

THE APOSTLE

News from the Salvatorians in Britan & Ireland
November 2017

CENTENARY OF DEATH OF FR FRANCIS JORDAN



THIS ISSUE

Centenary of death of Fr Francis Jordan
Holy Souls
Celebration at St Joseph
Welcome Fr Fortunatus Banzi SDS
Support our future Salvatorian





The Centenary of the Death of our Founder: The Venerable Francis Mary of the Cross Jordan (1918-2018)

The year 2018 is unique and special for us members of the Salvatorian Family. On 8 September 1918, in a nursing home in Tifers, Switzerland, Our Venerable Father Francis Mary of the Cross Jordan, the founder of the Salvatorian Family, breathed his last at the age of 70. Barely 37 years after founding the Society, he left behind many Salvatorian Fathers, Brothers and Sisters who had already spread across Europe, the Americas and Asia treasuring the memories of their spiritual father. But his spirit was immortalized through their missionary service as he had directed. Today after 100 years of his departure, he is alive and active in our life and mission and continues to stir our hearts.

We as Salvatorians are inspired by our Founder, Fr. Francis Jordan, who gave us one clear mission: we are to make the Saviour known and to go to the ends of the earth in order to do this. Since the 08 September 2017 we began the celebration of the centenary of his death which we will celebrate throughout the year. This will culminate with the end of the upcoming XIX General Chapter a year from now in 2018. We rejoice in the gift of his charisma. We, the Members of the Salvatorian Family celebrate this year a joyful experience of retracing a hundred years journey living and upholding the values of our Founder.

Within a short span of time he paved a way to the future of the Society. God let his dream and vision come true. The Society has grown in leaps and bounds over the years just as Fr. Jordan assured at the time of his departure. As we commemorate the centenary of his death, we pay a loving homage to our most venerable founder. An appropriate tribute was given to him through special programme in all our communities and institutions sharing his spirit with our employees, parishioners and beneficiaries. Various missionary activities will be undertaken especially towards the youth, seminarians, terminally ill and the aged.

Such a celebration is an occasion for our spiritual renewal and revival to reveal the Saviour to All. We pay our loving homage to our Founder Fr. Francis Jordan - a great visionary, a zealous missionary, a vibrant leader and an ardent lover of God and His people. Long live our Founder in his vision and mission through us, the Members of the Salvatorian Family in throughout the world. We also pray for the recognition of the importance of his charisma for the life of the Church and the world through his Beatification.

And we pray for the fulfillment of the words he spoke on his deathbed on 03 September 1918 "The dear God will make everything turn out right. Others will come, they will remember our suffering and continue our work" (The Last Days of Fr. Jordan, by Fr. Pancratius Pfeiffer, 24 September 1918).

Jesus Christ, our Divine Saviour, with gratitude we remember the strong testimony of the apostolic holiness of Father Francis Jordan, as well as his courageous struggle in order to bring your work of salvation to all peoples. We ask for your grace to revive in ourselves the spirit of his life and mission, embracing, with a renewed passion, his experience of God and his wide vision of evangelization.

