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SEMINAR
on our Marist PATRIMONY

Theme: The reflection and practice of Marcellin Champagnat
and our first Brothers
in the domain of education

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PRESENTATION

Brothers, it is with particular joy that we offer you this special edition of the CAHIERS MARISTES (MARIST NOTEBOOKS). In it you will find the contributions of the different participants in the Seminar which was held in Rome from 20-27 November 1997. The Patrimony Commission of the General Council felt the need to begin anew the research on our Patrimony and to put into contact with each other Brothers formed in various cultures and who have a particular interest in this domain of the Marist reality.

Why this theme: "The Reflection and the Practice of Marcellin Champagnat and of our first Brothers in the domain of Education?" Bro. André Lanfrey (Beaucamps-St-Genis), doctorate in History, hired half-time by the General Council for research on our Patrimony, has been working for a year on a manuscript of Bro. Jean-Baptiste which develops the educational, evangelizing mission of the Brother. This document is for Bro. Lanfrey of capital importance in the elaboration of Marist literature: THE SCHOOL GUIDE (1853), THE BIOGRAPHY OF FATHER CHAMPAGNAT (1856), COUNSELS, LESSONS, SAYINGS (1868). Furthermore, Bro. Danilo Farneda (Rio de la Plata) presented in Rome in 1993 a thesis entitled HISTORICO-CRITICAL STUDY OF THE SCHOOL GUIDE. On his part Bro. Aureliano Brambila (Mexico Occidental) continues to study in-depth the texts on our origins for the benefit of our Brothers. This group of Brothers and their in-depth research on texts for the most part little known seemed to us capable of constituting the starting point for our project on a theme essential for us and for the lay people who share our mission.

We wanted a small number of Brothers for this Seminar, but representative of our major language groups. We fixed the number at twelve. We were sorry that the Anglophone Brothers were not more numerous. Several Brothers who had participated in the International Course on our Patrimony in 1991 were present. If all the participants in this Seminar cannot devote a regular amount of time to this research, they are nonetheless all engaged in making the Patrimony known in their province or at regional and international level.

We mentioned at the beginning of this Seminar the considerable work of many Brothers in the area of basic research or of the spread of the

Patrimony, of the Marist charism, through their writings, through sessions on Marist locales and in the renewal centers: Brothers Henri Noé Colin, Pierre Zind, Paul Sester, André Lanfrey (Beaucamps-St-Genis), Gabriel Michel, Balko (N.D. de l'Hermitage), Canon (Castilla), Juan Maria (Norte), Juan Morral (Catalonia), Stephen Farrel, Owen Kavanagh, Fred McMahon (Sydney), Norman Gibson (New Zealand), Leonard Voegtle (Esopus), Aureliano Brambila (Mexico Occidental), Pedro Herreros (Chile), D. Farneda (R. de la Plata). If the role of the distributors is appreciated, the work of the researchers, by virtue of its specialization, is in general very little read, very little shared by the Brothers. We are benefitting from the work of these Brothers, but we have to prepare new generations of researchers, distributors, popularizers, animators. It is urgent to arouse interest in research, to find and form solid researchers coming from diverse cultural contexts.

The first two days of our Seminar were devoted to the presentation of the work of most of the participants; the presentation was followed by time for clarification and exchange. Since all had not been able to devote time to do research on texts dealing with our origins, we had asked several to explore other areas: how Champagnat's educational intuition begun in France germinated in different cultures, caused certain dimensions to evolve, was enriched by reality checks, brought original responses... It is essential to note that our Patrimony is not limited to the Founder; it also concerns the development of the founding intuition, the works, their evolution throughout the world since 1836, date of the first departure of Brothers for other continents and cultures.

The following days were given to deepening several themes. Thus we clarified the task of the archivist, the scholarly work, the historian's function, the task of the popularizer, of the animator. These roles are complementary; each step nonetheless has its own specificity. The role of the historian is not to edify but to help us understand better.

We felt the need to reflect on epistemology. That led us to clarify the following relationships: history and the sacred, history and spirituality, history and institutions, history and memory, history and truth. Epistemological problems likewise nourished our sharing. The work of Brothers Sester and Brambila respectively led us to study the historiography and the bibliography relative to our Patrimony. Serious work was done; nevertheless there still remains much to do to be able to offer the researchers tools easily used. Problems related to the publication of the texts on our origins, particularly those of Brothers François, Jean-Baptiste, Avit, were also broached. These documents should be distributed only if preceded by a critical introduction.

The future of the MARIST NOTEBOOKS was likewise discussed. An editorial committee should be set up. Furthermore, we must open this publication up to articles coming from Brothers from all countries: quality

articles of course, solid articles either on our origins, on the development of our Marist mission through time and continents, or on concrete aspects of the charism lived today in our various fields of apostolate. This can deal with aspects of reality relative to history, spirituality, pedagogy, pastoral care... The work of Brothers Brambila and Danilo has allowed us to discover all that we already have on computer concerning our Patrimony, what we can propose to the provinces and all that remains to be done to best utilize the potential of the electronic age. This led us to reflect on our possibly organizing a network using the considerable potential of the Internet. The perspective of the canonization led us to determine certain realisable or desirable projects. Bro. Lanfrey is about to publish a history of Marist pedagogy (limited to the French context). He does not think it possible to produce a critical edition of the life of Marcellin Champagnat before several years, because that presupposes a study of all the writings of Brothers Jean-Baptiste and François. On the other hand, he believes he can offer a substantial critical introduction. Likewise we feel the need for a history of the Institute. This requires collaborators from the various continents. Would we have the Brothers for such an important project?

The participants appreciated this space for open talk, sharing, confrontation of ideas, a beginning of collaboration, of dialogue among Brothers from all over the world. Has the goal been achieved? Yes, in what concerns the appreciation of the work of the participants, better knowledge of each other, reduction of prejudices, desire to work together, acceptance of being questioned on one's work, one's ideas. The conditions for a new start at the level of research are there. The work to be pursued is considerable but very exciting. One of the conditions: invest personnel in the area of Patrimony (origins, future stages, the present) starting from several disciplines: history, theology, spirituality, pastoral care of youth, pedagogy, religious sociology.

It is a matter of our creative fidelity to the charism and the projet bequeathed by Marcellin and deepened by his Brothers. Besides, the growing number of lay people attracted by our Founder, his spirituality, his mission, do not allow us to confine ourselves to vague pious reflections, approximations, assertions without solid foundations endlessly repeated. May this special edition give us the desire to go ahead!

f. Henri Vignau, c.g.

Fr CHAMPAGNAT'S IDEAS ON THE EDUCATION OF CHILDREN

(sources: his letters and other documents, and the Rules he gave the
Brothers)

by Br Aureliano Brambila

FOREWORD

In preparing the present work, I have used the inductive method. I began by laying down various groups of ideas, then employed a "grid" which allowed me to classify the different ideas in the quotations, and to show me their relative frequency. I was then able to draw various conclusions.

It may be that the only value of my conclusions is that they do not depart from their sources.

I am grateful to the General Council in the person of Br Henri Vignau for giving me this chance to examine our inheritance more deeply and to share with others the method I have employed.

Br Aureliano Brambila
Rome, 18th November 1997

01 - The Brothers - teachers

The Brothers are religious whose vocation is education

(Br CAMILLE : Summ 356) The mission of the Servant of God was definitely the formation of religious teachers; this is obvious if one examines the "School Guide" of the congregation; this book can be regarded as a summary of the educational conferences he gave to the Brothers during the holidays.

There is a need for men like this

(PROSPECTUS 1824A; 1824-06,1) In the country areas today, religious teaching is completely neglected or replaced by antichristian instruction ... It was to remedy this great evil and to get rid of these impious teachers in the less fortunate country areas, ...that Fr Champagnat founded a group of pious teachers devoted to Mary under the name of "the Little 'Uneducated' Brothers" who go in twos even into the poorest villages into which, because of lack of resources, the Brothers of the Christian Schools do

not go. (*Translator's Note: The phrase "uneducated" simply means not qualified to teach secondary school subjects such as Latin and Greek, just as "Little" means teaching in primary schools, not in the "big schools".*)

(STATUTES 1835: 1835-05,1) Good education is the surest method of forming good subjects for society. Unfortunately, most rural communes are deprived of this advantage, since the lack of municipal resources and the small number of inhabitants do not allow them to confide the education of their children to the Brothers of the Christian Schools.... It was to overcome these inconveniences that Fr Champagnat.... had the idea of setting up in the parish of St Martin en Coailleux, Canton of St Chamond, an association of primary teachers under the name of the Little Brothers of Mary.

Their material needs will be catered for until their death

(PROSPECTUS 1824A: 1824-06,7) We would like them to be bound by the vows customarily in use in religious communities. The sick and infirm members of the community will be cared for at the house expense, until their death.

Due concern will be given to their proper formation

(PS 313, 024-026, Circular Letter to the BROTHERS OF THE INSTITUTE, 10th January 1840) Above all, we will be good catechists, but we will also try to become competent teachers.

Their health will be looked after

(PS 019, Letter to Br BARTHÉLEMY, 3rd January 1831) I am very well aware of all the problems which all the illnesses of your co-workers can create for you. Take good care of yourself, so that you can carry out your difficult duties well.

(PS 287, Letter to Fr BENETON, JOSEPH, PP, 25th October 1839) I do not believe it possible for a Brother who has spent nearly the whole day with the regular classes to start over again with another in the evening. My interest in the health of all of them, plus the prohibition which His Lordship the Administrator gave me under similar circumstances, would not allow me to impose this burden on him.

Their work must be paid for

(PROSPECTUS 1824A: 1824-06,2) The Little Brothers of Mary demand no more than 400 francs for two Brothers, 600 for three, as well as a building suitable for teaching and a modest amount of furniture. Already our pious teachers are to be found in St Sauveur, Bourg-Argental, Vanosc, Tarentaise, Boulieu, St Symphorien le Château, and La Valla.

They devote themselves to education for religious reasons

(PROMISES 1818,1) We, the undersigned, for the greater glory of God and for the honour of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of our Lord Jesus Christ, declare and certify that we consecrate ourselves from this day forward.... freely and most voluntarily, to the pious association of those who consecrate themselves, under the protection of the Blessed Virgin Mary, to the Christian instruction of the children of rural areas.

Remuneration is required for their living expenses

(PS 008 Letter to DEVAUX DE PLEYNE, ALEXANDRE, MAYOR 1827-08) The sum of twelve hundred francs is already little enough to meet the expenses of the upkeep of three brothers in a town. To reduce it still more would be, it seems to me, to snatch away from them, not only the miserable salary attached to the most thankless and difficult job of any citizen, but even their poor and unappetizing food.

They are candidates for ongoing formation

(PS 003 Letter to Fr GARDETTE, PHILIBERT, 1827-05) If it is important, as everyone agrees that it is, for young people to have a good religious formation, it is therefore equally important, not only that those who give them that formation receive a good formation themselves, but also that they should not be left to their own devices once they are sent out.

(1830 RULE 5,3) The Brother Superior should make every effort to form those who are with him in virtue and knowledge.

The mission of a teacher is important for the Church and for society.

(PS 004 LETTER TO Mgr CATTET, SIMON, Vic Gen 1827-05) At the moment we have two thousand children in our schools. That alone, it seems to me, should count for something. Good formation of young people.

Theological dimension of the vocation of the teacher

(PS 014 Letter to Br BARTHÉLEMY 1830-01-21) What a wonderful and sublime occupation you have! You are constantly among the very people with whom Jesus Christ was so delighted to be, since he expressly forbade his disciples to prevent children from coming to see him. And you, dear friend, far from preventing them, are making every effort to lead them to him.

(PS 019 Letter to Br BARTHÉLEMY 1931-01-03) Be brave, dear friend, think how precious your occupation is in the eyes of God. Great saints and great men were happy to have a task which Jesus and Mary value so highly.

(PS 059 Letter to Queen MARIE EMILIE 1835-05) Our Statutes are enclosed, if His Majesty wishes to read them, with a brief introductory note giving the main reasons for which I founded this society of teaching Brothers.

Marcellin's own love for children

(PS 014 Letter to Br BARTHÉLEMY 1830-01-21) How happy I would be if I could be a teacher, and devote myself even more directly to educating these impressionable children!

(PS 102 Letter to Br EUTHYME 1837-03-19) Remember, too, how important your beginners' class is. It is up to you to train in their religion all the children that you teach. It is up to you to open or to close heaven to them. So, my dear friend, aim to edify them, pray for the grace to imprint the love of God strongly in their young hearts.

The Brothers' vocation is both important and demanding

(PS 159 Letter to DE SALVANDY, ANTOINE NICHOLAS, MINISTER FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION 1837-11-27) So, Monseigneur, we beg your Excellency to have these Statutes approved by the royal ordinance which will grant the Marist Brothers the means of exercising their important and demanding task in a legal and more advantageous way.

(PS 210 Circular Letter to ALL THE BROTHERS OF THE SOCIETY 1838-08-21) How happy I am to announce to you the end of, or rather, a bit of respite from your demanding task. Come, all of you, to be reunited and warmed in the sanctuary which witnessed your becoming children of the most loving of Mothers.

Their whole concern must be to make their schools function well

(PS 020 Letter to Brs ANTOINE and GONZAGUE 1831-02-04) My dear friends, do your utmost to run your school well... Never forget how much good you can do.

(PS 031 Letter to Br ALPHONSE 1833-11-03) Put everything you have, my very dear friend, into making it (your new assignment) prosper.

(Widow MOULIN (Marie DUVERNAY) SUMM 19) He used to come to the house every fortnight, however bad the weather, and in spite of the distance (a journey of about an hour and a quarter). At that time he was curate in Lavalla.

In order to act well, we must know how to maintain a psychological balance

(PS 029 Circular Letter to ALL THE BROTHERS OF THE SOCIETY 1833-08-10) Here it is vacation time again, a precious moment from every point of view, I mean for both soul and body.

(STATUTES 1834 A: 1834-01,2.2) Brothers will be given to those towns which ask for them. The payment for each Brother is fixed at four hundred francs. Although the Brothers will not go less than two together, central houses could be set up from which they can go singly to neighbouring towns.

He set up a society of teachers

(PS 034a Letter to King LOUIS PHILIPPE, 1834-01-28) I was ordained to the priesthood in 1816, but even before leaving Lyons Seminary, I thought seriously of founding a society of teachers which I wanted to consecrate to the Mother of God.

(PS 059 Letter to Queen MARIE EMILIE 1835-05) Our Statutes are enclosed, if His Majesty wishes to read them, with a brief introductory note giving the main reasons for which I founded this society of teaching Brothers.

To work for the salvation of children

(PS 324 Letter to PERES, MARIUS FERDINAND, LAYMAN 1837-12-12) We will very shortly be establishing a major house in the little city of Lorgues (Var) and we hope that within a few years it will be like a greenhouse for good teaching Brothers for the surrounding areas.

His concern for the health of his Brothers

(PS 163 Letter to Fr MOINE, FRANÇOIS FLEURY, PP. 1837-12-12) At the same time, it pains me to see them burdened with such a large number of children, in such small rooms; their health is at stake here, and they will not be able to stand it much longer.

(PS 172 Letter to Br FRANÇOIS 1838-02-04) Since Br Cassien's trip to Millery was so successful, send him to spend a week in Valbenoîte and in Neuville. Tell him how pleased I am with his good will. Tell him to take good care of his health on his little trips.

(PS 196 Letter to Br FRANÇOIS 1838-10-40) I hope all your sick, all of whom I love with all my heart, are being well-cared for and well fed.

(PS 287 Letter to Fr BENETON, JOSEPH, PP. 1839-10-25) In order to bring the request you sent me on 18th September into line with our rules and customs, I am sending you a fourth Brother for the adult class. I do not believe it possible for a Brother who has spent the whole day with the regular classes to start over again with another in the evening.

The work affected by illness among the brothers

(PS 167 Letter to GOIRAN, BARTHÉLEMY PHILIPPE, MAYOR 1838-01-04) The answer to your letter has been a bit delayed since, out of our very sincere desire to live up to the confidence of which you give us such

constant proof, we wanted to check again to see if there were not some way to send you brothers at least at Easter, but all our re-arrangements still did not offer us any resources. Just the other day we had to replace several of our Brothers who had fallen ill.

Care for the morality of our teachers

(PS 171 087-104 Letter to Mons. GASTON DE PINS, Apost. Admin. 1838-02-03) Given the fact that so many rural areas find it impossible to support more than two Brothers, are we supposed to hesitate between either leaving them with no way to obtain an education, or giving it to them by means of two Brothers even though this arrangements offers fewer safeguards than for three? Besides, our Brothers are trained to a life of rule and principle, tested by two years of noviciate, constantly supervised by both civil and religious authorities, and protected by our own concern..... This seems to me to offer totally satisfactory guarantees.

Finally, that thing I thought I should point out to the minister is that legal authorization has been granted to several institutes which open establishments with two persons, and sometimes only one; I am referring specifically to the Normal Schools (*Translator's Note: These are what are now called Teacher Training Colleges*), whose students, once they are out of their institutions, are thrown into isolated towns, become their own masters, and only too often show that they are far from offering the government the same guarantees as our Brothers.

Preparation for special apostolates

(PS 176 Letter to Br FRANÇOIS 1838-03-12) I am going to send Br Marie Jubin to the mutual school for the deaf and dumb. I intend to go there myself as soon as I can. It is essential that we do not lose our time.

(PS 334 Letter to RENDU, AMBROISE MARIE MODESTE, President of the Admin Council of the Royal Institute for Deaf-mutes, Paris 1840-04-25) We are involved in choosing the two subjects capable of attaining the Council's goal and our own. We will have them take the examination you spoke to us about and they will not come to you without the required certificates.

Necessity of a minimum standard of living

(PS 178 Letter to Fr MILLERAND, ANDRÉ, PP 1838-03-14) You can understand, Father and esteemed parish priest, that it would be absolutely impossible for us to cut back any further, since we are already down to what is strictly necessary. Is it not necessary that our Brothers, with an occupation such as they have, be given their clothing and board?

(PS 257 Letter to Mgr BAROU, JEAN JOSEPH, Vic Gen 1839-06-27)
Being a Brother of Mary does not diminish the ordinary necessities of life. It hurts us terribly to see the number of our invalids increasing every year.

02 - Education

The pupils

(PS 007 Letter to Mgr BAROU, JEAN JOSEPH, VicGen 1827-05)
We presently have nearly two thousand children in our schools. That, it seems to me, ought to deserve some consideration.

Even though small in number, they are the most important part of a school

(PS 024 Letter to Br BARTHÉLEMY 1831-11-01) Be brave, good friend; it is enough that you and your co-worker are willing to teach many children. Even if you had no students at all, your reward would still be the same. Don't get upset over the small number you now have.

Community life adapted to the apostolate

(PS 043 Letter to Mgr FRAIN, JEAN MARIE VicGen 1834-07)
Although our Brothers do not go less than two together, we can establish a central house from which they can go one by one to the nearby towns.

Dignity of the child

(Br AIDANT, SUMM 193) How often have I heard him speak in his conferences and advice to the Brothers when they came together at the Mother House during the holidays, about very solid and practical points on the respect which they should have for the children.

Everything is centred on the child

(PS 021 Letter to MONDON, JEAN BAPTISTE, MAYOR 1831-05)
I proved to you, by the reduction I made in the fees, that the only goal of all our efforts was the good of the children of your town.

(PS 217 Letter to Fr MOLLIN, ANTOINE, PP 1838-10-31) We are regretfully leaving the establishment we have had in your city where we would really have liked to work under your auspices for the instruction of the children.

We must love the children as Christ loved them

(PS 063 Circular Letter to all the Brothers 1836-01-19) We desire and wish that like Jesus Christ, our divine model, you may have a deep affection for the children.

The decision to support the zeal of the (civil) authorities for the education of the young.

(PS 230 Letter to BERTHOLEY, ANTOINE, Mayor 1838-12-04) We very much want to see our Brothers continue to work under your protection for the Christian education of the children of your town.

There are priorities in the Marist apostolate

(PS 313, 003-010 Circular Letter to all the Brothers 1840- 01-10) True Brothers of Mary, totally dedicated to the salvation of the children entrusted to us, we have no other aim but to inspire our pupils with love and fear of God, a taste for and the practice of our holy religion.

We pray to Mary to bless our pupils

(Rule of 1830, 1,3) At 4.45 or 5.45, they will begin the Office, which they will recite together, calmly and without hurrying, attentively, with devotion, in honour of the Blessed Virgin, to ask her to bless the school and the whole Society.

The children must be protected from physical violence on the part of the teachers

(Rule of 1830, 5,13) The pointer used to point to the letters of the alphabet, should be attached at one end (to the wall by a cord). The same should be done for the one used in the arithmetic lesson.

No sacrifice is too great when there is question of the good of the children

(Br LAURENT, OM 756) When Father Champagnat was curate in Lavalla, he was very upset to see what ignorance there was throughout the parish, particularly among the young. He found youngsters of 10 to 12 years old who did not know why they were on this earth, or even that there was a God. This is why he resolved to found a society of young men to help them.

03 - The School

Good premises, suitable for the purpose

(PS 009 Letter to the Parish Priest of ANNECY 1828) 4° In each place, we ask for a roomy, healthy, and airy house; classrooms large enough for the number of children; a garden in which the Brothers can work for recreation; two thousand francs for the furnishing and one hundred francs per year for its upkeep.

FR CHAMPAGNAT'S IDEAS ON THE EDUCATION OF CHILDREN

(PS 253 Letter to Fr REVOL, AUGUSTIN, PP, 1839-05-12) We are pleased to see that your construction is moving along, and we certainly want to foster your zeal. ...It would be very advantageous for the classes to start in the new house, and that the latter have all the time it needs to dry out before being occupied.

(PS 316 Letter to Fr PAGE, CLAUDE MARIE, PP 1840-01-29) We were very pleased to learn that your administrators were thinking of building a house very soon for the schools of your city.... You would do very well not to rent a house, but to wait until the new building has been put up..... The rented house would certainly need alterations, whose cost could be put to much better use in the Brothers' establishment, and besides, that would be the best way to stop your administrators' rush, and to slow down, or even put an end to, their project.

(STATUTES of 1830 C; 1830-07, 1,3) In each place, we ask for a roomy, healthy, and airy house; classrooms large enough for the number of children; a garden in which the Brothers can work for recreation; two thousand francs for the furnishing and one hundred francs per year for its upkeep.

Properties

(PS 215 Letter to Fr DOUILLET FERREOL, 1838-10-) The taxes, repairs and improvements would drag us into considerable expense. We do not lack buildings; people offer them to us from all sides and we do not have to pay a single penny for them.... Under no condition should you make your will in my favour; I would annul the will unless you also gave us the money to cover the incidental expenses.

Financial problems

(PS 220 Letter to Fr LAFAY, PIERRE MARIE, PP 1838-10-00) Since several of our establishments are in arrears either for the furnishings or for the annual salary, we find ourselves in the necessity of delaying the return of the Brothers who should be teaching in them until the conditions set forth in our prospectus have been fully met.

A playground

(PROSPECTUS 1824 B; 1824-07-19, 11) ...a suitable place for the children's recreation.

Financial requirements

(PROSPECTUS OF 1836 A: 1836-07, 10) Art. 9. Communes may have an establishment only on the condition that they pay to the Mother

House, in advance, a once for all payment of two hundred francs for each Brother they ask for.

(PROSPECTUS OF 1836 A: 1836-07,3) Art 2. Brothers will be sent to those communes which ask for them and which assure 1500 for four brothers, 1200 for three, or 1000 for one; in addition, a large enough house for the number of children foreseen, a garden, and a recreation space. Furniture will be supplied to the following value: 2000 fr. for four Brothers, 1500 for three, 1000 for two; this furniture will be maintained by the Brothers, and will become their property after six years; if it is maintained by the commune, it remains its property.

(PROSPECTUS OF 1836 A: 1836-07, 8) Art. 7: All the furniture and other items in the classrooms, such as benches, tables, desks, notices, reading and arithmetic tables, etc, etc, will be paid for by the commune.

(STATUTES 1825: 1825-01-15, 2) Art. 1. The primary object of the Little Brothers of Mary is primary.... they will give lessons free, and will make arrangements with the commune as to the means of assuring them an honourable and not onerous livelihood.

They may also have paying schools

(PS 037 Letter to Fr CAUMETTE, BARTHÉLEMY, CURATE, 1834)
5° Besides the free school, the Brothers can take charge of another which is not.

But they prefer non-fee-paying schools

(PS 206 Letter to Fr CAUMETTE, BARTHÉLEMY, CURATE 1834)
When the schools are free, they always do better, and good is more easily accomplished.

(PS 224 Letter to Fr CHARBONNIER, CÉSAR, PP 1838-11-01) I am sorry I cannot send you the Brothers you requested for the instruction of the children of your esteemed parish... I have to fill a great number of requests in which I am offered houses which are all ready, where the schools are totally free, and there are no foreseeable difficulties.

(PS 264 Letter to Fr PAGE, CLAUDE MARIE, PP 1839-08-12) We have been offered several completely endowed establishments and we are being urgently requested to occupy them as soon as possible. You can well understand, Father, that such establishments always deserve preference; they are less of a burden and there is more good to be done when the instruction is free.

(PS 265 Letter to Fr THORIN, CLAUDE MARIE, PP 1839-08-16)
We will not hide from you the fact that we prefer to accept establishments which are endowed and those where the school is free.

(PS 335 Letter to Fr PEALA, JEAN FRANÇOIS REGIS, PP 1840-04-00) The number of paying children could drop considerably and thus create a large deficit in your receipts. Besides, experience has taught us that the establishments which are cut back to only those resources either collapse or at best survive with great difficulty.

(PS 336 Letter to Fr DEBELAY, JEAN MARIE MATTHIAS, PP 1840-05-02) You have found the right way to obtain Brothers surely and promptly, that of endowing your school and making it a free one. As good is done much better in establishments with that sort of foundation, we always prefer them over others, and it is our policy to favour them in a special way.

(PS 337 Letter to Fr MEGE, ABEL XAVIER, PP 1840-05-03) I would be entirely ready to give in to your request if your school had funding and was to be free...

Salaries must be guaranteed

(PS 225 Letter to Fr VENET, JOSEPH MARIE, PP, 1838-11-05) Please believe me, Father, that I very sincerely desire to continue the work of Christian education of the children of your fine parish, but first it has to be made possible for us to do so. It will become so, I trust, through the cooperation of your good people.

(PS 287 Letter to Fr BENETON, JOSEPH, PP 1839-10-25) I hope that the town, together with the young people who will attend the evening classes, will be generous enough so that the fourth Brother will not remain there at our expense.

Boarders

(PS 297 Letter to Mgr BERTHIER, ANDRÉ, VicGen 1839-11-19) Perhaps it would be possible in the future, in order to put an end to any inconvenience, to find a suitable place in the Brothers' house for the celebration of the solemn ceremonies and the singing of vespers... You know, Fr Vicar General, that the distance from the parish church and the restricted area reserved there for the children, make it impossible for the Brothers' boarding pupils to go there.

(PS 309 Letter to Fr DORZAT, FRANÇOIS CHARLES, PP 1839-12-27) I will not speak to you about the primary boarding school which you could establish in the Brothers' house, although, in my opinion, this would be an excellent means to ensure its success and to provide your establishment with that just and reasonable security which makes an educational establishment run well.

A school tailored to human needs

(PS 120 Letter to Fr BADIOU, JEAN PIERRE, PP 1837-07-15) A single Brother could not accomplish very much. If there is competition, it is important to lay a good foundation first.

(RULE of 1830, 4, 31) There will be no more than 70 children in the lower class and 50 in the upper.

Mixed economy

(PS 287 Letter to Fr BENETON, JOSEPH, PP 1839-10-25) Our modest salary does not permit us to accept children from nearby towns free of charge. In all our establishments, the monthly fees for this service are received by the Brothers as a supplement to their minimal resources.

(PS 297 Letter to Mgr BERTHIER, ANDRÉ, VicGen 1839-11-19) Since their salary is incomplete in free schools, and the boarders' fees are definitely minimal, we hope that in the interest of the work and for the good of the diocese, His Grandeur will be good enough to continue this favour to us.

(STATUTES 1830 C; 1830-07,1.5) We ask for one thousand six hundred francs annually for four Brothers. We grant that the communes where our Brothers are established may ask for something from the well-off parents, in order to cover some part of the expenses of the establishment.

(STATUTES 1833 A; 1833-07, 12) Art.12 At times the Brothers will be obliged to ask for some contribution from the parents, after the charges have been fixed.

04 - Educational Project

Basic Anthropology

(PS 019 Letter to Br BARTHÉLEMY 1831-01-03) Exert yourself, spare nothing to form their young hearts to virtue; make them realize that without virtue, without piety, without fear of God, they will never be happy; that there is no peace for the wicked. That only God can make them happy, that it was for him alone that they were created. How much good you can do, dear friend!

(PS 079 Circular Letter TO ALL THE BROTHERS 1837-01-01) My wishes and desires at the beginning of this year are very different from those which the world tries to express in lying words: a certain abundance of material goods, honours, pleasures which the heart never enjoys - that is what the world wishes.

(PS 180 Letter to Mme CHAMPAGNAT, MARIE, widow of his older Brother, 1838-03-16) My God, how unhappy the man who does not live as

you wish; how blind is he who becomes attached to some possession which he will leave behind and never see again. Let us follow what St Paul tells us, let us use what God has given us as God wants, without becoming attached to it. Let us not desire to be rich, let us thank God for what he has given us. Alas! what more do the rich have than we do? More regrets about leaving this life!

Pedagogy: presence, solidarity

(Br CAMILLE, SUMM 28) During his seminary days, he gave catechism lessons during the holidays. One Sunday.. with an apple in his hand, he gave a lesson on cosmography. Turning the apple over and over in every direction, he pointed out that there were people living at the antipodes, who did not know the good God.... The apple was finally divided among the children. Later on, one of them, now Bishop Epalle, went off to evangelize these people.

Teaching catechism to mixed groups

(Mlle JULIENNE ÉPALLE, sister of Bishop Epalle, SUMM 72) To please my parents, who were neighbours of the Champagnats, he spent a few hours each day instructing us. I was the oldest, and was eleven years old at the time, and I will always remember the dignity of this young seminarist.

The teacher: a role model

(PS 014 Letter to Br BARTHÉLEMY, 1830-01-21) I know that you have many children in your school; you will consequently have many copies of your virtues, because the children will model themselves on you, and will certainly follow your example.

How to look on the child, bought at the price of the divine blood

(PS 019 Letter to Br BARTHÉLEMY 1831-01-03) What you have in your hands was bought at the price of the Blood of Jesus Christ!

(PS 024 Letter to Br BARTHÉLEMY 1831-11-01) Tell them, "Do you know why God loves you so much? It is because you were purchased with his blood, and you can become great saints, and with very little difficulty if you really want to. Jesus promises to carry you on his shoulders to spare you the effort of walking."

(PS 158 Letter to Br SYLVESTRE, 1837-11-25) The missionaries are very eager to reach their destination. Zeal for the salvation of the people of these islands is one of their most outstanding qualities. Let us pray, my dear Brothers, for their salvation and for that of those entrusted to us. The souls of Frenchmen are just as much the price of the blood of God as those of the pagans.

Human development

(PS 031 Letter to Br ALPHONSE, 1833-11-03) Give all the children who will be entrusted to you a good formation in all the Christian virtues. Pray for them, for with God's help they will be able to overcome all the difficulties they may encounter during life. Obedience above all is the virtue they should practise.

(PS 292 Letter to Fr DUMAS, CLAUDE, PP, 1839-10-31) I am very eager for them to live up to your expectations and those of the benefactors of your establishment, in forming the hearts of your fine young people to virtue even more than to knowledge.

Think positively

(PS 061 Letter to Br THÉOPHILE 1835-07-12) Courage, dear friend, everything will improve with time, and besides, God will definitely be our reward. So why worry? Let us act as if we were sure of total success, and give all the honour to Jesus and Mary.

(PS 180 Letter to Mme CHAMPAGNAT, MARIE, widow of his brother 1838-03-16) We can also truthfully say that our happiness is in our own hands, since there is nothing which, if we use it properly, cannot help us to obtain it: possessions, health, poverty, sickness, sorrows.

(PS 197 Letter to Br FRANÇOIS 1838-06-23) What is really important is that we do nothing on our side except what God wants us to do; I mean, do our best and then let Providence take over. God knows better than we do what suits us and what is good for us. I am sure that a little delay will not hurt us.

Obedience to the plan of God

(PS 180 Letter to Mme CHAMPAGNAT, MARIE, widow of his brother 1838-03-16) I never go up to the altar without thinking of him. Will we be long delayed in following him to the grave? The moment is already determined; you do not know it. I do not know it myself, and it is not important for us to know it. Let us anticipate it by a life entirely for God and as God wills.

(PS 328 Circular Letter to ALL THE BROTHERS 1940-03-14) Let us always be ready, our very dear Brothers, and let us live so that death may never take us by surprise.

Practice of the Sacraments

(RULE of 1830, 1,11) At eight o'clock, the Brothers will take the children to Mass

Inculturation

(RULE of 1830, 1, 12) At a quarter to nine, (they will) begin the prayers prescribed for the diocese.

Bible

(RULE of 1830, 1, 23) At three o'clock on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday, reading as in the morning; on Saturday, they will make the children read the Epistle for the Sunday, and recite the Gospel.

Prayer well carried out

(RULE of 1830, 1, 7) At half past six, they will have the children say their prayers, calmly and without hurry, with attention and respect. This point is essential.

Justice towards the children

(RULE of 1830, 4, 24) Serious faults should not be punished till the beginning of the next lesson.

Social Justice

(RULE of 1830, 5, 1) They will take great care of the furniture in each establishment... those who spoil the objects entrusted to them by the commune or by the mother house, are responsible in justice... since the communes, no less than the mother house, like a good father of a family, hand over only the use of these things to them.

Love of nature

(RULE of 1830, 5, 2) On Thursday, they will go for a short walk. They will bring the children also once or twice a month.

Become good catechists

(RULE of 1837, 2, 38) After the Office, the Brothers will study the catechism until seven o'clock. To get an idea of the importance of this study and to bring oneself to it with the zeal appropriate to a Brother according to the heart of God, they could read the chapter on Conduct regarding the Catechism Lesson, or Boudon's Catechism, section on sacred knowledge.

Quality control

(RULE of 1837, 3, 19) The Br Superior will oversee the way the Brothers teach their class : to see that all is in order, that the Catechism is

well learnt, that the writing is carefully done, and that the exercise books are kept clean. In the early classes, he will question the children about what they are supposed to know; he will make sure they can make the Sign of the Cross well, that they know the little Catechism and their prayers, and that they can read according to the first principles. He will ask to see the account book, will make sure that the furniture is in a good state, and that nothing is spoiled by the negligence of the Brothers.

(RULE of 1837, 10, 4) Every year, at the same time (for the retreat) they will bring a sheet on which each child will have written something, according to its capabilities, at the beginning and at the end of the year.

To become good teachers

(PROSPECTUS of 1824 B: 1824-07-19, 13) In their teaching, they will follow the methods of the Brothers of Christian Instruction.

(RULE of 1837, 5, 32) The Brothers will look on the study and practice of Conduct as one of the surest means of succeeding in their employment.

05 - Concrete Methodology

The active method - learning by doing

(PS 196 Letter to Br François, 1838-06-20) As soon as you receive this, send Br Francis Regis to Lyons to learn printing. I think Mr Guyot will be happy to have someone show him how to do it.

(RULE of 1830 1,16) At half past eleven, they will train the children in how to serve Mass.

(RULE of 1830, 1, 20) At half past one, the Rosary. Care should be taken to make the children recite it in turns, so as to be sure that they know it. The Brothers will be careful to say it with the children, and will take care that the children say in an unhurried way and with devotion.

Help the pupils to think

(RULE of 1837, 4,15) Before the Litany of the Holy Name at morning prayer, and at the examen during evening prayer, each Brother in his own class, will exhort his pupils, according to their capabilities, to reflect on some point for the examination of the day, as it is noted in the Conduct.

Prevention instead of punishment

(RULE of 1837, 5, 21) As long as the children are in the house, they should always be supervised. The Brothers will carry out this obligation themselves, and if they are obliged for some good reason, to be absent, they

will ensure that the children are always accompanied by a supervisor they can trust.

Process of “imprinting” on the child’s mind

(PS 024 Letter to Br BARTHÉLEMY, 1831-11-01 Write in all your children’s copybooks “Mary was conceived without sin.”

(RULE of 1837, 5,25) All the (handwriting) examples will be sentences from the Holy Scriptures, or Christian maxims taken from the holy Fathers or from books of piety.

Motivating the pupils’ work

(RULE of 1837, 5, 26) Normally the children should not be given pictures worth more than 10 centimes. The cost of prizes could be taken from the profits on the sale of paper, pens, and ink.

Care for the body, and its cleanliness

(RULE of 1837, 6,9) Every day, the children should wash themselves, comb their hair, brush their clothes and their shoes, before going to Mass. They will do this immediately after making their beds, when they rise in the morning.

Cleanliness of the rooms

(RULE of 1837, 9, 5) All the rooms will be kept clean and well ventilated, particularly those which are most commonly used. The classrooms should be swept every day, and the rooms ventilated as soon as the pupils leave.

06 - Situations of Poverty

Places which are, geographically, the most neglected

(Br AIDANT, SUMM 83) The Society which Fr Champagnat founded was not unlike that of Christian Doctrine, but it was aimed exclusively at the rural areas.

(Br EUTHYME, SUMM 82) The Brothers’ pupils should be above all those from rural areas, not necessarily the poor.

(PROSPECTUS 1824A, 1824-06, 8) To help the poorer communes, we will give them two Brothers for the winter only. These Brothers will return to the mother house to fill posts there, so as not to be a charge on the school. From these communes, we ask only for 400 francs, a house, and suitable furniture.

(PS 034A Letter to King LOUIS PHILIPPE, 1834-01-28) I was born in the district of St Genest Malifaux, in the department of the Loire. I learned to read only after making tremendous efforts, for lack of capable teachers. From that moment on, I realized the urgent necessity of having an institution which could, with much less expense, do in the rural areas what the Brothers of the Christian Schools do in the cities.

(PS 059 Letter to Queen MARIE AMELIE 1835-05) 1° Ordained a priest in 1816, I was assigned to a town in the district of St Chamond (Loire). What I saw with my own eyes in that new post with reference to the education of young people, reminded me of the difficulties I had experienced myself at their age, for lack of teachers.

(PS 113 Letter to DE SALVANDY, ANTOINE NICOLAS, Minister of Public Instruction 1837-06) The Superior of the association of the Little Brothers of Mary, established at ND de l'Hermitage, in the district of St Chamond (Loire) has the honour to inform Your Excellency that since the aim of this association is to make it easier for rural towns to obtain the benefits of education for their children with little expense, he has reduced the salary of each teaching Brother to minimum.

(PS 159 Letter to DE SALVANDY, ANTOINE NICOLAS, Minister of Public Instruction 1837-11-27) Having been born in the township of St Genest Malifaux (Loire) I became aware, because of the extreme difficulty I encountered in learning to read and write, of the urgent necessity of creating a society which could, with less expense, provide for the rural areas the good education which the Brothers of the Christian Schools provide for the cities.

(PS 171 039-040 Letter to Mgr DE PINS, GASTON, Administrator Ap. 1838-02-03) You know, My Lord, that my only purpose in founding the Little Brothers of Mary was to give the rural townships the benefit of the sort of education which their lack of money makes it impossible for them to obtain through the services of the excellent Brothers of the Christian Schools. Now, to reach this goal, while using the same teaching methods, I had to adopt a financial policy which would eliminate the obstacles which prevent the rural townships from enjoying the quality of education given by the Brothers of the Christian Schools.

(PS 173 Letter to DE SALVANDY, ANTOINE NICOLAS, Minister of Public Instruction 1838-02-14) The sacrifices which we felt we should make in order to provide more conveniently the benefits of education for the large and deserving rural population allow us to get by, but only by dint of economy.

(PS 319 Letter to Cardinal LATOUR D'AUVERGNE L., HUGUES J.C. 1940-02-11) My Lord, our work is totally on behalf of the poor children of the rural areas and the small cities.

(STATUTES of 1825: 1825-01-15,1) 1° A Christian and religious education is the most prompt and efficacious means of providing good subjects for society and fervent Christians for the Church. Unfortunately, this

means is not available in most of our rural communes. Lack of municipal resources and the small number of their inhabitants do not allow them to confide the education of their youth to the Brothers of the Christian Schools... Incited by considerations of this sort, a number of pious persons have established in the Diocese of Lyons, a new Congregation, known as the Congregation of the Little Brothers of Mary.

Orphans

(PROSPECTUS of 1824A: 1824-06,10) The object of our Society is the education of children in general, and particularly of poor orphans.

(PS 027 Letter to Miss FOURNAS, MARIE 1833) I await your reply... We are pleased with the little orphan Luc.

(PS_053 Letter to Br ANTOINE 1835-01-09) We have received another request for three Brothers to open a sort of foster-home in the city of Lyons. We are really concerned, since we don't know where we are going to find subjects for it.

(PS 306 Letter to Fr MENAIDE, MATTHIEU, PP 1839-12-03) We are transcribing textually for you the contracts which were made between us and the administrators of the orphanage; they can be the basis for the agreement which should put us in a position to work together at the good work you are planning.

The poor

(PROMISES 1818,3) Secondly, we commit ourselves to teach the poor children recommended to us by the parish priest, without recompense.

(PS 028 Letter to Bishop DEVIE, ALEXANDRE, 1833-07) I am more and more attracted to this good work, which, on close examination, does not diverge from my aim, since it is primarily concerned with the education of the poor.

(PS 219 Letter to Mr AURRAN, BLAISE, layman 1838-10) In the interview I was privileged to have with you, I spoke of the establishment of our Brothers for the instruction of the poor in the little city of Charlieu (Loire). I am taking the liberty of reminding you of this, with all the more confidence in that it has the double claim on your kindness which your pious generosity itself has prescribed.

(PS 234, Letter to Br DOMINIQUE, 1838-12-28) As for the financial aid we are expecting for the school for the poor in Charlieu, keep praying and ask others to pray.

(PS 262 Letter to GUINAULT, JEAN MARIE, Mayor 1839-07-27) We hope that the Lord will ultimately bless the efforts you are making to provide religious instruction for the poor children who would have been deprived of it because of the indifference of most of their parents.

(STATUTES 1830B 1830-03, 2) Art. 1°. The Brothers of Mary, whose principal aim is the education of the poor, will teach reading, writing, arithmetic, the principles of grammar, and, above all, the practice of religion. Their schools will be free, and they will come to an agreement with the commune as to the means of procuring for them an honourable living without unnecessary burdens being placed on them.

Adults without education

(PS 287 Letter to Fr BENETON, JOSEPH, PP 1839-10-25) In order to bring the request you sent me on September 18th into line with our rules and customs, I am sending you a fourth Brother for the adult class..

The handicapped

(PS 321 Letter to Count BASTARD D'ESTANG, DOMINIQUE F.M. Layman 1840,02,14) The city of St Etienne has definitively decided to carry out the project of an establishment for deaf-mutes on behalf of its large population, and has finally asked us officially for Brothers from our institution capable of directing this work. ... I am writing to ask you, sir, to please request the admission of our of our Brothers to the establishment for deaf-mutes in Paris.

(PS 323 Letter to Fr PRADIER, HENRI 1840-02-22) We were pleased to receive your proposal to send two of our Brothers to direct an establishment for deaf-mutes in your city. It fits perfectly into the plan of our institution, which is totally dedicated to the education of children of whatever condition.....

For some time now we have been entreated and urged to take on establishments of this type. We hope soon to be in a position to further the charitable plans of the persons who are interested in such an excellent work....

How fortunate our Brothers will be, if, having been called to teach this portion of the flock of Jesus Christ, which has so many claims on the solicitude of charitable people, they become more and more worthy of such a holy task.

The young people of the suburbs

(PS 339 Letter to Fr HUGONY, PIERRE BERNARD, PP 1840-05-03) The needs of your parish are extremely great; the description you gave us of them struck and afflicted us very deeply.

Young people in distress

(STATUTES 1828: 1828-01-15, 9) The aim of the Congregation includes the direction of foster-homes or places of refuge for young people taken out of situations of disorder or exposed to moral danger.

(STATUTES 1828 1828-01-15,11) We, Jean Paul Gaston de Pins... Apostolic Administrator of the Diocese of Lyons and Vienne ... Having seen the Statutes of the Little Brothers of Mary ... in view of the advantages for the poor and for the neighbouring parishes for the education of the needy, and in view of the service they will be able to render to the foster-homes and places of refuge for young people taken out of situations of disorder or exposed to moral danger, we hereby express our wish that they receive legal authorization.

07 -Ecclesiality

Co-operation in apostolic projects

(PS 028 Letter to Mgr DEVIE, ALEXANDRE, Bishop 1833-07) I intend then, My Lord, to back up your zeal wholeheartedly, since you have deigned to look in my direction.

(PS 087 Letter to Fr COMBE, JEAN PIERRE, PP, 1837-01-23) ... We are sending you our prospectus. If you are agreeable, we are determined to do all we can to further your zeal for the glory of God and the Christian education of the young people of your city.

(PS 187, Letter to Fr DUTOUR, MICHEL MARIE, PP 1838-05-11) We have always been very interested in the establishment in Amplepuis, and we would be delighted to be able to fulfil your desires immediately by furthering the truly pastoral zeal you demonstrate for the education of your children.

