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# NEWS

## WRITINGS ON MARCELLIN CHAMPAGNAT

*To the list given in Marist Notebooks N° 4 can be added the following:*

- 914 - Un homme de foi, le Bienheureux Marcellin Champagnat, Charles ALMERAS, Doctor of Literature, Marie Médiatrice edition, Genval, 1970, 326 pp. format 17.5 x 11.5, in French.
- 915 - The Venerable Champagnat and his Work, 1789 - 1840, presumed to be by Brother Francis Borgia, typed, 100 pp. format 27.5 x 21.5, in English.
- 916 - Marcellin CHAMPAGNAT 1789 - 1940, Fondateur des Frères Maristes, by Frère Pierre BADOIL, Rome 1990, 30 pp. 29 x 20.5, in French.
- 917 - E visse per salvare i giovani, Biografia del B.M. Champagnat, 1789 - 1840, Genoa 1992, 134 pp. 21 x 14, in Italian.
- 918 - El joven que dijo SI, Marcelle PELISSIER, translated from the French: L'enfant qui a dit OUI, Mexico 1984, 46 pp. 20 x 13, in Spanish.
- 919 - Un succès qui vient de loin, aperçu historique critique de la Vie de M. Champagnat, 1789 - 1840, French translation of: Achievement from the Depths by Br. Stephen FARRELL, typed, 433 pp. 29.7 x 21.

- 920 - Pastor e Pai, **Marcelino José Bento Champagnat**, by Lui DO REGO; new edition of N-067, ed. FTD, 88 pp. 21 x 14, in Portuguese.
- 921 - Buscando novo rumo, romance historico, extracts from the 3 volumes by Br. Gabriel MICHEL, "Né en 89" translated into Portuguese, FTD edition, 286 pages 21 x 13.5.
- 922 - Frère SYLVESTRE Tamet - Sintesis de la vida del P. Champagnat, translated into Spanish from the "Mémoires de Frère Sylvestre", typed, 122pp. 32 x 21.
- 923 - Complément aux notes de la Vie du Bienheureux Marcellin Champagnat, edited by Br. Roland BOURASSA, Quebec, Canada, typed, 142 pp. 25 x 17.5, in French.

## 2 - STUDIES

### 2.1 - On the life and the personality of Marcellin Champagnat

ABAIGAR Victor Pastor, Br. - La devoción mariana del B. Champagnat, en relacion con la escuela francesa del siglo XVII, Rome 1968, typed, 70 + 21 pp. 27.5 x 21, in Spanish - AFM 162.001

ASIAIN H., DIAZ J., ATAIDE J., Brs. - Attitudes de P. Champagnat,

- son souci pour les orphelins et les enfants des campagnes;
- comentario a la carta conminatoria de Juan Claude Colin;
- atitudes de P. Champagnat nas suas cartas; Rome 1993,
- typed, 44+21+24 pp., 29.7 x 21, in French, Spanish, Portuguese. - AFM 162.002

BALKO Alexandre, Br. - Le Bienheureux Marcellin Champagnat dans ses instructions et sermons inédits, Lyons 1972 - degree thesis, typed, 142 pp. 29 x 21, in French. - AFM 162.003

— Quien eres tú, Marcelino Champagnat? Una respuesta competente del Hno. A. Balko - Documentos maristas N-5, Guadalajara, Mex. 1982 75 pp. 23 x 17, in Spanish. - AFM 162.004

— Le Père Champagnat et la formation des Frères, Rome, 1985, typed, 41 pp. 29.7 x 21, in French -AFM 162.005

WRITINGS ON MARCELLIN CHAMPAGNAT

- BAYO Jesús, Br. - Vida afectiva de Marcelino Champagnat: celibato, amor y amistad, Roma 1993, thesis, typed, 181 pp. 29.7 x 21, in Spanish - AFM 162.006
- BELLONE Giovanni Battista, Br. - La "Grafia" del Beato M. Champagnat Studio grafologico - Genoa 1981, 110 pp. 20.3 x 13.4, in Italian - AFM 162.007
- Studio di un profilo del B.M. Champagnat, Genoa, 1983, 64 pp. 21 x 15, in French, English, Spanish and Portuguese.
- Un apostolo, un Fondatore, un Santo, Bicentenario della nascita del Beato M. Champagnat, 1789 - 1989; Genoa 1989, 40 pp. 21 x 15, in Italian - AFM 162.009
- BENINI Genuino Br. - Reflexos humanos de Champagnat nas cartas o circulares aos Irmãos, Rome 1993, typed, 35 pp. 29 x 21, in Portuguese - AFM 162.010
- BIDEGAIN FERNANDEZ Carlos Br. - Marcelino Champagnat en las cartas de sus contemporaneos, typed, 78 pp. 29 x 21, in Spanish - AFM 162.011
- BRAMBILA Aureliano Br. - A la découverte de Marcellin Champagnat, Recueil de titres et d'extraits de documents, N.-D. de l'Hermitage, 1984, typed, 40 pp. 29.7 x 21, in French - AFM 162.012
- CHAGAS COSTA RIBEIRO Francisco, Br. - Champagnat, primeiro mes de Maria em La Valla, Rome 1983, thesis, typed, 77 pp. 29.7 x 21, in Portuguese - AFM 162.013
- COLIN Marcel, TOSTI German, etc...Brs. - Etudes sur Marcellin Champagnat, different articles in French, English and Spanish, typed, 160 pp. 32 x 22 - AFM 162.014
- CORONADO TOVAR Jorge Luis, Br. - Marcelino Champagnat y la admision de Hermanos; the conditions for admission, Rome 1993, typed, 29 x 20, in Spanish - AFM 162.015
- FARRELL Keith B. (Br. Stephen) - From Disaster to Fulfilment, the religious history of the district of Saint-Etienne during the French Revolution, 1789 - 1801, Australia 1991, typed, 279 pp. 29.7 x 21, in English - AFM 162.017

- Du désastre au relèvement, l'histoire religieuse du district de Saint-Etienne pendant la Révolution française 1789 - 1801, French translation of the above, typed, 314 pp. 29.7 x 21 - AFM 162.018
- FELLI Fabrizio, Br. - Il Padre Champagnat: la sua intelligenza; l'educatore, Rome 1962, typed, 51 pp. 27 x 21, in Italian - AFM 162.019
- FORMIGA A., SALAZAR A.M., AMORIM A., Brs. - Etude sur M. Champagnat, Rome 1961, different articles in French and Spanish, typed, 9 + 35 + 61 pp. 26.5 x 20.5 - AFM 162.020
- GIBSON Romuald, Br. - Father Champagnat: the Man and his Spirituality, Rome 1971, typed, 170 pp. 29.5 x 21, in English - AFM 162.021
- GUTEMBERG Jo\_o, Br. - Inserç\_o e vida religiosa marista, Rome 1991, thesis, typed, 76 pp. 29.7 x 21, in Portuguese - AFM 162.022
- HERNANDEZ GAONA Manuel, Br. - Efforts du Père Champagnat pour faire approuver l'Institut, Rome 1966, typed, 43 pp. 27.5 x 21, text in Spanish, quotations in French - AFM 162.023
- LACANTE Romain, Br. - Mes rencontres avec le Père Champagnat, Rome 1993, typed, 47 pp. 29 x 21, in French - AFM 162.023
- LEVIS Afonso, Br. - A atitude orante de Marcelino Champagnat em suas cartas aos Irm\_os, Rome 1993, typed, 42 pp. 29.7 x 21. in Portuguese - AFM 162.025
- MESONERO SANCHEZ Manuel, Br. - Teresa de Lisieux y Marcelino Champagnat, el pequeño camino y la sencillez, typed, 110 pp. 28.5 x 19.5, in Spanish - AFM 162.026
- MONEGO Francisco José, Br. - O Beato Marcelino Champagnat: homem de bondade, Rome 1964, typed, 35 pp. 27 x 21, in Portuguese - AFM 162.027
- MORAL GONZALEA Arturo, Br. - Unidad de vida en el Beato Marcelino Champagnat, typed, 52 pp. 27 x 21, in Spanish - AFM 162.028
- PANINI J., TESCAROLO R., - La roca de la que fuimos tallados, documento base para los laicos cristianos maristas, Buenos Aires 1989, 32 pp. 20 x 13.5, in Spanish - AFM 162.029

WRITINGS ON MARCELLIN CHAMPAGNAT

- REVILLA Isaac, Br. - Marcelino Champagnat a la luz del decreto "Perfectae Caritatis", Rome 1967, typed, 78 pp. 28 x 22, in Spanish - AFM 162.030
- ROIG y LLOP Tomas, - El Instituto marista y su Fundador, el Beato Marcelino Champagnat, 28 pp. 24.8 x 17.7, in Spanish - AFM 162.031
- RUBIOLO Aemilius, Br. - La fe del Beato Marcelino Champagnat, Rome 1963, typed, 84 pp. 27 x 21, in Spanish - AFM 163.032
- SALAMANCA PEREZ Regino, Br. - Relaciones de Mazelier con los Maristas, typed, 38 pp. 29 x 21, in Spanish - AFM 162.033
- SESTER Paul, Br. - Études sur Marcellin Champagnat, 1817-1967, typed, 112 pp. 27.5 x 21, in French - AFM 162.034
- SHURKUS Albert (Br. Felix-Michael) - Marcellin Champagnat and conformity to God's will, Rome 1961, typed, 118 pp. 27.5 x 21.5, in English - AFM 162.035
- STIRN Roger, Br. - Petite histoire de la grande affaire, Brussels 1991, 49 pp. 24 x 15.5, in French - AFM 162.036
- SULLIVAN Stephen L., Br. - The Champagnat Standard of Religious Life, typed, 54 pp. 28 x 22, in English - AFM 162.037
- TENDERO PEREZ Ernesto, Br. - Pastoral vocacional de Marcelino Champagnat, a partir de sus escritos y testimonios directos; Rome 1990, typed, 180 pp. 29 x 20.5, in Spanish - AFM 162.038
- ZIND Pierre (Br. Louis-Laurent) - Sur les traces de Marcellin Champagnat, articles extraits de "Voyages et Missions" et de "Présence mariste" 140 pp. 29.7 x 21, in French - AFM 162.039
- Articles du "Bulletin de l'Institut", enlarged photocopy, 105 pp. 29.7 x 21, in French - AFM 162.040
- Bx. Marcellin Champagnat, son oeuvre scolaire dans son contexte historique, Rome 1991, 496 pp. 21 x 15, in French - AFM 162.041
- O Bem-aventurado Marcelino Champagnat e sus pequeños Irmãos de Maria, translation from the French by Br. Carlos Garetto, Belo Horizonte, Brazil, 1988, 296 pp. 21 x 14. in Portuguese - AFM 162.042

## 2.2 - On his idea of education

- BELLONE Giovanni Battista, Br. - Il B.M.Champagnat, apostolo della scuole, Genoa 1983, 116 pp. 21 x 15, in Italian - AFM 163.001
- CABRA Gabriel, Br. - Metodo catequístico del Beato Marcelino Champagnat en relación con el de San Sulpicio, Rome 1964, typed, 65 pp. 27 x 21, in Spanish - AFM 163.002
- COLIN Marcel - L'éducation d'après le Bienheureux Marcellin Champagnat, volume 1, Saint-Genis-Laval 1968, typed, 216 pp. 27.5 x 21 - 163.005
- ibid. - volume 2, 331 pp. - AFM 163.004
- Education as understood by Blessed Marcellin Champagnat, Founder of the Marist Brothers, volume 1, translated into English, typed, 213 pp. 6 27.5 x 21 - AFM 163.005
- ibid. - volume 2, 285 pp. - AFM 163.006
- COTTA Gildo, Br. - Educare: Principi pedagogici di Marcellino Champagnat, Rome 1991, 167 pp. 24 x 16.5, in Italian - AFM 163.0072
- DE CARVALHO José Airton, Br. - A catequese em Marcelino Champagnat, 1789-1840, Fundador dos Irmãos Maristas, Rome 1986, typed, 229 pp. 29 x 20, in Portuguese - AFM 163.008
- BA COSTA MARTINS Adelino, Br. - Contexto historico e social de obra educativa de Champagnat, Porto Alegre, Brazil, 96 pp. 21 x 14.5, in Portuguese - AFM 163.009
- DI PIETRO Alessandro, Br. - Marcellino Champagnat e la sua opera educativa, Rome 1951, typed, 210 pp. 27.5 x 21, in Italian - AFM 163.010
- FABRIZI Giorgio Br. - Lo zelo del Beato Marcellino Champagnat, Rome 1962, typed, 73 pp. 26 x 21, in Italian - AFM 163.011
- FAURE Dr. - Comments on the Education and the Pedagogy of Blessed Father Champagnat, typed, 10 pp. 33 x 20, in English - AFM 163.012
- FRECHES Gustave, Br. - Le Père Champagnat, chef, formateur de chefs, typed, 33 pp. 27 x 21, in French - AFM 163.013

WRITINGS ON MARCELLIN CHAMPAGNAT

GUTIERREZ GONZALO Angel, Br. - Presencia de los niños en las cartas de Marcelino Champagnat, Rome 1993, typed, 29 pp. 29.7 x 21, in Spanish - AFM 163.014

LEON EUTIMINO Br. - Valor actual de la pedagogia del Beato Marcelino Champagnat, Bogota 1956, 278 pp. 24 x 16.5, in Spanish - AFM 163.015

ESCORIHUELA PUJOL J.M., MORAL BARRIO J.J., SERRA LLANSANA L. - El educador marista

— Vol. 1 - Su identidad, su estilo educativo, 158 pp. 21.5 x 14, in Spanish - AFM 163.016

— Vol. 2 - Visto por los hombres formados en cien años, pp. 398, in Spanish - AFM 163.017

— Vol. 3 - Visto por la sociedad del futuro, 222 pp., in Spanish - AFM 163.018

Translation into Greek of the above work with local adaptation, Athens 1989, pp. 136 - AFM 163.019

— El directivo de una escuela marista, orientación de su actividad apostólica, Las Avellanas, Spain 1992, 80 pp. 22 x 16, in Spanish - AFM 163.020

SALVETTI Gaetano, Br. - La pedagogia de Marcellino Champagnat, Rome 1965, typed, 79 + XIX pp. 29 x 22, in Italian - AFM 163.021

SMET Jean (Br. Marie Fernandus) - Pédagogie du V. M. Champagnat, manuscript, 406 pp. 21 x 16, in French - AFM 163.022

ZIND Pierre (Br. Louis-Laurent) - Visão panorâmica da história da educação na Europa, translated from the French by Br. Carlo GARETTO, Belo Horizonte 1987, 148 pp. 21 x 14, in Portuguese - AFM 163.023

... ? ... - Educare è più che governare, Attualità di Marcellino Champagnat, typed, 125 pp. 27.5 x 21.5. in Italian - AFM 163.024

The principles which inspired Father Champagnat in his work for youth, typed, 23 pp. 32.5 x 20, in English - AFM 163.025

PEREZ J., VELASCO G. - Marcellin Champagnat face aux écoles: Perreux, Sorbiers, Rome 1993, 80 + 25 pp. 29.7 x 21, in Spanish and French - AFM 163.026

### **2.3 - On his charism and spirituality**

- BOYER G., LAMARRE L., MORNEAU R., Brs. - Recherches et réflexions sur notre spiritualité mariste, St Hyacinthe, Canada 1966, typed, 46 pp. 27 x 21, in French - AFM 164.001
- GIBSON Romuald, Br. - Father Champagnat, the Man and his Spirituality, Studies in Marist Spirituality, Rome 1971 -140 pp. 25 x 20, original edition, in English - AFM 164.002
- MUNOZ FERNANDEZ Zacarias, Br. - El carisma de M. Champagnat, en los "Tres Uno", en el gobierno del Instituto, en las cartas a los Hermanos, Rome 1993, typed, 218 pp. 29.7 x 21, in Spanish - AFM 164.003
- RODRIGUEZ Gabriel, Br. - Evaluación crítica de la espiritualidad de los Hermanos maristas, Rome 1976, typed, 78 pp. 29.7 x 21, in Spanish - AFM 164.004
- SESTER Paul, TANGUAY Lorenzo, Brs. - Études sur M. Champagnat, Rome 1967, typed, 158 pp. 27 x 21.5, in French - AFM 164.005
- SESTER Paul, Br. - Le charisme du Fondateur, Rome 1975, typed, 30 pp. 28 x 22, in French - AFM 164.006
- TANGUAY Lorenzo, Br. - Spiritualité "Champagnat", Une spiritualité d'enfance spirituelle, Château-Richer, Canada 1991, typed, 70 pp. 27.5 x 20.5, in French - AFM 164.007
- TIBURCIO y SILLA Vicente, Br. - Carisma del Padre Champagnat, 1982 - 1984, typed, 123 pp. 29.7 x 21, in Spanish - AFM 164.008
- VARONA GREGORIO Mariano, Br. - Jesucristo en la espiritualidad y escritos de Marcellin J.B. Champagnat a partir de las fuentes directas, typed, 202 pp. 29 x 20.5, in Spanish -AFM 164.009

### **2.4 - His concern for the poor**

- ALBALA MEDINA Laurentino, Br. - Cartas del Padre Champagnat, solidaridad con los mas necesitados, typed, 46 pp. 29 x 21, in Spanish - AFM 162. 0043

BELLONE Giovanni Battista, Br. - I Maristi, I poveri, Il mondo in via di sviluppo, Genoa 1992, 106 pp. 29.7 x 21, illustrated, in Italian - AFM 162.044

DORADO B: Wilfredo, Br. - El Padre Champagnat y la educación de los pobres, typed, 41 pp. 27 x 21, in Spanish - AFM 162.045

LASSO Ruperto, Br. - El Beato Padre Champagnat y los pobres: Amor y Proyección, Rome 1966, typed, 54 pp. 27 x 21, in Spanish - AFM 162.046

MORAL BARRIO Juan J., Br. - Los pobres y el sentido de la pobreza en la espiritualidad marista; datos para un discernimiento personal y comunitario, Barcelona 1991, 192 pp. 21 x 14.5, in Spanish - 162.047

SILVEIRA Luiz, Br. - Les Frères Maristes et l'éducation des pauvres, Rome 1963, typed, 223 pp. 27 x 21.5, in French -AFM 162.048

## 2.5 - The "CUADERNOS CHAMPAGNAT" de Frère Juan-Maria

1st VERSION - typed and partly hand-written, format 29.7 x 21, in Spanish

— Marco historico de M. Champagnat - El país de M. Champagnat -AFM 161.001

— Marco historico de M. Champagnat 2 - AFM 161.002

— Alguna lagunas en la vida de B. Padre Champagnat: la familia - AFM 161.003

— Algunas lagunas .... 2 - AFM 161.004

— Algunas lagunas .... 3 - AFM 161.005

— Algunas lagunas .... 4 - AFM 161.006

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— Algunas lagunas .... 6 - AFM 161.008

— Algunas aspectos de la personalidad del P. Champagnat 1 - AFM 161.009

— Algunas aspectos de la personalidad del P. Champagnat 2 - AFM 161.010

— Algunas rasgos de su personalidad 3 - AFM 161.011

- Algunas aspectos de la personalidad del P. Champagnat 4 - AFM 161.012
- Algunas aspectos .... 5 - AFM 161.013
- La sociedad de Maria, 1 - AFM 161.014
- La sociedad de Maria: Familia marista, 2 - AFM 161.015
- Nuestro carisma institucional - AFM 161.016
- Apendice - AFM 161.017
- Algunos aspectos de su personalidad, 6 - 105 pp. - AFM 161.018
- Una explicación de la sala de comunidad - AFM 161.019

2nd VERSION, typed, format 29.7 x 21

- Maria en la escuela de espiritualidad francesa, manuscript -AFM 161.020
- Marcelino Champagnat: apuntes sobre su personalidad - AFM 161.021
- Origenes de la Sociedad de Maria - AFM 161.022
- El país de Marcelino Champagnat - AFM 161.023
- Marco historico de Marcelino Champagnat - AFM 161.024
- Galicanismo, Jansenismo, Rigorismo - AFM 161.025
- La familia Champagnat - AFM 161.026
- Marcelino Champagnat: su carácter 1 - AFM 161.027
- Marcelino Champagnat: su carácter 2 - AFM 161.028
- El Beato Marcelino Champagnat: hombre de oración - AFM 161.029
- Carisma institucional - AFM 161.030
- Nuestra espiritualidad - AFM 161.031
- La devoción a Maria, característica de M. Champagnat - AFM 161.032
- Frescos de la sala de comunidad de N.-D. de l'Hermitage - AFM 161.032

3rd VERSION; Luis Vivès edition, Zaragoza, Spain 1989, 24.5 x 16.5

- 1 - Personalidad de Marcelino: algunos rasgos - AFM 161.034
- 2 - El Hermitage, escuela de formación - AFM 161.035

- 3 - Nuestro carisma institucional - AFM 161.036
- 4 - Marcelino, un apóstol de hoy - AFM 161.037
- 5 - Marcelino cautivado por Dios - AFM 161.038
- 6 - Marcelino hoy: Nuestra misión como hermanos - AFM 161.039

## **2.6 - Meditations on the person and the work of Marcellin Champagnat**

HENRI-NOE Br. (Marcel COLIN) - Sur les pas de Marcellin Champagnat, méditations maristes - Centre Champagnat, N.-D. de l'Hermitage 1958, 240 pp. 20.5 x 13, in French - AFM 192.01

- In the footsteps of Blessed Marcellin Champagnat, Marist Meditations - translation and adaptation from the French, typed, 150 pp. 32,5 x 21, in English - AFM 192.02
- Il revint sur ses pas glorifiant Dieu, Méditations en honneur du V.P.Champagnat, St. Quentin-Fallavier 1950, typed, 68 pp. 20.6 x 13.5, in French - AFM 192.03
- Rapprochements maristes, 12 méditations, Jeunesse et Amitié edition, St. Genis-Laval 1964, 74 pp. 19 x 12.5, in French - AFM 192.04
- Béatification et Humilité, St. Quentin-Fallavier 1956, 80 pp. 18 x 13.5, in French - AFM 192.05
- Ambiance mariste, onze méditations avec le Père Champagnat, N.-D. de l'Hermitage 1953, 48 pp. 17.5 x 13.5, in French - AFM 192.06
- Vita marista, Meditazione con il nostro Padre Fondatore, 3, translation of "Ambiance mariste", 66 pp. 16.8 x 12, in Italian - AFM 192.07
- Our Marist Way, Meditations on the Ven. Marcellin Champagnat and his Spirit, Marist Press, Poughkeepsie 1952, 52 pp. 20.3 x 13.8, in English - AFM 192.08
- Betrachtungen über den Geist des Ehrw. Stifters, Teil 1 und 2, Provinzialat, Furth b. Landshut, typed, 36 + 36 pp. 20.5 x 16, in German - AFM 192.09

LOUIS-IGNACE Br. Méditations à l'école du Bx. M. Champagnat, Montreal 1961, 124 pp. 22 x 14, in French - AFM 192.10

## 2.7 - Works of Popularisation

- BALKO Alexandre, Br. - Marcelino Champagnat, volviendo a las fuentes, Provincia marista "Norte", translated from the French, 198 pp. 21 x 14, in Portuguese - AFM 161.040
- BELLONE Giovanni Battista, Br. - Cerchiamo l'autentico B. Champagnat, Genoa 1982 - in 5 languages: Italian, French, English, Spanish, Portuguese, 176 pp. 20.5 x 13 - AFM 161.041
- Il centuplo ... e la vita eterna nel pensiero e nella vita del B.M. Champagnat, Genoa 1981, 110 pp. 17.5 x 10, in Italian - AFM 161.042
- Attualità dell'educatore marista e della scuola cattolica, Genoa 1979, 92 pp. 21 x 15, in Italian - AFM 161.043
- Un itinerario di gloria: Il fratello marista e il suo calvario, Genoa 1980, 158 pp. 21 x 15, in Italian - AFM 161.044
- L'artefice di una rivoluzione silenziosa, Genoa 1975, 136 pp. 21 x 15, in Italian - AFM 161.045
- D'ULIZIA Adalberto, Br. - Corrispondenza apocrifia con il B. Marcellino Champagnat, San Leone Magno, Rome 1985, typed, 191 pp. 29.7 x 21, illustrated, in Italian - AFM 161.046
- Bicentenario della nascita del Beato Marcellino Champagnat, 1789 - 1989, 27 + 37 pp. 29.7 x 21, in Italian - AFM 161.047
- McMAHON Frederick, Br. - Marist Milestones: a Champagnat Pilgrimage, Rome 1989, 64 pp. 24 x 16.5, in English - AFM 161.048
- Souls that have wrought with me, Blessed Marcellin Champagnat and the Society of Mary, typed, 218 + XXIII pp. 29.7 x 21, in English - AFM 161.049
- Testimony of Contemporaries of Marcellin Champagnat, selected by Br. Leonard VOEGTLE - 3 versions: English, French, Spanish, 33 + 34 + 32 pp. 29.7 x 21 - AFM 161.050
- Études sur M. Champagnat: articles, conferences, by various authors, typed, 126 pp. 27 x 21, in French - AFM 161.051

Études sur M. Champagnat, by various authors, typed, 97 pp. 27 x 21 - AFM 161.052

Le problème social et Marcellin Champagnat, typed, 147 pp. 29.7 x 21, in French - AFM 161.053

Notes on the Society of Mary and Father Champagnat, typed, 130 pp. 29.7 x 21, in English - AFM 161.054

## **2.8 - Writing mainly concerning the Brothers**

ANISIO, Br. - Espiritualidade dos pequenos Irmãos de Maria, Porto Alegre 1957, 259 pp. 15 x 11, in Portuguese - AFM 161.501

AVALOS GIL Hector, Br. - Les Petits Frères de Marie au service des pauvres, Rome 1993, typed, 60 pp., in French - AFM 161.502

BELLONE Giovanni Battista, Br. - Storia e tradizioni missionarie dei Fratelli Maristi, Genoa 1985, 36 pp. 23 x 16.5, in Italian - AFM 161.503

BOURKE Ludovic, Br. - Theology of Confirmation and the Teaching Brother's Vocation, 1965, thesis, 152 pp. 24 x 16, in English - AFM 161.504

ELIAS BECERRA José Luis, Br. - La comunidad marista en tempos del Fundador, Rasgos característicos a partir de los escritos del B. M. Champagnat, Rome 1992, 151 pp. 29.7 x 21, in Spanish - AFM 161.505

GARCIA PARRADO José Alfonso, Br. - La pobreza del Hermano marista, Rome 1986, typed, 98 + XVII pp. 29 x 21, in Spanish - AFM 161.506

GIBSON Romuald, Br. - The Holocaust of the Life of the Teaching Brother, Rome 1969, thesis, 222 pp. 24 x 16, in English - AFM 161.507

LOZ Volmar, Br. - Alguns novos documentos para a historia dos Irmãos maristas e coadjutores na Sociedade de Maria, Rome 1985, typed, 205 pp. 27.7 x 21, in Portuguese - AFM 161.508

MINGA Teofilo, Br. - Le Frère comme apôtre, d'après l'étude des constitutions de 17 instituts, Nairobi 1990, typed, 167 pp. 29.7 x 21, in French - AFM 161.509

SALAMANCA PEREZ Regino, Br. - Relaciones de Mazelier con los Maristas, Rome 1993, typed, 38 pp. 28.5 x 21, in Spanish - AFM 161.510

STIRN Roger, Br. - Les Petits Frères de Marie: identité et vitalité, 1840-1890, Brussels 1991, 110 pp. 24 x 16, in French - AFM 161.511

Documents sur la législation chez les Petits Frères de Marie, collected by Br. Aureliano BRAMBILA, typed 69 pp. 29 x 21, in French - AFM 161.512

MURPHY D., FLANIGAN M. - Frère François: - Grooming as Superior General; - Transmission of the charism of M. Champagnat, Rome 1993, typed, 27 + 26 pp. 29.7 x 21, in English - AFM 161.514

## 2.9 - Various Works: Catechisms; Comics; Index

### Catechisms:

Catecismo Champagnat, Editorial Progreso, Mexico

Preparatoria 1; 2; 3

Primaria 1; 2; 3; 4; 5; 6

Secundaria 1; 2; 3

Material de apoyo 1; 2

AFM 161.701

Champagnat: Bloc de apuntes, Provincia marista Norte, Logroño, Spain  
AFM 161.702

### Comics:

D'ULIZIA Adalberto, Br. - I messaggi del B.M. Champagnat

Vol. 1 - Le radici di un popolo, typed, pp. 1 to 90, 21 x 16

Vol. 2 - Per un popolo nuovo, segno di una chiesa presente nella storia, typed, pp. 91 to 192, 21 x 16, continuation of the above - AFM 161.704

Bicentenario della nascita del Beato Marcellino Champagnat... Rome, 62 pp. 29.5 x 21, in Italian - AFM 161.705

Hermanos maristas de Ecuador - M. Champagnat, Loja, Ecuador 1991, 140 pp. 23.5 x 16.5 - AFM 161.706

Champagnat file (selection of texts and engravings) 67pp. 29 x 21, in English  
- AFM 161.706

MORENO F. - Misión sublime: Vida y obra de Marcelino Champagnat, 1789  
- 1840, 26 x 19.5 - AFM 161.707

ROCH C., RODRIGUEZ F., LLUIS SERRA, - Marcelino Champagnat, Prov.  
de Catalogne 1989 - 26pp. 27.5 x 18.5, in Spanish -AFM 161.708

Les Frères Maristes au coeur de l'Église avec les jeunes, coll. La tradition  
vivante, 36 pp. 29.5 x 21 - AFM 161.709

The Marist Brothers at the Heart of the Church with Young People, coll. The  
living tradition - English translation of the above, 36 pp. 29.5 x 21 -  
AFM 161.710

Provinces of the United States of America - Champagnat, celebration of the  
bicentennial of the birth and sesquicentennial of the death ..., typed, 85  
pp. 27.5 x 21, in English - AFM 161.711

Index:

Correspondence received by Father Champagnat; texts assembled by Br.  
Aureliano Brambila, typed, 197 pp. 29 x 21 - AFM 151

Dieu, Jésus et Marie dans les lettres du Père Champagnat, typed, 40 pp. 29.7  
x 21 - AFM 150

Lieux de rencontre avec le Père Champagnat, Rome 1993, index of  
documents on Marcellin Champagnat, set up by Br. A. Brambila, typed,  
61 pp. 29 x 21 - AFM 150

## MARIST PUBLICATIONS

*Not all of the titles indicated below are exactly new. Nevertheless they may escape the notice of our readers, especially Marist Brothers. So it may be useful to make them known or to recall them. Is it not normal for us to prefer to enhance our libraries with works of the family, so to speak, thus providing stimulating nourishment not only for the mind but also for the heart.*

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Jan SNIJDERS, THE AGE OF MARY - LE SIECLE DE MARY, coll. MARISTICA textus et studia, N°1, Rome 1988; bilingual: English and French on facing pages - French translated from the English by Fr Gaston Lessard - 136 pages 21 x 15

The author himself points out in the preface that he is committing to writing here the principal ideas of the conferences on Marist spirituality and mission that certain Provinces asked him to give on the occasion of the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the approbation of the Society. He sees it as a mission to set in motion once again, according to the image that he uses, the snowball which seems to have stopped at a hollow in the rock, so that it might continue on its way and become an avalanche, but at the same time remain "hidden and unknown", in order to concretise in the Church of our time the unobtrusive, loving and merciful presence of Mary in the early Church.