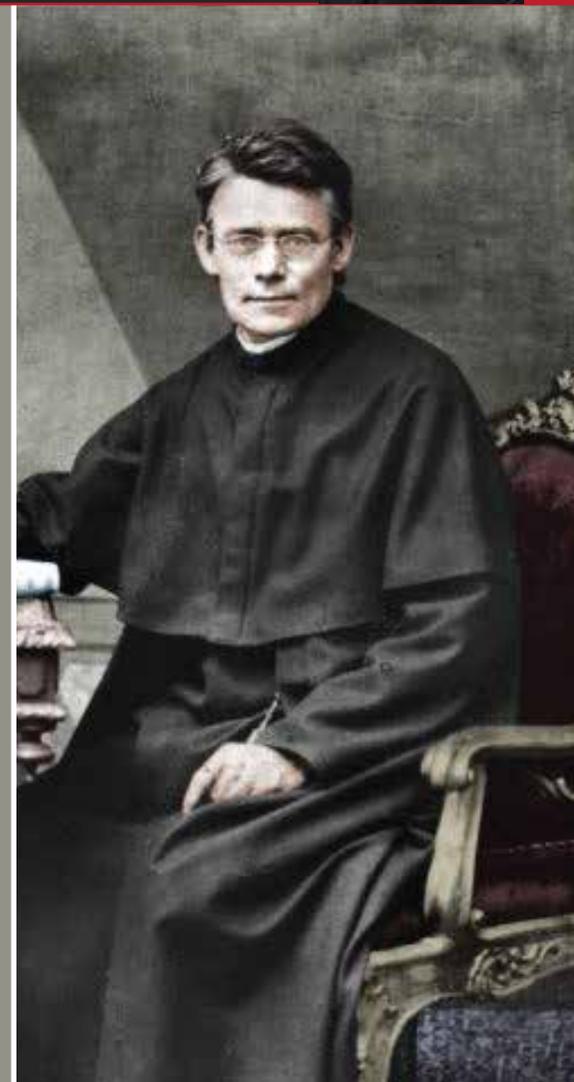
Holy Spirit fount of life, we praise and we give you thanks for having inspired the charisma of our Founder. Hear our prayer so that we, as the Salvatorian family, may live and continue to gather the fruit of his spiritual heritage. Make us capable of giving witness to him today, even in the adversities of life and in the face of hostility, and of accepting the crosses which our mission brings to us, with unshakeable trust in the Providence of your love.

In this year, when we remember the centenary of father Francis Jordan's death, we implore the intercession of Mary, Mother of the Saviour and Queen of the Apostles, so that the Salvatorian Family may always be the reflection of his life of holiness and of apostolic zeal throughout the year.

Amen

“ Prayer for the Centenary of death of Fr Francis Mary of the Cross Jordan

Father of eternal love and source of our salvation, during this time when we remember the centenary of the death of our Founder, Father Francis Mary of the Cross Jordan, we give you thanks for his life, dedicated to the service of the faith and of the church. We praise you, our Good Father, because through the life of our Founder you have led so many people to salvation and to the life of the apostolic service. ”



Father
Frank Waters SDS
Assistant Parish Priest Wealdstone



Father
Fortunatus Banzi SDS
Assistant Parish Priest



The Holy Souls

Ronald Rolheiser, an American priest and theologian, once received a letter from a lady asking if he could explain the Christian teaching about prayer for the dead. Her son had been killed in an accident; in her despairing grief, she was asking what sense does it make to pray for those who are departed. Rolheiser replied that it undoubtedly makes sense to pray for the dead, even apart from our Catholic custom of remembering them at Mass or in private prayer.

He argued that there are three reasons we pray for our departed loved ones. We pray for them firstly for the same reason we pray for anything. Put simply, it does us good. It helps us, the living, and consoles us who are left, as we pick up the pieces of our lives. Secondly, we pray for the dead in order to help heal our relationship with them. When someone dies, often there is unfinished business between us; in praying for the deceased, we try to wash clean those things that are still cause us painful regret.

Just as holding a dying person's hand can comfort both of us, so we can, as it were, "hold another's hand" beyond death.

This, of course, leads us to the classical doctrine of Purgatory. Here another story from a priest friend might help. A young couple, friends of his, were once invited to a fancy dress party. They chose to go as Mickey Mouse and Donald Duck. As they were parking their car outside the house, they could see other guests in a well-lit dining room. To their horror, they realised it was not a fancy dress party after all, as the guests inside were dressed in formal suits and evening gowns.

Fortunately they had enough time to nip home and change, rather than face embarrassment. Perhaps God is like that. When we see his beauty and goodness, and compare that to our sinful scabs, we feel we cannot face him. So Purgatory gives us an opportunity to go back and get changed, and return feeling comfortable.

Fr Frank Waters SDS

My Journey Since Ordination

It is a privilege to be able to tell you of my journey since my ordination to the priesthood. My first appointment was to Mary Mother of the Saviour Parish in Nakapanya in the very south of Tanzania in June, 2011. As with every priest, I had to instruct converts, visit the sick, look after the buildings, catechise the young people and also to attend to my daily prayers and the celebration of the Mass. I had been taught all these parochial duties by my teachers at the seminary but now after ordination I had to jump into deep water and start swimming without a life jacket. Now I had to begin learning from a different angle. My flock became my teachers.

