

***Praying with Father Jordan:  
Unlocking the Treasures  
of the Spiritual Diary***

Second Edition

Prepared and presented to the Salvatorian Family  
by the Joint Ongoing Formation Committee (JOFC),  
of the Joint Leadership Group (JLG), USA.

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## **Prayer Before Study of the *Spiritual Diary***

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O Holy Spirit,  
beginning in his youth,  
you gave Father Francis Jordan  
an apostolic heart  
and a contemplative spirit.  
As I read and pray with the  
*Spiritual Diary* of our Founder,  
open me to your presence  
in these pages and in these words.  
Endow me with the heart  
and spirit of our Founder.  
Give me the same burning zeal  
for the Mission of our  
Divine Savior:  
that all people everywhere  
might come to Eternal Life.

Help me also to grow in my  
knowledge and appreciation  
of the charism of Father Jordan  
through his personal thoughts  
and prayers.

Empower me with his trust  
in divine providence,  
and help me answer the call  
to be an apostle in our day  
and to our world.

I ask these graces  
in the name of Jesus,  
who is Savior and Lord,  
for ever and ever.

## INTRODUCTION

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### “PRAYING WITH FATHER JORDAN”

October 11, 2012, marked the beginning of the Catholic Church’s “Year of Faith” on the fiftieth anniversary of the opening of the Second Vatican Council. Through these fifty years of returning to the “original spirit” of our foundations, while adapting to the “changed conditions of our time” (*Perfectae Caritatis*, 2), we Salvatorians have grown tremendously in our awareness of Father Jordan and the founding vision of the Salvatorian community. Thanks to the work of so many Salvatorians throughout the world, we now have unprecedented access to primary Salvatorian sources and an ever-expanding collection of documents, articles, studies, and other resources to enrich our Salvatorian charism, mission, spirituality, and identity.

This present contribution of the JOFC is offered to the Salvatorian Family during the Year of Faith, and beyond, as an opportunity for spiritual growth. It is not a study guide or program to be completed; nor is it intended to duplicate or replace the wonderful resources already available. With this process, we Salvatorians simply are invited to enter into a deeper relationship with Father Jordan—allowing his spirit to touch our lives in new and more profound ways.

## “UNLOCKING THE TREASURES OF THE *SPIRITUAL DIARY*”

Of all the Salvatorian resources, Father Jordan’s *Spiritual Diary* is perhaps our greatest treasure—both for the unique insights it provides into Father Jordan’s intimate thoughts and prayers, as well as its capacity to speak to present-day Salvatorians. There are several resources available to facilitate greater understanding of Father Jordan and the historical and thematic aspects of his *Spiritual Diary*, many of which are now contained in the 2011 New English Language Edition. Furthermore, resources such as, *Talks of Father Francis Mary of the Cross Jordan*, *Letter Dialogue*, and various histories provide ample opportunities for personal enrichment and formation and greater contextualization of the *Spiritual Diary* in Father Jordan’s life.

Acknowledging the wealth of available resources, the JOFC has chosen to focus exclusively on the *Spiritual Diary*, allowing Father Jordan’s words to speak for themselves and speak to us. The pages which follow approach the *Spiritual Diary*, not as a book to be studied, but as a “spiritual classic” in which we can discover both Father Jordan and ourselves anew.

## “SECOND EDITION”

Yes, there was a first edition of *Praying with Father Jordan!* In 1996, several Salvatorians formed a “diary group” to pray with and reflect upon the *Spiritual Diary*. In order to encourage and facilitate the formation of other diary groups, they created a packet of materials including historical information and practical guides for reading, praying, and discussing the *Spiritual Diary*. Thanks to the work of Lay Salvatorians Joanne and John Pantuso, Sr. Pat Kieler, Fr. Peter Schuessler, Sr. Grace Mary Croft, Fr. Don Skwor, Sr. Carol Jean Zais, and many others, the treasures of the *Spiritual Diary* have been made much more accessible to the Salvatorian community.

In 2011, the Joint History and Charism Committee published Fr. Dan Pekarske’s new translation of the *Spiritual Diary*. This New English Language Edition not only provides a very accessible English translation of Father Jordan’s words, but also contains much of the historical and informative resources previously available in separate publications, plus a wealth of new material, all within an inviting and beautifully bound volume. Every Salvatorian is strongly encouraged to explore the depth and breadth of material contained in this wonderful book!

With the new edition of the *Spiritual Diary*, the JOFC set out to provide resources to facilitate incorporating the *Spiritual Diary* into our spiritual formation as Salvatorians. Because such valuable information for the study and prayerful reflection of the *Spiritual Diary* is now contained



within the text and appendixes of the new edition, the JOFC is offering this resource as a possible *companion process* for getting the most out of that material and facilitating our personal spiritual growth as Salvatorians.

The “Prayer Before the Study of the *Spiritual Diary*” (bookmark) and the suggested prayer service for presenting the new translation to the Salvatorian Regions in 2011 were just the beginning. Two of the original 1996 articles by Sr. Pat Kieler and Fr. Peter Schuessler have been updated and included in the current resource, as well as a revised schedule for reading the *Spiritual Diary* through the course of about a year. Finally, the two sections, “Praying the Questions of My Life with Father Jordan” and “Praying with the Saints in the *Spiritual Diary: Companions on Father Jordan’s Sacred Journey*,” were developed to facilitate prayerful reflection upon the *Spiritual Diary* within the context of our personal lives today. The next step of the process for the JOFC is to develop and offer retreats to the Salvatorian Family for even greater in-depth prayer and reflection on the treasures of Father Jordan’s *Spiritual Diary*.

This edition of *Praying with Father Jordan* would not be possible without the enthusiastic and faithful work of the JOFC members: Ms. Jan Bencken, Sr. Jane Eschweiler, Mrs. Ann Griffin, Fr. Don Loskot, Sr. Carol Thresher, and Fr. Jeff Wocken. Many thanks to them and all who helped make this resource a reality.

## Note Regarding Citation Style

All references to Father Jordan's original writing use two numbers: (1) a roman numeral indicating Book I, II, III, or IV of the *Spiritual Diary*, and (2) the page number(s) of the originals as recorded by Father Jordan. So "II/1-2" refers to original pages one and two of Book II, thus keeping citations consistent regardless of translation or edition of the *Spiritual Diary*.

