26*).

4. Witness of Father Jordan and Mother Mary of the Apostles:

Father Jordan and Mother Mary each had a deep personal God experience. It was in Lebanon that our founder had his most decisive experience. Visiting those places where the Divine Savior lived out his love for us and remembering his teachings, especially his last testament, Father Jordan was deeply moved. *“It was on the 4th of July, after having celebrated Holy Mass and leaving for the cedar woods....”* while he was on the mountain overlooking the Holy Land, that the necessities of the whole world began to pass through his mind and echo in his soul and there came, more strongly than ever, the words of the Lord: *“And eternal life is this: to know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent”* (**John 17:3**) With this, Father Jordan said to himself: *“Yes, O God, the Society (to be founded) must announce you and your only begotten Son.”* Thus the Lord made Lebanon Father Jordan’s Tabor experience. This Lebanon would nevermore be silent in his soul (see *Annales SDS, 1919, 212*).

Living Salvatorian spirituality individually, in our communities and together with the people is demanding but also fruitful. Obviously, this attitude requires that we constantly struggle with ourselves in the same way that Father Jordan did. He took the will of God seriously in respect to himself and his foundational plan and vision. Because the Lebanon experience in the Holy Land became so decisive, he knew true commitment was to follow meticulously in the footsteps of our Lord and Savior. In this way he was able to live a full and holy life urged on by the desire to serve God and help his neighbor. Father Jordan's strength, as expressed by Father Timotheus Edwein in "*The Spiritual Itinerary of Our Founder*," lay not in his talent for organization, political/ecclesiastical diplomacy, educational leadership nor in his human knowledge but rather in his abiding strength and conviction that he was an instrument in the hands of God. In a dark but promising time in the Church, he was but one instrument among others who were often better than him.

5. Salvatorian Texts:

Father Jordan seriously desired to become holy like his Master. "*As you know, the purpose of our Society is self-sanctification and the sanctification of the neighbor. But the sanctification of the neighbor, if it is to be well carried out, implies that before all and in the first place we sanctify ourselves*" [*Exhortations and Admonitions of the Founder (EA)*, 11].

In his Spiritual Journal, he proposes at least seven hours of daily prayer for himself. "*Dedicate at least seven hours a day to prayer! O give attention to it and do not omit it!*" [*Spiritual Diary of the Founder (SD) I*, 197, 9].

"*A member (of the Society) aims, through word and example, to animate anew many others who struggle, strengthening the disheartened and waking up the drowsy and those already asleep*" (*God Wants It, 1883, DSS IV*, 85-94).

“As simple collaborators with the ecclesiastical magisterium, try to reveal God, one and three, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, to the world” (The Catholic Teaching Society, 1888, DSS IV, 101-116).

“If the Reign of God is to happen today, it is necessary that those God has called abandon everything and, in fact, announce Christ the Savior through their words and the witness of their lives” (Ibid.).

“The greatest possible glory of God, The greatest possible self-sanctification and salvation. The greatest possible salvation, that is, the salvation of as many as possible. To achieve this, fight even to the shedding of blood, to death, to the most difficult martyrdom. Always -- Always--everywhere.” (SD II I6, 2-5; see EA 162).

In her ardent apostolic zeal, Mother Mary of the Apostles, speaking about the Society, affirms that the mission will only be achieved through personal sanctification which is grounded in Jesus.

Thus she expresses: *“O Apostolic Society,...To holiness, call them all ...transform the workworld ...so that truly they seek nothing but Jesus alone!” (“Lyric,” 1882, Spiritual Journey in Poetry, Poems by Therese, 1850-1893. English rendition, Miriam Cerletty, SDS, Milwaukee, 1994. Hereafter, MM Poetry.)*

Last Will Of The Founder:

Father Francis Mary of the Cross Jordan reveals his last will to his present and future spiritual children:

- 1. Let this be your lasting inheritance: trust in Divine Providence, which like a kind and concerned mother, will always care for you.*
- 2. I leave you life-long poverty which is like a precious treasure and a chosen pearl, for which you must give account on the day of judgment.*
- 3. Place all hope and confidence in God alone. He will defend you like a mighty warrior.*

4. *Woe to you if you place your trust in human beings and material possessions.*
 5. *Always remain loyal and faithful sons of our holy Mother, the Church of Rome. Teach what she teaches, believe what she believes, reject what she rejects.*
 6. *Love one another in the Holy Spirit and let your love be evident to everyone.*
 7. *Know that I have loved you very much and I desire that you also love one another.*
 8. *Become holy, increase and multiply over the whole world even to the end of time.*
- In the name of the Lord. Amen (Translation, Margaret Bosch, SDS, 1993)*

Last Will Of Mother Mary of the Apostles:

“I hope in all humility that my good Sisters will pray for me, and that they will continue to strive earnestly for their own sanctification, always intent on doing real good to their neighbor and adhering to the spirit of the Founder of the Society of the Divine Savior.”
(Mother Mary of the Apostles, Testament, 4 Aug. 1903, in General Archives, SDS-W, Rome).

Suggestions For Personal Reflection:

Through silence, listening and solitude, Father Jordan and Mother Mary created space within themselves so that they could get in touch with the call of the Lord.

1. I am invited to have my own Lebanon experience.
2. What is God urging me to do at this time?

I. B. Christ the Savior: source and inspiration of our life

For us Salvatorians to follow the Savior of the world means to want to follow the same path that he followed. We want Salvation History which is accomplished by God to move into the future throughout the world. We do this not only through the witness of our words but most especially through the testimony of our lives so that the world may truly believe.

Jesus Christ, our master and mentor, began the witness of his public life with a powerful time of prayer. It was the desert that prepared and strengthened him for his mission to reveal the Father and his great love for us. By the time Jesus came to the upper room there was no distinction between him and the Father: *"We are one!"* In his extensive final prayer, Christ asks us to be perfect in unity so as to fulfill the Reign of God. We can see Jesus' union with the Father throughout his earthly life. His on-going prayer had many powerful and prolonged moments especially when he was faced with important decisions. We are called by Christ and through him given the strength to make true liberation happen in the society in which we live.

This is what our founder says to us: *"Your activities will be blessed by God and will produce permanent fruit to the extent that each of you, as another Savior, prays, works, and suffers in the spirit of Jesus Christ"* (DSS X, 506, #753).

The Divine Savior is very clear. Without him we can do nothing. **John 15:1-8:** *Only those who are permanently united with God will produce lasting fruit.*

Over and over again, Father Jordan exhorts us insisting that if we do not seek our perfection grounded in our life in God, sooner or later when the storm of difficulties descends upon us, the smallest commotion will show that our house is not built upon a rock but

upon sand. **Matt. 7:24-27**: *The wise person knows to build his/her house upon rock.*

The revelation of God in Jesus Christ is the focal point of our history. In him we experience the communication of God through a human person marked by the circumstances and necessities of his historical time. The person of Jesus is where we experience the fullness of the revelation of the Father. **John 17:1-10**: *First of all Jesus glorifies the Father.*

Because of his efforts and mission to bring to birth the Reign of God, Jesus was continually faced with crisis. His mission provoked conflict in the resistant reality of his time. **Matt. 5:13-16**: *Through our life witness, we are called to invite persons to transformation.*

Father Jordan often insists that life witness is the primary factor in our evangelizing mission. If we want to be faithful to our Salvatorian mission, we must, before all else, be light that illumines and salt that gives flavor. If salt does not fulfill its mission to be salt, it is worthless. **Eph. 5:8-20**: *Now you are the light of the Lord.*

If we are light, we radiate and reflect light, illuminating that which is around us. If we incarnate Salvatorian spirituality, we produce the fruits of Salvatorian life. Action flows out of being. In Jesus, we know the Father. Likewise, the world should be able to see the kindness of the Savior in our lives! **John 1:1-18**: *We have seen your glory.*

Suggestions For Reflection:

1. What does the text suggest for my life?
2. Have I experienced the Savior in my life? In order to really follow him, what am I invited to do right now?

