

An Optimistic Apostolate

"Prayer is the lever that moves the Most Merciful Heart of our Saviour," Bishop Alvaro del Portillo assures us, in a Letter written in 1990.

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"I want with these lines to spur you to carry out an ever more intense apostolate, while putting all your trust in God. Consider the transforming strength of divine grace. It can enlighten the darkest minds even to the extent of

converting, in a single moment, Saul the persecutor into Paul the Apostle. And wonders like this are still happening today

So be optimistic, even though you so often experience real difficulties around you. Although we have to use all the human means within our reach, our hope is based not on them but on Jesus Christ our Lord, who is *Dominus dominantium* (*Rev 19:16*), Lord of lords, and who has conquered the whole world through his Sacrifice on the Cross.

At times it may seem to you that the *non serviam!* which so many men and women sadly utter with their lives, makes a much louder noise than the *serviam!* which by divine grace comes each day from the lips and hearts of all of us who want to be docile to grace. Don't let yourselves be deceived by

appearances. I assure you once again that God always triumphs.

Our strength lies in prayer. This is the lever that moves the Most Merciful Heart of our Saviour, who is always ready to help those who are his own. But it is good to be persistent with him. If we are generously demanding on ourselves in our daily struggle, you will see how the Church will rise up again, all over the world, and how the faith will take root in so many souls

Constant prayer has to be inseparably united to the daily effort each one of you should make to permeate your surroundings with a Christian spirit. Don't think your contribution can only be very small. Each one of you can do a great deal, because apostolic effectiveness depends, in the first place, on your love for God and on your

supernatural outlook in carrying out apostolate with those around you.”

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