Please note that in Book I, after page 159 Father Jordan mistakenly numbered the next page "150," so page numbers 150-159 appear twice. These duplicate page numbers are noted with an † in this edition. Also, he numbered two pages "27" in Book IV, thus "IV/27\*" is used to indicate the repeated page number.

Finally, when referencing text from the introductory material, the page number of the 2011 New English Language Edition is used.

# Thoughts About Praying the *Spiritual Diary*

Sr. Pat. Kieler, SDS

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## I. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE *SPIRITUAL DIARY*

- A. Is the *Spiritual Diary* perhaps our “deep story” which we need to experience to further articulate our Salvatorian identity? We may notice Francis Jordan's lifelong transformation process helping us identify our own unique experience of being given over to God in our time.
- B. Is the *Spiritual Diary* perhaps our Salvatorian “spiritual classic” as it reveals through Father Jordan's prayer our contemplative roots? Philip Sheldrake observes, “Classics are those texts that bring us into transforming contact with what is enduring and essential in our religious tradition. To put it another way, a classic is what may be called a wisdom document” (*Spirituality and History*, p. 172).
- C. Is the *Spiritual Diary* perhaps important to us as: a means to meet God and the Jesus that Father Jordan experienced; a means to engage the Gospel as it is filtered to us from Father Jordan's perspective? The focus of experience for us in praying the *Spiritual Diary* is toward Jesus and his mission as given to us by Father Jordan; the focus is **not** on becoming like Father Jordan. This is a significant distinction.
- D. Since the Salvatorian charism lives in us, the members, we can expect to find ourselves and the prayerful cry of

our hearts echoed in the insights of the *Spiritual Diary*, and also challenged to further growth. Open yourself to and expect a nurturing of your Salvatorian call.

## II. THE LITERARY FORM OF THE *SPIRITUAL DIARY* (see “The Spiritual Itinerary of Our Founders”)

### A. The entries:

1. are neither memoirs nor recollections
2. were never intended to be read by others
3. were written from Father Jordan's own heart, so that he would neither deceive himself nor miss the promptings of the Spirit in his life
4. are characterized by a profound honesty and relentless self-admonitions to the path of holiness
5. reveal in his penmanship his turbulent ups and downs as he strove for clarity of insight and purity of intention
6. are written from the profound depths of a soul rooted in God

### B. Themes we find in Father Jordan's growth process:

1. his ascetical program
2. prayers bubbling up and cries for help
3. offers of his life to make God known and to expend himself in the work of salvation
4. a growing love of the cross
5. a compelling desire to be holy and wholly given to Jesus Christ, like the apostles

6. a recognition that growth in holiness is growth in both God-knowledge and self-knowledge
7. quotes from many saints and spiritual books that reveal to us something of Father Jordan's inner spirit and are used by him to express his own spirit in relationship to God
8. some characteristics of the spirituality of his times: "Devotio Moderna"

### III. OUR PURPOSE IN PRAYING THE *SPIRITUAL DIARY*

- A. Not to know facts or themes in the diary, but to allow the *Spiritual Diary* to move our hearts, as we notice the evolution of his spiritual journey in life.
- B. To engage not only the words of Father Jordan, but his heart and spirit from which those words were expressed
- C. In treasuring and interacting with Father Jordan's truth, to allow ourselves to notice:
  1. Where and when I resonate with his spirit
  2. Where or when his words stir up an invitation in me or a resistance.
- D. Perhaps only by praying the *Spiritual Diary* (not just reading it) will we begin to treasure it as our Salvatorian classic.
- E. **Important reminder:** We are not reading the *Spiritual Diary*. We are **praying** the *Spiritual Diary*, somewhat the way you possibly pray the daily Gospel. The heart

of prayer is communion with God. Thus, we aim to allow God's spirit to move us to prayer as we allow ourselves to open to Father Jordan's prayer.

1. Learning to pray the *Spiritual Diary* is a little like learning to pray the psalms. Sometimes the images and language of the psalms had to be grappled with and moved through to come to the heart and to the prayer of the psalms. We need to bring a similar patience, openness, and trust in God's revealing Spirit to the praying of the *Spiritual Diary*.
2. Just as scripture would be incomplete without the treasure of the psalms, so intuitively we know our understanding of the Salvatorian charism would be incomplete without the gift of the *Spiritual Diary*.
3. In it we are being invited into Father Jordan's profound spiritual journey. His journeying to God and sharing in the mission of Jesus impels the journey and mission of all Salvatorians. We are invited to honor and perhaps re-discover in ourselves that contemplative well from which our own mission flows today. We are invited to celebrate and nurture our kinship with the spirit of our founder who longed to: "know you, the only true God and Jesus Christ whom you have sent" (Jn. 17:3).

# **Guidelines for Formative Spiritual Reading: Father Jordan's *Spiritual Diary***

Fr. Peter R. Schuessler, SDS

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## INTRODUCTION

For many people who are approaching Father Francis Jordan's *Spiritual Diary* for the first time, reading this text will come as a different and even somewhat challenging experience. For those of us who are not accustomed to reading this kind of literature, the following may be helpful to keep in mind when reading the *Spiritual Diary*.

First, what kind of book are we reading? It is not a novel for recreational reading, nor is it a history, or a spiritual "how-to" book. It is not a biography of the founder, although we can learn much about him, his vision and his personal relationship with God. It is a book that would normally be classified as a diary or journal, written in a chronological order. It is "spiritual" because we are given a privileged glimpse into Father Jordan's inner life as he experienced his personal relationship with God and worked out how to respond to the call to serve the Church he so loved. As we read and pray these inner thoughts or "heart cries" of the founder, we, too, can gain personal wisdom and insight for living our own life of the Spirit. Father Jordan never planned or intended to have his journal published. And he certainly would not have imagined that we would be reading his words in the Twenty-first century. He simply kept this diary for himself. These pages were his refuge, his place to go to when he needed to give

expression to some of his most intimate and personal thoughts and feelings. Nevertheless, we can learn something about our own identity as Salvatorians, our spiritual inheritance, and insights into our relationship with God through the careful reading, praying and reflecting on the words of this holy and inspired man.

