Dear brothers, sisters, lay Assumptionists,



Father Emmanuel d'Alzon

Saint Augustine puts it paradoxically: before being Jesus' mother, Mary was his disciple (*Serm on 25*
). The Gospel (Matthew 12:50) inspired Augustine's reflection: "Whoever does the will of my heavenly Father is my…mother." Mary's greatness is less due to the fact that she conceived Jesus in her womb, than to her complete acceptance of the Father's will.

Saint Augustine goes one step further: if we are disciples like Mary, we can become "mothers" like her and bear fruit for the Kingdom, bringing others to birth in Christ by drawing them to the font of baptism.

Mary's consecration as a disciple manifested itself when her parents presented her in the Temple. As we celebrate her discipleship, we remember Father Emmanuel d'Alzon on the 125th anniversary of his death. He too was entirely given over to the Father's will, and he too bore much fruit for the Kingdom.

What do these examples of discipleship teach us living in today's world? To acknowledge and be faithful to a loving design that does not have its origin in our own will; to be centered in one other than ourselves. To allow our lives to be entirely absorbed by this one thing that matters most. To believe that God wants us to be life-givers in this world.

We know what being a faithful son "cost" Jesus. We know what discipleship "cost" Mary. What price will we pay? What does a community look like when it is entirely given over to following

Christ? Where in the world is life being snuffed out and how will you make a difference?

Five years from now, in 2010, we will observe the second centenary of Father d'Alzon's birth, when we hope to celebrate his beatification. Through his intercession, may we pray that the Lord will heal those who are ill, transform the hearts of those who wander from Him, and bring justice and peace to communities, Churches and a world that thirst for these blessings.

Fraternally,
Richard E. Lamoureux, a.a.
Superior General

Please visit following links for more information on Father Emmanuel d'Alzon:
Father d’Alzon, at the end of his life (1880)
Prayer for beatification of Father Emmanuel d'Alzon
A word of thanks from Bulgaria
Pictures of Father d'Alzon