

Dehonian Remembrance Day
November 26, 2022



Father André Prévot,
a virtuous man

Father André Prévot, a virtuous man

*To prepare the place of prayer, various elements can be used that refer to the theme of the vigil (picture with the image of Father André Prévot, cross, candles, flowers, incense ...). It is important to pay attention to the sensibilities of the group. Provide a leader or principal animator to guide the vigil and the various readers. Consider also the possibility of the technology necessary to project the images and play the music. **All the texts can be adapted to the concrete situation of the group that will participate in the prayer, or for three shorter moments of prayer.***

Introduction

Sunday, November 26, 1913. 109 years ago, the great novice master of the Congregation just born in 1878 died in Brugelette (Belgium). Father Leone André Prévot was 73 years old. Born in Le Teil (France), he became a priest in 1865, a member of the diocese of Aix, where he developed pastoral initiatives that attracted the population of the city, and where his reputation for holiness spread, calling him “the new Curé of Ars”. But his vocation was his religious life and the spirituality of the victim and of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. He came into contact with Father Dehon and on September 22, 1885 he made his first vows in San Quentin.

In the Congregation he played various roles: novice master for many years, superior of various communities, superior of the western province and general assistant of the Congregation.

On his death, Father Dehon commemorated him as “his most worthy son”, “the repairman par excellence”, writing to the whole Congregation that “our Saint is dead”.

Every year, on November 26, we celebrate Dehonian Remembrance Day, in which we remember our confreres who lived the Gospel in a heroic way. Today we present the figure of Father André Prévot, who exercised the theological and human virtues to a heroic degree and who, therefore, is pointed out to the Christian community and to the world as a living example of total and faithful conformation to Christ and his Gospel.

Act of Oblation

God, holy Father,
may your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
Strengthen in us the priestly attitude of your Son:
“Behold, I come to do your will, O God.”

May we sense your will through one another,
through the various situations we encounter,
and through all your children.

Accept us as your collaborators
for the building of your reign in this world.

Enable us to abandon ourselves to your care.
In this way,
may we live as Jesus did
when he offered you his spirit on the cross. Amen.

Song

I. A man of profound faith

Reflection

Throughout his religious life, Father André Prévot fully realized the ideal of a soul entirely consecrated to the love of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and to reparation. He practiced mortification in everything; he loved the interior life and continuous prayer and was animated by ardent zeal for the eternal salvation of souls. His burning devotion to the Holy Eucharist made him remain motionless for hours at the foot of the Tabernacle and every night he remained prostrate on the floor of the church for a long time. His union with God was habitual. His total self-denial and great austerity of life harmonized within him an inexhaustible fund of charity, patience, sweetness and goodness. In every page of his books, and especially in *"Love, Peace and Joy"* (1893) and in *"The Year with Mary"* (1902), one can discover his spiritual, humble, serene and trusting interior life.

From his numerous writings we can grasp the key to his whole life: a pure victim ready to God's will - *Ecce Venio* - and always with so much love and immolation in the service of God and men.

Gesture: At this moment, a candle with the word FAITH can be placed in front of the image of Father Prévot.

Biblical reading: Colossians 2: 6-10

So, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, walk in him, rooted in him and built upon him and established in the faith as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving. See to it that no one captivate you with an empty, seductive philosophy according to human tradition, according to the elemental powers of the world and not according to Christ. For in him dwells the whole fullness of the deity bodily, and you share in this fullness in him, who is the head of every principality and power.

Psalm 92

The Lord is king, robed with majesty;
the Lord is robed, girded with might.
The world will surely stand in place,
never to be moved.

Your throne stands firm from of old;
you are from everlasting.
The flood has raised up, Lord;
the flood has raised up its roar;
the flood has raised its pounding waves.

More powerful than the roar of many waters,
more powerful than the breakers of the sea,
powerful in the heavens is the Lord.

Your decrees are firmly established;
holiness befits your house, Lord,
for all the length of days.