(PS 136, Letter to Fr PEALA, JEAN FRANÇOIS, PP, 1837-09-24) I am determined not to neglect any means of furthering your evident zeal and generosity for the glory of God and the Christian education of your children.

(PS 206, Letter to Fr MERLIN, CLAUDE, PP 1838-08-13) Be assured, Father, that we will do all we can to grant your desire and support your zeal for the instruction of the children of your parish.

(PS 208, Letter to Bishop TROUSSET D'HERICOURT, BENIGNE, 1838-08-20) I am truly upset that I cannot respond to your zeal for the instruction of the people of your diocese by acceding to the esteemed request you have addressed to us.

(PS 220, Letter to Fr LAFAY, PIERRE MARIE, PP) However, our conditions are so moderate and minimal that I could not reduce them, no matter how much I would like to work together with you for the solid instruction of the children of your parish.

(PS 226, Letter to Fr HUGONY, PIERRE BERNARD, PP 1840-05-03) May God open to your zeal sufficient resources for the accomplishment of such an important and necessary work, and also give us the means to further your pious project!

Love and respect for the clergy

(Br AIDANT, SUMM 472) He never ceased to recommend to us to respect and be submissive towards the clergy. In the same vein, it was he who laid down the way the Brothers should behave when a bishop visited the schools.

(PS 148 Letter to Frs ARTRU B. and DUMAS P.A., PP 1837-10-30) Our fundamental principle is to remain closely united to the episcopate.

(RULE OF 1837 5,8) The Brothers will be penetrated with the deepest respect for the priesthood, on account of its sublime character, and they will do all they can to inspire these same sentiments among their pupils.

Leaving the field open to other congregations

(PS 219 Letter to Mr AURRAN, BLAISE, layman, 1838-10-) However, if your zeal finds quicker and surer ways to do good elsewhere, we would not want to stand in the way. The glory of God and the good of souls before all else!

(PS 144, Letter to Fr FANGET, JEAN PIERRE, PP) If you cannot wait any longer, you would do well to find something elsewhere. We will always be glad to learn of the success of those who work for the education of youth.

(PS 252, Letter to Canon PICCOLET, MARIE FRANÇOIS, priest, 1839-05-12) We bless the Lord for making it easy for the inhabitants of the town of Cluses soon to have the means of obtaining zealous teachers in the persons of the Brothers of the Congregation of the Holy Cross. We should be totally indifferent whether God makes use of that society rather than ours, since in all things we should seek his greater glory.

(PS 255 Letter to Canon PICCOLET, MARIE FRANÇOIS, priest 1839-06-08) Please believe that we would be very pleased to go work in the field in which you are so greatly interested, if our means permitted and if the different religious orders already established in Savoy could not suffice to spread religious instruction and shelter those who would wish to consecrate themselves to teaching.

(PS 293, Letter to Mr AURRAN, BLAISE, layman, 1839-11-04) If Providence does not permit us to give you sufficient guarantees, we will be happy to see it in other hands than ours, for the glory of God and the salvation of souls.

Respect for the religious and civil authority and for those who exercise it

(RULE of 1837, 3, 24) Br Visitor will see the Parish Priest and the civil authorities with a view to obtaining the necessary information and to coming to an agreement as to the best means for the successful running of the establishment.

Cultivating a sense of unity

(PS 166 Letter to Fr DREVER, AUGUSTE, PP 1837-12-15) The unanimous agreement of your good parishioners for the religious education of their children gives well-grounded hope for the success of an establishment of this type in your town.

(PS 163 Letter to Fr MOINE, FRANCOIS FLEURY, PP, 1837-12-12) I hope with all my heart that our Brothers will do everything they can to meet your zealous expectations and those of your parishioners for the education of the young people confided to them.

(PS 269 Letter to Fr REVOL, AUGUSTIN, PP 1839-113-09) We will come to see you to visit the school building, and if everything is ready, our Brothers will go to carry out their functions under your auspices, in your attractive parish, in order to further your zeal for the education of youth and to give the virtuous foundress of this establishment the consolations of seeing the effects of her generosity.

(PS 277 Letter to Fr FLANDRIN, FRANCIS, PP 1839-10-07) We can only congratulate you on the excellent dispositions of your parishioners concerning the pious project you have drawn up for the instruction of your beloved young people.

Fusion with another teaching Congregation

(PS 065 Letter to Fr MAZELIER, FRANÇOIS, SUPERIOR 1836-05-08) The requests we receive from your region would be more rapidly and easily answered, and, under your supervision, we could only prosper.... May God's holy will be done in all this. In this union, which seems feasible to me, we want only to procure God's glory and spread good education.

08 - Universalism

Support for every good work which is in harmony with our charism

(PS 093 Letter to Bp DE BRUILLARD PHILIBERT, 1837-02-15) Our plans include all the dioceses of the world. When Their Lordships the respective bishops call us there, we will eagerly rush to help them and to consider ourselves always to be their most humble and very submissive servants.

Support for the government

(PS 034A Letter to King LOUIS PHILIPPE, 1834-01-28) Encouraged by this success and by the zeal shown by Your Majesty and your government for education... we present you with our statutes along with this request.

(PS 034B, Letter to King LOUIS PHILIPPE, 1834-01-28) The many requests I receive from all sides from different mayors (especially since the law of 28th June 1833), the approval of the local authorities, of the Prefect of the Loire and a number of honourable Deputies... show me far too clearly that my establishment is in harmony with the spirit of the government...

(PS 105, Letter to QUENTIN, FRANÇOIS XAVIER, Mayor, 1837-04-11) so that our Brothers... co-operate with you and work ever more effectively for the glory of God and the Christian education of the young people of your town.

(PS 140 Letter to JOVIN DESHAYES, JEAN MARIE, Mayor, 1837-09-26) I read your esteemed letter with very special interest. We are far too tightly pressed to be able to send you Brothers this year, but your request has been taken into consideration, and we will try, as soon as possible, to respond to your zeal for the Christian education of youth.

(PS 186 Letter to DE SALVANDY, ANTOINE NICOLAS, MinPubInstr 1838-04-21) I strongly desire to give this establishment a legal standing which is in perfect harmony with the government.

(PS 201 Letter to GERNTET, MARCELLIN, Mayor, 1838-07-27) Believe me Mr Mayor, I would be very pleased to be able to back up your zeal for the young people of your town.

(PS 324 Letter to PERES, MARIUS FERDINAND, notary, 1840-02-25) Please accept my regrets for not being able to satisfy, as you desired, the wishes of an administration which shows such praiseworthy zeal for the education of youth...

(PS 333 Letter to TACHON, JEAN, Mayor 1840-04-25) I am grateful for the good dispositions and the estimable goodwill of your worthy council towards our Brothers' establishment. It will be a reason for me to do all I can to fulfil your wishes and provide you with a good school.

(STATUTES 1834, 1834-01, 1) Fr Champagnat, seeing the zeal that His Majesty and his Government show in procuring the benefits of education for all classes of society, had the idea of setting up, in the parish of St Martin en Coailleux, Canton of St Chamond, an association of primary teachers under the name of the Little Brothers of Mary.

Public good

(PS 040 Letter to ARDAILLON, JACQUES, Deputy 1834-04-14) We sincerely want to work for the good of our fellow-citizens under the auspices of the King of the French.

(PS 064B Letter to ARQUILLIERE, CHARLES, Layman, 1836-04-13) We are extremely flattered by the honour which the prefect and the supervisors of the Normal School have done us in calling us to contribute to the good of education in our department. We will be very interested in

accepting, delighted to have this occasion to show our dedication to the prefect and to the good of our fellow-citizens.

(PS 097 Letter to Fr PAGE, CLAUDE MARIE, PP 1837-03-01) We rejoice with you at the decision of your town Council and the sacrifices it is determined to make for the Christian education of the young people of your city. May it all be for the greater glory of God and the strengthening of our holy religion!

(PS 173 Letter to DE SALVANDY, ANTOINE NICOLAS, MinPubInstr 1838-02-14) This year, a number of the Little Brothers of Mary are eligible for conscription. The impossibility of getting them exempted before we are legally authorized makes me fear that these will be just so many subjects snatched away from the very important work of public instruction.

(PS 299 Letter to Fr AURRAN BLAISE, 1839-11-20) We bless Divine Providence for the perseverance with which it has gifted you in your pious projects. Since you still want to place your work in the hands of the Brothers of Mary, we will be pleased to work with you for the religious instruction of your beloved Provençals.

Maintain good relations between Church and State

(PS 310 Letter to Fr GIRE, PP, 1840-01-02) We rejoice in the good dispositions of your town council. We strongly hope that it will follow up effectively on the project of a religious and Christian school for the dear children among your large population.

(PS 327 Letter to Fr VACHER, XAVIER, PP, 1840-03-03) You inform us of the good dispositions of your town council and its plan to entrust to our Brothers the Christian and religious education of the children of your attractive town.

(RULE of 1837, 3, 24) Br Visitor will see the Parish Priest and the civil authorities with a view to obtaining the necessary information and to coming to an agreement as to the best means for the successful running of the establishment.

No championing of our own system to the exclusion of others

(PS 312 Letter to BARTHÉLEMY, HYACINTHE CLAUDE, Prefect, 1840-01-04) Being very desirous of working under the protection and in line with the views of the government for the proper instruction of children, we are prepared to take whatever measures it wishes to point out to us to bring ourselves in harmony with it, even if it means adopting the statutes of an already established society.

(STATUTES of 1834 A: 1834-01, 2.5) The principal House and the establishments dependent on it will be open to inspection by those persons nominated for the supervision of Public Instruction.

09 - Marist Mission

Religious Education

(Br AIDANT SUMM 83) Fr Champagnat founded the Congregation of the Little Brothers of Mary. The idea came to him when he saw a dying child whose ignorance of religion was astonishing, and he said to himself that there must be others in the same condition. From then on, he wanted these poor ignorant children to be taught by Brothers whose only care it would be.

Looking after the young

(PROSPECTUS 1824A: 1824-06, 10) The object of our Establishment is the instruction of children in general and in particular of poor orphans. As soon as we have finished building the house known as the Hermitage and our means allow us to make use of a good water source to supply the needs of the work, we will take into our care the children of the orphanages and give them a good formation in giving them a good Christian education. Those among them who demonstrate dispositions for virtue and for knowledge will be employed in the house..

Instructing the young

(PROMISES 1818,1) We, the undersigned, for the greater glory of God and the honour of the august Mary, Mother of our Lord Jesus Christ, certify and state that, from this day forward, we consecrate ourselves freely and voluntarily, to the pious association of those who devote themselves under the protection of the blessed Virgin Mary, to the Christian education of the children of the rural areas.

Primary Schooling

(PS 324 Letter to PERES, MARIUS FERDINAND, Notary, 1840-02-25) The instruction given by our Brothers includes everything called for by the law under the heading of primary instruction. The conditions under which we set up establishments are almost the same as those of the Brothers of the Christian Schools, except that we allow the towns to collect a monthly fee from the well-off parents to cover part of the expenses of the establishment.

(STATUTES 1825: 1825-01-15,2) 1st Art. The object of the Little Brothers of Mary is primary education. They teach reading, writing, arithmetic, the principles of French grammar, Church singing, sacred history. In their teaching they follow the methods of the Brothers of the Christian Schools. They do not charge school fees, and they come to an agreement with the communes as to giving them sufficient for an honourable living, without undue hardship.

Education

(PS 066 Letter to Fr MAZELIER, FRANÇOIS, Superior, 1836-07-07) We have the same aim, which is the Christian education of children.

(PS 130 Letter to GONON, JACQUES, Layman, 1837-08-09) Your plan for procuring the glory of God by establishing a small community in the château which your elder brother inherited, is certainly praiseworthy. God will certainly not let it go unrewarded. The object of this establishment is somewhat outside the scope of our society, which is the Christian education of youth.

10 - Books

(PS 172 Letter to Br FRANÇOIS 1838-02-04) Last week I saw the Brothers of the Christian Schools, and I asked them to let us sell their textbooks at the same price at which they sell them themselves in their own establishments.

(PS 175, Letter to Br FRANÇOIS 1838-03-07) I have finally bought a lithograph machine, with which Br Jubin is now working.

(PS 238 Circular Letter to ALL THE BROTHERS, 1839-01-13) To make it easier for you to distribute good books, we have purchased a great number of them, below the usual price.

11 - Boarding Schools

(PS 216 Letter to Fr METTON, GEORGES, PP 1838-10-31) We grant Sury what we grant all our establishments: a Brother who is needed because of a boarding school or day school which has grown up independent of the one which the town has obtained from our house, is provided by the society without the town's being obliged to contribute to his support.

12 - Care to avoid ill-thought-out undertakings

(PS Letter to Fr VENET, JOSEPH MARIE, PP 1838-11-05) I have expressly forbidden our Brothers to take responsibility on weekdays for supervising children who do not attend our classes. I believe this supervision is useless in the case of the children who do not recognize authority, and dangerous for the Brothers, who get nothing out of it but insults and sometimes even rough treatment.

(PS 239, Letter to Bp DEVIE, ALEXANDRE, 1839-01-20) The city of Nantua has several teachers who no doubt enjoy the consideration and esteem of a certain number of its inhabitants.... To maintain the competition, we would need subjects we do not have at present...

(PS 305 Letter to Bp DEVIE, ALEXANDRE, 1839-12-03) In conformity with the wish Your Grandeur expressed, whether through Fr Superior or in my various contacts with you, I increased the personnel of St Didier so that the Br Director could devote himself more fully to the care of the novices. He wrote me that he had received several and I was very pleased to hear it, but I very much fear that the noviciate will not be able to get solidly established amid the routine of the classes and the boarding school.

(PS 117, Letter to DE POMEY, JEAN MARIE, Mayor 1837-07-04) Your esteemed letter reminded me of the steps which Fr Terraillon had taken when he was parish priest of Amplepuis, towards an establishment of not just two Brothers, or even three, since the town of Amplepuis must have four hundred children, or at least three hundred who are regularly in school. Two Brothers would therefore be entirely insufficient; they would inevitably collapse. I think that the new parish priest will agree with my observation as soon as he sees the situation.

13 - Level of Education

Primary

(PS 228 Letter to BAUDE, JEAN JACQUES, Deputy, 1838-11-24) There are no secondary school teachers in our society. We do not take charge of secondary schools or boarding schools. We do not teach Latin at all.

(STATUTES 1825: 1825-01-15,2) 1st Art. The object of the Little Brothers of Mary is primary education. They teach reading, writing, arithmetic, the principles of French grammar, Church singing, sacred history.

(STATUTES 1833 b: 1833,1) Art. 1. The aim of the Little Brothers of Mary is primary education at elementary and upper levels. They teach catechism, reading, writing, arithmetic, the legal weights and measures system, the elements of the French language, singing, sacred history; in addition, they teach the elements of geometry, line drawing, surveying and measuring land, and the geography and history of France.

Special education

(RULE of 1837,6,16) For adult evening classes, there must a Brother for that purpose, and his payment should be assured either by the commune or by monthly fees from the pupils.

(RULE of 1837,6,18) The adult class must finish not later than 8 p.m.

(RULE of 1837,6,19) In places where there are eight pupils each paying 8 francs per month, they will teach geometry, line drawing, and bookkeeping. Where this is done, the Mother House will supply an extra Brother. It is expected that such a class should be opened in the main town of each district.

14 - Missions

(PS 248 Letter to Br ANACLET, 1839-03-23) Pray for the prosperity of the mission in Polynesia and unite yourself with those who pray for the same intention.

15 - "Thou shalt not..." - Prohibitions

(STATUTES 1830 C:1830-07,10) Art. 9: The Marist Brothers are not allowed to teach Latin, nor to give private lessons either in the house or outside the school, for any reason whatever.

(STATUTES 1833 A: 1833-07,11) Art 11. No Brother shall ever be sent to live on his own; however, if there is another house not far away, a Brother may be sent from there to a school.

(STATUTES 1833 B; 1833,16) Art.16. The Brothers of Mary will never give Latin lessons, nor will they give lessons in a pupil's home for any reason whatsoever.

(STATUTES 1836 A: 1836-07,20) Art. 18. The Marist Brothers will teach neither Latin nor Greek. etc.

(RULE of 1830, 1,13) They will take care to teach the Catechism as it is written, and will not go into long explanations; that is the work of the Parish Priests.

(RULE of 1837, 5,10) The Brothers will not take part in any way in the business of civil or ecclesiastical administration, no matter for what reason. They will be careful never to criticize the conduct of the authorities, always bearing in mind that they are called only for the education and edification of the young. In the same spirit, they will abstain from reading newspapers and other types of public press.

(RULE of 1837, 5,12) The Brothers will not fulfil any function in the church, such as sub-deacon or similar, even if asked by the Parish Priest, unless they have the permission of their Superior. However, in the absence of an altar server, they may serve or sing at the Mass, being careful always not to leave the pupils unless a second Brother can control them.

(RULE of 1837, 5,13) During class time, no one is to be admitted to the school except the clergy and the civil authorities.

(RULE of 1837, 6,22) They will not make the children learn anything (poem?, song?) without permission of the Superior.

(RULE of 1837, 6,23) They will not make use of any musical instrument.

(RULE of 1837, 6,24) The Brothers will not give lessons in the pupils' homes.

(RULE of 1837, 9,11) Lay people should not be admitted to the interior of the house, except in special cases.

(RULE of 1837, 9,9) Women will never be admitted to the interior of the house, unless they are accompanied by the Parish Priest or the Mayor. This Rule is to be strictly observed.

16 - Overwhelmed by the demand for teachers

(PS 036 Letter to Br DOMINIQUE 1834-04-03) We are still receiving many novices and still receiving new requests.

(PS 123 Letter to Fr CROZIER, JEAN BAPTISTE, PP, 1837-07-03) It is very true that we receive requests from all over. Each one asserts the reasons why he should receive preference, dictated by his ardent zeal for the Christian education of youth. We would like to be able to answer them all, but the field is too vast for the number of workers.

(PS 229 Letter to Fr FAURE, PIERRE, PP 1838-12-04) The requests sent to us from all sides show that the field is vast and the harvest abundant, but the number of workers is too small. It hurts us very much to find ourselves unable at present to assist your zeal and thus show His Lordship your esteemed Bishop how much we desire to work under his protection in his diocese.

(PS 263, Letter to DE VIRIEU, STEPHANIE, Marchioness 1839-08-09) It would be a very special pleasure for us to send Brothers to begin the excellent work in which you are so strongly interested, but the establishments we are able to make this year have already been promised.

(PS 327 Letter to Fr. VACHER, XAVIER, PP, 1840-03-03) We would very much like to see our Brothers carry out their important and difficult tasks under the protection of your fatherly goodness, ...but it would be impossible to us, at present, to acquiesce to your request, because our available Brothers have all been assigned, and we have promises to keep for several years to come.

(PS 284 Letter to Fr DESCHAL, JULIEN, PP, 1839-10-21) The great number of requests which we have to fill before yours, will use up the number of subjects we receive for the next several years.

17 - The Parents

Importance of dialogue with the parents of the pupils.

(RULE of 1830, 4, 40) The Brother Headmaster should defer to parents and others who come to the house.

(RULE of 1837, 5, 16) It happens that there are times when it is the right thing to see the parents of certain children so as to act in cooperation with them. We must always let the parents see that their children offer great hopes for the future, and with a little trouble and a lot of care, if we act together, we can form them properly.

(RULE of 1837, 6, 14) Every three months the Brother in charge will give the boarders' parents a report on the conduct, the progress, and the expenses of those who board in the house.

18 - Pedagogical elements in the 1837 Rule

- Memorising the text of the Catechism and of extracts from the Gospels.
- Brief explanations, avoiding long-windedness.
- Postponing of punishment; a fixed time each day for punishments. No punishment to be based on pain.
- Importance of discipline that is firm, but is always paternal.
- Cleanliness in the writing books.
- Careful and well-formed writing. Models to be taken from spiritual writings.
- The sense of God; well-said prayers. Recalling the presence of God by the prayer of the hour.
- Learning to form a relationship with Jesus in the Holy Eucharist.
- The value of the teacher's example.
- A short daily meditation and examination of conscience.
- Respect and love for the civil and religious authorities.
- Dialogue with the parents of the pupils.
- An optimistic and positive attitude to the faults of the children and the teenagers.
- Vigilance which is continual but calm. The Brother should be aware of everything going on.
- Singing lesson, twice a week.
- Respect the person of the child. Avoid familiarity with him. No favouritism.
- Walks with the pupils.

- Competitions in class.
- Rooms to be kept clean and well ventilated.
- The pupils are the priority during school time. Meetings with the parents should be outside of school hours.
- Attention to orphans and to young people in moral difficulty.

Some conclusions drawn from the above study

1. Champagnat's wish was to found a congregation of Brothers (of religious) dedicated to the vocation of education. They were to be teachers; both the Church and society needed them. The Brothers are vowed to education for religious reasons. They make a promise which gives a theological dimension to the teaching vocation. The apostolate of the Brothers is important and, at the same time, not easy; they work for the salvation of the children. There are priorities in the Marist apostolate: to become good teachers, but above all, to be good teachers of religion. Champagnat brings out the value of the good example of the teacher - he is to be a rôle model for his charges.

2. But Champagnat has to form them to be good teachers. For some to whom he assigns a special task, he has to look to a special formation. He is attentive to the need for ongoing formation. This is why he brings them together at the Hermitage each year. They are to become good teachers, above all of religion.

3. He is careful about the Brothers' health. In their apostolate, they must remember that they are only human, and because of the type of work they do, they are an easy prey to illness. This is why he insists on keeping a psychophysical balance in their work. They must have a minimum reasonable standard of living. They must also make provision for times of illness and old age.

4. Champagnat wishes to look after youth through education: religious instruction, primary education, special education, the mission *ad gentes*. His object is the education of those children who are least favoured because of geographical considerations; but he includes also orphans, the poor, the handicapped, the youngsters of the suburbs, young people in distress, and poorly educated adults.

5. Everything is centred on the child. Attention must be paid always to the dignity of the child, redeemed by the Divine Blood. No sacrifice is too

great when it is for the benefit of the child. They must be loved in the way that Christ loved them. Marcellin himself had a great love of children. The most important thing in the school is the pupils. The Brothers must learn to enter into a relationship with the pupils without falling into too natural an attraction for them. Respect for the person of the child, avoiding all familiarity and favouritism. The only criterion is the good running of the school. The community life should be adapted to the mission. The child should be protected from physical and moral violence on the part of the teacher.

6. He wants to have a sense of ecclesial union, by sowing the seeds of love and respect for the clergy and for those in authority, by supporting apostolic projects whether set up by the parish or by the civil government. He co-operates for the public good, and contributes to a good understanding and co-operation between Church and State. He leaves the field open to other Congregations, and does not want any institutional rivalry on the part of the Little Brothers of Mary.

7. For his schools, he wants properly set-up premises, with well ventilated classrooms and a yard for the children's playground. He prefers not be the proprietor of the school; he is quite clear about the financial demands, and will always have difficulties with mayors and parish priests on this subject. He prefers the school to be non-paying, but will accept paying schools also; however, the Brothers' living must be assured. He proposes a mixed economy in response to the needs of the young. He is realistic in accepting boarders, because their contributions go directly to the Brothers.

8. Marcellin shows a very healthy basic anthropology, a very solid biblical spirituality, and a very keen sense of justice. A filial love for nature as a gift of God. He proposes a very practical pedagogy - presence, concrete as opposed to abstract, solidarity. He is conscious of human development. He must have a positive attitude to life. Obedience to the plan of God, who wants us to be happy. He believes in "inculturation". To be just towards the child, we must continually check the quality of his apprenticeship, keep in frequent touch with the parents to encourage him to go forward, have an optimistic and positive attitude towards the faults of the young people. Above all, he will pray to Mary to bless the Brothers and to help them.

9. The method he employs is active rather than theoretical: to learn by doing. Memorizing the text of the catechism, short explanations, not long-winded sermons. The sense of God: recall of the presence of God by using the prayer of the hour. Learn to enter into a relationship with Jesus through the Blessed Eucharist. Walks with the children to induce a love of nature and

also physical development. Help the child to reflect. Prevention of faults by continual but not harsh vigilance instead of punishment. In any case, a fixed time during the day for giving punishment. No corporal punishment based on physical pain. Importance of firm but paternal discipline. Inducing an attitude of mind, by short daily meditation and examination of conscience, memorizing extracts from the Gospels, pious sentiments as writing models. Make the children work by giving them proper motivation. Attention to the body and to cleanliness. Methodical practice of the sacraments. Prayers well said. Well maintained premises. Give the children a love for reading. Well kept exercise books. Carefully done writing. Rooms kept clean and well ventilated. Making the children work by emulation :- class competitions.

THE LITTLE BROTHERS OF MARY AND THE BROTHERS OF THE CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS¹

by Brother Danilo Farneda Calgaro

1.- INTRODUCTION : “WE NEED BROTHERS”!

From the return to power of King Louis XVIII, French ecclesiastical thinking concentrated on the search for new formats in order to rechristianise society. School was considered an essential means but it was necessary to reform it in order to turn it into an effective instrument in the making of post-revolutionary society.

“(…) Primary schools are the ones that multiplied most and were the most important; these are the ones which shape the public morals and opinions of the people. It is important that the doctrine which is professed is in harmony with religious teaching because religion is by its nature public education for the whole of one's life; it is the only guarantee the State can have of the morality and fidelity of the people taken as a whole (…)”²

Not only for the Church but for the majority of members of the French government under the Restoration, the schools, and especially the schools, were capable of “putting things back into their place”, that is to say, making the people more docile towards those in government and towards pursuing good customs.

The interests of the Church and of those in government met in their turn the approval of a society traumatised by the consequences of revolutionary dechristianisation. In this way, even in the midst of reigning ideological pluralism, the majorities did not hesitate to entrust the education of new generations to the Church.³

For such a mission a special type of teacher was required: “Education is

¹ The present article has as its origin the research which accompanied the elaboration of my final doctoral thesis. For that reason, if it clearly presents a concerted view as regards the relationships between both congregations, it focuses attention on the specifically educational aspects.

² Report presented to Napoleon I in 1814. Cf. ZIND P., *Blessed Marcellin Champagnat, his scholastic work in its historical context*. Session Marcellin Champagnat in Mendes, Brazil, January 1988, Ed. Generalate, Rome, 1991, p. 149.

³ Cf. LAUNAY M., *L'Église et l'école en France XIX et XX siècles*. Ed. Desclée, Paris.

a spiritual paternity the duties of which are so heavy, the task so extensive that to cope with it makes it necessary to be free of any other responsibility.”⁴

While consulting the departmental archives in Saint-Etienne Loire, I went through some contract documents in which are to be found a list of details which define the profile of a teacher called for by society. The teacher can be neither a curate nor a confessor “so that there will be no interruption in teaching, a task which demands a man’s whole attention”.

How can this demand be met when, amongst other things, paltry salaries demanded from the teacher the same standard practices as those in parallel professions? The teachers of those times were secretaries of mayors, sacristans, those charged with the maintenance of the town clock... To co-ordinate total dedication to education with so many parallel tasks in no way seemed to be very simple.

On the other hand it was not just a question of relying on availability as regards time but that ethical requirements in their turn took first place. Dupanloup asks the question: What is it that parents of families, the State, the Church have to expect from teachers? And he gives his answer: “(...) virtue, firmness, knowledge, intelligence, devotedness.”⁵

Taking into account these determining factors, what better than religious congregations to take charge of schooling on behalf of the people?⁶

Throughout the whole of France the desire that education should be returned into the hands of the Church grew stronger. The State would give a clear signal with regard to the authorisation of the return of the Brothers of the Christian Schools to the country.⁷ The General Council of the Rhone stated in 1814: “Religious congregations and only religious congregations offer us individuals who consolidate all their advantages without any of their disadvantages: entirely given over to teaching free from distractions and full of perseverance in teaching. Experience has disillusioned us about everything that was proposed to replace these religious congregations.”⁸

⁴ Cf. DUPANLOUP Mgr., *De l'Éducation. De l'autorité et du respect dans l'Éducation*, Ed. Charles Douniol, Paris 1872, p. 313

⁵ Cf. DUPANLOUP Mgr., *De l'Éducation*, p. 315

⁶ In Dupanloup’s thinking, Napoleon himself would have liked to put all education into the hands of religious congregations. As this was impossible, given the lack of them, Napoleon instituted a “civilian congregation” of teachers placed in the service of the University. In this train of thought it was obvious that Dupanloup wished to unite the teaching bodies of the country: lay teachers and religious. Cf. DUPANLOUP Mgr. *De l'Éducation*, p. 448.

⁷ The first school of the Brothers of the Christian Schools was about to open again in Lyons on the 3rd of May 1802. (During the revolutionary period they had been closed down) Cf. RIGAUT G., *Histoire générale de l'Institut des Frères des Écoles Chrétiennes*, vol. III, Ed. Plon, Paris 1938, pp. 498-557.

⁸ Cf. Statement of the General Council of Rhône (1814), in ZIND P., *Blessed M. Champagnat*, p. 150.

BROTHERS OF MARY AND BROTHERS OF THE CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

It was basically from these circumstances which have been briefly mentioned that teaching congregations received a broad social consensus. The problem nevertheless was due to the lack of religious teachers.

“Napoleon I had re-established the Brothers of the Christian Schools by re-organising the University in 1808 but these good Brothers, decimated by the Revolution, were far from being enough to meet the urgent requests and wishes of the population expressed everywhere.⁹

As regards the number of male teachers, only two Congregations of Brothers existed and at the beginning of the Restoration. The Brothers of the Christian Schools had 310 Brothers centred in Lyons¹⁰ the Brothers of Faubourg St. Antoine or the Brothers of Tabourins were no more than ten.¹¹

The Brothers of the Christian Schools gave their pupils free education and in virtue of their vows, they could not accept any payment from the parents. Free education for pupils and parents but nevertheless this was not the case for the municipalities.

“A community of Brothers cannot be made up of less than three members: two for teaching, the third is a lay Brother whom the Congregation always puts in a position in which he is able to replace one of his Brothers if he falls ill.”¹²

Entrusting a school to the care of the Brothers of the Christian Schools implied payment : 600 francs for the Novitiate of each Brother, 1,200 francs for their clothing, the furnishing of the school and living quarters for the Brothers. The annual salary of each Brother went up to 600 francs. The total sum meant that the municipality had to cover the expenses: first year 7,200 francs and in the ensuing years 1,800 francs.

Faced with such costs only the large cities could afford to pay three teachers with salaries comparatively among the highest in its category.¹³

Faced with the problem of scarcity of personnel in the Brothers of the Christian Schools and financial difficulties due to their Rules and above all for

⁸ Cf. BILON H. (Brother Avit), *Annales de l'Institut. La rude montée*, vol. I, Ed. Marist Brothers, Rome 1993, p. 21.

¹⁰ Cf. ANF, F 17, 12462. (ANF: Archives Nationales de la France. Paris.)

¹¹ Cf. ZIND P. *Les nouvelles congrégations de Frères Enseignants en France de 1800 à 1830*, Doctoral Thesis, Faculty of Letters and Human Sciences of Lyons, Ed. Marist Brothers, Saint-Genis Laval 1969, pp. 57 -60.

¹² Cf. ANF, F 17, 12453

¹³ Teachers' salaries at the beginning of the 19th century fluctuated between 200 and 400 francs annually. A worker on the other hand earned between 360 and 1,000 francs annually. You have to keep in mind that the Brothers of the Christian Schools had as their only means of support the contribution of the municipality. Other teachers received 200 francs but they were authorised to collect a monthly payment from well-to-do families. Anyway they had to rely on a very great number of pupils in order to equalise the annual income of the Brothers of the Christian Schools.

the numerous and impoverished rural municipalities, it was necessary to find a new solution.

If the Church wanted to remain faithful to its mission of teaching, christianising and responding to the calls of civil society it would have to search for a new moral and economic situation: to train teachers for the primary schools, teachers who were competent, upright, believers and not too costly.¹⁴

The “Little Brothers”¹⁵ were the perfect solution. Articles 36, 37 and 38 of the Royal Decree of 29 February, 1816 granted them the necessary legal framework under the designation of “religious or charitable Association”.¹⁶

Throughout the whole of France there would rise up various congregations of “Little Brothers” disposed to cover social requirements and to replace the Brothers of the Christian Schools, mainly in the rural context where, as we have seen, the requirements of their Rules made their presence impossible.¹⁷

2.- A VERY SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP.

In the letter addressed to Monsignor de Pins, Apostolic Administrator of Lyons, Father Marcellin Champagnat explained in this way the fundamental intention which had led him to found a teaching Congregation.

“You know, Monsignor, that the only purpose I had in mind in founding the Little Brothers of Mary was to obtain for rural communes the benefit of education which the lack of sufficient resources makes it impossible to achieve by means of the excellent Brothers of the Christian Schools.”¹⁸

¹⁴ The financial aspect is not indifferent to the type of teacher that both State and Church could finance in a context of serious inflation and of heavy losses of ecclesiastical resources with the abolition of the tithes. Cf. PROST A., *Histoire de l'enseignement*, pp. 90 - 94.

¹⁵ The title of “Small Brothers” or “Little Brothers” was used to distinguish this type of Congregation from that of the Brothers of the Christian Schools called “Big Brothers” (Grands Frères).

¹⁶ Art. 36. “Every religious and charitable association, such as that of the Christian Schools, will be allowed to provide, according to agreed conditions, teachers for the municipalities that ask for some, provided that this association is authorised, and that the rules and methods it uses have been approved by our commission for public education.” Cf. MINISTÈRE DE L'INSTRUCTION PUBLIQUE, *Ordonnances du Roi concernant l'instruction primaire*, Ed. The Royal Printing Press, Paris 1828, p. 21.

¹⁷ A specific study as regards the teaching congregations which arose in France between 1800 and 1830 is to be found in : ZIND P. *Les nouvelles congrégations de Frères Enseignants en France de 1800*, Doctoral Thesis presented to the Faculty of Letters and Human Sciences of Lyons, Ed. Marist Brothers, Saint-Genis-Laval 1969.

¹⁸ Cf. OM I, p. 341. A letter dated 3rd February 1838 and written by the Founder in Paris. (OM I: Origines Maristes Vol. 1).

Not only for Champagnat but for all the founders of teaching Congregations, the Brothers of the Christian Schools constituted a constant point of reference, above all in teaching and school management.”¹⁹

When he was a seminarian, Champagnat had lived nearby when the Brothers of the Christian Schools returned to the Lyons region.²⁰ When he thought of the necessity of founding a Congregation of Brothers dedicated to teaching, he discovered in the Brothers founded by de la Salle a point of departure, a motive of inspiration.

Diverse circumstances resulted in this relationship being particularly close during the beginnings of the Institute. As much from the point of view of those who entered the Novitiate of Lavalla as from their formation, important contacts were made between the two Congregations.²¹ In what was specifically teaching matters it is important to remember that Champagnat contracted a former de la Salle Brother to train the first Brothers in the simultaneous method.²²

Apart from these facts which can be considered circumstantial, it can be proved that there existed in the mind of the Founders of the Little Brothers of Mary a clear plan tending to follow the path in education made by the Brothers of the Christian Schools.

3.- THE PRINCIPLE OF COMPLEMENTARITY.

In 1838, within 20 years of founding the Institute of the Little Brothers of Mary, Champagnat wrote to Georges Menton, parish priest of Sury-le-

¹⁹ GONTARD M., *Les écoles primaires de la France bourgeoise (1833-1875)*, Ed. INRDP, Toulouse 1976, p. 385.

²⁰ The first school re-opened by the de la Salle Brothers after the Revolution was actually in Lyons Cf. ANF, F 17, 12462.

²¹ Jean Marie Audras, the first Little Brother of Mary who was to persevere in his vocation, wanted to be a Brother of the Christian Schools and had already made his first contacts with the de la Salle Brothers who were looking after the school in Saint-Chamond. His meeting with Champagnat would make him change his plans.

In 1822 the young Institute suffered the loss of aspirants to the extent that it feared for its future. Eight young men, thinking that they were going to a Novitiate of the Brothers of the Christian Schools, arrived unexpectedly in the Lavalla Novitiate. They were the outcome of a deceitful move planned by an ex-aspirant of the de la Salle Brothers who was trying in this way to obtain a place in the new congregation. Cf. PLC II, pp 301-302; FURET J.B., *Vie*, Ed. Generalate, Rome 1989, pp. 62-63.

²² “Before entrusting the school of Lavalla to his Brothers, the revered Father gave them an ex-Brother of the Christian Schools to train them. This man was sufficiently instructed and was well acquainted with the simultaneous method which the Founder wanted to adopt for his Congregation.” AAM, p. 28. (AAM: Abrégé des Annales) of Bro. Avit. Manuscripts not printed.)

Comptal (Loire): "This is the opinion of my confreres and our old Brothers whom I have consulted again. It is also the rule of the excellent Brothers of the Christian Schools who should set us an invariable standard in everything."²³

The statement does not seem to be exaggerated if facts are compared. Not only specifically pedagogical courses but diverse aspects of the life of new religious teachers had as their point of reference the experience of their "Big Brothers".

In this way the influence of the Brothers of the Christian Schools penetrated the whole organisation of Marist religious life. Pedro Herreros in his study of the sources of the first Rules of the Little Brothers of Mary,²⁴ analyses a series of documents beginning with those that confirm the narrow literary parallelism between the Rules and Constitutions of the Little Brothers of Mary and those of the de la Salle Brothers.²⁵

The same Herreros affirms that the Founder and the first Brothers went on developing a "progressive selection and adaptation" of the guidelines which directed their way of life and the mission of the Brothers of the Christian Schools according to the circumstances in which they were to function.²⁶

It was not surprising that it would come about this way. As we referred to this in the introduction, the same multiplication of teaching congregations had been initially conceived as complementary to the activities that the Brothers of the Christian Schools were developing in the cities.²⁷

Marcellin Champagnat, shortly before he died, writing to the Cardinal of Latour d'Auvergne, Monsignor Hugues Robert Jean Charles, bishop of Arras (Somme), clearly expressed the motives which gave rise to the founding of the Little Brothers of Mary.

"Monsignor, our work is totally in the interest of the poor children in the countryside and in the small towns. With the lowest costs possible, we are trying to provide for them Christian and religious instruction which the Brothers of the Christian Schools provide so successfully for the poor children of the large towns."²⁸

This was not a casual thought but one that turned up repeatedly in

²³ LPC I, p. 314. Letter written in November 1837. (LPC: Edition of the letters of the Founder, first volume.)

²⁴ Cf. CHAMPAGNAT M., *Rules of the Little Brothers of Mary*, Ed. Guyot, Lyons 1837.

²⁵ Cf. HERREROS, P. *La Regla del Fundador: sus fuentes y evolución. Edición crítica*, Ed. photocopied, Rome 1984, pp. 124-169.

²⁶ Cf. HERREROS, P., *The Rules*, p. 124.

²⁷ Cf. ANF, F17, 12453. Report of the Superior General of the Brothers of the Christian Schools dated 18 November 1818.

²⁸ Cf. LPC I, p. 584. Letter dated 11th February 1840 addressed to Cardinal de Latour d'Auvergne, Mgr. Hugues Robert Jean Charles, Bishop of Arras (Somme), asking for his intervention in order to obtain the authorisation of the Institute.

various documents and particularly in the “Guide des Ecoles”, “The Teacher’s Guide”, a didactic pedagogical manual printed by the Little Brothers of Mary in 1853. Before this in 1834, Champagnat had written to King Louis Philippe in the following terms:

“Born in the canton of St Genest-Malifaux, department of the Loire I only managed to read and write with the utmost difficulty due to a lack of proficient teachers: it was then I realised the urgent need for an Institute which would be able with less costs, *to provide for country children the excellent teaching which the Brothers of the Christian Schools provide for the poor in the towns.*”²⁹

In the first Statutes of the Little Brothers of Mary, approved on the 10 May, 1825 and conserved in the National Archives in Paris, is to be found the close relationship between the work developed by the de la Salle Brothers and that of the Little Brothers of Mary.

“A Christian and religious education is the quickest and most efficacious way of attracting good subjects to society, and to religion fervent Christians. Unfortunately, this means is missing in the majority of the rural districts. The lack of municipal resources, the poverty of the inhabitants, does not allow them to entrust the education of young people to the Brothers of the Christian Schools whose merits and capability are known by everyone. (...) Roused by these considerations, pious people in the Diocese of Lyons have formed a new Congregation under the name of the Congregation of the Little Brothers of Mary (...) In their teaching they follow the methods of the Brothers of the Christian Schools”...³⁰

The letter which accompanies the quoted statutes, written by Monsignor de Pins and addressed to Monsignor Fraysinous, Minister of Ecclesiastical Matters and of Public Education, interprets the purpose of the Little Brothers of Mary as follows:

“(...) we certify that this congregation in which we take a lively interest, is *the necessary supplement* of that of the Brothers of the Christian Schools for regions that are mountainous and poor (...)”³¹

This is an important document. It is the first time it has been recognised officially at diocesan level the “need” for the Little Brothers of Mary. In this first recognition, indirect of course, there appears the clear idea of being “complementary” to the Brothers of the Christian Schools in the small rural towns.

It can be said that the first explicit difference between the Little Brothers of Mary and the Brothers of the Christian Schools, present in

²⁹ LPC 1, p. 99. The letter dated 28 January 1834, sent to King Louis Philippe with the purpose of seeking the legalisation of the Institute

³⁰ HERREROS, P., *La Règle*, p. 39

³¹ HERREROS, P., *La Règle* p. 41

numerous documents, consists in being more economical.. This allowed them to adapt themselves to the concrete necessities of the rural municipalities and act in such a way that their children would be able to enjoy the same education that the Brothers of the Christian Schools offered in the cities and wealthy municipalities.³²

“The conditions according to which we set up establishments are almost the same as those of the Brothers of the Christian Schools, except that we allow the town councils to collect a monthly payment from parents who can afford to cover a part of the expenses of the establishment.”³³

The same Superior General of the de la Salle Brothers, Brother Anacletus, was to approve this initiative in a letter addressed to Champagnat the 2nd of August 1838 in the following terms:

“Dear Fr. Superior, I have learned with the greatest of pleasure that, considering the needs of primary education and your desire to contribute to extending it, you have founded a Congregation of Teaching Brothers for the dioceses of Lyons and Belley under the name of Marist Brothers, which you destine mainly for the municipalities whose population is not large enough for an establishment of our Institute to be set up there. I fully understand the importance of such a body and all the good it can do (...). Moreover it has to be admitted that we cannot establish ourselves everywhere, primarily because we are short of personnel and secondly because in our Rules, we must have at least three Brothers; many municipalities could not hand their schools over to us. *Congregations called to fill the immense void which we leave in the field of education, can therefore be most useful.*”³⁴

On the 19th of March 1836, the parish priest of Mornant (Rhône), M. Venet, when he was reporting on the appreciation enjoyed by the Little Brothers of Mary amongst the people, stated:

“The Founder has had an excellent idea *to found a body, following the same method as the Christian Schools.* It differs only in being able to serve more readily localities that cannot afford to pay for expenses which are too high. Furthermore, the favourable welcome they receive from the public is a living proof of the need for this establishment.”³⁵

³² Apart from the Founder's letters already mentioned I found the same idea of “complementarity” with the Brothers of the Christian Schools in the following correspondence: Letter to M. Alexandre Denis Devaux de Pleyne, mayor of Bourg-Argental (Loire) dated 1827. Cf. LPC I, p.42.; letter addressed to the Minister of Public Education, Nicolas Narcisse Achille de Salvandy, dated the 27th of November 1837 Cf. LPC I, p.306 ; letter dated 16th of January 1840, addressed to Mgr. Bonald who was in Paris to try once more to obtain from a person of influence the longed-for legalisation of the Institute. Cf. LPC I, p. 573.

³³ LPC I, pp. 592-593. Letter dated 25th of February 1840, addressed to Monsignor Peres Marius Ferdinand (Bouches-du-Rhône).

³⁴ AAM, p. 167

³⁵ AAM, p. 127

Along the same line, the report of the mayor of Sorbiers (Loire), dated the 20th of August 1836:

“We the undersigned, Mayor of the Commune of Sorbiers, district of St. Etienne (Loire), certify that the primary education of the pupils of the aforesaid commune, entrusted to the Brothers of Mary five years ago, has been consistently run by them in a zealous and successful manner to the satisfaction of the authorities and the parents. *We congratulate ourselves in finding in these worthy teachers whose costs are considerably lower, the advantages which the Brothers of the Christian Schools offer to towns.*”³⁶

4.- SOME CONGREGATION DOCUMENTS.

The close relationship between the Little Brothers of Mary and the Brothers of the Christian Schools is found documented not only in the correspondence of the Founder and the testimonies of persons living at the time, such as those I have just quoted, but is reflected also in the internal regulations of the Congregation.

Both the Prospectus of 1824 and the Statutes of 1830, 1833, 1834 and 1835 make direct reference to the Brothers of the Christian Schools. Two aspects are underlined: that of “complementarity” and “imitation” of the teaching methods used. As regards the second point, the most recurring expression is the following:

“In teaching we follow the methods of the Brothers of the Christian Schools.”³⁷

Analysing the set of guidelines which precedes the first edition of the Rules brought out in 1837, an important evolution can be seen as regards the type of references to the Brothers of the Christian Schools. Both the concept of “complementarity” and the “imitation” of teaching methods are to be found in all the documents, except in the Statutes of 1836 and in the Prospectus brought out in the same year.³⁸

In the Prospectus of 1836, for the first time, there is no reference to the methods of the Brothers of the Christian Schools.