Claude ROZIER, - S. PIERRE CHANEL d'après ceux qui l'ont connu, Rome 1991, 254 pages 24 x 15.5

This book is to a certain degree a sequel to "Ecrits de Pierre Chanel" which Father Claude Rozier published in 1960, six years after the canonization of the martyr of Futuna. It consists of testimonies on his life and

death gathered from the writings of those who knew him either in France or in Oceania. Among them those of Brother Marie-Nizier Delorme, his companion in the mission of Futuna, hold pride of place. Even though the author disclaims the intention of retracing in some way the life of his hero, it comes through nonetheless and in a more realistic way than in the first biographies. This work is able to awaken a lively interest in us, whether the setting be the French countryside or the mission in Oceania, and at the same time it gives us much information on the way of life of the period.

... EVER YOUR POOR BROTHER, Peter CHANEL. A collection of letters together with the Futuna journal, translated and presented by Fathers William Joseph STUART and Anthony WARD; Volume 2 of the collection: "Archives missionnaires maristes", Rome 1991, 466 pages 21 x 15

The authors state that "this is not in any way a translation of the book by Father Claude ROZIER, "Ecrits de Saint Pierre Chanel" which appeared in 1960. The texts are translated from the originals and are presented without introductions or notes. We simply wanted to make available to the English-speaking public the writings of the martyr of Futuna, leaving to the learned researcher the opportunity of consulting the works quoted.

J. COSTE and G. LESSARD, AUTOUR DE LA REGLE, 1 - Règlements et pratiques maristes du vivant de Jean-Claude COLIN, (doc. 1 - 26), coll. "Fontes Historici Societatis Mariae", Rome 1991, 296 pages 24.3 x 17

'Twenty-three years after the last volume of "Origines Maristes", the editors of these latter present to the members of their religious family a new critical edition. It is still a question of documents relating to the spiritual adventure which found its first official expression in the promise made at Fourvière on 23rd July 1816 "to found a pious congregation of Marists", but the new work, of which this is the first volume, differs from its predecessor on three essential points':

- 1 - the period concerned extends to the death of Jean-Claude Colin in 1875;
- 2 - the texts concern only the Marist Fathers and the coadjutor Brothers;
- 3 - these texts are living examples with regard to some rule, some practice, life within a society. (extract from the Preface)

Edwin L KEEL, S.M. - A BOOK OF TEXTS for the study of Marist Spirituality, Rome, Centre for Marist Studies, 1993, 388 pages, 24 x 17.

The author presents the work himself in the Introduction. The following is an extract:

"This book is an offshoot of the courses in Marist Spirituality that I have been offering since 1986 at the Centre for Marist Studies in Rome and the

Marist House in Framingham, and in 1992 at St. Anne's Presbytery in London...

Because the book is structured around the three symbolic moments of *Fourvière*, *Cerdon* and *Bugey*, which the Constitutions of 1988 offer as the framework both for Marist formation and for the whole of Marist life, the book should be used not only for Marist renewal programmes, but for those involved in Marist initial formation and for any Marist who seeks a deeper grasp of Marist spirituality through a thematic study of texts significant in our spiritual tradition. The texts are collected and presented here with little or no commentary. It is for the reader to meet Colin and the other founders and early Marists in their own words, and to let those words open up new paths of insight, of feeling and of action...

There is no attempt to provide here a sacred canon of Marist texts. There is, for instance, no direct treatment of prayer or the vows or such ministerial activities as preaching, teaching, hearing confessions, etc., themes on which Colin undoubtedly has much to say to us, but on which the basic research has yet to be done. Furthermore, any selection of themes and texts is necessarily biased, regardless of the attempt to allow the tradition to speak for itself and to unfold according to its own dynamic. What is brought together here is simply a rather large amount of significant textual material relating to the symbolic framework of Marist life. It will need to be supplemented as research continues to explore our spiritual tradition, and as others with other concerns and biases, attempt their own synthesis of the material..."

Antoine FORISSIER, FOR A MARIAN CHURCH, Marist Founders and Foundresses, Rome 1992, 268 pages 21.3 x 13.5

An English translation of "Présences de Marie" that the "Marist Notebooks" presented in N°2, page 30.

Charles GIRARD, LAY MARISTS. Anthology of Historical Sources, Rome 1993, 964 pages 24 x 17

An English translation of "Maristes laïcs" presented in Marist Notebooks, N°4.

Frère AVIT, Henri BILON, ANNALES DE L'INSTITUT divisées en neuf étapes, Rome 1993, published in three volumes: 1 - La rude montée, 1789-1840; 2 - L'épanouissement, 1840-1879; 3 - Route encombrée, 1880-1891.

Besides the individual annals of 480 establishments (excluding those of the North whose annals were not written by him), Brother Avit composed the general Annals of the Institute. We are concerned only with these latter here. The first part covering the life of the Founder was published in 1972, but the edition was completely exhausted. A new edition has therefore been brought out (volume 1) completing the series with the part that had remained unpublished (volumes 2 & 3), covering the period from the death of the Founder almost to the death of the author. For practical reasons, this second part has been divided into two volumes, the break being made after the death of Brother Louis-Marie in December 1879.

This is not a "History of the Institute" scientifically speaking. The author felt himself incapable of that due to lack of formation. They are rather 3 "Annals", in other words, an accumulation of facts and information on the life and development of the Congregation during its first 75 years. Brother Avit did not write the 884 pages of manuscript himself, he dictated them to secretaries after having assembled, sometimes with great difficulty, the documents he could still find. It is to his credit that he undertook this work and brought it to completion eight months before his death. In spite of his tendency to give himself a starring role, his fondness for spicy details, even his errors of dates and some doubtful judgements, he provides the historian with some irreplaceable material.

The introductory autobiography, full of extracts from the annals of the houses, provides the reader with some means of assessing the work that follows.

In short, this readable work merits attention from the point of view of interest and of its slightly critical tone but it is characterised nonetheless by a serene, religious acceptance of events which are not necessarily inevitable.

Juan J. MORAL BARRIO, HERMANO BERNARDO, Marista martir entre los mineros, Zaragoza 1993, 350 pages 22 x 16

We have to admit that the Marist Brothers of Spain have been very tardy in drawing to our attention and making public the virtues and the merits of our Brothers sacrificed through hatred for the Faith. The "PAGES DE L'HISTOIRE MARISTE, ESPAGNE 1936-1939" by Br Eduardo Corredera Gutierrez, FMS, (Graficas Casulleras, Sepulveda 79, Barcelona 1977), is the first serious work in this field.

Now Br Juan Jesús Moral Barrio gives us the biography of "FRERE BERNARDO, MARISTE, MARTYR PARMY LES MINEURS" who was the first victim of our religious Family in the course of the preliminaries to the bloody Marxist persecution in Spain.

In the introduction the author shows himself to be lenient towards those who have been the cause of "these long years of silence, perhaps of

discernment, of reflection, even of purification, of respect...” But he struggles to revive the memory, “so that the silence is not transformed into indifference and that forgetfulness does not result in an unpardonable impoverishment...”

The author’s abilities as an eminent pedagogue are apparent in the order and clarity of the different stages of the life of his hero.

The socio-political ambience of the period and the family atmosphere, so well described, are fundamental for an understanding of the development of the human, Christian and religious aspects of the personality of Brother Bernardo with his constant striving to do more and to do better which is so evident on every page. Though he might not have been born a saint Brother Bernardo understood very early the importance of the expression “heroic virtue” and he pursued this goal with courage and perseverance. Without wishing to anticipate the judgement of the Church or to infringe upon it, when we read this biography we clearly see that Brother Bernardo was an authentic hero by his way of life, as religious, as educator, as apostle, and his violent death was simply the final seal, albeit a glorious one, to this life of fidelity.

Joaquim Messias Bruno da SILVEIRA, BIOGRAFIA DO IRMAO LUIZ SILVEIRA, Mestre do equilibrio, Centro de Estudos Maristas, coleção Perolas Maristas, Belo Horizonte 1993, 168 pages 21.3 x 14.3

The recent biography of Brother Luiz Silveira is the product of in-depth research, of methodical gathering of materials and, above all, of an intense dedication on the part of the author, Joaquim Silveira, the brother of the deceased Brother Luiz. It presents the person of Brother Luiz to the reader in an intimate and unforgettable way.

It is a biography enriched by the personal testimonies of many Brothers and lay people and is presented in a dynamic and appealing way. It is also supplemented with excellent illustrations.

This biography, which is N°5 of the “Marist Pearls” collection, was published by the Centre for Marist Publications of the Province of Rio de Janeiro and will be a source of enrichment for the whole Institute. It traces in a lively way the human and religious dimensions of Brother Luiz, a man who was determined, dynamic, challenging, innovative, in touch with reality, and gifted with a great sensitivity and vision. He was also deeply involved in issues of justice.

Br José Milson

TOSTI German Br., H. PAULIUS, Joseph Louis Paul Pavier, 1881-1981, Marista, tres violetas y un solo mensaje, Gram editora, Buenos Aires 1993, 118 pages 21 x 15.

The author introduces himself and his work in these few lines taken from

the Prologue: “The Superiors suggested that I write a brochure on the subject of vocation; and now I have surpassed myself and we have this little book. I relied, as much as possible, on the writings of Brother Paulius. This idea was, I believe, the key to the success of this biography which thus reflects the life and ideas of our confrere rather than the musings of my imagination.

I am happy to place this work to the hands of my superiors and I think it will be useful to the Marist Brothers and to other religious, aspirants and seminarians as an aid in their efforts to surrender themselves to God.

# STUDIES

## FATHER CHAMPAGNAT AND CONFIDENCE

### I. CONFIDENCE

#### **Dynamic and trusting**

The life of Father Champagnat is characterised by confidence. His dynamic temperament was fundamentally optimistic. He possessed this supple force, indomitable as a watercourse or a plant which knows how to skirt around obstacles but never allows itself to be halted. The personal story of our blessed Founder, as well as the history of the foundation and development of the Congregation could serve to illustrate this truth. We know that he was not cut out for an intellectual career - his biographer mentions it often enough - nevertheless he spent long years of study and tedious effort in order to attain the priesthood. His confreres all agreed that he possessed neither the talents nor the indispensable resources to attempt, with any hope of success, the foundation of a congregation, but in spite of this, he takes his place today among the great founders in the history of the Church.

In this we are obviously moving beyond the psychological resources of a man and are dealing with a force which unites the frailty of the man with the power of God. The secret of Marcellin Champagnat was to present his situation of poverty to God and to the Good Mother, with the humility and simplicity of a child. From that point on he experienced a calm and joyful confidence, placing his destiny in the hands of the heavenly Father and abandoning himself completely to His wisdom and goodness.

**“His trust in God”** (Life, Part 2, Chapter III).

This Chapter is perhaps the richest and the most beautiful in the whole life of Father Champagnat. Brother Jean-Baptiste is at ease here and can

employ to the full his talent as a writer. In fact, it is here that he touches the fundamental spiritual attitude of Father Champagnat. He has an abundance of material and does not feel the need to “borrow” from elsewhere as he usually does.

*“There was no virtue that Father Champagnat so much recommended to his Brothers as confidence in God. He commented very many times on the first two verses of the psalm ‘Unless the Lord build the house’ and his reflections on them would fill volumes.*

*“Don’t be surprised,” he used to remark, “to see me constantly coming back to this same point: the fact is that it is the most important point. Indeed, what is peculiar to man is helplessness, wretchedness and nothingness; he has nothing, he can do nothing, without the help of God. Our weakness and our continual needs are so many reasons for putting our hope in God...” (p. 290).*

Father Mayet, who expressed some reservations on the life of Father Champagnat which he had just read, found there, nevertheless, the description of “the man of God”; it was the chapter on trust in God which impressed him most.

### **“I entrust everything...”**

After the tempest that had battered the Congregation during the course of “the terrible year” 1826, the young Founder recovered from his exhaustion and set about repairing the damage done to his work. Full of vitality once more he thought of nothing but new developments. He wrote to various people in order to obtain the services of a young priest who might help him in the formation of his Brothers and in the administration of the Institute. His letter to Father Cattet, Vicar General, the pitiless inspector of the Hermitage during the grave crises of the preceding year, gives us a clear insight into the dispositions of his soul.

He is making a difficult request and one with little hope of success. After having made some spiritual reflections on the recent trials, the Founder presents the situation with serenity, accepting fully, in advance, the will of God which will be revealed to him by his superiors. His confidence in Jesus and Mary attains a joyous abandonment which is expressed in this outburst of praise:

*“I am emboldened to say: provided that God has not abandoned me, may his holy Name be blessed, I fear nothing. I am alone; in spite of that I do*

*not lose courage, knowing how powerful God is and how his ways are hidden from even the most clear-sighted of men: often he attains his goal when we believe it to be least likely. I have always had a firm conviction that God wants this work, at this time when unbelief is making such terrible inroads; But perhaps he wants other men to establish it. May his holy Name be blessed! I desire more than ever to accomplish his holy will as soon as it is made known to me.*

*"I am anxious simply to reveal my position to you, and I am sure that you will act according to how you judge it conducive to the glory of God. After having acquainted you with the facts and how things stand, I abandon it all into the hands of the Lord and his most holy Mother, and I will bless their holy names." (cf. FMS N°47, 1981)*

This text gives us a glimpse into the soul of a saint and allows us some insight into its most intimate dispositions. This filial abandonment to the Providence of the heavenly Father, to Jesus and to Mary, is the ultimate degree of the complete confidence which he has in the wisdom and goodness of Providence. On the other hand, abandonment, being the perfection of gift, is a powerful expression of love, thus drawing together all the essence of the three theological virtues. This is also the opinion of Father Valentino G. Macca, advocate in the cause of Brother Alfano who notes with admiration this same attitude of filial abandonment with regard to this faithful disciple of the Founder:

*"Moreover, it is in this manner that the Servant of God lives this surrender to God, which is the union of his own will with that of the Lord in which consists perfect theological charity". (Relazione, p. 24)*

This observation has not escaped Brother Jean-Baptiste who mentions several times abandonment to Providence in the chapter on Trust in God:

*"My dear Brothers, when will we have sentiments worthy of God? Hasn't he given us so much proof of his goodness that we have learnt to rely on Providence, leaving ourselves entirely in his hands? Has he ever let us want for anything since he withdrew us from the world?" (p. 291).*

### **"Let us abandon ourselves to Providence"**

Following a veritable campaign of disparagement, certain people ceased supporting the works of Father Champagnat. Here are the words that

Brother Jean-Baptiste places on the lips of the Founder in these difficult circumstances:

*"I have long been convinced that we should not expect anything from men; that God himself wishes to do everything for us. Let us therefore intensify our confidence in his goodness, putting ourselves in the hands of Providence. It redounds to his glory to help us, bestowing on us the support which men refuse. Should the whole world be against us, we have nothing to fear as long as God is for us."* (p. 294).

At the time of the revolution of 1830, Father Champagnat provoked the admiration of the Archbishop of Lyons and his Vicars General in asking authorisation to have a ceremony of the reception of the habit when other religious were thinking only of going into hiding. (Life, Part I, Ch XVII, pp 174-175). Here is a passage from a short circular he sent to his Brothers to affirm them in their trust and their abandonment to the Providence of the heavenly Father:

*"The present circumstances prevent us this year from assembling at the Mother House to take our holidays together and make a retreat. God will provide... Let's fear nothing... We have God as our defender... Let's abandon ourselves to the wise and loving course of Providence."* (10.9.1830)

### **"In the arms of Mary"**

In 1833, when the Congregation was already well established and prospering, an insidious crisis almost compromised the whole work of Father Champagnat following an initiative of Father Cholleton, Vicar General. The latter conceived the project of uniting the Brothers of Mary to the congregation of the Clerics of St Viator. Though these still existed largely only on paper, their founder, Father Querbes, who had the reputation of being a man of great talent, had already obtained legal authorisation. The problem was that Father Champagnat's Brothers who had the numbers, the vitality and a very characteristic spirit, must change their name and adopt the rules of another congregation. But the last straw was, undoubtedly, to become separated from Father Champagnat and to accept Father Querbes, a stranger, as superior.

The planned solution worked out in the office of the Vicar General did not take account of the actual reality. Father Champagnat who had the experience and who knew the Brothers saw in it the imminent ruin of his

whole work. So he wrote a letter to Father Cholleton. We have the draft of it: it bears the marks of his tears. In his suffering he reviews the history of the Congregation, shot through with severe trials and as many providential rescues, clear signs of God's protection and favour and that of the Holy Virgin. The most beautiful expression of trust this precious document contains is probably the passage which witnesses to the important place that the maternal mediation of Mary holds in the history of our Congregation according to the deep-seated conviction of the Founder:

*"O truly fatal day and more than capable of overturning the work were it not for the fact that the divine Mary supports it with all the strength of her arm!"*

In the course of the development of this striking text we encounter two further expressions of the unshakable confidence of our blessed Founder in the Blessed Virgin:

*"Finding myself alone by the absence of Father Courveille and the departure of Father Terraillon, Mary has not abandoned us... Mary assists us; that is sufficient..."* (Letter of "the tears", Summer 1833).

### **God knows better than we do"**

One important characteristic of the spiritual attitude and holiness of our blessed Founder, then, is trust in God to the extent of filial abandonment. He came through the trials of life and of the foundation of the Institute guided by the star of trust in God and in Mary, and his death will give further evidence of this unlimited confidence. In 1838 came the setback of the drawn out attempts to obtain legal authorisation which seemed vital for the future of the Congregation. This dramatic reverse failed to shake the confidence of this man of God. His awareness of God left intact his wonder at the mysterious workings of Providence which must be allowed to unfold freely, because God knows better than we do what will work for our good:

*"I still have a great trust in Jesus and Mary. We will attain our object, of this I have no doubt, only the time is unknown to me. What is very important, for our part, is to do only what God wants us to do, I mean what it is possible for us to do, and after that to allow Providence to act. God knows better than we do what will help us and what is good for us."* (23.6.1838).

The Lord willed that, in life as in death, our blessed Founder give us the example of total trust and of filial abandonment. Indeed, though his life's

work was thriving and bore the unmistakable marks of divine benediction, he saw himself approaching the end of his earthly career without having been able to obtain two important guarantees for the future of his Congregation: legal authorisation and its certain inclusion within the Society of Mary. Thus the Lord willed it: our blessed Founder died, as he had lived, in hope.

*“Happy the man who stands firm when trials come. He has proved himself, and will win the prize of life, the crown that the Lord has promised to those who love him.” (James 1:12)*

The Spiritual Testament, probably composed in haste by Brothers Louis Marie and François, mentions above all the urgent problems and the wording is simple and direct, but it omits to give concrete expression to this general basis of the spiritual life of the Founder and of his Brothers. We see, nevertheless, that the insistence on the exercise of the presence of God emphasises in a practical and detailed way abandonment to God in filial confidence. We are indebted to Brother Jean-Baptiste for noting this omission in the Testament and reporting some of the last words of the Good Father on his death bed:

*“Throughout his life, Father Champagnat never let up inspiring his Brothers with confidence in God, assuring them that he would take care of them and his help would never be wanting to them. On his death bed, it was the subject of his last exhortation to them. ‘Put your confidence in God’, he urged them, ‘and count on him. His Providence will support you, help you, bless you and see to all your needs.’” (Life, 2nd Part, p. 296)*

### **“Don’t worry...”**

We have just mentioned that the exercise of the presence of God is the way of putting into practice abandonment to Providence in the details of our daily life. Scribbled in the margins of the manuscripts of Father Champagnat we find the crystallisation of his unceasing prayer in the form of multiple variants of the formula “You know it, my God”. Its first formulation is found in the notebook of resolutions of 1814. The passage from the letter cited earlier shows clearly that Father Champagnat’s abandonment to Providence was a product of his profound sense of God’s presence “who knows better than we do what will help us and what is good for us” (23.6.1838).

The clear judgement with which Father Champagnat was gifted made him aware for quite a while that the business of the legal authorisation was

not making progress. Instead of allowing himself to become bitter, he remained tranquil in a filial abandonment to God. This is what he wrote to Brother François on 7th June 1838:

*“It is still very true to say that we are in the hands of Jesus and Mary. Pray to them, my dear Brothers. May the holy will of God be done; and let us try to desire only what God wants to happen. Let us leave the success entirely in his hands; he knows better than we do what is necessary.”*

This spiritual attitude reminds us of the filial attitude in the Gospel, wonderfully illustrated in Chapter 6 of St. Matthew:

*“That is why I tell you not to worry...Your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. Set your hearts on his kingdom first, and on his righteousness, and all these other things will be given you as well. So do not worry about tomorrow...”* (Mt 6: 25-34).

Br. Jean-Baptiste’s chapter on Trust in God is not lacking in references, more or less direct, to the Gospel discourse that we have just quoted and which the Jerusalem Bible entitles “Trust in Providence”

“Why fear for the future?” (p. 291)

*“Men have cut off your payment, but God, who knows that you need to eat, has not withdrawn his protection; he will take care of you, since it is his work you are doing. He feeds the birds... It is quite impossible for him to abandon you and let you lack the necessities of life, if only you place your confidence in him...”* (p. 293)

*As to financial needs, I rely on the word of our divine Saviour: “Set your hearts on his kingdom first, and on his righteousness and all these other things will be given you as well.”* (p. 299).

Br. Jean-Baptist was right to emphasise next the peace of soul that these dispositions produced:

*“His unlimited confidence in God kept him in admirable tranquillity and inalterable peace in the midst of the greatest difficulties”* (p. 296).

## **“You know it my God”**

The scribbling in the margins of the manuscripts, as, for example, in the register of accounts, gives us some precious clues regarding the personal way

in which Father Champagnat sanctified work and transformed it into prayer. With the aid of longer texts, like “Prayer to Mary on arriving at a post”, we can reconstruct the interior content of this prayer in the form of aspirations which was a favourite practice of the Founder. In these moments of mental pause he entered into immediate dialogue with God and placed himself before his majesty in the simplicity of heart and openness of soul of a child.

This is an attitude of prayer marked by simplicity and poverty by which a man places himself in the fatherly hands of God with all the problems of the moment, and then takes up the task again in peace and confidence. “I am poor, I have problems, but you know it my God. I abandon myself to your wisdom and fatherly goodness, with all my problems.”

This is Father Champagnat’s own way of practising “the presence of God”, in the form of prayer. It was said about good Pope John that it is the privilege of simplicity and spiritual childhood to enjoy easy contact with God and with men. This “easy” prayer of simple souls unites the temporal and the spiritual in an attitude of habitual openness before God which makes possible unceasing prayer. By a kind of spiritual “feedback”, difficulties themselves and problems become occasions for filial recourse to God in trust.

This attitude removes distress, while at the same time conserving vitality and dynamism. It leaves no room for pride, since it is on God that we rely, not on ourselves, to keep us faithful.

The very first resolutions of Father Champagnat at the Minor Seminary of Verrières, about the year 1810, provide us with a very simple example of this practical spiritual attitude:

*My Lord and my God, I promise to offend you no more; to make acts of faith, hope and the like whenever I think of it ...”* (cf. Bulletin, N° 217, 1975).

We may think that if he does not mention charity, which completes the theological virtues, it is because of a sincerity that already characterises him. He does not consider himself a Seraphim aflame with love of God so he prefers not to repeat empty forms. But faith and hope which he stresses are essential elements of the impulses to abandon himself to God which will become familiar to him. We can say then that the young man of 21 already possesses the interior sentiments of complete filial trust in God, without having yet settled on a formula to express and recall them.

As well as witnessing to a fundamental authenticity, these first lines of the young Champagnat portray a fine balance between the human and the spiritual. This resolution is within the reach of everyone since it espouses a spontaneous and natural rhythm: “whenever I think of it...”. In fact, our whole human existence is governed by the law of repeated rhythms: the years, the seasons, the phases of the moon, day and night, breathing, the beating of the heart, etc. And this is true of work and rest. When we undertake an intellectual work, for example, the moments of intense concentration are followed by relaxation from our effort, that is, moments of repose. It is in these moments that our attention returns easily to ourselves and the love which animates us. These are the appropriate moments to place ourselves before the Lord in openness, even in the middle of our work, to tell him again of our poverty, our good will, and to entrust ourselves, with all our problems, to his fatherly Providence: “You know it my God”.

It is thus, aided by habit, that our life is transformed into a fabric, ever more closely woven, of work and of prayer in response to the exhortation of the Apostle: “Pray constantly...” (1 Thess. 5: 18)

## II. FIDELITY

### Openness and fidelity

Were we to stop here in our reflections on the trust in God which animated the life of Father Champagnat and nourished his prayer we would run the risk of misinterpreting his deep-seated attitude. In fact, filial abandonment to God presupposes that kind of sincerity and loyalty which moves one to employ all one’s resources of good will.

The two main characteristics of the filial abandonment practised by our blessed Founder are openness, which we have just illustrated, and a fidelity which engages all our good will.

In the letter of 1st November 1831, to Brother Bartholomew, who was disturbed by the competition of a lay school, Father Champagnat illustrates beautifully filial trust in the all powerful goodness of God requiring only our fidelity to him:

*“Don’t worry about the small number (of pupils) that you have... God holds the hearts of all men in his hands; he will send you numbers when he*

*judges the time right. It is enough that your infidelity does not stand in the way."*

On the occasion of a difficult arrangement with Father Douillet, who wanted to have his own way regarding the establishment of La Côte-St. André, Father Champagnat displayed a disinterestedness based on his confidence in God. But, here again, he is prompted by his habitual attitude of trust in Providence:

*"In this arrangement what we want is uniformity in the Society and not money, being convinced that if God is happy with us he will not let us want for anything"* (October 1836).

Brother Jean-Baptiste also emphasises this condition of our confidence in God, dictated by a simple attitude of honesty and uprightness. Here are the words that he places on the lips of the Founder in the difficult and dangerous circumstances of the revolution of 1830:

*"The great precaution you need to take...is to entrust yourselves to Providence and redouble your confidence in God. Strive to merit his protection by a greater fidelity to your Rule, by zeal in instructing your children, and by the practice of all the virtues of your state"* (Life, 2nd Part, Ch.III, p.292).

Responding to criticism and to accusations of senseless pride which led to the construction of the large house of the Hermitage, the good Father recalled once more his unlimited confidence in God with its complement of personal fidelity:

*"Let people say what they like, and let us put our trust in God, who will never abandon us, unless we first abandon him"* (Ibid. p. 294).

This insistence on fidelity finds a place also in the Gospel discourse on trust in Providence already cited:

*"Set your hearts on his kingdom first, and on his righteousness, and all these things will be given you as well."* (Matt 6: 33)

The theme of fidelity finds its roots in the fundamental principle of the covenant of God with his people and with all humanity, which makes the human person the partner of God. All of Sacred History is centred around this bilateral engagement, where the problematical element is evidently the

inconstancy of **human fidelity**. At the same time the supernatural vocation heightens the liberty and the dignity of the human person, capable of love and of fidelity.

### **A lesson on prayer**

Our blessed Founder gives here a simple yet profound lesson on prayer and on relations with God:

*“It is not those who say to me ‘Lord, Lord’, who will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the person who does the will of my Father in heaven” (Matt 7: 21).*

Union with God by means of the fidelity of each moment is a vital existential prayer which orients the soul towards God in the accomplishment of his will. The movement of prayer towards God is thus incarnated in daily life expressing itself in the effort of good will and in sacrifice inspired by love. Far from being superficial lip service, true prayer engages the whole of our being and draws upon all its capacity for love. We can recall here the triple protestation of St. Peter which places the ejaculatory prayer of Father Champagnat in a new light:

*“Simon, son of John, do you love me?... Lord, you know everything; you know I love you.” (John 21: 17)*

It is in this perspective of fidelity and of loving sacrifice that we must view the great biblical tradition of prayer and fasting. A prayer which is not supported by sacrifice risks being drained of its substance; because prayer is a movement toward God in love, and love is proved by sacrifice. At Medugorje, the Virgin teaches prayer and fasting. (She recommends, besides, abandonment to Providence and meditation on St. Matthew Chapter 6 to support it. At the same time she invites her children to abandon themselves to the goodness of her maternal heart). In Chapter XI of Part I of the Life of Father Champagnat, Br. Jean-Baptist gives us an idea of the fervour with which our blessed Founder and our first Brothers knew how to pray and fast in order to ward off the Bochard peril:

*“When the new troubles struck, Marcellin prescribed special prayers and called on the Community to fast for nine days on bread and water...” (p.112)*

*We recall also all the fervent prayers that the good Father addressed to the Blessed Virgin in the vocations crisis of 1822 (ibid. p. 93)*

### **At the service of Christ and of the Church**

This leads us spontaneously to the crisis which preoccupies us today and which causes worry to all those who are participating in the spiritual adventure of Father Champagnat. The survival of his charism cannot leave us indifferent. The responsibility we have with regard to the charism of the Founder and of the Institute constitutes an important aspect of our vocation.

It is not a question of nurturing a kind of group egoism, but of assuring the adaptation and development of a spring of holiness and of apostolate that the Holy Spirit caused to gush forth in the Church in the course of its history. The Founder, his charism, the Institute, all of us, are at the service of Christ and of the Church.