Synthesis of the Day:

1. Do a written evaluation of today focusing on its most significant aspects.
2. What do I intend to do concretely in light of the urging of the Spirit today?

Day Two

II. A. The Savior's Action - Our Action.

On the first day of this retreat, we prayed about our Salvatorian-“being.” We witness and proclaim Christ as Savior through our whole way of being and doing, that is through our entire person. On the second day, we want to pray about the action of the Savior, stressing our Salvatorian action. We are called to announce the Savior through all the aspects of our lives.

1. The Savior's Witness:

Reading and reflecting about the person of Jesus Christ in the Gospels, we meet a man who is profoundly free in his way of acting. He is free of prejudices, free to take initiatives, and free to take a position that is critical of the dominant system. He is free because he takes a clear, definitive position in life. He knows why he came into the world. It is to fulfill the will of the Father or, in other words, to save the human person. Consequently, with an eye always on the salvation of the human person, he is a man of extraordinary common sense, authority and flexibility.

We want to emphasize the following elements in the action of Jesus:

a) Discernment of God's will: Jesus always sought to remain united with the Father. In everything he tried to discern the will

of the Father; this is why he came into the world. All of his activities revolve around this truth. Over and over again he goes off to the mountain to pray, to meet with the Father in intimate dialogue. He and the Father are very close. *“No one knows the Son except the Father and no one knows the Father except the Son - and anyone to whom the Son wishes to reveal him”* (Luke 10:22).

b) Revelation of the Father: The kindness, love and mercy of God become manifest in Christ the Savior. His activities, words and actions reveal the Father’s kindness, love and mercy. The Savior is everyone’s friend and expresses these qualities toward all persons. On various occasions, he says that he has come into the world to save sinners.

c) Sensitivity to the suffering of others: Jesus is particularly sensitive in relation to the poor, the sick and the afflicted. This is very clearly shown in the beatitudes, in numerous cures he did, in the dead he raised when touched by the affliction of family members, and in the good he did in light of the needs of all.

In light of the Savior’s attitudes, we are called to take a position as Salvatorians. To be his followers, we need to walk in his footsteps. Father Jordan said that only one should be his master: Christ, the Savior. We seek our source of inspiration in him.

2. The objective of the Savior’s Action:

a) The Savior’s action: In union with and fulfilling the will of the Father, Jesus wants to save or liberate all people. For this reason he came to establish the Reign of God, the Reign of truth, justice and love. All people who, in fact, participate in this Reign find salvation in it. He came: *“...to proclaim liberty to captives and to the blind new sight, to set the downtrodden free, to proclaim the Lord’s year of favor”* (Luke 4:18-19).

b) Our Salvation Action: As Salvatorians, Christ the Savior is the center and motivating energy of our lives. Inspired by him, we embrace an apostolic stance before all of life: To glorify God and to make known the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit through the proclamation of Jesus Christ as Savior of the world (see *Rules of 1888 and SDS-W Rule of Life #2*).

This is the mission of the Church to which the Holy Spirit sends us. Thus, in union with the reality of the local Church where we are inserted, we seek to respond to its objectives as expressed through our national conference of bishops:

Objectives of the Church of Brazil:

“To evangelize the Brazilian people in the process of social, economic, political and cultural transformation:

- *by announcing the complete truth about Jesus Christ, the Church and the human person;*
- *in light of the evangelical preferential option for the poor;*
- *through the complete liberation of people through a growing participation and communion;*
- *striving to create the people and participate in the building of a just society of brothers and sisters;*
- *being a sign of the Reign of God here and now” (National Conference of Brazilian Bishops, 1990).*

3. Apostolic Zeal:

One of the Savior’s important characteristics in the Gospels is apostolic zeal. The source and origin of this zeal is the experience of the Father’s glory. Father Jordan and Mother Mary of the Apostles also possessed ardent apostolic zeal. Salvation literature attests to this fact.

Given his great apostolic zeal, in the beginning Father Jordan gave the name **Apostolic** Teaching Society to his work. He also insisted that the Salvatorian be a prayerful apostle: *“As long as*

there is one person on earth who does not know and does not love Him above all things, you dare allow yourself a moment's rest” (SD II, 1, 1).

4. Salvatorian Texts:

All Salvatorians follow the example of the Savior in their service in the Church and their work of evangelization. The directive of the founder was for us to find our inspiration in the example of Jesus Christ. This is the spirit that orients our Salvatorian evangelization, that is, all of our action.

Here are some examples taken from Salvatorian literature:

“In the spirit of the Apostles, to help propagate, defend and renew the Catholic faith in all countries of the world” (The Apostolic Teaching Society: Its Nature and Importance, B. Luethen, 1881, DSS IV, 29+).

“...to defend, propagate and spread the Reign of God by means of religious instruction” (Rule and Common Norms of the First Order of the Catholic Teaching Society, 1884, DSS I, 29-44).

“Put forth every effort and be very zealous to promote the knowledge of truth. Consider these words: ‘To enlighten those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death’” (SD I, 82, 4).

“...begin, proceed, persevere in working for the glory of God and for the salvation of souls...” (SD I, II8, 3).

“They (the members) should involve more and more people in this growing current (movement) so that this spirit can penetrate evermore in the total reality of our country ... They should not be content with the traditional care of souls in the schools and Churches but apply ... other methods of spiritual renewal” (The Missionary, 1881, #2).

“Never forget that the success of the apostolic person is always in proportion to his/her suffering” (EA, 174).

“Let no betrayal, no infidelity, no coldness, no abuse lessen your zeal! But everything through Him, with Him and for Him” (SD II, 1, 6; 2, 1).

“That meditation on the life of our kind Savior gives us more and more courage to give ourselves totally to God” (see EA, 172).

“With the Salvatorian apostolate we want to announce Jesus Christ the Savior to all people through our Salvatorian life and through all ways and means in union with the Church, giving emphasis to formation and involvement with Christian leaders with special attention to the little ones, the poor and the oppressed in order to build the Reign of God” (SDS-M 15th Provincial Chapter, Brazil, 1987).

“The kindness and love of God for humanity have appeared in Jesus Christ. In Him, the one true Savior of the world, all people are called to union with God and one another to form the people of God. Inspired by the Holy Spirit and out of concern for the salvation of all, Father Francis of the Cross Jordan founded the Society of the Divine Savior and gave it the apostolic purpose to announce to all people that Jesus is the Savior” (SDS-M Constitutions, Article 101).

