

“Once again I’m surprised how beautiful sanctity is”

Words from the homily of Bishop Alejandro Giorgi, auxiliary bishop of Buenos Aires, at the Mass he celebrated on May 12 for the liturgical feast of Blessed Alvaro del Portillo.

05/23/2017

On May 12, liturgical feast of Blessed Alvaro del Portillo, Bishop Alejandro Giorgi, auxiliary bishop of Buenos

Aires, celebrated Mass in the parish of our Lady of Loreto. At the beginning of the Mass, Bishop Giorgi asked our Lord for “a heart like Don Alvaro’s.” And he said that in reflecting on the Blessed’s life, “once again I’m surprised how beautiful sanctity is. Sometimes sanctity is seen as boring and too difficult, but sanctity is an inexhaustible font of happiness and joy. We see this in our saints, and especially in Don Alvaro.”

The auxiliary bishop of Buenos Aires continued his homily by citing some words of the Blessed: “I want to cite here some words of his in order to savor them once again: ‘I ask that your activity always be marked by the plus sign. That you not be opposition, that you not be subtraction, that you not be division. That you be a plus sign. You need to seek the others. And between what is yours and theirs, try to find something that is an addition, not a

destruction. The plus sign is very Christian. I ask that you be a plus sign. You can't think only about yourself, or about your spouse and children. No! You have to live fraternity, and have a lot of charity and think about the others, starting apostolic works so that this light of God can reach many people.' This is a good shepherd," the Bishop said.

Echoing the Blessed's words, Bishop Giorgi added : "of the four mathematical operations, the only one worthwhile is addition. I am convinced, as Don Alvaro tells us, that a Christian can never be subtraction. We can't be division, but a plus sign, a Christian sign.

Sometimes we complicate our life by multiplying worries and fears, things that make us sad. And when we see the life of a saint like Don Alvaro we see the simplicity of God, transparent in a clean, simple, joyful and hope-filled soul. Does this mean that the

saints didn't have any worries, any difficulties, any obstacles, any cross? We know perfectly well that they often had to bear even heavier ones than others. And then what is their secret? The secret is being in God, being a man of light: having one's entire life immersed in God's heart."

Referring to divisions within his own country, the auxiliary bishop of Buenos Aires said: "Today these cracks need bridges: each one of us. Each one of us in Christ, who is the great Pontifex, the great Bridge. Christ is stronger than any crack, any division, any subtraction, any opposition, any confrontation. But at times the devil succeeds in tempting us to become discouraged, which in the end means saying 'I can't live the Gospel, I can't follow Christ in this specific situation in which he is asking me to be addition, to be a bridge.' How great is Don Alvaro,

who invites us not to turn inward, but rather to be a bridge!"

"In Blessed Alvaro's beatification," Bishop Giorgi continued, "Pope Francis pointed to Don Alvaro as a man who always sought out the positive in others. A saint is not only a man who is seen to be positive, joyful, serene, hopeful, but also a person who is able to draw out from others what is best in them. Each of us can be a Don Alvaro today. Yes, each one of us can be a Don Alvaro: positive, a bridge, addition, joy, filled with hope, realistic, with the realism of a man of faith, who knows that Christ has won in the end."

[Link to original story at aica.org](https://opusdei.org/en-uk/article/once-again-im-surprised)

at-how-beautiful-sanctity-is/

(01/19/2026)