I started by visiting each family in their home, talking to them, praying with them and sometimes having meals with them. I soon realised that Christians were in the minority with only 12% of the population, whereas the majority were Muslims and those belonging to traditional religions. Members of the same family often belonged to different faiths but showed great tolerance towards each other. Some families considered themselves to be Catholic because they attended mass regularly even though they were not baptised. 80% of the total population had never been to secondary school and many had not even finished elementary school. Above all it was obvious that their living standard was extremely poor.

In order to deepen the foundations of Catholicism in the parish I decided to invest more energy in the young people believing that they needed to have a solid basis for their faith. Many children joined Holy Childhood Group. They were involved in prayer, sport, singing, dancing, altar serving, as well as visiting the sick and the elderly.

I soon realised that the Holy Childhood Group was the key to the evangelisation of my parish.

Challenges follow us everywhere and with the increase in the number of children and converts as well as the need to teach them catechism, more trained catechists and a matron for the children was needed and of course this brought us the problem of additional financial outlay.

In October 2015, I was transferred to St. Francis Xavier Parish in Mandera. It was originally founded in 1881. The parish consists of twelve outstations but these are in predominantly Muslim areas. There was hostility from them and attempts to burn some of our bush chapels. Only two of the villages had a majority of Catholics.

There are 2,256 baptized Catholics but very few actively live their faith. In spite of the fact that Christianity has been in the area for 136 years, many still practise witchcraft. It is obvious that further efforts at evangelization are needed. I called meetings of the parish council and the catechists. We decided to establish seminars for groups of parishioners and made efforts to reanimate groups such as Young Catholics, Holy Childhood, Sacred Heart of Jesus Ministry, Fatima Ministry, Church Choir, and the Charismatic group.

In September 2017 I was invited to join the Wealdstone Community in the British Province as assistant priest in St. Joseph's Parish. The mission of the Church is the same all over the world but every place has a different way of doing it. I learned a lot in my first few years after ordination but now I begin a new phase of my life and I am very happy to contribute to our Salvatorian Mission in a completely new country.





8th September 2017: Solemn opening of the Centenary of the Death of our Founder at St Joseph's, Wealdstone.

Our Venerable Founder died on 08 September 1018 in Tifers, Switzerland. In Psalm 116, the psalmist makes a remarkable statement. Near the end of this psalm of thanksgiving for God's deliverance from an untimely death, he says, "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints." (Psalm 116:15). In short, the psalmist is proclaiming that the death of a saint is precious to God because the saints are the objects of His attention, because they are rare (Matthew 22:14), and because He is putting so much effort into them at this time — far more than those with whom He is not yet working.

Thus from the early days of the Church and because of the persecutions of Christians there began the custom of commemorating each martyr annually on the date of his or her death, or birth into heaven — a date therefore referred to in Latin as the martyr's dies natalis ("day of birth"). And in many Religious Orders, a Founder's dies natalis is very often the day new members make their first/renewal/final of religious profession.

This past 08 September 2017 many brothers made their first profession and here in the British Pro-vince, many of our Fathers celebrated their Jubilees: Michael Doherty SDS (40 years of Religious profession), Patrick Keaney SDS (40 years of Religious profession), Noel Keane SDS (60 years of religious profession), Peter Preston SDS

(65 years of religious profession), Eric Powell SDS (65 years of religious profession) and Bernard Finan SDS (50 years of ordination).

Bishop John Sherrington, Auxilliary Bishop of Westminster, presided at the opening mass at St Joseph where many of the Jubelarians concelebrated. The Bishop gave a wonderful sermon and highlighted in a beautiful way the mission of Fr Francis Jordan:

"The mystery of God's call to choose those who are poor, weak and lowly, is seen further in the call of Francis Jordan. He was born in Gurtweil a small village near Baden in Southern Germany in 1848 - the year of revolutions. As much of Europe experienced turmoil and war, God sowed the seed of faith in the heart of Francis through his baptism, the learning of his prayers and reception of his first holy communion. As a young boy he grew in prayer and meditation. He delighted in the life of the saints, the reading of the bible and quickly decided that he wanted to be a priest. Whilst he was poor, he knew that there was no success in half measures, The mystery of God's call to choose those who are poor, weak and lowly, is seen further in the call of Francis Jordan. He was born in Gurtweil a small village near Baden in Southern Germany in 1848 - the year of revolutions. As much of Europe experienced turmoil and war, God sowed the seed of faith in the heart of Francis through his baptism, the learning of his prayers and reception of his first holy communion. As a young boy he grew in prayer and meditation. He delighted in the life of the saints, the reading of the bible and quickly decided that he wanted to be a priest. Whilst he was poor, he knew that there was no success in half measures, and threw himself into the hard work of entering seminary and becoming a seminarian for the priesthood. He added the name "Mary of the Cross" to his name and so closely associated himself with the Blessed Virgin Mary and her suffering at the foot of the cross. She is the intercessor for both his prayers and our prayers.