“God so loved the world that he gave his only Son as Savior. Moved by the deepest need of people to find life and to know the only true God and Jesus Christ whom he sent, Francis of the Cross and Mary of the Apostles founded our Congregation. Our apostolic purpose is to glorify God and to make him known, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, through the proclamation of Jesus Christ as Savior of the world” (SDS-W Rule of Life, Article 2).

“Rechristianize the homeland; evangelize non-believers; attend to the homeless - Teach and instruct them all!” (“Lyric,” MM Poetry).

Reflection Suggestions:

1. Looking at the Savior's actions, what does he call me to do?
2. As a Salvatorian, to what extent do I feel the Savior is the light and source of my action?

II. B. Christ the Savior: Source and inspiration of our life.

This morning, we meditated on the proclamation of salvation through the Savior's witness. We also reflected on some Salvatorian texts which enlighten our evangelizing practices. Now we will contemplate a few biblical texts which set direction for our Salvatorian journey as those who announce the salvation brought by Christ. Fr. Jordan was accustomed to using them in his prayer as well as to point out what he desired for the Society that he founded.

All biblical texts have a variety of connotations as well as various aspects that could be considered, however, we will look at them highlighting the aspect of salvation.

John 17:1-3: *“And eternal life is this: to know you the only true God and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.”*

Matt. 28:16-20: *“Go, therefore, make disciples of all nations; baptize them...and teach them....”*

Mark 16:15-16: *“Go out to the whole world; proclaim the Good News to all creation. He who believes and is baptized will be saved...”*

Dan. 12:2-3: *“...Those who have instructed many in virtue (justice) will shine as brightly as stars for all eternity.”*

Rom. 10:14-15: *“But they will not ask his help unless they believe in him, and they will not believe in him unless they have heard of*

him, and they will not hear of him unless they get a preacher and they will not have a preacher unless one is sent...”

Jas. 5:19-20: *“The case may arise among you of someone straying from the truth, and of another bringing him/her back. Remember this: the person who brings the sinner back from his/her way saves a soul from death and cancels a multitude of sins.”*

1 Cor. 1:3-9: *“For in (Christ Jesus) you have been richly endowed with every gift of speech and knowledge. Likewise, the witness I bore to Christ has been confirmed among you...”*

2 Thess. 3:13: *“My brothers and sisters never grow tired of doing what is right!”*

Acts 10:36-43: *“He went about doing good and curing all...”*

Titus 3:1-7: *“But when the kindness and love of God our Savior for humankind were revealed it was not because He was concerned with any righteous actions we might have done ourselves; it was for no reason except His own compassion that He saved us by means of the cleansing water of rebirth and renewing us with the Holy Spirit which He generously poured over us through Jesus Christ our Savior.”*

1 Cor. 9:15-18: *“Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel!”*

Ex. 34:29-35: *“And when Aaron and all the sons of Israel saw Moses, the skin on his face shone...”*

Ez. 37:1-14: *“Son of man, can these bones live?...I am now going to make the breath enter you and you will live...”*

Ps. 145: *“Oh, the splendor of your glory, your renown! I myself tell the story of your marvelous deeds.”*

Reflection Suggestions:

1. In light of these texts, let me ask myself what really is my pastoral practice?
2. Up to what point do I identify myself with the Savior's actions?

Synthesis of the Day:

1. Do a written evaluation of today focusing on its most significant aspects.
2. In light of the urging of the Spirit this day, what do I intend to do concretely?

Day Three:

III. A. The Savior's Methodology--Our Methodology

We try to make our Salvatorian mission concrete by announcing the SAVIOR and SALVATION through our way of BEING and ACTING following the example of Christ the Savior and the Apostles.

The Gospel reveals the root of our spirituality and returns us to the demanding simplicity of our Salvatorian identity. This requires us to live and act qualitatively in accord with evangelical values. *"In the same way your light must shine in the sight of all so that seeing your good works they may give praise to your Father in heaven"* (**Matt. 5:16**).

1. Following Jesus Christ:

The center of the Savior's mission is the revelation of the Father who wants all to be saved. He is the love of the Father made visible (see **John 14:18-21**).

At the beginning of his public life, Jesus called some people to follow him and to become his disciples. He did not want to act alone. He called, persuaded, motivated, and involved persons. In order to continue his mission, he formed followers, leaders, apostles, and persons who would continue his work.

In the Jewish rabbinate, the disciple chose the rabbi; in contrast, Jesus chose his disciples. He called those he wanted and formed them in and for freedom. In addition, he was extremely demanding of them in relation to their fundamental activities. Jesus was called the master, his disciples were called Apostles. Jesus called the twelve to learn from him. He walked with them, listening, forming, and, finally, missioning them (see **Matt. 10:1-42**).

- a) **Jesus' plan and vision:** Jesus announces his plan in detail. It is:
- a new social order: "*the Beatitudes*";
 - a new commandment: "*Love one another*";
 - a new code of law: "*The human person is not made for the Sabbath but the Sabbath for the human person*";
 - a new social structure: "*The one who serves is greater*";
 - a new kind of leadership: "*Salt of the earth and light of the world*";

Jesus warns the Apostles about inevitable persecutions (**Matt. 10:40-42**) and entrusts his mission to them saying: "*Go and teach all nations*" (**Matt. 28:18-19**). He will continue to accompany them through his Spirit who will teach them all truth (**John 16:13**).

b) **Jesus' formative pedagogy:** Jesus' greatest and most formative teaching tool is his esteem and love of the human person. The person is, without a doubt, the center of his preaching, the one to whom he directs all of his saving action. With his disciples, Jesus creates a living community, formed around him as a person. The center of gravity of the disciples' lives is Jesus himself, his destiny, his way of life, and his person.

Jesus knew what he wanted: to do the will of his Father and reveal it to all; to bring life in abundance; to establish communion among all people; to be a sign of the Father; to make the liberation and salvation of people happen; to announce and bring into being the Reign of unity, justice, love and peace; and, to be the way, the truth, the life and the light.

Jesus presents himself as the way to be followed: *“I am the Way, the Truth and the Life. No one will come to the Father except through me”* (**John 14:6**). Through his way of being and acting, the Savior is the Method, the Way, the One who forms. He does all of this, first of all, by living that which he proclaimed and did. He is the GUIDE, MASTER, and PASTOR, that is, the WAY, the TRUTH and the LIFE. In proposing the Reign of God, the Savior manifests himself not as the object of pure contemplation but rather as the model to be followed. In proposing the Beatitudes as the path of discipleship and human perfection, he is not making a summary of the requirement of some doctrine but rather is expressing his own personal experience and spirituality. Jesus is blessed, he is the beatitude. The preference for the poor, poverty of spirit, hunger and thirst for justice, mercy, commitment to true peace, purity of heart and persecution because of the Reign are incarnate in him.

In his mission, Jesus teaches the people, cures the sick, is compassionate and pardons. However, in the midst of all these activities centered on the poor and people in general, he never neglects the **formation of the Apostles**, and dedicates a good portion of his time to their instruction and training, often through special explanations (**Mark 4:3-28**). Jesus forms not only by teaching but especially by being the Master (**John 13:4-20**).

