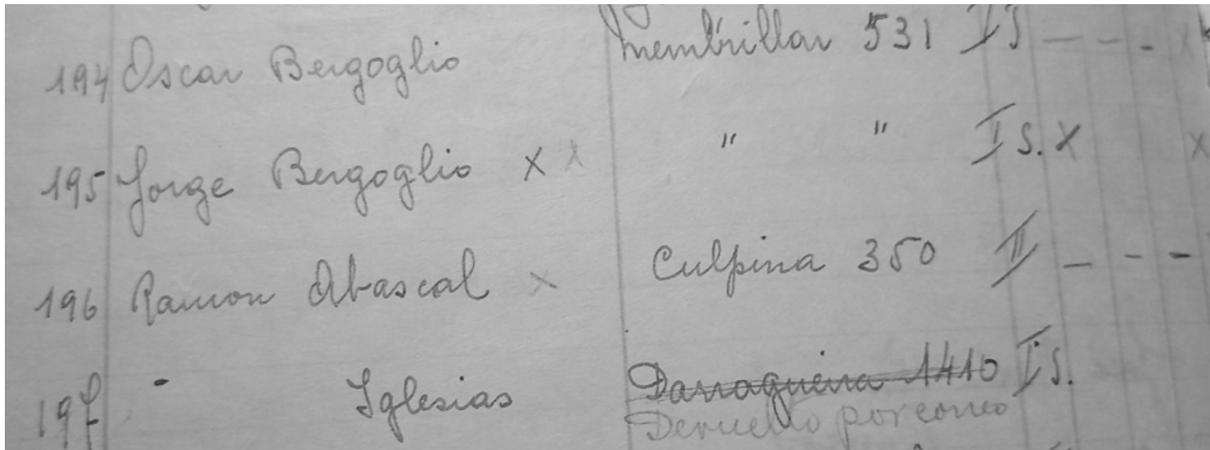


# "Give me half of your mercy"



This is a photocopy of a register kept in the archives of the Basilica of the Blessed Sacrament in Buenos Aires, Argentina, in which are noted the names of the so-called "night adorers", that is mostly young people who from 9pm onwards took turns praying before the Holy Eucharist. Among these names we can recognise Jorge Bergoglio, today Pope Francis, and his brother Oscar.

From their home in the Flores neighbourhood, on the outskirts of Buenos Aires, the young Bergoglio brothers would go by bus to the centre of Buenos Aires to reach the Basilica of the Blessed Sacrament to pray in silence during the night.

The main driving force behind the confraternity of the "night adorers" was the Spanish priest José Ramón Aristi, a religious priest who spent long hours in the confessional. When Father Aristi died at the Easter Vigil of 1996, Monsignor Bergoglio, then Auxiliary Bishop, descended into the crypt of the Basilica where the body had been laid, and while laying flowers made a gesture almost on impulse: "I grabbed", confessed the Pope, "the cross of his rosary and pulled it off with a bit of force... at that moment I looked at him and said: 'give me half of your mercy'".

Mercy is the love of God for us sinners. Mercy is to be loved when we are still carrying sins in our hands. Mercy is 'divine' because only God loves in this way. When we are loved in this way it changes us profoundly and irreversibly; mercy makes us 'merciful'.

On this **Divine Mercy Sunday**, pray with the words of Pope Francis: "give me half (and even more!) of your mercy... make me into a merciful priest, a merciful father or mother, a merciful spouse, a merciful sister and brother..."

In Christianity we become what we receive. Let God love you when you are not perfect, when you are angry and violent, when you are hard and unlovable. Let God love you as you are. Like Thomas in today's Gospel, touch Divine Mercy, and become what you touch. It is EASTER TIME, ALLELUIA !

*fr. Ivano*

Father Ivano