After ordination in 1878 at the age of 30, he was asked to study ancient languages in Rome and quickly felt the call to establish an apostolic society dedicated to proclaiming the salvation that comes through Christ. He was a pioneer in the work of evangelisation and made known the mystery of God's saving and merciful love for all people. Because he followed God's calling, today we celebrate not only the life of the Salvatorians here in Wealdstone since 1901 but also their presence in so many countries of the world. I welcome Fr. Richard, the Provincial, whose call was heard in the Congo, and of course Fr. Auson from Tanzania. Fr. Jordan's first mission territory was North East India, an area for which the Pope had difficulties finding missionaries. We rejoice as we begin the year of celebration to mark the centenary of his death

The mystery of God's call is seen in the priests whose jubilees we celebrate today. September 8th is the day on which they professed their vows so it is their anniversary. Their long lives of dedicated service (Fr. Michael being the youngster of the group) speak of the call of God and the response in grace to this invitation. While Mary, the Mother of God, and the Venerable Francis remind us more fully of the work of God's grace, we each know that we depend on his grace for our life and ministry.

God calls and seeks that we serve others. The charism of the Salvatorians is to communicate the hope of the message of the Divine Saviour and his love for each one of us, however, broken or weak. We see the compassionate face of Christ revealed in the scriptures as he reaches down and touches those who are sick, poor, rejected, weak or dying. He communicates love, hope and life. This is the promise he has made to us. Reflecting on the ministry of the Jubilarians, we see the work of faithfully spreading this message, the joy of a life committed to evangelisation, and hard hours laboured in parish work and teaching boys. The rebuilding of the school next door expresses the desire of the Salvatorians to continue to commit to the education of boys and to teach them about Christ. It is a lived commitment from which so many families present have benefitted.

Finally, the mystery of God's call invites each one of us to reflect on our own calling, whether priesthood, religious life, marriage or a committed single life. It is also an invitation to pray for men to enter the Salvatorian Order (or the diocese!), or the religious life. Across the road the Sisters of Our Lady of the Missions have shown their commitment to the education of girls".

The mass was attended by a good number of members of our parishes where we serve in North London. After mass, a celebratory meal was offered to the Bishop, the Jubilarians and our guests. Throughout the jubilee year, similar celebrations will be held in all the parishes under our care.



SUPPORT OUR FUTURE SALVATORIANS

Salvatorian seminarians complete a rigorous program of formation that includes prayer, academics, missionary exposure and preparation for final vows. They live in community and share a common liturgical prayer life. In Western Europe, vocations are still rare but not especially in Africa and Asia where we have many students. (115 students in Africa and Asia)

Typical annual expenses for a Salvatorian seminarian preparing for the priesthood at the Salvatorian Jordan University College and other seminaries where our students go for philosophy and theology include:

Formation, books, tuition fee cost £1,780

Food and Lodging £8 x 366 days = £2,928

Personal items/expenses £400

Medical expenses £260 provided by the Order as needed

Please consider making a donation in support of Salvatorian seminarians as they answer a calling to religious life. Our seminarians also ask that you send them your prayer intentions so they can remember your needs in their prayers.

ANNUAL NOVENA OF MASSES

All friends and benefactors of the Salvatorians are remembered each day in our personal and community prayers.

Please send us your special intentions for inclusion in our Novena Of Masses For Holy Souls.

DATES OF NOVENAS THROUGH THE YEAR

March 22nd to 20th
Feast of the Annunciation

May 22nd to 30th
Mary, Queen of Angels

September 29th to October 7th
St Michael and All Angels

December 16th to 24th
Christmas Novena



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