³⁶ AAM, pp. 127-128.

³⁷ Cf. AFM, 132.80 Champagnat Notebook No 8, Prospectus of June 1824; OM I, p. 325. Prospectus of July 1824, HERREROS P., *La Règle*, p. 31, Prospectus of 1836; HERREROS P., *La Règle*, p. 59; Statutes and Conditions, summer of 1830; HERREROS P. *La Règle*, pp 52, 55 Draft of Statutes, manuscript of M. Cattet. Plan of Statutes dated 25th February 1830, ANF, F 17, 12476. Statutes of the Little Brothers of Mary, sent with a letter addressed to the Queen, dated May 1835.

³⁸ Cf. ANF, F 17, 12476. Statutes of the Little Brothers of Mary, with the modifications suggested by the Royal Council, in the summer of 1836; HERREROS P. *La Règle* p. 30 Prospectus of the Society of the Brothers of Mary, dated November 1836.

“For teaching purposes they follow the new style of pronunciation and the mutually simultaneous method..”³⁹

This apparent evolution towards independence illustrates an important innovation well but it does not imply putting aside reference to educational methods of the Brothers of the Christian Schools. This is confirmed by the first edition of the Rules of the Little Brothers of Mary which was produced the following year.

In article 32 it was stated explicitly: “The Brothers will consider the study and practice of “*La Conduite*” as one of the surest means to succeed in their work. From this document they will therefore often read what is appropriate for them in order to grasp the contents fully and observe them faithfully.”⁴⁰

Reference to “*La Conduite*”, the education manual of the Brothers of the Christian Schools, “will be repeated on two more occasions in the same Rules of 1837.”⁴¹

It is noticeable that “*La Conduite*” is rarely quoted in the documentation of the Little Brothers of Mary that I have been able to consult with the exception of the three occasions when the Rules of 1837 do so.⁴² Rather than to the document itself, reference was made to the “method”. Brother Jean-Baptiste stated:

“Since the simultaneous method, designed by Venerable Father de la Salle, seemed to him to be the best, he had it adopted by his Brothers (...)”⁴³

This reference to the simultaneous method as a method devised by de la Salle deserves special explanation. During the 19th century the simultaneous method was mistakenly called the “Brothers’ Method” implying “the Brothers of the Christian Schools”.⁴⁴ In fact, during the first half of the 19th century in France there was a great pedagogical evolution which greatly surpassed de la Salle’s proposal. The individual method was slowly replaced by the simultaneous method whilst the latter ended up by assimilating aspects of the mutual method to evolve towards the simultaneous-mutual or mixed method.

³⁹ HERREROS P., *La Règle*, p. 30.

⁴⁰ CHAMPAGNAT M., *Règle des Petits Frères de Marie*, Ed. Guyot, Lyon 1837, p. 36.

⁴¹ Cf. CHAMPAGNAT M., *Règle*, 1837, pp. 25-26 and 37-38 respectively.

⁴² There were two more occasions when I came across the specific title of the teaching manual of the Brothers of the Christian Schools. 1. A priest to whom the Founder sent drafts of the Rules to be revised in 1836, stated: « “*La Conduite*”, the “School Management” book is often spoken of among themselves; I do not know what is meant by that.» AFM 363. 113. 2; HERREROS P., *La Règle*, p. 120. 2. In a letter that the Founder sent to Br. Francis, Superior General, from Paris and dated 24th of February 1838, making enquiries as to the possibility of buying a “certain number” of copies of “*La Conduite*” Cf. LPC I, p. 351.

⁴³ FURET, J.B. Vie, p.534. uses the term “mode” for “méthode”.

⁴⁴ Cf. ZIND P. Bx. M. *Champagnat*, p. 351.

According to the testimony of Brother Jean-Baptiste, Champagnat lived through this evolving improvement almost without adverting to it and always made reference to the simultaneous method or to the one improperly called “the method of the Brothers of the Christian Schools” although in reality he was practising the mixed method.

“It was in this way that the pious Founder unwittingly combined the simultaneous method with the mutual one; taking from the latter what was best to perfect the former; and telling his Brothers to adopt definitively later on the simultaneous mixed method.”⁴⁵

Peter Zind states that the fact that the Little Brothers of Mary were working in rural schools where the small number of pupils did not allow the genuine practice of the simultaneous method, effectively meant that the mixed method was practised in the Institute of the Little Brothers of Mary before the Brothers of de la Salle took it up.⁴⁶

This possible advance did not prevent the Brothers of the Christian Schools from continuing to be the point of reference when they in their turn made the pedagogical evolution of the moment.

From this perspective, it can be understood that Brother Avit, presenting the Statutes of the Institute sent to King Louis Philippe by the Founder, identified the method of the Brothers of the Christian Schools with the simultaneous-mutual method. He did it by adding to the original text in parenthesis, the explanatory expression: “simultaneous -mutual”.

“For teaching purposes they will follow the new spelling pronunciation and the method of the Brothers of the Christian Schools; (Simultaneous-mutual)”⁴⁷ It is indubitable that, even in the same process of the transformation of teaching methods which took place in the first half of the nineteenth century, the constant referral of the Little Brothers of Mary to the de la Salle Brothers remained unchanged.

The use of the same text books, at least during an early stage, is another proof of this close relationship.⁴⁸

⁴⁵ FURET J.B. *Vie*, p. 537.

⁴⁶ Cf. ZIND P., *Bx. M. Champagnat*, pp. 352-353.

⁴⁷ AAM, p. 90.

⁴⁸ On the 4th of February 1838, Father Champagnat wrote to Brother Francis, Superior General: “Last week I saw the good Brothers of the Christian Schools. I asked them if they were willing enough to sell us their school books at the same price as they themselves charged their schools.” LPC, P. 345. The same year he would ask once again for special prices and wrote with some irritation: “I saw the Superior of the Brothers of the Christian Schools again. They gave only a slight reduction and again this reduction will be in the binding which will cost less.” LPC I, P 398. In 1841 it was Brother Louis Marie who maintained this Marist tradition of using the text books of the de la Salle Brothers. The problem of the costs necessitated dealing directly with the editor in the first place and then editing our own books.

In a letter sent to Monsignor Barthelemy Caumette, parish priest of Meze (Herault) dated 1834, the Founder stated that the Little Brothers of Mary practised the simultaneous method and the new method of spelling pronunciation and that its religious dress was “similar” to that of the Brothers of the Christian Schools.⁴⁹

From the smallest details, such as dress, to developments in education, the de la Salle Brothers were always the point of reference. Making parallelisms of this type was simply to help the understanding and win the favour of priests and mayors interested in contracting the Little Brothers of Mary as municipal teachers.

The Brothers of the Christian Schools were known throughout the whole country and enjoyed great prestige.⁵⁰ When all is said and done, being compared with them effectively a good letter of introduction.

In any case, in the Little Brothers of Mary, the reference was not simply conventional or opportunist. Even considering that the appropriation of the directives of the de la Salle Brothers was not passive but that it implied selection and adaptation, as Herreros suggests in his study of the sources of the Rules of 1837, it is necessary to give its just value to this constant relationship which the Founder himself established between both Institutes

5.- TOWARDS GREATER INDEPENDENCE.

In accordance with the documents I have been able to analyse, during the foundation period and up to the consolidation of the Institute with the drawing up of new rules, fruit of the Second General Chapter, there stand out at least two great periods with respect to the type of relationship between the Little Brothers of Mary and the Brothers of the Christian Schools.

The first period is that of “complementarity” and reaches its full expression with the edition of the first Rules in 1837. The second is the period of “self-identification” and on no small number of occasions it implied opposition and rivalry between the two institutions.

The examples I have already presented give a clear idea of the first period. Most unfortunately between the edition of the Rules of 1837 and the

“On the 15th of April, when he was in Paris to obtain legal authorisation, Brother Louis-Marie made an agreement with M Poussielgue, so that the books of the Brothers of the Christian Schools were sent to the Hermitage Library at a reduced price, on condition that each order would mount to at least 500 items.” AAM p. 239.

⁴⁹ Cf. LPC I, p 108.

⁵⁰ Cf. CLAUSSE A., *Évolution des doctrines et des méthodes pédagogiques*, Ed Universitaires, Fribourg 1973, p. 111.

following Rules in 1852, insufficient official documents have been preserved to analyse, for example, the process of “referential” withdrawal with regard to the Brothers of the Christian Schools.

In spite of this, Brother Avit in his annals offers sufficient material to understand some aspects of this process. In the commentary to the letter sent by Brother Anacletus, Superior General of the Brothers of the Christian Schools to Father Champagnat on the 2nd of August 1838, the chronicler reveals some malaise due to the “spirit of superiority” implied in the letter.⁵¹

The Little Brothers were to go only to the municipalities which were incapable of accepting the Brothers of the Christian Schools. In 1838 it seemed that this criterion of “complementarity” was no longer very acceptable.

In fact the increase in the number of members and the necessity to keep them sufficiently occupied during the whole year resulted in their beginning to take over the management of schools whose attendance was prolonged beyond the few months lasting from the feast of All Saints till Easter.

These schools were none other those of areas with larger populations, worked in traditionally by the Brothers of the Christian Schools. The geographical convergence of both Congregations would create various situations of misunderstanding and even of confrontation.

By way of example I mention a few facts told by Brother Avit. In 1848 Brother Eutrope was principal of a boarding School in la Côte-St-André (Isère). The Brothers of the Christian Schools had established another boarding school in the nearby urban centre of Beaurepaire.

As a result of the conflict that in general rose up between neighbouring boarding schools in order to attract more pupils, Brother Avit⁵² tells the story of Brother Eutrope who, not devoid of humour, set a snare for Brother Renovatus, Director of the boarding school of the Brothers of the Christian Schools. Passing himself off as the father of a family, he sent a letter asking for information as to the advantages offered by the Beaurepaire boarding school compared with that of the Little Brothers of Mary. The answer was full of aggression:

“He (Brother Renovatus) sent a very long letter in answer to the supposed father of a family, including criticism of the “ignorant Marist Brothers”, a litany of exaggerated praise for the Beaurepaire School, a syllabus containing everything, even modern languages.”⁵³

⁵¹ This letter without any doubt is very good, but it seems to us that a sense of superiority and corporate feeling comes through just a bit too much.” AAM, p. 168.

⁵² AAM, p.471.

⁵³ AAM, pp.270-271.

Brother Avit himself, with a certain air of triumph, went on to state that in the end it was the Little Brothers of Mary who ended up replacing the de la Salle Brothers in Beaurepaire.

In Valbenoîte (Loire), Brother Cyprion repeated trick with the Brothers of the Christian Schools who were in charge of a boarding school in Désirée (Loire). In this case the answer was not any less aggressive.

“The Brothers of Valbenoite (the Little Brothers of Mary) are incapable of bringing up children well; they are ignorant peasants (...)”⁵⁴

In Pélussin (Loire) a situation of such tension arose that it was the same Brother Francis in his function of Superior General who wrote to Brother Felipe, Superior General of the Brothers of the Christian Schools:

“Very Reverend Brother, I find it necessary to put you in the picture as to what is going on in Pélussin and the part played by Brother Changeon in vexatious interference with our Brothers so that you may be kind enough to restore order there. For the last five or six years *this Brother has had the desire and the plans to substitute your Brothers for ours in this locality*, and there are no steps he will not take or instigate in order to achieve his aims.”⁵⁵

Without seeking to expose all the cases of rivalry between the de la Salle Brothers and the Little Brothers of Mary, I consider it important to put on record a fact that certainly influenced relationships between the congregations.⁵⁶

The case of the school for the deaf and dumb in St. Etienne (Loire) deserves special mention. Champagnat had enthusiastically welcomed the proposal of the town mayor that the Brothers should take on the management of the aforementioned centre. He immediately established the necessary contacts in Paris so as to send Brothers to qualify themselves in a specialist training college.⁵⁷

⁵⁴ AAM, p. 277.

⁵⁵ AAM, p. 513.

⁵⁶ Among the substitutions of the Brothers of the Christian Schools carried out by the Little Brothers of Mary I mention the following: Paray-le-Monial (Saône et Loire) Cf. AAM, pp. 433-444, Romanèche (Saône et Loire) Cf. AAM, p. 465, St. Pol (Pas-de Calais). AAM, p. 171.

⁵⁷ “I am going to send Brother Marie-Jubin to the mutual school for the deaf and dumb. I intend to go there myself when possible. It is essential that we don’t waste our time.” Champagnat himself wanted to qualify for the task! Was it in order to train other Brothers in his turn? That’s possible. (A letter from Champagnat, written from Paris and sent to Brother Francis, Superior General, LPC, p. 357. In successive letters the Founder confirmed that Brother Jubin had begun his qualifying courses. (Cf. LPC I. p. 358) and that he himself attended the courses from time to time: “Brother Marie Jubin is doing very well. He is now attending a class for the deaf and dumb and I too do so when I can.” LPC I, p. 374. The project of training Brothers to work with the deaf and dumb did not end with Brother Jubin’s fully qualifying himself. Champagnat confirmed in a letter that he sent to Brother Francis, Superior General, on the 20th of June 1838, his intention to send more Brothers to Paris:” I have just made the request to the administration of the establishment for the deaf and dumb

The fact that the Brothers of the Christian Schools took over the running of this school left the proposal made to Champagnat ineffectual and upset the initial plan.

What would have happened if the Little Brothers of Mary had taken charge of this school? Perhaps a strong educational presence of the Institute in the world of handicapped children?

Brother Avit gives the testimony of what had happened with another similar proposal in 1853, the same year in which the First Edition of *Guide des Ecoles*, "The Teacher's Guide" appeared.

"One of the Vicars General of Orleans asked for Brothers at once for a school for the deaf and dumb. *He was given a polite refusal considering that this speciality was not part of our programme*"⁵⁸

How quickly the Brothers had forgotten the particular interest shown by our Founder for this type of work! If the Little Brothers of Mary had not been replaced by the Brothers of the Christian Schools in the school for the deaf and dumb in St. Etienne, the answer would have been different.

As may be observed, the consequences of the rivalry between both congregations are not to be underestimated.

The very process of legalisation of the Little Brothers of Mary was seriously compromised by such a situation. Mr. Libersat, employee of the Ministry of Education, answered a letter written by Champagnat in August 1838: "It seems that the Minister is afraid of compromising himself by approving the existence of a new body of primary school teachers who can only extend the services which the too numerous congregation of the Brothers of the Christian Doctrine already provide."⁵⁹

Apparently the Minister Salvandez was trying to defend the interests of the Brothers of the Christian Schools. Champagnat did not delay in replying in the following terms:

"It is true that our Institute intends to obtain the benefit of primary education for the children of the small communes and that the majority of our schools will be established in these sorts of localities;⁶⁰ but we need as much to centralise our establishments so as to procure resources, to be able to establish schools in the more important communes. As to the argument concerning the

for free admission of two Brothers who will, if my request is granted, be given lodging, heating, catering, laundering, lighting, etc...for as long as it is necessary for them to complete their training." LPC p 398. All these efforts faded away when the Brothers of the Christian Schools took up the post which had been offered by the municipal council of St.. Etienne to the Little Brothers of Mary. AAM, P. 165.

⁵⁸ AAM, p.443. (Author's italics .)

⁵⁹ AAM, p. 72

⁶⁰ Champagnat uses the verb in the future tense: "will be founded". In fact, the majority of the schools managed by the Little Brothers of Mary were in municipalities with a population of more than 1800 inhabitants. Cf. FURET, Vie, p. 218, note 29.

Brothers of the Christian Schools, in my opinion, it is devoid of any foundation considering that they do not occupy a tenth of the communes in the kingdom and they can only accept non-fee-paying schools.”⁶¹

Reflecting on the difficulties Put forward by Salvandy who wanted to prohibit the Little Brothers of Mary from working in schools of municipalities larger than 1200 inhabitants⁶² and in this way avoid the rivalry with the Brothers of the Christian Schools, Brother Avit asks the following question:

“(…) a suspicion rises in our mind. The unknown person the pious Founder complains about and who seems to influence the Minister, might he not be one of the Big Brothers of Blessed de la Salle? We put this question to our readers and we leave it to them to answer it.”⁶³

The lack of documentation has not allowed me to reply to Brother Avit's question. However, the important thing is to make known the existence of the suspicion directed against some de la Salle Brother, capable of using his influence up to the level of the Minister for Public Education.

Just as there were many situations in which the rivalry between both congregations showed itself, there were also many recommendations from the Founder and his successor, Brother Francis, that confrontation of any kind was to be avoided.

Brother Jean-Baptiste declares that Champagnat, discussing with the Brothers requests from some mayors who wanted the Little Brothers of Mary to replace the de la Salle Brothers, said to them:

“We did not come here to replace the disciples of the Venerable Father de la Salle, we will never be capable of that; but we set ourselves to help them; to do what they cannot do and to go into small localities where, according to their Constitutions, they cannot set themselves up in, at least not ordinarily. These excellent Religious are our models; we shall never be able to do as well as they; but if it is not our remit to match up with them, we have to

⁶¹ FURET J.B., *Vie*, p. 218.

⁶² “As you know, there had been an initial decision of provisional authorisation restricting you to teaching in the communes with a population of 1200 at the most.” (From the letter written by M. Libersat: AAM; p. 172). In a letter addressed to the industrialist M. Jovin Deshayes, Champagnat made mention of 1000 inhabitants: “Relative to the clause by which the decree would leave us with only the communes of 1000 inhabitants and less and would deprive us of the most populated places, you realize that in no way can it suit us. A large number of our establishments would be ruined by this condition, several of the communes where they are having more than 4000 inhabitants. The minister of public education himself in a letter signed by M. Delbecque on the 18th of May 1838, calls upon us to take over the management of the school in St. Pol (Pas de Calais) and this town has more than 4000 inhabitants.” LPC I p. 446. Champagnat pointed out the existing internal contradiction in the restrictions that the decree of approval of the Institute would contain and the particular interests of the Minister himself who was asking the Brothers to found a school in a town with more than 4000 inhabitants.

⁶³ AAM, P. 174,

force ourselves to follow them from afar and to persuade ourselves that the nearer we approach them, the better we will do.”⁶⁴

Is this an ideal posture to adopt? I have just given an account of how the Founder himself maintained the possibility that the Little Brothers of Mary would operate in municipalities with larger populations. Organisational and economic problems demanded it.⁶⁵

The situation of the Institute seems to have imposed an evolution in the initial thinking of the Founder. Now it was not a question of restricting work to small rural municipalities but of avoiding rivalry with other congregations. According to Champagnat there was room for everybody and there were no sufficient reasons to fear competition among teaching congregations.

In the case where conflict should arise between two congregations the Founder gave this advice:

“In these circumstances be careful not to imitate your antagonist: let him make all the noise, let him try to introduce all sorts of things and make a thousand promises to attract children to his school. As for yourselves, remain more attached than ever to your Rules and your method of teaching; do not change anything in your way of doing things; be content to redouble your zeal and devotedness to form your children in piety and encourage them to make progress in the essential stages of primary teaching.”⁶⁶

The fact that in the spiritual testament itself, Champagnat considered it necessary to recommend the Brothers to avoid all types of rivalry with other congregations seems to confirm that it was a question of a situation they had undergone and was still current.⁶⁷

Brother Francis, Superior General, would take the same line of conduct as the Founder. Brother Avit described the reaction of the Superior General of the Little Brothers of Mary when he was faced with the proposal of the parish priest of Tournus who, in 1851, wanted to replace the Brothers of the Christian Schools with the Little Brothers of Mary.

“The Brother Superior wrote to the Very Reverend Brother Philip (Superior General of the Brothers of the Christian Schools) on the 20th of August, saying that he had given a formal refusal, that he had never accepted nor would he ever accept the replacing of Brothers from other Congregations.

⁶⁴ FURET J.B., *Vie*, p. 414.

⁶⁵ FURET J.B., *Vie*, p. 218

⁶⁶ FURET J.B., *Vie*, p.564.

⁶⁷ “Ah! I appeal to your limitless love of Jesus Christ, make sure you never envy any person especially those whom the good God calls to work, like yourselves, in the religious state and in the education of youth. Be among the first to rejoice at their success and grieve at their misfortunes. Recommend them often to the good God and to Mary, the divine Mother. Give way to them without any trouble. Never listen to any talk which would tend to harm them. May the sole glory of God and the honour of Mary be your only end and all your ambition.” FURET J.B., *Vie*, pp. 242-243.

I am convinced, he added, that you would do likewise in the situation and I can't understand how congregations can do good by being jealous of one another and by supplanting one another."⁶⁸

Beyond the ways in which the rivalry situations were confronted, it is important to let people know that they did exist. I am of the opinion that these situations influenced the process of diminishing "reference" of the Little Brothers of Mary to the Brothers of the Christian Schools.

6.- SILENCE WITH REGARD TO THE BROTHERS OF THE CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS

From the context I have just analysed, it is not surprising that after the edition of the Rules of 1837, no document of the Institute is found which takes up the constant references to the Brothers of the Christian Schools which were evident in the first period.

This silence acquires a new meaning. I wonder whether, if there had not been the experience of the rivalry I have exposed, the situation would have been the same.

Brother Jean-Baptiste doesn't make a single mention of *La Conduite* in the whole of the Founder's Biography. And yet it was the teacher's manual used daily in school work. Is it possible that Brother Jean-Baptiste wrote his memories from this new context of contained rivalry after which the Little Brothers of Mary had no interest in stating clearly that the lines they followed in education stemmed from the teaching manual of the de la Salle Brothers?

Brother Jean-Baptiste presents himself as being rather circumspect and he does not stop to examine the many cases of antagonism that existed. Brother Avit, on the other hand, shows up as having another type of sensitivity. In his Annals I found the greatest number of testimonies and a critical attitude towards what, as has been seen, he called a "sense of superiority" on the part of the de la Salle Brothers.

This different way of passing on history seems to depend on the personal characteristics of each chronicler. For Jean-Baptiste Furet silence was indispensable in avoiding all scandal⁶⁹; for Avit, "love of

⁶⁸ AAM, p 401; I came across similar situations in Thiers., (Cf. AAM, PP. 315, 326), IN Digne (Cf. AAM, p.498).

⁶⁹ It is sufficient to read the works of Furet closely to see the importance which he gives to avoiding all scandal. Bad or good example is considered to be a very powerful means to transmit evil or good. Consequently, avoiding all scandalous testimony was to avoid favouring the propagation of evil. Cf. FURET J.B., *Vie*, p. 499; FURET, J.B. *Avis, Leçons, Sentences et Instructions du Vénérable Père Champagnat expliquées et développées par un de ses premiers disciples*, Nouvelle Edition, Ed. Emmanuel Vitte, Lyon-Paris, 1914, pp. 290-309.

historical truth”⁷⁰ made him communicate deeds which otherwise would not have been known.

7.- BY WAY OF CONCLUSION:

The facts I have analysed do not eliminate the real importance that the teaching methods of the de la Salle Brothers had in the educational experience of the Little Brothers of Mary. This dependence, leading to independence, does not cancel out the real influence of the Brothers of the Christian Schools in the origins of Marist teaching methods.

The documentation presented permits us to say that, even taking into consideration the emotional tensions that there might have been between the Institutes, close contact with the teaching methods of the de la Salle Brothers unquestionably was the point of departure. Possible emotional rebuffs did not give rise to contempt or a withdrawal from the teaching methods of the de la Salle Brothers.

For 35 years, taking into account the juridical power of the Rules, *Conduite* constituted a fundamental teacher's reference book.⁷¹ One fact of particular relevance gave this reference to *Conduite* even greater power and strength during the years immediately prior to the edition of *Guide des Écoles*, *The Teacher's Guide*, I refer to the amalgamations with the Congregations of the Brothers of Viviers and Saint-Paul-Trois-Châteaux, analysed in the second part of this same study.

Conduite displayed itself as a common point of reference to the three merged congregations. In this way agreement was easily reached as to the educational topics to be defined in *Guide des Écoles*. The different teaching traditions would find a focal point and unity in the manual of the Brothers of the Christian Schools.

Once again it is Brother Avit who contributes precious testimony of this.

“When I was leaving the Hermitage, carrying this deliberation to my dear Brothers in Saint-Paul-Trois-Châteaux, I remember that Brother Jean-Baptiste did me the honour of saying to me: (...) it seems that it will be of interest to the Brothers who have united to base the general Rules, as well as the manner of government, whether moral or material, special to each

⁷⁰ AAM, P. 422.

⁷¹ Pierre Zind comes to the same conclusion. He states “In a general way, up until 1853, the Little Brothers of Mary strove (...) to teach in accordance with the famous “*Conduite des Ecoles Chrétiennes*” (...) ZIND P., *Bx. M. Champagnat*, p. 350.

Province on what is practised by the Brothers of the Christian Schools, our leaders and our models in the field of primary teaching, etc.”⁷²

How was this educational tradition of the Brothers of the Christian Schools taken up and what type of contributions and elaboration did the Little Brothers of Mary carry out? That is another topic meticulously studied in the research dedicated to the identifying of the literary resources of “The Teacher’s Guide”.⁷³

⁷² AAM, p. 445.

⁷³ Cf. FARNEDAD D., “*Guide des Écoles*”, 1817-1853, *Historical Critical Study*, Ed. Private, Rome 1993, pp. 360-470.

MARIST EDUCATORS IN THE PACIFIC

1836 – 1870

INTRODUCTION

First, a word or two of clarification. I think it advisable to speak of Marist educators rather than Marist education in the Pacific in the period 1836 to 1870 because, until the latter date, the involvement of the Marist Brothers in education in the Pacific was governed by the policies of their religious and ecclesiastical superiors, the Fathers of the Society of Mary and the Vicars Apostolic, and subordinated to their other occupations in the missions. It was only after 1870 that the congregation began to operate with relative independence in this field in the Pacific.

When we use the term 'Marist' for our educators, we apply it naturally as characterising the Marist Brothers of the Schools. Now in the case of the early missionary Brothers the term might well apply to the Society of Mary for which and with whose members they worked and lived, in most cases all their lives. Would not their approach in catechising and teaching then be Marist in that different sense? I do not think so. It has yet to be established that at this period there was a significant difference in practice between the approaches of the Fathers and the Brothers in catechising at least. Moreover, neither approach had yet become standardised. One of the main aims of the 'Guide des Écoles' of 1853 was in fact to help standardise procedures in the Brothers' schools. (Guide p.150) In the missions, problems of personnel and communication also meant that there could be no question for some years of an overall educational policy for a vicariate, let alone for the whole missionary region served by the Marists. Each missionary catechised and taught the way he had been trained before leaving Europe. In their educational activity, therefore, the missionary Brothers are certainly in the line of Champagnat and the first Little Brothers of Mary.¹

¹ Although a few coadjutor Brothers of the Society were also engaged in catechising, and even teaching in New Caledonia, the majority of the Brothers engaged in these activities during this period came from the Little Brothers of Mary.

In considering the involvement of our early missionaries in education in the Pacific, we take our examples mainly from the missions of New Zealand, Futuna, Samoa, New Caledonia and Australia. There is little or no relevant material from Tonga, Fiji or the Solomon Islands. However, I think what we have is fairly representative.

It is my intention to examine how this first wave of missionary Brothers to the Pacific imbibed the principles of our educational theory and practice from the Founder and the first Brothers, and how they attempted to put these into practice at various levels in the context of the missions of Oceania. Then we might trace what connections there are, if any, between the Brother of this epoch and those of the period after 1870 in the field of education.

For source material, we have at our disposal a considerable collection of correspondence from these Brothers. In our archives, over 90 letters have been reproduced in the volume *Lettres d'Océanie* No. 0 1836-1894 (LO). Excerpts from some can be found in Br Joseph Ronson's *Frères Maristes en Océanie* (FMO). (Br Joseph has also published a collection of the letters of Br Marie-Nizier – referred to here as LMN.) There are many others in the archives of the Marist Fathers. Since 1993 I have been engaged in translating into English and researching these letters, some 60 of which have already been published in a series: 'Letters from Oceania' covering the period 1836 to 1846. Subsequent letters from 1847 to 1870 (a further 60 or so) have been translated but not yet adequately researched. Undoubtedly there are many more letters written by Marist missionary priests which would also provide valuable material for us. However, those we have provide adequate records of the Brothers' experience and practice of catechising and teaching in the various vicariates of Oceania. There are, in fact, several letters almost entirely devoted to these activities, including even a few which treat of educational theory.

I. Formation of the Marist Educators

We are looking at a group of 31 Brothers sent out by Fr Champagnat and his successors as the contribution of the Brothers of Mary to the Oceania mission of the Society of Mary. About half of these joined the Institute before the death of the Founder in 1840. Their formation in religious and secular education they would have received from the instructions of the Founder himself or the superiors during their novitiate, in further studies at the Hermitage for some, during the refresher courses held at the Hermitage after the annual retreats, and in the seminars which the Founder was beginning to organise shortly before his death. Some also would have benefited from the instructions provided by their more conscientious directors in their first few years of community. In this case, we are probably dealing with notes

incorporating the Founder's instructions and also personal reflections on such instructions. We have what I believe are two very good examples of this in our collection in two letters of Br Pierre-Marie Percnon of December 1840 and February 1841 (LO71 and 23).² The oldest of our Brothers to go out to the missions, he had already had some 6 years of experience as teacher and director. The principal themes in his letters, discipline, the teacher's attitude to his students, the importance of prayer for a teacher, the dignity of a catechist, and Mary's place in the life of a Brother, faithfully echo the teachings of the Founder as we find them in the later writings of Brs Jean-Baptiste and Francois. But he shows some individuality in emphasising the connection between correction and healing (LO71) and the 'motherly' attitude a Brother should have towards his charges (LO71 and 23). When he returned to France for health reasons in 1846 he was able to put these ideas into practice once more among the children of the orphanages and schools he had charge of until 1868.

I have succeeded in linking 10 of the first 16 missionaries, between 1836 and 1841, including all those destined for New Zealand, at least tentatively, with specific communities in France other than the Hermitage.³ Thus, we have a sizeable group reasonably well acquainted with Marcellin's educational ideals and practices, mainly from oral sources. This would have been true also of the Brothers who followed in the years 1845 to 1849. Only the last 5, who departed between 1857 and 1860, would have been familiar with its written expression in the 'Guide des Écoles', though even these had entered the congregation well before its publication.

Some of the Brothers certainly received additional instruction in catechetics from the priests on the voyage out to Oceania. For example, Br Marie-Nizier Delorme reports that Fr Chanel took the Brothers of his group for catechism from time to time.⁴

Apart from that, the Brothers received no further help from the Fathers in this area. In places where they had the time and the opportunity to do spiritual study they used those books which they had brought with them from France or which were later sent out to them. Br Florentin Francon lists 8 books in a letter of 29 October 1840 (LO18). These had apparently arrived for him at the Bay of Islands and he asked that they be sent with some clothing to him at Akaroa. (According to another letter, this request was

² It is very likely that some of the 'little exercise books' Br Claude-Marie brought with him to New Zealand from France contained such notes (letter to Colin Jan 1842 re Ronzon p. 48)

³ and 4 out of 5 of those who departed last, between 1857 and 1860; but I have not had access to the relevant information about the 10 others who came out to Oceania between 1848 and 1849. However, it cannot have been much different.

⁴ C. ROZIER: *S. Pierre Chanel d'après Ceux qui l'ont Connu* (1991) P.228

never answered.) Marie-Nizier's letters from 1844 on regularly include requests for books, both for general study and for school. In 1844 he asks for: "a copy of Collot's catechism, a copy of the Lyon or Belley catechism, Royamount's abridged version of the Holy Bible, the abridged course of Sacred History by question and answer and a copy of the Rule" (LMN p.32): in 1846, "the 'Religious Man', an arithmetic textbook, a book of spelling mistakes and their corrections..." (LMN p.64): in 1850, "all the books the Brothers of the Hermitage have produced: canticles, grammar, spelling exercises, dictations, etc" (LMN p.76). He often had to wait years before receiving them. In a few cases, it would appear the Brothers were actively discouraged from doing such studies without permission and more than once a week, as Br Claude-Marie Bertrand discovered with Frs Servant and Petit at Hokianga in 1842 (LO 27). Pierre-Marie is exceptional in spending so much of his time at the Bay of Islands at studies since he had been told to prepare himself for ordination (rf. LO 21).

II. Catechetics

Educational practice in the early years of the mission was basic. Priests and Brothers were engaged in catechising as soon as they learned the language, though for the latter it was usually an activity secondary to the work of setting up and maintaining the material side of the mission. The nature, and frequently the circumstances, of the catechising, were very much the same we encounter in the earliest days of the Institute, and Br Lawrence is undoubtedly the model of the mission catechist. "Of all my functions," writes Br Élie-Régis Marin in May 1842 (LO 31), "that of catechist takes first place. That is to say, that if I learn there is someone sick in a tribe, I leave everything to go and see him, instruct him and, if he is in danger of death, baptise him. I take the natives living closest for prayers morning and evening. But I like it better when I can go to the more distant tribes, because then I have the opportunity to teach them the truths of our holy religion." When he was stationed at the procure in the Bay of Islands, Br Emery was able sometimes to accompany the priests on their visits to the neighbouring Maori: "How happy I am then to be with them. I teach them to make the sign of the cross, to sing, to read: I do the prayers and sing at Mass when it is said" (LO 43).

After the evening catechism, discussion on religion would often go on far into the night. Similar discussions, sometimes more heated, would take place when a missionary knowingly or unknowingly violated one of their 'taboos'. On a visit to Ahipara in the far north of New Zealand in June 1843, Claude-Marie decided to teach the local people a lesson by burning some wood they declared was 'tapu' or sacred. It took a lot of discussion, he complained, before they would see reason (LO 41).

On Futuna, Marie-Nizier was called upon to prepare people of all ages for first communion. It was the first solemn celebration of such, held on Pentecost Sunday 1848: *"During the week's retreat for the children chosen to make their first communion, a certain number of the older men and youths also prepared themselves for the great event, and followed the exercises of the retreat. I was responsible for instructing them and asking them the necessary questions"* (LMN p.51).

In Samoa, Br Charise Gras was one of the few Brothers who spent a lot of his time in catechising. The station, where he worked in the 1850s with about 200 converts, was a distance from the port and the priest was often away fetching supplies or seeing his confreres. *"While Fr Verne was away,"* Charise records in his Memoirs, *"I had the opportunity of baptising, of giving instructions to the faithful, to the beginners and the Protestants on Sundays and feast-days. He was ill one year during Lent and could only say Mass and hear confessions. So I had to give the instructions, even in Holy Week and on Easter Sunday. My congregation was neither learned nor critical and I did my best in the Samoan language. The many Protestants present found nothing to complain about."* (quoted by Br Avit in the *Annales* 3, 100-101). His way of attracting an audience for catechism would have won Fr Champagnat's approval: *"I was catechising in a remote village and was collecting only the odd listener when it occurred to me to play my flute. They came running in crowds, amazed, and from then on I had a numerous audience...."* (ibid. p.101).

Br Élie-Régis' debate.

In New Zealand, where the Protestant missions were already well established, there was keen rivalry between the Churches for converts. The Maori, who placed a high value on oratory and skill in debate, particularly enjoyed the debates on religion between the Catholic priests and the Protestant ministers. On another level this was simply a special form of catechetics and converts could be won or lost on the outcome. In a very long letter to the Brothers of the Hermitage in 1846 (LO 62), Élie-Régis describes one such debate he became involved in at Opotiki with the local Anglican minister, the Rev J.A. Wilson. His native catechists had asked him to respond to Wilson's attacks on the Church's teaching on the eucharist and the papacy. Élie-Régis had no experience of this sort of thing but, having done a little research, he felt that, with the help of God, he could defend the Catholic Church against the calumnies. In the account in the letter, and in the summary of it Br Ronzon provides in *Frères Maristes en Océanie* (pp.26-27), we see clearly how the Brother exemplifies the type of catechist envisaged later in the 'Guide des Écoles' (esp. pp.73-5), preparing his argument well, commending its success to God in prayer, a clear presentation, drawing on scripture and history, using examples and practical demonstrations, drawing

in his audience (appealing to the Protestant Maori as well), leaving his opponent with no recourse but to go away defeated, praying to God and the Blessed Virgin in thanksgiving. He achieved a notable victory, since Wilson was a skilled debater, and not only did the Protestants stop speaking against the Church but some became converts.

Here is how he relates the first part of their exchange:

After we had exchanged greetings, I asked him if what the natives had reported he had said was true, namely that we adored a piece of bread, and that the Pope was a wicked man. At first, he tried to excuse himself by accusing the natives of making a mistake. He had said that before the consecration it was only bread but after it was the body of Our Lord. But when our native, Francis, who had heard him himself, accused him of lying, and he found himself caught out, he looked for another way out. He asked, for example, if it was the same body born of Mary, if it was his veins and bones, how could it be in many different places at the same time. I replied: Don't you know Jesus Christ is God and that God is all powerful? The same Jesus Christ raised Lazarus from the dead after four days, gave sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, cured the sick without being present by a single word, multiplied 5 loaves of bread and 2 fishes, worked so many miracles – doesn't his power exist any more? No. No more evasions and pointless speculation; let's come to the proof. Then I took the Latin Bible I had brought with me and explained to him in Maori the passage about the real presence: This is my body. This is my blood. I asked him also for his own translation in Maori which he gave me. I looked up the text about the real presence which was, on this point, in perfect conformity with ours. I read it out to him twice, so the natives heard. As for him, he said that in the Eucharist it was only the likeness of Jesus Christ – in Maori: "toua ahuatanga". He also said it was a parable ("kupu wakarite" in Maori), as with Jesus' words, "I am the true vine." Then I referred to St John, Chapter 6 v 16, where it said (in Latin): "My flesh is really food and my blood is really drink. He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me and I in him...." This was too clear for him to evade. I began to shout at the top of my voice to the Protestant natives present, "You must be very foolish to listen to such a false man whom his own book contradicts. His book says one thing and he says another. If you had an ounce of common sense you would reject the one or the other. You would buy the book and refuse his instruction or listen to him and refuse his book. If we gave the books to our natives and they read them and then we taught them something quite different from the book, they would certainly know what to say to us." Wilson was beaten and he had no comeback on this point. As for his other statement that the Popes were wicked men, he offered the excuse that he had not said all the Popes were wicked but that there had been some wicked ones. I asked him to name them but he could not name

a single one. Then I told him, you are making it up; what you have put forward is not true. I had a copy of a book listing all the Catholics Henry VIII had put to death. I read it out to him in front of them all. In retaliation he replied that Henry VIII belonged to our Church. I said: "You dare to disown the king of your own nation?" He had nothing more to say. I drew for him the tree of the true vine, then I drew a withered branch. To distract the natives he pretended not to understand and asked if it was a tree for building canoes. I couldn't explain what I wanted because he didn't want to stay and look at it. As he was opening the door on his way out, I quickly quoted to him the passage from the Bible about the powers Our Lord gave to Peter. He wanted no more of it and went away. (LO 62; FMO pp. 26-7).

III. Schools

Elementary schooling went hand in hand with catechising. The first step was to teach reading and writing in the local language. The first record we have of a Brother doing this in New Zealand is in a letter of Br Michel Colombon in November 1840 (LO 19).⁵ On Sundays he was taking the Maori of Matauri Bay (part of the Whangaroa mission) for prayers: "*Some of them would have turned Protestant several months ago if I had not been with them on Sundays. They all come after prayers to my place, and we spend the rest of the day together, reading the little book and doing arithmetic... Dear Fr Epalle, please be kind enough to send two slates to help the natives write and some little books...*" The 'little books' were copies of Pompallier's first catechism and prayer book produced the same year.

Earlier in 1840 Claude-Marie was teaching the young Maori chief Etaka, a passenger with the Marists on the corvette 'Aube', the rudiments of French in return for instruction in Maori (rf. LO12 and 15). He was very disappointed when one of the priests took this task over from him. In 1844 he had the consolation for part of the year of teaching the Maori who resided at the procure in the Bay of Islands (LO52). He had taken over the role of schoolmaster for the Maori from Élie-Régis after the latter's transfer to Whakatane. Classes were in the morning, leaving the students free to work with their families or on the mission plantations in the afternoons, a common pattern throughout the Pacific. But while the school at the Bay could be run regularly, at least up until 1845, because of the number of personnel stationed

⁵ Strictly speaking, at that date Michel was no longer a member of the Society, having been dismissed by Mgr Pompallier in July (rf. FMO 18-21), and he signs this letter by his secular name, Antoine Colombon. But the priests and brothers refer to him as Br Michel when he returned to work at the mission a year or so later.

there, similar schools in the other stations functioned much less regularly in the early years as a result of the burden of work laid on a very over-extended missionary force. This was offset to a certain extent in the 1850s by the growing number of native catechists.

Since people of all ages often joined in these classes, the missionaries would have made much use of the mutual method of teaching, allowing the more advanced to help their younger or slower neighbours. This was, anyway, the practice in the Protestant native schools. Like most Polynesians, the Maori were apt students. Emery remarks of them: *"They have astonishing memories. They learn anything they want to. In a short time they learn to read, to write, their catechism, hymns. They really like singing. They harmonise so well that you cannot hear a single note above another. It is beautiful when there are a hundred or so of them singing a hymn. There is especially one canticle to the Blessed Virgin they prefer above all others, they sing it everywhere."* (LO42)

As time went on, of course, the novelty of the new teaching wore off and the students began to display some of the same attitudes as their compeers elsewhere. Writing in 1859, Marie-Nizier says: *"It seems to me I informed you in another letter that the Futunans generally are not very interested in learning. This lack of interest taken a bit too far has forced the priests, now that the Faith has taken root in the island, to refuse to allow any children who do not know how to read to make their communion. As a consequence, Fr Grezel in his parish made me responsible for teaching those to read, whom he had in line for first communion. Some were not slow learning to read a bit at the time. Others, younger ones, slipped quietly into school, and all appeared to acquire a taste for learning, contrary to my expectations."* (LMN p. 85)

While reading and writing, in the local language, and arithmetic were the staple subjects, other academic and practical subjects were added, depending on the interests and skills of the missionaries. These included all the subjects taught in the Brothers' schools in France (cf. *Guide des Écoles* p.172) and others. The curriculum of flourishing Maori schools on the Wanganui River and in Hawkes Bay in the 1850s included, as well as religion and the basics, elementary English, conversational French, Latin, history, geography, cosmogony, cooking, sewing, agriculture and plain chant. The Brothers who worked at these stations, Élie-Régis, Euloge, Florentin and Basile, contributed their part to the reputation of these schools until war and attendant circumstances effectively ended them early in the 1860s.

A very common problem for these early teachers was the lack of educational aids and equipment of even the most basic kind. As late as 1856 Charise in Samoa was complaining he lacked slates, paper, table, benches: *"Last year I did not have even a chart of the alphabet. I had to make one for myself with my pen. Since I have nothing to stimulate them, if I ventured to chide them even a little, these children would not come, for they are used to*

unlimited freedom" (19 December 1856 APM). A year later, his confrere, Br Lucien Manhaudier, had recommendations for missionaries departing for Oceania: they should include in their luggage "*a certain number of pictures representing the principal features, mysteries and personages of Holy Scripture, etc. etc...and a certain number of large charts showing the most common types of animals. The natives have never seen anything other than their little country lost in the ocean and they are very curious about them*" (1 August 1857, APM). Textbooks, of course, were in very short supply. "*One of the Fathers,*" writes Marie-Nizier to Francois in 1859, "*has asked me to lend my grammar to the Sisters; three have to make use of it. It will be a bit difficult, it seems to me, to ask for it back if they need it*" (LMN p.58). In the same letter he remarks: "*(Fr Grezel) has often asked me to ask you to send me at least two copies of all the books I have asked you for: the Life of the Rev Fr Champagnat, the collection of annotated hymns, the corrections for the spelling exercises, etc. (he has a copy of the Grammar). In the last resort....he told me: Tell the good Br François that if he cannot give me them, he should tell you how many Masses he wants and I will say them in payment....*" (ibid).

Schools for Europeans were run along more conventional lines, the teacher usually being a layman or woman with some teaching background. Since the instruction there was usually in English, we might not expect to find Brothers employed in this work. Pierre-Marie, however, had the task in 1842 of looking after the dozen or so English Catholic children who came to school at the Bay of Islands. He took them for some lessons though, he admits, they knew the language much better than he did (LO33). Fr Petitjean also has words of praise for Florentin in 1844 for his help with the European school attached to the Auckland station (17 December 1844 APM). Later, in Nelson, Claude-Marie was to supervise the boarders at Fr Garin's College and help some of them with their French and Latin. They included the future Marist Bishop Redwood who welcomed the first teaching Brothers to Wellington in 1876. (Rf. Ronzon FMO p.55)

In his introduction to the 'Guide des Écoles (p.3)', François emphasises the role of Champagnat in introducing singing into the programme of primary instruction in rural France. His aim in so doing was not just to provide parishes with cantors and choirs but also to attract and attach the children to the schools through their natural delight in singing. In the countries of the Pacific, the Marists found that church music and Gregorian chant had an instant appeal to the musically-inclined islanders and was a sure way of gaining followers. By no means all the missionaries were capable of teaching it. One who was, was Marie-Nizier, and he gives us a clear exposition of his method in a letter to Colin in 1846. "*Sometimes I am asked to teach the converts new tunes and hymns. My pupils are docile and quiet; a look suffices to call them to order if someone forgets the rule of silence. But there is a lot of rivalry. There are some hymns that take a fortnight of practice, with an hour's*

class each day, before they can properly be sung in church. I begin by reading aloud the same couplet several times over, then I sing it by myself, then again with two or three of the better singers, and finally we sing it altogether. I am also partly responsible for training the choirs of the two parishes.” (AM p.378; this is an edited version of the letter in LMN p.57).

