**Bishop Melchior de Marion Brésillac**

What is happening with the Cause of the SMA Founder for Beatification?

At present the Cause of our Founder, the Servant of God, Bishop Melchior de Marion Brésillac, is under examination in the Vatican Congregation for the Causes of Saints in Rome.

There are a number of steps to be taken. At present there is a group of 9 Theological Consultors in the Congregation who are asked to give their opinion on the heroism of the virtues of the Servants of God whose cause of beatification and canonization is ongoing. They are not always the same; different ones are chosen for each Cause to be examined. They don't know each other so as to avoid any interference. The meeting about the cause of Bishop de Marion Brésillac took place on 10 October and they unanimously expressed positive views.

We are waiting for the decision of Pope Francis that our Founder is now Venerable. How have we arrived at this point?

The examination of the heroism of the virtues is done in the 'Positio'. Our 'Positio' has almost 1200 pages:

1. ***Summary***, i.e*.* official documents concerning the Servant of God: 576 pages:

personal documents;

letters sent: 164 pages with a presentation for each letter;

letters received: 93 pages with a presentation for each letter;

spiritual writings: retreats, prayers, ‘Souvenirs’ – 79 pages.

1. ***Documented biography***: 455 pages with a chapter on the fame of his holiness and the graces received by his intercession;
2. ***Informatio***: from the above-mentioned texts, a presentation of theological and cardinals virtues put into practice by the Servant of God.

The procedure is not finished: the theologians' decision must be submitted to the "ordinaria" meeting of cardinals and bishops who are members of the Congregation. Afterwards, the file, in a brief summary, is presented by the Prefect of the Congregation for the Causes of Saints to the Pope who signs the decree on the heroic virtues of the Servant of God. It takes a few months.

1. *The meaning of "Venerable"*

The opinion of theologians is very important. Not only to continue the Cause but also for its ecclesial value, i.e. the recognition that is given to the personality of Bishop de Marion Brésillac as a missionary, as a bishop and as the founder of the SMA. By virtue of his life and his teachings, he is a gift, not only to us but also to the entire Church.

Our 'Positio' had to show that our Founder had a message and a testimony to offer to the Church, to the people of God today – certainly taking into account the difference in time, place and circumstances.

As far as the Cause is concerned, we may disagree or even be indifferent, but this recognition has a value that goes beyond our opinion and our person and remains valid in time. It can do good, today and in the future, to all those who are open to the recognized teachings and testimonies of one who, by the grace of God, has been able to respond in an appropriate way, bringing about rich fruits of the missionary vocation. The theologians consulted are highly competent people. When we have the opportunity, it will be very important to read the text of their decisions, where we will certainly have critical notes on the Cause, on the many years we took before presenting it, on the 'Positio', etc.

1. *The future*

Once our Founder has been declared Venerable [and that has not yet happened but we are hopeful for it] the next step is beatification, but to achieve this, our Founder must obtain from God**, through our faith and prayers**, a miracle that will be recognized by the Church.

Let us not forget that beatification is not only a celebration of the sanctity of the person who no longer lives among us. It is also "**an invitation and a program of life for those who are still here in this life, who are still pilgrims to the house of the Father**" (Fr. Kijas). Our relationship with the Blessed does not end in worship; but we must also follow the example he proposes to us and, through his intercession, we ask God’s blessing for our Society and for all humanity, especially for our brothers and sisters in Africa. We must cultivate the certainty that "**with the blessed we form one body, one family, one Church. That is why we are called to love by this charity that brings us to Christ, and through him to the Father**" (Id.).

From this truth is born our imitation of Bishop de Marion Brésillac in our way of being missionaries from the depth of our heart, able to take advantage of every opportunity "**to preach the Word**" and in this way to give birth to the local Church and make her grow. That is why there is a necessity for our prayer to obtain a miracle and for our intercession so that a new dynamism may sustain our life and our missionary pastoral care.

Please pray, through the intercession of our Founder, for your particular needs. If you receive any graces from God through Bishop de Brésillac’s intercession please make this known to the Postulator for the Cause:

Fr. Andrea Mandonico, SMA

Postulator for the Cause of Bishop de Brésillac

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