Father Champagnat expresses this truth with simplicity, clarity and fervour at the end of the short circular of 12.8.1837:

*“It is a very dear consolation to me to see you all gathered together, having but one heart and one soul, and making up one family, seeking nothing but the glory of God and the interests of his holy religion, fighting under the same standard, that of the August Mary.”*

### **We are responsible before God for the charism**

If we Marists do not feel responsible before God and before the Church for the survival of our charism, who will ensure its future? Or, to put it more directly, none of us can remain indifferent in the face of the present acute crisis of vocations. On the other hand we ought not to allow ourselves to be overcome by a sterile and negative anxiety which can paralyse us and sow discouragement. After the example of Father Champagnat we must confront the problem with simplicity, with upright and loyal hearts bearing in mind that our fidelity will influence not only our confidence in God but also the attractiveness and credibility of the charism of our Institute. A fervent religious, animated by sincere good will, is always able to say with Jesus: “... he who sent me is with me and has not left me to myself, for I always do what pleases him.” (Jn 8: 29)

It is a question **then of renewing** our good will and our fervour in living our Marist life, while at the same time entreating the Lord to "...create a clean heart in me, put into me a new and constant spirit". (Ps. 51: 10) But then let us summon up our sense of God and our spirit of faith. The wisdom of God infinitely surpasses our petty human efforts and even the limits of our imagination. It is this absolute all-conquering confidence accompanied by thanksgiving which Father Champagnat expressed in his letter to Father Cattet:

*"But I am emboldened to say that provided God does not abandon me, may his holy Name be blessed, I fear nothing. I am alone; in spite of that I do not lose courage, knowing how powerful God is and that his ways are hidden to men, even the most clear-sighted among them: often he attains his goal when we believe it to be most unlikely". (May 1827)*

Traditionally, we find in the Constitutions a chapter on the preservation, the survival or the vitality of the Congregation. Reducing this to the essential, we can affirm that the Congregation will continue in existence as long as the charism of Father Champagnat is alive in the hearts and in the lives of Marist Brothers. Instead of giving way to pessimism in the face of an uncertain future, let us adopt a more courageous and more realistic attitude, undertaking to examine our fidelity to the charism on which its future depends.

### **Are we faithful?**

To put it directly, are we being faithful to our Marist life and traditions? We are neither Jesuits nor Dominicans: our fidelity does not rest on high-flown theology but on present observances and practice.

Are our community exercises of piety times of real prayer and intimacy with God or are they simply formal observances? Are we faithful to the traditions of poverty and simplicity coming from the Founder in our dress, our furnishings, our travel? Have we not forgotten the traditions of austerity and mortification of our first Brothers in the matter of food, drink, use of tobacco etc? Have we not dissipated a heritage of sound traditions like hospitality, constant prayer and the silence which nourishes them? And the traditions of family spirit, self sacrifice, love of work? Formerly our older Brothers gave a constant example of application to work and prayer. Is this still the case?

The demands of fidelity extend to our innermost personal life and to our response to the constant promptings of grace. God is the sole witness of this kind of fidelity. Is our life truly regulated by religious obedience or are we

merely following our own will and caprices? It is so easy to escape from obedience alleging impossibility or very great difficulty. And the essential and so delicate virtue of fraternal charity, is it really flourishing among us? “By this love you have for one another, everyone will know that you are my disciples”. (Jn 13:35)

Simplicity, family spirit and devotion to our Good Mother, which characterise the Marist charism, constitute a special invitation to a fervent practice of fraternal love:

*“I want, I desire ardently that we love one another as children of the same Father who is God, and the same Mother, Holy Church. Finally, can it not be summed up in one word, Mary is our common Mother, could she view with an indifferent eye that we harbour in our heart something against one of those whom she perhaps loves more than us.” (5.1.1838)*

### **Mission and compassion**

Father Champagnat founded the Institute specifically for the apostolate of Christian Education. Many activities fill our days in the service of young people, are they dominated by the ideal of Christian education? It is so easy to be simply a teacher like the others and to be content with the little satisfactions of the teaching profession!

To what extent do we remain faithful to the orientation of the Congregation towards the humble, the simple people? Habitual association with the well-to-do is a direct danger to our spirit of humility and simplicity and therefore to the charism of the Institute. This Charism, as exemplified by Father Champagnat, called for an evangelical complement of compassion. All his life he was concerned with the poor, the sick, orphans and neglected young people. Mission and compassion, this phrase sums up the public life of Jesus, as well as the history of the Church.

*“The spirit of the Lord has been given to me, for he has anointed me. He has sent me to bring the good news to the poor...” (Lk 4:18)*

*“...and he sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal.” (Lk 9: 2)*

The compassion which the evangelical ideal of the Founder reveals, is a providential element in our charism intended to preserve us from soulless

activism. Father Champagnat was a very dynamic man, but the driving force of his activity was his heart, his compassion, his evangelic charity.

Let us not forget that in order for young people to be attracted to our way of life, they must be able to discern in it reflections of the absolute which preoccupies them. These days they are especially conscious of social justice and of the value of practical compassion for those neglected by the modern world. The “third world” of today approximates the historical circumstances in which Father Champagnat founded our Congregation for Christian education of the lowly. What part do we play in combatting the illiteracy of the poor and providing them with basic instruction? Education is the primordial means of escaping from isolation and from impotence in the face of a civilisation ever more dominated by technology.

Who has not heard the remarks, at times bitter, of certain Brothers, noting the success of recent religious movements, comparing their prosperity with our own stagnation: “*They have no trouble getting vocations!*” Yes, but at what price! When we examine them closely we are in admiration at their religious fervour, the depth and genuineness of their community life, the thoughtfulness of their fraternal charity, the generosity of their apostolic involvement.

Sometimes, in reading about or listening to accounts of devoted work for poor and neglected young people one is moved to ask: “But where are Father Champagnat’s Brothers? For young people to be drawn towards religious life they need to be able to discern in it practical forms of heroism and sanctity in order to be attracted by a particular vocation.

In the course of time, we have settled down in religious life at the price of a compromise between the evangelical ideal and human selfishness. The young are allergic to an ideal of a comfortable life, and God does not know what to do with pensioners in slippers.

*“You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt becomes tasteless, what can make it salty again? It is good for nothing, and can only be thrown out to be trampled underfoot by men.” (Mt 5: 13)*

Religious life has direction and purpose only if it is fervent. Its vocation has always been to witness to the kingdom and to fight in the front line with Christ in order to ransom the world.

*“Do not suppose that I have come to bring peace to the earth: it is not peace I have come to bring but the sword.” (Mt 10: 34)*

### **The example of Brother Alfano**

Who will help to revive among us the ardour of Father Champagnat and his first disciples? Providence has supplied this need by predestining certain Brothers to exemplify very closely the charism of the Founder. Thanks to God there have always been some of these in the course of the history of the Institute. By their fidelity to grace they light the way to our fidelity to the complete Marist vocation.

Brother Alfano (Giuseppe Vaser) who was born in 1873 in the Aosta valley and died at Ventimiglia in 1943, is one of these providential figures. He was the first Italian Brother in the Congregation. Coming from a region close to France in geographic situation and culture, he did his formation at Saint Paul Trois Chateaux. He provides a real link between the heroic times of the foundation and our own time of deep crisis. His love for the Founder and his attachment to the Congregation caused him to rediscover, as if by instinct, the fundamental Marist virtues.

We notice with joy that the examination of his virtues during the process of beatification revealed that together with his filial devotion to the Blessed Virgin he possessed a fundamental uprightness of soul which is one of the unquestionable signs of evangelical Marist simplicity. It leads to a confidence in God which goes as far as total surrender, and a generous fidelity to all the promptings of grace and to all the demands of the Marist vocation.

May the Lord grant that the example of this Brother will revive in us the ideal of the Founder, with immense confidence in God and in Mary, supported by an unshakeable fidelity to all our duties.

### **Conversion to “poverty”**

Finally, the most important thing is, perhaps, to confront the present crisis in a realistic way and in a biblical spirit.

In their trials the People of God were always invited by the prophets to recognise their infidelity, to leave idols of all kinds and be reconverted. The “remnant” in Sacred History, regenerated in humility and fervour, always rediscovered the mercy and the paternal kindness of God.

Distress kills; filial abandonment to God regenerates.

*“To me poor wretch, come quickly Lord! My helper, my saviour, my God, come and do not delay.” (Ps 40: 17)*

Let us listen once more to Father Champagnat who leads us to the Blessed Virgin, Mother, Patroness, First Superior of the Congregation. Let us open our souls to the ardent words overflowing with filial confidence which he addresses to a Brother who was being severely tried:

*“Never despair of your salvation, it is in good hands. Isn't Mary your refuge and your Mother? The greater your needs the more anxious is she to fly to your help... Mary, our good Mother, takes very good care of us. She knows that we are too weak to be able to endure a struggle... Farewell, my very dear Brother Marie-Laurent, I leave you in the arms of Mary, our good and tender Mother.” (8.4.1836)*

Br. A. Balko

## **TOWARDS A METHOD OF RE-READING the spirituality of Religious Orders and of Spiritual Movements**

It is not all that surprising that today representatives of religious orders and societies of the French school are coming together with a view to re-reading their origins because they think, with some justification, that their survival depends on it. They hope thereby to rediscover their original inspiration which will allow them to place themselves once more in a living stream, the source of renewal.

To avoid the traps of attachment to the past and of a mythical return to origins, such a process must be pursued with a certain rigour. That is why it seems to me to be useful to present some reflections on methodology, to clarify a little the vocabulary and to open up a few lines of enquiry, because religious orders do not necessarily have at their disposal the intellectual means to carry through a task requiring multi-disciplinary work, the methods of which are still hardly established. Besides, the very organisation of religious orders often leads to a certain parochialism, each order pursuing its research in accordance with its own needs and so favouring the diachronic approach. Working synchronically is much more difficult because it demands a synthesizing vision which is more difficult to acquire and often goes contrary to the intellectual traditions of the religious orders.

In addition, religious orders often develop an historiography, strongly coloured with the supernatural, in which the texts are perceived as fallen from heaven, read by an inspired person and guarded as a sacred deposit by a phalanx of initiates, proof against the wear and tear of time and the vicissitudes of history. Therefore it is often inappropriate for the disciples to

readapt themselves to these texts because it is necessary to be at the same time concerned about them and critical of them. One must know in particular how to desacralize them in order to see them as human documents subject to time, to clash of interests, to the deformations of interpretation...

It is true that this group has a greater chance of breaking with this tendency to parochialism and sacralization since it is composed of representatives of various religious families of diverse and recognised competencies. Nevertheless it does not seem to me superfluous to recall a few requirements of methodology.

## 1 - THREE FUNDAMENTAL CONCEPTS

I think we must first keep in mind the notion of COMPLEXITY because no spirituality exists outside general history, outside the history of the body which is its depository, the theologies of the time and of the past... The founder of a spirituality and his disciples are permanently located at the intersection of numerous influences which we need to identify as clearly as possible, even if we cannot exhaust all the richness of their synchrony.

Complex by essence, a spirituality can therefore only be lived out in TENSION between tradition and innovation, between asceticism and mysticism, between politics and vision...

But there can be no re-reading without a sharpened consciousness of chronology. The texts are not timeless, but written in times which unfold with their crises, accelerations and ruptures. It is well to keep in mind Braudel's distinction between a quasi immobile geographic time; a slow social time, that of groups; a short time, that of individuals and of factual history.

It seems to me that the work of Raymond Hostie (*Life and Death of Religious Orders*, Desclée de Brouwer, 1972) was successful in blazing a path towards a rigorous re-reading of the history of religious orders, throwing into relief the main stages in their life cycles. (pp. 289-319)

## 2 - LIFE AND DEATH OF RELIGIOUS ORDERS

First of all their birth takes place in a specific area (Western Europe...), in a precise period (17th or 18th century), as if carried in by a ground swell. Individuals arise, animated by a new inspiration, but they meet with

incomprehension from their associates. Pursuing their quest they encounter other men inspired by the same sentiments with whom they form bands whose members live in equality, charity, liberty and fervour in such a way that they both attract and disturb the society around them. After a time, if the band does not become a sect, if it does not break up, it becomes a group around one member who is recognised as synthesising in his person their common aspirations. A master-disciple relationship tends to arise and other younger aspirants come to swell the initial group.

If the master does not stifle the group or if he is not expelled from it, it can then organise itself and give itself an official superior and a common name. A new spiritual group is thus born. It has taken between 5 to 10 years to emerge.

After this maturation comes the time of expansion, for now the group can radiate in all directions and increase. But then, because the members are more numerous and more dispersed, unity based on frequent personal contact becomes impossible. Structuring is then necessary, in other words the establishment of a rule and of constitutions which will be the anchorage point of a tradition which is supposed to express the thought of the founder. After 25 years the group often has 200 to 500 members. It is ripe for a century of expansion, sometimes to as many as 40 000 members. Little by little stabilization sets in; tradition wins out over innovation; the Order delights in its success; its numbers continue to rise, it views the future with assurance.

Suddenly, there is panic: the Order detects that its decline has begun. It is between 200 and 250 years old. "Its radiation is extinguished, its activities languish, its membership shrinks". Within a century it has died out.

It is during this last phase that the members of the Order fervently engage in re-reading. "It is clear that they are scouring their past in an attempt to return to their origins, hoping to rediscover the secret of their initial vitality".(p.316) This return to sources can take on two aspects: "A complete and strongly literal return to the original rule" which gives poor results, or else a concern to rediscover "the spirit of an original nucleus" together with a deepening of their own particular experience. This combination of tradition and innovation can bring about a spectacular rebirth (as with the reform of the Cistercians and that of Carmel). A new cycle is thus set in motion.

It goes without saying that such a model must be used with prudence. One could also attempt to apply to religious orders the categories of the

sociology of Max Weber or Ernst Troeltsch. In fact the notions of “charismatic domination”, of “routinization of charism” (*Economic et société*, Plon, 1971, pp 249-258), as those of “prophet” (p. 464) and of “emotional community” (p. 475) of Max Weber could have led us to conclusions close to those of Raymond Hostie. In the same way the introduction of the concepts of Church-type, sect-type, mystic-type of Troeltsch have already been used, notably by Michael Hill (*Social Compass XVIII*, 1971/1, 45-64) to give a sociological typology of religious orders. But what is important here is to show the importance of a process which takes into consideration the concepts mentioned above: tension, chronology, the complexity of influences.

### 3 - AN EXAMPLE: THE ORATORY

We can use the history of the Oratory to test the model of Raymond Hostie. Thus Bérulle belongs to the ground swell of the Catholic Reformation, of the mystical invasion largely influenced by the Spanish and Rheno-Flemish mystics. The band would be the devout milieu in which Bérulle steeped himself, in particular the Acarie salon. This band becomes a group when Bérulle and six priests found the Oratory, in 1611, and open their first college, in 1614. The structuring seems to begin with the generalate of Condren. At the first General Assembly the usages become constitutions; even though the ties of the Oratorians remain loose, divergences appear; John Eudes leaves the Oratory. Father Bourgoing (1641-1662) seems to preside over the administrative organisation. He publishes the directories and edits the works of Bérulle. Did his authoritative management give rise to complaints? After him, Father Senault, a conciliator, presides over the expansion and tries to arbitrate quarrels connected with Jansenism. The eighteenth century, then, will be the time of expansion and stabilization. The Revolution will bring about the demise of the first Oratory which seems to make no effort to re-establish itself.

This too rapid sketch of the history of the Oratory seems to me to provide a partial confirmation of Hostie's model. However this example does not seem very adequate: the Oratory does not seem to have ever constituted itself a religious order, but to have remained a group, that is to say, loose in structure. Three factors could explain this situation: the absence of vows; the democratic government; the high intellectual level of the members.

As for the second Oratory, it probably illustrates our model better. In fact, Gratry, his conscience sharpened by his study of Lacordaire, Bautain, Laménais..., offers an intellectual challenge to the Church. The idea of an

apologetics workshop is in the air. The band organised around Gratry and Pététot, beginning in 1852, want to return to the sources of the Oratory, without the Jansenism, but with a great ambiguity in their plans for the future; Gratry wants intellectual activities at a high level, while Pététot is envisaging seminaries. It is during the course of metamorphosis into a group that the situation is clarified: Gratry is rejected and the intellectual current is marginalised. Pététot as undisputed leader is able to structure his group around colleges and seminaries. Finally, in the phase of organisation, A. Perraud researches oratorian sources; the original constitutions are readopted. The second Oratory is ready for a second expansion.

#### 4 - SPIRITUALITY, MYSTICISM, THEOLOGY

At this stage in my account it could be objected that the proposed model applies to the overall history of religious orders but not specifically to spirituality which is our present preoccupation. I am, therefore going to attempt to apply Hostie's model to spirituality.

But beforehand, it seems to me indispensable to clarify such terms as: spirituality, mysticism, theology.

In order to define mysticism I willingly make use of Brémond (cf. *L'Invasion mystique*) for whom it is fundamentally the direct consciousness of the presence of God, the intuition of God being present. For spirituality and theology, the recent article: "Spirituality" by Michel Dupuy in the *Dictionary of Spirituality*, T. 14-15, col. 1149-50) is very enlightening. He notes, for example, that the term "spirituality" was used for the first time as recently as in 1917. Following Joseph Weimeyer, he recognised five aspects: theologico-christocentric; anthropological; ecclesial; eschatological; present day prophetic. Spirituality is the foundation of theology because there can be no theology without experience of God. Spirituality and theology are thus related but distinct: the former is on the level of experience and spontaneous expression, while the latter is on the level of reflective elaboration.

These three attempts at definition seem to me sufficient to establish a schema of relationships between the three notions. Thus, for me, spirituality and theology are overlapping circles, one representing spirituality and the other theology, distinct but related. But in the spirituality circle I would introduce a distinction between mysticism, the passive aspect of the love of God which is given gratuitously, at times to the degree of infused contemplation, and asceticism, the effort to achieve union with God, the

active aspect of the love of God. This schema would have the advantage of allowing us to see these three components in tension with one another. Thus a tendency towards positivity in the spiritual life, in reducing the ascetical aspect, leans towards quietism. An hypertrophy of asceticism leads to a marginalisation of mysticism. And a theology depending on spirituality sometimes tends toward mysticism, sometimes towards asceticism.

## 5 - SPIRITUALITIES IN TENSION: IGNATIANS AND BERULLIANS

I have tried to re-read Louis Cognet (*La spiritualité moderne*) in accordance with my double grid interpretation: psycho-sociological and spiritual, and I think that I have obtained some significant results with regard to the two principal spiritualities of the 17th century.

In the case of Jesuit spirituality, Ignatius was influenced by Ludolph le Chartreux, Cisneros, the *Imitation*, and he constructed from them a Pauline mysticism: Trinitarian, ecclesial, eucharistic, Marial. His band is influenced by this spirituality conveyed by the Exercises, but Cognet stresses that the disciples underwent and developed other tendencies: Peter Favre was in contact with the Charterhouse of Cologne; Canisius was influenced by the Rheno-Flemish; Francis Borgia is more ascetic. Moreover, until 1580 the Company did not have a specific spiritual literature, except the Exercises, and the influence of the Rheno-Flemish mystics remained strong in them. Finally the Company defends itself against the contemplative tendency, for many of the Jesuits enter the Charterhouse..., but as the band is transformed into a group I think it feels obliged to choose a spirituality of action. That is why in 1574 the method of contemplative prayer of Father Cordeses is condemned and, in 1575, Mercurian prohibits Tauler, Suso,... Finally the prayer of quietude of Father Alvarez is disapproved of. General Aquaviva arbitrates with moderation in the conflict between an ascetical-active trend, henceforth dominant, and a mystical-contemplative trend, which from this point is less visible. Thus the structuring of the Order gave dominance to one aspect of spirituality without suppressing the other. Having thus clarified its spirituality the Order begins its expansion and its organisation. The maintenance of the tension between mysticism and asceticism preserves it from an excessive rigidity.

The Oratorian model seems to present a similar evolution. Bérulle was influenced by the Rheno-Flemish, by Pseudo-Denys, by the Spanish mystics, by Confeld... From them he gained a spirituality which was Theocentric, Christocentric, Augustinian... The first Oratorians, though initiated into his

spirituality, retained their individual orientations, “which accounts for the complexity manifested by the spirituality of the first Oratory, in spite of an undeniable unity”. (Louis Cognet, p.365) It is, in fact, normal for an order in the band phase to manifest at the same time unity and diversity. But in the structuring phase everything becomes modified little by little. It becomes a rather personal Bérullism which has greater scope than Bérullism properly so called. (Cognet p.395) Bourgoing himself published the work of Bérulle concealing his Dionysian side. He tied spirituality to Baptism. He is clearer and more commonplace than Bérulle, says Cognet, which is entirely normal in the structuring phase of a spirituality and of an order.

Thus in the two cases, Jesuit and Oratorian, we see a spiritual movement building a synthesis in which one can recognise, nonetheless, the personalities of the disciples. But after that the spirituality is fixed and, in consequence, somewhat impoverished, in order to make it accessible to those who did not have a direct contact with the origins and also to ensure a minimum of cohesion in a more numerous body.

Finally, with reference to the Eudists, Henri Brémond provides a good example of the evolution of spirituality in relation to the history of an order (*La conquête mystique*, Bloud et Gay, 1921, T.2, p.262-263): “for reasons that escape us the Eudists of the 17th and 18th centuries had published only inadequate brochures on the career of their founder, a career which was nonetheless very full”. And he attributes this default to Jansenism. Fortunately, this “incredible negligence of the Eudists” has been made good by a life of Father Eudes (1905-1908) and by the publication of his writings in 12 volumes (1905-1911). And Brémond is amazed, because “the authors of these gigantic works were religious proscribed, poor, and in conditional vows”. In my opinion, taking account of what I have said above, there is not all that much cause for astonishment. It is fairly normal for a religious order in its period of expansion to enquire little into its origins. On the other hand, the time of crisis favours the return to the spirituality of its origins.

One other factor plays a considerable role: the period. Thus the second half of the 16th century and the first half of the 17th century, times of trouble, of trial and error, of attempts at reconstruction, are eminently favourable to the emergence of a form of mysticism. In fact at a time when the State is weak, mystics can play a prophetic role. A disoriented society needs prophets; the Church in the process of reform has need of ideas and of pastoral initiatives. In troubled times, then, the mystic has a recognised place. But with the return of order, with the construction of the absolutist State, with a Church which has found its new pastoral models, the mystic becomes a nuisance.

Spirituality then takes a dominantly ascetic turn. This is what one observes in France beginning with Richelieu, the successful rival of Bérulle, persecutor of Saint-Cyran. And by the end of the century we witness the rout of the mystics who are embarrassing everyone: the State, the Church, the Religious Orders. But this rout does not mean that the mystics are any less present but only that their status in society has been modified. The mysticism of the 18th century therefore will remain out of sight until the troubles of the end of the century and the French Revolution release a “mystical invasion” with Clorivière, Coudrin, Chaminade... which has not yet found its Henri Brémond.

## 6 - DIAGRAMMATIC REPRESENTATION AND CONCLUSIONS

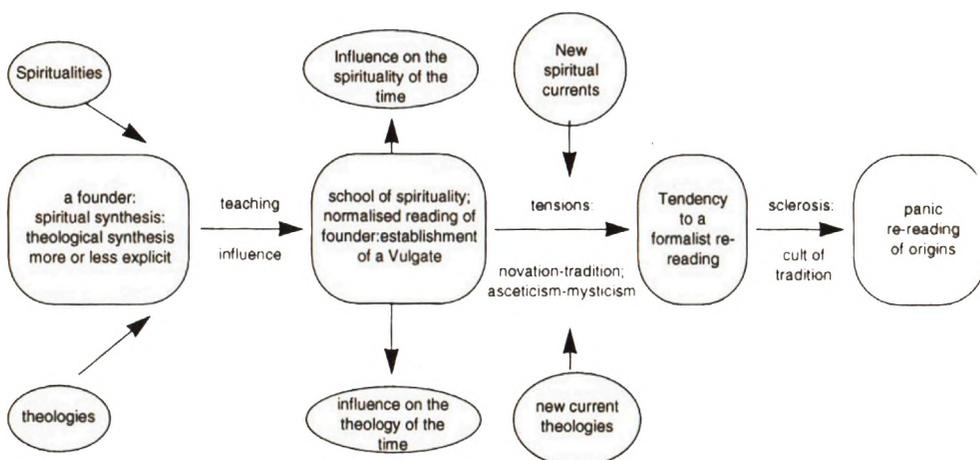
After these various expositions, I believe it possible to propose a general schema of the evolution of a spirituality within a given body, especially within a religious order. The various parts of my exposition can be found there: the frieze at the top traces the global evolution of the Religious Order from its birth to its decline; underneath I recall the historical circumstances which influenced the champions of the spirituality. Finally the main diagram strives to suggest the destiny of a spirituality resulting from the two evolutions suggested above.

### Re-readings of a school of spirituality: Attempt at a Schema

A ground swell	A band	Metamorphosis & Structuring	Organi- sation	Expan- sion	Stabili- sation	Decline or survival
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#### General Historical Circumstances:

Absolutism, Inspiration, Revolution, Industrialisation, Scientific Progress...



The reading of the above schema seems to me to lead naturally to the following methodological conclusions:

The re-reading of a spirituality cannot be effected independently of the order that brought it into being. It is necessary, then, to know the history and, in particular, to specify in what phase of this History the document was written and read.

The re-reading of a spirituality must always take full account of the broader historical context.

A spirituality is, at the outset, a synthesis drawn from various sources: spiritual, theological, political... comprising a large number of potentialities which the disciples exploit, abandoning or modifying according to their personalities, the needs of the group, of the times...

The history of a spirituality is always the history of the tensions between the various aspects of that spirituality.

## 7 - RETHINKING THE TERM "FRENCH SCHOOL"

These principles of methodology could conclude my article but I think it better to try to show their pertinence in relation to the term "French school" which seems to be so troublesome to the specialists of spirituality. A quick glance into the Dictionary of Spirituality would seem to me instructive in this regard.

In volume 5 (col. 782-784), the author of the article: "French School", André Rayez, insists on spirituality in the strict sense which he distinguishes from the diffuse influence of Bérullism. For him the term "French School" has three shades of meanings, namely, the Bérullian school; the French spirituality of the 17th century; the golden age of French spirituality. There is no question, therefore, of using this term beyond the 17th century, except for the restrictive definition of the Bérullian school.

The article: "France" (T.3, col. 933-934) of Jacques Lebrun presents some rather similar points of view.: "The disciples of Bérulle will insist on a certain aspect of his doctrine, bending it often in divergent directions, but beyond the doctrine, one senses the *influence of Bérullism* (in italics in the text) on the spirituality of the whole century. In a more restricted way the Bérullian influence is revealed by the establishment around the Oratory of a veritable "school": one speaks of the "French school" but the term is too vague and it

would be better to **speak of the “Bérullian school”**, in order to indicate precisely that these spiritual ideas stem from the doctrine of the founder of the Oratory. The adherents do not always transmit pure Bérullism, each developing the traits of the spirituality of the Cardinal in the direction dictated by his own formation, his temperament, his theology or philosophy.”

In affirming that the disciples of Bérulle bent his doctrine in the direction that suited them, does not Jacques Lebrun support my idea that every spirituality is fluid? But in contrasting “pure Bérullism” with that of the disciples, he strongly suggests the degeneration of Bérullism. Such a manner of speaking, contrasting the pure and the impure, seems to me dangerous because it tends to implicitly affirm that the purity of the origins can only be diluted. Is not this the same attitude that reigns in many religious orders today with regard to the feverish study of origins? Is it not also the reason why André Rayez speaks of a golden age of French spirituality and rejects the term “French school” beyond the 17th century?

Therefore, without denying the problematic aspect of the term “French school”, I believe it is necessary to see this spirituality, not in a creationist schema, outside of time, supportive of the myth of a return to the golden age, but, on the contrary, in a dynamic perspective which recognises fully the importance of history.

This is why, in my opinion, there is no doubt that the spirituality of the 17th century, which is called Bérullian or French, had a long posterity, and not only as a diffuse influence, but as an authentic spirituality. And here again the Dictionary of Spirituality suggests a response (T.3, article “France”, col. 993). André Rayez, speaking of the spirituality of the 19th century, affirms for us that “the treatises that these masters give us or the accounts of experiences they deliver us are always centred on Jesus Christ; the blossoming of the life of grace... the growth in the love of God and in the love of Christ... in conformity with the roles of Christ, especially the role of humility, the role of Priest and of Victim... in loving adherence to the Will of God... This life with and in Christ has a centre: Eucharistic adoration and contemplation... and has to be lived in union with the Virgin Mary. It has an essential point of application which is the touchstone: the gift of self to others...”

It seems to me that in this synthesis can be found many elements of the spirituality of Bérulle which suggest a direct line of descent. The question of a revival of the French school of the 19th century would merit to be seriously studied in the spirit that I have tried to define right through this article.

March 1992

André LANFREY

# “THE TEACHER’S GUIDE”

## An historico-critical study by Br Danilo L. Farneda C.

### 1. PREAMBLE.

*The Teacher's Guide* is a theoretico-practical manual which guided the teacher training and educational activity of the Marist Brothers from 1853 until the middle of this century.

Studied and approved during the 2nd Session of the Second General Chapter<sup>1</sup>, it went through six editions in the original language; the last appeared in 1942.

In spite of this long tradition and the fact that it constituted the official expression of Marist educational thinking, the document has remained a practically unexplored field of historical research.

In general the studies undertaken in the field of Marist education, which do not abound, refer to *The Teacher's Guide* merely when they wish to emphasise some aspect of it relevant to their particular subject.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The Second General Chapter of the Marist Brothers was held at the Mother House at the Hermitage (Saint Chamond, France). It extended over three Sessions in the years 1852, 1853 and 1854. The Second Session took place from 16th to 31st May 1853.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. DORATO SOTO M., *El pensamiento educativo de la Institución Marista*. Ed. Nau Llibres, Valencia; LEONE Hno., *Valor actual de la pedagogía del Beato Marcelino Champagnat*, Ed. Hermanos Maristas, Bogotá 1956; COTTA G., *Educare, principi pedagogia di Marcellino Champagnat*, Ed. Fratelli Maristi, Roma 1991; ALESSANDRO Fr., *Marcellino Champagnat e la sua opera educativa*, Ed. Fratelli Maristi, Roma 1950; COLIN M., *L'éducation d'après le Bienheureux Marcellin Champagnat*, vol. I et II, Ed. policopiée, Lyon 1968.

A book of quite a different character has recently appeared. It does not deal with the lack of references to sources in the Guide thus avoiding any controversy to which this omission might give rise. I refer to the posthumous work of Pierre Zind entitled *Blessed Marcellin Champagnat, his scholastic work in its historical context*.<sup>3</sup>

This study does not manage to bridge all the great gaps which exist. The author himself declares as much when he writes:

“The pedagogy of the congregation of the Little Brothers of Mary (...) remains a vast field to explore, under its various aspects (...)”<sup>4</sup>.