Br Germanique's school

A unique departure for the Pacific was that of Br Germanique Boudoy in 1858. He was the first Marist Brother sent to Oceania to open a school. The school was being set up at Port-de-France (now Noumea), capital of the new colony of New Caledonia, by the Governor for the education of the children of the chiefs of various tribes. As the Governor was away when Germanique arrived in December 1858, the Marists decided to put his skills as a geometrician to good use by sending him around the country to survey the mission properties. The long letter he wrote to Br François and Louis-Marie in July 1859, after completing this expedition, provides an excellent survey of the Catholic mission in New Caledonia 5 years after the French occupation (LO 80).⁶

Germanique closes his letter with an account of the opening of his new school.

“On our arrival at Port-de-France, we found the Governor had been back from Tabiti for some days. Fr Fremont, chaplain at Port-de-France, had already spoken to him about the opening of a school, or rather of a Brother teacher, for the school was already run by a sergeant who wished for nothing more than to be relieved of it. His Excellency adopted Fr Fremont’s proposal without any difficulty; he added that the Government would provide me with my daily rations and that an annual salary of 1,800 francs would be allotted me, starting from the 1st June 1859. This salary, which would seem almost fabulous in France for a Brother, is considered the minimum in Caledonia, because everything is so dear. A simple labourer, knowing only how to dig, is paid as much.

Two days after my arrival at Port-de-France, that is, on the 3rd June, I took up my duties as teacher. My class consists of 17 pupils, 6 French, 2 English and 9 Caledonians.

Although these children come from different countries, they all have a little understanding of French and all are learning the French language. I would be very embarrassed anyway if I had to teach them in another, for I know only a few words of English and I mangle them horribly. My little Caledonians live with Mr Durand, the town commandant; they are prisoners of war taken from

⁶ Included in the series: Circulars des Superieurs Generaux: T.2 pp.524-539.

tribes which revolted two years ago. You cannot believe....the joy I experience when I hear French words on the lips of these little copper and bronze faces. I will soon even be able to give them enough instruction for them to be admitted to the grace of baptism. I live with Fr Fremont and I teach in the first house of the town of Port-de-France. As one can imagine, the architecture is not the most elaborate; it is a simple straw hut. But something better is being built for me, and in a few days I will be able to assemble my students in a new classroom." (CS92 p. 538).

Unfortunately, we have no further letters of his and we have to rely on the correspondence of the Marist Fathers, particularly that of the Superior, Fr Rougeyron, to follow the fortunes of both the Brother and the school.⁷ In the beginning, certainly, they had high hopes. In his report on the state of the mission in 1859, Rougeyron announced that Germanique had set up his school and would also, in time, take evening classes with the soldiers to instruct them and train them in church chant. Towns were beginning to be set up at Canala and at South Bay and these would require Brothers too. Both Germanique and the Fathers, then, were not expecting he would be left for long without a companion.⁸

But already by the end the year there were signs that things were not working as well as expected. Germanique had not managed to attract anyone to his evening classes and his school had not grown; in fact, there was no noticeable increase in the roll for over a year. Rougeyron was also already commenting on the appearance of a certain jealousy of the mission among some of the colonists, who were to find a willing ear when the strongly anti-clerical Admiral Guillain arrived as governor in 1861 (R. 8 May 1859).

The situation had not changed much in mid 1860. Germanique was rendering the mission great services as its business agent in the capital, but he did not feel he was achieving much in the school. He had already requested Rougeyron for a transfer to work among the natives at the Conception station.

The mission superior was quite happy for him to go there but he wanted another Brother for Port-de-France. He was asking the Mission Visitor, Fr Poupinel, if he would approach the Brothers for the services of Br Marie Rudolphe whom Germanique himself had suggested as a suitable replacement (R. 15 June 1860).

But 1860 passed, then 1861, and still there was no sign of either a companion or a replacement. Rougeyron comments on the Brother's growing depression at the beginning of 1862: "*One should not be surprised then if one day this Brother should leave the mission which does not want to satisfy his, to me, well founded requests.*" (R. 1 February 1862). In his desire to lead a

⁷ Letters of Rougeyron to Poupinel APM ONC 618 (Here R)

⁸ E. DELBOS, *L'Église Catholique en Nouvelle Calédonie* (1993)

proper religious life he eventually asked Rougeyron for permission to spend a few months at the Mission procure in Sydney, hoping a stay in a regular community (which included a number of his own Brothers) would restore his spiritual and psychological wellbeing. His superior was happy to oblige (R. 6 September 1862). Just how long Germanique stayed there we do not know, but by August 1863 he was back in France (R. 18, August 1863). One of the priests took over the school which had 40 students by the end of 1863, most of them there under government pressure. It closed in 1866 as part of a cost-cutting exercise. It was not until 1873 that three new Brothers arrived to take up where Germanique had left off.

So ended what had seemed to be a very promising experiment. Would the future of the Port-de-France school have been any different if Germanique had received the support he obviously expected from his confreres in France? Given the circumstances in New Caledonia at the time, it seems unlikely. But the despatch of another Brother or two could well have meant the establishment of a viable alternative outside the Capital and would almost certainly have meant the salvation of Germanique's vocation. Thus I do not think we can lay the blame for the failure of this experiment or the loss of Germanique at the door of the Society of Mary, as Avit does in other cases (cf *Annales* 2:217). The superiors of the congregation do not appear to have done the forward-planning or provided the follow-up necessary to its success.

IV. Technical Training

The needs of the missions meant that the Brothers were required to enter areas of education which were mostly closed to them in France. While there seems to have been some disagreement among the priests about the value of Brothers being engaged in regular teaching at this stage, they did see a need for them to provide some technical training for the young converts of Oceania. On Wallis, Brs Joseph-Xavier Luzy and Marie-Augustine Dreuet had been training boys in carpentry and building as early as 1843 (letter of Joseph-Xavier 5 June 1844 APM). After a press was set up, Br Paschase St Martin was helping with the training of some boys in printing in 1847. The same year, hoping to form native Brothers to serve the temporal needs of the missions, Mgr Bataillon set up a college on Futuna. He wrote to Colin requesting qualified European Brothers who would instruct candidates in the main arts and trades (14 October 1847 APM). In the meantime, Joseph-Xavier was appointed to the institution to help out in 1848.

In New Zealand, Mgr Viard opened a college in Auckland in 1849. The following March he informed Governor Grey that he had chosen 4 or 5 of his French Brothers to teach technical subjects to the Maori students there (28 March 1850 APM). But the Brothers concerned, who certainly included Élie-

Régis and Florentin, did not have much time in this employment since they sailed south with Viard and other Marists to the new diocese of Wellington at the end of April.

Bataillon's ventures at colleges on Wallis and Futuna did not come up to his expectations, as we shall see further on, and he decided to send his students to Sydney for training. In 1853 he approached François for three Brothers, a tailor, a shoemaker and a printer to work at these trades at the procure and train the young Oceanians who would be sent to them for that purpose (LO73). In due course, Brs Emery and Augule Chiroussel were sent to Sydney. The former was a tailor who had learnt the art of printing in New Zealand, the latter a shoemaker. Both were assigned apprentices soon after arrival in 1859, one a Futunan, the other a Tokelauan. But while Augule continued in his trade until his death at Villa Maria in 1907, Emery soon "found his needle too heavy" (LO81) and obtained a transfer, first to Bataillon's new college at Clydesdale and then to the Fiji mission. In the letters of Joseph-Xavier, who had been in Sydney since 1851, we find the names of several young islanders who worked with the Brothers at the procure. A similar system operated in New Caledonia. In 1862 Br Bertrand Berselles was at St Louis responsible for building the wagons, other vehicles and boats for the mission. He had one or two apprentices. The other Brothers there also had their specialities and their trainees.⁹

V. Training their successors

Br Joseph-Xavier and the Hermitage of Futuna.

As we have seen, Bataillon set up a college on Futuna to form Marist Brothers from among his converts for the stations of his vicariate. He had also set up one on Wallis for the training of catechists and, he hoped, eventually priests. The foundation on Futuna was called Our Lady of the Hermitage and had as director the newly ordained Fr Isidore Grezel. There were about a dozen students, what a later generation would call 'juniors' there in 1848. Joseph-Xavier was in residence there almost from its beginning and his letters give us glimpses of its development up to the end of 1850. In May 1848, he writes to Colin: "*While waiting (for the bishop's return) I am going to concern myself with training the youngsters at the Hermitage in agriculture, carpentry, joinery and cooking. These youngsters are all keen workers, and I have only one regret, that is not being able to give them occasionally some reward to motivate them even more, such as a piece of cotton cloth or calico or even the Roman Breviary in Latin; a few even know how to read French.*"

⁹ Bernard Brou: Lieux historiques de la Conception, St Louis, Yahoue No. 32 (1982)

(Annales des Missions p.387 – an edited version of the letter of 20 May 1848 in APM).

In November, Paschase paid them a visit on his way to Fiji. He had been working with Augustin at the college of Lano on Wallis and has some interesting comparisons to make between the two establishments:

“The establishment (of Lano) has been going a year and already five boys have been replaced by others. This alarms Fr Meriais, for he is afraid the house will end up continually having to start over again forming new students. He is impatiently awaiting an assistant, but I don’t believe any of our Brothers will be assigned to this post by Monsignor since he seems to want to confine the Brothers to the status of domestics....the Brothers are regarded by the priests generally as scarcely more than domestic servants. This produces a petty rivalry which destroys any ease of relationship. That is obvious at the college where Fr Meriais is the only one obeyed, the Brothers never being upheld. The natives have no notion of the respect they owe and you can see, my dear Brother, that that must militate considerably against the progress of the establishment. Also, if Fr Meriais is absent, all is disorder and confusion.

The college of Kolopelu is quite different. Fr Grezel and Br Joseph, although not seeing eye to eye on Wallis, now find themselves acting with great concord of ideas and views. The Brother has all the confidence which can be accorded him. So the pupils are making marvellous progress and their attitudes seem to me to be infinitely better than those of the college of Lano....

The site, the terrain are, besides, very well chosen. Everything they need is there and their resources seem assured for many months. This has allowed them to take in a very large number of subjects. While I was there, His Lordship was insistent on this point and Br Joseph found himself immediately responsible for the beginners’ class....” (20 December 1848, APM).

It is probably to the years 1848/1849 that we can date the letter misleadingly headed “letter of a New Zealander to Br François” in our archives (LO70; Avit, Annales 3, p.28). It was certainly written by a young Wallisian, most probably among the ‘juniors’ at Kolopelu.

In May 1850, Joseph-Xavier writes: *“I am still on Futuna at the new establishment which is going well and growing more and more. His Lordship...has sent Fr Matthieu and the dear Br Augustin and 8 youngsters from Wallis, which has increased our little community to 25. All is going well on our mountain, i.e. at Our Lady of the Hermitage. Our dear little group of good children have just been increased again by half a dozen little Caledonians.”* (5 May 1850, from original in APM).

In September, in his last letter from Futuna, the picture is still very promising: *“The children of the Hermitage would like to have keys for the little boxes I have made them. If one could add 1 or 2 dozen, they would be very pleased. The little troop at the Hermitage is going quite well. There are about 30 of them. Since the arrival of dear Br Augustin we have built a house*

in stone 50 feet long by 18 feet wide and 12 feet high. It is a major work for so few people. 4 or 5 natives are working with us all the time. The others after class have to work in the plantations." (20 September 1850, from original in APM).

Joseph had to go to Sydney for treatment for elephantiasis at the end of 1850 and never returned to the islands. And within a few years both colleges were on the verge of closing. Why the sudden change? Bataillon was inclined to blame the counter-pull of local custom and tradition and this must indeed have played a part. But the factors mentioned by Paschase in his letter of 1848 also seem to have been significant. Matthieu had replaced Grezel at the Hermitage and, from a hint that Joseph-Xavier drops in a letter from Sydney in January 1851, seems to have made some basic changes there. He also appears to have introduced something of that anti-Brother feeling that Paschase identified at Lano. Bataillon, moreover, was an impatient man. When he saw an opening for the mission in Fiji that year he posted both Matthieu and Augustin there, leaving the relatively new Fr Laurent Dezest to run the Hermitage without any assistance. Some of the most able students were sent with them as catechists. Lack of a clear consistent policy was obviously a factor in its failure. Before he left for Europe in 1856, Bataillon was already considering founding a replacement in Sydney.

The college which was set up at Clydesdale, near Sydney, in 1859 was intended to produce catechists, Brothers and, above all, priests. From the beginning it was organised primarily as a seminary, for Bataillon wanted a local clergy to free him from dependence on the Marists. This is also why he wanted to have his own Brothers. Thus, even when it soon became evident that neither the site nor the type of school was suitable for Pacific Islanders, and the Marists were suggesting a training school for Brothers would be more practicable, Bataillon refused to consider any other option. Although it lasted twelve years, from 1859 to 1871, not one of its students was ordained to the priesthood. A number made the vow of obedience for a two year period¹⁰, but there is no record that any continued as Brothers once they returned to their islands. Emery and Charise were both stationed at Clydesdale for a time, but we do not know what part, if any, they played in the students' formation. We do know, however, that Br Gennade Rolland was responsible for any European postulant or novice co-adjutor Brothers at Villa Maria during those years. (cf Hosie p.146). Thus, if François and the Brothers of France were to be disappointed in their hopes of ever having the joy of welcoming a young confrere from Oceania, this was not the fault of the missionary Brothers.¹¹

¹⁰ John Hosie Challenge (1987) p.177

¹¹ Rf Circular 26 June 1849, CSG2 p.420

In 1865 one of the Clydesdale staff, Fr Jean-Baptiste Rolland, was appointed to the New Zealand mission. This was the period of the Land Wars between the Maori and the European settlers. Although the Marists in New Zealand had taken no steps to foster vocations to the Brothers among the Maori, Rolland felt he had some good prospects among the British soldiers, particularly the Irish. So at the close of hostilities in 1868, he set about founding a monastic establishment at Koru in Taranaki for the formation of co-adjutor Brothers, some of whom might also help with the education of a small number of boys boarding there. Élie-Régis was assigned to help him, not only as builder and farmer, but also as an agent of formation. He was, according to Rolland, "*the man of Providence, the one really necessary for this project. He was helped by several young men whom he strove to form to piety and the exercises of the religious life by getting them to follow, as far as possible, all the points of his own Rule*" (Rolland to Favre 1872 APM). There were about a dozen aspirants at Koru between 1869 and 1874. But the death of Élie-Régis in 1872 struck a mortal blow to the project which Rolland's fellow Marists did not support, and it closed in 1874. One of the last 'Brothers' to leave in 1874 entered our novitiate in Sydney in 1887, but he did not continue.

VI. The Situation in 1870 and Continuity

To sum up, we find Marist Brothers working in education at various levels in the Marist missions of the Pacific between 1836 and 1870, in catechising, primary schooling, training apprentices, technical training in colleges and in the formation of catechists and aspirants to religious life as Brothers. We find them, however, working usually as individuals and carrying out these activities among their other duties. With the exception of Germanique in New Caledonia, and possibly Abraham in Samoa, none were engaged in the work of education for a very significant part of their time in the missions.

We can put this into some sort of perspective if we consider the Brothers' contribution in relation to the educational scene in the Marist missions in 1870.

In New Zealand, the influx of European settlers and the Land Wars had meant the marginalisation of the Maori mission. Not a single priest or Brother was working full time among the Maori. Although a school for Maori girls had opened in Napier in 1867, there was no similar institution for Maori boys at this date. Two Brothers were still active in education, Élie-Régis forming novice Brothers at Koru and Claude-Marie playing a limited role in the boarding school at Nelson. The Superiors at St Genis-Laval had also received requests for Brothers for European schools at Napier and Wellington from Marist missionaries in those places.

There were no Marist Brothers on either Wallis or Futuna, the last, Marie-Nizier, having been transferred in 1863.

In Samoa, there was a school for catechists at Saleufi near Apia which had been established about 1859. Abraham had been working there for a number of years. In 1866 Bataillon asked Louis-Marie for Brothers to take it over, promising Abraham could join his confreres when the new community was set up (rf reply of Louis-Marie 18 December 1867 CSG3: 565-7). But by the time Brs Ulbert and Landry arrived in Apia in April 1871, Abraham had died.

In New Caledonia, of the three Marist Brothers working there, at least one was doing some teaching. At Ouagap, Thérèse had 50 boys helping with the upkeep of station and he was also taking them for classes. (Letter of Fr Villard, 10 June 1870, AM 3, 11-12) The new governor was also looking for Brothers to re-establish the school at Port-de-France.

The Brothers at the procure in Sydney had had contacts with young islanders through their apprentices at Villa Maria and the students at Clydesdale. In 1870 there were no longer any apprentices in residence and most of the Clydesdale students were on their way home prior to the closing of the college. On the other hand, the repeated requests made to St Genis-Laval by the Marists in Australia for Brothers for the European schools were about to be answered.

When we look at the same areas after the advent of the teaching Brothers, we can see that in general there was no, or very little, continuity with their predecessors.

When the Brothers arrived in New Zealand in 1876, they were destined for European schools. By that time Élie-Régis was dead and Koru closed. Claude-Marie did rejoin his confreres at Napier for a brief period, but only as housekeeper. None of the foundations the Brothers opened or took over in the 1880s and 1890s had any direct association with their predecessors, although there were also several attempts to involve them in education projects associated with the Maori mission.

In Samoa Brs Ulbert and Landry took over the catechists' school in May 1871. With the arrival of another Brother in 1873, an English school was opened in Apia. The newcomers had problems of health and morale, and by 1876 had been forced to give up the catechists' school. In 1877 war broke out among the Samoans and for that and other reasons, the two remaining Brothers returned to Sydney. The Institute did not return to Samoa until 1888.

In Sydney, the missionary Brothers at Villa Maria, mostly retired, had little contact with the teaching Brothers who came in 1872. But Marie-Nizier spent some months with them that year to help with the cooking.

Only in New Caledonia do we find a significant overlap between the two groups. When the teaching Brothers came in 1873 they were, in effect,

re-opening the school started by Germanique in 1859, though this time for the children of the colonists. Moreover, all three Brothers working with the Fathers, Bertrand, Aristide and Thérèse, applied to return to community life with their confreres, although only the latter 2 eventually did so. They were of particular value when the Brothers were invited to take over the mission schools, especially Thérèse, who even became a member of the district council. The problem here was not so much one of lack of continuity but rather the opposite. So close was the continuity that the Fathers felt that the new Brothers at the mission establishments should be dependent on them in the same way the old had been. This was to cause much dissension between Fathers and Brothers over the next twenty years.

APPENDIX

The Status of the Missionary Marist Brothers

A key question arising about the early Brothers on the Marist missions which applies particularly to those working in New Zealand, is whether they belonged to the Little Brothers of Mary or were Coadjutors of the Society of Mary. After 1839, when the two groups were separated in France, both provided men for Oceania but, whichever group they came from, they all ended up in practice working with the priests as coadjutors. Thus, missionary Brothers professed as Little Brothers of Mary and appearing as such in the records of the Marist Brothers also figure in the records of the Marist Fathers as coadjutor Brothers of the Society. The general attitude among the Fathers was that by the very act of leaving for the missions, these Brothers chose to become coadjutors.¹ The issue is further complicated by the fact that, on their return to France, a few of those professed as teaching Brothers appear to have ended their days in the houses of the Society as lay Brothers rather than returning to the houses of their congregation.² Up to the present, then, with the situation not fully clarified, the practice has been to consider the individual case on its merits, while accepting the right of both congregations to lay claim to men on the grounds of either profession or service.³

The question of how these Brothers saw themselves on going to the missions and how their parent body saw them, has been considered elsewhere (q.v. Catechist Brothers for the Mission). The question considered here is that of jurisdiction and status which has not been treated in detail elsewhere. Up to 1852 there is no problem, for the Brothers, like the Fathers came under Fr Colin as Superior General, their own superior, Br François, having the title only of Director General. Thus, the number of letters of rule⁴ written by the missionary Marist Brothers to Colin during the period 1836 to 1852 exceeds the number written to François in the same period. On the mission, of course,

¹ J. COSTE SM. *Lectures on Society of Mary History (Marist Fathers) 1786-1854*, Rome 1965, p. 190.

² *Ibid.*

³ M. O'MEEGHAN SM. *An Introduction to Marist History*, Greenneadows 1964, p. 66.

⁴ Letters of rule — i.e. personal reports priests and Brothers were required by Rule to write to the Superior General.

their effective superiors were the local head of mission, the Provincial appointed by the Society and the Vicar Apostolic.

But in 1852 Colin informed the Brothers' meeting in their second General Chapter at the Hermitage that it was no longer possible for the Superior General of the Fathers to be also General of the Brothers, even in the limited role he had been playing since 1845.⁵ François was now Superior General of the Marist Brothers in name (at least from 1854) as well as in practice. But while the new arrangement changed nothing for the Brothers in France, it had important consequences for those in Oceania, as some were quick to realise. This is seen most plainly in a letter written by Br Marie-Nizier to François from Futuna in 1855 enquiring whether the formal separation of the two branches of the Society, the priests and the Brothers, meant that the missionary Brothers were no longer one with their confrères in France.⁶

In his reply François informed him that the General Chapter had discussed this matter in one of its sessions and been assured that the Brothers of Oceania still formed part of the Society (of Brothers).⁷ It was François's intention to make communication with the Brothers in the Pacific one of his ordinary responsibilities. Moreover, when Fr Favre, Colin's successor as Superior General of the Fathers, sent Fr Poupinel to the Pacific as Visitor General of the Marist Missions in 1857, François wrote to Poupinel asking him to look after the interests of his missionary Brothers as well, providing a list of the names.⁸ In this capacity, Poupinel wrote regular reports on these Brothers until the end of his term of office in 1870.

François was succeeded as Superior General of the Brothers by Br Louis-Marie in 1860. The latter took a further step by placing the correspondence with the missionaries in the hands of one of the Assistants, Br Paschal, who was responsible for the Province of the Hermitage. In effect, insofar as the Brothers were concerned, the establishments they were employed in were attached to the Hermitage Province and Paschal became their Assistant.⁹ When he died prematurely in 1867, Br Philigone, Assistant for the Aubenas Province, was appointed to replace him in the congregation's dealings with the men in Oceania, and he became responsible for building up reserves for the missions.¹⁰ Finally, in 1875, after schools had been opened at the Cape of Good Hope, in Australia, Samoa and New Caledonia, the

⁵ COSTE, p. 194.

⁶ Letter of 23 May 1855. Rf Joseph Ronzon. Jean Marie Dclorme. Frère Marie-Nizier. Lyon 1995, p. 136 note.

⁷ Letter of 4 April 1856. Lettres de Frère François. T 2, pp. 273-274.

⁸ Letter of 17 January 1859. Hosie. p. 120.

⁹ Letter of 15 November 1862, CSG 3, pp. 523-526.

¹⁰ Letter of Br Louis-Marie to Fr Poupinel, 20 December 1867. CSG 3, pp. 567-571.

General Administration gave the missions of Oceania a Provincial of their own who then became responsible for all the Brothers of that area, whether they were working in the schools or not.

When the Brothers began arriving specifically for schools from 1870 onwards, some of their missionary confrères applied to join the new communities being established, others did not. Some were accepted into these communities, some were not. Some who joined the new arrivals returned after a time to the houses of the Fathers. Age, health, habit, the thought of being a drain on the slender resources of the new foundations, the continuing needs of the mission stations for their services – all these factors have to be taken into account in considering their responses to the changed situation. For example, 13 arrived in New Zealand between 1838 and mid 1842. Of the two still there when the teaching Brothers arrived in 1876, one applied to join them, spent a few years in community, and then returned to his former place of residence, while the other continued on where he was. Whatever the case, though, it was the Provincial of Oceania who, in consultation with the local bishop or Vicar Apostolic and the Marist Visitor or local superiors, had the final say.

To sum up: in the period up to 1852, during which the two branches acknowledged a common Superior General, the question of jurisdiction does not surface. After 1852, however, it does, since the two types of Brother on the mission, although basically doing the same type of work, now answered to two different Generals. The jurisdiction claimed in a general way by the Marist Brothers at the General Chapter that year was not disputed by the Fathers, and was in fact underlined in a special way by the Visitor General of the Marist Missions in his dealings with the Brothers working in those missions. Br Louis-Marie is even more explicit: “We will always consider you as ours, even if you have given yourselves to faraway missions and have to devote and consecrate yourselves entirely to them. It is even by that dedication and those sacrifices that you will contribute more than all the others to the good of our common work.”¹¹

But, while the situation was clearly appreciated at the higher levels of both Congregations at the time, it cannot have been so clear to those at the local levels where, before 1870, things proceeded as they had always done and, after 1870, the Brothers concerned responded in such different ways to the changed situation brought about by the arrival of their confrères for the schools. With the deaths of the last of the early missionaries and the rise of generations who had known no apostolate in the Congregation other than schools, they quickly became a forgotten generation, their status even not known by their successors. It is hoped this study has clarified the situation.

¹¹ Letter of 15 November 1862, CSG 3, p. 525.

THE AIM OF THE BROTHERS ACCORDING TO TWO INSTRUCTIONS CONTAINED IN THE MANUSCRIPTS OF BROTHERS FRANÇOIS AND JEAN-BAPTISTE

These two instructions reveal some points in common which are so obvious that we may be certain that they had a common source, but their numerous differences also show that this source had been interpreted and modified. The question then is: who was the author of these texts? Was it Brother François who copied Brother Jean Baptiste or vice versa? Or, more probably, did both these Brothers copy an instruction of Father Champagnat which they later modified? To help the reader to decide, we present here the two texts in question followed by a critical study aimed at clarifying them.

1. INSTRUCTION NOTEBOOK OF BROTHER FRANÇOIS, p. 415...

[415 B] Aim of the Brothers.

Take great care about what you do and what you teach; always do this and you will save both yourself and those who listen to you. (Timothy)

I. To work at our sanctification and that of the children, this is the purpose of our Institute, the purpose of our vocation. The salvation of a Brother is tied to that of the children confided to him. They must precede him or follow him into heaven. Because those who have charge of others cannot save themselves alone. Their salvation is accompanied by that of a great number. In fact the vocation of the Brothers is an apostolate. The most precious part of the Church is confided to them. They share with the priest the ministry of the Word.

— The Brothers must do the first sowing and the priest cultivate it. - The Brothers hold the place of the parents with regard to the children. The Brothers' schools are the refuges God has prepared for the children in order to preserve them from the corruption of the world. They are the remedy that God has prepared to cure and prevent the evil of impiety.

— Most of the parents are not capable of giving their children Christian instruction; either because they are too busy, or because they are impious or not very religious. God raises up the Brothers to replace them. [416] The enemies of religion want to get hold of the young in order to inculcate their

pernicious principles, to demoralize them, and, by taking from them the precious gift of their faith and their innocence, cause them to be lost. But God, always rich in mercy, has given to the Church several religious orders whose purpose is to thwart these perfidious and wicked designs.

— We belong to a century in which men have a thirst for knowledge. Instruction is spreading as far as the smallest villages. The wicked, inspired by the Angel of Darkness, make use of this to instil into the minds and hearts of the children, the most perverse and pernicious principles, the most subtle poison. - They would like the children to learn everything, that they become adept in all the fields of learning, except religion. The Brothers' schools were established to throw up a dam against this flood of false doctrine. They were established to provide knowledge of Jesus and his religion. They were established to regenerate our country, to prevent the faith from ever being extinguished among us.

— The vocation of the Brothers is, then, a sublime one. The aim which they adopt is of such importance that we can say that on its accomplishment depends the salvation of a great number of souls, the preservation of the faith and of good morals, both the spiritual and temporal happiness of the present generation and those which will follow it.

II. In order to reach their goal most easily and most perfectly, the Brothers must give their pupils, along with religious instruction, secular instruction; that is, they must form not only good Christians but good citizens, by seeing that the pupils acquire all the knowledge that may be necessary to them later on. But they must remember that the imparting of the human sciences is not the end of their vocation but only a means to attain it.

— It is to attract and win the children that the Brothers agree to teach them the secular subjects. - They are only teachers in order to be apostles. A Brother who would be content to impart to his pupils secular knowledge would not fulfil the purpose of his vocation at all. He would degrade and demean himself. Instead of being an apostle and an ambassador of Jesus Christ to the children, he would be merely a schoolmaster; instead of being a guardian angel to the young people confided to him, he would only be a base mercenary; instead of being the doctor, the propagator of the truth, he would only be a propagator of vanity and untruth; instead of co-operating with the Church, he would be co-operating with the enemies of Christ and of the Church.

— This Brother would render himself unworthy of his vocation, he would be opposing the designs that God had in raising up the Congregation of which he is a part and in calling him to the religious state. He would offend God; he would be unfaithful to his vocation; he would profane the grace of his state and the talents that he has received in employing them only for the propagation of the profane sciences.

— This Brother would distress his Founder, showing himself to be an unworthy disciple and destroying his work; he would scandalise his Brothers, become for them a stumbling block [418] and paralyse their zeal. He would disappoint the hope of the benefactors of his school or of the authorities who called him and honoured him with their confidence.

— He would render himself unworthy of the esteem and confidence of the parents.

— And he would become deceitful and treacherous, cruel and homicidal with regard to his pupils; deceitful and treacherous, abusing his authority and position over them, making them love vanity and having them swallow the poison; because learning, without knowledge of Jesus Christ, without virtue is a poison; cruel and homicidal, because he would be killing the souls that he is called to save.

III. The father and the mother who would refuse to their children food and clothing would be regarded as cruel, barbarous, hard-hearted, unworthy of life. - The Brother who refuses to break the bread of the Word of God for his children is even more culpable because he allows the soul to die which is more excellent than the body. St Paul says that the one who does not care for his own, especially for those of his household, has renounced the faith and is worse than an infidel. What must we think of a Brother, then, who neglects his children, who fails to instruct them, who does not correct their faults and vices, who does not have them fulfil their religious duties, etc. (See: Godescard: *Vie des saints*, February 5, Vol 2, p 76.80, *Martyrs du Japon*).

— The master employs a domestic in order to be served. The Brother takes charge of his children solely to form them to virtue that they may become better, [419] to teach them their duties and how to carry them out. If you allow your Brother, your neighbour, to perish, says the Holy Spirit, God will ask you to account for his soul. - This accounting will be terrible for a Brother who, by reason of his state, by reason of his duty, was obliged to procure salvation for those whom God, the Church, society and the fathers of the families confided to him.

— We don't in any way show love for the children by making them learned but neglecting to make them saints; to introduce them to all the human sciences and leaving them in ignorance of the sciences of religion, the way of salvation, the means of correcting their vices and acquiring the Christian virtues. — This is not loving them either for time or for eternity.

— In fact, in spite of the advance of knowledge and of science, the change of ideas and the quest to penetrate the secrets of nature, in spite of all the efforts to educate the people, none of this has prevented a single tear falling from the eyes of the poor; nor reduced their plaintive cries; they are not better sheltered from misery and misfortunes. — The inventions, the discoveries, the most ingenious machines, the railways, the power of steam, the prodigies of

industry, the secrets of science can do nothing for the good of mankind. — None of that can make man better or happier.

— Furthermore, it has been proved, demonstrated by the books of statistics of hospitals and prisons throughout Europe, that great misfortunes, insanity, science and other crimes increase in proportion to education and the so-called advance of knowledge. Such is the finding of conscientious research into the correlation between criminality (*Pensées d'Humbert*, C 97...) and [420] education:

1. as education becomes more widespread year by year, the number of crimes and misdemeanours increases proportionally;
2. the number of those who can read and write who are accused of crimes is twenty percent higher than that of illiterate accused; and those having a higher education account for two thirds more, these figures being in proportion to the numbers belonging to each of these classes;
3. the degree of perversity in the crime, the chance of escaping the pursuit of justice and prosecution are in proportion with the level of education;
4. the counties in which education is the most widespread are those which have the most crimes; that is to say, morality appears to be in inverse ratio to level of instruction;
5. relapse into crime is more frequent among educated offenders than among those who can neither read nor write (Report to the Ministry). Thus, the less religious a country is the more crimes are committed in it, especially if it has a high level of learning.

IV. So it has been well established that learning does not procure happiness, neither for the individual nor for society, and that a Brother who would devote himself merely to making his pupils learned, far from doing them any good, would actually be harming them.

The Brothers must imitate the famous Missionaries who carried the light of faith to China. They instructed the people in mathematics, astronomy, etc., only that they might preach Jesus Christ.

— The Jesuit, Father Rieu, is an admirable model in this matter. He won the esteem of the learned men of this Empire [421] by his astronomical demonstrations; he drew them geographical maps etc.; then from the sciences of this world he moved skilfully to those of Heaven, — The mandarins, inspired by their love of mathematics, came in crowds to listen to him. — He was in demand everywhere; they listened to him with respect when he spoke to them of God, and with admiration when he sounded the depths of human knowledge. — A great number asked for Baptism.— For seventeen years Father Rieu used this method of winning souls. and during these long years, which would have exhausted anyone's patience, this good Father submitted to all their demands. He remained discreet and reserved awaiting the day when he would finally be allowed to be a missionary. —That day finally came in

China and Father Ricci reaped in joy what had been sown in tears. He was able to announce to the doctors and the people the truths of salvation and they were converted in great numbers.

— The learned, lacking in piety and interior spirit, said Fr. Balthazar Alvarez, are men of no account; in spite of all their knowledge and the pride that masters them, they are, in fact, so many scourges for their community and the Church. If I was in charge of the appointments of all the religious of this kind I would send them all to the kitchen rather than make teachers or masters of them.

— Learning in the mouth of a fool is like a javelin in the hand of an intoxicated man. (Prov 26). We are to blame, says St Gregory, for all the people we see perish without attempting to aid them. If it is thus with regard to persons we are not in charge of, what will it be with regard to those God has confided to us? If by ignorance a child happens to be lost, says St Liguori, God will demand an account of his soul of those whose duty it was to instruct him. To form children in the sciences and to neglect their souls would be like a doctor who, instead of giving his patient remedies, only thought of decking him out in fine clothes.

Extract from THE APOSTOLATE OF THE MARIST BROTHER a manuscript of Brother Jean Baptiste

Chapter 1: The Aim of the Brothers

1— The aim of the Brothers is the instruction and Christian Education of the children.

Take great care about what you do and what you teach; always do this, and you will save both yourself and those who listen to you. (St Paul to Timothy), thus, to work at the instruction and sanctification of the children is the purpose of our Institute and the aim of your vocation.

In this century most of parents are not capable of giving their children instruction and religious education, either because they are too busy with the things of this world, because they do not know enough about their religion themselves, or because they are irreligious and consequently indifferent to the salvation of their children, which means that an infinite number of young people would remain in ignorance of the truths of the Christian Faith and would sink into vice if God, in his ineffable mercy, had not taken pity on them and had raised up pious masters to take charge of their Christian upbringing.

Why have these schools, both private and public, multiplied more and more? Schools for children, schools for adolescents, schools for adults, day schools, night schools, Sunday schools. Why are these rooms opening everywhere for the care of young children, and even crèches for new-born infants? Why, finally, all this eagerness, all this foresight, all these institutions, unknown before our day, to the eternal honour of the sound part of society, as to the eternal opprobrium of the other. Is it simply progress, improvement, as they like to call it? No, all this has been made necessary by a deep need of our times; it is an accusatory remedy for the evil at work in us. Can you not see that the roles are changed, inverted; that it is from the family that society ought to draw its strength, but now, on the contrary, society is taking the place of the family? If education in the home was what it ought to be, would we ever dream of substituting adoption for maternal care? Would we have ever thought, a century ago, of creating refuges for teaching young children the elements of religion, or founding crèches to give them milk and essential care? And why not? Because at that time the family was Christian. There were, undoubtedly, schools to perfect and complete their education but the first of schools was the paternal hearth. In these new services of charitable aid, we have a thousand reasons for praising God and for blessing the generous souls who conceived the idea, but all observant minds will also see in this a frightening revelation of the sadly decadent state of our morals. (Cardinal Giraud, *Instruction pastorale*)

We are living in a time in which man has a thirst for knowledge; instruction is spreading as far as the smallest hamlets. Philosophers and unbelievers, inspired by the spirit of darkness, use this need to learn which has taken hold of men to instil into the hearts of children their pernicious principles; they strive to take possession of young people in order to inculcate their fatal doctrine, to demoralise them, to cause them to be lost by stripping them of faith and morals. They want the children to learn everything, to be initiated into all the branches of learning except religion. Christian schools were established to paralyse these efforts of the wicked, to throw up a dam against this flood of false doctrine by giving the children, along with civil instruction, a sound and solid Christian instruction.

The aim of the Brothers is, then, above all, to make Christians of the children, that is:

1. to instruct them in the truths of the Christian faith, the commandments of God, the dispositions necessary for the worthy reception of the sacraments, the necessity and the method of prayer;
2. to preserve their innocence and to have them avoid sin by keeping them at school for most of the day and, by this means, protecting them from

laziness, bad companions and all the occasions they would have of deviating from the path of virtue and of offending God if they were left to their own devices;

3. to form them in virtue by giving them the means of acquiring it, by developing their good inclinations, inspiring them with a horror of vice, destroying their faults and correcting their character.
4. to bring them to love religion by showing them that it is only by this means that man can attain happiness, even in this life; to form them and to habituate them to its practices right from their childhood.
5. to teach them their duties towards their parents, the pastors of the Church, the head of State, the magistrates and society, and to spare no effort to make the children obedient and respectful, good Christians and virtuous citizens;
6. to inspire them with a love of work, to give them habits of order and cleanliness, to make them love their state, to give them the means of improving it, of rendering it happy, honourable and sanctified.

2— Primary education is only a means to give this Christian instruction more perfectly. The Brother who would limit himself to giving the children civil instruction would not be fulfilling the end of his vocation.

To attain this end more efficaciously, the Brothers give the children primary instruction, but this part of their teaching is only a means of retaining them longer, of following them more closely, of giving them more solid instruction in religion and, in a word, winning them more easily to God and of grounding them more perfectly in the practice of virtue and their duties as Christians. The Brothers must never forget that the teaching of the profane sciences is not the purpose of their vocation, it is only a means of attaining it, from which follows:

1. that a Brother who would be satisfied with giving his pupils civil instruction would not be fulfilling the purpose of his vocation; he would be obstructing the design God had in calling him to the religious life and in founding Christian schools;
2. that he would be offending God and would be neglecting the first and most important of his duties as teacher. In fact, the holy Lateran Council made it a commandment for teachers to form the children in piety and to give them solid instruction in the truths of faith. Here is the tenor of its decree:

Man being disposed to evil from his youth, it is a very great and important work to accustom children to virtue from a tender age, this is why we command that teachers be not satisfied with teaching the children the principles of human learning, but that they will be equally solicitous to teach them the truths of

religion, and thus they will teach them the commandments of God, the articles of Faith, the canticles and psalms, the lives of the saints. We order that on Sundays and feast days classes be given to the children on subjects which concern religion and good morals and that the masters apply themselves to instruct them in Christian doctrine and exhort them to good with all the care of which they are capable. Finally we want the children to be sent to church, not only to hear Mass but also to attend Vespers and the divine offices as well as instructions and sermons.

3. that he would be disappointing the hopes of the benefactors of the schools and the authorities who called on him or support him, and he would abuse the confidence of the parents who confide their children to him to give them, before all else, religious principles, and who depend on him particularly for all that concerns this essential part of the instruction and education of their children. To neglect a point so important is, in a sense, to steal money from the parents or the salary provided by the founders, and there are even certain circumstances of this kind where there is an obligation of restitution (Monseigneur Devie).
4. that he would distress the Church by failing to fulfil the mission it is confiding to him, that he would insult the founder of his Order, that he would even inflict injury on this Order by abandoning its purpose and introducing laxity in such a fundamental matter.
5. that he would degrade himself and dishonour himself in ceasing to be an apostle, to co-operate with the pastors of the Church so that he would become a mere school master and a propagator of vanity and untruth.
6. that he would be cruel to his pupils and commit a type of homicide on them in depriving them of religious instruction, which is the life of the soul, and exposing them, for the want of such instruction, to being lost eternally.

To deprive children of instruction and of Christian education is to deprive them of the most precious of benefits, it is to deprive them of the only thing really necessary and that nothing can replace. In fact, what use can other benefits be without faith and the knowledge of God? What will it serve, for example, to have learned spelling and acquired a knowledge of languages when death has reduced us to silence? One can die at ten as easily as at fifty or sixty. So what will become of the child whom we neglect to instruct in the truths of salvation? What use will a perfect knowledge of geography be to him in another world, and what will it avail him in *eternity* to be conversant with the history of the various eras of *time*? What will it serve for him to have shown great promise in the things of this world, for which he was not made, because there will be no recompense in heaven for vain studies, no place of honour for those who have distinguished themselves in the sciences. (Malbranche) Alas! all profane knowledge counts for nothing in heaven and

is so much dross when compared to the knowledge of Jesus Christ (St Paul). Unfortunate is he, says St Augustine, who knows everything but does not know God. To teach the children the sciences and neglect their souls puts one in mind of a person who, seeing a house well decorated but with walls falling in ruins would not think of rebuilding them but only of embellishing the exterior; or of a doctor, seeing a patient in declining health, instead of giving him remedies which would cure him, is concerned only with procuring for him superb garments. What does it serve a tree to have branches, green leaves and a beautiful appearance if its roots are wasting away? (St John Chrysostom)

The father or the mother who would refuse to give their children food and clothing would be considered very blameworthy; but the Brother who would refuse to break the bread of the Word of God for his pupils is still more culpable, since he allows their souls to die which are infinitely more valuable than their bodies. The one who takes no care of his own children and who does not instruct them in the truths of salvation, says Saint Paul, has renounced the faith and is worse than an infidel. Let no one tell me, says St John Chrysostom, that these words meet some needs of the body; far from weakening the reproach I have made against you, it renders it more serious. If St Paul ranks the one who neglects the temporal needs of his own children lower than an apostate or an infidel, what rank must be given to those who take no interest in their spiritual needs, the most important of which is instruction? What must you aim at in instructing the children? said Mgr. Devie to two primary school teachers on retreat. Is it to make them scholars? I would regard this idea as a kind of apostasy, if it entered the mind of a religious entrusted with the bringing up of young people. If you leave your Brother to perish, says the Holy Spirit somewhere in the Scriptures, God will demand you to account for his soul. He says elsewhere, if the impious sin, if the just fall, they will perish in their iniquities and I will ask of you their blood. We are to blame, says St Gregory, for the death of all those we see perishing without going to their aid. If it is thus for persons who are not in our charge, what will it be for those whom God has confided to us. If through ignorance a child happens to be lost, God will demand an account of his soul of those who ought to have instructed him. (St Liguori) This accounting will be terrible for a religious who, by virtue of his state and duty, was obliged to procure the salvation of the children that God, the Church and the fathers of families had confided to them.

3. — Secular education is worthless for the well-being of man; it is incapable of making him better or happier.

Education gives ideas, but it does not give integrity, nor morals, nor any virtue; it will produce scholars but it will never produce citizens. The Romans

and the Greeks who have bequeathed to us the principal works of this kind, were not lacking in education; this instruction did not make them better, it did not reform them, far from it. It was when they were most highly educated that they were most corrupt; all their sciences and all their enlightenment were not able to prevent their sinking into and being lost in the cesspool of iniquities. It is said that we know more at fourteen years of age today than was formerly known at the age of twenty-five; because of this our century is even called the century of the enlightenment, and, nevertheless, if facts can still prove something, one thing alone is certain: education without religion which is spreading everywhere, rather than making people better has only corrupted them further. (*In the margin*: Gaumes the whole paragraph)

In fact, when we consult the annals of criminality, the statistics drawn up by the heads of government departments, we see that education, far from halting the progress of evil, actually encourages it, when it is not supported by religious principles. Thus the logic of the official figures leads the statisticians to prove:

1. That crime increases in proportion to the spread of education.;
2. the number of those who can read and write who are accused of crimes is twenty percent higher than that of illiterate accused; and that the class of accused having a higher education accounts for two thirds more, these figures being in proportion to the numbers belonging to each of these classes; In other words, out of 25,000 men who can neither read nor write 5 will be convicted of crimes; but out of 25,000 men who received a high education there will be 15 convictions;
3. the degree of perversity in the crime, is in proportion with the level of education;
4. the counties in which education is the most widespread are those which have the most crimes, that is to say, morality appears to be in inverse ratio to level of instruction;
5. relapse into crime is more frequent among educated offenders than among those who can neither read nor write.

The same statistics indicate that mental disturbance increases in proportion to the level of civilization and education and is much rarer among the less enlightened. Thus London and Paris, seats of civilization and centres of the sciences and knowledge, are the cities having the greatest number of lunatics. London which has 1,400,000 inhabitants has 7000 lunatics, which is one in 200. Paris with a population of 1,000,000 has 4,000 lunatics, which is one in 220, while St Petersburg has only one lunatic for every 3,100 inhabitants. Out of 100 cases of derangement 80 are due to the disordered state of the passions. The less there is of faith among a people, the higher is the incidence of mental derangement.; such is the formula which summarises

all the research of science, and such are also the results, as far as the morality of man is concerned, when it is not accompanied by a knowledge and practice of religion.

