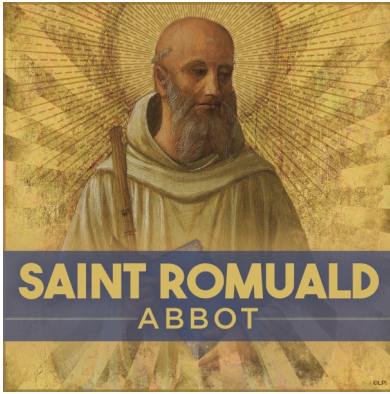


## FROM FR. JASON



Dear Brothers and Sisters,

On June 19th, the Church celebrates the Memorial of St. Romuald, a great witness of radical conversion and contemplative life. In a time when so many live as if God were distant or unnecessary, the Lord places before us this fiery figure who reminds us that the Gospel is not a comfortable habit, but a living encounter that demands everything.

St. Romuald was born into a noble family in Ravenna in the 10th century. His early life was marked by the violence and ambition typical of his social class. Yet one day, after witnessing a terrible crime within his own family, the Lord broke through his heart. He realized he could no longer live for the passing things of this world. He left everything: riches, social position, human plans, and entered the monastery. But even there he felt the call to go further. He became a hermit, embracing a life of austere penance, incessant prayer, and deep solitude with God. Eventually, he founded the Camaldolese Order, a beautiful synthesis of eremitical solitude and fraternal communion, where monks live in separate cells but remain united in charity and the Eucharist.

What moves me most about St. Romuald is his total response to the Lord's call. He used to say: "Sit in your cell as in paradise." He understood that the cell is not a place of escape, but the privileged space where the soul struggles with its sins, meets the Crucified Christ, and rises again with Him. This is the same experience the Lord is offering each one of us.

Like Romuald experienced, many of us are living a superficial Christianity. The Lord wants to visit us with His mercy. Through the proclamation of the Kerygma (Christ died for our sins and rose for our justification), we can discover that Jesus is not a memory of the past but a living Person who loves us personally and calls us by name. This is why we walk together in a parish community. We can support one another in this journey of conversion, celebrate the Word of God that judges and saves us, and rediscover the beauty of the sacraments, especially the Eucharist and Reconciliation.

Are we are learning, step by step, what it means to live the Paschal Mystery in daily life? The 'cell' of St. Romuald becomes for us our personal prayer time and the moments of silence in which we allow the Lord to purify our hearts. In this 'desert,' the old man in us dies with his fears, attachments, and idols, and the new man, conformed to Christ, is born.

In these weeks of Ordinary Time, when the external solemnities of the liturgical year have quieted, the Lord is inviting us to go deeper into this interior desert. Do not be afraid of silence. Do not run from the crosses that appear in your marriage, in the education of your children, in your work, or in your health. It is precisely there, in that apparent barrenness, that the Risen Lord wants to meet you and make your life fruitful.

St. Romuald, after many trials and even misunderstandings, saw the Lord bless his obedience with new communities that still exist today. Let us ask St. Romuald to intercede for our parish. May he help us to be men and women of deep prayer, radical in our following of Jesus, generous in service, and joyful in the midst of trials. To the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of the Church, we entrust our journey.

Peace, 