



March 2018 bulletin THE DIVOTION TO THE FOUNDER A DISCERNMENT OF THE GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

"If you knew the gift of God ..." The charism of our Congregation, as of all other Congregations, is not a human work, springing from the mind and heart of two brave and brilliant people. It is above all a gift from God, something that comes directly from the Father, the source of every perfect gift, through the model of the person of Jesus and the Holy Spirit who gives light and life to all inspiration.

Our 'holy' Founders welcomed with a generous and sincere heart this particular word sown by the Holy Spirit in their good soil. They heard the moans of the Spirit through the cry of pain of so many children far from God, abandoned, poor, destined for marginality, delinquency or exploitation. They had the "vision" of a future of dignity, of industriousness and of citizenship, with a life ordered and animated by the presence of God-Love and of his Gospel.

Father de la Mennais and Father Deshayes perceived these thoughts, sentiments and undertakings as coming from God himself. They remained faithful to this call that God Himself addressed to them personally. Certainly they had their doubts, they focused on God's project with a certain research, but they immediately understood that all this was not just good works but a response to God's call and a mission that God assigned to them. And they immediately responded by devoting their whole life to this cause. "The zeal of your house devours me", and this up to consuming and exhausting all their energies until death on the breach. Feli, who had broken up with his brother Jean-Marie, had pronounced this prophetic word: "Little brothers, here is your work".

This common discernment would bring together two Founders who would understand that God wanted to associate them with this unique work. The important thing was not who would pursue it and how, but to know that it could be born and develop in the Church and in the world. Both of them were simply serving this work.

The early Brothers also quickly understood that they were called to this mission and to directly embody this charism received from the Founders whom God had inspired. That's why they considered their Founders as their Fathers. For this reason they followed, with docility, their words, their teachings and the way they marked out for them. It was for this reason also that they showed them their filial affection and turned to them with confidence in all circumstances. That is why they followed them in all apostolic, difficult and sometimes heroic initiatives. It is for this reason that we too, today, follow the charism that God inspired in them, and which we still receive from God as a living word that they continue to put in our hearts in the present times.

Bro. Dino De Carolis

Due to the fact that there is a General Chapter going on in Rome this month, the prayer of the attached Novena is common to all the three languages (English, Spanish and French). This is our way of being united in prayer to the Capitulants.