Secondly, how should we go about reading the *Spiritual Diary* of our founder? I suggest that the best and most fruitful way is to practice the art of *formative spiritual reading*. While much has been written about spiritual reading in general and on *lectio divina* in particular, I have found the best and most useful guidelines to be those that have been articulated by the science of Formative Spirituality, as developed by Fr. Adrian van Kaam, C.S.Sp, and Ph.D. I am further indebted to Susan Muto, PhD who has contributed a number of books and publications that has done much to foster the practice of formative spiritual reading. Something, someone or some event is “formative” when, with prayerful reflection, we are given an insight or understanding into who we most deeply are in God’s eyes, the man or woman he has meant for us to be from the beginning of time. We are given a directive, no matter how small, about how God is calling to live our life in this particular time and place. Often these ideas come to us as “hunches” that, if acted upon, lead us a little further down the road of our life’s calling. For this reason, the kind of reading we are interested in doing when we read Father Jordan’s *Spiritual Diary* is called “formative.”



It is also “spiritual” reading because through this kind of reading we are seeking to better understand and appreciate our relationship with God and, in and through God, with each other and the world in which we live.

The way most of us have been trained to approach a text is in a critical, analytical style of reading which has the purpose of gaining some kind of information. This is the way we read a cook book, for example, or a manual, a textbook or a newspaper. In our search for the information we need, we study and analyze what is written, questioning the text when appropriate, judging its style and usefulness and drawing practical conclusions. Some other kinds of literature, such as a novel or a short story, are read mostly for entertainment or to pass the time. A critical attitude and time efficiency are often the tools that are used to accomplish this kind of reading. Reading for information or entertainment play an important role in our education, our work, the culture in which we live and in the way we successfully navigate our way through accomplishing the countless number of tasks that are part of our everyday lives.

However, the reading of literature such as Scripture, spiritual masters and Father Jordan’s *Spiritual Diary* calls for a different approach to reading the text. This kind of reading calls for a certain amount of personal discipline, patience and a non-judgmental attitude towards the author and his/her style. What follows are some ways to foster the art and discipline of formative spiritual reading. As you go through this list of “dos and don’ts” it will be important

that you be honest with yourself as you identify the characteristics of your own style of reading.

## ATTITUDES THAT CAN MAKE FORMATIVE SPIRITUAL READING DIFFICULT

First, let's examine some of the thoughts and attitudes that we bring with us to a text and which can often hinder us from receiving the fruit that comes from a reading that is formative and spiritual.

**When I settle for a shallow *feeling* response only:** When I refuse to let the word(s) confront me and address itself to the here and now of my life; staying in the shallow water of comfortable feelings.

**When I read for information only:** Of course this is how most of us have been trained to read. This is when I read only to round out my religious-spiritual education, to satisfy my intellectual curiosity or seek information; a cursory and surface coverage of many texts without deep integration.

**When I do not practice sufficient discipline:** "Fleeing" from the text as soon as it pricks my conscience or opens up an area of my life where, spiritually speaking, I feel less than adequate or uncomfortable. Often my ego or cherished self-image feels threatened; I am not willing to stay with the text, practice repetition or to sit in silence with what I have just read.

**When I fail to trust:** . . . that God will work in me; that all things work together for the good of those who love God with sincere hearts. Not trusting that God can and would want to communicate to me through this text. As Salvatorians we might call this a failure to trust in Divine Providence.

**When I refuse to let go:** That is, to let God be God in my life and to surrender my egocentric desires and ideas; to abandon myself to God's will as this invites me, appeals to me and challenges me within the context of my lived world; when I hold only on to MY own thoughts, desires and ideas, not believing that the text has anything new or of importance to offer me.

**When I harbor the image of myself as a “spiritual reader”:** That is, focusing on the “art” or the “doing” of spiritual reading rather than on the meaning and guidance that emerges from the text as the Spirit-gift of the Word; when I focus on the image I have of myself as a spiritual reader rather than attending to the grace of the moment and the word God wishes to give me in this reading.

**When I fall into analyzing, judging, comparing and criticizing:** When I wish that things were other than they are; living in the “as if” or “never for me” mentality rather than being open to this author's message, style of expression, use of imagery, etc. When I look for the negatives to criticize rather than being open to what the text has to say to me. This leads me to placing myself in a “superior” position to that of the author because of my

education or the advantages of the times or culture in which I live.

**When I do not allow myself the experience of inner solitude:** I stay in the “fast lane”, never stopping to notice the small things of life, “smelling the roses”, etc. It’s being oblivious to the harmony, richness of color, sound, and beauty of design in the world around us. When I keep myself filled with the noise of my preoccupations and do not make room for the presence of God to be felt or God’s voice to be heard. As St. John of the Cross reminds us, *“The Father spoke one Word which was His Son, and this Word He always speaks in eternal silence, and in silence must it be heard by the soul.”*(Maxims and Counsels)

**When I refuse to accept my limitations:** This is a refusal to acknowledge and accept the reality that is uniquely **ME**, including my vulnerabilities, my poverty and dependence on God. It is my refusal to accept the truth that I am always becoming and do not have my life as all together as I would like.

**When I am attached to “warm fuzzies”:** That is, only expecting “good feelings” to come forth from my reading of the text; when I begin to dwell more on looking for these than on the meanings to which they point. As a result, I consider my spiritual reading a failure because I don’t have these warm feelings when I have finished.

**When I crave only the new and unusual:** This is a mentality that insists on being “in” with the latest and the

newest; this can lead to prejudging and labeling the text as “old fashioned,” conservative, ancient, out of date or irrelevant.

**When I give in to discouragement:** This can lead to resistance to the text. This comes from wanting to be at a place where I am not at yet; refusing to accept the pace of growth that God has chosen especially for me; this can also evoke slight guilt feelings or mild depression, resulting in dismissal of the text as being irrelevant.

**When I find myself holding onto a waiting “for” vs. waiting “upon” mentality:** My exaggerated expectations can lead me to the desire to force a meaning from the text in accordance with my own limited world view or my own narrow needs only. This happens when I impatiently wait for the text to agree with my ideas and do not wait for ideas and meanings to emerge from the text as a gift from God, chosen especially for me in this here and now.

### USEFUL ATTITUDES FOR FORMATIVE SPIRITUAL READING

The following attitudes create facilitating conditions for successful formative spiritual reading:

**When I approach the text with a sense of humility:** I know myself well enough to let the words of the text touch and possibly challenge me; I respect my God-given limitations and gifts and not straining or forcing myself to go beyond them; I find my peace in responding to the “pace of grace” God has chosen for the unfolding of my life.