The fact that no historico-critical study of *The Teacher's Guide* has ever been produced is concrete evidence of the deficiencies to which I have alluded.

I do not think it wise to leave in oblivion a document which formed generations of educators and which may reveal the sources of the educational thought of the Institute of the Marist Brothers.

## 2. HYPOTHESES AND AIMS.

Pierre Zind, in the study already mentioned affirms:

“In general, and until about 1853, the Little Brothers of Mary strove (...) to teach according to the famous *Conduite des Écoles Chrétiennes* (Conducting of Christian Schools)”<sup>5</sup>

This affirmation gave rise to several enquiries and working hypotheses. Above all I was interested in clarifying the reasons which led the Marist Brothers to compile their own document. Why had they ceased to use the *Conduite*? How did *The Teacher's Guide* come into existence? Who was/were the editor/s of the document.

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<sup>3</sup> ZIND P., Bx. Marcellin Champagnat, son oeuvre scolaire dans son contexte historique. Session “Marcellin Champagnat” de Mendes, Brésil, January 1988, published General House, Rome 1991

<sup>4</sup> Cf. ZIND P., Bx. M. Champagnat, p. 350

<sup>5</sup> ZIND P., Bx. M. Champagnat, p. 350. The first edition of the “Conduite” was published in 1720. Cf. LA SALLE J.-B., et al., “Conduite des Écoles Chrétiennes divisée en deux parties. Publ. Joseph Charles Chastanier, Avignon 1720.

In my initial hypothesis, *The Teacher's Guide* was the result of the integration of educational principles and methods favoured in the socio-ecclesial context of Restoration France, with necessary adaptations to the concrete situations in which the Marist Brothers worked.

This process suggests that the document was not the result of a passive assimilation of the norms of the *Conduite*. After 35 years of experience in the schools, the Marist Brothers had acquired a style and some educational insights of their own; so that at a certain time the need was felt to clarify in a document this specifically Marist form of education.

The following questions arose in the process: “What kind of influence did the *Conduite* have on the drawing up of *The Teacher's Guide*? Were other sources involved? What was the influence of the educative experience of the first Brothers? What part was played by the Founder’s educational approach?” And as for the contents, which aspects of *The Teacher's Guide* are the most significant for defining Marist education?

Taking into consideration the present stage of research, the questions and hypotheses formulated, I decided to make a historico-critical study of the first edition of the *Guide* as this would be an essential first step to any future study directed to investigating its evolution, its importance and its relevance to the present day.

The time-frame indicated, 1817-1853, means that our attention is also directed towards the period during which the ideas in the *Guide* took shape, beginning with the foundation of the Institute of the Marist Brothers of the Schools.

### 3. APPROACH

The main object of my research was to identify certain sources which shed light on the origins of the Institute. The first step was to consult some studies of Marist pedagogy. I was able to establish that no specific researches existed on this subject. It seemed to me important to find a few documents reflecting the educative thought of the first Brothers. To this end I consulted various archives both in Rome and in France.<sup>6</sup> This quest led me to identify a series of

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<sup>6</sup> Central Archives of the Marist Brothers, AFM-Rome; Archives of the Marist Fathers, APM-Rome; Archives of the Archdiocese of Lyons, AAL-Lyons; Departmental Archives of the Loire, ADL-St Étienne; National Archives of France, ANF-Paris, and the personal archives of Pierre Zind, St Genis-Laval, France.

documents until now unknown or very little studied. I am referring to numerous documents kept in the Archives of the Loire dealing with the official contact between the Congregation and the French Academic authorities.

However the most significant contribution came from the discovery of four unpublished manuscripts of *The Teacher's Guide*, pre-dating the first edition, preserved in the Archives of the Marist Brothers in Rome. This lucky find, made when my study was already well advanced, served to enrich it in a significant manner, necessitating the "Comparative Edition" of the document, an aspect which I had at first not even considered.<sup>7</sup>

The unpublished manuscripts of the Acts of the Second General Chapter, like the unpublished *Annals* of Brother Avit, also preserved in the Archives of the Marist Brothers in Rome, have provided a complementary resource in the study of the context and the process of drawing up the document.<sup>8</sup>

In the libraries attached to the archives where I worked and in the Pedagogy section in the National Library of Paris, and the Library of the National Institute of Pedagogical Research, also in Paris, I was able to consult the most significant works of the period. This consultation proved fundamental in the identification of the literary sources of *The Teacher's Guide*.

Particularly enriching has been the dialogue with some other researchers into Marist origins, who have not only provided me with abundant material, but have also directed my work with opportune advice.<sup>9</sup>

After an attentive study of the educative context of post-revolutionary France and of the Institute of the Marist Brothers I concentrated on the analysis of *The Teacher's Guide* and on the compiling of the "Comparative Edition".

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<sup>7</sup> By "Comparative Edition" I mean a study comparing the discovered manuscripts with *The Teacher's Guide*. A "comparative edition" is not the same as a "critical edition" since I have not included the critical apparatus of the sources and I have limited the historico-explanatory notes to the process of elaboration.

<sup>8</sup> It is only during the last few years that there has been great interest in the historical study of the first years of the Institute, based on sources other than the writings of Br Jean-Baptiste Furet. The unpublished *Annals* of Br Avit represent one of the alternative and complementary sources which have allowed me to understand in a different way some aspects of the history of the Institute of the Marist Brothers of the Schools. The same is true of the letters of/to the Founder, as well as the letters of Br François Rivat, his first successor.

<sup>9</sup> I have dialogued on the subject of my study with Marist Brothers Pierre Zind, André Landfrey, Alexandre Balko, Juan Moral, Aureliano Brambila, Gabriel Michel, Paul Sester and with the Marist Fathers Jean Coste and Gaston Lessard.

Next I analyzed the principal pedagogical writings of the authors whose names appear in *The Teacher's Guide*. I succeeded in tracing, in many cases, the origin of the passages cited between quotation marks. By subsequent research I was able to discover other literary provenances, or at least, certain conceptual parallels.

Consultation of contemporary writings which tackle the problem of method in the primary school - even though their authors are not quoted in *The Teacher's Guide* - allowed me to broaden the research of new literary sources.

### *Arrangement of the Work*

The research is divided into four parts:

The first part approaches the question of the relationship of *The Teacher's Guide* with its socio-cultural milieu. I have outlined the broad coordinates of the context in which the document took shape. The situation of French primary education and of the school master, the influence of the politics of the State, the role of the Church and, in particular, of the Congregations of teaching Brothers, form a vast contextual fan, essential background for historical research.

In this same section we study the specific theme of the educative method used in schools, a component which deals directly with the content of *The Teacher's Guide*

In the second part, the immediate circumstances which led the Institute of the Marist Brothers to compile *The Teacher's Guide* are presented. The “Comparative Edition” is set out and we conclude with a critical study of the process of drawing up the document.

The third part is devoted to the study of the sources. We study with particular attention the connection between the Marist Brothers and the De La Salle Brothers who, according to Champagnat “ought to set an invariable standard for us in everything”,<sup>10</sup> at the same time identifying any other literary and pragmatic sources.

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<sup>10</sup> LMC I, p. 294 (SESTER P., Letters of Marcellin J.B. Champagnat 1789-1840. Founder of the Institute of the Marist Brothers, Vol I, Publ. General House of the Marist Brothers, Rome 1991).

The fourth and last part is reserved for the exposition of the educative thought developed in *The Teacher's Guide*.

First of all the theoretical principles are studied by analyzing the aims and finalities, as well as the basic means by which they are to be attained. Next we study the profile of the kind of educator that the Marist school needs, concluding with a critical analysis of the logical sequence of the text.

#### 4. GENERAL CONCLUSIONS OF THE STUDY

I present briefly the general conclusions of the completed study.

##### 4.1 - The Teacher's Guide *and its context*.

Beginning with the broad lines of the social, political, ecclesial, pedagogical and institutional context I think I have reached an adequate historical understanding of the finalities and educative insights of the Marist Brothers.

##### The need for schools

The social forces of post-revolutionary France discovered in the school an ideal means of constructing a new national order. Napoleon undertook to give the country an ethical and intellectual stamp based on the precepts of the Catholic religion.<sup>11</sup>

Because of this situation the disciples of de la Salle were once again legally recognised in December 1803. "Les Grands Frères", as they were generally called, were thus officially invited to participate in public education.

There is no doubt that the enormous disproportion between needs and available means rendered the response of the de la Salle Brothers insufficient.

The Restoration was to prepare the juridical framework favourable to the birth, in the whole of France, of new Congregations of religious teachers which were able to respond to the new calls of society<sup>12</sup>. Thus was born the

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<sup>11</sup> "The new master of the nation did not envisage any popular education other than religious, formed by the Imperial Catechism." Cf. ZIND P., *Les nouvelles congrégations de Frères enseignants en France de 1800 à 1830, Thèse de Doctorat es Lettres, Faculté des Lettres et des Sciences Humaines de Lyon*, Publ. Marist Brothers, St. Genis-Laval 1969, p.465.

Petit Frères” as the men of the moment, who were to play a very efficacious role in restoring Christian faith and morality in the country.<sup>13</sup>

Among the founders of the new Congregations of teaching Brothers figures the young curate of Lavalla, Marcellin Champagnat. He had personally experienced the consequences of the deplorable state of the national education system. At 16 years of age he scarcely knew how to read or write! The memory of what he had suffered during his childhood, together with his zeal for evangelisation, urged him to begin, in 1817, the foundation of the Institute of the Marist Brothers.

#### Various politico-pedagogical projects

The French elementary school developed in this climate and as an indirect result of two opposing political conceptions: the one liberal and tending to be revolutionary, the other conservative and monarchic, at which extreme the “ultras” were found. In fact, the two positions had much in common and their differences are often exaggerated. We need to bear this in mind in reinterpreting the position of the Catholic Church. Rather than trying to preserve its social standing, or to return to the «Ancien Regime», as the liberals accused it of doing, we see the constant preoccupation with securing the opportunity of fulfilling its mission: announcing the message of Christ to the whole human race and creating a society conforming to this message.

The Church possessed in the schools an efficacious instrument of rechristianization. Civil society, for its part, considered religion to be the corner-stone of ethics and civil order. From these closely linked interests would arise the agreements and the conflicts which were passionately experienced throughout the whole of the nineteenth century.

One of the most bitter ideologico-political disputes was over the educative method. The supplanting of the individual method by the

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<sup>12</sup> In the preamble which introduces the law it is stated: “Persuaded that one of the greatest advantages that we can procure for our subjects is an appropriate instruction (...) based on the true principles of religion and morality (...)”. Article N° 36 establishes: “... every religious and charitable association, such as that of the Christian Schools, will be able to supply, under suitable conditions, masters to the communes (...)” MINISTRY OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION, *Ordonnances du Roi concernant l’instruction primaire*, Publ. Imprimerie Royale, Paris 1828, pp.14, 21.

<sup>13</sup> We cannot pass over the reaction of the French clergy, in the face of the Protestant menace, and their efforts to occupy all the primary schools by the rapid diffusion of the mutual method. It was vital to find a rapid and economic solution which guaranteed the presence of Catholicism, especially in rural France which was most exposed to the danger.

simultaneous one, and it in turn by the mixed method, was initiated by the introduction in 1815 of the mutual method. This latter became an ideology and a political instrument.

The “simultaneous-mutual” or “mixed” method selected what was good from these two pedagogical streams. *The Teacher's Guide* was to reap the fruit of this period of political and pedagogical change.

The particular context of the Marist Congregation.

Nevertheless, *The Teacher's Guide* is not merely the product of a political and educational context on a national scale, but it is an attempt to respond to concrete and complex needs experienced within the Congregation of the Marist Brothers itself.

The rapid increase in the number of Brothers and of establishments, the legal recognition of the Institute accorded by the national authorities a short time before, the acquiring of complete autonomy by the ending of the guardianship exercised by the Marist Fathers, the inadequacy of the Rules which had directed the Congregation up to that point; these were the immediate circumstances which necessitated the drawing up of new guidelines to respond to the challenges of the time.

From a strictly educative viewpoint, the multiplicity of methods used by the Brothers up to that time was not regarded positively, it involved too many risks<sup>14</sup>.

*The Teacher's Guide* becomes part of the new normative framework of the Institute as a concrete means of establishing unity by pedagogical uniformity and of obtaining in return the qualification for the service rendered by the Brothers in the schools of the communes.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> “In his class, more than anywhere else, a Brother needed rules which outlined his duties and the manner of fulfilling them, because if he were free to choose them himself the possible shortcomings of his teaching and his method would be prejudicial not only to himself but also to his pupils and to his confreres.” PETITS FRERES DE MARIE, *Guide des Ecoles*, Publ. Emmanuel Vitte, Lyon-Paris 1853.

<sup>15</sup> The reduced period of teacher-training of the Brothers, brought about by the need to respond to the urgent demands of new foundations, did not guarantee a sufficient pedagogical formation. *The Teacher's Guide* could be considered as a way of forming teachers by actually teaching.

#### 4.2 - The Teacher’s Guide, *product of a process of collaboration.*

I believe that I have largely cleared up the matter of the process of the compiling of *The Teacher’s Guide*, and also the problem of identifying its author, aspects which have not been sufficiently studied until now.

##### Three stages

It is possible to identify three stages in the drawing up of *The Teacher’s Guide*:

First stage: Brother Jean-Baptiste Furet, second Assistant General, drew up the draft of the document and submitted it for examination to Father Langniet, a Marist priest, and to the General Administration of the Institute of the Marist Brothers. This phase seems to have started around 1845<sup>16</sup>.

Second stage: the “Commission of the Guide” studied and introduced a number of amendments to the initial draft. The “Commission of the Guide”, proposed and created by the Chapter Assembly itself, carried out its mandate between 19th June 1852 and 16th May 1853.

Third stage: The Chapter Assembly studied, revised and finally approved the document during the 2nd Session of the Second General Chapter.

##### Contentious participation

The participation in the drawing up of *The Teacher’s Guide* was not without a certain degree of conflict. The General Administration intended to submit to the Chapter Assembly for consideration, the drafts of the three sections which would make up the new Rules, expecting rapid approval<sup>17</sup>. The Chapter Assembly claimed a more direct participation in the editorial process and asked for more time to analyze, at their leisure, the contents of the three documents, so that they would be thoroughly conversant with the matter on which they were required to make a decision. This proposal was accepted and the Chapter proceeded to *three* sessions instead of the *one* that had been planned.

In the light of this, the idea of an unconditional acceptance of the draft presented by the General Administration, as Brother Jean-Baptiste Furet seems to claim, does not appear to be accurate.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>16</sup> Cf. AAM, p.411. (Unpublished Annals of Br Avit: 1775-1884. AFM s/c)

<sup>17</sup> *The Common Rules* indicating the means of being a good religious, *The Teacher’s Guide* clarifying the method of giving children a Christian education, and the *Rules of Government* creating the structures of animation to ensure that the directions contained in the preceding documents were really followed by the members of the Institute. Cf. PONTY L., *Vie de Frère François, première Supérieur de l’Institut des Petits Frères de Marie 1808-1881*, Publ. Emmanuel Vitte, Lyon 1899, p. 169.

### 4.3 *The Sources of The Teacher's Guide*

I have identified a few direct literary sources and some other complementary ones which were used in the drawing up of *The Teacher's Guide*.

#### *La Conduite* as primary literary source

The study of sources reveals, above all, that a diversity of factors have influenced the pedagogical orientations of the document. As for the literary sources, two origins must be distinguished: In first place the pedagogical heritage of the De La Salle Brothers by way of the *Conduite*; in second place, the various pedagogical treatises consulted by the author of the draft, the members of the General Administration and of the "Commission of the Guide" from among the capitulants.

These literary sources seem to have influenced the various stages of the compiling of the document. Brother Jean-Baptiste suggests as much when he affirms that it was proposed to "improve and render more complete"<sup>19</sup> the basic text of the works consulted.

After the comparative study of *The Teacher's Guide* and the *Conduite*, I think I can affirm that the work of St. Jean-Baptiste de La Salle was the principle and fundamental literary source. This affirmation is based also on the fact that for 35 years the *Conduite* had been the pedagogical reference manual used by the Marist Brothers. The rules regarding boarders confirm this explicitly.<sup>20</sup>

The same comparative study reveals that the influence of the pedagogical manual of the De La Salle Brothers, even though fundamental, has not precluded the contribution of the Marist Brothers. This becomes apparent in the numerous variations revealed by the comparative analysis of the two documents.

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<sup>18</sup> Cf. FURET J.-B., *Life of Joseph-Benedict-Marcellin Champagnat, 1789-1840, Marist Priest, Founder of the Society of the Little Brothers of Mary, by one of his first disciples*. Bicentennial Edition, General House of the Marist Brothers, Rome 1989, p. 260.

<sup>19</sup> *Guide* 5920.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. CHAMPAGNAT M., *Regles des Petits Frères de Marie*, Publ. Guyot, Lyon 1837, p. 46.

## Other literary sources

*The Teacher's Guide* and the *Conduite* belong to a pedagogical current of Catholic orientation which reaches the Founder and the first Brothers enriched by the contribution of various pedagogues.<sup>21</sup>

On the basis of the rare references to sources in *The Teacher's Guide* and of an extensive reading of the pedagogical bibliography of the period, one can gain access to the study of the complementary literary sources, a contribution that I consider especially important since it brings to light a series of sources which until now have remained unknown.

The authors of the following textual sources used in the compiling of *The Teacher's Guide* have been identified: *Traité de l'éducation des filles* by Fénelon; *Traité des études* by Rollin; *Les douze vertues d'un bon Maître* by Brother Agathon FEC; *De l'Éducation* by Monseigneur Dupanloup, the catechism of the Diocese of Lyons and *Homélie ou explications des évangiles* by Cardinal de la Luzerne.<sup>22</sup>

## 4.4 - Originality of The Teacher's Guide

In addition to typical styles of pedagogy, I have identified certain “insights” which might define a Marist style of education.

No claim is made of propounding an original pedagogical theory

*The Teacher's Guide* does not set out to offer an original pedagogical treatise, but to respond to the needs of the Institute concerning its scholastic mission. The necessity of promoting methodological unity and of providing a

<sup>21</sup> The *Ratio Studiorum* of the Jesuits, the educational work of St. Peter Fourier, the famous book *L'Ecole Paroissiale* of Jacques de Bathencourt, the educational organisation of Charles Démiá in Lyons, the experiment of the schools of Port Royal, the catechetical method of Saint-Sulpice constitute the elements of a pedagogical and ecclesiastical movement into which the Marist Brothers gained entry by way of the *Conduit*.

<sup>22</sup> FENELON, *Treatise on the Education of Girls*, published with introduction and notes by courtesy of Rousselet, Publ. Librairie Ch. Delagrave, Paris s.d. ; ROLLIN, *Treatise on Studies. On the method of teaching and studying literature, in relation to the mind and the heart*. Four volumes, Publ. Dabo-Butschert, Paris 1833; AGATHON Br., *The Twelve Virtues of a Good Teacher*, Publ. Moronval, Paris 1945; DUPANLOUP Mgr., *On Education* Three Volumes, Publ. Lecoffre, Paris 1851; DIOCESE OF LYON, *Catechism printed by the authority of His Eminence Cardinal Fesch*, Publ. Bélagaud, Lyons 1867; LUZERNE G de la, *Homilies or Explanations of the Gospels of the Sundays and Principal Feasts of the Year*. Five volumes, Publ. Laurent-Bournot, Langres 1804.

formation manual for new teachers were the principal motives behind the compiling of a document adapted to the particular situations and traditions of the Brothers.

It is precisely in the process of adaptation, faithful to the teachings of the Founder and profiting from 35 years experience in education in a rural milieu that the particular manner of assimilating contemporary pedagogical orientations was established.

The De La Salle Brothers were, according to the expression of the Founder, “our invariable standard in everything”.<sup>23</sup> To act as they acted meant becoming part of an educative trend which was socially and politically acceptable. To depart from these directions was, on the contrary, to run the risk of disapprobation and pedagogical setback. In the light of this the departures from the normative model identified in *The Teacher's Guide* take on a particular importance.

#### 4.5 - *Educative contents of The Teacher's Guide*

The study of the educative contents has enabled us to identify the board essential themes of the document and its pedagogico-pragmatic character.

##### Aims and conclusions

The ultimate end of the educative service of the Marist Brothers is to create the necessary conditions for the children to reach eternal salvation. This transcendent end is attained historically by the formation of the “good Christian and virtuous citizen”.<sup>24</sup> which involves, according to *The Teacher's Guide* the formation of “the whole child”.

Following from this general objective of an integral education that the document prescribes the formation of the religious, ethical, intellectual, emotional and physical aspects of the person.

In this educative concern for the whole person one can perceive a definite hierarchy. What is essential, fundamental, is the ethical and religious formation because it assists the man to attain his destiny: salvation in the love of God, happiness.

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<sup>23</sup> LPC I, p.314.

<sup>24</sup> Cf. *The Teacher's Guide*, 2095, 2649; FURET, J.-B., *Life*, p. 535.

## A profile of the educator

The profile of the educator, whose fundamental characteristics are set out in the final part of the study, lead us to find in *The Teacher's Guide* a guide to the formation of a professional frame of reference for the Marist Brothers.

One can see clearly the double concern of the General Administration to clarify, on the one hand, the methodology of teaching and, on the other, the model of the teacher who had to put it into practice.

## 5. LIMITS AND NEW PERSPECTIVES OF STUDY

The historico-critical study that I have just presented in its basic outline does not claim to have exhausted the subject. From various points of view it still remains open to further research.

The difficulties arising from the limited time available to develop the research have led me to centre the critical study of the document on the historical and logical aspects of the text, by analyzing its origin, its literary sources, its educative content and its coherence.

Concerning the educative contents of *The Teacher's Guide*, it is indispensable to pursue the study of their value and of their relevance. The wealth of pedagogical suggestions, which I have uncovered during my work, convinces me that it would be very profitable to study this aspect at greater depth in order to achieve an hermeneutic reading of the educative insights of the first Brothers.

A complete critical edition of *The Teacher's Guide* is also imperative, including necessary explanatory historical notes and reference to sources, aspects which may arise from this study.

Finally, I believe that it would be necessary to carry out a specific research on the evolution of the pedagogy practised by the Marist Brothers. I have limited my work to the period of the foundation and of the first institutional organisation after the death of the Founder.



# DOCUMENT

## 2.10 PARDONING INJURIES

### A

NOTE of a summary of a sermon of Bourdaloue,<sup>1</sup> according to the manuscript, AFM<sup>2</sup> 134.16, a four page leaflet, format 20.3 x 13cm, written on the first two pages.

The text which follows is nothing but a résumé of the sermon of Bourdaloue for the 21st Sunday after Pentecost. Marcellin Champagnat picks out short phrases summarising the key points of the text. It does not seem likely that he intended to use this as an outline for one of his own sermons as it is too sparse, too impersonal. It would be rather an exercise in stylistics, in the basics of sermon composition. Consequently, we may place the text in his years at the Major Seminary, 1815-1816. Without further evidence this must remain an hypothesis.

(cf. *Oeuvres complètes de BOURDALOUE*, of the Society of Jesus, new edition, Versailles 1812, vol. 7, pp. 243 - 272)

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<sup>1</sup> A 17th century Jesuit preacher.

<sup>2</sup> Marist Brothers' Archives.

*Tunc vocavit illum dominus suus, et ait illi: Serve nequam, omne debitum dimisi tibi, quoniam rogasti me: nonne oportuit et te misereri conservi tui, sicut et ego tuî misertus sum? Et iratus dominus ejus, tradidit eum tortoribus*

5 Dieu nous ordonne et a droit de nous ordonner le pardon des injures, première proposition;

Si nous ne pardonnons pas, nous mettons Dieu dans un droit particulier de ne nous pardonner pas, seconde proposition.

10 (1er)

1° Dieu nous ordonne et a droit (de nous ordonner) de pardonner les injures. *Sic et pater vester coelestis faciet vobis, si non remiseritis unusquisque proximo suo de cordibus vestris.*

*Ego autem dico vobis. Diligite inimicos vestros.*

15 2° Dieu a droit de nous ordonner le pardon des injures: 1 - comme Dieu; 2 - comme père; 3 - comme modèle; 4 - comme juge.

(1°) Or, M.F., Dieu a incontestablement le droit de nous assujétir à ce précepte parce qu'il est notre maître et par conséquent que nous sommes indispensablement obligé de nous y soumettre pour reconnoître  
20 là dessus comme dans tout le reste notre dépendance.

2° Comme père et bienfaiteur: cet homme ne mérite pas que vous lui pardonniez, mais Dieu le mérite.

3° Comme modèle: que ne pardonne-t-il pas tous les jours a tant de pécheur (?)

25 4° Comme juge: peut être doutez vous que Dieu vous ait pardonné jusqu'à présent; hé bien voici le moyen d'assurer votre...

2de

Si nous refusons au prochain le pardon que Dieu nous ordonne et qu'il exige indispensablement de nous, nous lui donnons un droit  
30 particulier de ne nous pardonner jamais à nous-mêmes, car nous nous rendons singulièrement coupables et coupables en quatre manières: envers Dieu; envers Jésus Christ; envers le prochain et envers nous-mêmes.

1 - Envers Dieu nous violons un de ses préceptes les plus essentiels; or comment pouvons nous espérer de le fléchir en notre faveur(?)

*Tunc vocavit illum dominus suus, et ait illi: Serve nequam, omne debitum dimisi, quoniam rogasti me: nonne oportuit et te misereri conservi tui, sicut et ego tui misertus sum? Et iratus dominus ejus, tradidit eum tortoribus.*

5 God orders us, and is justified in ordering us, to pardon insults, first proposition;

If we do not pardon we give God the express right not to pardon us, second proposition.

(1st)

10 1. God orders us and is justified (in ordering us) to pardon insults.  
*Sic et pater vester coelestis faciet vobis, si non remiseritis unusquisque proximo suo de cordibus vestris.*

*Ego autem dico vobis. Diligite inimicos vestros.*

15 2. God is justified in ordering us to pardon insults: 1 - as God; 2 - as Father; 3 - as model; 4 - as judge.

(1.) Now, my friends, God has the incontestable right to oblige us to carry out this precept because he is our master and consequently we are indispensably obliged to acquiesce in this as in all else in order to recognise our dependence.

20 2. As father and benefactor: This man may not merit your pardon, but God merits it.

3. As model: Does he not pardon every day so many sinners (?)

4. As judge: Can you be in any doubt that God has pardoned you up to the present moment; well here is the means of assuring your...

25 2nd

If we refuse to our neighbour the pardon that God orders us to give and which he indispensably requires of us, we give him the express right never to pardon us, for we render ourselves particularly blameworthy, and blameworthy in four ways: before God; before Jesus Christ; before  
30 our neighbour and before ourselves.

1 - Before God we violate one of his most essential precepts; how can we hope for pity(?)

2 - **Coupables envers Jésus Christ, Fils de Dieu, nous le renonçons**  
35 en quelque manière, dès que nous renonçons au caractère le plus  
distinctif du christianisme qui est le pardon des injures.

3 - **Coupables envers le prochain substitué en la place de Dieu, nous**  
lui refusons en conséquence des transports ...

40 4 - **Coupables envers nous-mêmes, nous nous démentons nous-**  
mêmes et la prière..

## PARDON DES INJURES

*Tunc vocavit illum ... misertus sum.*

- Jamais reproche ne fut plus convaincant, ni chatiment mieux mérité. Pour peu que nous ayons de lumière et de droiture naturelle, je suis sur
- 5 que vous sentez tous la force de ce reproche et que vous pareillement la rigueur de ce supplice. Car enfin qu'avoit à répondre ce serviteur dur et impitoyable à se faire payer, sans délai, une somme de cent deniers. Tendis que son maître, touché pour lui de compassion et ayant égard à sa misère, venoit de lui remettre jusques à dix mille talens.
- 10 Si donc le maître est irrité d'un telle conduite, s'il punit de suite ce misérable et s'il le traite comme il a traité lui même son débiteur, c'est un arret dont l'équité se présente de suite à l'esprit.

- Voilà, mes chers F, la figure; faisons en l'application, ou plutôt voyons celle que Jésus Christ en a fait lui-même. C'est ainsi, dit le Fils de
- 15 Dieu, que votre père céleste se comportera envers vous. *Sic et pater vester coelestis faciet vobis, si non remiseritis unusquisque proximo suo de cordibus vestris.*

- Dieu (a-t-il droit de nous ordonner) nous ordonne le pardon des injures en faveur de nos ennemis, première proposition.
- 20 Si nous refusons à nos ennemis le pardon, nous donnons à Dieu un droit particulier de ne nous pardonner jamais, 2e proposition.
- Vierge Ste nous implorons votre assistance.

- Dieu a droit de nous ordonner le pardon des injures en faveur de nos ennemis, premièrement comme Dieu, secondement comme père,
- 25 troisièmement comme modèle, quatrièmement comme juge.

- 1 ent. Comme Dieu il est notre maître et nous sommes indispen(sablement) obligé de nous soumettre à la loi qu'il nous a fait d'aimer nos ennemis pour lui rendre hommage par notre dépendance. Quel est celui d'entre les hommes qui peut disputer à Dieu le droit de faire cette
- 30 loi(?) *O homo, tu quis es qui respondeas Deo(?)*

Quelle est donc la réponse la plus courte et la plus décisive pour renverser nos excuses et toute cette justification dont nous tachons de justifier nos vengeances(?) Dieu veut que nous pardonnions et que nous pardonnions de coeur, c'est à dire que nous ne contentions pas de garder

PARDONING INJURIES

*Tunc vocavit illum ... misertus sum?*

Never was reproach so convincing nor chastisement more deserved. Even with a little enlightenment and natural uprightness I am sure that  
 5 you feel all the force of this reproach ... likewise the rigour of this punishment. In order to respond to this hard and pitiless servant who demands immediate payment of a sum of one hundred denarii. While his master, moved with compassion for him because of his destitution, had just cancelled his debt of as much as one thousand talents.  
 10 If then the master is irritated by such conduct, if he punishes without delay this wretch, and if he treats him as he himself has just treated his debtor, it is a judgement the fairness of which is immediately evident.

Behold, my dear brethren, the figure; let us now apply it, or let us  
 15 see the application Jesus Christ himself makes of it. It is thus, says the Son of God, that your heavenly Father will deal with you. *Sic et pater vester coelestis faciet vobis, si non remiseritis unusquisque proximo suo de cordibus vestris.*

God (has he the right to order us) orders us to pardon injuries in  
 20 favour of our enemies, first proposition.