Concerning formation, Jesus is more demanding with his disciples than the other rabbis are (**John 15:16**). He makes no secret of the great requirements that he proposes for those whom he calls to follow him. He demands that following his example, they not only be students but servants (**Matt. 10:24-25**).

c) Jesus' demands for commitment: In order to follow him, Jesus demands commitment (**Matt. 11:29**). He requires: the sharing of insecurity (**Luke 9:57-58**); hardship even to the point of martyrdom, thus going wherever he goes (**John 12:26**).

For Jesus, **faith is the decisive value** in discipleship. The Gospels show us his demands in this area: *“Do not be unbelieving, but people of faith ... Happy are those who believe without having seen”* (**John 20:24-29**). *“Why are you afraid, oh you of little faith?”* (**Matt 8:26**).

The gospel accounts of the praying Jesus let us see the direct relationship between **faith and life**, between **discernment and decision** in the atmosphere of prayer. We see these aspects as essential elements in the relationship of Jesus to the Father and to the people. Through prayer Jesus expresses his life-prayer, shows the meaning of his mission and teaches his disciples to pray. *“Remain in my love”* is the greatest commandment sealed with his own life. *“No one has greater love than the one who lays down his life for his friends”* (**John 15:9-15**). He should be the preferential love in the life of the disciples. This love implies renunciation, even unto the cross: *“Those who want to follow me must renounce themselves”* (**Mark 8:34**).

2. Following the Apostles: Analyzing Salvatorian literature, we can see very clearly that Father Jordan wants to found a Society that is made up of disciples and apostles who are both lay and religious. He underlines this aspect of our Salvatorian charism very precisely. Here we are speaking of our very way of evangelizing. Hence, as Salvatorians we are called to live our spirituality and pray our mission in the Church and the world by following the example of Jesus and the Apostles. Their example shows that we are to form Christian, apostolic lay leaders who become agents of transformation without, however, forgetting about the masses of people in the world.

Seeing that the harvest is great and the laborers few, Jesus facilitates and shares leadership, designating 72 other disciples and sending

them two by two before him into the cities he would eventually visit (see **Luke 10:1f**).

The Apostles adopt the methodology they learn from the Master (see **Acts 6:7**). After the coming of the Holy Spirit (see **Acts 2**), they disperse and begin to establish communities. Without losing sight of the masses of the faithful, they give special care and attention to the formation of **new leaders** who will be able to carry on their mission.

The twelve were to be as much like Jesus as possible. In his letter to the Ephesians, Paul says that we should no longer be children tossed one way or the other and carried along by every wind of doctrine (**Eph. 4:14**). We need to grow up and reach the unity of faith and knowledge of the Son of God until we become perfect persons, fully mature with the fullness of Christ himself (**Eph. 4:13**).

The disciples grew and reached the point where they could teach others who would then serve as examples of their preaching wherever they were. In his first letter to the Thessalonians, we find an outline of Paul's ministry: "...and you were led to become imitators of us and of the Lord... This has made you the great example to all..." (**1 Thess. 1:6-7**). Paul repeats to Timothy: "Do not let people disregard you because you are young, but be an example to all believers in the way you speak and behave, and in your love, your faith and your purity" (**1Tim. 4:12-13**).

Everyone is strengthened by **life witness**. For this reason Paul insists that his disciples follow his example just as he has followed the example of Jesus (see **1 Cor. 4:16**). Writing to the Christians in Corinth, Paul praises them for their living witness: "...you are yourselves our letter, written in our hearts, that anybody can see and read..." (**2 Cor. 3:1-11**). Paul dies content that there were people like Timothy, Titus, Philemon, Phoebe and Lydia who would continue his mission.

3. The Founder's Ideal: The will of the Father is that his whole family be sons and daughters like Jesus. In order to help others to

live in the image of Jesus Christ, we must first of all do so ourselves. Our ideal is to **follow Christ**, to be like him so that through our witness and involvement we help those around us to become other Christs. The Apostles teach us this methodology of discipleship.

Our founder wanted us to follow in the footsteps of the Apostles. We know with how much zeal and with what effect the Apostles lived up to their vocation and mission. *“We gave you a formal warning , he said, not to preach in this name, and what have you done? You have filled Jerusalem with your teaching...” (Acts 5:28)*. When you are tortured, be joyful for having suffered outrage for the cause of Jesus. *“They preached every day both in the temple and in private houses, and their proclamation of the Good News of Christ Jesus was never interrupted” (Acts 5:42)*.

Not even the works of mercy should keep them from their ministry of announcing the Word. *“It would not be right for us to neglect the Word of God so as to give out food...” (Acts 6:2-4)*.

Our long range objective is to **make disciples who in turn will form other disciples**. The disciple should be able to give birth to other disciples and teach them the truths of the faith through their words and life witness. Thus our founder proposes the following for the Society: *“It aims to help in the transformation of many Catholic Christians into authentic Catholics, so that they not only have the beautiful name but that they be filled in their very being with the Catholic faith” (The Missionary, 1881, #1)*.

Our Founder wanted our models to be the Savior and the Apostles. *“Consider holy persons...how much they accomplished through zeal for souls and follow their example. Think of what the Savior himself did...Think of how the holy Apostles labored...” (EA, 124)*.

In another place Father Jordan said: *“We want to help **enkindle in all hearts** the fire that Jesus brought upon the earth. It is this fire*

that he wants to see blazing!” (The Catholic Teaching Society, 1888, DSS IV, 105).

He affirms with conviction: *“They should involve more and more people in this rapidly growing stream (movement), in order that an apostolic spirit can more and more penetrate our country” (The Missionary, 1881, #2).*

In regard to the example of the Apostles whom Father Jordan presents as our models, he remembers: *“Through word and example, they aim to animate anew many others who struggle, strengthening those without spirit and waking up those who have fallen asleep” (God Wants It, 1883, DSS IV, 94).*

And again: *“Oh (that there were) holy apostles hastening throughout the world, evangelizing all! Oh, inscrutable zeal; how often you have been scorned and suppressed with the excuse that you are meant for a select few!” (SD I, 138, 6-7).*

Jordan entrusted the Society to Mary, Mother of the Savior, who prayed with the Apostles awaiting the first Pentecost. She was to be a model in the following of Jesus and the Apostles.

Father Jordan is insistent about who the model is that we are to follow. He never puts himself up as the one to be followed, but rather, through his methodology, points to Jesus and the Apostles. Mother Mary left us the following testimony: *“Never desire anything else, but to work as brothers and sisters as the women at the time of Jesus and the Apostles” (see Luke 8:1-3).*

Reflection Suggestions:

1. Who is Jesus for me?
2. As a Salvatorian, am I a true path to the truth and life, a faithful master, guide and shepherd?

3. How do I allow myself to be engaged by Jesus and do I involve others in my apostolate in order to form leaders?

III. B. Christ the Savior, Source and Inspiration of Our Life.

Those whom Christ calls to follow him closely join together in a community of life. They form a permanent group of disciples who accompany the Master at all times. We Salvatorians accomplish our mission following Jesus the Savior in the spirit of the Apostles who together with Mary serve as our models and helpers.

Jesus' earthly life, all of his words and actions are permeated by: a prophetic word; his message of Good News; the new law of perfection which he proclaimed; and, the actual beginning of the Reign of God. The Reign of God is in the attitude and acts of Jesus as well as those of his disciples as they follow him.

Jesus' daily life was the first step in showing us the way to live and in the training of his disciples. Today, our challenge as Salvatorians is to rediscover the essence of the actions of Jesus, the Savior, in order to make it happen in today's infinitely more diverse circumstances.