Father Jordan writes in his *Spiritual Diary*: “I will do my spiritual reading modestly and humbly, recalling how little progress I have made in the spiritual life.” (*Spiritual Diary* I/66)

**When I am open to the author:** I do not fight the author’s style and I learn to recognize and appreciate differences in the style that are due to the ideas, customs, practices and beliefs that were around in the times in which this particular author lived.

**When I practice the discipline of repetition:** I remember that reading is “formative” when I re-read, dwell, spiral in on and carefully “chew” the text. By sharing my insights and findings with someone else or with others in a reading group I engage in another form of repetition. Stay with the text!

**When I focus on quality and not quantity:** I resist reading to cover large portions of the material in one sitting. A word or phrase is enough to absorb meaning and direction for my life. Avoid “speed reading”! In his *Spiritual Diary*, Father Jordan writes: “Finally, I will read Holy Scripture with greatest reverence and devotion: not reading hastily, but with a calm, attentive soul, especially for all the things that are useful to humble me.” (*Spiritual Diary* I/68)

**When I choose a conducive place and time:** I find a place that is quiet and appropriate to the spiritual practice in which I am about to engage. I try to be aware of

environmental factors, such as lighting, the level of noise, comfortable seating, the presence of religious symbols, incense, etc. What time of the day is best for me to do spiritual reading?

**When I avoid “ego evaluation”:** I assume a spiritual mode of response; I try to be less self-critical and more self-appreciative. I open myself to the “little words” that flow from the text and announce themselves in the larger Word of God. These words are being given to me because God personally believes in my goodness.

**When I am ready to “move” or change:** I aim to be open to reformation and being transformed by the power of sacred words. To do this, I look for opportunities to learn, stirred by the ongoing dialogue between what I read and the way I live. I know and accept that I might be invited to make a change in my life by the Mystery that gave me life in the first place.

**When I trust:** . . . that the word is working its way with me; that approaching the text is a given that will make a difference in my life.

**When I wait “upon”:** . . . the disclosure that comes in God’s good time (vs. waiting for my own expectation to be fulfilled in accordance with MY preconceived notions of how they should be fulfilled.)

**When I avoid “negative identity”:** That is, being present only to what the text is NOT saying. (When I look only for

theological explanations that are not meant to be there and overlook experiential descriptions would be one example of this.)

**When I practice vigilance of the heart:** I am aware of when my expectations for blissful communion with God make the text seem wearisome, boring or tedious and which, therefore, can lead me to resist the text.

**When I try not to be afraid of darkness:** I try to practice living with the sense of not knowing, no matter how much I do know or think I know. Darkness can - and often is – an experience of the transcendence of God.

**When I am ready for the new and unforeseen:** Just as God can be experienced as darkness, so also God can suddenly and unexpectedly be present in new and creative ways. This calls for a playful, child-like attitude on my part as the reader.

**When I persevere:** I stay with particular passages that evoke a prayerful response and reflective presence in the moment. Keeping my own spiritual reading notebook or journal is helpful for coming back to these special passages.

**When I bring an attitude of willingness to the text:** I am willing to work through resistances and disclosures that challenge me to make a change or confront me or make me feel uncomfortable.



**When I am willing to share:** Sharing the fruits of my spiritual reading with my spiritual director, a friend or in a spiritual reading group, can help me to integrate what I have received from spiritual reading into my life. Sharing helps me to be sure that what I have learned about myself and God's plan for my life doesn't just stay in my head but it will move this new wisdom into my heart and, ultimately, to put it into action.

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SOME SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER READING:

Casey, Michael - *Sacred Reading: The Ancient Art of Lectio Divina* (Triumph Books, 1995)

Mulholland Jr., M. Robert – *Shaped by the Word: the Power of Scripture in Spiritual Formation* (The Upper Room, 1985)

Muto, Susan Annette – *Approaching the Sacred: An Introduction to Spiritual Reading*. (Dimension Books, 1973)

“ “ “ *Steps Along the Way: The Path of Spiritual Reading* Dimension Books, 1975)

“ “ “ – *The Journey Homeward* (Dimension Books, 1977)

“ “ “ – *A Practical Guide to Spiritual Reading* (Dimension Books, 1976)

Wiederkehr, Macrina – *Abide: Keeping Vigil with the Word of God* (Liturgical Press, 2011)

Willimon, William H. – *Reading with Deeper Eyes: The Love of Literature and the Life of Faith* (Upper Room, 1998)

Wood, Ralph C. – *Literature and Theology* (Abingdon Press, 2008)

## SECTION I

### **Praying the *Spiritual Diary* Throughout the Year**

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This encounter with the *Spiritual Diary* is spread out over most of one year; it can be used by individuals for personal reflection or by groups for shared reflection. Many of those using this guide for personal reflection may find the need to modify the schedule because of personal and/or ministerial circumstances and may take more than the suggested 42 weeks to complete. That's fine. Don't feel you have to stick scrupulously to the suggested readings, but also, don't try to squeeze too many readings into one sitting. The readings should be spread out over several days of the week (perhaps Monday-Friday). This pace suggests about 2-3 of Father Jordan's pages per sitting.

Whether you're in a group or reading the diary on your own, spend time with the Founder's words. Let them sink in. Understand the 19<sup>th</sup> Century spirituality that might be influencing Father Jordan's spiritual reading. The following questions might help you in your reflection.

*What was going on in Father Jordan's experience as he was writing these thoughts?*

*How do these words impact (challenge, console, rouse) me as I read them today?*

*What prayer do these readings evoke in me?*

Start your daily reading with the “Prayer Before Study of the *Spiritual Diary*.”