Moment of silence and personal prayer (at this moment one can personally read the text of Father Prévot and the testimony)

Text by Fr. Prévot: Charity towards the Poor

“I too, a poor sinner, want to be a friend of Jesus who has won my heart with his goodness and love. I want to respond to the merciful and compassionate love of His Heart by showing myself full of mercy and compassion towards my brothers and sisters, the poor sinners. I want to respond to His love by preferring Him above all else, by giving Him my whole heart without sharing or reservation, because my sick heart needs Him and Him alone, because all my happiness is to respond to His divine call, which is all mercy, and to fulfill His holy will, which is all love. I want to respond to his goodness by my trusting abandonment, to his gentleness by my docility in letting myself be led. In my turn, I want to give Him everything, to give Him back all His gifts and to use them solely for His service; I will be worthy of the trust He shows me by calling me to share in His work, by my devotion and my constant fidelity to all the duties of my office”.

Testimony: Fr. Manuel Lagos, scj. Venezuela

“In my approach to the personality of Fr. Prévot, his personal and faith experience, one of the elements that touched me most strongly was the theme of sacrifice. Today it does not seem fashionable to talk about sacrifice. It seems that everything we do must bring us hedonistic satisfaction of our desires. It led me to reflect on sacrifice as a capacity for acceptance and responsibility in our daily lives, understood as an offering to God of everything we do, are and experience, be it joys but also daily sufferings. As a priest of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and a psychologist, my interest in the figure of Fr. Prévot meant the possibility of discovering a specific way of being Dehonian. It was an opportunity for me to discover a true witness that the Grace of God works and manifests itself in the lives of brothers and sisters. It was also a source of inspiration in the experience of my vocation of oblation to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. It has aroused in me a strong interest in continuing to delve into the fascinating history of our Congregation and continue to rediscover the charismatic sources that have inspired what we are today in the Church and in the world. The particularities of Fr. Prévot’s character, education and temperament should not obscure his concrete and admirable manner of intimacy and spirituality. I find his spiritual journey very timely, and it has been an inspiration for my own journey. Today I discover in the example of Fr. Prévot’s life, a human personality that is certainly complex, in which a profound spiritual personality developed, which arouses my admiration and inspires me. We know well that it is not possible to contemplate Jesus Christ - our only model of life - only as a man, to try to imitate his personality or psychological characteristics. What is needed is the gaze of faith, the openness to the mystery of the Son of God that surpasses all human knowledge. In the same way, Fr. Prévot was a concrete model - and not the only one - of living Dehonian spirituality, which certainly cannot be imitated in his behavior and personality, but is unquestionably admirable in his capacity for openness and response to the grace of God”.

Pray: Act of Faith

O my God, I firmly believe
that you are one God in three divine Persons,
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
I believe that your divine Son became man
and died for our sins and that he will come
to judge the living and the dead.

I believe these and all the truths
which the Holy Catholic Church teaches
because you have revealed them
who are eternal truth and wisdom,
who can neither deceive nor be deceived.
In this faith I intend to live and die. Amen.

Song

II. A man of strong hope

Reflection

Hope appears, for Father Prévot, as most marked by trials and difficulties, but it tends precisely to instill the confidence to achieve the Supreme Good. Hope makes him persevering in the search for God's plan for him and to adhere to it with all his strength. In him this virtue above all became the animator and support of his vocation and mission strongly marked by victim spirituality. Therefore we see hope in abandonment and an increased hope up to full abandonment, out of love and reparation.

Gesture: At this moment, a candle with the word **HOPE** can be placed in front of the image of Father Prévot.

Biblical reading: Romans 5: 1-5

Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access [by faith] to this grace in which we stand, and we boast in hope of the glory of God. Not only that, but we even boast of our afflictions, knowing that affliction produces endurance, and endurance, proven character, and proven character, hope, and hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out into our hearts through the holy Spirit that has been given to us.

Psalm 61: 2-3, 6-9

My soul rests in God alone,
from whom comes my salvation.
God alone is my rock and salvation,
my fortress; I shall never fall.

My soul, be at rest in God alone,
from whom comes my hope.
God alone is my rock and my salvation,
my fortress; I shall not fall.

My deliverance and honor are with God,
my strong rock;
my refuge is with God.
Trust God at all times, my people!
Pour out your hearts to God our refuge!