In the name of the Father, Jesus calls his disciples with the fullness of authority and missions them. He proposes that, like himself, they leave everything in order to imitate his listening to the will of the Father.

Matt. 4:8-22: *“The people that lived in darkness have seen a great light...”*

The Holy Spirit shows us how we should follow Jesus. He lets us see what it means to follow at each moment in our life. He allows and helps each to take up the responsibility of the imitation of Jesus in the world we confront.

John 16:13; Acts 1:7-8; Acts 2:17-18; Acts 10:44-45: *“You will be sad, but your sadness will be changed into joy.”*

Jesus missions his disciples as apostles in order to continue his work of announcing the Reign of God and performing the same signs that he did: **Matt. 4:19; 10:1-8; Mark 16:15-18:** *“Go into the whole world and preach the Gospel to every creature....”*

Jesus gives his disciples the same power that he has. It is with them and in them. The work that they do is that of Jesus himself. Thus, they are able to speak and accomplish signs similar to those of Jesus. **Matt. 10:1, 13-15; John 20:21-23; Matt. 18:18-20; Matt. 28:18-20:** *“As the Father has sent me I also send you....”*

The disciples’ way of being is Jesus’ way of being and living. It demonstrates a willingness to abandon home, family, work and security. It is permeated by freedom from any type of enslavement to money, rigid Pharisaic law or fear of authority. **Matt. 6:24-34; 10:8-10; 18:23-35; 20:24-28; Acts 3:6-7; Luke 1:46-56.** *“Do not worry about your life.”*

The liberating action of Jesus is the door through which we must enter: **John 10:7-21:** *“I am the gate. Anyone who enters through me will be saved.”*

Jesus also speaks of himself saying: **John 8:12-24:** *“I am the light of the world; anyone who follows me will not be walking in the dark but will have the light of life.”*

The sermon on the Mount reflects the experience of Jesus and was the reason the disciples believed in him. It is here that Jesus reveals the secret of his life work and vision...Here, he invites us to follow his way of living, his praxis, his life work and experience. **Matt. 5:1-16:** *“Blessed are the poor in spirit...”*

Reflection Suggestions:

1. Today, what does it mean for me to follow Jesus Christ and the Apostles?
2. Am I able to feel as the Apostles and disciples of Jesus did?
3. What challenges me in the attitudes that Jesus takes with the Apostles?

Synthesis of the Day:

1. Do a written evaluation of today focusing on its most significant aspects.
2. In light of the urging of the Spirit this day, what do I intend to do concretely?

Day Four

IV. A. The Savior's Inclusive Love--Our Inclusive Love (Universality)

Using discipleship as our methodology, we are called to proclaim the Savior through a vital spirit of openness marked by inclusive or universal love.

1. Salvatorian Characteristic:

The spirit of universality is a fundamental characteristic of our Salvatorian charism and was seen by Father Jordan and Mother Mary as a spirit of openness and inclusive love. The focus and center of attention of the Savior's action is the human person. What Jesus wants, in conformity to the will of the Father, is to save the human person. Our Founder expresses himself about this in the following way: *"Remember that the spirit of Christ is the spirit of universality and not of any particularism. Christ died for all and therefore our*

Society has a universal character...” (Father Jordan and His Foundations, 291).

“Open wide your hearts and strive to be all to all in order to bring them to Christ” (Father Pancratius Pfeiffer in Father Jordan and His Foundations, 291).

2. Decisive Focus:

The person to be saved is the decisive focus in all of the Savior’s activity. He knows how to listen and welcome persons where they are in their concrete need. He does not generalize. Anyone who seeks him out in faith and a spirit of poverty can be cured, no matter what the ill. The Savior always tries to reveal and show the love of the Father who saves, liberates and communicates life. We need only remember the stories of the Samaritan woman at Jacob’s well, Mary Magdalene, the blind, the crippled, Zacheus and so many others.

What is important to the Savior is to free persons from their illness, that is, to save. In light of this, everything else was secondary be it: race, color, nationality, or social condition. Jesus came to save all without distinction or any type of discrimination. To the extent that a person opens up to God so that God’s action can happen, something new will occur.

3. All People and the Whole Person:

When he spoke of universality, Father Jordan was accustomed to expressing himself thus: **all—to all—through all ways and means.** **All** should be agents of transformation, involving **all**, using for this **all** ways and means that the charity of Christ inspires.

We are called to bring freedom to all people without discrimination, as well as to all dimensions of the whole person. To do this we should involve all, or as great a number as possible, as true agents

in the process. Drawn in by the love of Christ which saves, we try to develop, in a vital way, all the possibilities of eternal life in every dimension of the person.

a) Physical Dimension (the body): We work toward the growth and harmonious development of the whole body: organs, systems, food, rest, dress, work, sports, housing, hygiene, health ...

b) Psychological Dimension: Here we refer to the integration and interaction of the physical, emotional and spiritual aspects of the person.

c) Spiritual Dimension: Intelligence and Will. The thinking, deciding person. Desires and sensitivities. The feeling, sensing and contemplative aspects of the person.

d) Religious Dimension: Christian life- faith, hope and love. Transcendence: eternal life, salvation, grace. To hear the Lord from within “...speak, Lord, your servant is listening” (*SD I, 144, 5*).

We are all called to free ourselves from all that diminishes us or keeps us from sharing life. “*I have come so that they may have life and have it to the full*” (**John 10:10**).

4. All ways and means:

In order to reveal the love of the Father who saves, we seek to use whatever ways and means that the love of Christ inspires (see **1 Cor. 13**). Once again, it is the person to be saved that is important. Therefore, we never absolutize any type of apostolic activity. In principle we are open to all apostolic activities as well as to all ways and means. We are called to welcome whatever in that specific time and place is available and indicated in order to achieve liberation, that is, salvation.

It will always be necessary to choose our activities in accord with the signs of the times as well as the call of one’s particular reality

and the Church. For us, activities are only means to salvation and, as such, ought to be used according to the concrete circumstances.

5. To free oneself in order to free others:

We are called to live out the important experience of being saved by Christ the Savior. To the extent that I have and nourish this experience of Christ's liberating love, I am open to really meeting others. To the extent that I sense an internal personal freeing, I become more sensitive to all the needs of others. The freer I am from my prejudices, the more I avoid exclusion, marginalization and discrimination of others and the more I am able to announce and give witness to salvation while denouncing all forms of slavery.

6. Salvatorian Texts:

Here are some significant Salvatorian texts:

“Our holy Redeemer became incarnate, took up a life of suffering, and accepted a painful passion and death in order to save us. The only mission that he entrusted to his apostles was the salvation of people” (Statutes of the Apostolic Teaching Society, 1881, DSS II, 99).

“Serve the members carefully and wisely in the Lord, through example, the written and spoken word and all the ways and means which the love of Christ inspires, in order to manifest to all and glorify everywhere God the Father, his Son Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit in order to save immortal souls” (Rules 1886, DSS I, 49-50).

“Be a true apostle of Jesus Christ. Do not rest until you have carried the word of God to the four corners of the earth. Be a true herald of the Most High!” (SD I, 182, 3).