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<u>Week 1</u>	Introductions to: <i>Spiritual Diary</i> , English Language Edition, First and Second Sections	<u>Week 11</u>	Introduction to the Fourth Section and SD I/110-121
<u>Week 2</u>	SD I/1-8	<u>Week 12</u>	SD I/122-130
<u>Week 3</u>	SD I/9-16	<u>Week 13</u>	SD I/131-139
<u>Week 4</u>	Introduction to the Third Section and SD I/17-31	<u>Week 14</u>	SD I/140-145
<u>Week 5</u>	SD I/32-45	<u>Week 15</u>	Introduction to the Fifth Section and SD I/146-152
<u>Week 6</u>	SD I/46-60	<u>Week 16</u>	SD I/153-151+
<u>Week 7</u>	SD I/61-75	<u>Week 17</u>	SD I/152+-159+
<u>Week 8</u>	SD I/76-88	<u>Week 18</u>	Introduction to the Sixth Section and SD I/160-168
<u>Week 9</u>	SD I/89-100	<u>Week 19</u>	SD I/169-176
<u>Week 10</u>	SD I/101-109	<u>Week 20</u>	SD I/177-185
		<u>Week 21</u>	SD I/186-191
		<u>Week 22</u>	SD I/192-199

- Week 23 Introduction to the Seventh Section and SD I/200-213 (“The Pact”)
- Week 24 SD II/1-12
- Week 25 SD II/13-25
- Week 26 SD II/26-32
- Week 27 Introduction to the Eighth Section and SD II/33-44
- Week 28 SD II/45-50
- Week 29 SD II/51-53 (“The Pact” appears again; do you have any new insights?)
- Week 30 SD II/54-65
- Week 31 SD II/66-79
- Week 32 SD II/80-94
- Week 33 SD II/95-106
- Week 34 SD II/107-121
- Week 35 SD III/1-9
- Week 36 SD III/10-20
- Week 37 SD III/21-37
- Week 38 Introduction to the Ninth Section and SD IV/1-10
- Week 39 SD IV/11-18
- Week 40 SD IV/19-27\*
- Week 41 SD IV/28-39
- Week 42 The Spiritual Testament of Father Jordan

## SECTION II

### Praying the Questions of My Life with Father Jordan

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Spiritual reading must be true to the authentic reality of the author, yet it also incorporates the lived experiences of the reader. The six questions in this section are not a thematic study of the *Spiritual Diary*. They were chosen primarily with you, the reader, in mind. You are invited to turn to them in any order and at any time a given question seems particularly relevant. The simple process of Read-Reflect-Pray may also be used to address additional questions as they surface.

**READ** – References include the book and page numbers, as well as the first few words of the particular quote. Please take time with each passage, prayerfully reading Father Jordan’s words and allowing them to sink in.

**REFLECT** – Beginning with the reflection questions provided, invite Father Jordan’s spirit into dialogue with your own questions and experiences.

**PRAY** – When you’re ready, use these “prayer starters” to guide you into a deeper encounter with God within the context of the your reflection process.

## **“How Do I Pray?”**

1. Father Jordan described how to pray in all sections of his *Spiritual Diary*, showing the importance he placed on prayer in his life.

READ I/65-66 -“Carry on your spiritual dialog...”  
II/99-----“Pray earnestly...”  
III/5-----“Put aside...”  
IV/18----“Pray without ceasing...”

REFLECT How do Father Jordan’s instructions for prayer coincide with my personal style of prayer?

PRAY Pray in these or similar words: “Divine Savior, help me to pray with the fervor that Father Jordan showed in his prayer life by...”

2. For certain circumstances Father Jordan had a formula for prayer.

READ I/30-----“But Pray...”  
I/89-90 -“3 or 5x5 Our Fathers...”  
II/13-----“Honor the Holy Spirit...”

REFLECT What is my personal prayer formula? What other ones might I explore?

PRAY Pray in these or similar words: “Lord, teach me to pray so that I may...”

3. Father Jordan sometimes wrote down his prayers in his *Spiritual Diary*.

- READ I/101 -- "Lord Jesus Christ..."  
II/12 --- "Oh Lord, You know..."  
III/36 -- "Oh God, Almighty Father..."  
IV/7---- "Oh God Almighty and Merciful..."
- REFLECT How can writing down my prayers help, or hinder, my prayer life?
- PRAY Pray in these or similar words: "Dear Lord, help me to pray in a way that you will hear my heart by..."



## “Who Is My God?”

1. Father Jordan cried out to God in times of great need in his life.

READ I/5 ----- “Oh, Lord and King of Heaven and Earth ....”

I/12----- “Oh, Father, grant that .... Oh, most loving Father ... Oh Lord, Oh Father, Oh God and Creator....”

I/37---- “Oh Jesus ...”

REFLECT How do I turn to God and cry out when I am in need? If I hesitate to take my neediness to prayer, why is that so?

PRAY Be still and allow yourself to get in touch with the cry of need present in your heart at this time in your life. If there are NO words, just be quiet before God with this need. If there are words, then allow yourself to cry them out to God in prayer.

2. Father Jordan uses a variety of names for God in his *Spiritual Diary*. In his personal prayer, these names change at different times of his life.

READ I/32---- “My soul, never address ....”

I/65---- “Carry on your spiritual dialogue with the Savior....”

II/69--- “Help me, Oh Jesus ....”

IV/28-- "Never lose heart ...."

REFLECT What name for God do I use most comfortably in prayer at this time in my life? What does it tell me about my relationship with God right now?

PRAY Pray, using the name for God which you normally use. Repeat that name slowly, pausing in silence between each utterance. Allow this name to take you more deeply into experiencing God's self-revelation to you. Perhaps you want to write a prayer paragraph, poem or phrase that fills out the meaning of that name for you.

3. Father Jordan's God language reflects an intimacy with God.

READ I/9 ----- "Into your arms...."  
I/26----- "Still more, Lord...."  
II/87 --- "Oh Lord, help me...."  
IV/25-- "Trust firmly...."

REFLECT How personal and intimate is my relationship with God? How has this changed over the years? If I've ever resisted this intimacy, why might that be?

PRAY Pray over your entire life, pausing to understand how you have related to God throughout your life. Can you see any

changes? What do these changes say about you and about the God of your life? Pray with the insights that come from this exercise.

4. Father Jordan's experience of God was expansive, broadening and without borders.

READ I/202-204 - "The creature, trusting ...."  
II/12----- "Oh, Immensity...."  
III/3----- "Almighty God ...."

REFLECT How do I experience God beyond myself, that is in a more cosmic and global sense?

PRAY Pray with God's revelation to other people. How has that impacted me? How has God led me to break out of a too-narrow understanding of God? Have I resisted that at all? If so, how? How have I opened myself to a more cosmic and global sense of the divine working in my life and in the world? Pray with that openness or lack thereof.

## **“How Do I Discern God’s Will?”**

1. When Father Jordan needed to make a decision, he asked God to show him the way.

READ II/74 --- “Oh Lord almighty ...

II/76 --- “Reveal to me ...”

III/2---- “Oh, Lord, through ...

REFLECT At what point in my process of decision making do I bring God into the picture? How do I ask God to show me the path I should follow?