Moment of silence and personal prayer (at this moment one can personally read the text of Father Prévot and the testimony)

Text by Fr. Prévot: Reparation

"The evil that we want to repair comes from the revolt of men against the will of God who had arranged everything for the greater good of all. The remedy and reparation consist in conforming ourselves, in abandoning ourselves fully to this divine will, all wise and good. From another point of view, let us not forget that if Our Lord wants to make use of us for the work of reparation, it is because He needs, for this purpose, souls who are entirely abandoned to Him, from whom He can do what He wants. If He finds such

souls, He will accomplish this work in them in a way that is sweet for the souls themselves, consoling for His divine Heart and fruitful for the Church. Dear souls of reparation, you will find forgiveness, salvation and peace for yourselves and for your brothers in abandonment. Give yourselves to love for love's sake, in all confidence, without fear and without reserve. Renew, on every occasion, these dispositions of abandonment in your soul and then boldly advance in the work of reparation: work of forgiveness, salvation and peace".

Testimony: Bishop Virginio D. Bressanelli scj, bishop emeritus of Neuquén-Argentina

"Prévot's particularity was proper to his personal charism, which at no time (especially in its external expressions) did he understand how to transfer it to the Congregation. What was most particular to him, in my opinion, was his way of understanding and practicing the spirit of immolation in the vow of victimhood. Dehon, the vow of victim led him, among other things, never to speak of the problems and attacks he received from outside or within the Congregation..., to keep silent..., not to defend himself unless he was asked to do so..., for Fr Prévot, the vow of victim led him to the total renunciation of himself, so that the Lord and grace alone could emerge as the protagonist. Both, each in his own way, were heroic. This subject deserves a special study in the history and theology of spirituality in the Catholic Church. It cannot be treated superficially, because it was for both of them a real path to holiness, even with different modalities and approaches. Likewise, some ascetic forms, present in the spirituality of the 18th and 19th centuries, certainly circumstantial and outdated today, much publicized anecdotally in some biographies of Fr Prévot, which make him eccentric and extravagant, are very secondary and should not tarnish his path of dedication and holiness. Nor should they lead to ignorance or underestimation of this SCJ religious who is one of "our greatest" (cf. Cst 16). Nor should the many trials he endured in his life, against which he had to struggle theologically, be confused with this inadequate clothing. The reputation for holiness which Fr. Prévot enjoyed in the Congregation from his death onwards is also historically undeniable. Perhaps Fr. Dehon himself contributed to this, and he openly manifested himself in this sense. Certainly his life was a true journey of holiness, under the action of the Holy Spirit, incarnating the essential values of the Dehonian charism, from his experience of the love of God in Christ and of his heroic love for his neighbor".

Pray: Act of Hope

O Lord God,
I hope by your grace for the pardon
of all my sins
and after life here to gain eternal happiness
because you have promised it
who are infinitely powerful, faithful, kind,
and merciful.
In this hope I intend to live and die. Amen.

Song

III. A man of generous charity

Reflection

The virtues lived by Father Prévot may seem demanding and severe. It can be said that he had a very strict tendency in the practice of virtues. Throughout his life, he strove with a sincere heart to exercise all the virtues. Everything is centered in charity towards God and neighbor. This is the true center and foundation of his life and of his virtues: to live centered in Jesus Christ and above all to exercise charity, because he always wanted to “overflow the measure of charity”, his focal goal of life.

Gesture: At this moment, a candle with the word **CHARITY** can be placed in front of the image of Father Prévot

Biblical reading: Ephesians 3: 14-19

For this reason I kneel before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named, that he may grant you in accord with the riches of his glory to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in the inner self, and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, rooted and grounded in love, may have strength to comprehend with all the holy ones what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

Psalm 85: 11-17

Teach me, Lord, your way
that I may walk in your truth,
single-hearted and revering your name.

I will praise you with all my heart,
glorify your name forever, Lord my God.
Your mercy to me is great;
you have rescued me from the depths of Sheol.

God, the arrogant have risen against me;
a ruthless band has sought my life;
to you they pay no heed.

But you, Lord, are a compassionate and gracious God,
slow to anger, abounding in mercy and truth.
Turn to me, be gracious to me;
give your strength to your servant;
save the son of your handmaid.

Give me a sign of your favor:
make my enemies see, to their confusion,
that you, Lord, help and comfort me.