“We intend to make use of any and whatever means or instruments which allow us to reveal God one and three and guide people to

happiness and eternal life” (The Catholic Teaching Society, 1888, DSS IV, 105).

“All peoples, races, nations and tongues glorify the Lord our God!” (SD II, 2, 2).

“Hold fast to that. Always keep this universality well in mind. So the Society is not destined for Italy or Germany but for all countries... As the Society is not restricted in regard to place, so neither is it restricted to certain classes of people...Remember well that if you depart from this spirit (universality) you will be disregarding the essential nature of the Society” (EA, 148).

Throughout history, we see that Mother Mary of the Apostles found in Father Jordan’s ideal the space to realize that which her heart sought and felt to be necessary for the people of her times. She expressed this very clearly when she wrote:

“O holy, venerable, unique Society! Apostolic, soul-zealous, greathearted Society!

Grow steadily, increase, spread everywhere! Embrace and renew the universe!

Draw to yourself pastors of souls, draw teachers, educators and dedicated women - Oh lead and guide them all!

Rechristianize the homeland; evangelize non-believers; attend to the homeless - Teach and instruct them all!

Motivate fathers to steadfastness, mothers to holy child-rearing, country innkeepers to trustworthiness - To holiness call them all!

Impart true wisdom to the learned; give pure form to the arts; consecrate and transform the workworld. O do it, do it!

Enlighten your own leaders, ignite their heart and soul so that truly they seek nothing but Jesus alone!

*O holy, venerable, unique Society! Apostolic, soul-zealous
greathearted Society!” (“Lyric,” MM Poetry, 95.)*

Mother Mary was content and happy when she recognized the longings of her ideal in the Rules of the Society. *“The lives of those associated with this group must be apostolic” (Rules, 1882, DSS I, 19).*

Reflection Suggestions:

1. What does saving all people and the whole person mean to me?
2. What does it mean to be open to all peoples and all ways and means in my daily life?

IV. B. Christ the Savior, Source and Inspiration of Our Life.

It is a challenge today to live our Salvatorian mission in its universal dimension inserted into the local Church and our Brazilian reality. We live in an unjust, corrupt, unequal and individualistic society where greed for profits and power dominate and destroy life. The human person, never a priority, is often destitute and lacking adequate means for dignified growth as a child of God. The society in which we live limits a person’s freedom, making it very difficult to live solidarity, sharing, peace, justice and love.

It is in this concrete situation that we are called to live, to share and communicate, in other words, to free and save. It is in this process that we are able, through our inclusive love, to help others have this same experience of life. Here are some biblical quotations to light our path:

John 17:1-23: *“Eternal life is this: to know you ... I pray not only for these, but for those also, who through their words will believe in me ...Father, may they be one in us....”*

Matt. 28:16-20: *“Go, therefore, make disciples of all nations ...”*

1 Cor. 12:4-13: *“...In the one Spirit we were all baptized, Jews as well as Greeks, slaves as well as citizens and one Spirit was given to us all to drink.”*

Acts 2:1-12: *“...they had all met in one room....They were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak foreign languages ... ‘Surely’ they said, ‘all these men speaking are Galileans! How does it happen that each of us hears them in his/her native language?’”*

Mark 16:15: *“Go out to the whole world; proclaim the Good News to all creation....”*

Mark 13:10; 6:7-12; Rom. 1:16: *“But first of all it is necessary that the Gospel be preached to all nations.”*

Mark 16:20: *“They, going out, preached everywhere....”*

2 Cor. 5:15: *“Christ Jesus died for all of us....”*

1 Tim. 4:10: *“I mean that the point of toiling and battling is that we have put our trust in the living God who is the Savior of the whole human race....”*

Luke 2:30-32: *“...because my eyes have seen the salvation which you have prepared for all the nations to see, a light to enlighten the pagans and the glory of your people Israel.”*

Luke 4:18-19: *“The Spirit of the Lord has been given to me, for he has anointed me. He has sent me to bring the good news to the poor, to proclaim liberty to captives and to the blind new sight, to set the downtrodden free, to proclaim the Lord’s year of favor.”*

Reflection Suggestions:

1. What call or urgings do I sense in light of the demands of universal, inclusive love?
2. Looking at the example of the Savior, what is the place of the human person in my apostolic activities?

Synthesis of the Day:

1. Do a written evaluation of today focusing on its most significant aspects.
2. What do I intend to do concretely in light of the urging of the Spirit today?

Day Five

V. A. Essential Elements in Our Salvatorian Spirituality.

Today we are going to pause to meditate on what we call the essential elements of our Salvatorian spirituality. The four previous themes provide us with directions that deserve to be reflected upon and internalized. In order to do this, we are now going to try to synthesize the overall vision presented during the past four days. To the extent that we incarnate our Salvatorian mission in an authentic Jordanian vision, our spiritual life will acquire and reveal certain marked characteristics.

1. Christ the Savior -- Inspiring Exemplar:

The mentor and inspiration of our Salvatorian Spirituality is **Christ the Savior**. He is the Anointed One, the Consecrated One, the One who is sent (Christ) to be Savior (Jesus). He is the model par excellence in whom we find inspiration for our being and action. He reveals to us the immense love of the Father who desires all to be saved. *“The Word became flesh, he lived among us, and we saw his glory” (John 1:14).*

He guarantees the unity of our life. We learn from him how to give ourselves in love, “...*but emptied himself to assume the condition of a slave, and became as all human beings are ...*” (**Phil. 2:7**). He freed himself from all possible chains, directing his entire life toward his mission as Savior. In light of this mission, he became poor, obedient and chaste, living in community with the Apostles. In order to find the strength to be faithful until the end, he sought to be in constant union with the Father often passing whole nights in prayer.

Inspired by our mentor, Jesus Christ, and sustained by the salvific love of the Father, we commit ourselves to a life of poverty, chastity and obedience through our profession of the Evangelical Counsels. Following his example, we seek to obtain a healthy balance between contemplation and action. Called, drawn and engaged by him, we embrace a life of fraternal community, faith and service. In the daily effort to incarnate our model, Christ Jesus, we meet in Mary, the Mother of the Savior and Queen of the Apostles, as well as the Apostles themselves, precious examples and intercessors.

Along with Mary, the humble servant of the Lord who was full of grace, we give glory to God for the wonderful works also realized in the depths of our being (see **Luke 1:46-55**). Mary and the holy Apostles, anointed by the Holy Spirit, inspire us in the following of the Savior. With them we proclaim “...*that the Father sent his Son as Savior of the world*” (**1 John 4:14**).

2.The Savior’s Being -- Our Being:

According to the example of our model, Christ the Savior, the basic focus of our Salvatorian spirituality is the revelation of God in the totality of our being and action. Everything in us proclaims God’s love. “*All for the greater glory of God*” (**SD I, 1, 3**). We are persons marked by a thirst for the absolute who is God. Moved by the Holy Spirit, we are called to “*proclaim the glory of God one and three*” (**The Catholic Teaching Society, 1888, DSS IV, 105**).

Jesus Christ, our exemplar, reveals the Father to us not only through his words and actions but through his whole person, his way of being and doing. Everything in him reveals the love of the Father: “*I have glorified you on earth and finished the work that you gave me to do*” (**John 17:4**).