Education contributes nothing towards the well-being and temporal happiness of man. Thus, in spite of all the advance in knowledge, in spite of the efforts being made to propagate this knowledge among the people, it has not prevented a single tear falling from the eyes of the poor; they are not any the better protected from destitution and misfortune. The inventions, the discoveries, the most ingenious machines, the railways the power of steam, the prodigies of industry, the secrets of science can do nothing for the good of mankind. — None of that can make man better or happier (*in the margin*: Mgr. le C de Bonald). So we don't show love for the children by making them learned but neglecting to make them saints; we do not love them by introducing them to all the human sciences and leaving them in ignorance of the sciences of religion, the way of salvation, the means of correcting their vices and acquiring the virtues. No, this is not loving the children either for time or for eternity.

Alas! Alas! exclaimed the unfortunate Jouffroy on his death bed, all this knowledge leads to nothing; one catechism lesson is worth a thousand times more.

O father, wrote a young man some time after leaving the college where he had received a brilliant education, O father, from what unhappiness you would have preserved me, if instead of sending me to college, you had made me work with you at your workbench.

An unfortunate young man, plunged in vice and misery, meeting his teacher one day, addressed him with this crushing reproach: Sir, I must tell you that I feel under no obligation towards you, for what you taught me has done me more harm than good.

Woe, woe upon that house and the instruction I was given there; if only I had never crossed that threshold, I would not now be on my way to the scaffold. Such was the curse uttered by an unfortunate who had been ruined by an education devoid of religious principles.

What did your master teach you? a philosopher asked a young man who was leaving college. Grammar, replied the young man. And what else? Mathematics. And what else? History, etc. Did he teach you your duties to the gods? Your duties to men? Have you learned to live virtuously? asked the philosopher. - No, he did not tell me about that. - Well then, he has treated and raised you like an animal and he will be responsible for all the evil you do during your life.

(Commentary on the Instructions of Brother Jean Baptiste and Brother François on the purpose of the Brothers.)

MANUSCRIPTS OF BROTHER JEAN BAPTISTE AND BROTHER FRANÇOIS IN «PETIT ECRIT» OF 1924

This small article presupposes that the reader has some acquaintance with several documents which were sent to him and which take stock of the analysis of the manuscripts of Brother François and Brother Jean Baptiste, carried out over the last two years. The list is as follows:

- *L'apostolat d'un Frère Mariste*, copy, by Br Paul Sester, of a manuscript of Brother Jean Baptiste, formerly titled " Treatise on Education", masterpiece of a collection of manuscripts of Brother Jean-Baptiste, the study of which is only beginning.

- *Construction d'une littérature spirituelle mariste. Des instructions du P. Champagnat aux livres fondamentaux de l'institut des Frères Maristes*, 247 pages, by Br André Lanfrey, Lyons, 1997.

- In it I show that *L'apostolat d'un Frère Mariste* (ADFM) must be dated after 1852 and that it is an essential source of the Rule of 1852, the Teacher's Guide, the Life of the Founder, and of *Avis, Leçons, Sentences*. That means that thanks to this «discovery», the possibility of our understanding the process of compiling the fundamental books of the Institute is considerably improved. From this point on, a critical study of the Life of Father Champagnat is possible.

I also demonstrate the close correspondence that exists between the manuscripts of Brother Jean Baptiste and numerous instructions of Brother François; this correspondence is such that one can formulate the hypothesis that the documents left by these two disciples of Father Champagnat pass on to us some of the instructions of the latter, collected by themselves or by others, and more or less modified and filled out to meet their needs. Finally, I have found a certain number of the authors whose works have largely inspired these texts: Rodriguez and Saint Jure, Jesuits, Cardinal La Luzerne, the great moral authority of the clergy at the beginning of the Restoration, Mgr Dupanloup, celebrated teacher of the middle of the 19th century.

- *L'apostolat d'un Frère Mariste. Introduction critique*, by André Lanfrey, 51 pages.

A résumé of the preceding work, intended, as the title implies, to serve as an introduction to ADFM.

It contains on the last page a simplified plan of the process of construction of the Marist literature which I have placed as an appendix to this document.

Le «Petit Ecrit» de 1824, sources et postérité d'un texte fondateur, André Lanfrey, November 1997, 45 pages.

This completes the preceding works by showing that the «*Petit Ecrit*»

(short written summary) of 1824 given by Father Champagnat at the time of the construction of the Hermitage, and of which Brother Jean Baptiste gives «the substance» in the «Life» on pages 133-135, a work now lost, is probably one of the essential sources of ADFM and of the early Marist literature. This fact adds to our previous conclusions an element of great importance since one has the certitude that the manuscripts of Brother François and Brother Jean Baptiste reflect not only an oral teaching but also a text of the Founder, perhaps the first legislative text of the Institute. But this lost writing is known only through a résumé of Brother Jean Baptiste, much adapted, and is probably diluted in the manuscripts, interspersed with various glosses, commentaries and examples, quotations from Scripture and from the Lives of the Saints. Nevertheless, it does not seem impossible to disengage from this matrix by means of meticulous critical work. The following text will give some idea of this process.

THE «LIFE» pp. 128-130

Here is what Brother Jean Baptiste writes:

«During the summer, he thoroughly instructed them on the religious vocation, on the aim of the Institute and on zeal for the Christian education of children. So they wouldn't forget what he had taught them about these different matters, he gave the Brothers a short written summary of the main things he had said.»

Then follow about fifteen paragraphs which set out the «substance» of this «short written summary». We will begin with a detailed examination of the first of these, on the end of the Brothers, then the series of 12 articles on what the Brothers must do to educate the children.

THE AIM OF THE BROTHERS

The aim of the Brothers in joining this Institute has been above all to ensure the salvation of their souls, and to render themselves worthy of the huge weight of glory that God promises them and that Jesus Christ merited for them by his blood and death on the Cross.

ADMF seems to take up this theme again in the first three chapters. Here are the headings and subheadings:

- The aim of the Brothers
- Excellence of this aim
 - Nothing more sublime or more excellent

Nothing more meritorious, nothing more agreeable to God
 Nothing more honourable

- How advantageous it is to work for the salvation of souls
 - It is a mark of predestination
 - It is to assure one's salvation
 - It is to be assured of magnificent rewards.

So it is probable that these chapters retain something of the «small written summary» but we do not have the time to undertake a detailed study of it at the moment as our attention has been drawn by other texts we feel to be more interesting still.

THE AIM OF THE INSTITUTE ACCORDING TO ADFM AND THE FIRST NOTEBOOK OF INSTRUCTIONS OF BROTHER FRANÇOIS

The first chapter of ADFM (On the aim of the Brothers) and the instruction of Brother François entitled «Aim of the Brothers» (1^o carnet d' instructions , p. 415) have so many points in common that it is evident they have one common source. At the same time they show some important differences in their construction: certain passages of one are not in the other or are in a different place. This fact suggests that if there is indeed an original reference text, this has been modified and augmented. The plan of the two texts, given below, will enable the reader to compare them.

ADFM Chap.1 : «On the aim of the Brothers»	Carnet 307 p. 415 : «Aim of the Brothers»
To sanctify oneself by sanctifying the children; Paul to Timothy.	Idem
	The salvation of a Brother is tied to that of the children entrusted to him.
	The Brother shares in the ministry of the priest.
The Brothers have been chosen by Providence to take the place of defaulting parents.	Idem
Without Christian schools the children would be lost. (Champagnat)	
Long quotation from Cardinal Giraud (1850)	

THE AIM OF THE BROTHERS

	The enemies of religion want to cause the children to be lost. God raises up orders to oppose them. (Rodriguez)
Unbelievers exploit the thirst for knowledge in order to inculcate their false doctrine.	idem
Christian schools set up a barrier against this evil.	idem
	Christian schools are regenerating the nation, preventing religion from being extinguished. A sublime vocation.
To Christianise the children by teaching catechism, the sacraments... (6 articles)	
A Brother may not confine himself to secular subjects.	idem
If he does this he is opposing the designs of God, deceiving the parents, insulting the founder of his order.	idem
To deprive the children of Christian education is to deprive them of every good: Malebranche, St Paul, St John Chrysostom, St Augustine.	
To refuse religious instruction is to encompass the death of the child's soul : St Paul	idem
St John Chrysostom	Quoted at the end.
What must we think of a Brother who does not instruct?	idem
Quotation of Mgr Devie: He is an apostate.	idem
	To instruct the children is an obligation greater than that of a master towards his servant.
St Gregory, St Liguori.	Quoted later.
This reckoning will be terrible.	idem
Quoted later.	To instruct them without initiating them into religious knowledge is to show no love at all for the children.

Secular instruction does not lead to happiness.	Quoted later.
Mgr. Gaume : it provides ideas but not integrity.	
Quoted later.	Cardinal de Bonald : Inventions, industry do not contribute to the happiness of the poor.
Statistics showing the correlation between education and crime.	idem
Cardinal de Bonald : Inventions, industry do not contribute to the happiness of the poor.	
To instruct children without initiating them into religious knowledge is to show them no love at all.	
Four stories of the ungodly regretting having been wrongly educated.	
	Secular instruction contributes nothing to happiness.
	A Brother must act like a certain missionary (Fr Ricci in China.)
	Balthasar Alvarez against religious pride.
Quoted earlier.	Quotations from St Gregory, St Liguori, St John Chrysostom.

There is no doubt that certain passages in these chapters are of a later date and this could only have been added by Brother François or Brother Jean Baptiste. Thus, a quotation from Cardinal Giraud dates from 1850 since we find it in the pastoral sermon for the Lent of 1850 on education in the home.¹ Similarly the statistics which claim to show that education causes an increase in crimes seems to come from the period leading up to the vote or the Falloux law in 1850.

But there are other passages which are certainly from Father Champaignat . Here are a few examples.

¹ *Oeuvres du Cardinal Giraud, archevêque de Cambra*, Vol. 3, 4th Edition, Lile, Lefort, 1864, pp. 123-156.

THE THIRST FOR KNOWLEDGE

<p>ADFM, Chapter 1</p>	<p>Brother François, <i>Instructions</i>, page 415</p>	<p>«Life of Fr Champagnat», Chapter XXII, page 520.</p>
<p>«We are living in a time in which man has a thirst for knowledge; instruction is spreading as far as the smallest hamlets. Philosophers and unbelievers, inspired by the spirit of darkness, use this need to learn which has taken hold of men to instil into the hearts of children their pernicious principles; they strive to take possession of youth in order to inculcate their fatal doctrine, to demoralise them, to cause them to be lost by stripping them of faith and morals. They want the children to learn everything, that they be initiated into all the branches of learning except religion.»</p>	<p>«We belong to a century in which men have a thirst for knowledge. Instruction spreads as far as the smallest villages. The wicked, inspired by the Angel of Darkness, make use of this to instil into the minds and hearts of the children, the most perverse and pernicious principles, the most subtle poison. - They would like the children to learn everything, that they become skilful in all the fields of learning, except religion.»</p>	<p>«However, he reflected on the fact that we live in an age when man has a thirst for knowledge; he saw that the wicked, spurred on by the enemy of salvation, exploit man's craving for knowledge to exert influence over children and, under the guise of giving them primary instruction, to inculcate their dangerous doctrines, wiping out faith and morals; he was therefore willing to overlook any disadvantages that might be involved in teaching secular subjects.»</p>

In attributing to Father Champagnat the idea that the thirst for knowledge is a fundamental fact of society, the «Life» enables us to affirm that the extracts from Brother François and Brother Jean Baptiste are simply reporting the words of the Founder.

But two other passages can be quoted to support this thesis.

TO GIVE, FIRST OF ALL, RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION

ADFM	Brother François	«Life», page 520
<p>«Primary education is only a means to give this Christian instruction more perfectly. The Brother who would limit himself to giving the children civil instruction would not be fulfilling the end of his vocation. To attain this end more efficaciously, the Brothers give the children primary instruction, but this part of their teaching is only a means of retaining them longer ², of following them more closely, of giving them more solid instruction in religion and, in a word, winning them more easily to God and of grounding them more perfectly in the practice of virtue and their duties as Christians. The Brothers must never forget that the teaching of the profane sciences is not the purpose of their vocation, it is only a means of attaining it.»</p>	<p>« In order to in order to reach their goal most easily and most perfectly, the Brothers must give their pupils, along with religious instruction, secular instruction; that is, they must form not only good Christians but good citizens, by seeing that the pupils acquire all the knowledge that may be necessary to them later on. But they must remember that the imparting of the human sciences is not the end of their vocation but only a means to attain it. It is to attract and win the children that the Brothers agree to teach hem the secular subjects. - They are only teachers in order to be apostles.»</p>	<p>He wanted absolutely to have access to the children. In order to lure them from those schools, they had to be promised as complete a teaching as that provided by secular teachers.</p>

We notice here that if the first two texts are rather eloquent , the «Life» has been content to condense the ideas. It seems that this was a regular procedure with Brother Jean Baptiste, obliged to contain in a work of limited proportions a much longer lesson.

² A repetition in the original text.

Finally, a passage from ADFM appears in ALS (Avis, Leçons, Sentences) where it is explicitly attributed to Father Champagnat.

ADFM	ALS, Chapter 1, pages 7-8
<p>« In this century most of parents are not capable of giving their children instruction and religious education, either because they are too busy with the things of this world, or because they do not know enough about their religion themselves, or because they are irreligious and consequently indifferent to the salvation of their children, which means that an infinite number of young people would remain in ignorance of the truths of the Christian Faith and would sink in vice if God, in his ineffable mercy had not taken pity on them and had raised up pious masters to take charge of their Christian upbringing.»</p>	<p>«They are the replacements for the fathers and mothers. The great affliction of our century is the almost total collapse of education in the home. Most parents no longer give religious instruction to their children, either because they are too busy with the things of this world, or because they do not know enough about their religion themselves, [...] or, more frequently, because they are irreligious and consequently indifferent to the salvation of their children. [...] From which it follows <i>that a great number of children would remain in ignorance, would sink into vice and be lost if God in his infinite mercy had not taken pity on them and raised up pious masters to take care of them and give them a Christian upbringing.</i>»³</p>

Thus, thanks to the ALS, we have proof that the text of ADFM certainly contains a lesson of Father Champagnat. Furthermore, what is striking here is the very close agreement between the two texts as if an original text had been put in and not an account of an oral instruction.

DATING THESE TEXTS OF FATHER CHAMPAGNAT

If we have been able to show that the manuscripts of Brothers Jean-Baptiste and François on the aim of the Institute are made up of passages taken from texts or oral instructions of Fr. Champagnat, it has not been possible to date them with precision. Moreover, we have to place our trust in Br. Jean-Baptiste, who in the book "LIFE" or the A.L.S. tells us that these passages are definitely from the Founder.

³ The whole of the passage in italics is explicitly attributed to Father Champagnat.

Nevertheless there is a way of dating these documents thanks to the planning of a prospectus of the Little Brothers of Mary in June 1824 ⁴:

“Christian instruction to-day is entirely neglected in the rural areas or replaced by anti-Christian teaching. In the late season people with no morals, no religion go out into the rural areas where the police are shorthanded and by means of their immoral conduct, their blasphemous talk and books poisoned with corruption, sow godlessness and anti-monarchical sentiments. To remedy such a great evil and chase these godless teachers from the less fortunate rural areas, these enemies of the good order of Christian Society and the monarchy, pious teachers devoted to Mary under the name of the unsophisticated Little Brothers of Mary go out in pairs to the poor rural areas, where the Brothers of the Christian Schools cannot go due to a lack of resources.”

This project put together by Fathers Champagnat and Courveille is in exactly the same tone as the above text. It has the advantage of showing us that the bad teachers are especially the peripatetic teachers. It is obvious that as far as Courveille and Fr. Champagnat were concerned, the latter were suspected of plotting against the monarchy. We seem to be witnessing the show of distrust of the ultra circle that sees plots everywhere - not always imaginary however ⁵ - and particularly those adept in the mutual method. Since this method was fashionable many teachers made it known that they practised it, and this aroused distrust.

In fact this introduction will remain hand-written and the prospectus printed in 1824 will have a more moderate tone. But the statutes of the 15th of January 1825 drawn up in the Hermitage (OMI doc 130, p. 361) take up the same tone in the introduction. Deploring the fact that Christian education could not be taught in the rural areas due to lack of resources, the document continues:

“Out of sad necessity, children are left to stagnate in deadly ignorance or, what is worse still, to be put into the hands of mercenary teachers who are not at all capable of forming them in the virtues they require.”

It therefore seems to me I have the right to say that, in view of the testimony of F. Jean-Baptiste, and comparing the texts of 1824 - 25, the texts of Brothers Jean Baptiste and François on the aim of the Institute recall resolutions held by Fr. Champagnat about 1824. It is even highly probable that these are parts of the “Petit Ecrit” given to the Brothers.

⁴ Ho. J. Pedro Herreros, *La regla del fundador: sus fuentes y evolución., edición crítica, Roma, 1984, p. 21.*

⁵ In 1821-22 plots of Republicans and Bonapartists of la Charbonnerie were rampant.

THE INFLUENCE OF RODRIGUEZ AND COURVEILLE

A supplementary argument in favour of a draft from the Founder is the evidence of the influence of Rodriguez. The Life of Fr. Champagnat tells us in fact (p. 486) that:

“Sometimes instead of the talk on the Rules, he had some chapters read from Rodriguez or Saint Jure in which these authors deal with the Rules.”

Now, these two Jesuits are authors of two great classical ascetic treatises in the religious world, the XVIIth to the XXth century. Rodriguez, a Spanish Jesuit born in 1526, published in 1615 his Practice of Christian Perfection, translated into French as early as 1621⁶. A new translation by the abbot Régnier Desmarais at the end of the XVIIth century was to be re-edited over and over again⁷.

Saint Jure (1588 - 1657) is a French Jesuit, author of “Knowledge and Love of the Son of God”, edited for the first time in 1633 and very often re-edited afterwards and it is partially inspired by Rodriguez.

Their influence is clearly manifest in 1633 in the “Treatise on Education” (A.D.F.M.): More than sixty passages of this manuscript are copies of Rodriguez. The influence of Saint Jure, important as it is, seems less impressive.

The Treatise (which seems to transcribe - with a few changes and additions - the teachings of Champagnat), was inspired, for the plan of its first part of the first treatise and the third part of Rodriguez, titled: “The purpose for which the Society of Jesus has been constituted; and some means which can serve to this end and be relevant to all religious in general”.

This title holds up the Society as a true model to be imitated for the founders of missionary congregations. Moreover the whole treatise puts forward a theory of apostolic action which must be constantly balanced between two poles: the search for personal perfection and the salvation of one’s neighbour. Thus Chapter VI recalls “That we have to be careful not to fall into one extreme (on the pretext of helping our neighbour’s advancement) which is to give up entirely any dealings with one’s neighbour, on the pretext that we are entirely taken up with our own salvation.” He therefore proposes three means to “do some fruitful work for souls”: sanctity of life, prayer, zeal for one’s neighbour. The first part of the treatise will take up this plan on three points - and a good part of the text - by nevertheless giving priority to zeal.

⁶ The abbot Régnier Desmarais mentions in his preface that this first translation was re-edited in 1667, 1670 and 1674.

⁷ I use the 1824 edition edited in Lyons by Périsset Brothers in 4 volumes.

But above all, it is the first chapter (“What is the purpose of the institution of the Society of Jesus?”) which had a profound influence on M. Champagnat.

Thus the first lines of the Treatise (and also of Notebook 307) repeat almost word for word those of Rodriguez:

“Be careful about your conduct and the teaching of others; apply yourself carefully to these two points and in this way you will save yourself, and you will save those who listen to you.” (1 Tim, IV/ 16).

Rodriguez then emphasises that

“St. Ignatius seeing on the one side that the Church was provided with several religious orders that devoted themselves unceasingly to divine worship and to their spiritual advancement, and considering on the other hand, that the Church was afflicted with numberless heresies, disorders and scandals (...) he was inspired by God to institute our Society to be, as he himself said, a type of standby emergency group ever ready to respond to the least alarm(...) and, for that purpose, he did not want us to be held down by chanting in choir or by any other spiritual practices which could divert us from the service of souls.”

And, after showing that the Fathers of the desert were conscious that they had to leave their hermitage when heresy was threatening the Church, he concluded:

“Now, it is precisely for this purpose, by special dispensation of His providence, that God raised up our Society in such deplorable times when the Church had such a great need for help.”

We find a similar idea in the first page of the Treatise:

“ In this century the majority of parents are not capable of giving their children teaching and religious education (...) whence it follows that an endless number of young people would remain in ignorance of the truths of the Christian faith and would wallow in vice if God, in His ineffable mercy hadn't had pity on them and hadn't raised up pious teachers to take care of them and bring them up in a Christian manner.”

Notebook 307 of Br. François is even nearer to Rodriguez:

“The enemies of religion want to seize hold of young people to inculcate in them their pernicious principles, to demoralise them and to ruin them, by taking away the precious gift of faith and innocent behaviour. However, God in His mercy has given the Church several religious orders whose aim is to oppose these deceitful plans of the wicked.”

Therefore, facing up to “philosophers and non-believers” who “strive to get a hold of young people to instil into them their deadly doctrine” (God) has raised up Christian schools “to build a dam to hold back the devastating torrent”.

As the Jesuits see themselves invested with a providential mission in the XVIIth century against heresy, Champagnat sees the Marist Brothers as being invested in a new mission: Christian education. Let us note however that the step he has taken seems more pessimistic, more defensive: the Jesuits have chosen for their action the image of a standby emergency company; the Marists retain their image of the “dam”.

But this providential mission has not been handed down solely to the Marist Brothers. It is the whole Society of Mary which is a new Society of Jesus:

M. Courveille, its founder, will recall his revelation at Le Puy:

“As, in the time of a frightful heresy which was to upset the whole of Europe, Jesus raised up His servant Ignatius to form a society which carried His name by calling it the Society of Jesus (...) likewise I would like (it is Mary who is thought to be speaking) (...) that in these latter times of ungodliness and unbelief, there should also be a society consecrated to me (...) and that it be named the Society of Mary”⁸....

The comparison between Rodriguez’s text and that of Courveille shows deep connivance: the “so deplorable times” have become “these latter times of ungodliness and unbelief”. M. Champagnat himself will often repeat this pessimistic phrase. But above all we notice **that there is an intimate bond between M. Courveille’s revelation at Le Puy and the aim of the Marist Brothers.**

We are therefore being present at a re-enactment of the Jesuit myth⁹ in a somewhat different context since now it is no longer heresy that is threatening but disbelief and ungodliness. That is why in the chapters that follow we see an imbalance between Rodriguez and the Treatise: even though the latter is used to justify an attitude which reconciles concern for the interior life and the apostolate, A.D.F.M. insists on the fact that you can’t be a genuine primary school teacher without giving priority to Christian education. In the XVIIth century the Jesuits had to justify themselves in wanting to be religious and apostolic at the same time.; in the XIXth century the Marists want to defend themselves from becoming lay teachers. The further up you go from a dynamic perspective - to introduce a new form of religious life - to a defensive perspective: not to give way to the innovation of teaching which has no connection with religion.

⁸ Origines Maristes, T.2, doc. 718, p. 581

⁹ ANDRÉ LANFREY, *Cahiers Maristes*. No 10, “The legend of the Jesuit of Le Puy”, p. 1-16.

CARDINAL LA LUZERNE

But this image of the dam linked to the incapacity of parents seems to have been taken by Fr. Champagnat from Cardinal La Luzerne (1738 -1821), Bishop of Langres who in his book *Considération sur divers points de la morale chrétienne*, 1810 mentions:

“The majority of fathers are not in a position to give by themselves the moral and religious teaching that they themselves received. The inability to express oneself clearly, the mechanical occupations that take up all their time leave them absolutely incapable of this task which, to be worthwhile, must be well done”.

In this same book he takes up a great number of pages to combat the opinions of the unbelievers who “in this deplorable century” “put off religious education until adolescence”. We therefore discover there three categories of parents of A.D.F.M. : uneducated parents, too busy, impious.

Finally, in “*Considérations sur l’état ecclésiastique*” which is a real treatise on the priesthood according to the French School of spirituality, La Luzerne speaks disparagingly of ignorant priests who are the “scourge of the Church”. One of his passages even directly is the inspiration of the first chapter of the *Treatise*.

LA LUZERNE “De la science ecclésiastique”	TREATISE, CH. 1 P. 1, 3
“If in the 16 th century heresy made such rapid progress, infected a great part of Europe, (...) it was due to the ignorance of the clergy in which they wallowed that was responsible for its deplorable success. The dam which was to contain it, finding itself weak and powerless, allowed the flood to extend its ravages everywhere without any resistance.	“An infinite number of young people would remain in ignorance of the truths of the Christian faith and would have wallowed in vice if God (...) hadn’t raised up pious teachers” (...) Christian schools are set up to paralyse the efforts of the wicked and build a dam against the devastating torrent of their fatal doctrine”...

The image of the dam and the flood are therefore taken up again but in a different sense; the latter stopped in the XVIth century because those in charge were steeped in ignorance; in the XIXth century the situation changed; those in charge are no longer uneducated: it is the young people who are. The Church therefore this time has the opportunity of putting up a dam that will not crumble.

THE FOUNDER OF THE ORDER

Brothers Jean-Baptiste and François in a long passage speak about the culpability of the Brother who would neglect the religious instruction of the children. Intentions are not very nice: the negligent Brother would be in opposition to God’s plan, would deceive the benefactors of the schools and the parents, would bring shame on himself, would be cruel towards the children and would be committing a type of homicide...

To understand such a charge, you have to realise that we were then in a phase of violent conflict between the Liberals and the Ultras¹⁰, referring notably to the quarrel between simultaneous teaching, that of the Brothers, and mutual teaching, that of the Liberals. The inflexibility of such resolutions is already for us an element that cannot be forgotten in history. But there is a lot better in the following extracts:

A.D.F.M., ch. 1	François
<p>“He (the Brother neglecting religious instruction) would afflict the Church by not fulfilling the mission confided to him, he would insult the Founder of his order and would be prejudicial to this very order by abandoning his aim and by introducing slackening on this fundamental point.</p>	<p>“This Brother would afflict his founder whose unworthy disciple he would show himself to be and whose work he would destroy; he would scandalise his Brothers and would become for them a stumbling block and would paralyse (sic) their zeal”...</p>

The allusion to the founder suggests that the text is an old one. On the other hand the use of the verbs “to afflict” and “insult” suppose that the latter is still in use. Finally, the text of Jean-Baptiste does not use the word “society” or “congregation” but “order” which isn’t current.

In my opinion, the use of this vocabulary shows on the contrary that we are in the first years of the Institute because this word “order” is used by M. Courveille in his letter from Aiguebelle, in 1826, and by F. François in his first Retreat notebook in the 1820s. I don’t know of any text later than 1826 which uses this word.

Therefore, the founder of whom it is question here, is not M. Champagnat but M. Courveille, who is considered as such by Champagnat himself; and the order is the Society of Mary in the process of being

¹⁰ The first are the partisans of the ideas of the revolution, the second want a restoration of the values of the Old Régime, notably religion.

established at the Hermitage, and of which Courveille wants himself to be Founder and Superior.

Therefore, on speaking of the outraged or afflicted founder, the two texts refer to the situation of the years prior to 1826 and suggest that the author of these words is M. Champagnat because it wasn't he who would have thought of giving himself the title of founder. On the other hand we very well understand why Brothers Jean-Baptiste and François have kept this in mind after Champagnat's death because, for the Brothers, it was clear that there was only one Founder. It does not prevent the use of the verbs "to outrage" or "to afflict" which are ill applied to a deceased founder and keep trace of the vocabulary of the time when the founder, M. Courveille, was still alive¹¹.

But one question remains: Did Brothers François and Jean-Baptiste start off from a text of the founder or from a talk from him which would have been reported by two different people, perhaps themselves? In the first case, for this passage we would be faced with an extract from the "Petit Ecrit" of 1824; in the second case it would be an extract from a talk given that year and which would be quite in the way of thinking of the founder at that time.

I believe the second hypothesis is the better one because it would have been considered bad that it had been put into an almost official document and wanting to say no more than the essential, imprecations against the bad Brothers. Moreover, the variations among them would be less because at that time they would have at their disposal a text for reference¹². It therefore seems to me that the texts of Brothers Jean-Baptiste and François derive from the founder two types of document: **extracts from what he wrote in 1824 and extracts from what he said**, the same year probably. By not retaining these imprecations against the Brothers in the contents of the "Petit Ecrit", Brother Jean-Baptiste seems to confirm this hypothesis and therefore these harsh assertions would be those from a talk. But it is true that writing after 1850 for a large public he could hardly repeat such slanging remarks.

It seems to me therefore that we have at our disposal enough data to say that a large part of the texts that we have analysed date from the Restoration. In particular the thought and vocabulary are very unbending: thus parents are "for the most part irreligious"; the lay teachers are "vile mercenaries". The idea of plotting against religion, obsession of the ultras, is

¹¹ The text of F. François in speaking of a "stumbling block" uses an expression that M. Courveille uses in his letter from Aiguebelle in 1826. It's a current term in religious vocabulary, equivalent to the word "scandal" but it is not insignificant to see the use of it.

¹² It can only be supposed that the text was already there when they wrote, because when editing the "Vie", Brother Jean-Baptiste seems to have had it under his eyes.

very present. Reference to the order and the founder seems to me an important element in dating; likewise the idea, present in the only text of Brother François, of “regenerating our country”, preventing the faith from being blotted out, which are, especially the first one, typical preoccupations of the Restoration. The influence of La Luzerne, moral authority of the Church in France under the Restoration, also suggests this period. Finally, we have seen that Rodriguez is the basic influence and that in matching Courveille’s version with this author and with the texts of A.D.F.M. and from talks from Brother François we are led to believe that the idea of the providential election of the congregation comes from Rodriguez through Courveille. The Marist texts we have analysed are therefore near the origins for they carry the trace of the first bit of influence brought by Courveille.

But these texts have indubitably undergone additions and modifications. In particular there have been included quotes from prelates and ecclesiastical writers writing between 1838 and 1850¹³. Let us add that about this time, especially in 1848-50, we were in an atmosphere of scholarly warfare which was very much like that of the Restoration, which made it possible for the Superiors at the cost of a few changes to go back to the original texts in their talks and also with a view to editing the new Rules. It appears that this doctrinal effort hasn’t been only that of Brother Jean-Baptiste but also that of Brother François.

This said, it seems to me that the version of Brother François is nearer the text and original talks in 1824. And finally I wonder if the whole first part of A.D.F.M. of which the plan - and often the text - follows Rodriguez, is not, if not the lost “petit écrit”, but at least the extension of the latter and the talks that Fr. Champagnat was able to give at the time. By working on several articles of the first chapter of A.D.F.M. near those of the condensed version contained in “Life” p. 129, we are going to try and make all that precise.

COMPARING THE ARTICLES OF “LIFE” AND OF A.D.F.M. ON EDUCATION

In his Contents of the “Petit Ecrit” Brother Jean-Baptiste gives a long list of the obligations of the Brothers concerning the Christian education of children. The latter seems clearly taken up in A.D.F.M. obviously abbreviated. The table below clearly shows up the connections and the differences.

¹³ For the moment I have not been able to trace all the sources but, since the authors were known, it is only a question of time.

LIFE p 129-130	A.D.F.M.
1. Teach catechism morning and afternoon, striving to impart to the children, the mysteries of our holy religion, the truths of salvation and of the commandments of the Church.	"1 To instruct them in the truths of the Christian Faith and the commandments of God,...
2. Arrange for the children to go to confession every three months; prepare them with the utmost care for their First Communion; teach them to make their confessions properly; instruct them thoroughly in the dispositions needed for fruitful reception of the sacraments of Penance and Eucharist; urge them to have frequent recourse to these two sources of graces and salvation.	...necessary dispositions to receive the sacraments as required ,...
3. Avail themselves of every means suggested by zeal, to convince them of the necessity of prayer and to love it and savour it; endeavour to have them pray always with attention, recollection, respect and piety; see that they know the morning and night prayers and all the others in use in our schools.	...the necessity and the method of prayer
4. Talk to them often about the Blessed Virgin; instil in them unlimited confidence in her powerful protection; to achieve this, give them simple instructions, suited to their capacity and exactly what they need to develop that true devotion to Mary which is a mark of predestination.	
5. Inspire them at the same time, to have a devotion to their Guardian Angel and their patron saints and encourage them to pray often for the souls in purgatory.	
6. Have them sing hymns every day, train them in Gregorian chant, teach them to serve Mass and to take part in the ceremonies of the Church; use	

<p>every possible strategy to attract them to the Church Services and show them how to draw fruit from their attendance.</p>	
<p>7. Teach them to sanctify their actions, their work, their suffering by offering them to God and accepting his holy will; make them understand that virtue and holiness consist chiefly in avoiding sin, in being faithful to the duties of one's state in life and in sanctifying one's everyday actions through motives of faith and a supernatural intention.</p>	<p>4. to make them love religion by showing them that it alone is capable of making man's happiness and of making him happy even in this life, to form them, to accustom them and to keep up one's practices from childhood.</p>
<p>8. Watch over the children with great vigilance; don't leave them alone in class, at play, or elsewhere; supervise them at all times so as to preserve their innocence, to get to know their defects with a view to correcting them, their good tendencies in order to develop them and any misconduct which needs punishing to prevent scandal and the spread of evil; make school attractive to the children (27) so that they will attend as long as possible and be kept clear of bad example and frequent inducements to offend God.</p>	<p>2 To preserve their innocence and make them avoid sin by keeping them at school most of the day and in this way making them cut out laziness, bad companions and all the occasions they would have of being disturbed if they were left to themselves." 3 To train them to virtue by giving them the means to acquire it, by developing their good inclinations, by inspiring them with a horror of vice, by destroying their failings and by correcting their character."</p>
<p>9. Inculcate respect for Christ's priests and obedience to civil authorities; fight constantly against a spirit of independence which is a major blemish on our society, and let the children see that obedience to priests, parents and civil authorities, is a commandment of God and a duty in all times and places.</p>	<p>"5 To teach them their duties towards their parents, the pastors of the Church, the head of state, the magistrates and society, and not to spare anything in order to make the children submissive and respectful, good Christians and virtuous citizens".</p>
<p>10. Inspire them with a taste for work and lead them to love it; show them that idleness is one of the most dangerous vices for soul and body, being the source of numerous faults.</p>	<p>"6 Inspire them with love of work,....</p>
<p>11. Train them to be temperate and courteous; give them a love of order</p>	<p>...To give them habits of order and cleanliness, to make them love their</p>

and cleanliness, reducing the theory to practice by requiring them to treat all others with respect , especially those of exalted rank.	condition, of giving them the means of improving it, of making it happy, honourable and of sanctifying oneself in it.”
12. A final point: the Brothers should be models of piety and virtue for the children; in this way they will lead them to God much more by example than by words.”	

Footnote 27 School attendance was not compulsory and the children attended very irregularly, especially during the summer season. It was easy for them to play truant.(Cf. LPC 1, doc. 298, p. 543).

The two texts therefore have obvious points where they meet: numerous expressions are identical. On the other hand it can be seen that the A.D.F.M. text has taken the trouble to condense the text and be more moderate in expression. This is particularly obvious at the beginning where several articles are put together in one. Condemnation of the spirit of independence (article 9) which is too polemical, has disappeared. All that suggests that A.D.F.M. is later than the text given in “Life”. Besides , we have another means of putting a date on something: the “prince” is replaced by the term “head of State” which means that the first text was written under the Royalty and the second under the Republic, that is to say between 1848 and 1852. Moreover, the suppression of the condemnation of the spirit of independence suggests the same thing: how can one maintain such a condemnation under a Republic?

We therefore think that we can date the text of the Life of the Founder of 1824, as that of Brother Jean-Baptiste and that of A.D.F.M. between 1848 and 1852.

COMPARISON OF THE NORMATIVE TEXTS AND THE MANUSCRIPT

Another sign of the primordial importance of the text of 1824, in the eyes of the superiors, is that the latter was taken up again in the normative texts of the Institute such as the Rules of 1852 and the Guide des Écoles, without forgetting Chapter XXII of Life which gives the essential parts of F. Champagnat’s educational doctrine.

THE AIM OF THE BROTHERS

LIFE p. 129	RULES	GUIDE	LIFE p. 532
<p>1. Teach catechism morning and afternoon, striving to impart to the children, the mysteries of our holy religion, the truths of salvation and the commandments of God and the Church.</p>	<p>Ch. VI, art 2 p. 58 "to instruct them in the Christian Faith".. art. 5 p. 59: "They will then apply themselves with special care to instruct Children in the truths of the Faith, the Commandments of God and the Church.</p>	<p>2nd part, ch. 1, p. 83 "The aim of the Brothers is to give children a Christian education, that is to say: 1. To instruct them in the Mysteries of Religion and the Commandments of God,..</p>	<p>"The knowledge he acquires serves to develop his intellectual faculties and makes him ready to receive religious principles."</p>
<p>2. Arrange for the children to go to confession every three months; prepare them with the utmost care for their First Communion; teach them how to make their confessions properly; instruct them thoroughly in the dispositions needed for fruitful reception of the sacraments of Penance and Eucharist; urge them to have frequent recourse to these two sources of graces and salvation.</p>	<p>... necessary dispositions to approach the Sacraments fruitfully, and above all they will strive to get the children to know Jesus Christ"... Art. 6: "A good first communion being the most important deed in their lives (...) the Brothers will take every means possible to get the children ready for it.</p>	<p>dispositions required to receive the Sacraments and the other truths necessary for salvation".</p>	<p>...and put them into practice"</p>
<p>03/ "Take A 3. Avail themselves of every means suggested by</p>	<p>Art. 7 p. 60 They will not fail to teach their children the</p>		<p>"to procure for them an eminently Christian education"</p>

<p>zeal, to convince them of the necessity of prayer and to inspire them to love and savour; endeavour to have them pray always with attention, recollection, respect and piety; see that they know the morning and night prayers and all the others in use in our schools.</p>	<p>ordinary formulas used to pray (...) and, to get the children used to praying to God respectfully, attentively and modestly, they will often train them to say the morning and evening prayers.</p>		
<p>4. Talk to them often about the Blessed Virgin; instil in them unlimited confidence in her powerful protection; to achieve this, give them simple instructions, suited to their capacity and exactly what they need to develop that true devotion to Mary which is a mark of predestination.</p>	<p>Art. 11: They will inspire them with solid devotion to the Blessed Virgin</p>		
<p>5. Inspire them, at the same time, to have a devotion to their Guardian Angel and their patron saints and encourage them to pray often for the souls in purgatory.</p>	<p>likewise, they will teach them to honour their Guardian Angel and their holy patron, and will exhort them to pray often for the souls in Purgatory.</p>		

<p>6. Have them sing hymns, train them in Gregorian chant; teach them the ceremonies of the Church... (15)</p>	<p>Art. 8 p. 60: "Likewise for what concerns the Offices of the Church (...)they will teach them to stand or sit in the holy place in the same way as assisting at Holy Mass.</p>		
<p>7. Teach them to sanctify their actions, their work, their suffering, by offering them to God and accepting his holy will; make them understand that virtue and holiness consist chiefly in avoiding sin, in being faithful to the duties of one's state in life and in sanctifying one's everyday actions, through motives of faith and a supernatural intention".</p>	<p>Art. 9 p. 60: Again they will teach children to sanctify and render meritorious all their actions, by offering them to God, by asking Him for His help and by resigning themselves to hard work. They will not fail either to give them means of making the most of their sorrows and afflictions, of illnesses and all the other annoying events in life, by seeing in all that the will of God; and by taking all that without complaint and in a spirit of penance".</p>	<p>4"to make them love religion, to form them, to get them accustomed to and to hold on to their practices from their childhood." "6... to bring them to liking their condition, to give them the means of improving it, of making it happy, honourable and of sanctifying it."</p>	
<p>8. Watch over the children with great vigilance; don't leave them alone in class, at play, or else-</p>	<p>Art. 2, p. 58: "to preserve their innocence." Art. 6 p. 59 "they" will make them understand that</p>	<p>p. 83 "2. To preserve their innocence and make them avoid sin by keeping them at school</p>	<p>"The first of these needs is to keep the child at school for a long time, so as to keep him away</p>

<p>where; supervise them at all times so as to preserve their innocence, to get to know their defects with a view to correcting them, their good tendencies in order to develop them and see any <i>m i s c o n d u c t</i> which needs punishing, to prevent scandal and the spread of evil, to make school attractive to the children</p>	<p>the best means of preparing oneself for a good first communion is to correct one's faults, to avoid sin, to keep away from bad company and to pray a lot, to be assiduous at Church services, at catechism classes and at School..." Art. 10, p.61: they will persist in forming their heart to virtue (...) by telling them to keep away from bad company and inspire in them a great horror of sin by correcting their faults"...</p>	<p>most of the day and in this way making them cut out laziness, bad companions and all the occasions they would have of being disturbed if they were left to themselves." 3.To train them to virtue by giving them the means to acquire it, by developing their good inclinations, by inspiring them with a horror of vice, by destroying their failings and by reforming their character."</p>	<p>from the contagion of the bad examples he meets at every step even in the bosom of his family". "If the teaching of the profane sciences has some drawbacks, it also has the advantage of keeping the child busy and of keeping him for a long time in class, and by that very means to keep him from being lazy, to make him keep away from bad company..." "s o m e occupation, serious study, by keeping the child away from evil passions, preserves his faith, his piety and his virtue".</p>
<p>9. Inculcate respect for Christ's priests and obedience to civil authorities; fight constantly against a spirit of independence which is the major blemish on our society, and let the children see that obedience to priests, parents and civil</p>	<p>Art. 2, p. 58: "in a word to make of them good Christians and virtuous citizens.</p>	<p>" To teach them their duties towards their parents, the pastors of the Church, the Head of State, magistrates, society, and to spare nothing to make the children submissive and respectful, good Christians and</p>	

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<p>authorities, is a commandment of God and a duty in all times and places.</p>		<p>v i r t u o u s citizens.”</p>	
<p>10. In inspire them with a taste for work; and lead them to love it; show them that idleness is one of the most dangerous vices for soul and body, being the source of numerous faults</p>		<p>“6. To inspire them with love of work”...</p>	<p>“...to keep them from idleness...”</p>
<p>11 Train them to be temperate and courteous; give them a love of order and cleanliness, reducing the theory to practice by requiring them to treat all others with respect, especially those of exalted rank.</p>		<p>“6 ...to give them habits of order and cleanliness”..</p>	
<p>12. A final point: the Brothers should be models of piety and virtue for the children; in this way they will lead them to God much more by example than by words.”</p>			

We see therefore that these four texts have strong bonds between them and that these chapters are all united by the same idea: what is the aim of the Brothers? Chapter 6 of the Rules begins in this way: "The secondary end of this Institute"... and chapter 1 of "The Teacher's Guide", p. 83 has for its title : "aim of the Brothers, object of their teaching".

We have before our eyes the process by which the doctrine of the Institute was constituted:

a standard text of the Founder, lost to-day, but from which we can reconstitute the main lines thanks to the "Life of Champagnat" but also to the manuscripts of instructions that Brothers Francis and Jean-Baptiste have left to us; the "Treatise on Education" or A.D.F.M., the first chapter of which has six articles which summarise this document, without taking into account that the latter is probably made up of other extracts.

We must therefore take with all seriousness the statements of the General Chapter which in its introduction to the Rules tells us that the Brothers will rediscover "especially in the last two sections, the summary of all his teachings and often his own expressions"; likewise you can put your trust in Brother François who, in the Introduction to "The Teacher's Guide" assures us: "We have faithfully followed the rules and instructions which our pious Founder has left us concerning the education of youth."

If we take notice of it, this sentence sums up the process of formation of Marist doctrine that we have had under our eyes with the texts on the aim of the Institute which derive from part of the writing of the Founder who wanted to establish their educational practice; from another set of instructions; and finally from commentaries and quotations to give substance to their basic doctrine.

To-day , we have to proceed in an opposite manner: to extract from composite texts the original teaching of the Founder. It seems possible to do this thanks to the manuscripts we possess and the study of which is just beginning.