Moment of silence and personal prayer (at this moment one can personally read the text of Father Prévot and the testimony)

Text by Fr. Prévot: Charity, the perfect bond of family spirit

“Be an angel of peace for those of your brothers who form a family with you. Show sincere compassion to all and make it as effective as possible. Be the good Cyrenean of all, for all suffer and bear their crosses, and Jesus will help you to bear yours. This will be the fullness of charity, which is itself the fullness of the law. Blessed and blessed among all will be the one who devotes himself, without saying anything, to a hidden, poor and painful life, all of self-denial, for love of his family, who sacrifices himself for them in union with Jesus. He will have found the science of peace and will teach it to those around him. Be an angel of consolation in your family. Imitate Jesus in this too: forget yourself, think little of your own sufferings, and devote yourself to relieving the physical and spiritual suffering of those around you. Always remember that, in practice, devotion and dedication must be one and the same thing. Let your face breathe joy rather than sadness or some other unregulated affection; let the outward serenity of your features be a mark of that which reigns within. Let your modesty delight your brothers: modesty, putting order in the mind and in the heart, naturally makes the face serene and even smiling. Oh, how much good you can do around you! Pray to the Lord to give you this gentle, affable charity, which does not tire, endures everything, and remains smiling in all the setbacks of life. To make it easier for you, think that Jesus Himself lives in your midst. Be eager to serve Him, to show Him all your affection in the person of your brothers. Treat them as you would treat Jesus Himself, with all the care, consideration and devotion of good charity”.

Testimony: Fr. Flávio Marcos dos Passos, scj. Brazil

“I understood that love cannot be contained, it cannot be measured numerically, it cannot be calculated. The measure of love is Love, so if I experience Jesus who is the personification of the Law, the personification of Love, it is impossible not to overflow. And the beauty of all this is that the more I overflow, the more I have to overflow because, as Father Prévot wrote, the promise that Jesus made to pay us the same measure should encourage us to obey the Law not out of fear, not just thinking of eternal. Punishment, but we must obey, above all, because if we open ourselves, we can truly experience the overflowing of Love, of Divine Charity within ourselves. And by experiencing it, we will be able not only to understand the words of Jesus, but to make Jesus and his word our life, configuring ourselves to him to be a living source that always makes Charity overflow. In conclusion, I would like to highlight one of Father Prévot’s affirmations that touches my heart the most. He says: “you need rest, I will answer: we must let the measure of charity overflow”. This statement touches me a lot because in the world we live in, with so much stress, so much haste, with so many things to do, sometimes we use these realities to hide, they are like excuses for not respecting the Law of Love. But Father Prévot marvelously states that the overflowing of charity is the cure for fatigue. For this reason, I ask for the intercession of Father Prévot so that Charity overflowing in me helps me to be an “overflowing” (I think this word does not exist, but I write in this way to strengthen the configuration of Christ, to which we are called) and that my tiredness, wet by the overflowing of Charity, may make my brothers rest. Thank you Father Prévot for this beautiful and effective spiritual testament ”.

Pray: Act of Love

O Lord God, I love you above all things
and I love my neighbor for your sake
because you are the highest, infinite and perfect
good, worthy of all my love.
In this love I intend to live and die. Amen.

Song

Closing: Love knows no measure

Reflection

Father André, in addition to being rigorous, was a man in love with God. Many of his prayers and homilies were imbued with love for the Lord. But Father Prévot offers the best of himself in the exercise of confession. He knows how to listen to penitents without haste and with patience; he helps them to overcome their sins one by one. Thus he begins his challenge against all sins, insists on the practice of virtues and advises good behavior. The Servant of God also has a gift: he knows how to scrutinize the consciences of penitents and how to read sins. Through confession the curate re-establishes their relationship of friendship with God and with what they think of themselves. What amazes about Father Prévot is the attitude of the heart, through which he overcomes the rigorism in which he grew up and which surrounded his environment. The virtue of the Servant of God finds justification in his humility and simplicity and in his persevering and constantly faithful ministry to the God of goodness and mercy.

Prayer: Love knows no measure – Fr. André Prévot

From time to time I will tell myself:

you must not place a limit on your love.

When self-love tells me:

defend your rights, I will answer:

You must not place a limit on your love.

If laziness says: you need some rest, I will answer:

You must not place a limit on your love.

If the wisdom of the world tells me not to forgive

In order not to lose self-worth, I will answer:

You must not place a limit on your love.

If I am embarrassed, tense, tired, I will tell myself:

Have courage! You must not place a limit on your love.

Then, on my part, when I will have need of help, counsel,

correction, consolation, perhaps forgiveness, support

for the body, for the soul, for myself or my brothers/sisters,

then I will turn to Jesus and say:

“Good master, you promised to use the same measure:

You too must not place a limit on your love”. Amen.

Final Song