



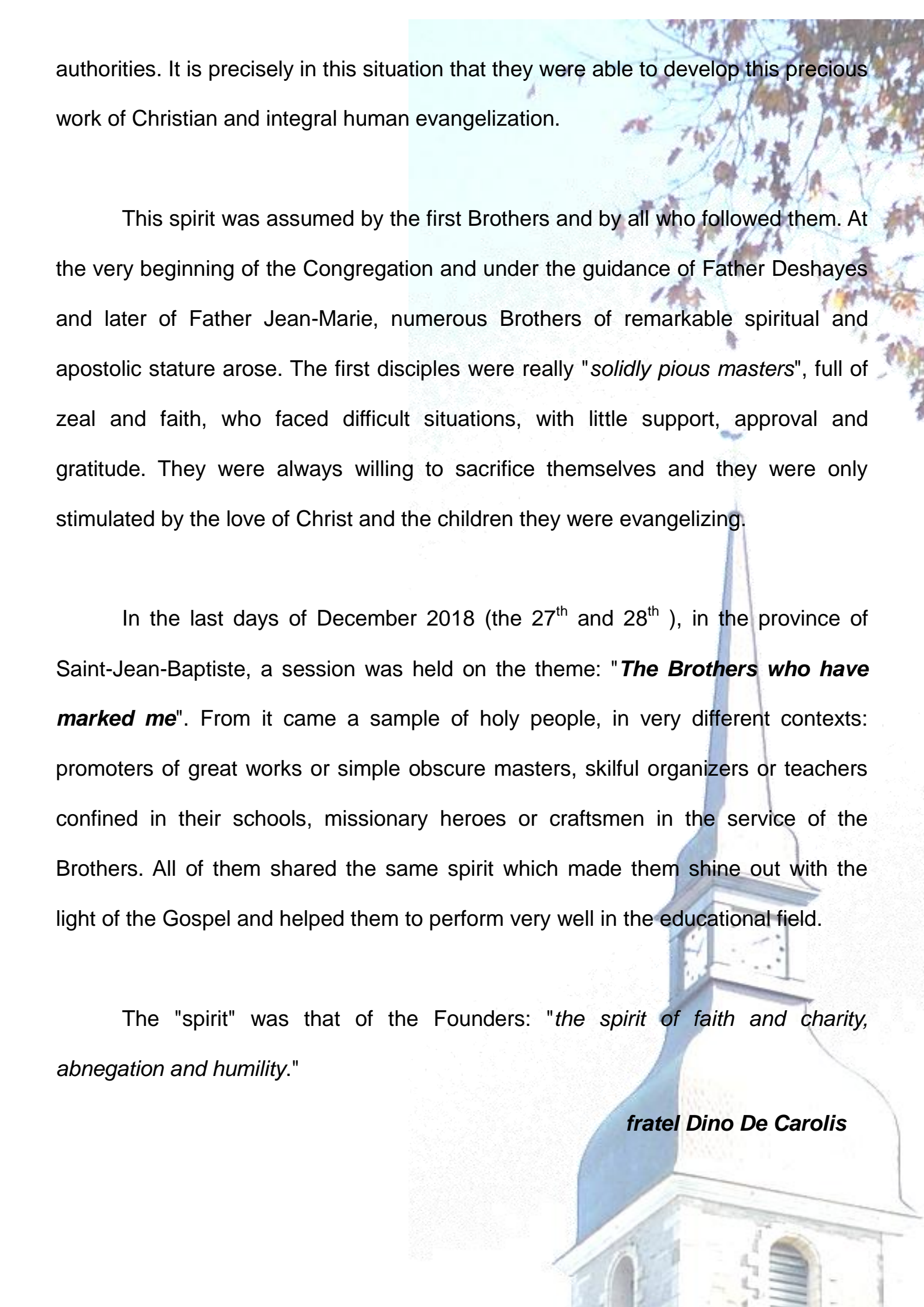
## January 2018 Bulletin

# **“THE DEVOTION” TO THE FOUNDER**

### **Devotion to the Founder is faithfulness to the spirit of the Congregation**

In the first Rules of the Brothers, we find an article that defines the spirit of the Congregation: "*The spirit of the Congregation is a spirit of faith, charity, abnegation and humility.*" Naturally, these words are inspired by the Gospel and therefore they concern all Christians regardless of their state. But for us, the Brothers, within this ecclesial belonging, it takes on a family flavour, and it is illuminated by the way it is embodied in our history.

Above all, this Spirit was lived by our Founders, Father Deshayes and Father de la Mennais, and this was from the beginning. They were holy priests, full of charity, faith and apostolic zeal. They boldly and humbly embarked on this work of God, that stood the trials, the weaknesses and the human failures. The characteristics of the two Founders and their very work were those of a certain "*obscurity*": care for the little ones and the poor, going where no one wanted to go, the simple and repetitive apostolic activities, the Religious without consideration (little Brothers, ignorant ...). The fact of not being priests gave them more freedom to evangelize, even if it somewhat kept them at the peripheral of the ecclesiastical

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authorities. It is precisely in this situation that they were able to develop this precious work of Christian and integral human evangelization.

This spirit was assumed by the first Brothers and by all who followed them. At the very beginning of the Congregation and under the guidance of Father Deshayes and later of Father Jean-Marie, numerous Brothers of remarkable spiritual and apostolic stature arose. The first disciples were really "*solidly pious masters*", full of zeal and faith, who faced difficult situations, with little support, approval and gratitude. They were always willing to sacrifice themselves and they were only stimulated by the love of Christ and the children they were evangelizing.

In the last days of December 2018 (the 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> ), in the province of Saint-Jean-Baptiste, a session was held on the theme: "***The Brothers who have marked me***". From it came a sample of holy people, in very different contexts: promoters of great works or simple obscure masters, skilful organizers or teachers confined in their schools, missionary heroes or craftsmen in the service of the Brothers. All of them shared the same spirit which made them shine out with the light of the Gospel and helped them to perform very well in the educational field.

The "spirit" was that of the Founders: "*the spirit of faith and charity, abnegation and humility.*"

***fratel Dino De Carolis***