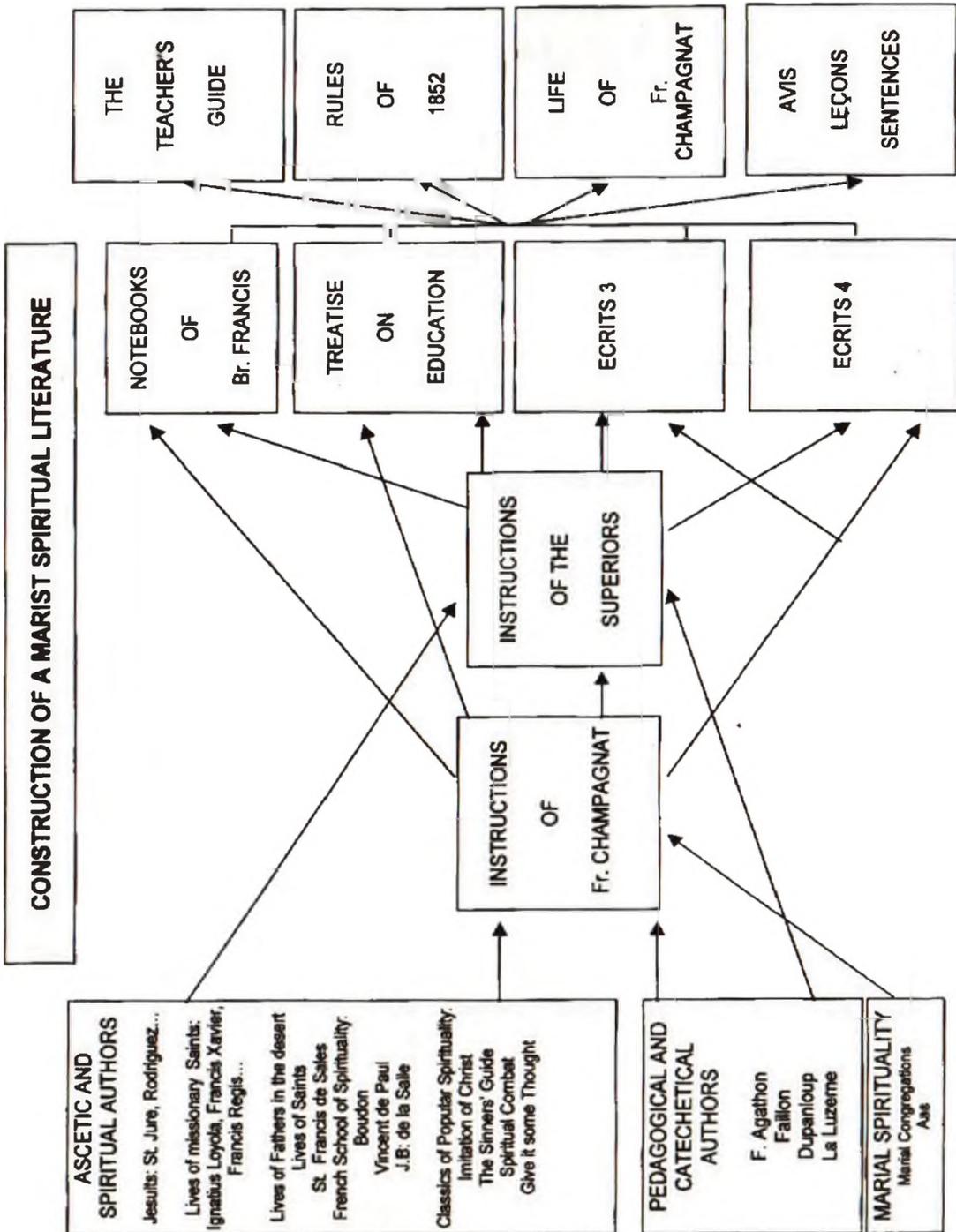
We can even envisage some criteria of differentiation: when a text is taken up several times and by several authors with no notable variations, we are probably face to face with something written by the Founder. If these texts, although very similar, have important differences, it is probably a question of transcriptions of instructions of Father Champagnat. Finally, as to all the quotations of Bishops, of saints whose biography is recent, of authors of the middle of the 19th century, it is obvious that they do not come from Champagnat. A lot of quotations from the Lives of the Saints, from the Desert Fathers also seem to have been added later on to the original text of the Founder.

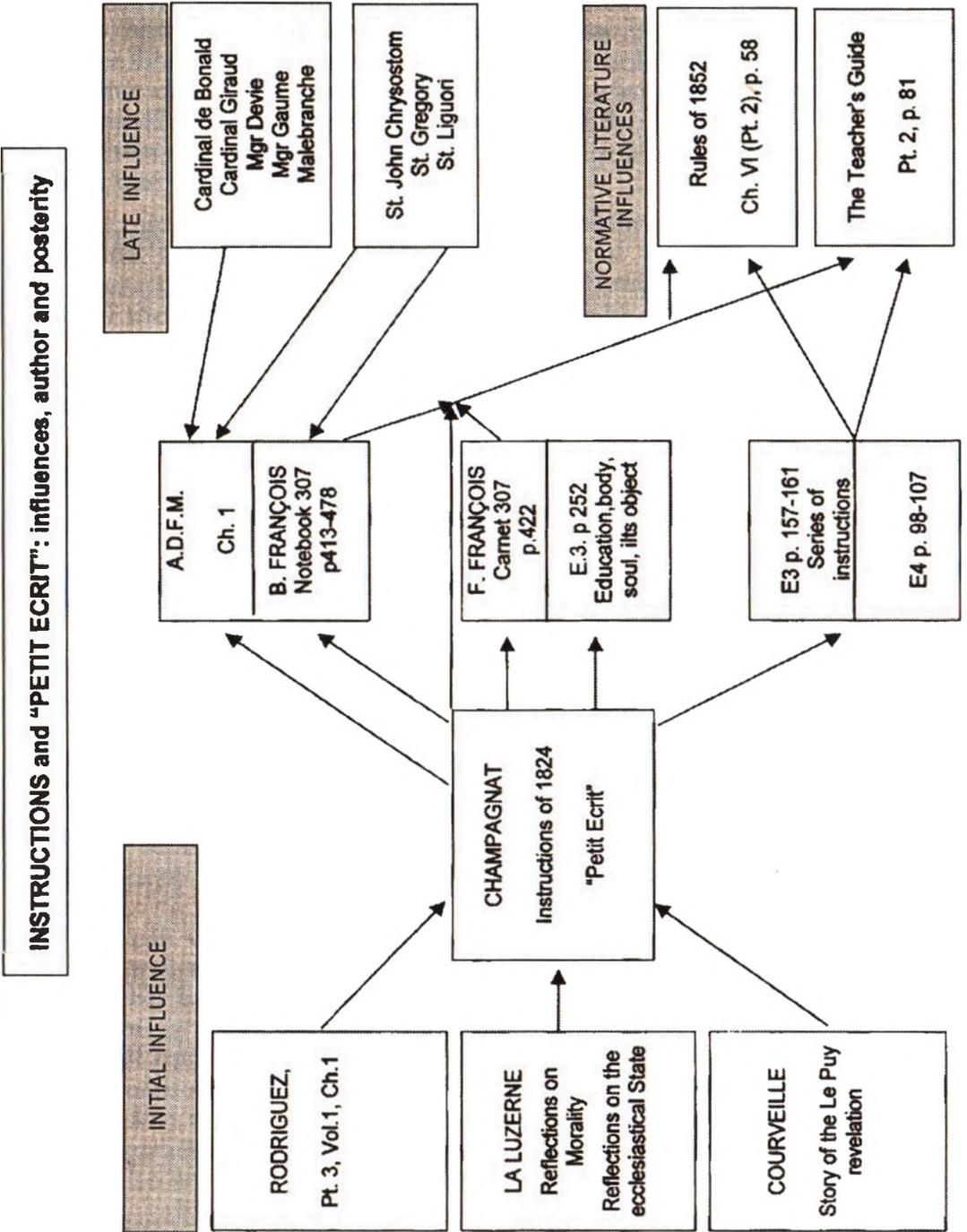
We therefore hope to be able to add to the sources that we already possess on the Founder a series of documents taken above all from his

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instructions especially and sometimes from his writings. The piece of work you have just read, calling to mind the importance of the “petit écrit” of 1824, which is not irremediably lost but diluted in the manuscripts, and making it obvious that the instructions of Brothers Jean-Baptiste on the aim of the Brothers have certainly for their basis an instruction of Father Champagnat, has been able to give you an idea of what a global study of the manuscripts brings us.

André LANFREY, 28/11/97





MARCELLIN CHAMPAGNAT AND LEGAL RECOGNITION OF THE MARIST BROTHERS

Bro. Gabriel MICHEL

When I did this project I thought it would throw some light on many points in our history that are not well known.

First of all, why was it so important? Was it a matter of prestige? Not at all, rather a problem that was quite concrete: military service. Some years ago you could hear people say: "Why, military service is a good thing. It enlarges one's horizons. It strengthens your vocation. It puts you on an equal footing with ordinary people." All right, but they were thinking of military service for one year. In Father Champagnat's time, however, the period of service was from 6 to 8 years.

Young people who came to the Hermitage were generally about twenty years old. Therefore, if in the lottery for military service their number came up, there they were, having just become religious and with a very brief period of formation, forced to look forward to a long period of military service which could make even the strongest lose their vocation.

Now, the De La Salle Brothers and congregations which had been recognised up to 1825, were dispensed from military service on the presentation of the letter of obedience written by the Superior. They gave you a diploma if you wished to teach, and even if you were only a novice or a Brother engaged in manual work you were still dispensed.

If you were not in a recognised congregation you could be dispensed if:

- you had the diploma + a promise to teach for ten years;

- you paid someone to take your place. That's easy, but costly. In 1841, Brother François had to pay out 6,000 francs for substitutes that meant the yearly salaries of 15 Brothers. And yet, they already had an agreement with St-Paul-Trois-Châteaux to place as many Brothers as possible in the communities of M. Mazelier - a recognised congregation - during the time for their military service.

All that is to show that it was very necessary to obtain legal recognition. Father Champagnat managed to obtain everything but that. It is therefore important to explain why.

I am not going to give you the whole story. You just have to look at the table of contents, which is quite detailed, to see what you already know or do not know.

You can count seven or eight attempts, and each time there is: the request, the list of staff and pupils, the presentation of statutes. It's at least interesting to be able to say to oneself: "At such and such a date, here's the point we've reached."

In the early years we got by for the bishops were still powerful enough and, if the Brothers as a whole did not have official recognition, you can see from the report of the Inspector M. Guillard in 1822 that the Brothers in St Sauveur and in Bourg Argental already have individual recognition (p. 21). But after 1825-26, the government would become less favourable to congregations and so official recognition would be more necessary than ever.

Moreover, in his visit to La Valla in 1822 the inspector suggested this: "The De La Salle Brothers are in the University", the hint being: "You do the same" (p. 23).

So, there's a mystery there. You can see that something has been done, for the Rector, D'Regel, mentions it to the Principal Master of the University (4.10.1822), Mgr Frayssinous: "An Institution in my academy whose founders (Courveille, Champagnat ?) could adopt statutes similar to those of Ploërmel ...". And he specifies: "I had been very pleased to authorize some Brothers whom they had placed in communes for which I am responsible...".

Why did it not work? No doubt because of Bochard who, as the one in charge of all questions concerning teaching, could block everything, as long as M. Champagnat did not agree to unite his Brothers to those of Bochard.

With the arrival of Mgr de Pins in 1824, they were going to make the first official request which is so well known, with Statutes, Bishop's letter, signatures of 14 Brothers. This was at the beginning of 1825.

The date was quite favourable. Why did it not succeed? The Committee of the State Council was asking for the word "Congregation" to be replaced by "Charitable Association", and the word "vow" by "commitment" - for "vows" were still proscribed since the Revolution and it was only gradually that the monks of Solesmes or other religious like the Dominicans could come to the surface again.

Why did the bishop (?) not want to? We don't know, but it seems that no reply had been given, and so the opportunity had been missed for 25 years. That is about the time when Father Champagnat made the Brothers change from promises to vows. Did that seem contradictory?

On the occasion of the third request (1828) it was in the time of the "Ordonnances" (Decrees), that is to say a time when the government was fighting against the Jesuits who had already regained some influence, although that influence was still being exaggerated. Their seminaries had to be closed for they, far from forming only priests there, were forming an intelligentsia which was going to spread through all the ministries if one did not look out. The "Ordonnances" were not aimed at the Little Brothers in the primary schools, but they betokened a rather anticlerical mentality, and the king,

Charles X, - whose Christian principles, if one may say so, were exaggerated - was obliged to sign the "Ordonnances".

But in any case, in the years 1828-29, Champagnat was more concerned with other questions: cloth stockings, reading method, etc.

At that point came the Revolution of 1830. For the time being he would not have the support of the District Council or the General Council who, in principle, were enemies of those who had been friends of their predecessors. That would soon change but, after all, the period from 1830-31 was not the time to request legal recognition, since the Prefect of La Loire (Scipion Mourgue) was a firebrand, as malevolent as he could be where the Marist Brothers were concerned (p. 81).

It was taken up again in 1832. Till then it had always been the bishop who engaged in the procedures, but even the bishop failed. Then the powers in the archbishop's house began to consider a union with Saint-Viateur. That question is well discussed by Jean-Baptiste, but all the same it can be fleshed out by some details: before the 1830 Revolution, M. Querbes had, at the last minute, obtained recognition for his congregation although it had only one school and two or three recruits, whereas Champagnat already had 19 schools and some 100 Brothers at the time of his 1832 request.

Champagnat was thinking about an agreement with the Marianists who, in fact, were quite a distance away, and Saint-Viateur was proposed to him first of all as a union on paper but afterwards as a real union, that is a straightforward merger under the direction of Querbes. The rest of this story is well known, but there are quite a lot of documents which could be added and which I give, either in this article or in a coming article on Champagnat's obedience.

Then comes the period 1834-36. I inserted a chapter on the Guizot law of 1833. Of course, the training colleges would compete with the schools of the Little Brothers, but Guizot, although he was a Protestant, was not at all opposed to the Catholic world. Moreover, if you wonder how the Brothers could avoid military service in the 1830-34 period, the answer is that educational needs were so great that the government could hardly be demanding for the Brothers since it was not so for its own teachers.

In the interval, the official world of the District Council and the General Council became favourable again to Father Champagnat and his Brothers, even if this same world could complain about the direction of the diocese, not about Mgr de Pins but of his Vicars General. So in this situation there are still some subtleties of which Brother Jean-Baptiste could not have been aware (p. 108).

Father Champagnat set about making contacts with St-Paul-3-Châteaux which would spare the necessity of any kind of union with Saint-Viateur. Moreover, these latter were going through a period of trial and deserved - or perhaps not - a letter of rebuke from the archbishop's house.

In any case, let Father Champagnat start again to take the necessary steps, and let him do it himself.

In the meantime, we can notice that the Brothers, who were treated with such disdain by the prefect who was in office in 1830, were treated with much more respect by inspector Dupuy who came to help in the summer course which Father Champagnat was giving. This was in December 1833. He found in our schools order as perfect as that in the De La Salle schools, very good methods and teaching which would soon be of the first degree and nowhere under third (p. 107).

This, then, was very encouraging and Champagnat could have another attempt. He had written to the king, to the queen, to the minister of public instruction in 1834-35. He had made an agreement with St-Paul to put under the protection of Mazelier the Brothers who had drawn a ticket for military service. And now, let him go to Paris himself!

Here again this is well explained in Jean-Baptiste's book. However it is really interesting to see the negotiations in 1836. He had all the support he could have wished for from the region. The members of the District Council and the General Council, if they were no longer the same persons as in 1830, were in any case similarly inclined, and now they would be found to be unanimously in favour of Champagnat's Brothers, therefore, like him, they wanted legal recognition. Statistics show some 200 Brothers, 30 schools, two thirds of which are in the communes.

Brother Jean-Baptiste says that, Father Champagnat saw that he was wasting his time when he found out that Guizot was returning to the Ministry since Guizot, being a Protestant, would have nothing to do with a congregation dedicated to the Blessed Virgin. But it is not at all sure that this was true. These are rather things that someone must have told him. The truth is that Guizot had not wished to accept l'Hermitage as a training school in 1834. Whatever the truth of the matter, Champagnat arrived in Paris on 28 August, at a time when there was a change in the Ministry. Guizot took over only on 5 September. How could one hope that he would want to interest himself immediately in this case? Champagnat had to return to Belley before 20 September for the Chapter, retreat and election of a Superior General for the Fathers who had been recognised by the Holy See.

For everyone's information he had written an article on the Marist Brothers for "L'Ami de la Religion". In November, Mgr Pompallier would also bring a note to the queen before leaving for Oceania.

In 1837 preparations were started for a new petition with all that entailed: recommendation from the District Council, statistics, etc. and off to Paris again in January 1838. But here we have Father Champagnat's diary which gives us information on his contacts, not only with politicians but also with people like M. Desgenettes, founder of the Archconfraternity of Notre-Dame des Victoires to which we would later be affiliated. This allows

us to picture details of which we have been told nothing, for example the knowledge Champagnat could have had of the apparitions in the *rue du Bac*, six years previously, for Father Champagnat was staying just down the road and M. Desgenettes had decided to give the miraculous medal to the members of his confraternity as their badge.

In Champagnat's diary you can see also to what extent our Founder was capable of "moving heaven and earth" to do what appeared to him as the work of God. Monsieur Salvandy finds that

- there is moral danger in envisaging schools with only 2 Brothers;
- this new institute could harm the De La Salle Brothers.

That is what he told Monsieur Fulchiron, the member for the Rhône, who, on 9 February, warned Champagnat. And Champagnat immediately notified the bishops of Lyons and Belley, telling them that they should write to the minister and that they needed, so to speak, the rough copy of their letter. On the same day, 13 February, the two bishops replied with two letters, basically similar but submitting slightly different considerations in the terms they use to crush the two objections (pp. 144, 148, 149). One gets the impression that they must have been together that day to give such shrewd answers.

You will find, then, several chapters giving an account of that period. Champagnat came back in the month of May, for the Ministry had decided to consult the prefects of the Loire and the Rhône. So one had to be ready for any eventuality. Father Champagnat also used this occasion to give the May devotions in l'Hermitage and preside over a clothing ceremony. He started off again on the 13th to continue the fight. When he arrived in Paris, he found that the letter from the Prefect of the Loire had not yet arrived; he took steps to have him spurred on and, in spite of everything - in days when there was neither phone nor fax - a letter from the Prefect arrived dated 24 May.

In this work I have dealt briefly with the case of the Minister, Salvandy, who was not a bad man but one who had to avoid making slips for he was closely watched by his rivals.

But in the end what was going to block everything was the story of the College of St Chamond. It is a college which forms part of the University, even if its different directors are, and were then, priests - as were also several professors. Now both the mayor and the parish priest of St Chamond had got into their head the notion of having a private college whose director would be Terrailon, assistant to Father Colin, who was parish priest of a parish in St Chamond, who would not object and who would choose his teachers, several of whom would be members of the Third Order in Lyons, therefore Marists also. This story was put forward as truly typical of the fight against the University.

Now, although the Municipal Council as a whole was favourable to the idea of M. Ardaillon, the mayor, there was at least one person who was fiercely against it and who would not hesitate to make up stories that were far from the truth. He wrote a letter to the Rector describing the Marist Brothers

- for he had no doubt that Terraillon and Champagnat formed one team - as follows: "Humble and poor in their origins, this group asked only to live unnoticed. Having suddenly become millionaires, millionaires as if by magic, it has changed its appearance, and now it is bold and enterprising."

And, becoming enterprising himself, he does not hesitate to assert: "The Brothers of Christian Doctrine are expecting fierce attacks; they are on the defensive; as far as the college is concerned, war to the death!" (p. 201)

This letter was written in the month of August. Father Champagnat returned to Paris in July, but from the beginning of July the Rector knew that they were intending to replace the director, Maury, by Terraillon, for decisions had already been taken in the Municipal Council at the end of June. Father Terraillon did not intend to take over the direction of the college unless he could choose the teachers, but the Rector declared this to be contrary to the principles of the University and this finally stopped the project from being realised.

There, then, was what had been going on these last days when Champagnat was in Paris. When he came back he could understand the confusion which had arisen between "Petits Frères" and "Grands Frères" for if that was the name that they were already giving to the De La Salle Brothers who were engaged only in primary teaching, there was all the more reason to give such a name to those who wished to run even a secondary school. Therefore, for Salvandy, Champagnat would be considered rather as a crafty devil than as a simple priest.

It was necessary, therefore, that Champagnat should make haste to straighten out the situation. The man he trusted was Baude, a deputy member of the General Council and thus a man of liberal tendencies - he was even Prefect of Police in Paris in 1831 - but who had great esteem for Champagnat and was immediately ready to help him. He wrote to Mgr de Pins - who was probably in favour of the solution involving Terraillon and Marists of the Third Order - to tell him politely but firmly that, should Champagnat fail, the whole explanation would be in the story of the college at St Chamond. Mgr de Pins wrote immediately to the Minister not to confuse the Little Brothers of Mary with another Society of Mary whose objectives were not at all the same, but nevertheless it was too late.

All that could lead us on to the difficult relations between Champagnat and Terraillon, to the pun in the coach coming back from Belley and, no doubt to the violent letter from Father Colin, who had to pass on his demands through Terraillon, his assistant, but who remained parish priest at St Chamond, a thing for which Champagnat reproached him. This is what I have tried to explain every time I have explained the difficult problem of a Champagnat who received a formal order, which could well have caused his cause of beatification to founder if this problem had been raised, but it is a problem which is satisfactorily resolved when you know the essential facts of the question and that it was mixed up with that of legal recognition.

CHAMPAGNAT FROM DAY TO DAY

Bro. Gabriel MICHEL

I am now trying to remake a chronology, but one that is from 5 to 10 times more detailed than the one published in the seventies. It would be limited to the life of Father Champagnat.

I have written up - in a small way - some years from 1822 to 1828. The idea would be to have - especially for researchers - some dates, as fully furnished with detail as possible, of what happened in such a month, such a week, such a day. I would have to put down a lot more references so that one could be sure that what is said has a historical basis.

Here are some examples: January 1822: how the Brothers got through it since the congregation was not recognised. There was an authorisation from the Rector. ADL T. 14 = Archives Department of the Loire.

March 1822: I introduce the letter written by the aspirants to Pius VII. It was signed only by Colin-Courveille, and they gave the address of Cerdon, since Pius VII's reply was addressed to Cerdon, but it certainly alludes to the Champagnat branch, since among the "works" indicated are:

- the salvation of souls
- the missions near or far
- but also catechism to those in ignorance and
- forming young people to virtue and
- visiting prisoners and the sick (which the Brothers did in the early years).

March 1822: the arrival of the former De La Salle subject who, I am convinced, was Grizard. He brought with him eight young people at the beginning of March, must have been expelled round about the 20th, was authorised by the Rector for Charlieu on the 22nd or 23rd. On the 25th, the sub-prefect of Roanne submitted this authorisation to the Prefect. At Lavalla he had said that he had been with the De La Salles for six years (in "The Life" by Jean Baptiste); later he would tell the inspector the same thing. At Charlieu he claimed that he was forming novices by the La Valla method and was in contact with Courveille, even if, which is most improbable, Father Champagnat had lost sight of him after having expelled him.

12 June 1822: Letter to Mgr Bigex, bishop of Pignerol, to the two Colin brothers concerning the letter of Pius VII.

8 November 1822: Entry of a novice - Marcellin Saby. He did not stay. I shall do the same for all who come.

8 November 1822: Paid 10 francs to the seminary = 4 days. Therefore he left La Valla on either the 4th or 5th to see Courbon, Gardette, Bochart (GM means legal recognition).

1823 1 January: Entry of aspirant from Villelonge = Br Dorothee.

February: Memorare in the snow, 25 March. Macchi received anonymous letters announcing a schism if an administrator was appointed for Lyons to replace Fesch. This is important because it meant that on 1 September we would find Bochart taking advantage of the priests' retreat - which Father Champagnat was following - in order to try to set them against the idea of an administrator. Courbon would say about this that it was no longer "gallicanisme" but "gallicanage".

20 October, Seyve, one of the 12 to 15 persons who had given their name to the founding of the Society of Mary, came to preach at La Valla and set the people against Rebod, the parish priest.

Let's jump to 26 November 1822.

After the affair at Charlieu, where Grizard, after having committed God knows what kind of stupidity, ran away. As he had teamed up with Courveille for the schools of the Feurs district, the latter would force Father Champagnat, who was finishing the building of the important project of the Hermitage, to give him three Brothers to replace this Grizard person who pretended to be a kind of affiliate to La Valla.

For the year 1825, I shall often note down the expenditure or receipts noted by Champagnat in his accounts book.

For 1826, in the entry for 7 August I have put down a long summary which is quite separate from the accounts book, but is certainly the report Champagnat made to the archbishop's office which, on 8 August, had given up their wish to join us to the Frères du Sacré Coeur, after Coindre's suicide (end of May), but asked Champagnat to be careful with his expenditure: "The deplorable state of the temporal affairs of the Brothers in Notre-Dame-de-l'Hermitage makes a detailed account of their situation most necessary".

This is something which, at my age, and being in close proximity to the departmental archives and the archives of the diocese, I can still do in order to shed a little light on each month or each day in the life of Marcellin.

That would allow me also to corroborate many of the details in volumes 2 and 3 of "*Né en 89*" for, if volume 1 is practically exhausted, at least in l'Hermitage - I don't know how many copies are left in St Genis or in Rome - there are still many copies of the other two volumes left. And yet there was an issue of 5,000 for vol. 1 and 3,000 for each of the other two.

SOME WAYS OF APPROACHING THE TASK OF FINDING THE BASIC ELEMENTS OF MARIST EDUCATIONAL PEDAGOGY IN SPAIN

Using some historical sources

Br J.J. Moral

FOREWORD

What I am presenting is a suggested approach rather than a finished work or, to put it another way, a prefatory synthesis to a historical work.

- Indicating the sources,
- starting a dialogue on the sources for this part of Marist history,
- complementing theories and establishing their truth,
that is the aim of these pages.
In any case there is an obligation to consult new sources which
can change everything.

These sources are:

- the general archives in Rome;
- the archives of Saint-Paul-Trois-Châteaux;
- the archives of Lacabane;
- the archives of Aubenas;
- the archives of Madrid;
- the archives of each of the Spanish Provinces.

1. GOING THROUGH SOME HISTORICAL SOURCES

- Brother Hypolitus: "Essai de synthèse historique de l'oeuvre mariste en Espagne".
- Brother E. Corredera: "Pages d'Histoire Mariste".
- Publications of FTD.
 - 1.1 The Province of Spain: 1886
 - 1.2 The two contributions of the Brothers: 1903
 - 1.3 Places, foundations, organisation
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Introduction

We can synthesise in five short chapters the historical development of the pedagogical and educational work of Marists in Spain during the one hundred and eleven years from 1886 to 1997.

Right through this period there exists a pedagogical legacy which has been handed on, an evolution of educational principles received from preceding generations and a creative adaptation and updating, according to the circumstances and needs which have arisen during these years.

In order that my exposition may be made clearer, I have divided it into five stages:

1) Following historical sources: this is a historical reminder, recalling our origins and the values of the past.

2) The legacy and traditions received from the French Brothers: something like the cellar in which good wine has been able to mature and become a vintage with its name of origin.

3) The evolution of information regarding the beginnings and the efforts that went into that: this has required a concentration of effort and a focusing of our exertions which have produced effective results that are ready to be further developed.

4) New groupings and adaptation to the changes: all this springing from new ideas in society and in people's mentality and from the call to answer new needs.

5) Challenges for the future: These are the prospective problems we shall have to face with daring and hope.

The work that is asked of me will no doubt leave numerous gaps due to the many different ways in which the information has been obtained. I shall try to make up for these drawbacks by giving facts, pictures and graphics.

Brothers, Martyrs and Saints, Apostles and Teachers.

Men formed with society in view: good Christians and good citizens. Works undertaken. Events looked at objectively or subjectively, with all their limitations. You have there the history of thousands of workers in the Lord's vineyard, cultivated and cared for in the Marist way in Spain.

FOLLOWING HISTORICAL SOURCES

First there is a trickle, tenuous, but original and objective and issuing from a reliable source: Br Hypolitus. In his day he published an essay entitled: "Historical synthesis of Marist work in Spain". From the beginning he had played a leading role, had founded several educational establishments, and was Provincial of the Province of Spain. We can trust whatever he has passed on to us in his historical synthesis.

"Stella Maris", shortly before the death of Br Hypolitus in 1942, published a synthesis of the first 50 years of the life of the Province. However, the vast amount of research which Br Hypolitus had undertaken has not been published and remains in the Archives of Las Avellanas. It consists of more than 42 carefully written notebooks, giving facts and diary entries which deserve a better place.

"Pages d'histoire" of Brother Eduardo Corredera, is a collection of facts, works and memoirs, which we would have irreparably lost without the intervention and work of the historian. One part of this conglomeration has been published; the other parts (three volumes of "Histoire des oeuvres

maristes” could be the object for later research.

An anonymous publication, the oldest of the history of Marist educational work in Spain, bears the curious title: “Mémoire des Noces d’argent de la Province Espagnole de Barcelone”. Some very rare copies of this publication exist and in it you find a summary of the first 25 years and so it is a trickle going back to the authentic sources.

First educational contribution

The most enduring and effective pedagogical and educational sources are to be sought by retracing other trickles and other affluents. The publication of class books was a laborious work, the fruit of the talents and efforts of the French Brothers who were able to pass them on to the Spanish Brothers. We still have complete issues which have escaped fires and destructive violence, which we preserve as cultural treasures of great pedagogical richness.

A great writer, former pupil of the Brothers in Parafrugell and the early days of Gerona, Josep Pla, who describes them for us in detail and informs us of his “Souvenirs d’ancien élève”.

We preserve some particularly interesting words of this Ampurdanian author who was remarkable for his judicious criticism of everything that came under his pen: (cf. *Éducateur mariste* II, p. 362) “The Brother Director prepared me, somewhat reluctantly, for the baccalauréat. We had bought the books and the syllabuses demanded by the Professors of the High School in Figueras: these books were badly presented, complicated and in frightening disorder. Compared with the French manuals of Primary Teaching which we had been following, and which were so clear, so precise, so simple (I remember, for example, the “First Elements of Cosmography” by J.H. Fabre, the celebrated entomologist, which was a real delight), the official books caused me an anguish such as people of nervous temperament feel when confronted with disorder, obscurity, lack of balance and correct measure».

(Josep Pla, Gerona “Un llibre de records”, Éd. Destino, Barcelona, 1952, p. 23.)

Here are some other texts from the same book, pages 16 and 17:

“Pedagogically they brought the basic French methods: clarity, patience, tenacity, the taste for personal emulation without which no teaching is possible. They demanded a minimum of hygiene. They encouraged games that were straightforward and hard. Punishments were reasonable, rarely excessive. They understood the kind of instruction that the people required and accentuated the practical spirit of teaching. They had the advantage of being able to teach French admirably and Spanish with an advantage: French, because that was their mother tongue and Spanish, because they knew it as

foreigners who had studied it, better than national teachers who presumed to get it over by inspiration. Over the riotous Ampurdian temperament they projected some of that French discipline which gave indisputable results. In a word, they created a college which was clean, religious and pedagogically normal. I, who am a supporter of the old teaching methods, am inclined to think that they lacked only one thing, being completely French, that is to say they could have been more strict and more disciplinarian.”

The issues of books from the publishing house FTD as it was at first, and then Luis Vives afterwards, were not only an intellectual contribution of the first order but also a pedagogical initiative whose merit was recognised all over Spain.

Wall maps, with the whole series impeccably presented, Mathematical texts with lots of exercises systematically arranged, Physics, Chemistry and Biology, books on History and Civics, all have been universally recognised for their excellent pedagogical quality.»

The following publications (in Spanish, of course), illustrating pedagogical applications and Marist pedagogy, have come through right to the present day as models of this educational tradition:

- Pedagogical Psychology, FTD, 1932, Barcelona.
- Teacher's Guide, Edelvives, 1942, Saragossa.
- Queen and Mother, Edelvives, Saragossa.
- Catechism of the Sacred Heart, Edelvives, 1945, Saragossa.
- Catechism of the Blessed Virgin, Edelvives, 1945, Saragossa.
- General Pedagogy, Edelvives, 1946, Saragossa.
- History of Pedagogy, Vol. I and II, Edelvives, 1965, Saragossa.

1.1 The Marist Province of Spain

The Marist Brothers' starting point in Spain was on 19 December 1886. On that date, four Brothers arrived in Gerona with a view to learning Spanish in order to go later to Argentina and work in collaboration with the Lazarite Fathers. Since their departure for Argentina was put off till later, June 1887, the Brothers started to give classes and in September the number of pupils went up to 120. Before the end of that first year they had taken the decision to stay on in Gerona and to continue their Marist work there.

1.2 The two streams: 1903

On 23 June 1903, another group of French Marists, expelled from their country by the Combes Law, which made life impossible for religious

communities, came to Basque territory in Spain and founded a college at Oñate, on the premises of its famous and beautiful university.

A third group had already been installed in Pontós, in the Province of Gerona, on 26 May 1903.

These three French streams were to develop separately and were to form the bases of the three Marist Provinces in Spain: the one called the Province of Spain, whose core was the group of Brothers who had come to Gerona, then the Province of Anzuola, so named because the Brothers who arrived at Oñate soon established their novitiate at Anzuola, a small town in Guipuzcoa ten kilometres from Oñate, and finally the Province of León, for the Brothers who had come to Pontós soon began their work of education in the north-west of Spain.

1.3 Installation, Foundations, Organisation

Here is the chronological account of the first foundation.

Foundations followed each other in fast succession, more than two schools each year.

That is a tangible proof of their reputation.

This is the geographical distribution on the coasts of Catalonia.

The Superiors who are considered to be the founders of the Province of Spain.

Some specimens of the pedagogical and educational legacy of the first Brothers who came to Spain.

1.4 The Silver jubilee of the Province of Spain (1912)

In 1912 the Silver Jubilee of the arrival of the Marist Brothers in Spain was celebrated. Twenty-five years, therefore, had passed since the beginnings at Gerona on 19 December 1886. This date might have passed unnoticed but we have preserved a written testimony that is especially interesting: a book with the list of all that went on at this occasion. It shows the vitality of the Province of Spain and the *esprit de corps* that inspired its organisers.

An assembly of Brothers, Novices and Juniors was organised in Las Avellanas in 1912. This was a great day for appraisal and thanksgiving.

1.5 First moves to split up the Provinces (1924, 1929, 1932).

The expansion, vitality and reputation of our works were the three factors which favoured the development and establishment of the educational work of the Brothers in Spain.

The vitality of the Marist Brothers in Spain was not slow in showing itself. In 1890 there were already eight houses with 70 Brothers and more than 1,000 pupils. In 1900, the Brothers had 30 houses in Spain with 287 Brothers, 120 aspirants and 5,160 pupils. And in 1930 there would be 92 houses with 1,126 Brothers, 552 aspirants and 25,026 pupils.

The expansion in America was another sign of vitality. Since 1889 the Marist Brothers were collaborating in Colombia. In 1899 they arrived in Mexico. In 1903 in Argentina, then it would be Peru in 1909, Chile in 1911 and Venezuela in 1925.

This persuaded the Brothers not only to regroup the works into three different Provinces and Districts (Spain, Anzuola and León), but also to consider their eventual division. Political circumstances and other considerations caused the juridical procedures for the intended changes to be postponed.

2. LEGACY AND TRADITION IN MARIST EDUCATION IN SPAIN

Remember the dates in this second stage; we are faced with educational elements that have been handed on by legacy and by tradition, namely: those elements that were inherited in a legal manner and elements that were rapidly learned by the new generations, each completing the other and joining together in a harmonious and efficacious manner.

Five concrete facts, with their dates; five educational elements with their dynamism, the source of their growth:

2.1 Golden Jubilee celebrations frustrated (1886-1936)

Everything was ready for this most solemn celebration. Brother Laurentino had gone to Las Avellanas to have a last look over the work of preparing the house which had to put up the Brothers who had been called to a session of spiritual renewal which was at the very heart of the Province's celebrations and was planned to last for two months; when he returned to Barcelona the political upheavals were beginning and terrible news of Brothers who had been murdered or had disappeared kept coming in. The festivities could not begin

Here is how Brother Hipólito described the situation: "The Province, as planned, and with hearts filled with enthusiasm and gratitude, was getting ready to celebrate its 50 years of existence, to relive the past, to applaud the successes of our Superiors and to praise the Lord for the works he had done. The restoration of the monastery of Las Avellanas was to be a kind of fitting

and lasting manifestation of our feelings of gratitude, the memory passed on from one generation to the next. Circumstances obliged us to change our programme. Confronted with the ruin of the majority of our works in Spain, with the burning of so many churches, with the sacrileges, with the blasphemies uttered by the masses, with the diabolical opinions being expressed, it was not a hymn of praise which gushed spontaneously from our hearts, as we would have wished, but exclamations of grief accompanied, it is true, by “*fiats*” of resignation.”

(“Ensayo de una síntesis histórica de la obra marista en España”, Stella Maris, 1938-39, p. 13)

2.2 The Civil War: incalculable losses

The war was a disaster from every point of view and in every domain. The sowing of the blood of martyrs is a promise of fertility. That is the exact meaning of the words of the historian who wrote immediately after those events:

“However, in the midst of desolation, pure voices were being raised to heaven before the throne of the Lord, to implore pardon and mercy, the voices of those hundreds of confessors of their faith who had passed through the prisons of iniquity, the voice of the martyrs offering their palms to the spotless Lamb and asking for peace and love in the world. First was Brother Lycarion, Director of the Technical School at Pueblo Nuevo, in 1909, at the time of the Red Week in Barcelona. In 1934 it was the turn of Brother Bernardo, Director of the school where the children of the miners in Barruelo were taught. Today there is a whole host of our Brothers whose glory lights up the sky of our Province which emerged from the troubles enriched with the treasure of the merits of their sanctity and virtue, fertilised as it was with the blood of martyrs. “*Te martyrum candidatus laudat exercitus.*”

2.3 The blood of the martyrs gushes forth as seed - promise of flowers

Here are the data and the statistics:

- * The MARTYRS
- * Data of the Province up to 1936
- * Data of the Province up to 1940.

2.4 The first multiplication:

- * **From the Great Province of Spain to the three, then four Provinces.**

* **León, Norte-Sur, Levante.**

* **León, Bética, Levante**

The decree of the General Council, held in Saint-Genis-Laval on 3 May 1944, allows us to study the details of the two successive divisions and the boundaries laid down.

2.5 Expansion in the forties.

* Development of educational works

* Houses of formation

* The impulse given and the eagerness of the people for things educational bear fruit immediately.

Second educational contribution

This contribution does not consist in the attachment to or defence of a method, as we shall see, but in work that is open to any furtherance of education, to every pedagogical reform and experiment, while still remaining faithful to the main principles and proven values in education.

The second generation, the one which lived in the tensions of these thirty or so years, was characterised by grief, distrust and pessimism, and perhaps also by the preponderance of the values it had imbibed, or by a struggle that was antagonistic, at times fiercely relentless, at times a struggle to the death, a struggle in which those values triumphed which were contrary to belief in effort, to constancy in work, to love of things well done and to confidence in a better future.

The atmosphere the Brothers created around them.

Here are some *fioretti* plucked from the garden of our family reviews:

“There reigned among them complete confidence and great enthusiasm: it was a model community where they lived out to the letter the commandment of the Lord: “Love one another”.

One day in the month of May, that month of flowers, when they were coming back from the Church of Our Lady of Mount Carmel where they had celebrated their May Devotions, they were approached by a well-dressed gentleman who greeted them in very correct French. He asked them questions about the college about whose praises he had read in the newspaper. Satisfied with the answers he got he asked if he could enrol his son, whose name was Narciso. The gentleman in question was none other than the lawyer, Manuel Viñas (Desvignes) a canon of the S.I.C.

And the good chronicler is already putting down in writing the first reaction of the locals: "A certain publication, which was considered "red", from the very first day attacked the new college, announcing in ironical terms its failure. After some days, seeing that the results it had been looking for were contrary to its expectations, it changed its tactics and splashed out invectives against those families which were confiding the education of their children to foreigners who knew neither the language nor the ways of the country..."

But here is the best, the richest sketch of all those which remain anonymous but which describe the authentic characteristics of the educator as described by witnesses. It can be summarised as follows:

"The difficulties, the unease, the upsets occasioned by the war were mitigated by a deep religious spirit, a great spirit of prayer and a great devotion to the Blessed Virgin. Moreover, many of them were excellent teachers of secular subjects.

"Most of them were men of God: very austere, generous, totally devoted to the work that was theirs (in spite of their numerous occupations). They passed on to us all their knowledge and experience. They put into practice everything they knew. We always noticed that they were never idle.

"The almost maternal goodness, which stamped their words and appearance, made them attractive. Their sound spirituality and the depth of their interior life made an impression on everyone. Although hard on themselves, they always showed themselves kind and full of goodness to others.

"They distinguished themselves by their elegance, their competence and their sympathy which was infectious.

"They strove to inculcate in us, by every means, correct attitudes and values for life."

(Cfr. Educador marista, 2, p. 112 and Stella Maris, 1938-39, p. 13)_

A lady journalist gave us a present of this article which is truly eloquent: (Published in the daily newspaper "El Universo", 12 August 1910)

THE MARISTS. To express my deep admiration and gratitude to those men who piously call themselves Brothers and with mystic sweetness take the name of Marists, the limits of this article are severely restricted, since I have not sufficient room at my disposal just now to welcome them among my expressions of homage.

I do not know where they come from, these exceptional men who have sown the seeds of culture so abundantly in this country town, but I know where they are going. They are going on to that glorious sacrifice of love for children. They are going towards the promotion of knowledge by means of charity. And they are going joyfully, with certainty, with a humility that is most enchanting. The truth is that the harvest of their work entails as much that is

burdensome in that activity as it is fruitful in blessings. And those men are happy when they reap the harvest of their ambitions in the intelligence of their pupils.

With such admirable examples as these gentlemen are offering us for our consideration, there is nothing easier than to defend and give fervent praise to the excellence of the teaching given by religious orders.

The small mountain town I am recalling is not a clerical village, in the meaning that is now given to that word; there are lots of liberals and even republicans. When the Marists established themselves there some years back, called to further the cultural aims of a beneficent foundation, they were met by a cold hostility from the public in their mission of redemption.

Just now, through their colleges of primary and secondary education, the Marists are reaping in love and gratitude that outflow of wonderful self-denial which they have lavished on that township.

The most disbelieving, the most indifferent, those who said with suspicion: "They look like priests!", who murmured disdainfully: "They look like monks", those who were most sceptical and suspicious have turned their uncovered heads towards the Marists and have bowed with respect before their work.

The most emotional and beautiful note about this holy work is the deep love that the children feel for these model educators. With an impulsive affection, full of attraction and confidence, the pupils without distinction of class or age, are there, grouped in a harmonious chorus of submission around the Marists.

The task of learning, which is always unpleasant for children, has become a most pleasant one in the patient and skilful hands of the Marists.

A deep sensation of well-being has gently penetrated the hearths where these children lend dignity to the hours they spend of their harsh and poor lives, receiving some initiation into knowledge of all that is good and beautiful.

The possibility of acquiring knowledge and attaining the happiness of an invaluable betterment of their modest social condition has been presented to these children in such a captivating way, that with the verve of grown men they are joyfully submitting to great sacrifices of work to take advantage of this tempting benefaction.

Some young lads, who are already able to stand the painful toil in the mines, hurry home from their heavy working day to wash, change their clothes and leaf through some enlightening books which are opening up for them previously unknown and glorious horizons.

It is a delight to see how young shepherd boys, miners, woodcutters and minor officials translate Lord Byron and Lamartine, greet Wolf, are acquainted with Leclanché and Mohr, Ruhmforff and Edison...

The most fortunate children, those who have the leisure to run about,

being freed by their good fortune from starting work at an early age, enjoying a climate that lends itself more to delicacy of feeling, live with the Marist Brothers in affectionate familiarity. Never, not even occasionally, does attendance at class seem boring to them. To ensure punctuality, they rise promptly at an early hour, resisting the luxury of their sweet morning slumber. When the grown-ups are still sleeping, the children are already flitting about silently on tiptoe through the house, and often, in bleak winter mornings, the children's sandals, click-clacking gaily on the village streets, seemed to us to be calling the neighbourhood to the bustle of work.

This deep friendship of the children with the Brothers, this warmth of sympathy which are working such miracles of application and constancy, are the reward for the Marists, their glory.

The children, with the generosity characteristic of youth, feel drawn towards whatever is unselfish and noble, and their inexperience does not prevent them from appreciating the sublime abnegation of these religious, among whom are learned writers, real artists of knowledge; artists who are wise in living a renunciation, that is as absolute as it is imponderable, of all the material things of life, who are solicitous, who work, who strive and who redeem without any more reward than that of getting a very frugal meal and wearing poor clothes. Learned artists who earn *seven reales* (about two pence) for a day's work.

This figure which speaks volumes, put alongside the high merits of these exemplary men, adds volume to any other commentaries we could add to these words of admiration.

Now that there is a discussion going on in the social dispute as to the benefits that religious orders are contributing to Spain, let us remember with reverence that we have seen at close quarters and have heard in our own houses the great charity of those who, by their outstanding virtue and their charming simplicity, deserve the affectionate name of *Brothers*, and the sweet and holy surname of *Marist*.

CONCHA ESPINA DE LA SERNA (*Cabezón de la Sal, Santander*)

3. INNOVATIONS AND EVOLUTION

3.1 An unforeseen development

With the most pressing needs in mind, and banking strongly on the restoration of what the war had ruined and of the educational institutions they had founded, the Marist Brothers faced up valiantly to the risks, following the example of the Brothers who had given their lives during the war.

Some schools existing before the war could not be reopened. More than 200 Brothers had been martyred, and the incessant blood-letting of those who left the Institute as a result made itself felt when taking stock of the members who were at our disposal for putting the educational machine in motion once more.

Still, if we compare things with other well-known educational institutions in the Iberian peninsula, the distribution that was made speaks volumes.

The youngest, those who had most recently arrived, constituted the third educational force in the country.

3.2 Division on a grand scale

The fact that our educational work and vocations were multiplying, although explicable by natural causes, (need for schools to be satisfied, faith and Christian austerity existing in society after a disastrous period of warfare) is perhaps not enough to explain precisely this general phenomenon.

At the end of the fifties, the possibility of splitting up this blossoming of works became an urgent necessity and little surprise was expressed at the canonical decision on 2 February 1959, to erect seven new Provinces in the Institute.

Some called this division a painful childbirth, others a necessary growth because of existing differences, many others looked upon it as a multiplication of our strength.

