



Cavanis Lay Fraternity
Sacred Heart House, CAVANIS INSTITUTE
Via Col Draga - Possagno (TV)

INVISIBLE MONASTERY

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On February 2nd, the entire Church celebrates the World Day for Consecrated Life, coinciding with the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord in the Temple. This feast is not only a moment of solemn prayer, but also an opportunity to reflect on the call to Consecrated Life—the call that God awakens in the hearts of men and women to follow Him closely and collaborate with Him as witnesses of His joy and grace, and above all, as witnesses of fraternal communion.



In the writings of the Venerable Fathers Anthony and Mark Cavanis, we find numerous confirmations of their fidelity to God, the Church, and our most needy brothers and sisters, through both teaching and works.

The love and fidelity of the Cavanis Charism were bequeathed by the Founders to all their spiritual children working throu-



ghout the world. Today, this same love and fidelity must be the essential lifeblood for the growth of the Congregation, which stands in need of vocations. We hope that young people will respond, “HERE I AM,” to the call to religious and priestly life; however, our prayer is necessary so that the Cavanis Institute may be an example in the Church of witness and perseverance in God’s will, following a fruitful path in helping our neighbors, who are increasingly in need of affection and love.

Let us not fail to offer our prayer and affection to the Congregation we love so much, and may the Holy Spirit enlighten us on this journey.

**From the Holy Gospel according to
Luke (2:22–40)**

When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord (as it is written in the law of the Lord, “Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord”), and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, “a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons.” Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord’s Messiah. Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him what was customary under the law, Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying:

*“Lord, now you are dismissing your servant in peace,
according to your word;
for my eyes have seen your salvation,
which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples,*



*a light for revelation to the Gentiles
and for glory to your people Israel.”*

And the child’s father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, “This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed, so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed—and a sword will pierce your own soul too.”

There was also a prophet, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, having lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped there with fasting and prayer night and day. At that moment she came, and began to praise God and to speak about the child to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem. When they had finished everything required by the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favor of God was upon him.

For our Meditation: ANTHONY and MARK CAVANIS: HAPPY PRIESTS and RELIGIOUS

Young faces that tell a story of light

Admiring the new painting that represents Father Anthony and Father Mark Cavanis, I found their faces beautiful and expressive: they are two happy young priests, with clear and smiling gazes. Anthony and Mark experienced a happy childhood and adolescence—within their family, in their



vocational choice, and throughout their long educational ministry with young people. This happiness was sustained by trust in the Father's providential love and nourished by the Word of God, even when it led them down the difficult paths of the reality of their time.

Happiness is not a formula, but a journey

In common language, we associate happiness with beatitude, joy, gladness, and cheerfulness: all manifestations of a happiness that does not depend on a system, a method, or a formula. If we search for it along those paths, we are truly lost! In the Bible, there is no trace of a "method" to find happiness; it is presented as a journey. It is not guaranteed by success or a large sum of money, but by "two small coins"—those of the widow.

A happiness welcomed as grace

Man does not buy happiness, nor is he the master of his own happiness, nor does he deserve it: he welcomes it as grace and approaches it through humble seeking. It is difficult to perceive the inner workings of a happiness that is not earned, but received as a free gift. Gratuitousness characterized their entire lives and their work. They were happy, without ever pretending not to see the suffering of their Venice and of the "poor dispersed youth."

The Bible as a living word, not a chronicle

The Bible is not the land registry book of the Jewish people: it is the Word of God, to be understood through the suffering of an oppressed people who see God as their defender; and upon this situation they build an epic, according to the culture and language of the time. For Anthony and Mark, the Bible was not a collection of history books according to the criteria of modern historiography, nor were they books that exalt the pessimism and sadness typical of the time "when the shadows lengthen" (cf. Eccl 12:1–7).

The present as the time for happiness

For Anthony and Mark, the time for happiness was the present—the everyday life, with its trials, its uncertainties, and its fears of the future—while always keeping their hearts open to the happy surprises of God. Those who have a hardened heart “like a tamarisk in the desert, shall not see when happiness comes” (cf. Jer 17:6) and cannot experience it. Happiness does not simply fall from heaven; or, even if it does, the heart must be able to receive it as a gift. This requires an openness to change one’s heart in the hope that does not disappoint.

God who finds joy in making His children happy

“I will rejoice in doing them good” (Jer 32:41), God seemed to repeat, embracing Anthony and Mark’s desire to be happy. And they prayed: “May the most just, most high, and most amiable will of God be done, praised, and eternally exalted.” The fundamental criterion for welcoming happiness is to abandon oneself to the infinite love of the Father for His children who suffer and are oppressed. They must trust: the Lord prepares a “promised land,” just as He did for Israel entering Palestine.

The Bible as sacred history lived in prayer

Anthony and Mark did not study the Bible according to modern criteria: for them, it was Sacred History, loved and prayed—especially the Psalms:

“Happy are those who do not follow the advice of the wicked... or sit in the company of mockers, but their delight is in the law of the Lord” (Ps 1). They proposed a humble path of fidelity to the Word, not a sterile and narcissistic perfectionism aimed at “earning” God’s love.

True happiness is born from a heart that opens to goodness

Happiness does not depend on achieved perfection:

“Happy are those whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is

covered” (Ps 32:1);

“Happy is the man who makes the Lord his trust, who does not turn to the proud” (Ps 40:4);

“Happy are those who consider the poor” (Ps 41:1), because “it is more blessed to give than to receive” (Acts 20:35);

“Happy are those who live in your house, ever singing your praise” (Ps 84:4);

“Happy are those whom you discipline, O Lord, and whom you teach out of your law” (Ps 94:12).

A happiness that speaks to the heart of our time

The painter has brought Father Anthony and Father Mark back to life, happy in this present time, in our “today,” which is a time of challenges, but the only time we have: we are the time. Let us try to contemplate their smiling and happy faces. Happiness is the other name for love for the youth of our day and its challenges: “Do not be afraid, little flock, for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom”—and happiness.

Father Diego Spadotto, C.S.Ch.

SOLA IN DEO SORS