PRAY Take a specific decision you need to make to your prayer. In your own words ask God to walk with you as you make this decision. Ask God to show you the way.

2. Father Jordan was attentive to how his inner disposition as well as external forces helped God’s will become clearer in his life.

READ I/11----- “Let nothing shake....”

I/43-44 ”Do not despair ....”

I/151 --- “Here is how God works....”

REFLECT What internal and external helps does God send to help me discern God’s will? How do I use them?

PRAY Pray in these or similar words: “Loving God, help me listen to your voice within myself.

Help me put aside any anxiety or fear that is present as I look at my life and the decisions I need to make. Let me seek wise counsel and listen to it with an open mind and heart. ...”

3. Father Jordan’s inner spirit was always ready to respond to God.

READ II/61--- “Oh Lord, make...”  
II/119 - “For You, Oh Lord....”  
IV/38-- “Here I am....”

REFLECT What is my inner disposition toward responding to God? How do I identify and handle any resistance I discover within myself?

PRAY Pray in these or similar words: “Gracious God, please give me a generous heart as I seek to follow your pathways in my life. Help me understand the inner resistance I encounter so that I may grow in openness to that which will lead me closer to you. Teach me to be generous, open to all you ask. ...”

## **“What Is Holiness For Me?”**

1. For Father Jordan, the virtue of self knowledge and humility before God’s abundant grace and mercy was the foundation for a holy life.

READ I/21----- “Oh man, be humble!...”  
I/79----- “It is no humility...”  
I/156-8 “See and consider...”  
IV/27--- “Be humble...”

REFLECT How do I see myself in relation to God and others? What helps me to be more honest with myself, especially before God – acknowledging both my strengths and weaknesses? How does this relate to my understanding of “holiness”?

PRAY Pray for the grace to grow in humility, to accept and nurture the gifts God has given you, and to increase in holiness.

2. In his desire for holiness, Father Jordan consistently endeavored to direct all of his thoughts and actions toward God.

READ I/39---- “My soul, your thoughts...”  
I/48---- “Is not the practice...”  
II/29--- “A soul that...”  
III/17-- “All for God...”

REFLECT How do I strive to know God better in my

life? In what ways can my life—my thoughts, words, and actions—become a prayer of praise to God? How does this relate to my understanding of “holiness”?

PRAY Praise God in thanksgiving for all the graces God has given you, and ask for the grace to increase in holiness.

3. Father Jordan reflected on love for God and union with God as the greatest realization of a truly holy and saintly life.

READ I/168 -- “Oh the immeasurable...”  
II/75--- “Oh Lord...”  
III/23 -- “Just as love...”

REFLECT When have I felt God’s love most profoundly in my life? When has my love for God been the strongest? How does this relate to my understanding of “holiness”?

PRAY Call upon God to enter more completely into your life and to help you grow in holiness.

4. For Father Jordan, holiness was both an intensely personal relationship with God and yet inseparable from service toward others.

READ I/99---- “The most divine...”  
I/105 -- “I suspect that...”

II/97 --- "The real essence..."

III/15 -- "Charity..."

**REFLECT** In what ways does my spiritual life lead me into service of others? As my knowledge of myself and of God changes over time, what effect does this have on how I relate to others? How does this relate to my understanding of "holiness"?

**PRAY** Pray for the many needs of the world, including your own special intentions, so that all people may increase in holiness.



## **“What Gives Me Fire For My Life Of Service?”**

1. Trust and Hope in the Lord gave Father Jordan his zeal for service.

READ I/94----- “Apply yourself with...”  
II/21----- “Through the merits...”  
III/25 ----- “Entrust your...”  
IV/35-36 - “The fire...”

REFLECT When has trust and hope in the Lord given me the impetus or incentive to action in my life of service?

PRAY Pray in these or similar words: “ Lord, may my trust and hope in You encourage me to ...”

2. Father Jordan had a deep devotion and love of God and the Church upon which he based his service and/or mission.

READ I/70---- “Love the holy ...”  
I/120-- “You will merit...”  
I/137-- “Let your zeal...”  
III/20-- “Oh Lord...”

REFLECT Why do I serve others, where does my zeal come from?

PRAY Pray in these or similar words: “Dear God, help me to devote my life in service to my fellow human beings with the same fire and

intensity that Father Jordan illustrated in his lifetime by...”

3. Prayer sustained Father Jordan in his life of service.

READ I/38---- “As soon...”  
I/85---- “Pray much...”  
II/86 --- “Oh really pray...”  
IV/33-- “Pray-pray-pray...”

REFLECT How does my prayer life sustain me in my service, or mission?

PRAY Pray in these or similar words: “Please give me the gift of zeal in my service to you, Oh Lord by...”

4. Father Jordan depended on many sacred writers for a better understanding of his mission.

READ I/46----- “A bishop said...”  
I/156-158 - “Imitate St. Vincent...”  
IV/10----- “Of all the interior gifts...”  
IV/18----- “It was always...”

REFLECT In what religious material do I find fire?

PRAY Pray in these or similar words: “Jesus help me to gain new perspectives and greater zeal for mission and service to You by...”  
(reading religious works, especially those of Saints.)

5. Father Jordan found joy, encouragement and rejuvenation in his vision and in the fruitfulness of apostolic works.

READ I/209-- "Mark in your calendar..."

II/1 ---- "As long as there is one..."

II/11--- "A seminary has been..."

REFLECT When have my apostolic efforts given me joy, encouragement and rejuvenation?  
What in the work of others also encourages me?

PRAY Pray using these or similar words: "Divine Savior, sanctify all my works for You by giving me the love, strength and perseverance I need for the work to come..."

## **“How Do I Deal With Failure, Adversity, And Challenges?”**

1. Father Jordan cried out to God in prayer when he experienced failure, doubt and anxiety.

READ      I/6-7--- “How much longer, Lord....”  
              I/10---- “When, Oh Lord, when....”  
              II/48 --- “Oh Lord, Almighty One....”

REFLECT    How do I allow my heart to cry out to God in difficult times? Am I sometimes reluctant to let go of rote prayers rather than use the words that come from my own heart, like Father Jordan does? If so, why might that be?

PRAY        Allow yourself to bring a specific failure, doubt or anxiety to mind. Then, set aside rote prayers and let the cry of your heart emerge. Talk to God in “your own language.” Be careful not to censure your inner self-expression. God will not be “offended” and, in fact, is ready to hear you.