3.3 Tendencies and differences

When the new structures established began to function, then inevitably differences were noticed and prevailing trends gave an impulse to each administrative unit to exploit the possibilities of a future full of promise.

3.4 Two University Schools for the formation of teachers

After some failed attempts (1967-1973), two groups of Provinces built two training colleges for higher education with a double aim: the Christian formation of teachers in Primary Schools and university preparation for our Scholastic Brothers. The Provinces of León, Castille and Levante established theirs at Salamanca, the other four at Alcalá de Henares, near Madrid. These two schools were similar in their set-up and frequently worked together.

Alcalá de Henares: It belongs to the Marist Provinces of Bética, Catalonia and Madrid. It has 8 Marist teachers, 32 lay teachers, and 6 persons employed in services and administration. 583 students.

Salamanca: belonging to the Marist Provinces of Castille, León and Levante. It has 4 Marist teachers, 34 lay teachers and 4 persons for services and administration. 689 students.

Subjects taught Diplomas granted	Students(m,f) Alcalá	Students Salamanca
Infant education	9/121	3/96
Special Education	16/98	10/68
Speech and language	10/56	13/93
Foreign language	18/30	10/19
Primary Education	36/70	9/10
Social Education	23/96	—
Musical Education	—	29/77
Physical Education	—	177/75

3.5 The “missions” of each Province

Was this a furtherance of apostolic action or specific concern for the missions? It was proposed that each Province should choose a field of action in America or Africa where the need for human development through education was necessary.

The Marist Provinces in Spain sent Brothers to Paraguay, Bolivia, Ecuador, Ivory Coast, Zaire, Malawi and Equatorial Guinea to collaborate in missionary work in the domain of education.

4. CREATIONS

4.1 Reactions to the new laws

Since 1970 Spain has been going through a political transition whose influence has repercussions which affect all institutions and social levels.

New laws made changes in the domain of education: the Villar Palasí Law fixed the structure of the new plan for Primary Education (EGB) and then for the Baccalauréat et Polyvalent (BUP). The Palasí law had no sooner been put into effect than an attempt was being made to impose new laws

affecting education, under the auspices of the new political parties.

All Marist works felt the impact of these legislative squalls and all the work of the Brothers and their collaborators underwent serious modifications.

Attempts to find common solutions

Three tendencies, which are borne out by statistical facts, emerge in Marist works:

1. A reaction of adaptation to the new legal demands.
2. A concentration of strength in our scholastic enterprises with establishments that were both numerous and financially viable.
3. A tendency to join in a federation with other educational institutions which shared our objectives.
4. A multiplicity of educational projects which were open to lay participation.
5. A sharing of pupils in all activities.

4.3 Shared Marist educational works

Shared Marist works were strengthened and adapted themselves. The following five have been established:

- a) Salamanca. The University School "Luis Vives" for the formation of Teachers.
It belongs to the Provinces of Castille and Levante.
- b) Salamanca. Scholasticate for the Provinces of Castille and Levante.
- c) Alcalá de Henares. The University School "Cardenal Cisneros" for the formation of teachers. It belongs to the Provinces of Bética, Catalonia, and Madrid.
- d) Alcalá de Henares. Scholasticate for the Provinces of Bética, Catalonia, Madrid and Norte.
- e) Torrent. Single Novitiate for the seven Provinces of Spain.

4.4 The Publishing House, "Luis Vives". The Secretariats. The CEIS

The "Luis Vives" Publishing House, which is committed to good quality productions and to the perfecting of school textbooks, started life in Barcelona. It has a quite remarkable history and an existence of one hundred years in the domain of scholastic methodology. In 1932 it adopted the name

of the Valencian humanist, Luis Vives, to replace that of FTD which it had before.

In 1937 it was transferred to Saragossa. In the eighties it refurbished its workshops and established a trade centre in Madrid.

The secretariats of Education and Pastoral Work coordinate the initiatives common to the Spanish Provinces and suggest comprehensive solutions to problems of information, formation and updating.

The CEIS (Centro de Estudios Informaticos Superiores) is a centre for educational research and a centre for higher computer studies which is at the service of all those engaged in educational work; it processes data handed in by colleges; it also gives educational guidance and makes up programmes of psycho-pedagogical import. It is in Madrid.

4.5 The Conferencia Marista Española (C.M.E.)

The Spanish Marist Conference brings together the seven Marist Provinces in Spain, i.e. Bética, Castille, Catalonia, León, Levante, Madrid and Norte.

Origins and present state

The CME has its roots in the days when Marist Spain had an Assistant General appointed in 1942 to liaise with the Superior General.

Bit by bit the need arose to start enterprises in which all seven Provinces had an interest, so secretariats and delegations were constituted, starting with a coordinating structure which was given the name “Conferencia Regional Española” (1971).

In 1988 this structure was renamed “Conferencia Marista Española”, while keeping the existing functions and machinery.

The last revision of the Statutes was made in 1995 and different functions were reorganised and improved as was the office work. The role of Brother Secretary General of the CME was defined as was that of the Central Council which is made up of the Secretary General and at least two other Brothers, who are at the service of all the works that are in common at their different levels, taking into account the special nature of each work.

Objectives of the CME

The essential objective of the CME is to look after those interests that are common to its members, in particular:

1. By strengthening the sense of cohesion at the heart of the Marist Provinces in Spain.
2. By facilitating collaboration with the Church and relations with the Superior General and his Council.
3. By encouraging solidarity between Provinces in their service of mission, following the exhortations of the 19th General Chapter.
4. By promoting coordination between Provinces and mutual support by reflecting and acting together.
5. By creating and directing works that are common to all and fixing their statutes; by modifying or suppressing certain projects should that be deemed necessary.

Third educational contribution

Here are the words of Brother Basilio Rueda, spoken on the evening before the Centenary of the Congress of Marist Education.

“You possess all the spiritual and human resources necessary to face this new challenge which, like any challenge, has its light side and its dark side. Throughout the years of this century of Marist presence in Spain you have lived through moments of history that were more painful, more dramatic, more demanding than those of the last few years, and you have been able to accept them, to endure them, to resolve them. Very often works that were in ruins had to be started all over again. All those moments, with the passing of time, have become bearers of light but also of shade.

“Be, then, children who are worthy and proud of your past. Be the fruit of the blood of martyrs (and I am using this word without in any way giving a judgment of value: what is important is the faith and love with which those Brothers died). Not less great were the men of the forties who, in the midst of restrictions, studying and teaching at the same time, have rebuilt those works, have formed those former pupils who are their pride and consolation and, with great enthusiasm, have created the Marist Spain which we admire today.

“I invite you to unite with those feelings of joy, to which the Centenary gives rise, some feelings of concern which may be caused by the difficult future that may lie ahead. May you be able to present to the Institute which is assembling for the 18th General Chapter the admirable example of a daring review, an optimistic spirit and enlightened decisions.”

(Brother Basilio Rueda, SG, *Pantalla escolar*, no. 5, p. 55)

5. CHALLENGES

5.1 The LODE law and the LOGSE law

Two successive government laws (LODE = Organic Law of Education and LOGSE = Organic Law of General Organisation of the Educational System), in favour of which two thirds of the parliament members voted, provoked all kinds of reaction in school circles.

* The CME called extraordinary meetings to give a coherent answer to those questions: attitudes and strategy of the Marist Institute and of collegial educational communities to be adopted in giving an answer to the LOGSE with regard to the quality, responsibility and social and evangelical sense of such an answer.

- * The four following attitudes were proposed:
 - Follow very carefully every item of information.
 - Be ready to set up positive procedures for action.
 - Take special care to analyse the real state of education at the moment.
 - Discern and start fighting for a legal statute.
- * It was thought that the present circumstances were a good opportunity for improvements, also a cause for concern.
- * This was a work led by the educational community.
- * Action was structured around two axes: attitudes to be adopted and commitments to be taken.

5.2 The Marist Centenary in Spain: 1886-1986

The Marist Centenary was celebrated with a great deployment of cultural, academic, artistic, sporting, social, pedagogical and educational events.

5.3 The Congress of Marist Education in Salamanca

This Congress had particular reverberations and echoes. It was celebrated in September 1886. Its preparation, its participation at all levels and the manner in which it was conducted were hugely successful.

5.4 The 18th and 19th General Chapters

The messages of these General Chapters found an echo in the Brothers and in the educational works and gave rise to actions that were marked by daring and hope among all the Brothers.

The exhortation of these two Chapters to go out to the poor became a challenge to all those responsible for works of education.

Each year works of solidarity are multiplying.

ONG (Non-Governmental Works) and SED (Solidarity, Education, Development) have taken initiatives which go beyond the frontiers and which involve the whole Marist educational community.

The University Schools have become centres of renewal for Brothers and lay people. More than a thousand Marist collaborators have passed through them and followed their courses.

5.5 Shared mission; the CEP and its projects

Meetings of Major Superiors of Provinces and Districts of Europe started off with the creation of the CEP (Conference of European Provincials).

Following their meetings in Lebanon and Seville, the following concrete projects were set up:

- The Congress of Young European Brothers, which was held in Llinars del Vallès in Spain and which opened up new and hopeful prospects.
- The course of Marist formation for laypeople in Europe, who were called with a view to future development.
- Meetings of Brothers in the Third Age where they share, work together and exchange views and experiences.

The present works could be structured on these three lines of action by considering them in the light of the Marist mission.

Fourth educational contribution

“You are faced with a task which is greater than that of resolving the problem of scholastic reform (LODE): it is the task of helping to bring to birth the Marist school of the future, with pedagogical answers that are truly Marist and creative, of helping to establish the Marist school in Europe which is in part dechristianised, and to launch, starting with the school, a new wave of civilisation and evangelisation.

“Remain on the watch for those causes which are at present challenging humanity.”

(Br. Basilio Rueda, SG, op. cit., p. 56)

The Marist pedagogy which Marcellin Champagnat left us is still alive and fruitful:

Be close to the children so that they may become good Christians and upright citizens. This was the burning desire of Marcellin Champagnat.

This charism is the one which we, the Marist Brothers, have inherited.
Contact with young people allows us to discover our own reality, their problems and hopes.

OUR SOCIETY
IS THE OBJECT
OF OUR CARES
AND CONCERNS

OUR SOCIETY
GIVES US
FAITH AND
HOPE

Fifth educational contribution

In 1996, two events happened which were of capital importance to the history of the Brothers in Spain:

The first was the visit of Brothers of the General Council. This visit began with a meeting in Madrid from 10-12 January 1996. Then different teams of Councillors visited the Brothers, the houses and the works of the seven Provinces throughout the first three months. The visit ended with a week for reflection in Guardamar, from 8 to 14 April, at the end of which several priorities were indicated with a view to reinvigorating Marist life and mission.

The second event was the murder of the four Spanish missionary Brothers on 31 October 1996 at a time when they were working in a refugee camp in Nyamirangwe. They had been devoted to this mission which had been confided to them directly by the Brother Superior General to help the Rwandan refugees in Zaire. The lives and deeds of Brothers Julio Rodríguez, Fernando de la Fuente, Miguel Ángel Isla and Servando Mayor filled pages and columns in the newspapers and had a great impact on Spanish society; more than that, they are a sign of new places of Marist presence and of our service to the poor even to the giving of life.

Rome, 20 N- 1997 Br J J Moral

THE ACADEMIC CLIMATE OF OUR SCHOOLS IN FRANCE (1818-1891)

(as seen through the writings of Br. Avit)

Br. José PEREZ, fms

In this article I will attempt to sketch various aspects of the academic environment of our schools in France, based on the writings of Brother Avit. I will analyze his life and his work in an attempt to better understand the topic. The *Annals of the Institute* and those of the houses provide an invaluable source for understanding the history of our schools from the beginnings of the Institute up to 1891, when Br. Avit completed his work.

BROTHER AVIT: HIS LIFE, WORK AND PERSONALITY

Brother Avit (Henri Bilon) was born in Saint Didier-sur-Chalaronne (Ain) in 1819. On October 1, 1837 he went with the Brothers to the Hermitage to attend their annual retreat. His experiences amid the solitude of the Hermitage resulted in his returning to Saint Didier and requesting admission to the novitiate. He was admitted on March 9, 1838 and on May 14 he took the habit.

On October 11, 1838 he made temporary vows and was sent to Pelussin where he began his teaching career. "His director ridiculed his inexperience and his piety in front of the students."¹ At the same time, the director, who had greater enthusiasm for excursions than for regularity and study, put him in charge, in addition to his classes, of keeping an eye on the interns² on Sundays and Thursdays and on the other days after classes were over. In May 1839 he was sent to Terrenoire. The director, "a very virtuous Brother, but with a biting humor and a character that made life miserable for the other Brothers"³, requested new assignments for the two Brothers under his charge for having been late in coming home after a hike of more than 20 kilometers.

¹ *Annals of the Institute*, Vol. I, p. XVII.

² students who live in the school building.

³ *Annals of Terrenoire*, pp. 2-3.

So the Brother Director and parish priest of Pelussin again welcomed Br. Avit to their school. But Br. Avit had no enthusiasm for his new assignment and Father Champagnat, sympathizing with him, sent him to Viriville. Neither teaching a class of 65 students nor monitoring study hall kept him from preparing for the “brevet” text, studying until midnight and sometimes until two in the morning. Six months later in Grenoble he would pass the exam. It was March 9, 1840. In May he was again reassigned, this time to Charlieu as teacher of the upper class. He had become so loved by his students in Viriville that when he left, “most of them wept like women”.⁴

On August 15, 1840 Brother Avit was named director of Saint Genest Malifaux. The school improved and the authorities were pleased, but Brother Avit was falsely accused of something and was removed from the directorship and sent to Mornant. There he took things deftly in hand and his success in improving the conduct of the students both surprised and pleased the parish priest, Fr. Venet. However, Br. Avit’s frank and firm response to repeated interference by the pastor and by one of his vicars resulted in the pastor’s requesting that he be reassigned, while at the same time expressing the admiration he had for Br. Avit:

*Follow this Brother well. He has enough material for three, but he has a lot to trim off.*⁵

In his new assignment at Bougé-Chambalud things took a different course. His musical talents, his organizing ability and his talent at negotiating quickly gained him the sympathy of the parish priest, the mayor and the people in general. Barely two months after Br. Avit’s arrival, the parish priest was writing to the superiors (December 28, 1843):

*Our Brother Avit is doing a very good job. The upper class has made more progress in two months that they did in ten months last year. I therefore hope that you will allow him to stay with us for a long time.*⁶

During the summer, since he had only a few students, he was the one who would ring the church bells when a storm was threatening. This charmed the townspeople who were heard to comment: “This Brother keeps the hailstones away from us”. The town council, as a token of their appreciation for this service, awarded him 100 francs, which he refused. On hearing rumors that Br. Avit was going to be reassigned, the parish priest again wrote to the superiors in the name of all his parishioners. In September 1846 it was again rumored that he might be reassigned. Fr. Revol wrote three letters to the superiors warning them of the commotion changing him would

⁴ Annals of Viriville, p. 9.

⁵ Annals of Mornant, p. 13.

⁶ Annals of Bougé-Chambalud, p. 4.

cause in the town and that the boarding school would probably have to close down, since all the boarders would follow Br. Avit to Roussillon, a town located about 12 kms. from Bougé-Chambalud and where rumors had him being sent.⁷ Years later, this is how Br. Avit viewed his time in Bougé-Chambalud:

He⁸ spent three of his best years here. There had been rain and sunshine. He had regretted having worked too often for human glory. The praise he received was of no value.⁹

The 1846-47 school year found him directing the school at Mondragón where the Marist Brothers had replaced the Brothers of St. Gabriel. This school had a very poor reputation. It was said that the boys even went to the extreme of throwing rocks at the Brothers as they walked through the streets. No Brother would accept the directorship. Br. Jean Baptiste finally tapped Br. Avit. His energy, firmness and talent gradually reestablished discipline among students who were accustomed to do whatever they wanted. He quickly gained the admiration of Fr. Rey, the parish priest, who had at first been very reticent, and of the parents of the students. For two years he divided his time between his duties as principal and visiting the houses of the provinces of Saint Paul and la Bégude. The authorities were immensely pleased with Br. Avit and wanted him among them on a more continuous basis. They expressed this desire to his superiors, who named him Visitor for the Provinces of Mediodia and Centro. He was very busy in his new post and used his gift for diplomacy to negotiate for new establishments and to free about forty Brothers from the military service requirement via difficult dealings with the authorities of l'Ardèche and of la Drôme in 1850. He used his organizing ability to rectify situations in the houses, to promote the studies of the Brothers and to acquire furnishings for the schools. His tact helped resolve tensions between the authorities and the Brothers and his self-sacrifice showed in his visiting many schools, especially in the problem-ridden department of l'Ardèche.

In 1852 he was elected a delegate to the Second General Chapter. He would participate in all the Chapters up to that of 1880, fulfilling the duties of secretary.

In 1855 the superiors chose to give Br. Avit a well-deserved rest. They offered him the job of principal at either Craponne or at Digoin. Since he was wary of the cold climate of Craponne, he chose to go to Digoin. Digoin,

⁷ According to the Annals of Mondragón and of Lorgues his assignment was to have been director of the interns in the latter town.

⁸ Here Br. Avit speaks of himself in the third person.

⁹ Annals of Bougé-Chambalud, p. 7.

due to its location on the Central Canal, was a town of affluence and a carefree lifestyle. Opened in the time of Louis XVI, the canal had led to the introduction of the attractions of luxury and moral corruption. This was not an environment in which Br. Avit felt comfortable, as he himself admitted.¹⁰ Being that he was a master both at praising as well as at criticizing, Digoïn definitely received the latter. He paints a very somber picture. No one escapes his sharp words: the municipal council especially; the parents, for being so lenient with their children and always late with their tuition payments; Fr. Page, a holy priest, who with his endless liturgies exhausted the students, who were already lazy and mean-spirited; the superiors, who abused the confidence they had placed in him and sent him the most difficult subjects who, due to their lack of morality or of judgment or of the religious spirit and their constant scheming, had to be constantly under his vigilance. Neither his firmness nor energy were enough to subdue and motivate such undisciplined and rebellious individuals. This town was not prepared to appreciate the self-sacrifice and devotion of Br. Avit, whom they considered to be very demanding. He was good at using stories to describe people and situations. He has this to say about Digoïn:

*The bridge over the canal, on the road to Charolles, has been named by the Brothers "the Bridge of Idlers" because at any time one can see a crowd of men idling about. One day in 1857, some farmers, needing help to harvest the crops, came to offer them food and 4 francs per day. They refused, saying "It's boring." Most of them were penniless.*¹¹

*In 1869 the pastor preached vigorously against teen pregnancy. Ten months later, he had to baptize eight children born to girls in their teens.*¹²

Br. Avit, being tense and uncomfortable where he was, had requested a change. After a wait of six months, the superiors saw an opportunity when the parish priest of Bourbon-Lancy requested Br. Avit as principal of the parish school. The superiors agreed and the principals changed places in May of 1859. There followed three months of devoted work which was little appreciated by the parents who, while acknowledging his good points, considered Br. Avit too harsh and demanding. If the first stage of his teaching career had been filled with glory and success, in the second stage disappointment and misunderstanding prevailed.

Br. Avit's generosity and nobility is obvious when we read the evaluation by his successor in Digoïn who does not skimp in his praise of his influence, dedication and skill in the management of the school.

¹⁰ Annals of Digoïn, Bourbonnais I, p. 376.

¹¹ Annals of Digoïn, Bourbonnais I, pp. 375-376.

¹² Annals of Digoïn, Bourbonnais I, p. 376.

In August of that same year Br. Avit was named Visitor for the Province of St.-Genis, a post he held until 1876 when he was elected Assistant General at the second session of the 5th General Chapter, and was assigned the new province of Bourbonnais. In March 1880, due to the state of his health and the slow loss of his sight, his resignation as Assistant General was accepted. He had spent 14 years as a teacher and 28 in positions of government, during which he maintained a close relationship with Brothers Louis-Marie and Jean-Baptiste. Far from enjoying a well-deserved rest, he became the chronicler of the Institute. For two or three months a year he would visit the houses of the Institute to request documents that, together with his own recollections and the information that some Brothers gave him, would provide the basis for the task that kept him absorbed for the rest of the year. Although there was nothing to indicate death was near, symptoms appeared in December 1891 of an illness that led to his death on February 7, 1892 in Saint-Genis-Laval.

The works of Br. Avit have come down to us through the *Annals of the Institute* and the annals of the houses.

The Annals of the Institute

Kept from 1884 on, they are quite varied in content and lack any thematic order since he dictated them to his secretaries as he was gathering the information and included recollections of his own. Abounding in detail, they provide information on the Brothers, the establishments, the authorities, the missions and all sorts of incidents.

The Annals of the Houses

They comprise the history of the establishments from their beginnings to the moment in which for reasons of health Br. Avit had to interrupt his work. Some of the schools had already been closed.

The complete collection of almost 600 annals is found in Vol. 2 of *Marist Notebooks*.¹³

The annals of the houses are all similar in structure. They begin with an

¹³ Those that have been published are those of the provinces of Aubenas, Saint Paul (2 volumes) and Bourbonnais (2 volumes). Awaiting publication are those of the Hermitage, Saint Genis-Laval, Beaucamps and Ouest.

The Annals of the Province of Bourbonnais were completed by 1903. It was probably Br. Noé, Mathieu Becouse, who had the idea of continuing the Annals of Br. Avit, according to Br. Théophane, S.G. (See: *Introduction to the Annals of the Province of Bourbonnais*, by Br. Paul Sester).

historic overview of the locale, go on to describe the difficulties involved with the founding, the history of the school over the years, reports of the Visitors, a description of the buildings and the results obtained....all of this enriched with personal recollections and enlivened by his unique style and invaluable anecdotes. As his biographer relates:

He is before all else a man of truth, of frankness, of righteousness, of justice....a real Nathaniel, without duplicity nor disguise. To these qualities, he adds a spirit endowed with finesse and a natural vivacity from which flow prompt replies, sharp words, both spiritual and caustic, with a unique hidden meaning in his language, character and ways.

*Anxious to do his best as historian and judge, Br. Avit, in his Annals, speaks forthrightly the truth of people and events as he saw them.*¹⁴

Br. Avit is a unique witness. His having known the Founder, his experience as a teacher and the offices he held place him in a privileged position to give us first-hand information. Having a deep understanding of the daily life of the Brothers from the viewpoint of both superior and ordinary Brother, he fills the canvas with both light and shadow, a skill based on his mastery of depicting character that demonstrates his insight and his careful observation. He was a confidant of Br. Louis-Marie, who entrusted him with many delicate matters that brought him into contact with various people in authority and led him to a deeper knowledge of the persons he describes and analyzes with such ease, whether they be of lowly or exalted status. The harshness of his descriptions and evaluations, the earthy but reliable and convincing language he uses are surprising, but are what every good chronicler and historian must take as a starting point.

Br. Avit's work is not that of a simple narrator of events. Despite his often caustic, jocular, critical or angry style, he is a truly religious person, deeply human and totally identified with the institution that he is defending, for which he fights boldly and that he loves with all his heart. He foresees the risks of simple curiosity, of anecdotal reporting and of relating events that other chroniclers would usually ignore.

*Moreover, these chronicles are not for the public; only the superiors ought to have access to them for their good and to help them in governing. It is well to take the good wherever one finds it.*¹⁵

The openness of his expression, the clarity of his writing and the irony he employed were not an obstacle to the admiration, appreciation and love that the Brothers had for him, since "he had a good heart, was affectionate and open to friendship".¹⁶

¹⁴ *Notices Biographiques*, Vol. II, p. 8.

¹⁵ *Annals of Le Magny*, pp. 3-4.

¹⁶ N. B., Vol. II, p. 8.

Br. Avit, through his writings,

*...definitely makes us re-live the beginnings of the Institute with a certain dynamism and a compelling sense of humor.*¹⁷

Although Br. Avit's purpose was not to make a methodical presentation of the educational and academic situation, it is possible to extract from his writings useful and interesting information that helps us understand the life and work of our Brothers in France during the 19th century. What follows are some aspects of that time and place.¹⁸

1. Certain circumstances regarding the establishment of houses
2. Various roles the Brothers played
3. Formation of the Brothers
4. Profile of the Marist educator
5. Priests in the writings of Br. Avit

1. CERTAIN CIRCUMSTANCES REGARDING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF HOUSES

A. THE SCHOOL BUILDINGS

The unpleasant experiences of foundations such as the schools in Marthes and Vanosc, which were forced to close because of very deficient conditions, and others, like Saint Symphorien d'Ozon, where the Brothers lived in far from adequate conditions, obliged the superiors to insist that means be provided for the Brothers to live in buildings that had the suitable facilities.

*Having come to see the house and noticing the poor conditions, Father Champagnat told the pastor that he would remove the Brothers since he did not wish to have them suffer, that in conscience he could not allow them, not to mention the children, to remain in such a place. The two Brothers returned to La Valla and the school remained closed for ten years.*¹⁹

*The house was in such a terrible state and so many essentials were lacking that we had to abandon it four years later.... We have said that the pious Founder placed two Brothers here in 1823, that he came to visit, that he found them poorly housed and poorly paid and that he intended to remove them in 1826 or 1827, to the great displeasure of the pastor, Fr. Gouillet.*²⁰

¹⁷ Lettres 2, Repertoires, p. 65.

¹⁸ The annals I used were limited to those of the schools established in the time of the Founder as well as some other publications.

¹⁹ Annals of Marthes, p. 4.

²⁰ Annals of Vanosc, p. 7.

The school at St. Symphorien d'Ozon was in a less than suitable location.

*Fr. Dorzat, the pastor, acquired a small house on the public square (today it is a café) and had it repaired to serve as lodgings for the Brothers and children... The location was poorly suited for a school because of the market place, the fairs and public diversions, which were not conducive to the concentration needed for religious teachers and for discipline in class.*²¹

This was why Father Champagnat wrote the following to the new pastor, François Bois, in July 1837:

*The situation with the public square is very difficult for our Brothers. Several have lost their vocations; no one wants to go there. For all practical purposes, it is just as if they were living in the world.*²²

The condition of the building improved with time and the required facilities for the school and for the community were, with slight variations, described thus:

*A sufficiently large house with yard and garden; the classrooms should be joined, well-ventilated, well-lit and joined together by a door with a glass pane.*²³

*They will be furnished with an adequate house, with a yard and garden, enclosed and separate. This house should lend itself to community life and have a reception room, a kitchen with sink, a dining room, one or two spare rooms, a dormitory, a study hall, a small oratory and a well with a pump or fountain.*²⁴

A lack of foresight or of judgment on the part of those in positions of responsibility led in some cases to the opening of schools without provision for the above mentioned requirements and those that the Founder had already clearly set forth, albeit in a very general way:

*It is important that this school start off on a good footing, and for this it is necessary that the location be large and adequate.*²⁵

An example of the lack of foresight was the school at Cluny where we took over from the Brothers of the Christian Schools. Br. Louis Marie sent Br. Grégoire, the Visitor, to look into the conditions of the land and the school.

²¹ Annals of Saint Symphorien d'Ozon, p. 2.

²² Letter to Fr. François Bois, pastor of Saint Symphorien d'Ozon, Doc. 125, p. 256.

²³ Annals of Chomerac, Aubenas, p. 159.

²⁴ Annals of Lafarge, Aubenas, p. 246.

²⁵ Letter to the pastor of Usson-en-Forez, Fr. Dumas, Doc. 121, p. 250.

This emissary informed him poorly and made him accept an unsatisfactory position, which had been instrumental in causing the Brothers of the Christian Schools to leave... The classrooms were on the ground floor and the residence on the first floor of the cloister. This latter place was spacious enough, but adjoined other less honorable households. The vast hallway was a public place where several tenants lived, among whom was a seamstress who had several young girls in training. The mayor was at her place frequently and through her knew what the Brothers were doing. The latter were frequently irritated by the young apprentices who used to go so far as to stand, without shame, in front of the Brothers' door.²⁶

Although an isolated case, it shows that one does not always learn from experience.

B. ASSIGNING BROTHERS

Assigning the Brothers was one matter that caused our superiors major headaches. The founders of the schools were opposed, in some cases, to having the Brothers changed and, in others, demanded it in no uncertain terms.

To clarify this situation, an article was introduced into the list of the conditions for the founding of a school:

The Reverend Brother will have the right to change the Brothers when he judges it necessary, but he ought to do it in such a way as not to disrupt the classes.²⁷

Nevertheless, it was a worthless effort now that pressure continued in one form or another on the part of the authorities and founders of the schools who believed they were within their rights in demanding the retention or the re-assignment of Brothers. These situations were frequently unpleasant, especially when the reasons for the changes were of a personal or community nature that the authorities did not understand.

Too frequent changes and their consequences

Frequent re-assignments caused complaints not only from the authorities but also from the Brothers. In 1842 Br. Xavier, director of St. Paul-en-Jarret, lamented the consequences of so many changes:

Without mentioning the rash judgments that people make about the Brothers in seeing them changed so often, they say that they do not love one another, so that it is necessary to change them often.²⁸

²⁶ Annals of Cluny, Bourbonnais I, p. 298.

²⁷ Annals of Berre, Saint Paul II, p. 74.

²⁸ Annals of Saint Paul-en-Jarret, pp. 2-3.

The mayor of St. Marcel d'Ardèche complained on February 11, 1881 that since the previous October there had been five changes at the school and this is detrimental to the students.²⁹

What would the people of Allan have had to say when their parish priest announced from the pulpit the change of the Sisters and Brothers, using the following metaphor:

*Once you have a horse, a mule or a donkey that can no longer be of service to you, you change it for another.*³⁰

As a result of the changes, the local authorities came to take on a negative attitude, the consequences of which would fall on those who had been completely removed from the mentioned changes. This was the case, for example, in St. Symphorien-le-Château where

*Mr. Fournel could not be consoled by the removal of Br. Ignace and vented his feelings on those responsible. This explains the numerous conflicts and the frequent changes of leadership that occurred over several years.*³¹

Reasons for the Changes

- Lack of discipline and lack of student progress

These are among the most frequently cited reasons given when the authorities request or demand a change of Brothers. On May 15, 1851 the town council of St. Victor-la-Coste held a session to which the parish priest was invited. A lively argument ensued concerning Br. Victorin. The priest had committed himself to ask for the Brother's transfer. Br. Avit after his July 16, 1851 visit put it this way in his report:

*The mayor, who forthrightly speaks his mind, has defied me to find a priest who is not against Br. Victorin, mainly for the reason that the children are accomplishing nothing*³²

*The Brother Director, even though a good religious, had poor discipline in his class and they made little progress. The mayor stressed this more than any personal reasons in his demand that the Brother be changed.*³³

²⁹ Annals of Saint Marcel d'Ardèche, Aubenas, p. 531.

³⁰ Annals of Allan, Saint Paul, II, p. 9.

³¹ Annals of Saint Symphorien-le-Château, p. 12.

³² Annals of Saint Victor-la-Coste, Saint Paul II, p. 518.

³³ Annals of Connaux, Aubenas, p. 169.

- The whims of certain priests

The requests for changes, at times justified, were in other cases simply the result of the fickleness of those requesting them, like Fr. Gauchet, priest of Chavanay.

Sometimes he would complain about a Brother, sometimes he would complain about the numerous changes which were common at this time³⁴

- Meddling in political affairs

On February 28, 1881 Fr. André requested the reassignment of Br. Adelmus.

He was fond of him, he would say, believed him capable and gave him high marks, as did the parents, but he believed his re-assignment was necessary in order to appease those who were causing division in the parish³⁵

- Incompatibility of Brothers and priests

But today things have come to the point that I have to abandon my reluctance and beg you very humbly to change Br. Director of St. Quintin. In several circumstances which I will not mention, his conduct toward me has been completely against the rules of propriety. He is a man who wants to reason about everything and who wants to always be right, even when it concerns the canons of the church³⁶

Antagonism among the authorities because of the changing of Brothers

There was not always such a unanimous reaction as that in Solliès-Pont in 1869 when the superiors changed Br. Bonitus.

Mr. Grue, manager of the “fabrique”³⁷ demanded strongly... the pastor supported the letter of the manager, saying that the children were crying and that the parents were making novenas so that the Brother would remain... The mayor also demanded...³⁸

³⁴ Annals of Chavanay, p. 7.

³⁵ Annals of Calmette, Saint Paul II, p. 527.

³⁶ Annals of Calmette, Saint Paul II, p. 527.

³⁷ The term “fabrique” meant at the time the temporal goods of a parish, that is, its goods and revenues, and the organization in charge of administering them. The goods of the “fabrique” are made up of “exterior goods” (house, cultivated land, meaning in money or nature, rental fees—mostly from bequests of long ago), and of “interior goods” (collections and offerings, bank accounts)... - *Lexique historique de la France d’Ancien Régime*, p. 131. Editeur Armand Colin.

³⁸ Annals of Solliès-Pont, Saint Paul II, p. 373.

At other times the superiors received contradictory requests, as at St. Paul-en-Jarret in 1873 or in Suze-la-Rousse in 1868, when Mr. Chuvin, the mayor, demanded that Br. Hyrénarque stay on, in defiance of the pastor's opinion.

*Fr. Neyret, the new pastor, has often requested the re-assignment of Br. Camérin, because the latter represents the party of the old priests... The mayor, on the other hand, insists that there be no change of director, because Br. Camérin has significant ideas, because he has been at St. Paul for a long time and there are no substantial complaints against him, nor against the school that he directs.*³⁹

*That would put the superiors in one of those difficult positions where they find themselves often enough—faced with the antagonism of the local authorities.*⁴⁰

One of the most delicate situations occurred in 1860 in LaValla when Fr. Bedoin asked that Br. Vincent be re-assigned. Br. Vincent was both popular and highly regarded throughout the region. He played the role of fundraiser, doctor, surgeon...and above all, dentist. Despite the protests made by the town council and by some 64 other citizens, the superiors conceded to Fr. Bedoin's request, while at the same time anticipating the antagonism their decision would cause between the clergy and the townspeople. This didn't take long to occur. The popular reaction and demonstrations that greeted the decision, along with its being imprudent, exacerbated even more the tensions between the municipal and ecclesiastical authorities. In 1864, in face of the new assignment given the Brother, the mayor had recourse to the prefect, who intervened before the Rev. Brother.. The tension brought about by the latest concession was resolved in an unexpected manner. Fr. Bedoin died around this time and the vicar was transferred to Mably. Br. Avit recounts it this way: "He left La Valla cursing Br. Vincent."⁴¹

C. FREE SEATS IN CHURCH

The Brothers and children will have free seats in church.

This direct demand came about because of the parishes being under the economic rule of an organization called "La Fabrique"⁴², which among other things charged for the rental of pews in church. This had been mandated by the Founder, but its not being included in the contracts of the foundations

³⁹ Annals of Saint Paul-en-Jarret, p. 8.

⁴⁰ Annals of Suze-la-Rousse, Saint Paul II, p. 477.

⁴¹ Annals of La Valla, pp. 6-8.

⁴² See footnote #35.

gave rise to unpleasant situations and tensions between the Brothers and the priests, as happened in Blanzay:

There were some conflicts between them (Fr. Lepine, the pastor, and Br. Bertoul, who was cantor) as regards the singing and the children's places in church...

The conflicts about the singing and the pews continued. (with Father Narjolles)
43 The reason for this friction was that the church, though never filled, had rented all the pews while the Brothers had to bring their students to Mass and Vespers, which they would sing. So they had no free time and the Brother who did the chanting was overwhelmed with work.

FROM TAXES AND OTHER ASSESSMENTS

*The foundation... would exempt the Brothers from all taxes and local subsidies or would pay for them.*⁴⁴

We encounter this situation in many foundations. It was an attempt to keep the Brothers from considering themselves subject to the law of May 21, 1836, by which

... every resident or head of household or establishment, responsible for the direct contributions, could be called each year to do three-days of contributed service, first for himself and then for each male between the ages of 18 and 60 years of age, who were family members or servants residing in the commune.

Forgetting these conditions led to comical situations, as that with the Brothers in Charpey. When Br. Avit went to visit them in 1863 they were nowhere to be found. It turned out "they were out working on the roads with the laborers".⁴⁵

It was an unpleasant situation the Brothers faced in Evaux (la Creuse) when the mayor used their non-compliance with the law as a pretext for initiating an on-going battle with the school on the part of the municipal and departmental authorities.⁴⁶

2. - THE DIVERSE ROLES THE BROTHERS PLAYED

In addition to the various jobs a priest would give a teacher (sacristan, cantor, custodian, bell ringer, etc.), other functions were often assigned,

⁴³ Annals of Blanzay, Bourbonnais I, pp. 85-86.

⁴⁴ Annals of Chagny, Bourbonnais I, p. 153.

⁴⁵ Annals of Charpey, Saint Paul II, p. 534.

⁴⁶ Annals of Evaux, Bourbonnais, p. 416.

among which secretary and surveyor were prominent. Br. Avit relates that before the Brothers' arrival in the small town of Ebreuil (Allier) about 1870...

...the school had been under the care of a very talented instructor, but who was often upset by his multiplicity of jobs: geometry teacher, telegraph operator, secretary at the town hall.⁴⁷

The Brothers didn't consider themselves completely immune from this situation. To avoid overwork, questionable relationships and other difficulties, the norms set forth by the superiors very clearly prohibited them from carrying out certain functions. The superiors nevertheless relented on occasion or the Brothers performed them without authorization.

A. Sacristan

The priests considered the Brothers collaborators in their ministry, but Father Champagnat saw serious drawbacks in the performance of certain roles and said so to Father Colin in 1835:

...the sacristies would turn out to be an embarrassment for the Society. He begged Fr. Colin to see to it that the Brothers should never be in charge of them.⁴⁸

One of the reasons for rejecting some of the requests for Brothers was precisely that they were being asked to carry out the role of sacristan, as was the case with Fr. Morel, canon of Sens, who requested Brothers to be in charge of the sacristy, the liturgies and the choir at the cathedral. Likewise turned down was the rector of chaplains at Fourvière in 1874, who wanted Brothers to take care of the sacristy in the old Sanctuary. Both were told that neither the job of sacristan nor other similar jobs fit in with our aim and that the Founder himself had been opposed to Brothers carrying out such functions in the Sanctuary of Fourvière.⁴⁹

B. Cantor

Another very common need mentioned in the requests made by priests was for Brothers qualified to sing in church.

Fr. Janin, pastor of Bajac, sent the following request in 1846:

We have only poor cantors for the celebration of the divine office: you will render us an invaluable service by sending us a Brother...who might have a better than ordinary idea of chant⁵⁰

⁴⁷ Annals of Ebreuil, Bourbonnais I, p. 400.

⁴⁸ Annals of the Institute, Vol. I, p. 157.

⁴⁹ Annals of the Institute, Vol. III, pp. 91, 193.

⁵⁰ Annals of Bajac, Lubenas, pp. 76-77.

The priest at Viols-le-Fort requested in 1866 that two qualified and discreet Brothers be sent for the opening of the school, and that one of them be a good cantor.

*At the outset, it is important that they inspire confidence. I would very much desire that one of them be a good enough cantor to teach our children plain chant.*⁵¹

On September 26, 1867 the pastor of Suze-la-Rousse presented this request to the superiors:

*I also beg you to send us Brothers who can sing and who know chant. It is sad that out of three men not one can add one note to another. That is what I had planned to tell you.*⁵²

The role of cantor was on occasion performed without charge, but at other times it was remunerated as part of the Brothers' salary, as was the case in Solliès-Pont.

*The "fabrique" added 200 francs for the Brother who led the singing at church.*⁵³

Usually the amount paid for this service was a small supplement to the salary, as was the case in Sanilhac where "the Brothers sang the funeral Masses and received 50 francs for their services."⁵⁴

C. Secretary

It wasn't often that they were asked to fulfil this role, but in some cases the superiors were asked if the Brothers could be permitted to do so. The reason was to win the sympathy of the mayor since it wasn't easy for him to find qualified people to act as secretaries in certain villages. The downside of doing this work was the excuse used by some mayors that lay teachers would be preferred in the post since they took easily to the work and quickly gave in to the mayors' desires.

⁵¹ Annals of Viols-le-Fort, Saint Paul II, p. 427.

⁵² Annals of Suze-la-Rousse, Saint Paul II, p. 477. To avoid situations like this Jean-Marie de Laménais had adopted the practice he recommended to Fr. Mazelier on February 1, 1825 when Mazelier asked him for guidance in directing his new congregation: "It is very rarely that I permit them to sing in church; if they had lovely voices, the pastors would want them to go to the 'lutrin': then what would become of the children? Who would keep an eye on them in church? Who would teach catechism classes before the Office? How does one replace a Brother who sings well with one who sings poorly? We would not have any liberty to make changes: that is, after all, the most important thing." (Correspondence of Fr. J. M. de La Menais by Br. Symphorien-Auguste. 7th series, p. 141).

⁵³ Annals of Solliès-Pont, Saint Paul II, p. 377.

⁵⁴ Annals of Sanilhac, Aubenas, p. 591.

The difficulties that came with being secretary are reflected in the letter that Fr. Mollier wrote to the superiors on January 10, 1867 in reference to the change of mayors in the small town of Montreal:

One of the justifications put forward by Mr. Ferratier for wanting a lay teacher is that they also serve as secretaries. The previous secretary having displeased him, he has no one at the moment. Br. Pothin is secretary in name only.

Could you not, Br. Superior, as an exception and only until a new secretary is found, allow Br. Pothin to carry out the duties of secretary? I am sufficiently aware of his virtues to be sure that this work will not be a detriment to his religious spirit... It is understood that a stipend will be given the Brother. Moreover, I would obtain from the mayor assurances that he will not have to deal with members of the opposite sex.⁵⁵

D. Other jobs

In the following requests for Brothers we can see the variety of duties that were entrusted to teachers. The Brothers also on occasion volunteered to do them, as in the case of Br. Avit, who volunteered his services to M. Drevet, mayor of Saint Genest-Malifaux, to assist in taking a census of the town. He did so simply as the teacher at Planfoy who was doing something solely to please his mayor.

Br. Avit spent a week at this work. His drivers were prompt in arriving each day about noon at the home of a well-off farmer where a sumptuous dinner was ready. On the final day they arrived at M. Drenet's, who had prepared a real feast. Br. Avit was the first to taste a 30 year old wine called Côte-Rôtie.⁵⁶

The following request arrived at the Hermitage in 1851:

A naïve pastor from the Diocese of Dijon asked for a Brother, unmarried, for his small parish. This Brother would be teacher; secretary at the town hall; as well as choir master, cantor, sacristan, bell ringer and grave digger! With all these duties, said the good priest, he could earn 500 francs. You can therefore clearly see that he could not live on this if he had a wife and children. The naivety of this request caused much laughter among the Brothers at the Hermitage and led them to think the bishop of Dijon recruited his clergy in whatever way he could.⁵⁷

The notion that the Brothers were at their beck and call continued among the pastors up until the end of the last century.

The pastor of Sommières, in 1881, did not have a sacristan and could not find one who would accept 600 francs per year. He therefore asked for a Brother and offered the

⁵⁵ Annals of Montreal, Aubenas, p. 352.

⁵⁶ Annals of Saint Genest-Malifaux, p. 5.

⁵⁷ Annals of the Institute, Vol. II, p. 250.

600 francs. This Brother would assist in singing the Office, ring the bells, go with the priests to visit the sick and to interments, decorate the sanctuary and be in charge of the sacristy.⁵⁸

3.-THE FORMATION OF THE BROTHERS

A. It was very deficient in the early days

The formation of the Brothers in the early days of the Congregation was without a doubt very lax. This has to be seen in the context of the times, when training was generally deficient and the deficiency did not only affect certain congregations. All the congregations founded at this time were faced with the same situation.

Our first Brothers usually came from culturally deprived backgrounds and their intellectual development on entering the novitiate was quite inadequate. Br. Avit briefly mentions the reasons for the Brothers' lack of good preparation:

Before the law of 1833, the brevet was not required. Father Champagnat undoubtedly did not foresee that it would be. His first Brothers were poorly educated. His meager resources and the numerous requests for Brothers that he received left him little time to prepare them. Moreover, the people were not very demanding on this point, and lay teachers were not much better educated than the Brothers. The good Father was thus caught by surprise by the above mentioned law.⁵⁹

It was true that the Brothers received scant preparation in the novitiate simply because there wasn't sufficient time for them to acquire adequate formation. Br. Avit himself was in the novitiate for less than seven months. Others stayed for only four. Shedding light on this situation is the letter that Br. Maria Lin wrote to Br. Jean Baptiste in 1842 when the latter blamed the slow progress of the children on the Brothers' lack of preparation:

Yes, my dear Br. Director General, I am ignorant, it is very true. You can easily judge by my limited knowledge: poor handwriting; weak grammar, mathematics and, even more so, religion... How is it that one only gives the appearance of being capable yet goes on teaching?! Judge for yourself by the lessons that I have received in the Society since the day that I had the happiness of joining, up to the present: four months of novitiate and nothing more. I am 30 years old. I beg you to place me where I may become wise; I cannot do so here, being the only one in charge of more than twenty plus boarders, as well as teaching class...⁶⁰

⁵⁸ Annals of Sommières, Saint Paul II, p. 406.

⁵⁹ Annals of Pélussin, p. 8.

⁶⁰ Annals of Usson-en-Forez, pp. 14-15.

