

2. Father Francis Jordan – a Blessed with limitations and weaknesses

by Fr. Stephan Horn SDS, Bad Wurzach, 1 June 2020

The young John-Baptist Jordan shows that his greatest ability, his genial talent for languages, also brought with it a spiritual weakness and danger. Not only because it seduced him to exuberant diligence that almost ruined his health, but above, all because it could lead him to ambitious intentions and lead to problematic self-fulfilment. He had big plans. When he was in the seminary after his studies, he was frightened by the danger of trying to please people instead of wanting to please God. He began to counteract quickly and to put God and the salvation of people at the centre of his life:

“January 3, 1878. For you the first and most important thing should always be to become holy and pleasing to God, so to live and so to die. With God’s grace eliminate whatever in any way does not lead to this goal or hinders its attainment.”

(SD I,31)

“In all, you do and allow, significant and insignificant, let your guiding motto be: **All for the greater glory of God (to God alone honour and glory) and for the salvation of souls.**”

(SD I, 67)

Precisely in this way, he could do great things for God and find himself again:

“It is not against humility to recognize in oneself the gifts of God.”

(SD I,40)

“A soul unaware it has received great gifts from God will never rise to do anything great for God (St. Teresa of Avila).”

(SD I,78)

Something similar can be seen in a second treat in Fr. Francis of the Cross: his boldness in acting and trusting in God and a fearful concern for the purity of conscience, which made him sometimes joyless. This weakness must have accompanied him throughout life. It meant a great spiritual task for him. He sought to face this task through prayer and brave effort:

Prayer of the young Jordan (SD I,58)

**“Oh God, all good and powerful, have mercy on me,
For You alone are my hope and my peace.”**

“Give me back the joy of Your salvation. (Ps 51,14).

Pray often for great trust in God and for joy. As far as possible, avoid anxious moods, because the Lord is powerful, and He can save you. Strive to serve God lovingly and joyfully, and, above all, lay aside any exaggerated anxiety which displeases God, for He is no tyrant.”

(SD I,62)

Based on this, we can ask the following impulse questions:

1. Do I make enough efforts to cleanse my heart and to guarantee the integrity of intentions? Do I understand the importance of the daily renewal of the “good intention”?
2. Do I see in my weaknesses, spiritual tasks, but also opportunities?
3. Is the full focus on love for God and neighbour, which we find in the traditional motto of the Founder, something that shapes our everyday life more and more and gives us joy?