2. Father Jordan urged himself not to dwell on his sense of failure.

READ      I/30-----“As soon as....”  
              I/62-----“Pray often....”  
              I/94-95 --“Never lose heart....”

REFLECT    How do I deal with the negative experiences

of my life? When I am tempted to “get stuck” in my own sense of failure, what do I find myself doing? How can I break the cycle of negativity that sometimes can overtake me?

**PRAY** Pray in these or similar words: “Loving and forgiving God, I know you are ready to forgive me. Help me know how to forgive myself and to let go of the failures I’ve experienced. ...”

3. Father Jordan’s prayer led him to experience God as Savior in difficult times.

**READ** I/3 ----- “When dark clouds ....”  
I/9 ----- “Into Your arms....”  
II/47----- “O Jesus....”  
IV 23-24 -- “Son, you have....”

**REFLECT** How have I experienced God’s saving action in my life in the past? How can I be more open to it as I face the challenges that are present in my life today?

**PRAY** Take time to look back over your own life journey. Discover God’s saving activity in it. Give thanks for what has been. Pray to recognize God’s saving action in your life today.

4. Father Jordan trusted in God's strength when faced with challenges.

READ I/45---- "Throw yourself...."  
II/82 --- "Trust & prayer...."  
IV/12-- "Trust in the Lord...."

REFLECT What does it mean for me to TRUST in God during times of doubt or even despair in my life? What are some of the ways I can "throw myself in the arms" of God today? What keeps me from doing that more readily?

PRAY Pray in these or similar words: "Oh loving and provident God, help me let go of my fierce independence when I am facing the challenges of my life. Soften my inner hardness and help me reach a deep trust of you. ..."

5. Father Jordan knew he could count on God when all else failed him.

READ I/37-38 --"Oh my soul...."  
IV/28-----"Never lose heart...."

REFLECT How do I react when the people in my life let me down or even betray me? What happens to me when a special dream I have fails? How do I respond? How does it impact my relationship with God and with

those around me?

PRAY

Pray in these or similar words: “Oh trustworthy and faithful One, comfort me in this time of deep loss and disappointment. Help me remain ‘hearty’ rather than ‘lose heart.’ I count on you to show me the way through this. ...”

**SECTION III**  
**Praying with the Saints**  
**in the *Spiritual Diary*:**  
**Companions on Father Jordan's**  
**Sacred Journey**

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The early twenty-first century has seen a renewed interest in our companions on the faith journey. Recent publications like Robert Ellsberg's ALL SAINTS and James Martin's MY LIFE WITH THE SAINTS have captured the imagination of large reading audiences and brought contemporary appeal to recovering the importance of the communion of saints.

It is interesting that Father Jordan's acquaintance with, and devotion to, his spiritual advocates is frequently noted in his *Spiritual Diary* (see, *Spiritual Diary*, New English Language Edition, 2011, Appendix 1, pp. 348-359). Thus, we have included here descriptions of how several saints impacted his life and can influence ours as well.



## **Mary**

### **Father Jordan's Maternal Companion**

#### 1. Mary as Father Jordan's Advocate and Helper

READ I/120-- "Never neglect to cherish..."

I/183-- "Argue with God..."

II/98--- "Oh powerful Virgin..."

II/99--- "Pray earnestly..."

REFLECT At what times in my life have I sought help from Mary? What assistance do I attribute to her?

PRAY Pray for Mary's help with the brokenness in today's world.

#### 2. Mary as Model of Virtue for Father Jordan

READ I/30----"My soul, if like the Virgin..."

I/35----"Once our Blessed Mother said..."

I/39----"My soul, your thoughts should  
always be in heaven..."

REFLECT What human and spiritual qualities of Mary do I seek in my life?

PRAY Pray asking Mary for humility, joy, and intimacy with God.

#### 3. Mary's Titles as Descriptors of Father Jordan's Relationship With Her

READ I/153† Patroness of the Society "Renew the

good intention...”

I/196 -- Litany of Titles “Oh Mary, Oh Virgin...”

II/1----- Queen of Heaven and Earth “As long as there is one person...”

II/46 --- Mother of God and His Mother “Oh Mary, Mother of God...”

II/118 - Mediatrix of Salvation “Preach her...”

IV/34-- Mater Dolorosa “Promoting the blessed devotion...”

IV/38-- Begetter of God and God-Bearer “Oh Mary, Mother of God...”

REFLECT How do I refer to Mary when praying, teaching, preaching? Why?

PRAY Pray to Mary as Patroness of Salvatorians, asking to be a God-bearer in these times.

#### 4. Marian Devotions Father Jordan Promoted

READ I/64---- “Introduce the Rosary...”  
III/2---- “Introduce the Living Rosary...”  
III/13 -- Visits to Marian Shrines “Oh Immaculate Virgin...”

REFLECT How is my love for Mary expressed: through art, prayer, music, pilgrimage?

PRAY Pray gratefully for Mary’s many ways of being present.

5. Marian Connections on Important Days for Salvatorians

READ III/18 ----- “Today on the feast of Mary’s Assumption...”

Page 319 - Father Jordan’s death on Feast of Mary’s Birth (9/8/1918)

REFLECT Which feast of Mary do I cherish most? Why?

PRAY Pray thankfully for Mary’s strong accompaniment of Father Jordan on his sacred journey. Ask her to companion you and support your mission.

## **St. Theresa of Avila** **Model of Trust, Truth, and Mysticism**

1. Theresa's Trust, an Influence on Father Jordan  
READ II/103 - "The secret of her success..."  
IV/8---- "The secret of her success..."  
REFLECT In what aspects of my life do I struggle to trust? What helps me to restore trust?  
PRAY Pray to Jesus for complete confidence in the ways of God for you and the world.
  
2. Theresa, Model for Discipline in Speech  
READ I/13-16---"Say little..."  
I/78-----"Humility is truth..."  
REFLECT In what circumstances have I found myself abusing the gift of speech? What made me aware of this?  
PRAY Pray for speech that is helpful, not harmful.
  
3. Theresa's Mysticism, Inspiration for Father Jordan  
READ I/78---- "A soul unaware..."  
REFLECT When do I experience moments of special union with God? What has led me to realize that my personal talents and abilities are gifts from God for the sake of others?