He not only reveals the Father in that which he does but he himself is the revelation of the Father: “*If you know me, you know my Father too*” (**John 14:7**). He is one with the Father: “*I am in the Father and the Father is in me...*” (**John 14:11**).

We are called to be one with the Father in the same way as our mentor, Christ Jesus. We are called to perfect integration of contemplation and action, being willing to let go of that which does not nurture eternal life in us and is not in keeping with our divine model. This is the only way we will be able to become attractive and engaging persons who reveal the divine love which saves and frees: “*May they be one, Father, may they be one in us, as you are in me and I am in you so that the world may believe it was you who sent me*” (**John 17:21**).

Father Jordan urges himself: “*See everything in the light of holy faith. Let everything you think, say and do be guided by faith. The just person lives by faith*” (**SD I, 136, 5**).

He is very aware that freedom is the result of God’s action and our faith. Thus he insists that we: “*Become persons (men) of prayer!*” (**EA, 18**). In fact, he proposes seven hours of daily prayer for himself! (see **SD I, 198, 5**).

3. The Savior’s Action -- Our Action:

The objective of our Salvatorian mission is the salvation or liberation of the human person. This is the real meaning of eternal life. It is life which begins here and now but will also continue and go beyond our

earthly life. *“And eternal life is this: to know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent!” (John 17:3).*

Christ the Savior shows us that eternal life is won not through “works” but by being that pours itself out in action. With the whole Church, we strive so that the Savior and his salvific message are known by all so that by being incarnated in our lives, they will have eternal life.

Following the example of our model Jesus Christ, our preaching ought to begin with our lived experience: *“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” (1 John 1:3).* And this is because: *“...we saw his glory, the glory that is his as the only Son of the Father, full of grace and truth” (John 1:14).* We can now exclaim with St. Paul and Father Jordan: *“Woe to me, O Lord, if I do not make you known to people!” (SD II, 2, 3).*

To the extent that we incarnate evangelical values in our life, we automatically radiate and announce them to others. We are like yeast whose very nature it is to permeate flour, causing it to rise. We are like light which illuminates the surrounding darkness (see **Matt. 13:33; 5:14-16**).

By the example of the Apostles who followed Jesus, we are called to evangelize through our lives and our works so that the kindness and love of God is made manifest (see **Titus 3:1-7**). We understand it in this way because over and over again Father Jordan insists on such availability, apostolic zeal and saving love. *“Therefore, again and again I recommend to you zeal for souls!” (EA, 124-125).*

True apostolic zeal is inspired and nourished by the love of the saving God. *“...even if I have all the eloquence of human beings or of angels...if I have the gift of prophecy,...if I give away all that I possess, piece by piece, and if I even let them take my body to burn*

it, but am without love, it will do me no good whatever” (1 Cor. 13:1-13). According to Jesus Christ our exemplar, we should give special attention to the poor and needy: *“When we see the poorest, most abandoned and lowest of persons, we must behold in them an immortal soul for which Christ died and shed the last of his blood” (EA, 124).*

4. The Savior’s Methodology and Our Methodology:

The immense and saving love of the Father is revealed in the person of Jesus Christ. He came to reveal the kindness and love of God for all (see **Titus 3:1-7**). We are all called to follow Jesus Christ’s example using the same methodology as he, our master and Lord, used. The one who is *“light of the world” (John 8:12)* also says to us *“You are the light of the world...” (Matt. 5:14-16).*

We sense a call to characterize our Salvatorian life by the concern of Jesus Christ and the Apostles for training other apostles and disciples to help them and eventually take their places in the mission. We must involve others, using the same pedagogy as the Master, and applying his methodology in order to involve and lead others to be exposed to these experiences. As Salvatorians we cannot act alone or isolated. We need to unify groups and channel energy by involving and forming people through participation and communion.

Father Jordan invites us to announce the Savior and salvation, allowing ourselves to be inspired by *“the charity of Christ” (1 Cor. 13)*, in other words, by the love which saves. From this, we understand why Father Jordan insists so much on charity or love as a fundamental element of our spirituality. *“Encourage mutual love as much as possible in order that, united by bonds of peace in the Holy Spirit, they show themselves to be companions of the Apostles” (Rules, 1882, Apostolic Teaching Society, DSS I, 26).*

We also see the great trust that Father Jordan had in Divine Providence as well as in other persons by his distribution of

responsibilities. Above all, he was concerned about forming people, getting them involved and helping them be transformed. It comes down to looking at a person through the eyes of the Savior, teaching as he taught, involving and evangelizing as he did, thereby, using the same methodology as he used.

5. The Savior's Inclusive Love--Our Inclusive Love (Universality):

The spirit of the Savior is an inclusive, universal love that wants all people to be saved. This universal love is one more basic characteristic of our Salvatorian spirituality. The glory of God is the salvation of the person. Always what is important is that the person be saved. *"This universal love is especially and specifically for our Society, which is destined for all peoples"* (**EA, 100**).

Inspired by the love of Christ who saves (**1 Cor. 13**) we seek to involve all persons without discrimination of class, nationality or apostolic activity. Therefore, we may never absolutize any type of apostolic activity, not even our own! We welcome whatever and whomever is most in keeping with the concrete needs of the Church and circumstances, opting preferentially for *"the little ones"* (see **Rule of the Apostolate, Rule 1884, DSS I, 29-44**).

The kindness and love of God for all revealed in the person of the Savior (**Titus 3:4**) guide us in our apostolic life and help us to be faithful to the Founder's great call: *"Oh, that I could save all!"* (**SD I, 149, 3**).

To the extent that we learn how to relativize all that is not for the glory of God and the salvation of people, we will be unmistakably marked by our simplicity of life. The more we grow in lasting values, the simpler we become. However, this requires a constant renunciation of the false values that are so proclaimed by the world around us.

Here we discover a key for understanding the asceticism of the cross which was so powerful in the life and work of Father Jordan. He was convinced that *“The works of God prosper only in the shadow of the cross”* (**SD I, 163, 6**). For Father Jordan, the cross is a potent expression of saving love. It is an instrument of salvation. *“If anyone wants to be a follower of mine, let him renounce himself and take up his cross and follow me”* (**Mark 8:34**). Indeed, the cross is an indispensable condition for following Christ. It is the price of a greater love. *“There is no greater love than to lay down one’s life for one’s friend”* (**John 15:13**). Love and the cross walk together and complete one another. The more one loves, the more one suffers and the less one feels the burden of the suffering. *“Yes, my yolk is easy and my burden light”* (**Matt. 11:30**).

6. Salvatorian Texts:

a) Christ the Savior -- Inspiring Exemplar:

“He (Jesus Christ) is our example (mentor). [This sentence is in the original but was skipped in the English translation]. Let each one, when called upon to undertake great apostolic labors, imagine that also to him it is said: ‘I will show him how much he must suffer for my name’” (**Acts 9:16**) *“...He did not say: ‘I will show him how much he must preach, how hard he must labor, how many he must convert’”* (**EA, 152**).

“Of what avail will all other work and activity be if we do not strive after holiness? O how happy you are if you rightly understand this truth! Let this be your guiding principle: I must become like my divine model” (**EA, 13**).

b) The Savior’s Being and Our Being:

“Imitate our divine Master, who prayed so much, of whom Holy Scriptures says ‘and he passed the whole night in prayer to God’” (**Luke 6:12**). *“We know how he prayed on the Mount of Olives before*

he began his passion. Therefore, imitate the Savior by being men of prayer. Pray much, with great humility, with great confidence. Thereby you give glory to God. Our times need men of prayer. Of what avail is all toil, struggle, speaking and writing, if God does not help? The time that is spent in prayer is not lost” (EA, 21-22).