If we refuse to pardon our enemies we give God the express right never to pardon us, 2nd proposition.

Holy Virgin we implore your assistance.

God has the right to order us to pardon injuries in favour of our  
 25 enemies, firstly as God, secondly as father, thirdly as model, fourthly as judge.

1. As God he is our master and we are indispen(sably) obliged to submit to the law that he has made for us to love our enemies in order to render him the homage of our dependence. Who is there among men  
 30 who can dispute God's right to make this law(?) *O homo, tu quis es qui respondeas Deo(?)*

What then is the shortest and most decisive response to overturn our excuses and all this justification by which we try to justify our vengeance(?) God wants us to pardon and pardon from the heart, in  
 35 other words we are not to content ourselves with a certain outward show,

35 certains dehors, mais que nous bannissons de notre coeur toute  
animosité volontaire et tout (animo) ressentiment. Dieu veut que je vous  
l'annonce de sa part: *Ego autem dico vobis: Diligite inimicos*. Que pouvez  
vous répliquer à un précepte si clair qui ne tombe de lui-même (devant  
un précepte si). Il coutera bien cher dès qu'il est nécessaire. Il n'y a pas à  
40 examiner s'il coute beaucoup ou peu.

*Sur la page 3 on peut lire le texte suivant:*

Une personne des environs m'a chargé de vous demander s'il  
pourroit *tutâ concientiâ* faire tomber sur notre maison une restitution de  
quatre cets francs qu'une autre confesseur avoit conseillé de donner au  
45 bur(ot)eau de bienfaisance.

Vive Jésus Vive Marie

La Côte Saint André

1° Que les Frères en entrant puissent suivre et faire suivre le  
reglement

50 2° L'établissement de La Côte sera toujours dependant du Sup...  
général dans quelque diocese qu'il soit.

3°

but we are to banish **all voluntary** animosity and all (animo) resentment. God wants me to **proclaim it to you** in his name: *Ego autem dico vobis: Diligite inimicos*. What response can you give to so clear a precept which does not collapse (before a precept so...) It will cost dearly as soon as we  
40 must practise it. We must not consider the cost whether it be much or little.

On page 3 is found the following text:

A person of the locality has requested that I ask you if he could *tutâ concientiâ* donate to our house a restitution of four hundred francs which  
45 another confessor had advised him to give to a charitable organisation.

Praised be Jesus Praised be Mary

La Côte Saint André

- 1- May the Brothers on entering be able to follow and have others  
follow the rule  
50 2- The establishment of La Côte will be still dependent on the  
Sup...general no matter which diocese it happens to be in.  
3-

## SERMON SUR LE DELAI DE LA CONVERSION

*Non tardes converti ad Dominum ne differas de die in diem...* Eccl. c. 5

Ne differez pas votre conversion et ne la renvoyez pas d'un jour à l'autre. [Si.5,8]

- 5 (1) Lorsque [nous] rentrons serieusement en nous mêmes et que  
loin du tumulte du monde et dans le silence des passions nous  
descendons dans notre propre coeur, nous entendons une voix secrete  
qui nous dit a tous que nous ne sommes pas ce que nous devons être,  
qu'il faut nous convertir et que le plus grand malheur qui pût nous  
10 arriver ce seroit d'être surpris par la mort dans l'état où nous vivons.

## 2.11 DELAYING CONVERSION

**SERMON,** following the manuscript in AFM 134.25  
booklet of 32 pages, format 18,6 x 14cm,  
colour pale green except for the first and last leaves which are  
white  
Written on pages 1 to 31.

The long text which will follow has everything to awaken our curiosity. This time we find ourselves with a sermon, complete from beginning to end and without spaces left for improvising. It is a connected text, carefully composed in a style correct, fluent and simple. So many characteristics unusual with Father Champagnat who was seldom able to take his time to compose a text, because of the thousand other things he had to do. Could it perhaps be one of those exercises in preaching required of seminarians. In any case this text exhibits a certain freshness of youth and some expressions with which the later sermons will be studied.

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### SERMON ON DELAYING CONVERSION -

*Non tardes converti ad Dominum ne differas de die in diem...*

Eccl. Ch. 5

Do not delay your return to the Lord, do not put it off day after  
5 day. (Si. 5:8)

(1) When we enter seriously into ourselves far from the tumult of  
the world and, in the silence of the passions, descend into our own  
hearts, we hear a secret voice which tells us all that we are not what we  
ought to be, that we must be converted and that the greatest misfortune  
10 that could befall us would be for us to be surprised by death in the state  
we are living in.

(2) Aussi, M.F., combien de fois, pressés par les remords d'une conscience justement alarmée, effrayés par la crainte des jugements de Dieu, n'avons nous pas formé la résolution de changer de vie et de nous donner à Dieu sans délai comme sans partage.

15 *Non tardes ...*

3 - Mais hélas! trop semblables à des hommes à demi endormis, nous n'avons, ce me semble, ouvert les yeux un instant à la lumière que pour nous replonger dans un sommeil plus profond. Jusqu'ici toutes nos résolutions et nos bon projets de conversion (et nos bons pro) se sont  
20 évanouis comme un songe dont il nous est resté à peine un foible souvenir.

4° Quelle est donc, m.f. notre folie et notre extravagance! Eh quoi? nous convenons de bonne foi, ou nous sommes forcés de convenir que nous ne voudrions pas mourir dans l'état où nous sommes et nous  
25 n'avons pas le courage d'en sortir? Comme Augustin encore pécheur, nous gemissons sous le poids de nos chaînes et comme lui nous les aimons encore ou du moins nous craignons de les voir se briser; esclaves volontaires d'une faiblesse honteuse, de mille penchants qui nous tyrannisent tour à tour, nous n'avons pas le courage de nous faire violence  
30 pour les reprimer; toujours les armes nous tombent de mains quand il s'agit de les tourner contre notre propre coeur, contre cette passion chérie que nous fomentons depuis si longtemps et qui tôt ou tard, si nous n'y prenons garde, sera la cause de notre réprobation éternelle.

5° Cependant, M.F., malgré nos coupable délai et nos longues  
35 résistances à la grâce, Dieu ne cesse de nous poursuivre dans sa miséricorde et de frapper à la porte de notre coeur avec importunité. Aujourd'hui sa voix puissante vient se joindre au cri de no(tre) conscience pour nous presser, pour nous conjurer peut-être pour la dernière fois de mêttre un terme à nos désordres et de hater le moment  
40 de notre conversion. Ha! de grâce, n'endurcissez pas vos coeurs:

*Ne differas ...*

6° Après un oracle si formele et des invitations si pressantes, comment justifier aux yeux de la raison et de la foi (la présomption) témérité de tant de pécheurs, de tant de laches chrétiens de nos jours qui  
45 vivent dans le péché, qui croupissent dans le péché en disant sans cesse qu'ils se convertiront et en se flattant qu'ils en auront toujours le temps et les moyens? Parmi ceux qui diffèrent ainsi d'un jour à l'autre leur conversion, on en distingue de deux sortes: les uns qui refusent de se convertir à présent, mais qui se proposent de le faire dans un autre  
50 temps de la vie; les autres, moins généreux qui ne voulant donner à Dieu

(2) Moreover, **brethren**, how many times, driven by a conscience justifiably alarmed, **frightened** by the fear of the judgements of God, have we not formed the **resolution** to change our lives and to give ourselves to God without delay and without reserve.

15 *Non tardes ...*

3- But alas! too much like men half asleep, we have, it seems to me, opened our eyes for an instant to the light only to fall into a deeper sleep. Until now all our resolutions and all our good intentions of conversion (and our good plans) have vanished like a dream of which scarcely a  
20 faint memory remains.

4- Such then, brethren, is our folly and our absurdity! What then? We admit in good faith, or we are forced to admit, that we would not like to die in the state we are in but we do not have the courage to get out of it. Like Augustine while still a sinner, we groan under the weight  
25 of our chains and like him we still love them or at least we fear to see them broken; voluntary slaves shamefully weak, tyrannised by a thousand tendencies one after the other, we lack the courage to do the violence to ourselves necessary if we are to check them; time and time again the arms fall from our hands whenever it is a question of turning  
30 them against our own hearts, against this dear passion which we have entertained for so long and which sooner or later, if we do not take care, will be the cause of our eternal reprobation.

5- Nevertheless, dear brethren, in spite of our culpable delay and our long resistance to grace, God does not cease to pursue us in his  
35 mercy and to knock at the door of our hearts with importunity. Today his powerful voice unites with the cry of our conscience to urge us, to conjure us, perhaps for the last time, to put an end to our disorders and to hasten the moment of our conversion. For pity's sake, do not harden your hearts.

40 *Ne differas ...*

6- After an oracle so precise and invitations so pressing how can we justify to the eyes of reason and of faith (the presumption) the rashness of so many sinners, of so many lax Christians of our time who are living in sin, who are wallowing in sin, while saying all the time that they intend  
45 to be converted and deluding themselves that they will still have the time and the means. Among those who keep putting off their conversion from one day to the next, one can distinguish two types: the ones who refuse to be converted at present, but who mean to be at another time of life; the others, less generous, who only want to give God their last breath,

que leur dernier soupir, renvoient froidement leur conversion à la mort. Double illusion, illusion funeste qui a perdu et qui perd encore tous les jours une infinité d'âmes.

7° Pécheurs téméraires cessez de vous flatter, ou plutôt écoutez et  
55 tremblez. Si vous ne profitez du moment présent, si vous différez de jour  
en jour votre conversion, vous vous exposez au danger évident de ne vous  
convertir jamais, ce sera le sujet du premier point de ce discours; si vous  
renvoyez votre conversion à la mort il est moralement certain que vous ne  
60 vous convertirez pas et que vous mourrez dans le péché, sujet du second  
point.

### 1 point

Tant que nous n'aurons pas fait un triste naufrage dans la foi, il est  
rare qu'en cedant aux attraits du vice nous renoncions pour toujours aux  
charmes de la vertu et qu'en différant notre conversion, nous nous  
65 déterminions à mourir dans le péché et à nous précipiter dans l'enfer.  
L'esprit tentateur pour nous attirer dans ses pièges nous cache toujours la  
profondeur de l'abyme vers lequel il nous entraîne, il cherche même à  
nous persuader comme à nos premiers parents que la mort ne nous  
surprendra pas dans cet état *Nequaquam moriemini* [Gen.3,4], et qu'il  
70 nous sera facile d'en sortir quand nous le voudrons. Il ne manque jamais  
de nous faire entrevoir dans l'avenir des temps heureux, des circonstances  
favorables pour expier les égarements du premier âge et mettre un  
intervalle entre la vie et la mort. Séduit par ces apparences trompeuses  
nous sommes tranquilles sur notre salut au milieu de nos désordres, et  
75 lorsqu'on nous presse, qu'on nous sollicite de revenir à Dieu, nous  
n'avons garde de répondre avec les impies qu'il n'y a point de Dieu, point  
de salut pour nous, ce qui serait une espèce d'apostasie et le comble du  
délire; nous convenons au contraire de l'obligation indispensable où nous  
sommes de mettre ordre à notre conscience et nous protestons hautement  
80 du désir que nous avons de nous convertir un jour, mais ajoutons: il n'est  
pas encore temps de nous consacrer au Seigneur, il faut laisser passer les  
premières années de la jeunesse à laquelle un parti aussi sérieux que celui  
de la vertu ne saurait convenir. Il faut attendre cette saison de la vie où  
l'expérience et la maturité de l'âge annoncent ordinairement des  
85 réflexions plus solides. C'est alors que nous travaillerons à notre salut  
avec moins de peine et plus de succès.

Mais cette époque est-elle arrivée pour nous, pécheurs, nous  
différons encore notre conversion, nous la renvoyons à la vieillesse, parce

50 calmly postponing their **conversion** until their deathbed. A double illusion, a fatal illusion **which has caused the loss**, and is still every day causing the loss of an **infinite number** of souls.

7- Reckless sinners stop deluding yourselves, rather listen and tremble. If you fail to profit by the present moment, if you put off your  
55 conversion from day to day, you expose yourself to the obvious danger of never being converted. This will be the subject of the first point of this discourse; if you postpone your conversion until the moment of death it is morally certain that you will not be converted and that you will die in sin, the subject of the second point.

60 1st Point

As long as we have not made sad shipwreck of our faith, it is rare that in giving in to the allurements of vice we renounce forever the attractions of virtue and that in delaying our conversion we are determined to die in sin and cast ourselves into hell. The Tempter in  
65 order to allure us into these traps always hides from us the depth of the abyss towards which he leads us, he even seeks to persuade us, as he did our first parents, that death will not surprise us in this state *Nequaquam moriemini* (Gen. 3:4), and that it will be easy to get out of it whenever we wish. He never fails to make us foresee a happy time in the future,  
70 favourable circumstances for us to expiate the waywardness of our earlier life and to place an interval between life and death.

Seduced by deceptive appearances we remain calm about our salvation in the midst of our irregularities, and when we are urged, when we are begged to return to God, we take good care not to respond with  
75 the impious that there is no God, no salvation for us, which would be a kind of apostasy and the height of madness; on the contrary we acknowledge the essential obligation we have to put our conscience in order and we loudly profess our desire to be converted one day, but we add: it is not yet time to consecrate ourselves to the Lord, we have to get  
80 over the first years of youth during which something as serious as the practice of virtue would be out of place. We need to await that stage of life where the appearance and maturity of age usually gives promise of more solid reflections. It is then that we will work on our salvation with less bother and more success.

85 But this time has arrived for us, sinners, and we still put off our conversion, we banish it to old age, because the passions will then be

que les passions étant alors éteintes, la raison exerçant son empire, il sera,  
90 disons-nous, plus facile de nous donner à Dieu sans partage.

Et en attendant nous jouissons paisiblement des plaisirs de la vie, nous croupons dans nos mauvaises habitudes, nous prolongeons la chaîne de nos crimes, bien résolu, ce semble, à les expier dans nos vieux ans.

Quelle illusion! quel aveuglement déplorable! Enfants des hommes,  
95 jusques à quand serons-nous le jouet de l'erreur et du mensonge! ne comprendrons-nous jamais qu'en différant ainsi notre conversion de jour en jour nous la rendons plus difficile, plus invraisemblable et moralement impossible! Et pourquoi? parce qu'il est bien probable que nous ne parviendrons jamais à cet âge mur, à cette heureuse vieillesse que nous  
100 aimons à regarder comme le terme de nos désordres et l'époque fixe de notre retour ver Dieu. Et quand nous serions assurés d'y arriver, il est moralement certain que nous n'en profiterons pas pour nous convertir et que, jeunes ou vieux, la mort nous surprendra avec des velléités de projets de conversion acquis dans l'esprit et le péché dans le coeur. Voila  
105 le triste sort que semblent nous présager nos retardements et nos délais.

La raison et l'expérience sont ici d'accord avec la foi. Elles se réunissent toutes les trois pour nous dire, chacune en sa manière, que notre conversion, que notre salut dépend du moment présent, puisque le passé n'est déjà plus en notre disposition et que l'avenir n'y sera peut-être jamais.  
110

Et d'abord si nous consultons la raison, elle nous dit que nous n'avons ici-bas qu'une existence précaire et incertaine, qu'il n'y a pas un seul instant qui ne puisse être le dernier de notre vie, pas un où nous devrions nous dire à nous-mêmes ce que David disoit à son cher  
115 Jonathan: Hélas! il n'y a entre la mort et moi que le souffle qui m'anime encore et qui peut s'éteindre à tous les moments: *Uno tantum gradu, ego et mors dividimur* [1 Sam.20,3]

Semblables à ces criminels qui attendent en tremblans l'exécution de leur sentence et ne se tiennent assurés que du court espace de temps qu'il  
120 faut pour passer de la prison au lieu de leur supplice, nous sommes tous des victimes dévouées à la mort. Nous devrions craindre à chaque pas d'aller heurter contre la pierre du tombeau; tous les jours il s'ouvre devant nous; nous en voyons tomber mille à notre droite et dix mille à notre gauche et nous n'en sommes pas plus alarmés que si nous avions fait un pacte avec la  
125 mort et que nous n'eussions rien à craindre de ses surprises. Et remarquez, mes frères, que nous ne vivons dans cette funeste sécurité que l'orsqu'il s'agit de notre salut. Car du reste, l'incertitude de la vie est si profondément

extinguished, reason will hold sway, it will be easier, we think, to give ourselves to God without reserve.

And in the meantime we enjoy the pleasures of life in peace, we  
 90 wallow in our evil habits, we extend our string of crimes, firmly resolved, it seems, to expiate them in our old age.

What an illusion! What deplorable blindness! Children of men, how long will we continue being the plaything of error and of falsehood! Will we never understand that in thus putting off our conversion from  
 95 day to day we are making it more difficult, more improbable and morally impossible! And why so? Because in all probability we will never reach these years of maturity, this happy old age which we like to imagine to be the end of our dissipation and as the time set aside for our return to God. And even if we were assured of reaching it, it is morally certain  
 100 that we will not profit by it to be converted and that, young or old, death will surprise us while we are still toying in our mind with the idea of conversion, but with sin still in our hearts. Behold the sad fate which seems the inevitable result of our postponements and our delays.

Here reason and experience agree with faith. All three unite in  
 105 telling us, each in its own way, that our conversion, that our salvation hangs on the present moment, since the past is already out of our reach and the future, for us, may never arrive.

And if we first appeal to reason, it tells us that we have here nothing  
 110 but a precarious and uncertain existence, that there is not a single instant that might not be the last of our life, not one in which we ought not tell ourselves what David said to his beloved Jonathan: Alas! there is nothing between me and death but the breath that still animates me and which may be extinguished at any moment: *Uno tantum gradu, ego et mors dividimur.* (1 Sam. 20:3)

Like criminals who, trembling, await the execution of their  
 115 sentence, and who are assured only of the short space of time it takes to walk from the prison to the place of execution, we are all victims at the disposal of death. At each step we ought to fear bumping against the tomb. Every day it lies open before us; we see one thousand on our right  
 120 and ten thousand on our left falling into it and we are no more alarmed by this than if we had a pact with death and nothing to fear from his surprises. And note, brethren, that we are living in this fatal security when our salvation is at stake. And yet, the uncertainty of life is so deeply engraved on our minds that it enters into all our plans and

gravée dans notre esprit qu'elle entre dans tous nos projets et règle toute nos démarches dans l'ordre social. Nos conventions, nos contrats sont  
130 pleins de sagesse et de précautions contre les surprises de la mort. Comment concilier ici cette conduite avec la lumière de la raison et du bon sens! Nous aurions honte, nous rougirions, vous et moi, M.F., de raisonner et d'agir de la sorte dans nos affaires temporelles. Nos conventions et nos  
135 contrats sont pleins de sagesse et de précautions contre les surprises de la mort: on ne sait ce qui peut arriver, on peut mourir, il est bon de tout prévoir et de ne laisser rien au hasard des événements humains. Ha! quoi donc, M.F., la mort est-elle moins incertaine quand il s'agit de notre salut éternel que quand, que lorsqu'il s'agit d'un vil intérêt, d'un intérêt d'un moment? Mais vous l'aviez dit, ô mon Dieu, il faut que votre oracle  
140 s'accomplisse: Les enfants du siècle sont plus prudents que les enfants de lumière: *Filii hujus seculi prudentiores sunt filiis tuis*. [Lc.16,8]. Nous portons en nous la preuve de cette vérité. Quelle crainte, quelles alarmes à la vue du moindre danger qui menace notre fortune, notre vie, notre santé...! A la plus légère indisposition, aux indices d'une maladie qui peut  
145 avoir des suites funestes nous épuisons toutes les ressources de l'art. Rien ne coûte à notre sensualité: régime pénible et dégoûtant, remèdes violents, opérations dangereuses, dépenses excessives, rien n'est épargné, tout est sacrifié pour arrêter, ou plutôt pour retarder de quelques jours, de quelques heures peut-être, la chute inévitable de cette maison de boue qui  
150 s'écroule de toutes parts, malgré les précautions que nous prenons pour la conserver. N'est-ce pas aussi, mes f. ce que nous faisons tous les jours pour la conservation d'un corps périssable et caduc (destiné à rentrer) dans la poussière d'où il a été tiré? Que faisons-nous pour notre âme immortelle, comme pour la main qui l'a formée? rien, pas le moindre sacrifice, pas la  
155 moindre violence. A voir notre lâcheté et notre indifférence pour les biens éternels, ne dirait-on pas que nous avons renoncé à l'espérance du ciel et que, comme les brutes, nous n'avons rien à attendre au-delà du tombeau.

Has! Chrétiens, fermerons nous toujours les yeux à la lumière? Ne comprendrons nous jamais le danger évident au quel (nous) nous  
160 exposons notre salut en différant de jour en jour de travailler à la réforme de nos mœurs? (Contéron) Compterons nous toujours sur un avenir incertain qui n'est pas en notre disposition et qui n'y sera peut-être jamais? Pouvons nous ignorer, dit Tertulien, qu'il n'y a point de lendemain pour un chrétien?: *Christiano crastinum non est*. Si nous refusons de nous  
165 convertir aujourd'hui que la grâce nous presse, qui peut nous garantir que nous le pourrons demain. Mais, dites vous, nous sommes jeunes, il faut que la jeunesse se passe dans le divertissement et les plaisirs, et lorsque le retour de l'âge ou l'importune vieillesse viendra nous rapeler malgré nous à des réflexions plus sérieuses, nous nous convertirons. Voilà l'évangile du

125 regulates every step in the social order. How can we reconcile this  
 conduct with the light of reason and of common sense! We would be  
 ashamed, we would blush, you and I, dear brethren, were we to reason  
 and act thus in our worldly affairs. Our agreements and contracts are full  
 of prudence and of precautions against unexpected death: we are aware  
 130 of what may happen, one may die, it is as well to foresee all possibilities,  
 to leave nothing to chance in human affairs. What then, dear brethren,  
 is death any less uncertain when it is a question of our eternal salvation  
 than when it is question of a base interest, an interest of the moment?  
 But you have said it, O my God, it is necessary that your words be  
 135 accomplished: The children of this world are more astute in dealing with  
 their own kind than are the children of light: *Filii hujus seculi prudenti-*  
*ores sunt filiis lucis.* (Lk. 16:8) We bear in ourselves the proof of this  
 truth. What fear, what alarms at the sight of the least danger menacing  
 our fortune, our life, our health...! At the least indisposition, at the  
 140 symptoms of a sickness which may have fatal consequences we exhaust  
 all the resources of medical skill. No matter what it costs us: a difficult  
 disgusting diet, violent remedies, dangerous operations, excessive  
 expenses, nothing is spared, everything is sacrificed in order to stop, or  
 rather delay for a few days, for a few hours perhaps, the inevitable fall of  
 145 this house of clay which is collapsing everywhere in spite of the  
 precautions we take to preserve it. Is it not thus that we act every day,  
 dear brethren, to preserve a perishable and decaying body (destined to  
 return) to the dust from which it came? What do we do for our  
 immortal souls, for the hand that formed them? nothing, not the least  
 150 sacrifice, not the least violence. On seeing our slackness and our  
 indifference with regard to our eternal welfare would not one say that we  
 have renounced the hope of heaven and that, like the beasts, we expect  
 nothing beyond the grave.

Alas! Christians, will we forever close our eyes to the light? Will we  
 155 never understand the obvious danger to which we expose our salvation in  
 putting off from day to day the work of reforming our morals?  
 (Contéron) Will we continue to count on an uncertain future which is  
 not at our disposal and which perhaps will never arrive? "Can we be  
 unaware", says Tertullian, "that there is no tomorrow for a Christian?":  
 160 *Christiano crastinum non est.* If we refuse conversion today though grace  
 is urging us to it, who can guarantee that we will be able to accept it  
 tomorrow? But, you will say, we are young and youth must have its fling,  
 but when life changes or when importunate old age comes to recall us, in  
 spite of ourselves, to more serious reflections, then we will be converted.  
 165 This is the gospel of the present age, the morality of libertines, the corrupt

170 siecl, la morale des libertins, les maximes corrompues qu'on ne rougit pas  
de debiter dans le monde et qui, comme un poison subtile, circule dans  
tous les coeurs. Maximes aussi fausses dans leurs principes que funestes  
dans leurs effets puisqu'elles ouvrent la porte à tous les vices et canonisent  
tous les excès et tous les débordements du premier âge.

175 Qu'il me soit permis ici d'interpeller les partisans insensés de cette  
morale et de leur demander si ce Dieu qui les a créés pour leur bonheur  
et pour sa gloire n'est pas le Dieu de tous les temps et de tous les âges, si  
tous les jours de leur vie ne lui appartiennent pas également et s'il leur a  
laissé quelques années pour les prostituer au monde, aux plaisirs et aux  
180 passions. N'est-il pas au contraire, leur dirai-je avec Moïse, le Dieu  
jaloux des prémices de votre coeur et sentiments purs et innocents de  
votre première jeunesse? Pourquoi voulez-vous lui ravir la fleur de vos  
années pour la consacrer au démon et a ses oeuvres? La vie est-elle donc  
trop longue pour être employée toute entière a glorifier le Seigneur qui  
185 nous l'a donnée? Ha! le premier âge est-il donc trop précieux pour être  
consacré a mériter le ciel? Vous ne donnez donc au Dieu des vertus que  
les restes impurs, le rebus du monde et de vos infames passions?

Vous ne voulez donc sortir de la voie de vos iniquités et revenir à Dieu  
qu'après que vous serez longtemps vautrés dans la fa(n)ge de tous les  
190 vices? C'est là le voeux de votre coeur. Mais sur quels fondements, je vous  
prie, osez vous vous promettre une si longue vie, de si nombreuses années?  
Tenez vous donc dans vos mains le fil de vos jours? Etes vous l'arbitre  
suprême de votre destinée? N'est-ce pas Dieu qui a marqué la durée de  
votre existence et posé la borne fatale, qui vous dit comme le prophète aux  
195 flots de la mer: Tu viendras jusque là et là tu briseras l'orgueil de tes vains  
projets et de tes chimériques espérances: *Hunc usque venies*. N'est-ce pas  
lui qui nous conserve la vie, qui peut la terminer à chaque instant(?)

Monstre d'ingratitude, osez vous bien vous flater qu'il vous conservera  
précieusement des jours, des années que vous destinez d'avance  
200 uniquement a l'outrager? Croyez-vous donc qu'il doive multiplier vos jours  
a proportion des crimes et vos années a proportion de vos égarements(?)  
Insensé, vous refusez de vous convertir aujourd'hui et demain peut-être  
nous pleurerons votre mort. Vous ne voulez pleurez vos iniquités que dans  
quelques semaines, dans quelques années; dans quelques jours, peut-être  
205 demain, nous pleurerons votre mort éternelle et votre sépulture au fond des  
enfers.

Y pensez-vous, âmes présomptueuses, vous qui, du sein de la  
jeunesse, comme d'un port assuré, aimez a porter un regard de

maxims which are unblushingly preached in the world and which, like a subtle poison, circulates in all our hearts. Maxims as false in their principles as they are fatal in their effects since they open the door to all the vices and canonise all the excesses and all the dissipation of youth.

170 May I be permitted to challenge the insane advocates of this  
morality and ask them if the God who created them for their happiness  
and his glory is not the God of all time and of all ages, if all the days of  
their lives do not also belong to him, and has he left them a few years in  
order to prostitute them to the world, to pleasures and to passions. Is he  
175 not, on the contrary, according to Moses, a God jealous of the first fruits  
of your hearts and the pure and innocent sentiments of your early youth?  
Why do you want to ravage the flower of your youth in order to  
consecrate it to the devil and his works? Is life, then, too long to be  
employed entirely in glorifying God who has given it to us? Ah! is youth  
180 then too precious to be dedicated to the meriting of heaven. So you give  
to the God of virtues only the impure dregs, the refuse of the world and  
of your infamous passions?

You want, then, to leave the path of your iniquities and return to  
God only after you have been a long time wallowing in the mire of all the  
185 vices? That is the desire of your heart. But on what foundations, I pray  
you, do you base your expectation of so long a life and so many years?  
Do you hold in your hands the thread of your days? Are you the supreme  
arbiter of your destiny? Is it not God who sets the duration of your  
existence and places the fatal limit, who says to you as the prophet said to  
190 the waves of the sea: You will come thus far and there you will break the  
pride of your vain projects and your fanciful hopes: *Huc usque venies*. Is  
this not he who preserves us in life, who can terminate it at any second(?)

Monster of ingratitude, dare you flatter yourself that he will  
preserve these days as something precious, these years that you have set  
195 aside in advance only to outrage him? Do you believe then that he will  
multiply your days in proportion to your crimes and your years in  
proportion to your recklessness(?) Fools, you refuse to be converted  
today and tomorrow we could be mourning your death. You want to  
weep for your iniquities but not for a few weeks, not for a few years; in a  
200 few days, perhaps tomorrow, we will be weeping over your eternal death  
and your grave in the bottom of hell.

Think about it, presumptuous souls, you who like to cast a complai-  
sant eye over the future, from the vantage point of youth, as from a safe

complaisance dans l'avenir et croyant voir s'ouvrir devant vous une vaste  
210 et brillante carrière, vous endormez au bruit que font les chaînes de votre  
mortalité et oubliez que l'on peut mourir à tout âge, même au printemps  
de la vie.

Vous êtes jeunes, mes f., je le veux, mais fussiez-vous cent fois plus  
jeunes encore, vous feriez toujours assez vieux pour mourir. La mort est  
215 aveugle, elle ne sait point choisir ses victimes, elle frappe indistinctement  
et l'enfant (et le vieil) qui ne vient que de naître et le vieillard (qui)  
décrépite, courbé sous le poids des années, elle ne s'assure point à suivre  
le cours de la nature, elle n'attend pas toujours que nos corps, consumé  
par le temps tombent d'eux mêmes en poussière. Hélas l'astre qui  
220 préside à notre naissance est témoin de notre mort avant qu'il termine sa  
course.

Vous êtes jeunes, mais est-il bien certain que vous deviendrez vieux  
et que vous aurez le temps de vous convertir dans un âge plus avancé(?)  
Dieu seul peut vous répondre. S'est-il fait votre caution? Ne vous  
225 menace-t-il pas du contraire? Ignorez-vous que la jeunesse est  
précisément l'époque la plus remarquable par ses errements  
(remarquable) extraordinaires, par les accidents imprévus qui vous  
enlèvent la vie? L'ardeur du tempérament, l'excès des passions, ces  
emportements de la colère, tout dans cet âge entier que n'est-il pas fait  
230 pour hâter le pas de la mort et concourir à étendre ses ravages?