**PRAY** Pray for a deeper awareness of God's gifts to you for service of others.

**St. Francis de Sales**  
**Profession and Social Class Irrelevant!**  
**All are Welcome**

1. In taking the message of salvation to everyone by all ways and means, Father Jordan was reminded by St. Francis de Sales not to let his role as messenger detract him from the message.

READ I/123-124 - "It is enough simply to ....."  
I/210 ----- "Rarely speak about..."

REFLECT How do I maintain a balanced perspective regarding my own accomplishments as I interact with people from many walks of life?

PRAY In prayer, ask God to help your interactions be more about others and His message of salvation than your personal agenda.

2. St. Francis de Sales served as wise counsel to Father Jordan by keeping a clear focus as he interacted with people from all walks of life.

READ III/34 -- "A humility which becomes....."

REFLECT How do the people I interact with affect my enthusiasm, conviction, and zeal of my journey? What roles do prayer and reflection have in my daily routine?

PRAY In daily prayer and reflection, ask God's guidance to refresh your focus, enthusiasm, and convictions about your walk with Him.

3. Father Jordan recognized and took comfort that God works even through silence and patience.

READ 11/22--- "God will speak for those who...."

REFLECT How do I handle times of silence and lack of feedback? How do I handle my own impatience?

PRAY Pray for discernment about all those with whom you interact. Ask for guidance to make each exchange an encouragement and source of wisdom to further your efforts and progress along God's way. Consider how patience and silence contribute to your spiritual growth.

## **St. Francis Xavier Zealous Missionary**

1. When confronted by opposition to his endeavors, Father Jordan is encouraged by St. Francis Xavier.

READ        1/26---- “It would do me no good...”  
                  1/26---- “Oh the praise of men, what evil...”

REFLECT    To what ‘foreign lands’ have I been called in living my faith? To what extent has the “praise of men” caused me to struggle with acting on God’s will for myself? What do I do when I sense tension between my personal desires and goals and God’s will?

PRAY        In prayer, ask, through the intercession of Father Jordan, for clarity and insight regarding the “foreign lands” in your own life and the potential for influence of a personal agenda thwarting God’s will for yourself.

2. In facing disappointments, Father Jordan found wisdom and courage in St. Francis Xavier’s words.

READ        1/81---- “Humility and prudence...”

REFLECT    When has humility been a factor for me in facing my challenges? How does prudence affect my actions and discernment in



making important choices?

**PRAY** Ask for keen awareness of humility and prudence in your daily interactions and their effect on your spiritual growth and actions.

3. When faced with challenges, Father Jordan found guidance in the words of St. Francis Xavier.

**READ** III/22 -- “The greatest danger lies....”

**REFLECT** How do I face disappointments? How do I shift my reliance from myself and outside resources to trust?

**PRAY** Pray, through the wisdom and examples of St. Francis Xavier and Father Jordan, for guidance in facing challenges in your “foreign missions” at home, work, and in friendships.

**St. Francis of Assisi**  
**Founder, Namesake, Model of Suffering**  
**and Zeal**

1. St. Francis, Model and Patron for Father Jordan  
READ I/184 -- "On October 12, 1885,..."  
IV/8---- "Likewise, never forget this..."  
REFLECT Why was the blessing of Francis (I/184) so important to Father Jordan then and to us today? What values of St. Francis are also important in our Salvatorian Family?  
PRAY Pray to St. Francis for growth in the Salvatorian family.
  
2. St. Francis, Man of Suffering, Taught Father Jordan Its Value  
READ IV/10-- "Of all the interior gifts..."  
REFLECT What have my various experiences of suffering taught me?  
PRAY Pray that whatever suffering you bear will be an invitation to faith.
  
3. St. Francis, A Charismatic and Loving Apostle  
READ III/23 ----- "When will we finally begin..."  
IV/25-26-- "He was full of charm..."

REFLECT Which charisms of Francis (IV/ 25-26) did Father Jordan himself have? Which do others say I possess?

PRAY Pray that you can love God with all you are and your neighbor as yourself.

**St. Vincent de Paul**  
**Simple and Steadfast in Service to Those in**  
**Need**

1. St. Vincent de Paul, known for his service to people in all walks of life and need, was a model for Father Jordan.

READ I/136 -- "Take St. Vincent de Paul...."  
I/141 -- "Saint Vincent ..."

REFLECT What in my life started as a small seed in my early years and continues to influence my ministries and direction today? Who were the holy people of my youth who inspired me?

PRAY Ask our Heavenly Father, for greater recognition of the special qualities of "ordinary" people you meet daily in the most ordinary ways.

2. Father Jordan was inspired by the actions and ardor of St. Vincent de Paul.

READ I/52-----"What now,..."  
I/143 -----"A good work revealed..."  
III/26-27--"One day an obstinate..."

REFLECT What activities of others attract me and motivate me to participate along with them? What needs of others most inspire

me to action or prayer?

**PRAY** Ask God to give you keen sensitivity to recognize the acts of charity and kindness that you may witness daily through others.

3. Father Jordan was a man of wisdom, single minded and wise in pursuing the formation of the Society.

**READ** I/163 -- "One passion..."

**REFLECT** To what extent do I allow competing interests and good causes to divert my attention and dilute my efforts? What guides my decisions in selecting the ministry or activity to which I devote my time, talents, and energies?

**PRAY** In prayer, rededicate yourself to using your special skills and talents to further spread the message of salvation and God's love to all you meet.

4. Father Jordan and St. Vincent were humble men whose dedication to Christ's message guided their actions and dedication to others.

**READ** I/175 -- "Those undertakings which begin..."  
I/182 -- "A just man who shirks..."

**REFLECT** When am I most likely to call attention to my charitable works and busy-ness? What

are some ways in which I can “diminish myself to exult the others” in my field of work?

**PRAY** Recognizing that neither Father Jordan nor St. Vincent de Paul sought special accolades or public esteem for their work, pray that God help guide you in focusing on your work at hand and the most effective use of your skills as you engage in the work.

5. Both Father Jordan and St. Vincent de Paul were instrumental in attracting and fostering vocations.

**READ** II/104 - “One can perform no ...”

**REFLECT** In what ways have the examples and stories of saints and historical people influenced my vocation? How do they continue to affect my spiritual and community growth? Which of the traits of Father Jordan & St. Vincent (advocacy, wisdom, affirmation, inspiration) particularly touch me? How will I continue to develop and enhance these special traits in myself?

**PRAY** Pray for continued inspiration and dedication to serve others according to your walk with the Lord.