

## Novena for Paolo Seventh Day

From the Gospel according to Saint John

My command is this: love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends.

*Jn 15:12-13*

From the Sunnah

حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو بَكْرِ بْنُ أَبِي شَيْبَةَ، حَدَّثَنَا وَكِيعٌ، وَأَبُو مُعَاوِيَةَ عَنِ الْأَعْمَشِ، عَنْ أَبِي صَالِحٍ، عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ، قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ - صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ -  
"وَالَّذِي نَفْسِي بِيَدِهِ لَا تَدْخُلُوا الْجَنَّةَ حَتَّى تُؤْمِنُوا وَلَا تُؤْمِنُوا حَتَّى تَحَابُّوا أَوْلَا  
أَدُلُّكُمْ عَلَى شَيْءٍ إِذَا فَعَلْتُمُوهُ تَحَابَبْتُمْ أَفَشُوا السَّلَامَ بَيْنَكُمْ "

It was narrated that Abu Hurairah said:

“The Messenger of God (ﷺ) said: 'By the One in whose Hand is my soul! You will not enter Paradise until you believe, and you will not (truly) believe until you love one another. Shall I not tell you of something which, if you do it, you will love one another? Spread the greetings of peace amongst yourselves.’”

*Hadith #68 from Sunan Ibn Majah, Vol. 1, Book 1*

## Words from Paolo

The *Abdâl* are good persons in Islam. For me, they can also be good Christians. They are part of the same mystic school, the school of selfless love. For becoming an *Abdâl*, you have to work on your soul without relent. You cannot declare yourself *Abdâl*. The *Abdâl* are chosen by God for healing the wounds of the world through the gift of themselves, through patience, humility, silence and through littleness assumed in love.

Once I had the certitude to encounter one. I found myself in Homs, the chief city Mar Musa depends on, for doing some administrative papers. I was annoyed because I had just learned they wanted me to pass an exam for obtaining the residence permit in Syria. I finished this futile morning in an immense corridor in the district office where in the middle there was an iron cage for casting tax envelops. In this iron cage, I found a white man, radiant and smiling, who made everybody feel comfortable. We were all in a hurry, dripping with sweat and anxious to exit as quickly as possible this hellish place. And yet there was this angel in a cage who spoke 'love' and who said: "Come on, give it to me. But yes, of course, I will take care of it." He fostered us all, and everybody was ashamed to be so much in a rush. I wished to kiss his hand and I said to myself: "an angel in a cage who takes care of taxes". This man radiated sainthood like an *Abdâl*. He carried the burden of the world on his shoulders and like a sponge absorbed its misery, its wounds and its fatigue to give it back in light.

The *Abdâl* in Islam are hidden souls, suffering, who are united with God and who, like Abraham, are saving the world by their attitude of intercession.

*Reported by Guyonne de Montjou, Mar Moussa, Paris 2006*