Aussi, mes f., si nous descendions dans ces demeures souterraines,  
dépositaires des ossements des morts. Pour un vieillard, que de jeunes  
personne n'y apercevrons nous pas? Pour un père de famille, que  
d'enfants autour de lui?

235 Imprudente jeunesse qui, vous croyant inaccessible aux coups de la  
mort, remettez d'un jour à l'autre l'oeuvre de votre conversion,  
souvenez-vous que cette santé florissante sur laquelle vous comptez si  
fort, n'est qu'une flamme toujours prête à s'éteindre, un ressort délicat  
que le moindre frolement peut arrêter, une heureuse conformation  
240 d'organes que le choc le plus léger peut déranger sans ressource.

Non, mes f., le tempérament le plus fort, la complexion la plus  
robuste ne furent jamais un rempart contre les coups de la mort(?) ni  
des titres pour prétendre à une longue vie. Ha! si vous en doutiez  
encore, si vous n'êtes pas plainement convaincu de cette vérité,  
245 j'ouvrerois (aujourd'hui devant vous) le grand livre de l'expérience et je

harbour, imagining that you see opening up before you a long and  
 205 brilliant career, you are deaf to the noise made by the chains of your  
 mortality, you forget that you may die at any age, even in the springtime  
 of life.

You are young, my friends, I am pleased to say, but were you a  
 hundred times younger you would still be old enough to die. Death is  
 210 blind and does not know how it should choose its victims, it strikes  
 indiscriminately whether it be a child who has just been born or a  
 decrepit old man, stooped under the weight of his years, it does not  
 know how to follow the course of nature, it does not always wait until  
 our bodies, consumed by time crumble to dust by themselves. Alas, the  
 215 star which presided over our birth is witness to our death before  
 finishing its course.

You are young, but is it at all certain that you will ever grow old and  
 that you will have the time for conversion at an advanced age(?) God  
 alone can tell you that. Does he stand surety for you? Or on the  
 220 contrary does he not caution you? Are you ignorant of the fact that  
 youth is precisely the period most noted for extraordinary (remarkable)  
 errors of judgement, for unforeseen accidents which may carry off your  
 life. Eagerness of temperament, excess of passions, outbursts of anger,  
 everything to do with this age seems designed to hasten the footsteps of  
 225 death and to join forces in extending his ravages.

Therefore, brethren, if we were to descend into the underworld, the  
 depository of the bones of the dead, for every old person how many  
 young people would we not see there? For one father of a family how  
 many children around about him?

Imprudent youth who, believing yourself beyond the reach of death  
 put off from one day to the next the work of your conversion, remember  
 that this flourishing health on which you count so confidently is but a  
 flame always liable to be extinguished, a delicate watch-spring that the  
 least touch can stop. A happy arrangement of organs that the least shock  
 235 can upset irremediably.

No, my friends, the strongest constitution, the most robust build,  
 are never ramparts against the assaults of death nor titles to a long life.  
 Ah! if you still doubt it, if you are still not fully convinced of this truth, I  
 will open (before you today) the great book of experience and I will tell  
 240 you of the curious and careful reckoning done in our time that for ten

vous dirois des calculateurs curieux et attentifs ont observé de nos jours que sur dix mille personnes qui viennent au monde à la même époque, plus de six mille payent le tribut à la mort avant d'avoir atteint l'âge de vingt et un ans, plus de huit mille disparaissent de la terre des vivants  
250 avant l'âge de quarante ans, et après soixante ans, il en reste à peine cent, c'est à dire un sur vingt.

Tel est mes f. le resultat de l'espérance et le fruit des observations les plus exacts sur la probabilité de la vie humaine, c'est a dire, encore une fois, que de quarante enfans qui naissent le même jour, il s'en trouvent a  
255 peine quinze qui parviennent a l'âge de vingt et un ans, six qui parviennent a quarante cinq ans et deux qui au plus voyent la soixantième année de leur âge et pas un sur ce petit nombre qui pousse sa carrière jusqu'à soixante dix ans. Et remarquez, mes frères, que ce ne sont pas là de pieuses exagérations, des conjectures hazardées pour effrayer des âmes  
260 foibles, ce sont des faits évidents, prouvés par l'expérience de tous les siècles et vérifiés de nos jours par un des plus sages observateurs des loix de la nature dont le temoignage (ne sauroit) ne sauroit vous être suspect.

Jeunes gens qui m'écoutez, auserez vous vous flater que vous serez du très petit nombre de ceux qui a traver de mille dangers échappent  
265 comme par miracle a la faux de la mort et parviennent ainsi a un âge mur ou a une heureuse vieillesse? Pour une voix discordante qui vous appelle a l'âge de quarante ans, il y en a sept qui se réunissent pour vous crier que c'est une illusion, que vous n'y parviendrez pas.

D'où je conclus, mes f., que sur vingt il y en aura infailliblement  
270 vingt qui n'auront pas le temps de se convertir et qui mourront en réprouvés. Ha! vous trembleriez avec raison pour votre fortune si elle était exposée a un danger si évident et vous ne tremblez pas sur le salut de votre âme rachetée par le sang de Jésus Christ.

Vous vous reposez tranquillement du soin de votre éternité sur un hazard d'un peut-être et sur l'incertitude d'un avenir que Dieu ne vous a point promis, qu'il ne doit a personne et qu'il refuse tous les jours a une infinité de pécheurs aussi coupables que vous. Et en effet, mes frères, combien de jeunes gens de nos parens, de nos amis, de nos  
280 voisins ou de nos proches a qui la vigueur, la force de l'âge sembloit promettre une longue suite d'années lorsque tout a coup nous les avons vu frappés comme par une main invisible, tomber a nos côtés et descendre dans la nuit du tombeau en s'écriant avec cet infortuné roi de Juda: *In dimidio dierum meorum vadam ad portas inferi* ... [Is. 38,10].  
285 Nous avons a peine connu le monde et déjà il faut le quitter; nous n'avons rien que quelques jours et déjà nous touchons à la fin de notre

thousand people who **come into this world** at about the same time, more than six thousand **pay the tribute of death** before reaching the age of twenty-one, more than **eight thousand** disappear from the land of the living before the age of forty, and **after sixty years**, there remains scarcely  
 245 one hundred, that is, one in twenty.

Such is the result of experience and the fruit of the most precise observations on the expectancy of human life, that is to say, once again, that of forty children born the same day scarcely fifteen will attain the age of twenty-one, six will reach forty-five and two at the most will see  
 250 their sixtieth year of life, and not one will extend his career as far as his seventieth year. And note my friends that these are not pious exaggerations, conjectures thrown out to frighten feeble souls, these are evident facts proved by the experience of every century and verified in  
 255 our own day by the most prudent observers of the laws of nature whose testimony could not reasonably be doubted.

Young people who are listening to me, would you flatter yourself that you will be among the very small number of those to elude a thousand dangers, escape, as by a miracle the scythe of death and thus reach the maturity of a happy old age? For one discordant voice that  
 260 calls you to the age of forty years there are seven in unison crying that it is an illusion, that you will not reach it.

From which I conclude, brethren, that of the forty there will infallibly be twenty who will not have the time for conversion and who will die reprobate. Ah! you would tremble and with reason for your  
 265 wealth if it were exposed to a danger so obvious, and you do not tremble over the salvation of your souls redeemed by the blood of Jesus Christ.

You relax tranquilly from the care of your eternity on the gamble of a “perhaps” and on the incertitude of a future that God has not in any way promised you, that he owes to no one and that he refuses every day  
 270 to an infinite number of sinners as guilty as yourselves. In fact, my friends, how many young people have there been among our relations, among our friends, our neighbours, those near and dear to us, to whom the vigour and strength of youth seemed to promise a long succession of years, when suddenly we have seen them struck as if by an invisible  
 275 hand, to fall at our side and descend to the darkness of the tomb crying out with that unfortunate king of Judah: *In dimidio dierum meorum vadam ad portas inferi...* (Is. 38:10) We have scarcely known the world and already we must leave it; we have had nothing but a few days and

carrière; nous avons formé des projets de conversion pour l'avenir et il n'y a pas d'avenir pour nous; nous nous étions flattés comme tant d'autres de pouvoir réparer les égarements de nos jeunes ans par la  
290 régularité de l'âge mur et les vertus de la vieillesse, et la mort impitoyablement nous enlève a la fleur de nos ans, au milieu de nos plus beaux jours: *In midio dierum meorum*.

Le temps fuit devant nous, l'éternité avance, déjà ses abyme immances s'ouvrent sous nos pas; nous allons y entrer avec le désir  
295 stérile de conversion et le regret éternel de ne l'avoir pas fait.

Pécheurs, serions nous insensibles a tant d'exemples si frappants dont nous sommes chaque jour les tristes témoins. Ha! si les fatales leçons de l'expérience et la voix de la raison ne sont pas capables de nous tirer de notre assoupissement létargyque, nous nous réveillerons  
300 peut-être au bruit de cette voix qui renverse les cèdres du Liban et fait sortir les morts du tombeau.

Ecoutez, ce n'est plus un homme, c'est Jésus C., la vérité même, que vous allez entendre. Veillez, nous dit cet aimable Sauveur, veillez sans cesse parce que vous ne savez pas quand viendra le Seigneur: *Vigilate*  
305 *quia nescitis qua hora dominus vester venturus sit* [Mt. 24,42]. Soyez donc toujours prêts, continue-t-il, parce que le Fils de l'homme viendra comme un voleur qui cache ses approches: *Veniam ad te tamquam fur* [Apoc. 3,3] et l'Évangile remarque que les foudroyantes paroles s'adressent a tous, aux jeunes gens comme aux vieillards: *Dicebat autem*  
310 *ad omnes*. Presque a chaque page des divines écritures sont rapelées les mêmes menaces contre le pécheur imprudent qui diffère sa conversion.

Cherchez le Seigneur, dit Isaïe, (cherch) tandis qu'on peut le trouver: *Quaerite Dominum dum inveniri potest* [Is.55,6]; marchez tandis que vous avez la lumière, dit St Jean: *Ambulate dum lucem habitis*  
315 [Jn.12,35]. Ici ce sont des vierges insensées qui ont le malheur de s'endormir un instant en attendant l'arrivée de l'époux; il arrive au milieu de la nuit; à leur réveil elle courent se présenter a la salle du festin, mais c'est trop tard, la porte leur est impitoyablement fermée: *Nescio vos* [Mt.25,12].

320 Là, c'est un serviteur inutile qui est surpris à l'arrivée de son maître et est précipité pieds et mains liés dans les ténèbres extérieures: *Ejicite eum...* [Mt.25,30].

Tout ce que nous lisons dans le texte sacré: sentences, figures, menaces, paraboles, tout est alarmant pour le pécheur qui diffère sa

280 already we are at the end of our career; we had planned our conversion for the future and there isn't any future for us; we had deluded ourselves, as so many others had done, that we would be able to make up for the wildness of our youth by the regularity of maturity and the virtues of old age, and death pitilessly plucked us in the flower of our years, in the midst of our happiest days: *In medio dierum meorum*.

285 Time flees before us, eternity advances, already the great abyss opens under our feet; we are going to enter it with the sterile desire of conversion and the eternal regret of not having done anything about it.

290 Sinners, could we be indifferent to so many striking examples of which we are each day the sad witnesses. Ah! if the fatal lessons of experience and the voice of reason are incapable of rousing us from our lethargic drowsiness, we will awake perhaps to the sound of that voice which cracks the cedars of Lebanon and causes the dead to rise from their tombs.

295 Listen, it is no longer a man, it is Jesus Christ, the very truth, that you are going to hear. "Stay awake", says this loving Saviour to us, "stay awake because you do not know the day when your master is coming": *Vigilate quia nescitis qua hora dominus vester venturus sit*. (Mt. 24:42) "Stand ready", he continues, "because the Son of Man will come like a thief in the night": *Veniam ad te tamquam fur* (Apoc. 3:3) and the Gospel points out that the thundering words are addressed to all, to young and old alike: *Dicebat autem ad omnes*. On almost every page of the divine Scriptures we find the same warnings to the imprudent sinner who postpones his conversion.

305 "Seek the Lord", says Isaiah, "while he is still to be found": *Quaerite Dominum dum inveniri potest* (Is. 55:6); "Walk while you have the light", says St John: *Ambulate dum lucem habetis* (Jn. 12:35). Here there are some foolish virgins who have the misfortune to fall asleep for a moment while awaiting the arrival of the bridegroom; he arrives in the middle of the night; when they awake they run to the banquet hall, but it is too late, the door is pitilessly shut against them: *Nescio vos* (Mt. 25:12).

310 Again, it is the good-for-nothing servant who is surprised by the arrival of the master and who is bound hand and foot and thrown out into the dark: *Ejicite eum...* (Mt. 25:30).

Everything that we read in the sacred text: maxims, figures, warnings, parables, everything is alarming for the sinner who delays his

325 conversion, tout semble lui dire, au nom de Dieu: *Ne differas...*, ne perdez pas un instant.

D'où il suit que Dieu, pour punir la coupable indifférence de tant de pécheurs présomptueux qui diffèrent de se convertir, est dans le dessein formel de les surprendre et de les frapper de mort dans le moment ou ils  
330 y penseront le moins et qu'ainsi le seul et l'unique moyen d'éviter cette surprise, c'est d'être toujours prêts et de nous mettre dès aujourd'hui dans l'état ou nous voudrions être trouvés a cette dernière heure, a ce moment décisif ou tout disparoit aux yeux d'un mortel. Sont cela vos dispositions, mes f.(?)

335 Voudrions [nous] mourir au moment ou je parle? Non, sans doute, mais nous n'y pensons pas et au lieu d'être frappés, consternés de ces avertissements si précis, de ces menaces si claires et si souvent réitérées, nous les entendons avec une sécurité dérisoire et nous y répondons avec une indolence qui tient autant de l'impiété que de du blasphème.

340 En effet, mes f., un Dieu, la vérité même, nous dit c(l)airement qu'il nous surprendra si nous ne revenons promptement à lui. Et nous, misérables néants, nous lui répondons avec assurance qu'il ne nous surprendra pas. Il nous menace de punir notre audace et notre témérité par des coups subtiles et imprévus, et nous, plongés dans un sommeil  
345 honteux, nous osons défier sa sagesse de nous surprendre impunément.

Un Dieu, la bonté même par essence, nous ouvre le trésor de ses miséricordes infinies, il nous presse d'y venir puiser le pardon de nos crimes, et nous répondons à ces tendres invitations que par de nouveaux outrages. Quel étrange raisonnement, dit Tertulien, Dieu est bon donc il  
350 faut être méchant; il sera assez bon pour nous pardonner, donc nous ne devons point craindre de pécher; il sera assez patient pour nous attendre dans nos coupables délices, donc il faut que nous soyons assez insolents pour continuer a l'offenser.

Un chrétien, un homme, un démon même est-il capable d'un tel  
355 raisonnement? Et cependant, M.F., c'est le raisonnement, c'est le langage impie de tout homme qui renvoie d'un jour à l'autre sa conversion. C'est le votre, pécheur obstiné qui vous roidissez contre les salutaires impressions de la grâce qui vous poursuit. Ha! vous craignez, ce semble, que Dieu triomphe de l'insensibilité de votre coeur malgré vous et dans  
360 le délire de vos passions alarmées vous ne rougisiez pas de lui adresser votre sacrilège prière, ou plutot cet exécrationnel blasphème:

315 conversion, everything seems to say to him, in the name of God: *Don't delay...*, don't lose a single moment.

From which it follows that God, in order to punish the culpable indifference of so many presumptuous sinners who put off their conversion, wills it that they be surprised and struck dead at a moment  
 320 they least expect, so that the only means of avoiding this surprise, is to be always ready and to put ourselves, from today on, in the state we would like to be found in at our last hour, at that decisive moment when we disappear from mortal eyes. Are these our dispositions, brethren?

Would we like to die at this moment while I am speaking?  
 325 Undoubtedly no, but we are thinking about it, and instead of being dismayed, alarmed by these precise warnings, so often reiterated, we hear them with derisory security and we respond to them with an indolence which amounts to impiety if not blasphemy.

In fact, brethren, God, the very Truth, tells us clearly that he will  
 330 surprise us if we do not return promptly to him. And we, miserable nothings, we reply to him with assurance that he will not surprise us. He threatens to punish our boldness and our recklessness by striking us unexpectedly, and we, plunged in shameful indifference, dare to defy his wisdom with impunity.

A God, by essence Goodness itself, opens to us the treasury of his infinite mercy, he urges us to come and draw from it the pardon of our crimes, and we respond to these tender invitations only with fresh outrages. What strange gratitude, says Tertullian, God is good, so we  
 335 have to be wicked; he will be good enough to pardon us, so we have no fear in sinning; he will be patient enough to wait for us while we  
 340 indulge in guilty pleasures, so we are insolent enough to continue to offend him.

Is a Christian, a man, a demon even, capable of such reasoning? Nevertheless, brethren, it is the reasoning, it is the impious language of  
 345 every man who puts off from one day to the next his conversion. It is yours, obstinate sinner, who harden yourself against the salutary prompting of grace which pursues you. Ah! you fear, it seems, that God will triumph over the insensibility of your heart in spite of yourself, and in the delirium of your alarmed passions you do not blush to address to  
 350 him your sacrilegious prayer, or rather this abominable blasphemy:

Seigneur nous rendons hommage à votre souverain domaine sur toutes les créatures; vous avez sur nous des droits imprescriptibles. Vous servir et vous honorer est pour nous un devoir que vous avez imprimé  
365 dans nos âmes; nous sentons vivement la douce nécessité de nous donner a vous sans réserve; notre bonheur en dépend. Mais la violence de nos panchants (nous) s'y oppose; nous vous promettons bien sincèrement de vous aimer un jour, mais de grâce, permettez nous de vous haïr et de vous mépriser encore pendant quelques années et de nous livrer à toute la  
370 perversité de notre coeur. Le monde, les plaisirs, la chair et le sang, voilà nos dieux. Tant qu'ils voudront de nous, il nous est impossible de nous attacher à vous, mais quand, à force de dégouts et de mépris le monde nous aura trainés aux pieds de vos autels, quand les ris de la vieillesse auront sillonné notre front decrepit et que nous nous verrons a notre  
375 dernier soupir, alors nous vous prierons d'accepter ces restes impurs d'une vie souillée de crimes et d'agréer ce coeur, le rebut du monde et de la nature entière comme un présent digne de vous être offert.

Peut-on entendre sans frémir un tel langage? C'est néanmoins ce que ne cessent de vous dire, o mon Dieu, tous ceux qui renvoient leur  
380 conversion a la veille ou au moment de la mort, sans penser qu'ils se font illusion et qu'il est moralement certain qu'ils ne se convertiront pas alors, qu'ils mourront dans leur péché: *In peccato vestro moriemini.* [Jn.8,21]

## 2 point

385 Quand je vous accorderois, mes frères, ce qui n'est rien moins que certain, que vos années se succèderont, qu'aucun accident funeste ne viendra les interrompre et que poussant votre carrière au gré de vos (pass) désirs et comme au dela de vos espérances, vous retracerez parmi nous la longue vie des patriarches, est-il bien sur au moins que vous vous  
390 convertirez dans votre vieillesse? Vous le dites, vous le croyez peut être, mais ne vous y trompez, c'est un prétexte, une illusion qu'il faut dissiper et dont la raison, l'expérience et la foi feront ici une justice exemplaire.

Une reflexion que je vous prie de ne pas perdre de vue, mes f., c'est qu'on parvient à la vieillesse d'une manière si insensible qu'on l'on s'y  
395 trouve ordinairement sans y avoir pensé. Les semaines, les mois se succèdent, les années s'accumulent sur nos têtes sans nous avertir et la mesure de nos jours est comblée qu'on croit a peine avoir commencé a vivre. L'âge qui termine l'âge mur et où commence la vieillesse n'est pas distinctement marqué.

Lord we render **homage** to your sovereign dominion over all creatures; you have **imprescriptible** rights over us. To serve you and to honour you is a duty that you have imprinted on our souls; we feel strongly the sweet necessity of **giving** ourselves to you without reserve;  
 355 our happiness depends on it. But the violence of our inclinations works against us; we promise you very sincerely to love you one day, but, for pity's sake, allow us to hate you and to despise you for a few years yet and to yield to all the perversity of our hearts. The world, the pleasures of the flesh, behold our gods. They make such demands on us that it is  
 360 not possible for us to devote ourselves to you, but, when disgust and contempt for the world drags us to the foot of your altars, when the lines of age have furrowed our decrepit brows and when we consider ourselves to be at our last gasp, then we will pray you to accept the foul dregs of a life soiled with crimes, and to accept this heart, the reject of  
 365 the world and of all nature, as a gift worthy of being offered to you.

Can one hear such language without trembling? It is nevertheless what is said to you incessantly, O my God, by those who postpone their conversion until tomorrow or to the moment of death, without thinking that they are deluding themselves and that it is morally certain that they  
 370 will not be converted then and that they will die in their sin: *In peccato vestro moriemini.* (Jn. 8:21)

## Point 2

Were I to grant you, brethren, which is by no means certain, that your years will follow one another with no fatal accident coming to  
 375 interrupt them, and, extending your career beyond all your hopes, while at the same time indulging every desire, you live out among us the long life of the patriarchs, is it at all certain that you will be converted in you old age? You say it is, you believe it perhaps, but you are mistaken, it is an excuse, it is an illusion which must be dissipated and to which  
 380 exemplary justice will be done by reason, experience and faith.

One reflection that I pray you not to lose sight of, brethren, is that one reaches old age by a process so imperceptible that ordinarily one finds oneself there without having thought about it. The weeks, the months follow one another, the years accumulate on our heads without  
 385 our adverting to it and the number of our days is completed when we scarcely believe we have started to live. The age when maturity ends and old age begins is not distinctly marked.

400 Chacun se fait là-dessus les plus grossières illusions. Un jeune  
homme compte sur sa jeunesse, un homme plus avancé sur la vigueur de  
l'âge et un vieillard sur la force de son tempérament. Chacun croit avoir  
des raisons pour vivre et des ressources contre la mort que les autres  
n'ont pas et puis que dans l'âge de la décrépitude on aime a se reposer  
405 avec assurance sur quelques exemples fameux d'une longue et heureuse  
vieillesse, sans faire attention à la multitude innombrable de ceux qui ont  
payé bien avant le tribut à la mort. On a déjà un pied dans la fosse et on  
se livre encore à l'espérance de vivre, tant elle est naturelle, et tous ceux  
qui nous environnent: parens, amis et tous se font un devoir d'entretenir  
410 en nous cette douce et funeste illusion.

Les vieillards eux-mêmes, par un raffinement d'hypocrisie feignent  
souvent de parler avec persuasion de la brièveté des jours qui leur  
restent a passer sur la terre et du terme prochain de leur vie, afin que les  
autres se hatent de les rassurer sur des crainte qu'ils n'ont pas de leur  
415 état. Et ainsi tout concourt a nous séduire et a éloigner le moment de  
notre conversion a laquelle nous ne voulons travailler que dans l'extrême  
vieillesse.

Mais je veux bien que vous ne soyez pas du nombre de ceux qui se  
font illusion sur ce point et que lorsque le poids des années aura courbé  
420 vos corps vers la terre, vous compreniez enfin qu'il est temps de sortir du  
vice et de consacrer a Dieu un reste de vie qui vous échape.

Le ferez vous, mes frères, vous que la difficulté de votre conversion  
effraye maintenant. Aurez vous le courage de l'entreprendre dans la  
vieillesse, c'est a dire dans l'âge des infirmités et des douleurs, dans l'âge  
425 ou après un siecle d'années revolues l'on (p)arvient presque toujours a  
cet état d'enfance d'où l'on a tant de peine de sortir.

A quelle dure extrémité vous voila réduit, chrétiens auditeurs! C'est  
votre frêle vieillesse, c'est l'âge de la caducité que vous chargez d'un  
fardeaux accablant que vous avez pas eu le courage de remuer du bout  
430 du doigt durant tout le cour de votre vie. C'est lorsque vous ne serez  
plus capable de rien que vous croyez pouvoir réussir dans l'affaire la plus  
importante et la plus difficile, dans une affaire d'ou dépend votre  
bonheur ou votre malheur éternel. C'est lorsque vous ne penserez que  
comme l'on parle en dormant que vous croyez pouvoir faire ces  
435 reflexions profondes, ces discussions sérieuses que suppose et qu'exige  
nécessairement votre conversion. C'est a un corps usé par les ravages du  
temps, par les excès des passions, c'est a dire a des membres affoiblis par  
la debauché, exténués par la décrépitude que vous laisserez le soin  
d'expier par la penitence ces egarements de votre jeunesse?.

Each of us entertains the grossest illusions in this matter. A young man counts on his youth, an older man on the vigour of his age and an  
 390 old man on the strength of his temperament. Each believes he has reasons to live and resources against death that others lack and then in the age of decrepitude one likes to take comfort in a few famous examples of a long and happy old age, without paying attention to the innumerable multitude of those who have paid the tribute to death well  
 395 before. With one foot already in the grave one still entertains the hope of living, it is so natural, and all those around us: relations, friends, feel it a duty to maintain in us this sweet and fatal illusion.

The elderly themselves, by a refinement of hypocrisy, often talk with  
 400 feigned conviction of the brevity of the days remaining to them on this earth and of the nearness of the end of their life, in order that others will hasten to reassure them that they have no fears about their condition. And thus everyone conspires to delude us and to put off the moment of our conversion for which we want to work only in extreme old age.

But I am anxious that you be not among those who labour under an  
 405 illusion on this point, that when the weight of years stoops your body towards the earth you may finally understand that it is time to cease the practice of vice and to consecrate to God the re-mainder of the life which is fast slipping away from you.

Will you do it, brethren, you who are frightened by the difficulty of  
 410 conversion now. Will you have the courage to undertake it in old age, a time of infirmities, aches and pains, at the age when after completing the best part of a century, one nearly always reaches the stage of second childhood from which it is so difficult to extract oneself.

To what a dire extremity you are reduced, Christian listeners! In  
 415 your frail old age, the age of decrepitude, to be loaded with a crushing burden which you did not have the courage to stir a finger to lift during the course of your life. At a time when you will be capable of nothing you think you will be able to succeed in this most important and the most difficult undertaking, that on which depends your eternal happiness or  
 420 misfortune. It is at a time when you will think like one talking in his sleep that you imagine you will be capable of these profound reflections, these serious discussions that the work of your conversion will demand. Is it to a body worn out by the ravages of time, by the excesses of passion, to limbs enfeebled by debauchery, exhausted by decrepitude that you will  
 425 leave the care of expiating by penance the excesses of your youth?

440 Ah! je vous en conjure par vos intérêts les plus chers, n'affligez pas  
ainsi vos dernières années; épargnez a votre vieillesse les regrets les plus  
cuisants et les pensées les plus desesperantes. Car, mes f., ne vous y  
trompez pas, pour changer de vie, pour sortir de l'affreux esclavage de  
vos passions et rompre des chaînes pesantes qu'on porte depuis plus du  
445 demi-siecle, il faut un grand courage, une grande force d'âme, il faut un  
coeur ardent, sensible et genereux, il faut être susceptible de ce  
entousiasme qui fait tout entreprendre et tout surmonter. Pour [vaincre]  
le mal, il faut, pour ariver au but qu'on se propose, or je vous le  
demande, M.F., ces qualités precieuses qui sont l'apanage ordinaire de la  
150 jeunesse, ardente a s'enflamer pour le bien comme pour le mal. Les  
trouve-t-on reunies dans une âme qui a vieilli dans le crime, dans un  
coeur flétri, gâté par le vice pendant une longue vie? Le zele, le le  
courage, l'ardeur s'allient-ils bien avec les glaces de la vieillesse qui  
paralyse toutes les facultés de l'âme et la plonge dans une seconde  
455 enfance plus triste et plus accablante que la première.

Quelle folie, grand Dieu! quelle extravagance d'attendre la victoire  
de nos passions du temps qui les fortifie et de l'âge qui nous affoiblit.  
Quelle folie de fortifier un ennemi qu'on peut vaincre, de lui laisser  
prendre un peu plus d'emprise, gagner un peu plus de terrain pour avoir  
460 ensuite plus de combats a livrer, plus de victoires a remporter. Ah!  
depuis quand, mes f.,les maux les plus invétérés sont-ils plus facile a  
guérir? Tous les jours n'éprouve-t-on pas au contraire que les maladies  
qui dans un autre âge cederoient facilement a la face des (passions)  
remèdes, sont incurables dans la vieillesse. Il en est de même, dit St  
465 Augustin, de nos habitudes et de nos panchants vicieux. Quand ils ont  
longtemps corrompus et altéré les facultés de notre âme, ils se changent  
en necessité et cette fatale necessité rend notre conversion moralement  
impossible. Et comment, en effet, toucher, attendrir un vieillard endurcit  
que ne vit plus que pour les sens et dont le coeur n'a plus de sensibilité  
470 que pour conserver un reste de vie qui lui echappe malgré les efforts  
qu'il fait pour le retenir? Comment lui arracher un soupîr, une larme?  
Que lui dire pour le frapper qu'il n'ait entendu mille fois et constamment  
foulé aux pieds(?) Comment faire naître le goût pour la piété dans un  
coeur desseché par les passions, dans un coeur qui ne conserve d'attrait  
475 que pour le crime qui est pour lui comme un état fixe et habituel?

Comment réveiller une conscience dont il a constamment étouffé les  
remorts? Y aura-t-il chatiment? Comment imaginer qu'après avoir abusé  
de tous ces moyens de salut pendant 50 ou 60 ans il sedera plus

Ah! I conjure you, in your own dearest interest, not to afflict your final years in this way; spare your old age the bitterest regrets, the most despairing of thoughts. Because, dear brethren, make no mistake about it, to change your life, to extract yourself from the dreadful slavery of  
 430 your passions and to break the heavy chains that you have borne for more than half a century, you will need great courage, great strength of soul and a fervent heart, sensitive and generous, you will need to be capable of an enthusiasm which will enable you to undertake all that is necessary and overcome all difficulties. To attain the goal that you set  
 435 yourself you must overcome the forces of evil.

Now I ask you, dear brethren, these precious qualities which are the ordinary attributes of youth, eager to dedicate itself wholeheartedly whether to good or to evil; are they to be found in the souls of a veteran in crime, in a heart sullied and ruined by vice during a long life? Zeal,  
 440 courage, fervour, do these go well with the tepidity of old age which paralyses all the faculties of the soul and plunges it into a second childhood, sadder and more debilitating than the first.

