

100 Years of Priesthood

On December 18, in Argentina, Fr. Cesar Molaro, an associate priest of Opus Dei, will celebrate the golden anniversary of his priesthood, along with his twin brother, Raul. With link to Zenit interview.

12/08/2010

On December 18, in Parana, Argentina, Fr. Cesar Molaro, an associate priest in the Priestly Society of the Holy Cross, will celebrate the

50th anniversary of his ordination, along with his twin brother Raul, a priest in the Institute for Diocesan Priests of Schoenstatt. The motto for the celebration is: “100 years in the priesthood, saviors with Jesus.”

Born in a humble family of nine brothers and sisters, both twins felt called to the priesthood, studied in the same seminary and now carry out their priestly ministry in the archdiocese of Parana.

In an interview published recently on Zenit, Fr. Cesar Molaro recalls: “In 1947, we took part in the Catholic Action at the old seminary and, at the end of the year, Fr. Marcos Kemerer asked us if we would like to join the seminary. That is how we entered, in March 1948.”

After losing two daughters soon after giving birth, their mother had promised: “If God gives me sons, I will consecrate them to become

priests." "In spite of the vow she made before we were born, my mother found it very hard to see us join the seminary. Even before we wore a soutane, from the first year of philosophy, when the holidays came, she would always beg us to stay. On the day of our ordination, she wept for emotion throughout the whole ceremony, and was delighted and proud of her sons in the priesthood. I have always thought how much the prayers and support of our parents and of our brothers and sisters have helped us in our fidelity to our priestly ministry. I think the family is essential in a priest's faithfulness and perseverance to the ministry."

"Being a priest," says Fr. Cesar, "is a grace, a call from God. It is to take part in the priesthood of Jesus Christ; that is why a priest can act in the person of Christ, the Head...one acts on behalf of Jesus, as saviors with Jesus."

In the difficult years after the council, continued Fr. Cesar, it seemed that “almost everything was being discarded: prayer, devotion to the Virgin and the rosary, obedience, celibacy, liturgy, etc. These were difficult and obscure years ... although at first I prayed a lot, after 1968 or 1970, I stopped praying due to my activity, and I felt a great inner emptiness. In September 1976, I went to a retreat called by Monsignor Tortolo, which was preached by an Opus Dei priest: Father Fernando Lázaro. After that, he used to come every month from Buenos Aires to visit me and many other priests of the diocese. He invited me to join Opus Dei.

"Over the years, I have seen that Opus Dei looks after you and looks after the priesthood. Once a week, you have fraternal conversation (spiritual direction), confession, and a formation meeting. It does not

impose anything on you, while demanding more and more from you in your spiritual life, with all its requirements. There is no double obedience: to the bishop and to Opus Dei. One continues to be a diocesan priest and not a religious (Opus Dei priests are not religious), and one owes obedience to the bishop only.

"In 1992, I had the grace of attending the beatification of Fr. Josemaría Escrivá. Although I wanted to, I was not going to the canonization because I had undergone a stomach operation on May 17, 2002, and the canonization was on Oct. 6. Opus Dei paid for my entire trip and lodging; on board the plane, there was a priest looking after me, while, at the canonization, the vicar of Opus Dei in Argentina himself was by me, looking after me.

"Really, as the founder of Opus Dei used to say, it is a good place to live

and to die. It pleases me to remember that I was able to go twice to Rome and see the Pope and the Prelate of Opus Dei, in the center of Catholicity, to experience the universality of the Church: faithful from all over the world, taking part in the beatification and canonization.”

Speaking about perseverance in matrimony and in the priesthood, Fr. Cesar said: “In the priesthood, there is one who does not fail, and that is Jesus...If one remains faithful to the norms of piety, if one is obedient, and accepts one’s crosses in an endeavor to follow God’s will, with his grace, one perseveres in fidelity. I am pleased and I thank God, when some of the faithful say to me: ‘Thank you for your fidelity’.”

He also said that, after Jesus, the Blessed Virgin Mary plays a key role in the life of a priest. “She is Jesus’

mother and our mother, who cares especially for her sons in the priesthood. If one gives oneself to the Blessed Virgin, one may go through troubles, but the Virgin does not neglect one. How important it is to trust in her! ... Every day I rediscover how important the three Hail Marys are, the praying of the holy rosary, the scapular, in other words, that we should feel that we are Mary's sons."

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