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Fr. Carrón (CL): Benedict XVI Showed Us the Beauty of Faith in Christ

“A witness to the fullness that only faith in Jesus Christ can give to the life of every man.” This description of Benedict XVI comes from **Fr. Julián Carrón**, President of the Fraternity of Communion and Liberation (CL). In an interview with **Adriana Masotti**, Fr. Carrón highlights what is, in his opinion, one of the most significant aspects of the person and the Pontificate of Benedict XVI.

(Audio: <http://media01.radiovaticana.va/audio/ra/00360845.RM>)

JC – I would summarize it with an image that we all have in mind: the joyful, beaming, radiant face of the Pope as he waved to us before the door of Castel Gandolfo was closed, because this joy that we saw in his face says everything about what Christ is for him. Only the real presence of Christ can fill up the life of a man, to the point that it overflows with this fullness that we have seen. This is what an image expresses, a human experience that we saw in front of us: the nature of the Christianity to which the Pope constantly tried to introduce us, and to which he bore witness in every way—that is, how only Christ can respond to this thirst for life that every man has, and Benedict XVI’s joyful face means that the response is there. This is the key to understanding his teaching and all that he communicated to us.

AM – What did Benedict XVI represent in particular for Communion and Liberation?

JC – For us, he was a witness to Christ, one who had the audacity and the greatness to show us the relevance of faith to life’s needs. Because of this, we watched him, we followed him, and we read his speeches and homilies almost daily.

AM – During the eight years of Benedict XVI’s Pontificate, was there a moment of particular closeness to CL that you would like to recollect?

JC – One thing that will always remain in our memories, from even before he became Pope, is Fr. Giussani’s funeral—the fact that he wanted to preside over it and that he said what he did about Fr. Giussani, the founder of Communion and Liberation—and then the Audience that he conceded to the whole Movement in St. Peter’s Square. And, more recently, the Audience that he gave to our friends in the Priestly Fraternity of St. Charles Borromeo, where he reaffirmed his friendship with Fr. Giussani. However, it would be reductive to stop only at these gestures, because for us Benedict XVI was a constant companion, a light that helped us to live the faith today, that made it interesting for us, that helped us to understand what the value of reason is in the relationship with faith. We cannot but enter into dialogue with the human questions of others, we cannot ever forget that the initiative is always God’s and that Christianity is an event that happens in life and that reawakens it, and that the life of the Church cannot be reduced to an organization. All of this is what he was for us: something precious for our history.

AM – How are the adherents of Communion and Liberation living this period, in which we await the election of the new Pontiff?

JC – In the wake of what Pope Benedict XVI himself suggested before leaving us, we are waiting in prayer. We pray that the Lord will give us the Shepherd that the Church needs today, we ask that the Lord and the Spirit enlighten the Cardinals so that they can identify—according to God’s design—the person that the Lord has chosen to guide His people. Like the whole Church, we are waiting anxiously, but at the same time, with the peace that Benedict XVI’s gesture of renunciation

imparted to us. The certainty of Christ's presence in the Church is what made Pope Benedict's gesture possible. Thus we are entirely certain, because Christ's presence is even clearer now than it was before.

AM – Fr. Carrón, we entrust ourselves to the Spirit, but if you were to make a prediction, what do you hope that the new Pope will be like?

JC – A man of faith, passionate about Christ, who always awakens our faith more and more, so that we can rediscover its beauty, its capacity to respond to all of the challenges of life; and to have someone to whom we can look in order to learn to become Christians in this era in which we are called to live the faith.

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