“In our work (Salvatorian mission) the first thing for a Salvatorian is to procure his own sanctification, his own salvation. We have entered the Society in order to become holy. This is our first and most important task.... In his great mercy the Divine Savior has called us to become images of himself, to become as much like him as possible -- to become holy” (EA, 12).

c) The Savior’s Action and Our Action:

“Think of what the Savior himself did for the salvation of souls!” (EA, 124).

“If the Reign of God is to come for all of us, it is necessary that those whom God calls to abandon everything, in fact announce Jesus Christ by word and life witness ...” (The Catholic Teaching Society, 1888, DSS IV, 113).

“O my Lord and God, grant that I may be able with your help to carry out that undertaking for your honor, so that all may be imbued with your sacred doctrine and that I, at the end, burning with your charity may pour out my life for you, that is, for your glory. Amen” (SD I, 120, 3).

d) The Savior’s Methodology and Our Methodology:

“Oh, (that there were) holy apostles hastening throughout the world, evangelizing all! Oh inscrutable zeal; how often you have been scorned and suppressed with the excuse that you are meant for the select few!” (SD I, 138, 6-7).

“May each one of you be able to say, no matter where he may be, what St. Paul said of himself: Imitate me as I imitate Christ (see 1 Cor. 4:16). Thus, you will exert great power of attraction. You will awaken vocations and you will stir the hearts of many unto their conversion” (EA, 164).

E) The Savior’s Inclusive Love and Our Inclusive Love:

“But love, I should say, should also be like a mother toward her child. It should be true, ready to make sacrifices, patient, attentive, sympathetic, impartial, universal, not one-sided, but, active in word and deed. It should embrace all.... If our love is from God, then we shall love all. If it is from humans, then there is danger of not loving all. This universal love is especially and specifically for our Society, which is destined for all peoples” (EA, 100).

“Serve the members carefully and wisely in the Lord, through example, the written and spoken word and all the ways and means which the love of God inspires, in order to manifest to all and glorify everywhere God the Father, his Son Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit in order to save immortal souls” (Rules, 1886, DSS I, 49-50).

“Therefore, conduct yourselves in such a way, that of each single one of you it can be said that he/she is a shining lamp, through religious observance (life) and good example (witness). Such a one lights the way to the true light, to the God-Man. ... We should make the Savior of the world known to all peoples. ‘To make our Lord known to all and everywhere.’ We should join ourselves to him” (EA, 157).

Reflection Suggestions:

1. What are the most significant aspects of our Salvatorian spirituality for me?
2. What do I intend to do from now on to deepen my Salvatorian spirituality even more?

**V. B. Christ the Savior,
Source and Inspiration of Our Life.**

John 17:1-10: In the priestly prayer, Jesus describes his mission: to give glory (reveal, manifest) to the Father and to give eternal life to all those the Father has given him. Eternal life consists in knowing God.

John 1:1-18: *“The Word was made flesh, he lived among us, and we saw his glory...”*

2 Cor. 3:12-18: When transformed, we reflect the glory of God like a mirror.

2 Cor. 6:1-10: St. Paul warns us not to receive the grace of God in vain so that we can be faithful witnesses of Jesus Christ.

1 Cor. 1:1-9: We have been greatly enriched through the word that leads to knowledge (proclamation) and Christ’s witness which has been made strong in us.

Titus 3:1-7: When the goodness and love of God our Savior appear in us, He will save us through his mercy.

Luke 4:16-20: Christ the Savior calls us to continue his mission on earth.

Matt. 28:16-20: Our mission is to make disciples, baptizing and teaching.

Mark 16:15-20: We are called to announce the Gospel to all creatures through all ways and means and without any discrimination.

2 Cor. 3:1-11: Following the Savior and the Apostles, we will be a living letter of Christ to the people of our time.

Acts 5:17-21: Following the example of the Apostles in the living out of our mission, we must be willing to confront suffering and the cross.

Mark 8:34-38: The cross marked the life of Jesus and Father Jordan. It is therefore necessarily a characteristic of the life of a disciple of Christ.

Phil. 2:1-11: St. Paul exhorts us to take on the mind of Jesus Christ who emptied himself, taking on the form of a servant.

Rule of Life SDS-W, 40: *“Our Lord Jesus Christ is the source of all holiness. He calls us to the full life of love and holiness which he himself led on earth for the salvation of all and for the Father’s glory. As we strive to live the fullness of our Salvatorian call, the Holy Spirit, who prays and acts in us, unifies our entire life.”*

Constitutions SDS-M, 201: *“Our Salvatorian life is apostolic and is the expression of the love of Christ urging us to spend ourselves for the salvation of all people, confident that thereby we ourselves grow continually in our union with God.”*

Constitutions SDS-M, 104: *“To progress toward this ideal we endeavor to grow in the knowledge and love of the Savior and make Him known to others. We foster an unshakable trust in God and a true spirit of prayer, being convinced that we can do all things in Him who strengthens us.”*

Reflection Suggestions:

1. How am I actually being a sign of Christ’s saving love with others, in my religious community as well as with other people?
2. What do I intend to take on in my personal life that will lead me to grow in Salvatorian spirituality?

Synthesis of the Day:

1. Do a written evaluation of today focusing on its most significant aspects.
2. What do I intend to do concretely in light of the urging of the Spirit today?

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About the Author



Brazilian **Fr. Arno Boesing, SDS**, is well known throughout the Salvatorian world for his significant contributions to our understanding of the Salvatorian charism. His fine grasp of both the German and the Portuguese languages, as well as his understanding of many of the other languages used by the Founder and early Salvatorians, enabled him to pioneer the translation of Fr. Jordan's Spiritual Diary and other early Salvatorian texts for Brazilian Salvatorians. His personal research and writing have laid a foundation for much material available to Salvatorians today both in Brazil and around the world.

Fr. Arno was born April 19, 1937 in Itapuí, Santa Catarina, Brazil. He entered the Society's preparatory seminary in Videira, Santa Catarina at an early age and made his first profession February 2, 1961. As a seminarian, he was sent to Passau, Germany where he completed his philosophy and theology studies prior to his priestly ordination on June 29, 1966.

Over the years, Fr. Arno has served the Society in many capacities. Among these are his international service on the Generalate from 1969-1975 as well as his seven years as Provincial Superior of the Brazilian province. During his many assignments as a parish priest, Fr. Arno has been known for his commitment to lay formation, leaving vibrant faith communities wherever he worked. Lay Salvatorian groups have also flourished in the parishes where he has served. While his research, translations and writings are noteworthy, we also want to underline Fr. Arno's commitment to the development among us of a spirituality specifically Salvatorian. He has also been a driving force behind the collaborative Brazilian work in this area since the 1980s. Numerous Salvatorian retreats, reflection papers and study guides owe much to his in-depth understanding and undying collaborative spirit.

We wish Fr. Arno well in his ongoing contributions to our Salvatorian heritage and know that we will continue to be graced by his presence and work among us.