What folly, great God! what absurdity to expect victory over the passions at a time which strengthens *them* and which enfeebles *us*. What  
 445 folly to strengthen an enemy that one can conquer, to allow him gain a little more ascendancy, to win a little more ground, in order to have more battles to fight, more victories to win. Ah! since when, brethren, are the most deep-seated of ills the easiest to cure? Does not everyday experience rather prove the contrary, that illnesses which in earlier life  
 450 responded easily to treatment, are incurable in old age? The same is true, according to St. Augustine, of our habits and our evil tendencies. When they have over a long period corrupted and altered the faculties of the soul, they render our conversion morally impossible. And how in fact can you touch and soften a hardened old man who only lives for the  
 455 senses and whose heart yearns for nothing but to preserve the remnant of life which is slipping away from him in spite of all his efforts to retain it? How can you extract from him a sigh, a tear? What can you say to move him that he hasn't heard a thousand times before and always trampled under foot(?) How can you nurture a taste for piety in a heart dried-up  
 460 by passions, in a heart whose attraction is only for sin which for him has become a fixed and habitual state.

How can one imagine that having abused all the means of salvation during 50 or 60 years he will yield to them more easily at the end of his days. From whence will come this new power of truth or this new

facilement à la fin de ses jours? Dont viendra cette nouvelle force à la  
480 vérité, ou cette nouvelle docilité à son esprit?

D'un miracle, oui mes frères, la conversion d'un vieillard est un vrai,  
un grand miracle, mais avez vous bien droit de compter sur ce miracle,  
vous qui renvoyez votre conversion à votre vieillesse? Dieu vous l'a-t-il  
promis? Ne vous enseigne-t-il pas, au contraire dans l'écriture ste. que  
485 l'on ne trouve dans la vieillesse que ce que l'on a amassé pendant la vie  
et surtout dans la jeunesse? *Quomodo in senectute tua invenies quae in  
juventute tua non congregasti* [Si.25,5]. Que celui qui n'aura semé que du  
vent, ne moissonnera que de la tempête. Ne vous assure-t-il pas encore  
qu'on porte jusques a la fin de ses jours tous les penchans du premier  
490 âge? *Adolescens viam suam ambularis etiam cum senerit, non recidit ab ea*  
[Prov.22,6] et que loin de s'affoiblir comme nos corps, loin de changer  
comme la couleur de nos cheveux, les vices de notre jeunesse nous  
suivent jusque dans la poussière du tombeau: *Ossa qui implebuntur vitiis  
adolescentiam* [Job 20,11].

495 Vous comptez sur un miracle; il n'est pas impossible a Dieu, j'en  
conviens; je sais que l'Esprit St. souffle quand il veut et où il veut, qu'on  
peut se convertir a tous les instants de sa vie et que la penitence quand  
elle est bien faite n'est jamais tardive: *Vera poenitentia nunquam sera*.  
Mais je vous le demande, mes frères, Dieu l'a-t-il souvent opéré, ce  
500 miracle sur laquelle vous fondez votre conversion? L'a-t-il au moins  
opéré quelquefois?

Pour moi, je vous l'avoue franchement que pour répondre a cette  
question j'ai parcouru tous les livre de l'Ancien et du Nouveau  
Testament, consulté l'Histoire de l'Eglise et tous les monuments de la  
505 religion pour voir si j'y trouverois beaucoup d'exemples de vieillards qui,  
après avoir blanchi dans le crime se soient convertis a la fin de leur vie.

Et quel a été mon étonnement, le croiriez vous, mes f., je n'ai pas  
trouvé un seul exemple (remarquable) depuis Adam jusques a nous.  
Non, pas un seul exemple memorable, [serait-ce] de crainte qu'il ne  
510 servit de fanal pour éclairer l'abyme et tranquiliser les pecheurs qui vont  
s'y précipiter et qu'il ne devint un sujet de scandale et de ruine a tous les  
malheureux qui voudroit s'en prevaloir?

Je n'en sais rien, mais tout ce que je sais, c'est qu'en parcourant tous  
les fastes de la religion depuis l'origine du monde, en interrogeant tous  
515 les siècles, j'ai vu avec une surprise sans égale que tous les Sts. dont les  
noms sont parvenus jusqu'à nous, ont servit Dieu dans leur jeunesse. Les

465 docility of spirit? From a miracle, yes brethren, the conversion of an old man is a real, a great miracle.

But have you any right to depend on this miracle, you who banish conversion to your old age? Has God promised it to you? Hasn't he, on the contrary, taught you in the Holy Scriptures that one will find in  
 470 old age only what one has amassed during life and above all during youth? *Quomodo in senectute tua invenies quae in juventute tua non congregasti. (Si. 25:5)* That the one who has sown only the wind will reap only the tempest. Doesn't he assure you again that you carry to the end of your days the inclinations acquired in your youth?  
 475 *Adolescens viam suam ambularis etiam cum senerit, non recedit ab ea. (Prov. 22:6)* and that far from growing weak like our bodies, far from changing like the colour of our hair, the vices of our youth follow us as far as the dust of the tomb: *Ossa qui implebuntur vitiis adoles-centiam. (Job. 20:11)*

480 You count on a miracle; it is not impossible to God, I grant you; I know that the Holy Spirit breathes when and where he wills, that one can be converted at any moment of one's life and that penance when it is well done is never too late: *Vera poenitentia nunquam sera.* But I ask you, brethren, has God often performed this miracle on which you base  
 485 your conversion? Has he at least sometimes performed it?

For my part, I admit to you frankly, that in order to reply to this question I have gone through all the books of the Old and the New Testaments, consulted the history of the Church and all the monuments of religion to see if I would find many examples of old men who, after having  
 490 steeped themselves in crime were converted at the end of their lives.

And what has been my astonishment, would you believe it, brethren, I have not found a single (remarkable) example from Adam to our day. No, not a single memorable example, (would this be) for fear that it would serve as a lantern to illuminate the abyss and tranquillise  
 495 sinners who are going to plunge themselves into it, that it become a means of scandal and ruin to all those unfortunates who would like to avail themselves of it?

I am unlearned but all I know is that on going through all the annals of religion since the beginning of the world, in searching all the  
 500 centuries, I saw with great astonishment, that all the saints whose names have come down to us, served God in their youth. The patriarchs, the

patriarches, les prophètes et tous les justes de l'Ancienne Loi l'ont l'été dès leur plus tendre années. Aucun ne s'est converti dans la vieillesse après avoir passé sa vie dans le crime. Tous les Sts. que l'Eglise honore, 520 tous les Sts. que l'Eglise honore d'un culte publique, l'ont été avant l'âge de 40 ans. Les Sts. solitaires de la Thébayde: les Antoine, les Hilarion, les Pacôme avoient fui dans la solitude, les Cypriens, les Ambroise, les Basil, les Crisostome, tous les grands hommes se sont donnés a Dieu dès leur jeunesse, et si quelqu'un avoit eu le malheur de faire des fautes graves, ils 525 n'ont pas attendu de s'en repentir dans la vieillesse ou dans les temps posterieurs. Les Ignace, de Loyola, les François Regis, les Louis de Gonzague et tant d'autres viennent a lapuis de la vérité que je vous ...

Mais quoi qu'il en soit, M.F., si nous ne trouvons dans l'Ecriture aucun exemple de vieillards convertis a la fin de leurs jours, elle nous en 530 rappelle un grand nombre de coupables et d'impénitents. Temoins, ces infâmes vieillards qui attentirent avec tant de fureur a la vertu et a l'innocence de la chaste Susane. Temoin, la déplorable vieillesse de Salomon et de tant d'autres qui, sous les glaces de la vieillesse couvent encore des feux criminels qui s'exalent en regrets impuissants et n'en 535 renouvellent pas moins tous les crimes dans leur coeur. Je ne puis les comparer qu'à ces montagnes de neges qui vomissent sans interruption les flammes d'un volcan embrasé quelle portent partout dans leurs flancs.

Ah! mes frères, jusques a quand dirons nous avec Augustin, rebelle 540 à la voix de la grâce: Encore un peu de temps, encore un peu de temps..., et ce peu de temps ne finissoit pas. Que ne disons nous plutôt avec le même Augustin, resolu de céder a la grâce...

Jugez en vous mêmes, M.F., d'après ces épouvantables exemples, si les passions sont eteintes et si elles cessent de tyranniser dans la vieillesse. 545 Ha! que ne puis je vous faire entendre ici la voix lamantable d'un de tous ces malheureux qui vous ont précédé dans le tombeau, victimes de leur imprudente et coupable delais.

Ils vous disent, ils repetent sans cesse avec l'accent de la douleur et le ton du desespoir de ne pas differer un seul instant votre conversion, 550 que le moindre delai peut vous être funeste et vous exposer à des regrets éternels.

Ah! si vous etiez tentés encore de vous rassurer sur votre âge, sur votre santé, sur vos forces, je vous dirois: *Veni et vide*, venez et voyez.

prophets and all the just of the Old Law were so from their tenderest years. Not one was converted in old age after a life spent in crime. All the Sts. honoured by the Church, all the Sts. honoured by the Church  
 505 with public devotion, were saints before the age of 40. The hermit saints of Egypt: the Anthonies, the Hilarions, the Pachomiuses have fled into solitude, the Cyprians, the Ambroses, the Basils, the Chrysostoms, gave themselves to God in their youth, and if any of them had had the misfortune to commit grave faults they did not delay their repentance  
 510 until later on or until old age. The Ignatiuses of Loyola, the Francis Regises, the Aloysius Gonzagas and so many others come to the support of the truth that I ... to you

Be that as it may, brethren, if we do not find in the Scriptures a single example of old men being converted at the end of their days, it  
 515 does recall a large number of guilty people and unrepentant ones. Witness those infamous old men who attempted with so much fury to despoil the virtue and the innocence of the chaste Susanna. Witness the deplorable old age of Solomon, and of so many others, who concealed under the frigidity of old age criminal passions which may have stirred  
 520 up impotent regrets but these did nothing to lessen their attachment to these crimes in their hearts. I can only compare them to those snow covered mountains which ceaselessly vomit flames from the volcanic fires within.

Ah! brethren, how long will we keep saying with Augustine  
 525 rebellious against the voice of grace: Yet a little while, yet a little while... , and this little while never comes. May we say rather with the same Augustine, resolved to give in to grace...

Judge for yourselves, brethren, from these appalling examples, if the passions are extinguished and if they cease to tyrannise in old age. Oh!  
 530 that I could have you listen here to the lamentable voice of one among all these unfortunates who have preceded you to the tomb, victims of their imprudent and culpable delay.

They would tell you, they would repeat without ceasing in painful accents and with a tone of despair not to put off for a single moment  
 535 your conversion, that the least delay could be fatal for you and expose you to eternal regrets.

And if you were still tempted to reassure yourself because of your age, your health, your strength, I would say to you: *Veni et vide*, come

Parcourez ces sombres demeures où repose la cendre des morts, voyez  
555 ces ossements épars, ces restes de cadavres. *Vide*, ce sont les restes  
précieux d'un père cheri, d'une mère (tendrement aimée) qui vous  
aimoit tendrement, d'un epoux, d'une épouse, d'un epoux dont la mort  
prématurée vous causa tant de douleur et dont les tendre souvenir  
560 sages leçons qu'ils vous donnent du fond de ces antres sepulcrales: O  
vous qui méditez sur nos tombeaux, enfants cheries, souvenez vous que  
nous étions hier ce que vous êtes aujourd'hui et que dans peu, demain  
peut être, vous serez ce que nous sommes: *Hodie mihi, cras tibi*.

*Veni et vide*, venez et voyez, approchez de plus près, levez cette  
565 pierre et contemplez ce jeune homme enlevé a la fleur de son âge. C'étoit  
votre condisciple, votre ami, peut être, hélas!, le corrupteur de votre  
innocence et le malheureux complice de vos désordres. Le reconnoissez  
vous? *Veni et vide*. Voyez ce cadavre a demi rongé par les vers et dont  
570 l'aspect hideux vous fait reculer d'horreur, c'est le corps de cette jeune  
personne esclave des vanités et des plaisirs du monde, idolatre de sa  
figure et de sa beauté qui fut longtemps l'objet de vos folles amours et de  
vos infames passions.

*Veni et vide*, faites encore un pas et vous reconnoîtrez les restes  
impurs de cette nouvelle Jesabel, de cette femme, l'opprobre de son sex,  
575 l'idole des libertins et le scandale de tout un pays. *Vide*, voyez ces pieds  
qui se portèrent avec tant d'ardeur aux plaisirs, ils sont entravés pour  
jamais. Voyez ces mains souillées de mille crimes, instruments de tant de  
désordres, elles sont déjà deséchées. Voyez ces organes de vanités  
580 toujours prêts à tout voir et a tout entendre, ils sont couverts d'un nuage  
éternel.

Que la solitude des tombeaux, que le silence des morts est éloquent  
Ne diroit il rien a notre coeur? Ne vous semble-t-il pas voir tous ce  
cadavres se reunir et vous dire: "O vous tous qui n'avez pas encore  
renoncé a toute esperence de conversion et de salut, profitez de nos  
585 exemples et devenez sages a nos depends. Convertissez vous sans delais  
convertissez vous aujourd'hui, demain peut être il ne seroit pas temps  
Notre erreur fut de croire comme vous qu'il seroit encore temps de se  
convertir sur le declain de l'âge ou dans les bras de la vieillesse. Nous  
avons été trompé dans notre attente; vous le serez infailliblement et vous  
590 ni pensez pas.

Ha si vous vous obstinez a fermer l'oreille aux sages leçons des  
vivants, croyez en du moins à la triste experience des morts. Prosterne ici

and see. Wander through these sombre abodes where the remains of the  
 540 dead repose, see these scattered bones, these remnants of corpses. *Vide*,  
 these are the precious remains of a dear father, a dear mother (tenderly  
 loved) who loved you tenderly, of a husband, of a wife, of a husband  
 whose premature death caused such sorrow and whose tender memory  
 still stirs your emotions and causes your tears to flow. Listen to the wise  
 545 lessons they give you from the depths of these cavernous sepulchres: O  
 you who meditate on our tombs, dear children, remember that we were  
 yesterday what you are today and that in a little while, tomorrow  
 perhaps, you will be what we are: *Hodie mihi, cras tibi*.

*Veni et vide*, come and see, approach nearer, lift this stone and  
 550 contemplate this young man plucked in the flower of his youth. He was  
 your schoolmate, your friend, perhaps, alas!, the corrupter of your  
 innocence and the unfortunate accomplice of your wrongdoing. Do you  
 recognise him? *Veni et vide*. See this corpse half eaten away by worms  
 and whose hideous aspect makes you recoil in horror, it is the body of  
 555 that young person, the slave of the vanities and pleasures of the world,  
 idolater of his own face and beauty who was for a long time the object of  
 your foolish loves and your infamous passions.

*Veni et vide*, take another step and you will recognise the remains of  
 that new Jezebel, that woman the shame of her sex, the idol of libertines  
 560 and the scandal of the whole country. *Vide*, look at those feet which  
 scurried with such ardour after pleasures, they are shackled forever. See  
 those hands soiled with a thousand crimes, instruments of so much  
 wrongdoing, they have already shrivelled away. See these organs of  
 vanity, always ready to see everything and to hear everything, they are  
 565 covered by an eternal cloud.

The solitude of the tomb; the silence of the dead, how eloquent it is!  
 Does it say nothing to our hearts? Can you not see all these corpses  
 together saying to you: "You who have not yet renounced all hope of  
 conversion and of salvation, profit from our example and become wise in  
 570 your own regard. Be converted without delay, be converted today,  
 tomorrow perhaps there will be no time. Our mistake was to think as  
 you do that it would be soon enough to be converted in our declining  
 years, or in the arms of old age. We were wrong to wait; you will be  
 infallibly wrong also and you don't realise it.

575 If you insist on closing your ears to the wise lessons of the living, at  
 least heed the sad experience of the dead. Prostrate here at the foot of

aux pieds des autels, serions nous comme l'enfant prodigue: *Surgam* c'en  
est fait, mon Dieu, la resolution est prise et je l'executerai aujourd'hui,  
595 dès ce moment. Plus le temps est court, plus je dois me hâter. *Surgam et  
ibo*, je sortirai de cet assoupissement mortel où j'ai croupis depuis tant  
d'années. J'irai me jeter entre les bras du meilleur des pères, je lui dirai  
dans l'amour de mon coeur: *Pater peccavi*, mon père j'ai péché contre le  
ciel et contre vous et combien de fois et en combien de manières et  
600 pendant combien d'années? Ah! Seigneur, si vous ecoutez votre justice,  
je suis perdu sans ressource, mais j'en appelle a votre misericorde, j'en  
appelle a votre coeur, j'en appelle a votre parole. Vous l'avez dit qu'au  
moment que le pécheur se convertiroit, se tournant ver vous, vous vous  
tourneriez ver lui. Me voici Seigneur, je vous tends les bras; me fermerez  
605 vous les votres? Mon Seigneur, vous me recevez comme le père du  
prodigue, vous me donnerez cette tendresse paternelle qui efface le  
passé, qui assure l'avenir et qui conduit a la gloire éternelle.

the altar we would be like the prodigal son: *Surgam* it is done, my God, the resolution is taken and I will carry it out today, from this moment. The shorter the time the more must I hasten. *Surgam et ibo*, I will shake  
 580 myself out of this fatal torpor in which I have stagnated for so many years. I will go and throw myself into the arms of the best of fathers, I will tell him in the love of my heart: *Pater peccavi*, my Father I have sinned against heaven and against you and how many times and in how many ways and during how many years? Ah! Lord, if you listen to your  
 585 justice, I am lost irretrievably, but I call upon your mercy, I call upon your heart, I call upon your word. You said that at the moment a sinner is converted, turning himself towards you, you turn yourself towards him. Here I am Lord, I hold my arms out to you; will you close yours to me? My Lord you will receive me as did the father of the prodigal, you  
 590 will show me that paternal tenderness which wipes out the past, which assures the future and which leads to eternal glory.

Si aujourd'hui vous ne vous convertissez pas, *cras morieris*, demain vous mourrez, mais de la mort (des) réprouvés et ainsi de ce corps petrit d'orgueil et souillé par un crime qui suit la danse, vous descendrez dans un étang de feu et de souffre pour y bruler eternellement.

- 5        Alors filles débauchées, filles sans pudeur vous connoitrez l'importance du salut mais il n'en sera plus temps.

Repondez moi tous qui composez ces abominables assemblees et vous surtout qui fournissez le lieu où elles se tiennent: connoissez vous

## 2.12

# CONVERSION

The two texts which follow are related. They have for theme “Conversion” and they are found, one before and the other after general confession.

### A

**EXHORTATION**, AFM 134.26  
leaflet of four pages of format 27.4 x 19.5  
written on the four pages.

It is only towards the end that this text reveals its purpose, to urge the faithful, seemingly those who go rarely, to go to confession, whether it be to the parish priest or to the preacher. It seems to imply particular circumstances, like a mission or the Forty Hours, or some such occasion on which Father Champagnat was called in as preacher. This is clearly indicated by the expression: “I have come here...”.

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If today you do not accept conversion, *Cras morieris*, tomorrow you will die, but it will be a reprobate's death and thus this body puffed up with pride and sullied with a crime which results from dancing, you will go down into a lake of fire and sulphur to burn there eternally.

5 So, debauched young women, shameless young women, you will know the importance of salvation but it will be too late.

Answer me all you who make up these abominable assemblies, and above all you who provide the place to hold them: do you know the

- l'importance du salut? La connoissez vous aussi, langue de vipere qui
- 10 dechirez impitoyablement la reputation de votre prochain et qui, parce que vous dites la verité, vous vous croyez a l'abri. Et c'est positivement en quoi consiste la médisance, autrement si ce que vous dites n'est pas vrai, vous etes calomniateurs? Et vous encore qui aimez a vous faire illusion et a vous tromper en croyant que vous sanctifiez le saint jour de
- 15 dimanche en entendant une premiere messe et passant le reste du jour, je ne dis pas a ne rien faire, ce qui est déjà une perte de temps que Dieu vous donne pour faire votre salut et que jamais, dussiez vous vivre cent ans, vous ne pourrez le reparer, mais qui en perdant le temps que Dieu vous a donné, faites (sans cesse) ce qu'on ne cesse de vous défendre en vous rendant dans les endroits ou se tiennent les assemblées diaboliques.
- 20 Vous êtes fatigués quand il s'agit d'assister aux offices, mais faut il se rendre a ces abominables fêtes, dès lors plus de fatigues, plus de difficultés. Je vous le demande encore une fois, est ce la connoitre l'importance du salut[?] Si le serviteur dont parle l'évangile fut condamné a avoir les pieds et les mains liés et a etre jeté dans le feu
- 25 parce qu'il n'avoit pas fait valoir le talent qui lui avoit été confié, a plus forte raison y serez vous condamné, vous qui le dissipent et cependant vous n'y pensez pas, malheureux que vous êtes.

- Outre tout ce qu'a fait J.C. pour vous sauver, voyez encore ce qu'ont fait et ce que font encore tous les jours tant de saints de tout âge et de tout
- 30 sex pour sauver des âmes. Que de Sts. prêtres qui non pas craints de sacrifier leur bien leur repos, santé, liberté, leur vie, en un mot tout ce qu'ils ont eu de plus précieux et de plus cher. Rien na pu leur empêcher de travailler a (leur) la conversion des pecheurs: n'y les tyrant les plus cruels, ni les tourments les plus insupportables, les roues, les fouets, les croix, tout
- 35 cela étoit pour eux un gain. Au milieu de leurs tourment il publioient les misericorde et les louanges du Seigneur. Ils prioient pour ceux qui les persecutoient

- Voila ce que faisoient nos peres dans la foi et ce que font encore tant de saints prêtres, de saints missionaires. Est ce ainsi, mes frères, que vous
- 40 vous comportez? Est ce ainsi que vous santifiez vos traveaux, vos souffrances, car un chretien dans l'état où vous êtes, sanctife le dimanche, remplit tous les commendements de Dieu et de l'Eglise, aime Dieu par dessus toutes choses, parce qu'il est infiniment aimable, infiniment bon, misericordieux et qu'il nous a comblé de bienfaits en tous genres.
- 45 2° remplit tous les devoirs de son état. Est il père de famille, il a soin d'élever ses enfants dans la crainte du Seigneur, leur apprend a le prier, le cathechismes et par son exemple leur apprend a frequenter les sacrements. Il ne neglige rien de tout ce qui peut porter ses domestiques a faire leur

importance of salvation? Do you know it, viper's tongue, you who tear  
 10 to shreds the reputation of your neighbour and who, because you tell the  
 truth, think you are safe. And yet is not this precisely what is meant by  
 detraction, or if what you say is not true are you not calumniators? And  
 you who like to deceive yourself into believing that you are keeping the  
 Sunday holy by attending the first Mass and then spending the rest of the  
 15 day doing I know not what, wasting the time that God gives you to work  
 out your salvation, and never, were you to live to a hundred, will you be  
 able to regain it, but while losing this time that God has given you, you  
 do (without ceasing) what we ceaselessly forbid you to do, by going off  
 to these places where these diabolical assemblies are held. You are tired  
 20 when it is a question of attending the offices of the Church but if you  
 have to go to these abominable festivals, there is no longer any tiredness,  
 no longer any difficulties. I ask you once more, do you know the  
 importance of salvation? If the servant of whom the Gospel speaks was  
 condemned to have feet and hands tied and be thrown into the fire  
 25 because he had not made use of the talent confided to him, with what  
 stronger reason will you be condemned for it, you who squander it and  
 yet you think nothing of it, unfortunate as you are.

Apart from all that Jesus Christ has done to save you, see what has  
 been done, and what is still being done by so many holy people of all  
 30 ages, both men and women, to save souls. How many holy priests who  
 have not feared to sacrifice their property, their rest, health, liberty, their  
 lives, in a word, all that they hold most precious and dear. Nothing  
 could stop them working for the conversion of sinners: neither the  
 cruellest tyrants nor the most insupportable torments, wheels, lashes,  
 35 crosses, all was for them a gain. In the midst of their torment they  
 proclaimed the mercy and the praises of God. They prayed for those  
 who were persecuting them.

This is what our fathers in the faith did and what so many holy  
 priests and holy missionaries are still doing. And is it thus, brethren, that  
 40 you behave? Is it thus that you sanctify your work, your sufferings, for a  
 Christian in your state of life,

- 1- sanctifies the Sunday, fulfils all the commandments of God and of  
 the Church, loves God above all things, because he is infinitely lovable,  
 infinitely good, merciful and because he lavishes all kinds of gifts on us.
- 45 2- fulfils all the duties of his state. If he is father of a family, he takes  
 care to bring up his children in the fear of the Lord, teaches them their  
 prayers, their catechism, and by his example teaches them to frequent  
 the sacraments. He neglects nothing which may encourage his family to

salut il les oblige a frequenter les sacrements, sans cela il les menace de les  
50 mettre dehors.

Dès son reveil il commence par offrir son travail a (Dieu) par une  
elevation de coeur: Mon Dieu je vous donne mon coeur, donnez moi le  
votre; je vous offre mon travail et toutes mes souffrances en union aux  
souffrances de J.C. en satisfaction de mes pechés. Il fait tous les soirs  
55 quelque lectures quand toute la famille est assemblée et la priere en  
publique. Il est respectueux et recueille dans l'église. En est il proche, il  
ne laisse passer aucun jour sans aller visiter le très St. Sacrement de  
l'autel. Est ce là ce que vous faites?

Vous reconnoissez vous a ce portrait[?] Combien y a-t-il qui s'y  
60 reconnoissent? Y en a-t-il cinq cens parmi ceux qui m'ecoutent? Y en a-  
t-il trois cents, mais que dis je, il n'y en a pas même cinquante. Mon Dieu  
vous le savez et nous l'ignorons, mais ce que nous savons, [c'est] qu'il y  
bien peu qui fassent leur salut et c'est notre Seigneur Jesus C. qui nous  
l'apprend quand il nous dit qu'il y a beaucoup d'appelés mais peu d'élus.

65 Qui que vous soyez qui ne vous reconnoissiez pas a ce portrait,  
sortez d'ici ou changez de vie, car le saint lieu n'est que pour les sts. et  
pour ceux qui travaillent sincerement a le devenir.

Non M.F. qu'il n'en sorte pas un, mais que tous, petits et grands,  
commencent dès ce moment a se donner au Seigneur (qui se). Dites lui  
70 tous, dans la sincerité du coeur:

Mon Dieu j'ai eu le malheur de vous offenser en me rendant dans  
les assemblées mondaines, mais dès cet instant je change de vie, je  
renonce à toutes les parties de plaisir où Dieu pourroit être offensé. Je  
vais dès ce moment, je vais me jeter aux pieds d'un charitable confesseur,  
75 je lui avouerai mes péchés avec franchise et sincerité, bien résolu de ne  
jamais retomber dans mes habitudes.

Stc. Vierge vous qui êtes notre mère (nous) le refuge des pecheurs,  
*Refugium peccatorum*, c'est sous votre protection que je vais travailler a  
mon salut.

80 Si telles sont vos dispositions, M. chers F., venez avec confiance, le  
coeur contrit et humilié, vous jeter aux pieds de sacré tribunal. Là vous  
trouverez dans la personne de votre dimgne pasteur la douceur, la  
patience et la compassion pour vous. Plus vos péchés seront grands plus

work for their salvation, he obliges them to frequent the sacraments,  
50 threatening to put them out of the house if they do not.

On awaking he starts by offering his work to (God) by raising his heart: My God I give you my heart, give me yours; I offer you my work and all my sufferings in union with the sufferings of J.C. in satisfaction for my sins. Every day he does some readings when  
55 all the family is assembled and says some prayer together. He is respectful and recollected in church. If he is nearby he does not let a day pass without going to visit the blessed Sacrament of the altar. Is this what you do?

Do you recognise yourself in this portrait? How many are there who  
60 recognise themselves in it? Are there five hundred among those listening to me? Are there three hundred? Dare I say, are there even fifty? My God you know and we are ignorant of it, but what we do know is that there are few who work at their salvation and it is Jesus Christ who tells us this when he says that many are called but few are chosen.

65 Whoever among you does not recognise himself in this portrait, go hence or change your lives because the holy place is only for the sts and for those who are sincerely working to becomes such.

No brethren, not one of you goes out, but may all of you, young and old, start from this moment to give yourselves to the Lord (who himself).  
70 Tell him, all of you, in the sincerity of your hearts:

My God , I have had the misfortune of offending you by going to these worldly assemblies, but from this moment I am changing my life, I renounce all the outings where God could be offended. From this moment I am going to throw myself at the feet of a charitable confessor,  
75 I will admit my sins frankly and sincerely, firmly resolved not to fall back into my bad habits.

Holy Virgin you who are our Mother, the refuge of sinners, *Refugium peccatorum*, it is under your protection that I am going to work at my salvation.

80 If such are your dispositions, my dear brethren, come with confidence, with hearts contrite and humble, throw yourselves at the feet of the sacred tribunal. There you will find in the person of your worthy pastor, gentleness, patience and compassion for you. The greater your

plus sa compassion sera grande. Il s'attendrira jusqu'à pleurer avec vous.  
85 Et plus vous montrerez de sincérité dans votre confession, plus vous gagnerez son estime et sa tendresse pour vous.

Je recevrai pareillement avec bonté et compassion ceux qui auront confiance en moi. Venez donc tous, M. chers F. avec simplicité de cœur, je ferai pour vous tout ce qui dépendra de moi. Je prierai le Seigneur  
90 pour vous, qu'il veuille bien vous faire miséricorde. Sachez, mes chers frères, que je ne suis point venu ni comme un mercenaire (mais) ni pour mon plaisir, mais comme un ministre qui veut sincèrement et de tout mon pouvoir travailler à votre salut. C'est pour cela uniquement que je suis venu ici. Ne m'épargnez pas, ne craignez pas de me demander à  
95 quelque heure que se soit, se sera toujours avec bonté que je viendrai. Loin de me chagriner, en vous voyant venir, j'en bénirai le Seigneur, je me féliciterai, mes très chers frères, de vous pouvoir être utile. De concert avec votre digne pasteur, nous travaillerons à vous rendre heureux, même dès cette vie, pour peu que vous vouliez vous prêter, en vous  
100 rendant la paix (de l'âme) avec vous même et après cette misérable vie la félicité éternelle. C'est la grâce que je vous souhaite.

*en bas de page, à gauche, d'une écriture différente:*

Dès que je me crois quelque chose, disoit un pieux auteur, je commence en être rien.

