



Les Fils de la Charité
Région France

Paris, February 22, 2008

Jean Fraissinet
1910-2008

“My God, give me again the gift of having a life useful for your glory! And then, when it pleases you grant me a valiant death for you, and to awake in your Love, to immerse myself in it forever, there will be my rest.”

Jean-Émile Anizan

Jean was born on December 12, 1910 in Sernhac in the Gard department of France. He had begun his 98th year and was the dean of the Sons of Charity. His nurse saw him as “non medical” person. He hoped to become the first Son to reach 100 years.

He was very much of his origins and of his region. Indeed, until the last years, he liked to go to Nîmes with the Sons team over there, contemplating “the luminosity of the sun that we only find here.” He liked to meet families; a good serving of mussels with French fried potatoes with beer even at one in the morning was a delight for him.

In 1986, as he celebrated his 50 years as a priest he made this homage to his parents: “It is in the poverty of my parents and out of their generous poverty that my vocation was born: ‘Go tell the Church that it is to the humble, to the poor, to the laborers that Jesus has sent it by preference’.” As a matter of fact his parents had come to Paris to find work. As Jean’s vocation appeared early they allowed him to go to the minor seminary of Marines that was then in Seine et Oise, and also at that time managed by the Sons of Charity. . There he met with Father Anizan, but without being really impressed by him, but symbolically he is the last of the Sons of Charity to have known him.

Jean was ordained a priest in Versailles on June 29, 1936 with 29 other young deacons. Those were the years of the Front Populaire¹. At the time did he associate in his heart two traditions that did not usually get along very well? That of faithfulness to Jesus Christ and to the Church and that of a faithfulness to the working class that was rising for more justice and liberty? In any case, very soon he asked his bishop permission to join the Sons of Charity.

After his novitiate he is appointed to Villeneuve St-Georges for all the duration of the war 1939-1945. Then he was in Curé d’Ars parish in Kremlin Bicêtre for two years, then two more years at Notre-Dame Auxiliatrice parish in Clichy. He then went to Draveil where he will be for 33 years, part of them with Francis Feuillet. He would be with Francis again in Maule, his last assignment. In 1988 he comes to St-Joseph retirement house in Issy-les-Moulineaux. That does not stop him from helping in parish work for yet a few years.

Jean was dynamic and enjoyed life. He liked the life he led; he was well aware of having received all and if he liked the Church it is because it had given him Jesus Christ who was the beacon of his life. All through and until the end he was a man of prayer, faithful to the Eucharist

¹ A leftist coalition that left a very positive mark on the world of the French workers.

and the Rosary, spending long hours in the chapel. He also had a very acute missionary sensitivity, recalling the words of John Paul II: “The Church is constantly in a state of mission.” His pastoral sensitivity helped him meet with the world of nonbelievers, “my Marxists friends” he would say. At his silver jubilee he said to them: “My very dear friends, who without sharing my faith have so often honored me with your friendship I owe a great gratefulness: that friendship I consider as a demand and a call: you are saying to me ‘Friend, give us the reason for the hope that you bear in you’. Your affectionate friendship is a grace that calls me to live my faith better in order to be a witness of that faith.”

Another group of persons were the object of Jean’s care: the sick. “My visits to the sick are always for me visits to the Blessed Sacrament”, he would say as he was convinced of the identification of Jesus with them, “I was sick and you came to visit me.”

Do we have to mention his attachment to the Sons of Charity? Almost to the end he attended important Sons meetings: among them the retreats in Pleterje and in Nevers. He was somewhat looked upon as the mascot grandfather of the Institute, always happy to be there, even if it was fanciful at times but we always forgave him (like letting his cell phone ring during a meeting showing that even at his age he knew how to use it).

Finally, we can say a few words of his mystical side and of his daily spiritual readings (among them Fr. Anizan, Elizabeth of the Trinity, Madeleine Delbrel, etc.). He typewrote some lines that stroke him and added his comments. An example of that: The relationship he does between Fr. Anizan and Elizabeth of the Trinity:

- Anizan: “I ache for God, I would like to be wrapped up in his wonderful Trinity and to make my home there.”
- Elizabeth: “Pacify my soul, make it you heaven, your beloved home and my place of rest.”

For the last few days he did not feel like eating, or play cards; it was not like him. Taken to the hospital on Wednesday (not forgetting his cane!) he died this Thursday February 21.

For Regional Council of France, *Jacques Robbe fc*

Translated by *Lorenzo Lortie fc*