105 *à droite, des paraphes ou essais de signature et:*

Souhait Claude.

sins the greater will be his compassion. He will be tender to the point of  
 85 tears with you. And the more sincerity you show in your confession, the  
 more you will win his esteem and his tenderness toward you.

I will equally receive with gentleness and compassion those who  
 confide in me. I will pray to the Lord for you that he show you his  
 mercy. Know, my dear brethren, that I have not come as a hireling (but)  
 90 nor for my own pleasure, but as a minister who wants sincerely and with  
 all my power to work for your salvation. That is the only reason I have  
 come here. Don't spare me, don't fear to ask me whatever the time, I  
 will always come to you with kindness. Far from being annoyed at seeing  
 you come, I will bless the Lord for it, I will be very pleased, my dear  
 95 brethren, to be able to be useful. In concert with your worthy pastor, we  
 will work for your happiness, even in this life, if you are prepared to  
 make just a little effort with a view to making peace (of soul) with  
 yourself, and then, after this miserable life you can be sure that eternal  
 felicity awaits you. This is the grace that I wish you.

100 *at the bottom of the page, to the left, in a different writing:*

From the moment that I think myself to be something, a pious  
 author used to say, I start to be nothing of the kind.

*at the right, some flourishes or trials of a signature and:*

Souhait Claude.

---

## B

**CONFERENCE**, according to the manuscript in AFM 134.27  
 on a single sheet of format 23.5 x 19.5  
 written on page one and the start of page 2

The text which follows apparently treats of relapse into sin or the sincerity of  
 conversion. It is a simple outline of a conference which could come after confession,  
 thus being a sequel to the preceding text and is similar in manner and style.

*Vade et jam amplius noli peccari* [Jn.8,11]

Voilà, M.F. le fruit le plus solide et la marque la plus assurée d'une véritable pénitence. Ce n'est que par le changement de nos mœurs que nous pouvons bien connoître si notre retour ver Dieu a été sincere.

5 Tertulien ne craint pas de dire en général que la conversion du pecheur doit être jugé fausse dès qu'il ne fait voir aucun amandement dans la conduite: *Ubi emendatio nulla poenitentia vana.*

Que je dise aux chretiens d'aujourd'hui ce que St. J.Bp. disoit autrefois aux Juifs: *Facite ergo dignos fructus poenitentia* [Lc.3,8]. Nous  
10 le faisons, me répondront quelques uns, nous ne manquons pas de faire nos paques et même de nous approcher aux grandes fêtes: première illusion.

On s'excuse su le faux pretexte qu'on ne veut pas profaner les sacrements comme font tant d'autres: seconde illusion.

15 C'est pour détruire ces faux raisonnements que j'établis deux propositions:

1re Le pecheur est tranquille sur ses rechutes parce qu'il frequente les sacrements, et moi je pretend que la rechute doit le faire trembler sur sa pénitence.

20 2me Le pécheur s'éloigne des sacrements parce qu'il est sujet a retomber, et moi je pretends que la rechute est le motif le plus pressent et la raison la plus forte qui doit l'engager a s'en approcher souvent.

Quand la rechute est accompagnée des circonstances suivantes, alors il est impossible, sans un extrême aveuglement, de se faire illusion  
25 sur sa pénitence:

1re Quand la rechute est prompte;

2me circonstance: Quand la rechute dans le péché n'est précédé d'aucun remede pour s'en garantir, aucune precaution pour n'y pas retomber;

30 3ème circonstance: Quand la rechute est fréquente, qu'on ne voit nulle diminution dans le nombre de fautes, qu'on retombe aussi souvent, avec aut[ant] de facilités;

4ème circonstance: Quand on devient hardi dans la rechute, qu'on franchit le pas sans difficulté ou qu'on vit tranquille.

*Vade et jam amplius noli peccare* (Jn. 8:11)

Behold, brethren, the sound fruit and the most certain sign of true penitence. It is only by the change in our morals that we can really know that our return to God has been sincere. Tertullian did not fear  
5 to say that in general the conversion of a sinner must be judged false if we note no amendment of conduct: *Ubi emendatio nulla poenitentia vana.*

May I say to Christians today what St. J. Bp. used to say to the Jews: *Facite ergo dignos fructus poenitentiae* (Lk. 3:8) We know, some will  
10 reply to me, we do not omit our Easter duties and even approach the sacraments on the big feasts: first illusion.

They excuse themselves on the false pretext that they do not want to profane the sacraments as so many others do: second illusion.

It is to refute these false reasonings that I establish two  
15 propositions:

1st - The sinner is unperturbed by his relapses because he frequents the sacraments, and I claim that his relapse ought to make him tremble about his penitence.

2nd - The sinner stays away from the sacraments because he is  
20 subject to fall again and I claim that his falls are the most pressing motive and the strongest reason to urge him to approach them often.

When the relapse is accompanied by the following circumstances, then it is impossible, without extreme blindness, to have any illusions about his penitence:

25 1st - when the relapse is immediate;

2nd circumstance: When the relapse into sin is not preceded by any remedy to protect oneself, any precaution against reoffending;

3rd circumstance: When the relapses are frequent, when one sees no  
30 diminution in the number of faults, when one falls fairly frequently, with as much facility.

4th circumstance: when one becomes bold in relapse, when one crosses the line without difficulty or is not disturbed by it.

Vi Jf.M St J.

*Fratres, hortamur vos ne in vacuum gratiam Dei recipiatis.*

“Nous vous conjurons, mes chers Frères avec St Paul, de ne pas recevoir en vain la grâce de Dieu”.

- 5 Une chose ici-bas, qui importe grandement, une chose qui nous intéresse uniquement, une chose qui nous regarde personnellement, c’est la grande affaire de notre salut. Cette grande affaire, cette unique affaire, cette affaire personnelle dépend premièrement de la grâce, secondement de notre fidélité à la grâce.

## 2.13

# PRAYERS FOR THE FORTY HOURS

### A

**CONFERENCE**, according to the manuscript in AFM 134.28  
leaflet of 8 pages of irregular format of approximately  
7 x 11, written on pages 1 to 7.

The “Prayers for the Forty Hours”, a very old custom to counterbalance the frivolities of the carnival, were, the Abbé Gaume informs us in his Catechism of Perseverance (Vol. VIII, p.29), “accompanied by preaching, exposition of the Blessed Sacrament and other exercises of piety”. It is, then, for one of these occasions that Father Champagnat had prepared the sermon plan that we are going to read.

He probably borrowed the theme and ideas from other preachers, but between this outline and the actual sermon there would have been plenty of room for expressing his own personality. Our only regret is that he left us nothing of it.

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V. J f. M St J.

*Fratres, hortamur vos ne in vanum gratiam Dei recipiatis.*

“We entreat you, my dear brethren, with St. Paul, not to receive the grace of God in vain.”

5 Here on earth, one thing which is most important, one thing that interests us uniquely, one thing that concerns us personally is the great question of our salvation. This great question, this unique question, this personal question depends in the first place on grace; secondly, on our fidelity to grace.

10 Il est donc bien important mes f., que vous profitiez des grâces que Dieu va vous faire dans ces prières des quarante heures.

1° parce qu'elles sont excellentes et précieuses

2° parce qu'elles sont données par nombre et mesure.

3° parce qu'elles sont données avec l'obligation d'en profiter.

15 1° Ses grâces sont excellentes et précieuse.

Elles sont excellentes. *Quia impta sunt a Christo.* Pour créer le monde, le ciel, et la terre et toutes les richesses qu'ils renferme, il ne faut qu'une parole: *Dixit et facta sunt*; mais pour nous acquérir les grâces de Dieu, Jésus-Christ est descendu du Ciel en terre, il a voyagé, 20 sué le sang et eau et expiré sur une croix.

*Dixit multa et fecit mira, et tulit dura, et me tantum dura sed et indigna.* (St Aug. St Bern.)

Nous ne recevons pas la moindre grâce qui n'ait été achetée bien chèrement par notre divin Sauveur.

25 *Benedixit nos omni benedictione spiritali in Christo accepit dona in hominibus*: Toutes les bénédictions que Dieu nous donne, toutes les faveurs qu'il nous fait, c'est en Jésus, pour l'amour de Jésus et comme à Jésus. Les dons que le Père éternel fait à son fils ne sont ils pas bien précieux; pour lui pour lui ce sont des récompenses en égard aux grands 30 mérites de Jésus-Christ, ce sont des grâces, des faveurs gratuites qui ne sont pas faites à tout le monde: *Non fecit taliter omni nationi*.

Non, M.C.f., tous n'ont pas connu comme nous le bonheur d'avoir des prières des quarante Heures, je ne dis pas ceux qui ne connaissent pas la véritable religion, mais encore beaucoup de ceux qui comme vous 35 ont le bonheur de la connaître.

Du temps d'Elie, il y eut une grande famine: le Seigneur envoya son prophète, chez une pauvre veuve de Sarepta, ville des Sidoniens. Étant à la porte de la ville, il vit une pauvre veuve qui ramassait du bois.

2° Dieu donne ses grâces par nombre et par mesure.

40 *Unicuique datur gratia, secundum mensuram donationis Christi.* (St P. Ep.4.13). St Thomas nous dit très bien que personne n'a reçu la grâce sans mesure, que Jésus-Christ, Homme-Dieu; et comme c'est en son pouvoir d'en donner ou n'en pas donner, ou d'en donner peu et diversement, comme le père de famille à l'égard de ses serviteurs. La 45 raison de cela, c'est que Dieu ne fait rien qu'avec une très grande sagesse:

10 It is, then, very important, brethren, that you profit by the graces that God is going to give you during the prayers of the Forty Hours.

- 1- because they are excellent and precious
- 2- because they are given sparingly
- 3- because they are given with the obligation to profit by them.

15 1- These graces are excellent and precious.  
They are excellent. *Quia empta sunt a Christo.* To create the world, the heavens, the earth and all the riches it contains, all that was needed was a word: *Dixit et facta sunt*; but to gain for us graces from God, Jesus Christ came down from Heaven to earth, he travelled, sweated blood  
20 and water and died on the cross.

*Dixit multa et fecit mira, et tulit dura, et me tantum dura sed et indigna.* (St Aug. St Bern.)

We do not receive the least grace which has not been bought very dearly by our divine Saviour.

25 *Benedixit nos omni benedictione spirituali in Christo accepit dona in hominibus.*

All the blessings that God gives us, all the favours that he does us, are **in** Jesus, **for** the love of Jesus and **with** Jesus. The gifts that the eternal Father gives to his Son, are they not precious; for him they are recompenses  
30 with regard to the great merits of Jesus Christ, they are graces, free gifts that are not made to everyone: *Non fecit taliter omni nationi.*

No, my dear brethren, not everyone has known the happiness of having the prayers of the Forty Hours, as we have, I am not talking about those who do not know the true religion, but rather of many of those  
35 who, like yourselves, do have the happiness of knowing it.

In the time of Elijah, there was a great famine: the Lord sent his prophet to the house of a poor widow at Zarephath, a Sidonian town. At the gate of the town he saw a poor widow gathering firewood.

2- God gives his graces sparingly.  
40 *Unicuique datur gratia, secundum mensuram donationis Christi.* (St P. Ep. 4:13) St. Thomas tells us that no one has received grace without measure, except Jesus Christ, Man-God; and as it is in his power to give some or not to give any, or to give a little and in various ways, as the father of a household does with his servants. The reason for this is that  
45 God always acts with very great wisdom.

Dieu dit dans ses divins secrets: J'ai tant de grâces à donner à un tel, à une telle. A celui-là, je veux qu'il entende dix, vingt, trente sermons; à celui-ci, qu'il assiste ou puisse assister trois, quatre prières des quarante Heures. Dieu seul en sait le nombre. Après ce nombre, s'il en abuse, je le  
50 retirerai de ce monde. Je veux que ce père de famille reçoive cet avertissement de son curé: s'il n'en profite pas...

Josué, ce grand capitaine du peuple de Dieu, voulait conquérir la ville de Jéricho. Dieu envoya dix plaies aux Egyptiens pour les convertir,  
55 et dit après la neuvième: *Adbuc una plaga percutiam egyptum.*

3° Les grâces sont données avec obligation d'en profiter.

Nous sommes obligé de rendre compte des grâces que Dieu nous donne. Nous voyons cette vérité clairement démontrée dans l'Evangile: Le Fils de Dieu se compare à un père de famille qui donne des talents à  
60 ses serviteurs pour qu'ils les fassent valoir. Après quelque temps, il leur fait rendre compte.

St Paul dit que la prédication de l'Evangile produit des effets tous différents dans les auditeurs. *Christi bonus odor sumus Deo, in iis qui salvi fiunt, et in iis qui pereunt: aliis quidem, odor mortis in mortem, aliis  
65 autem odor vitae in vitam.*(St P). *Quae illis causa perditiones, vobis autem salutis, et hoc a Deo* (idem).

St Bernard dit à ce sujet une chose étrange: *Time cum arriserit gratia.* S'il disait: craignez, quand Dieu vous menace de ses jugements... Quand les Israélites négligeoient de ramasser la manne, elle se  
70 pourrissait et se changeait en vers. Il n'est rien de si doux et de si précieux que la grâce de Dieu; mais, si nous la méprisons, si nous négligeons d'en faire le profit que Dieu demande de nous, elle engendrera dans nos âmes ce ver qui ne meurt point et qui ronge les âmes réprouvées.

75 1° Thess. St P. *Sine intermissione orate* (Tessal. 1,5-17)

2° *Vigilate et orate, ut non intretis in tentationem* (St.Matt.26,41)

3 *Dimitte nobis debita nostra* ( St.Matt. 6,12)

Davi. *Invoca me in die afflictionis et eruam te*

St Luc *Opportet semper orare et nunquam deficere* 18.1

God says in his divine secrets: I have so many graces to give to such a man or such a woman. Concerning that one, I want him to hear ten, twenty, thirty sermons; of this one, that he take part in or have the opportunity to take part in three, four Forty Hours devotions. God alone knows the number. After this number if he fails to profit by them I will withdraw him from this world. I want this father of a family to receive this warning from his parish priest: if he does not profit by it...

Joshua, that great captain of the people of God, wanted to conquer the city of Jericho. God sent ten plagues on the Egyptians in order to convert them, and said after the ninth: *Adbuc una plaga percutiam Aegyptum*.

3- Graces are given with the obligation of profiting by them.

We are obliged to render an account of the graces that God gives us. We see this truth clearly demonstrated in the Gospel: The Son of God compares himself to the father of a household who gives a certain number of talents to his servants in order that they profit by them. After a certain time they are made to render an account of them.

St. Paul says that the preaching of the Gospel has different effects in different listeners. *Christi bonus odor sumus Deo, in iis qui salvi fiunt, et in iis qui pereunt: aliis quidem, odor mortis in mortem, aliis autem odor vitae in vitam.* (St.P) *Quae illis causa perditionis, vobis autem salutis, et hoc a Deo* (idem).

St. Bernard has a curious thing to say on this subject: *Time cum arriserit gratia.* If he had said: Fear, when God threatens you with his judgements... When the Israelites neglected to gather the manna, it rotted and became a mass of worms. There is nothing so sweet and so precious as the grace of God; but if we scorn it, if we neglect to make the use of it that God asks, it engenders in our souls that worm that never dies and which gnaws reprobate souls.

- 1- Thess. St. P. *Sine intermissione orate.* (Thessal. 1: 5-17)
- 2- *Vigilate et orate, ut non intretis in tentationem* (St.Matt.26:41)
- 3- *Dimitte nobis debita nostra* (St.Matt. 6:12)
- Davi. *Invoca me in die afflictionis et eruam te*
- St. Luke *Opportet semper orare et nunquam deficere* (18:1)

(I)

## MOYENS DE PROFITER DES PRIERES DES 40 H.

L'année dernière nous dimes que devons profiter de la grâce de prières des quarantes heures pour trois raisons principales.

5 La première est fondée sur le besoin que nous en avons. Graces

## B

**SERMON** according to the manuscript in **AFM 134.14**

A collection of 8 leaves of 20 x 13.7 format which were originally 4 leaves folded in two and then separated, except for one, which allows us to see what the original sheets were like.

It is not easy to reassemble them with certainty. In fact, we have four different texts. We have identified them with Roman numerals.

– The first (I), written on one separated sheet with the reverse side left blank, contains the title and the outline of a plan. It speaks of a sermon from “last year” from which it recalls the themes:

- need for the Forty Hours devotions;
- particular graces attached to them;
- danger of missing this opportunity.

But we are left wondering whether it is a matter of three different points, or three aspects of the first point only. If we accept the latter hypothesis the key idea would be to profit from the particular graces of this occasion. That could be, then, the synthesis of the “Conference” below, (134.28). Moreover, one could deduce from this that of the “three principal reasons” for profiting from the Forty Hours, “last year” Marcellin Champagnat developed only the first, and that this time he is going to speak of the second.

– The second text (II) is no more than a recalling of a few examples. It covers only three-quarters of the page and the different writing shows that it was not done at the same time as either the first or the third of these texts. The examples presented would be more suitable for the “Conference” mentioned above.

– The third text (III) begins on the reverse side of this second one and extends to 6 further pages. The ideas which it develops, to understand faith and repentance, are related to neither of the texts just mentioned. Instead of presenting another of the “reasons for profiting from the Forty Hours”, it explains the “manner” of profiting from this celebration.

– The fourth text (IV), finally, is nothing but a quotation from St Augustine. Since it is found alone on one page and could at a pinch illustrate the end of the third text, it is reproduced here in last place, as outside the text.

We have to take these texts, then, as they appear, in their individuality, without looking for logical connections between them.

They are reproduced here as faithfully as possible, including the errors.

## (I)

## MEANS OF PROFITING FROM THE 40 HOURS DEVOTIONS

Last year we said that we ought to profit from the grace of the Forty Hours for three principal reasons.

5 The first is based on the need we have of it. Particular graces to

particulières pour se convertir. craintes raisonnables de ne jamais se convertir si on a manqué cette belle occasion.

Voyons cette année ce que nous devons faire pour bien passer ces trois jours.

10 1° assister autant que possible à tous les exercices de ces trois jours et y assister avec recueillement.

2° purifier sa conscience par une bonne confession.

3° prendre de fortes résolutions pour éviter ce que votre confesseur vous aura dit d'éviter et pratiquer ce qu'il vous aura recommandé

15

(II)

*Surgens festina velociter*

1° Assister autant que possible à tous les exercices des prières des quarante heures. Je dis à tous les exercices.

20 Nous ne connaissons pas les momans de la grâce. Combien de Sts qui sont dans le ciel qui n'y seroient pas s'ils eussent manqué se moment favorable. Que de damnés dans les enfers et qui n'y sont que parce qu'ils n'ont pas profité des moindres occasions ou qu'ils les ont méprisés. Si les dix lépreux ne fussent pas venus à la rencontre de notre Seigneur n'eussent pas été guéris Si le centurion n'eut pas demandé la  
25 guérison de son serviteur, s'il eut manqué cette occasion de se convertir, il ne se fût jamais converti. Si Naaman eut manqué la seule circonstance de se laver trois fois dans les eaux du Jourdain

(III)

Que viens je faire ici M.F.?

30 Je viens à la prière de vos pasteur pour nous joindre à eux et à vous pour réparer les outrages que notre divin Sauveur reçoit dans ces jours, la honte du christianisme, ces jours de débauche et de libertinage. Je sais, mes chers F. et c'est ce qui fait la consolation de vos pasteurs et la notre, je sais dis-je que cette licence effrénée qui a lieu dans (les) bien d'autres  
35 paroisse n'a pas lieu dans celle-ci, mais il suffit (que) à des enfans bien nés de savoir qu'un père qu'ils aiment tendrement soit outragé dans quelque lieu que ce soit pour qu'ils y prennent part et pour qu'ils redoublent d'affection pour un père tendrement aimé.

40 Dans quelles dispositions Jésus Ch. notre bon père veut il que nous entrions pour le dédommager des insultes qu'on lui fait.

enable us to be converted. Reasonable fears of never being converted if we miss this beautiful occasion.

Let us see this year what we have to do to spend these three days well.

- 10 1- attend as far as possible all the exercises of these three days and assist at them with recollection.  
2- purify one's conscience by a good confession.  
3- take firm resolutions to avoid what your confessor tells you to avoid and to do what he recommends you to do.

15

(II)

*Surgens festina velociter*

1- Attend as far as possible all the exercises of the Forty Hours. I say all the exercises.

- 20 We do not know the moments of grace. How many Sts are there in heaven who would not be there if they had missed some such favourable moment. How many damned are there in hell who are there only because they did not profit from the least opportunities or because they scorned them. If the ten lepers had not come to meet our Lord they would not have been cured. If the centurion had not asked for the cure  
25 of his servant, if he had missed this opportunity to be converted, he might never have been converted. If Naaman had missed the sole opportunity of bathing three times in the waters of the Jordan

(III)

What have I come here to do dear brethren?

- 30 I come at the request of your pastor to join with him and with you to make up for the outrages that our divine Saviour receives these days, the shame of Christianity, these days of debauchery and licentiousness. I know, my dear brethren, and that is what consoled your pastors and us, I say I know that this unrestrained licence which takes place in many other  
35 parishes does not take place in this one, but it is quite enough for children to know that a father whom they love tenderly is being outraged in whatever place for them to set about redoubling their affection for a tenderly loved father.

- 40 In what dispositions does Jesus Ch. our good father want us to set out to make amends for the insults he suffers.

J'en trouve deux

La première disposition qu'il faut apporter pour bien profiter des prières des quarante heures, c'est la foi. Il faut que celui qui approche de Dieu, dit l'apôtre St Paul, croie en Dieu, par conséquent il est inutile de  
45 venir dans cette église et de vous prosterner aux pieds des autels. Vous voulez adorer Dieu et l'apaiser, la première démarche est celle que la foi vous propose de faire.

En sortant de votre maison et en entrant dans cette église, allons, mon âme, allons assister au triste spectacle d'un Dieu mourant. Jettons  
50 les yeux sur lui, voyons comme il étend les bras, comme ses mains sont (?), mais pour qui est-ce, ô mon âme, pour qui est-ce qu'il a voulu endurer tant de tourmens c'est pour moi, c'est pour effacer mes péchés; c'est pour me donner sa grâce. Ce sont mes crimes qui l'ont attaché à cette croix, c'est mon orgueil et ma vanité.

55 Seconde disposition qu'il faut apporter. C'est la mortification et la douleur, pourquoi? pour nous conformer à Jésus Ch. allant à Jérusalem où il doit être bafoué, moqué, flagellé, livré à la mort. Or, M.F., si le chef souffre tant de peines, seroit il juste que les membres fussent dans les délices et dans la joie? Quand J.C. parla à ses apôtres de sa passion  
60 future, quoiqu'il la leur expliquât fort distinctement et qu'il leur marquât les différentes circonstances, ils n'y comprenoient rien: *ipsi nihil intellexerunt*, cela leur étoit caché.

Comment cela leur étoit-il caché? c'est qu'ils prenoient cette vérité comme une vérité outrée, et qu'ils ne s'imaginoient pas que leur maître qui faisoit tant de miracles en faveur des autres et qui pouvoit par  
65 conséquent se garantir de la persécution des Juifs dut être effectivement exposé à de si mauvais traitement.

C'est en second lieu, qu'ils ne vouloient pas que cette prophétie s'accomplît. On en trouve une preuve évidente dans Saint Matthieu: J.Ch. ayant (dit) à ses apôtres beaucoup de choses qui devoient les  
70 consoler, leur apprit une nouvelle qui les afflige tous. Il faut (que) j'aïlle à Jérusalem et que j'y souffre beaucoup d'indignités de la part des pharisiens et des chefs de la synagogue. Il le faut, répondit St. Pierre avec aigreur, hé à quoi songez-vous? Non sans doute cela ne sera pas. *Capit increpare diems abiit a te Domine non erit tibi hoc.*

75 Les apôtres ne voulurent donc rien connoître des souffrances futures de Jésus Ch. et, qui plus est, ils ne voulurent pas même qu'elles arrivassent, pourquoi cela? Ils voyoient, dit St Augustin, que si J.Ch. venoit à souffrir toutes ces indignités et ces ignominies, ils se voyoient eux-mêmes obligés de le suivre et de partager avec lui ses disgrâces. Ce  
80 fut aussi dans cette occasion que Jésus Christ reprenant sévèrement cette délicatesse de St Pierre jusqu'à l'appeler satan et sujet de scandale: *Vade*

I suggest two

The first disposition we must bring in order to profit from the Forty Hours is faith. The one who approaches God, says the Apostle Paul, must believe in God, consequently, it is useless to come into this church  
 45 and to prostrate yourselves at the foot of the altars. You want to adore God and appease him, the first step is the one that faith suggests you do.

On leaving your house and entering this church, let us go, my soul, let us go and witness the sad spectacle of a God dying. Let us cast our eyes on him, let us see as he extends his arms as his hands are (?), but for  
 50 whom is it, O my soul, for whom did he want to endure so much torment, it is for me, it is to wipe out my sins; it is to give me his grace. It is my crimes that have fixed him to this cross, it is my pride and my vanity.

Second disposition we must bring

55 It is mortification and sorrow, why? In order to conform ourselves to Jesus Ch. going to Jerusalem where he is to be ridiculed, mocked, scourged, sent to his death. Now, brethren, if the head suffers so many pains would it be right for the members to know only delights and joys? When J. C. spoke to his apostles of his future passion, even though he  
 60 explained it very clearly to them and indicated the different circumstances, they did not understand any of it; *ipsi nihil intelegerunt*, that was hidden from them.

How was it hidden from them? Because they were taking this truth as an overstated truth, and because they did not imagine that their master who was doing so many miracles in favour of others and who  
 65 therefore was able to protect himself from the persecution of the Jews was to be actually exposed to such ill treatment.

Secondly, they did not want this prophecy to be fulfilled. A clear proof of this can be found in Saint Matthew: J.Ch. having (said) many things to console his apostles, revealed one piece of news to them which  
 70 distressed them all. It is necessary (that) I go to Jerusalem and that I suffer many indignities there at the hands of the Pharisees and the leaders of the synagogue. It is necessary, replied St Peter with bitterness, what are you thinking about? No, it certainly will not be. *Capit increpare diems abiit a te Domine non erit tibi hoc.*

75 The apostles did not want to know anything about the future sufferings of Jesus Ch. and, what is more, they did not even want them to happen, why not? They saw, says St Augustine, that if J.Ch. was going to suffer all these indignities and ignominies, they saw themselves obliged to follow him and share his disgraces with him. It was also on this  
 80 occasion that Jesus rebuked severely this softness of St Peter to the extent of calling him Satan and a cause of scandal: *Vade post me satana*

*post me satana scandalum est mihi* lui fit connoître, et à tous les autres, la part qu'ils devoient prendre à ses souffrances, par ces paroles qui sont comme l'abrégé de la vie chrétienne.

- 85 *Si quis vult venire post me abneget semetipsum, portat crucem suam et sequatur me.* Vous dites si souvent que vous voulez me suivre, vous passez dans le monde pour être mes disciples, mais j'ai une chose à vous dire et qui est de la dernière importance, c'est que celui qui veut venir après moi doit se renoncer à soi-même, porter sa croix et me suivre.
- 90 Vous venez m'adorer aux pieds de ces autels, votre piété est louable, mais si vous n'y venez dans un esprit de mortification et de douleur, cette piété est inutile. Vous venez me rendre vos respects pendant que tant de libertins me deshonnorent; votre dévotion me plait; mais elle me plaira encore davantage si vous renoncez à vous même et à vos passions, si vous
- 95 quittez les divertissemens et les joies du siècle pour vous unir à mes souffrances, si au contraire après ces protestations que vous me faites vous vous abandonnez au désordre, je vous direz comme à St Pierre: retirez(vous) de moi sathan vous me scandalisez.

(IV)

- 100 *Summa est appropinquare ad vos, vestrum appropinquare ad illum.*  
Jésus Christ se fait un plaisir de s'approcher de nous ; nous devons nous faire un plaisir de nous approcher de lui, c'est St Augustin qui parle ainsi

*scandalum est mihi* teaches him and all the others the part that they must play in his sufferings, by these words which are like a summary of the Christian life.

85 *Si quis vult venire post me abneget semetipsum, portat crucem suam et sequatur me.* You say so often that you want to follow me, you pass in the world for my disciples, but I have one thing to tell you which is of the greatest importance, it is that the one who wants to come after me must renounce himself, take up his cross and follow me. You come to  
90 adore me at the foot of these altars, your piety is praiseworthy, but if you do not come in a spirit of mortification and sorrow, this piety is useless. You come to pay me your respects while so many libertines dishonour me; your devotion pleases me; but it will please me still more if you renounce yourselves and your passions, if you leave worldly amusements  
95 and joys behind in order to unite yourselves to my sufferings, if on the contrary after these protestations that you make me you abandon yourselves to disorder, I will say to you as to St Peter: get behind me Satan you are a scandal to me.

(IV)

100 *Summa est appropinquare ad vos, vestrum appropinquare ad illum.*  
Jesus Christ finds it a pleasure to draw near to us; we must find it a pleasure to draw near to him, it is St Augustine who says this.

Besides "The Annals of the Institute" of Brother Avit, mentioned in this issue, we have available by the same author some "Annals of the Houses" of the Provinces of Saint-Paul-Trois-Châteaux and Aubenas, typed on floppy-disks thanks to the assiduous work of Brother Jean-François Escallier (84 years). We could supply these to whoever wishes to have them, whether on 3 1/2 inch disk, format Word for Windows, or printed on separate sheets, or simply bound by us (spine glued with soft cover). They will be arranged according to the lists published in "Marist Notebooks" N° 2, in three separate volumes:

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|--|--------------------|
| 1 - Province of Saint-Paul, houses from A to Ma. | 576 pages          |
| 2 - " " " " " " " " " " " "                      | Mi to V. 642 pages |
| 3 - " " Aubenas,                                 | 714 pages          |

In view of the dimensions, the rather specialised subject matter and the language (French), we will limit the printing to what is strictly necessary. So if you are interested in having these "Annals", would you kindly send me your order, specifying under which form you would like them: printed text, bound or unbound, of such and such house only, or on 3 1/2 inch disk. The prices are as follows: volumes 1 and 2, 60,000 L (Ital.) each; volume 3, 70,000 L.; separate pages, 100 L per page. The complete annals on disk, 10,000 L. As we will not be holding stocks, a certain delay in delivery must be expected.

As far as we find it possible, we are thinking of continuing this undertaking with the houses of other Provinces. We will keep you informed, through this same publication, as soon as they are ready.

Br P.S.