Br. Avit shows his awareness of this situation in a terse phrase:
*The studies in the novitiate were greatly curtailed*⁶¹

B. Testimony regarding deficient formation

Evidence of the faulty preparation of the Brothers is found among people outside the Institute, as well as among the Brothers themselves. In 1841 the pastor of Nantua⁶² sent a letter to the Superiors praising the Brothers, but including the following recommendation:

*He begged them to teach the Brothers to write and to speak better.*⁶³

In 1844, Rev. Br. François responded to Msgr. de Bonnard:

*It is true that we have some 60 subjects at the house, but they are too young to be sent out or not sufficiently advanced in the field of teaching*⁶⁴

In 1845 the principal of the school in Anduze requested authorization for rising at 4:00 AM so as to prepare class and improve handwriting.⁶⁵

In the reports he wrote on his visits, Br. Avit does not beat about the bush in describing the deficiencies in this area.

*Br. Rambert knows and does nothing. Br. Philadelphie, judging by his dictation, forgets what he has learned.*⁶⁶

*What is even more serious is that Br. Nicostrate, with his 23 year old beard, with his extreme sensitivity and underhandedness, knows nothing at all. He is clumsy, mistreats the children and does nothing to win their affection. This Brother is still unable to control his class. I know that you are cautious, but surely you must have at St. Paul some subjects who at least know how to read. Let's be frank: we cannot entrust a class to a Brother who is ignorant of how to teach and knows almost nothing about working with children.*⁶⁷

C. Concern for the formation of the Brothers

Aware of the deficient preparation of the Brothers, Father Champagnat was concerned for their formation from the beginning.

⁶¹ Annals of the Institute, Vol. I, p. XVIII.

⁶² This is Fr. Debelay, later bishop of Troyes and archbishop of Avignon.

⁶³ Annals of Nantua, p. 13.

⁶⁴ Annals of the Institute, Vol. II, p. 85.

⁶⁵ Annals of Anduze, Aubenas, p. 8.

⁶⁶ Annals of Bellegarde, p. 6.

⁶⁷ Annals of Saint Victor-la-Coste, Saint Paul II, p.519.

THE ACADEMIC CLIMATE OF OUR SCHOOLS IN FRANCE (1818-1891)

*Before confiding the school at La Valla to his Brothers, the venerable Father arranged for a former Brother of the Christian Schools to train them.*⁶⁸

He himself set forth the duties of their ministry in the work of the foundation of the congregation, among which the formation of its members took pride of place.⁶⁹ When the means were finally in place at the Hermitage, the courses took on a more regular structure.

*We have seen that since the beginning, the vacation had lasted two months and that the good Father used this time to instruct his Brothers in their duties as teachers and in the virtues of religion.*⁷⁰

Although references to the formation of the Brothers appear only occasionally in the Annals, they lead us to conclude that it was one of the concerns of the superiors.

On April 26, 1841 16 Brothers from the school in Valbenoîte and the surrounding area took exams. The results were not very flattering.⁷¹

In 1843 Rev. Br. François organized a course to update the Brothers in specific areas.

*He decided that the metric system and the rules of participles would be dealt with by the Brothers during the single conference that year. The metric system was entirely new to them. The Brothers knew little about it and the different rules regulating the participle would often confuse them.*⁷²

*In 1848 the boarding school in Grange Payre was closed and a class to prepare for the brevet was established in the building. Brothers both young and old were goaded on by Br. Sylvestre.*⁷³

Br. Avit, who was Visitor at this time, organized summer courses at Saint Paul. These would continue for a period of years. The subject matter of the courses dealt with the various areas of primary education.⁷⁴

The political changes that occurred between 1848 and 1850 and new legislation regulating the schools brought such pressures on the superiors from town councils, prefects and government authorities that they were forced to open a number of new schools. Obviously this situation did not help to advance the training of the Brothers.

In 1866 a permanent six-month course was instituted, in which the Reverend Brother, some of the Assistants and Br. Euthyme, helped by some

⁶⁸ Annals of the Institute, Vol. I, p. 33.

⁶⁹ Ibid., p. 37.

⁷⁰ Ibid., pp. 173-174.

⁷¹ Annals of Valbenoite, p. 7.

⁷² Annals of the Institute, Vol. II, p. 74.

⁷³ Ibid., p. 180.

⁷⁴ Annals of Saint Paul, Vol. II, p. 287.

other Brothers, gave classes geared to the Brothers' obtaining the complete brevet.⁷⁵

Ten years later the position of vice provincial was established. Among his main duties was the religious and academic formation of the Brothers.⁷⁶

Formation at this time was something that depended almost exclusively on the good will of the Brothers. They had to make time for their formation between classes and other school activities, such as supervising study halls after class hours, teaching courses for adults, supervising the boarders, who were a part of the majority of the schools in lesser or greater numbers, etc. It was a hit and miss formation. One of the most frequent observations in the reports of the Visitors is their reminding the directors of their responsibility to see that the Brothers did not neglect their studies.

D. Self-taught Brothers

Despite these drawbacks we do find truly exemplary Brothers who by persistence and hard work achieved a broad education or stood out in some special field. Among the self-taught Brothers who deserve special mention are:

Br. Jean-Baptiste

*In reading his many works, no one would suspect that they were written by a man who had not gone beyond primary school. Brother Jean-Baptiste was gifted with a prodigious memory, good judgment and an heroic courage in the face of work and its trials.*⁷⁷

Br. Euthyme

He was highly skilled and renowned as a naturalist. When the eminent naturalist and geologist Malbosc bequeathed his collection to the Department of Ardèche, the Prefect asked him who could take responsibility for classifying it. M. Malbosc responded that he knew of no one better able to do this than Br. Euthyme, who was then principal of the school at Saint Ambroix. The superiors acquiesced and for 4 months Br. Euthyme lived in Paris, subsidized by the Department, and classifying the collection.⁷⁸

⁷⁵ Annals of the Institute, Vol. III, p. 121.

⁷⁶ Ibid., p. 215.

⁷⁷ Annals of the Institute, Vol. III, p. 172.

⁷⁸ Annals of the Institute, Vol. II, p. 430 and Annals of Aubenas, p. 46.

Br. Citinus

Despite his many jobs—classes, adult courses, special art class—and the difficulties he had for 8 years with the municipality of Oyonnax, he built up a true museum of natural history and had all sorts of successes.

*For agriculture (tree growing) he won the first prize of 40 francs in 1864. He won a scarlet medallion in 1865, the emperor's prize, a gold medal, a grand prize in 1866 and a repeat of the same in 1867. In the competition among the area schools, that of Oyonnax, he won 14 of the 17 prizes the first year and during the 3 following years first place: the last time, 500 students took part in the competition.*⁷⁹

E. Inventors

Along with those Brothers mentioned above, we have Brothers who were inventors and who had unequalled good fortune with the results of their discoveries.

Br. Aubin

Inventor of an ingenious card game used to teach the geography of France that he, in Br. Avit's judgment, probably committed the error of not applying.⁸⁰

Br. Amable and Br. Emmanuel

The first was the discoverer of biophosphate and the second of Arquebus, which discoveries have resulted in a good income for the Institute.

Br. Dace

Br. Dace, "the sleepwalker of Saint Genis", strolled the fields at night and some naïve persons following his directions came up with a liquid they named "l'eau-dace"⁸¹, whose excellent properties were widely praised.

Br. Pemen

He merits special mention for his tenacity and the time and money he invested in the creation of a contraption that was meant to prevent the train derailments that were prevalent in those times. He didn't give up until his invention was presented to Napoleon III through the good offices of M. Brame, deputy of the Department of Norte, who sent it to the Ministry of

⁷⁹ Annals of Oyonnax., p. 8.

⁸⁰ Annals of the Institute, Vol. III, p. 231.

⁸¹ The name is not without irony, since its pronunciation is the same as that of "audace", daring, audacity.

Public Works. With a diplomatic letter they terminated all his efforts. This Brother had spent large amount of money on his invention, money donated by benefactors and patrons. He had contrived to obtain a French “invention brevet” for which he made yearly payments of 100 francs. Two English “brevets” cost him 1000 francs and a Belgian brevet put him back another 100 francs a year. Br. Avit sums up the story of this Brother:

*All was the result of his invention, but the trains continued to derail.*⁸²

Br. Dacien

This Brother invented a clock in 1859, which was on display for 7 years in one of the rooms at Saint Genis. His timepieces were stored eventually in the attic and were either destroyed or stolen by the soldiers who lived there during the military occupation of the house in 1870. Judging by the description that Br. Avit made in the Annals, the clock would be worthy of adorning the main square of a great capital city or any of our cathedrals. If the final footnote to the efforts of Br. Pemen has its touch of irony, that of Br. Dacien shows a deep sorrow.

*The destruction of this masterpiece weighed heavily on the heart of its creator. It was in fact most regrettable since this clever invention could have brought honor to its creator and to the Institute, for which it could have been the source of some income.*⁸³

4. PROFILE OF THE MARIST EDUCATOR IN THE WRITINGS OF BR. AVIT

Nowhere in the writings of Br. Avit do we find a profile, as such, of the Marist educator. We see, however, throughout his reports, his descriptions of the Brothers, his observations and the contributions of others, what might be said to form the profile of the prototype of the Marist educator of that time. Br. Avit's subtlety in pointing out qualities and shortcomings, as well as the examples described contain, in all probability, as much an educational purpose as a descriptive one. If his writings doubtless show no definitive theory of education, it is no less sure that in those writings what stands out is his experience as a teacher and his psychological insight.

⁸² Annals of the Institute, Vol. III, pp. 70-71.

⁸³ Annals of the Institute, Vol. III, p. 97.

⁸⁴ Annals of La Côte-Saint-André, p. 6.

Love and affection

*If the keenness of mind of Br. Louis-Marie instilled some fear, his competence and his heart of gold made him loved.*⁸⁴

*Br. Barthélemy restored to the school what it had lost and there was more love.*⁸⁵

*This instructor (Br. Licinius) knows how to win the hearts of the children, doing much good here, not only with the children, but also with the youth, whose affection he has earned.*⁸⁶

*It is not study that is needed, but a teacher who would make school enjoyable and attract the children.*⁸⁷

Kindness

*Br. Bassus has been principal at Chavanay for 32 years; he has earned by his kindness and good advice the sympathy of all the people of the town.*⁸⁸

Good Character

*By their appealing character, they (the Brothers) won our admiration and the confidence of the people and we were pleased.*⁸⁹

*Despite his devotion, Br. Eduin does not shine here, because of his miserliness, his complaining and his not very attractive manner.*⁹⁰

Good Communicators

In the following examples we clearly see the importance of the ability to communicate, one of the keys to success in teaching. What stands out is the contrast between the Brother of average intelligence but having good communication skills and the very knowledgeable Brother who lacks these skills.

*Having only a mediocre education, he (Br. Philippe) was a very good teacher and was successful. He had a special gift of communicating what he knew...even what he did not know: we have witnessed this many times while visiting his classroom, when he would shout in such a way that he could have been understood even from far away.*⁹¹

Marie Jubin, presently the provincial of Saint-Genis, spent 2 years here (Pierrelatte). Very capable, a good religious, but with a glacial character, lacking

⁸⁵ Annals of Ampuis, p. 6.

⁸⁶ Letter of the mayor of Mornant, M. Fourneau, Annals of Mornant, p. 17.

⁸⁷ Annals of Nyons, Saint Paul II, p. 84.

⁸⁸ Annals of Chavanay, p. 8.

⁸⁹ Annals of Mayres, Aubenas, p. 313.

⁹⁰ Annals of Aveize, p. 5.

⁹¹ Annals of the Institute, Vol. III, p. 283.

*initiative, lacking drive, not knowing how to communicate his vast knowledge, this new principal was not very respected by the people.*⁹²

Dedication and Perseverance

It is, arguably, the most mentioned quality. Without a doubt, devotion and dedication have been hallmarks of an entire generation of Brothers, a bequest that originated with the Founder as in his letter to Brothers Antoine and Gonzague written in 1831:

*My good friends, you must do the work of four people in order to advance your school.*⁹³

Of the many examples in which Br. Avit stresses this quality we cite the following.

*The house was going very well under him (Br. Nazianze) for many years. He was capable, very happy, very energetic and devoted in everything.*⁹⁴

*(Br. Ignace) had only a mediocre education, but his devotedness, know-how and lovable qualities brought him success.*⁹⁵

*Of a somewhat stiff character, but an exemplary and devout religious, (Br. Baudelius) accomplished much good during his 12 years here.*⁹⁶

Discipline

*Discipline is so necessary that without it teaching is impossible. Discipline is the glory of a school and draws students to it.*⁹⁷

*Under him (Br. Crescentien), the classes—his especially—had good discipline. M. Deshayes and M. Avril came to see him one day and, not hearing a sound, stopped at the door, wondering if there were classes that day. Opening the door, they were astounded to see a classroom full of children who were so quiet one could have heard a fly buzzing. With discipline such as this, progress was inevitable. They were very impressive and two volunteer teachers who had continuously fought for some years, packed up one after the other.*⁹⁸

*Br. Domitien was a good religious, very devoted, but lacking strength of character and, in spite of his devotedness, made little progress because of his lack of discipline.*⁹⁹

⁹² Annals of Pierrelatte, Saint Paul II, p. 99.

⁹³ Letters 1, Doc. 20, p. 63.

⁹⁴ Annals of Allevard, pp., 10-11.

⁹⁵ Annals of the Institute, Vol. III, pp. 155-156.

⁹⁶ Annals of Ampuis, p. 10.

⁹⁷ Avis, leçons, sentences, p. 398.

⁹⁸ Annals of Monchain-Creusot, Bourbonnais II, p. 207.

⁹⁹ Annals of Mornant, p. 9.

Gentleness of Character

*I often recommended gentleness and teaching according to the Guide regarding paternal discipline.*¹⁰⁰

Fervor

*We loved to see his happiness (Br. Nazianne), the drive he exerted everywhere, and everyone admired him, even the parish priest, who adored him.*¹⁰¹

*Br. Pasteur would even have trouble staying hanged if he were to hang himself; we esteem him as a good and capable religious, but we find him old beyond his years, somewhat of a hypochondriac and lacking enthusiasm.*¹⁰²

Organizational Skills

*Br. Herman is here (Perreux), the head of the household, the master of discipline, of the curriculum, of the students and of all that goes with it. He is the de facto director. Br. Policarpe does not contradict him and basically controls only the material affairs of the house.*¹⁰³

Tact and Courtesy

*Br. Germain and Br. Marie Damascène quickly earned the good will of the people and overcame the effects of the earlier scandals by their exact and sometimes excessive politeness.*¹⁰⁴

*The pastor greatly admires Br. Director and the mayor is beginning to appreciate him due to the reputation he has already built up by his politeness and the control of his class.*¹⁰⁵

*Br. Jean Philomène was the man to succeed here from the outset. He was of ordinary intelligence, but very sharp, had a pleasing appearance and was very obliging, knowing how to treat each individual in their turn.*¹⁰⁶

*Br. Roque... was a devoted Brother, had a strong will, but was lacking in the talents to succeed as an administrator. Fr. Venet, while appreciating his obvious qualities, could hardly stand him as the principal of the school; he found him to be hypocritical.*¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁰ Annals of Tulette, Saint Paul II, p. 507.

¹⁰¹ Annals of Alleverd, p. 12.

¹⁰² Annals of Boulieu, p. 12.

¹⁰³ Annals of Perreux, p. 20.

¹⁰⁴ Annals of Cluny, Bourbonnais I, p. 298.

¹⁰⁵ Annals of Remoulins, Saint Paul II, p. 598.

¹⁰⁶ Annals of Bajeu, p. 12.

¹⁰⁷ Annals of Mornant, p. 16.

Talent

*It is he (Br. Leon) who by his prudence, skill and talent has instilled in everyone here this good attitude.*¹⁰⁸

Seriousness

*He (Br. Apollinaire) was replaced at Vauban by the talented Br. Leon whom the teachers feared because of his grave and austere character. He wasted less time than his two predecessors, and the students received a better education.*¹⁰⁹

Adaptability to the Locale

*Whatever may be the talents and virtues of a Brother, one must, as the proverb has it, "first buy the country".*¹¹⁰

*Br. Photius fitted in very well here. He had perfectly gauged the character of the people. He was well loved and will be sorely missed.*¹¹¹

*Unfortunately, the Brother Superior whom you have sent to us has not absorbed the spirit of the people and has not been able to earn the respect of his students.*¹¹²

*If you should have the opportunity to write to him (Br. Flavien), please ask him not to speak ill of our region...*¹¹³

5.-PRIESTS IN THE WRITINGS OF BR. AVIT

The daily life of the Brothers in the schools was confined within the norms that governed the relations of teacher with priest...a relationship of dependence and submission. In a diocesan regulation of 1830 it is specified:

*The teacher will respect the pastor: he owes him respect because of his being a priest and shepherd...He will help him in the administration of the sacraments, and should be careful that nothing be lacking in this, whether in the church or at the sick bed. He shall not easily absent himself from the parish, since the pastor may have need of him or that the school might thereby be neglected...*¹¹⁴

¹⁰⁸ Letter of the pastor of Bardas, Fr. Janine, Aubenas, p. 78.

¹⁰⁹ Annals of the Institute, Vol. II, pp. 173-174.

¹¹⁰ Annals of Anse, p. 11b.

¹¹¹ Annals of Tavel, Aubenas, p. 599.

¹¹² Letter from the mayor of Château de Macenc, M. Prudhomme, Saint Paul II, p. 538.

¹¹³ Annals of Boulieu, p. 6.

¹¹⁴ *The Church and Education: 1000 Years of Educational Tradition*, L'Harmattan, p. 207.

*Above all, the teacher is the second pastor: cantor at church, sacristan, bell ringer for the Angelus, Mass and Vespers...and accompanies the priest in bringing the last sacraments to the sick, etc.*¹¹⁵

The relationship of the Brothers with the clergy was lived out within this context. The Rules of 1852 are quite explicit on this point.

*The Brothers will show their submission, respect and loyalty, doing everything in their power to instill the same sentiments in the children.*¹¹⁶

Br. Avit describes a wide variety of priests, each, according to his personality, affecting the relationships with the Brothers.

A. Priests who wanted to control the Brothers

There were priests who saw the Brothers merely as assistants. Such was the case with Fr. Melton, in Sury le Comtal, who demanded that the Brothers carry out the functions of sub-deacon, cantor and sacristan. Father Champagnat at first, and Br. François later on, would intervene and forbid these offices from being entrusted to the Brothers.¹¹⁷

*It goes without saying that I eagerly await the arrival of your good Brothers, assured as I am of finding in them useful and zealous helpers.*¹¹⁸

When the Brothers did not give in to the demands of the priests, complaints arose, like that of Fr. Chevignon who wrote the following to Br. François on February 3, 1844:

*I am anxious that you be aware that the Brothers who operate the school at Charlieu do not seem to recognize in any way the authority of the pastor. The outcome is difficult, since such a just request had produced nothing but refusals: how far does pastoral authority extend? Have the Brothers received any orders in this regard? Should I consider them an exempt order? I am truly scandalized to have to speak to you about such things. I close by stating that for the good order and edification of my parish, I absolutely need two Brothers to be at catechism every Sunday to supervise the children.*¹¹⁹

The ongoing conflicts degenerated into behavior that was less than exemplary for the parishioners. It reached a point where the authorities felt obligated to intervene, as was the case in Saint Bauzille, whose mayor had this to say in a letter to the Superiors:

¹¹⁵ Ibid., p. 208.

¹¹⁶ Rules, 1852, Part 3, Chap. VIII, art. 2.

¹¹⁷ Annals of Sury le Comtal, p. 5.

¹¹⁸ Fr. Martigny, Annals of Bagé-le-Châtel, p. 8.

¹¹⁹ Annals of Charlieu, p. 10.

*There exists at Saint Bazille a situation that my conscience forces me to inform you of. There is a conflict between Br. Clémène, superior of our community of Brothers, and the pastor. As I see it, it is a horrible example for the people for, if I am not mistaken, the purpose of the Brothers is to do good; here, this purpose is lacking completely...without going into details to determine who is right and who is wrong...*¹²⁰

In the report of Br. Visitor on the school at Souvigny we read:

*The pastor is hard to please. He would like to direct everything at the Brothers' house. The lack of harmony between the Brothers and the clergy is a regrettable fact in these hills.*¹²¹

Although the Rules required full submission to the priest, on numerous occasions this called for heroic virtue, as Br. Avit plainly puts it in regard to Fr. Chomel:

*The sacrament of Orders does not confer good judgment on those who do not already have it. He has a spider in his brain. He demands from the Brothers services that our Rules and our superiors do not authorize. Among these services: supervising the children of lay people in church, training and directing the choir, washing windows, waxing his wood floors and, from time to time, etc.*¹²²

B. Self-sacrificing and altruistic priests

There were truly devoted priests such as Fr. Noailly and Fr. Dorzat. Fr. Noailly was pastor of Saint Paul-en-Jarret and Br. Xavier, principal of this school between 1828 and 1853, relates this about him:

*He supports us everywhere and in everything...The next year, Fr. Noailly was changed to Guillotière, leaving the Brothers and Sisters desolate. But he did not really leave us. Around the beginning of every year he would send us bags of rice, shopping bags full of raisins and figs, or some pieces of linen or pocket handkerchiefs. When I would go to visit him, he would put out the red carpet.*¹²³

Regarding Fr. Dorzat, pastor of Saint Symphorien-d'Ozon, we are assured:

*The Brothers knew him to be a true father on whom they could rely with full confidence in any situation.*¹²⁴

¹²⁰ Annals of Saint Bazille, Aubenas, pp. 474-475.

¹²¹ Annals of Souvigny, Bourbonnais II, p. 516.

¹²² Annals of Le Pouzin, Aubenas, p. 400.

¹²³ Annals of Saint Paul-en-Jarret, p. 2.

¹²⁴ Annals of Saint Symphorien d'Ozon, p. 3.

C. Priests set in their ways

These priests had a mentality anchored in the past. Their vision was limited to wanting the children to learn their prayers, their catechism, and a little bit of reading, writing and arithmetic. Such a narrow “curriculum” made a school useless in the eyes of a society that required a broader instructional program. Two priests who had this attitude were Fr. Gilibert and Fr. Dorzat.

Fr. Gilibert, pastor of Saint Genest-Malifaux

Fr. Gilibert was pastor of Saint Genest-Malifaux. At the beginning of Br. Avit’s tenure as regular teacher at Saint Genest-Malifaux, the communal council, made up of Fr. Gilibert, the mayor and the justice of the peace, tested the children. After the section on the catechism was finished, Fr. Gilibert left. He was terrified of grammar, math, geography and history. The testing having concluded, Br. Avit went to Fr. Gilibert for his signature. He found the priest praying the rosary and, on asking for his signature, received this response:

After you have stuffed our children with geography and history, who will plant the potatoes? It is enough that they know the catechism, and a little reading and writing.

Usually the priests enjoyed giving out the prizes, but Fr. Gilibert had to be begged to help. He refused the chair that had been set up for him, remaining at the back of the hall. He would leave as soon as the prizes for catechism had been awarded.¹²⁵

Fr. Dorzat, pastor of Saint Symphorien d’Ozon

Fr. Dorzat was much like Father Champagnat—simple, pious, modest, self-sacrificing, only desiring and seeking in everything the glory of God and the salvation of souls. Before retiring from these honorable roles, he had founded two religious congregations: the Ursuline Sisters and the Little Brothers of Mary... The pastor limited the program of the Brothers and wanted it to consist only of learning prayers, catechism, reading, writing and a bit of math.¹²⁶

This limited program and the frequent change of Brothers put this school at grave risk.¹²⁷

D. Shrewd and intelligent priests

There was a group of priests who showed a special wisdom and intelligence by the simple listing of the qualities they wanted in the Brothers who might be sent to them.

¹²⁵ Annals of Saint Genest-Malifaux, pp. 3-5.

¹²⁶ Annals of Saint Symphorien d’Ozon, p. 3.

¹²⁷ Annals of Saint Symphorien d’Ozon, p. 5.

Fr. Rossat, pastor of St. Jean, Lyon

In his description of the type of Brother he would like to have for the establishment of la Providence Denuzière, he demonstrates a special insight:

*What we really want is a man of intelligence who identifies with this work, who gets involved in it and who puts his whole heart into working at it along with us.*¹²⁸

Fr. Jourjon, pastor of Mars

If Fr. Rossat was asking for an exceptional person, Fr. Jourjon, pastor of Mars, did not lag far behind:

*At the least, we need someone who is very capable, either as a teacher or as an administrator; an obliging person who will not demand anything beyond that which is strictly necessary; someone who can request people to do things for him yet still attract them to himself.*¹²⁹

E. Other Types of Priests

- Avaricious priests

Along with priests who were generous and devoted and disposed to always support the Brothers, we find others who show the other side of the coin. Such a one was the pastor of Rives. The Carthusian monastery gave him 500 francs a year for the support of the school, but part of this subsidy found its way into supporting the pastor's other employees. He was very troubled when, at the request of the Rev. Br. Superior General, the Abbot chose to send the 500 francs directly to the Brothers.¹³⁰

- Untrusting priests

Their over-sensitivity occasionally made it very difficult for the Brothers to show the priests they worked with the obedience, respect and loyalty that the Rules called for.

*The pastor of Perreux absolutely refuses to keep the kneelers in church in good repair. The Brothers are sucking dry the resources of "la Fabrique"; they are the pastor's cross. As he sees it, they only go to him when they need money., etc....The Superior General does not consult him enough; he never visits or writes. He is constantly changing the Brothers without any consultation with the pastor.*¹³¹

¹²⁸ Annals of la Providence Denuzière, p. 4.

¹²⁹ Annals of Mars, p. 3.

¹³⁰ Annals of the Institute, Vol. III, p. 182.

¹³¹ Annals of Perreux, pp. 12-13.

- Eccentric priests

We cannot end this narrative without mentioning certain “characters” that are so abundant in the picture that Br. Avit paints.

- A Gold-Medal Nose

*Fr. Thorat, vicar of Saint Genest, had a prodigious nose. The parishioners would say with a smile that they could leave their homes at the same time the tip of his nose left the sacristy, and still arrive in time for the beginning of Mass.*¹³²

- A Very Understanding Spiritual Director

*Fr. Gilibert, pastor of Saint Genest-Malifaux, was very kind in confession. A Brother would accuse himself of not rising on time or of having omitted some exercise of piety. The confessor would reply: When you cannot get up, recommend yourself to God and stay in bed; when you cannot perform your spiritual exercises, recommend yourself to God and leave it be.*¹³³

- Master of the Chase

Fr. Auplec, according to his own admission, “was able to outrun the rabbits when he was young.”¹³⁴

- “It’s Never Too Late”

*Fr. Brut died at the age of 95 at Ampuis in 1876. It was he who gave the brevet to Rev. Br. François after a very easy examination. Two years prior to his death he began to study English. When we expressed our surprise, he replied seriously: “One never knows what might happen; it might come in handy some day”.*¹³⁵

- The Patron Saint of Timekeepers

*Fr. Bourdat, pastor at Courthézon, asked us if we traveled much. When we answered in the affirmative, he said he did too: “I went to Rome once in 3 days, 7 hours, 8 minutes and 53 seconds”.*¹³⁶

F. Maturing of Priests’ Attitudes Towards Religious Schools.

Priests at the beginning of the 19th century were generally not only defenders but also enthusiastic promoters of Catholic schools, even going so

¹³² Annals of Saint Genest-Malifaux, p. 3.

¹³³ Annals of Saint Genest-Malifaux, p. 5.

¹³⁴ Annals of Bourbon-Lancy, Bourbonnais I, p. 102.

¹³⁵ Annals of Ampuis, p. 5.

¹³⁶ Annals of Courthézon, Saint Paul I, p. 249.

far as to devote their lives and resources to them. They were of a generation that struggled resolutely to overcome the de-Christianizing effects of the Revolution and who saw in religious education the most effective means of accomplishing their goal. Over time, a development can be observed among one element of the clergy. There were still dedicated priests who fought earnestly to maintain the schools operated by men and women religious, but with the arrival of the era of laicization, other priests tended to adopt the opposite attitude, at times in a very outspoken manner.

Among those deserving special mention for their efforts on behalf of the Brothers' schools was the priest at Saint Etienne de Lugdarès, highly respected for his constancy:

*He is very devoted and has a great talent for raising money, and for raising the fruits of the earth, which he sells. He uses some of them to feed the pigs, which he also sells.*¹³⁷

Praiseworthy as well for his zeal, though not as much for his discretion was the priest of Milhaud.

*The council wanted to vote for the laicization of the school. The courageous pastor (Fr. Veirun) climbed to the pulpit and addressed his parishioners: "My brothers, the municipal council that you elected is going to vote for the laicization of the Brothers' school. Everyone, go to the square in front of the town hall—have the children shout, have the women wail and the men raise a ruckus!" They did as he said, but the outcome was that some 15 men were taken before the justice of the peace and the good priest's stipend was suspended.*¹³⁸

An example of those who were sympathetic to the lay schools is found in Fr. Rigaud, who in 1873 had succeeded Fr. Auplec's at Bourbon-Lancy.

*He did not lose any time in making known his preference for the lay school. The first time we went to visit him, he asked us if it would be possible for us to find 5 Brothers for Bourbon who would together be as valuable as one lay teacher. Our only response was to stare at him, say good-bye and be on our way. We never visited him again.*¹³⁹

One of the most striking instances of opposition to the religious school occurred in Firminy, where

*...the local pastors made it abundantly clear that in their eyes the religious school was of no greater importance than the lay school. They even passed this attitude on to Fr. Chatanay, Fr. Eustache's successor. The new pastor invited a disalced Capuchin to preach during Lent of 1880. This priest adopted the stance of the local pastors regarding religious schools, and he spoke of it with a distressing offhandedness.*¹⁴⁰

¹³⁷ Annals of Saint Etienne de Lugdarès, Aubenas, p. 493.

¹³⁸ Annals of Milhaud, Saint Paul II, p. 9.

¹³⁹ Annals of Bourbon-Lancy, Bourbonnais I, p. 108.

¹⁴⁰ Annals of Firminy, p. 16.

EDUCATION

according to Marcellin Champagnat,
as handed down by Brother Jean-Baptiste
in **Sentences, Leçons, Avis** (the title on the cover)
or **Avis, Leçons, Sentences, Instructions** (the title on page 1)

Br. Paul Sester

I believe I can interpret this title as follows: What you are going to read are instructions given by the Founder to the Brothers, each of which develops a recommendation, or a lesson suggested by some event, or a maxim, or even a summary of instructions on topics often touched upon.

The full title adds: **“of the Revered Father Champagnat, explained and developed by one of his first disciples”**.

It is clear, then, that in this work we find both the thoughts of Marcellin Champagnat and those of Brother Jean-Baptiste on the subject of education. So how can we tell what comes from each of them? Only our confidence in the fidelity of the reporter can give us some assurance of learning the thoughts of the Founder.

That is still more the case since these thoughts are presented to us in successive “snapshots”, not according to a logical plan or some readily discernible criteria.

Reference is explicitly made to Father Champagnat at the beginning of each chapter, except for six scattered through the volume, and the last six which deal with education.

This work appeared in 1868, twenty-eight years after Father Champagnat's death and nearly twelve years after the publication of his biography. In that same year, 1868, the author also produced *Biographies de quelques Frères* (Our Models in Religion), and in 1869, *Le Bon Supérieur*, and in 1870, *Méditations sur la Passion*. We are therefore in a productive period during which the author is harvesting the fruits of previous labors.

All these works are intended not only for the Marist Brothers, but for the public. In fact, the one we are dealing with here is preceded by a fairly lengthy “Foreword” which develops an answer to the question: “What is the Institute of the Little Brothers of Mary?” It is a legally recognized institute, he answers, whose membership is constantly increasing, a group of men who want to live religious life hidden and unknown, who use the adjective “Little” to underline their spirit of humility, which is fitting for people who dedicate themselves to

the education of children. It is a congregation which places itself under the banner of the Mother of God, “a modest congregation which the Mother of God has taken under her special protection and which she has promised to preserve free of weeds and all harmful plants” (p. xiii). This “Foreword” ends with an exhortation addressed specifically to the Little Brothers of Mary, which shows that they are after all the main target of the book.

In point of fact, looking at the table of contents, it appears that the point of the book is to encourage the Brothers to preserve that spirit of self-effacement which, seen from a supernatural point of view, is not lacking in grandeur and nobility.

The education of children, of little ones, certainly falls within that spirit, and this is the theme to which this study will restrict itself.

The last six chapters of the book, out of a total of forty-one, are devoted to this theme. Should we attach any significance to this disproportion? At first sight, this same proportion is pretty well maintained in other works by Brother Jean-Baptiste. It should also be noted that he does not intend to present an exhaustive treatise on education, but only to develop certain aspects of it — those, no doubt, which seem to him most important or on which Father Champagnat laid greatest emphasis. These are:

Chapter XXXV	What it means to educate a child
XXXVI	The necessity of education
XXXVII	What it means to teach catechism well
XXXVIII	The respect we owe a child
XXXIX	A conversation about discipline
XL	Supervision
XLI	What is an educator?

I am not going to write a commentary on each of those chapters. What I am interested in at the moment is tracking down the understanding of education which emerges from them. I am therefore going to make a synthesis, from two points of view:

- the child, or education from the point of view of the one being educated;
- the teacher, or education from the point of view of the educator.

SOME PRELIMINARY NOTIONS

First of all, I want to take a closer look at the way Brother Jean-Baptiste begins chapter XXXV, specifically, two passages he attributes to Father Champagnat.

“If it were merely a question”, he used to say, “of teaching children secular subjects, we would not need Brothers, because layteachers would be enough for that

task. If we were interested only in giving religious instruction, we could rest satisfied with being merely catechists, and bringing the children together an hour a day. But we want to do more than that: we want to raise children; that is to say, we want to give them a complete education. To do that, we must be educators, we must live among the children; and they must spend a great deal of time with us." (page 427)

There we have a clear-cut definition of the vocation of a Marist Brother. More than just a teacher, more even than just a catechist, he is an educator, an instructor. His role then consists not only, nor even essentially, in imparting information, but in stimulating, and at the same time accompanying, the development of the human person which is developing within the child.

Without a doubt, there will always remain the unanswered question: are these really the thoughts of Father Champagnat? Let us recall, as a partial answer at least, his love for children, as is witnessed, among other things, by some of his letters. What we can deplore is the fact that Brother Jean-Baptiste does not develop this statement, leaving us to think that it is more than he can handle, or that he does not agree with it.

The second text offers a point of clarification which puts the first on a more concrete footing by bringing in original sin. It is found on the next page, and states:

Since God created man in innocence and justice, if Adam had not rebelled against his Creator, his nature would not have been altered, and his children would not have needed an education. At birth they would have possessed all the perfection of their being, or at least they would have attained it by themselves as their faculties developed. But, as a result of his original degradation, man is born with the seeds of all the vices, as well as of all the virtues.

This text presents us with a dilemma: does education consist in "uprooting" the seeds of the vices, or in cultivating good inclinations which will eventually stifle the bad ones? Here we have the problem of the old concept of education, face to face with the new one, which was born, it would appear, from the revolution; a concept which, moreover, depends on the role society assigns to the child.

THE CHILD

The dominant image is that of cultivating the earth. The child is like a piece of land which must be cultivated. But here, two viewpoints collide, or else complement each other, depending on the interpretation one gives to the texts. On the one hand, there is the virgin soil waiting to receive the seed. "The heart of a child is virgin soil which is receiving seed for the first time" (p. 430). On the other hand, it is uncultivated soil, covered with weeds and brambles. The text goes from one to the other by stating, "No matter how fertile the soil may be, if it remains uncultivated it produces only brambles

and thorn bushes. In the same way, no matter how good a child's dispositions may be, no matter how rich his gifts, if that child lacks an education, if his gifts are not developed, he will remain without virtue, his life will be worthless for doing good, or else it will produce only wild fruit, dead works" (pp. 442-443).

As you can see, we move quickly beyond that first image. It is not a question of neutral soil, since mention is made of gifts, as above. Elsewhere, the child is spoken of as having inclinations and even passions, and in general these two are described as evil, the fruit of original sin. If no one intervenes, a human being follows his inclinations, and takes the road of vice which leads to perdition, to hell. Finally, the child appears as a piece of territory over which God and the devil are fighting, and the educator intervenes to tip the scales in favor of good.

Using this more or less negative view as a starting point, what means does the educator have at hand for bringing up the child?

The first means consists in exercising continual vigilance over the child. In chapter XXXV, this means is merely mentioned, but all of chapter XL is devoted to it. That means that a great deal of importance is attached to this point. The idea is not a new one. All Brother Jean-Baptiste had to do was to seek inspiration, or rather to copy from, Cardinal de La Luzerne who discoursed at length on the subject. "Watch over them [the children], he told parents, and always be aware of what they are saying, what they are doing, and if possible, what they are thinking. Supervise their exercises of piety,...supervise their studies,..keep an eye on the places where they go,...watch out for the company they keep,..keep an eye on the servants they go to,..keep an eye on the persons who enter your house..., supervise your household..." (Reflections on the duties of fathers and mothers, in *Magnificences de la religion*, vol. 22, p. 392).

And Brother Jean-Baptiste echoes him with these words, among others: "Whatever may be the good qualities and positive attitudes of your children, watch over them day and night, never let them be masters of their own actions, even watch over their thoughts; otherwise, you cannot expect to keep them pure" (p. 489).

Here, we can ask ourselves if this is really the thinking of Father Champagnat, who in his letter to Brother Barthélemy on 1st November 1831 (L. 34), stresses love of the child, suggesting to the brothers that they tell their students, "Jesus promises to carry you on his shoulders to spare you the difficulty of walking"? It is true that in the chapter on "The respect we owe a child", Brother Jean-Baptiste never stops heaping praise on the child, taking a position diametrically opposed to the first.

When he discusses the second means, namely discipline (chap. XXXIX), he takes a stand, so to speak, midway between the two. There are two kinds of authority: legal authority, whose function it is to command,

punish and reward; and moral authority, its contrary, "the only one which truly raises a child; this is the influence the teacher exerts over his students through his virtue, his competence, his good behavior and the wisdom with which he governs" (p. 481). Even though Marcellin Champagnat recommends to the Brothers not to leave the children alone during class time except for serious reasons, it is not hard to imagine that he would agree with this way of thinking, which parallels that of Bishop Dupanloup (*L'Éducation*, vol. 1, pp. 168-179). But would not the fact that the text of *Avis, Leçons, Sentences* has no connection whatever with that of *L'Éducation* prove that Brother Jean-Baptiste is here truly giving us the thoughts of Marcellin Champagnat, as he states at the beginning of the chapter? Whatever may be the case, the child appears to us here as a person deserving of love and respect, rather than as a rebellious student who must be put in his place with pitiless discipline.

In point of fact, the third means is nothing other than respect. There is a whole chapter, as mentioned above, which deals with this theme, in two sections: "What is the child whom we must respect?" and "What we must respect in the child".

The child we must respect is: "the most noble and most perfect creature,...the masterpiece of the divine hands...; the image and likeness of the triune God through his life, intelligence and reason, and love,...qualities which constitute the foundation of his being...; the son of God who is 'his father and model' and who 'wants him to be great, holy and perfect like himself'; the prize and the price of the blood of the saving God...; the most lovable and most beautiful thing on earth...; your brother, one like you, bone of your bone, your other self..."

What we must respect in the child is above all his innocence, "that precious treasure of the first grace of baptism, which they still have and which we have all lost". Here, Brother Jean-Baptiste quotes Massillon, and then goes beyond him by means of a lengthy development addressed to educators, after telling them, "The child is the object of your work, of your fatigue, and of the exercise of your virtues. The child will be your consolation at your death, your defense against God's judgment, your crown and your glory in heaven" (p. 468). We have to ask ourselves whether we are educating the child for himself or for our own heavenly happiness?

Still, we must not forget the final aspect of education presented in chapter XXXV. "Finally, to educate a child", he says, "is to give him every means for acquiring the full perfection of his being; it is to make this child a perfect man..." (p. 438). It is obvious that he is here expressing the true aim of education, the correct way for the educator to view a child: to give him the means to develop himself, to acquire the perfection of his being, in a word to educate himself, according to the oft-repeated expression of Bishop Dupanloup. The child should thus be considered as a person-in-the-making, whose growth must be aided, not by imposing on him a blueprint made up by the educator, but by

helping him to discover the one with which nature has gifted him. Therefore, we may speak of freedom in education, just as Bishop Dupanloup does with a certain degree of insistence. This also supposes that the educator knows the child, his character and his dispositions, something which Brother François stresses even more forcefully than does Brother Jean-Baptiste, for whom knowing the personality of the child is simply a means for controlling him better.

Finally, the child is seen from the two more or less contradictory angles which we may caricature thus: from one angle, as a little savage to be subjugated, and from the other, as an angel to be protected. This means that the educator, as he carries on his work, must simultaneously keep these two aspects in mind, in order to keep from being deceived and to strive to be effective.

THE EDUCATOR

This section raises the question of the educator, and of the way he envisions his function. Now, the final chapter of *Avis, Leçons, Sentences* answers the question, "What is an educator?" I admit that this chapter, as much by its subject matter as by the place it occupies in the work, rather surprised me.

The word Brother Jean-Baptiste uses here, *instituteur* = a primary-school teacher, was made official by the French Revolution, and has a secular nuance which it has not completely lost even today, even though it no longer has the noble connotation of those days. Father Champagnat did not hesitate to use it, giving it the meaning we give nowadays to the word "educator": a dedicated person, as opposed to a *maître d'école* (school-teacher), who is primarily interested in a pay-check. The sentence quoted at the beginning of this study is explicit: "We must be educators (*instituteurs*), we must live in the midst of the children and they must spend a great deal of time with us" (p. 427). More than a teacher who merely imparts knowledge and learning, the educator is one who lives with the child, who accompanies him to help him discover the goal of his existence and the means he possesses within himself to reach it.

It follows, Brother Jean-Baptiste affirms, that education, according to the Fathers of the Church, "is a judgeship, a parenthood, and an apostolate" (p. 504). Then he develops these different aspects, using Bishop Dupanloup's text (Book III of the second volume of *L'Éducation*, which appeared in 1857), which he transcribes verbatim without indicating his source. And when that no longer serves his purpose, it is mostly Cardinal de La Luzerne who takes over, to the point where almost the entire chapter is simply borrowed from different authors.

Since we know that most of the works mentioned were written some years after Father Champagnat's death, what else can we say except to admit that they illustrate the latter's thinking? The first chapter of the work we ar

dealing with upholds this hypothesis, entitled as it is, "What a Brother is, according to Father Champagnat". Seen from this perspective, Brother Jean-Baptiste would conclude his work by giving, in the last chapter, the answer to the question posed in the first. The work thus appears as a fresco, showing in separate brushstrokes the complete picture of the Marist Brother.

The fact remains that at the end of the description, the question as to how Father Champagnat saw his Brothers remains unanswered. Did he see them as religious who were educators, or as educators who were religious? Which of those two nouns did he stress? In a word, did he see the apostolate as something inherent in the Brother's vocation, in the way the last Council spelled it out, or as something added on, as a secondary aim, according to the formulation of the Common Rules after 1852?

This is certainly not the place to answer this question, which Brother Jean-Baptiste does not raise. This did not prevent him from giving parts of an answer by setting forth the qualities of the educator. A long passage borrowed verbatim from Cardinal de La Luzerne, enumerates his duties (pp. 509-510) and concludes: "I nearly said, 'To be a good educator, one must be a perfect man'". Then he develops the five main qualities he must possess.

The first is "solid virtue" (p. 510), that is to say, constantly to give the child the example of a virtuous life. "In order to teach virtue, or better still, to inspire it, to communicate it, one must be virtuous; otherwise, one becomes a charlatan and a professional liar, which is the ultimate vileness" (p. 512). There is no point in demonstrating that a host of authors from whom Brother Jean-Baptiste could have drawn his inspiration, develop this point at length. Marcellin Champagnat would certainly subscribe to the idea, taken globally, since in order to have educators who were sufficiently available and dedicated, he wanted them to be religious.

The second, namely "fervent piety" (p. 514), fits perfectly into that line of thinking. God should hold first place: because he is humankind's first educator; because it is for God that children must be raised; because the child needs God's help in order to complete his education; because, finally, the educator cannot fulfill his difficult task without God's help. It is clear, therefore, as Bishop Dupanloup repeats along with so many others, that there is no true education outside of religion, leaving us to intuit that he prefers priests and religious for that function.

The third virtue needed is "a great love for one's work and for children" (p. 520). We know from his letters and other writings that the Founder often recommended us to stay with the children, and also to love them. Here, it is the turn of Father Pouillet to offer some words to illustrate the point: "Therefore, love your children...love all of them equally; no outcasts and no favorites; or rather, let all of them believe they are favorites and privileged..." (*Discours sur l'éducation*, 1951, pp. 151-152).

Still we must note that the words “love” and “to love” flow from Brother Jean-Baptiste’s pen as often as necessary when he quotes authors, but appear only rarely when he is developing his own thoughts. On the one hand, it is evident that he is not, by nature or by temperament, a sentimental type; his writings are proof of that. On the other hand, many years of experience, both as classroom teacher and as school administrator, made him more authoritarian than fatherly. It may also be that his great concern with sanctification, to which his letters amply testify, persuaded him to do himself violence in order to be able to carry the day against the enemy of salvation.

He must not have been unhappy, in setting forth the fourth virtue: “devotedness”, to have the approval of Bishop Dupanloup on this point, saying that “to devote oneself, is to give oneself unreservedly, to forget oneself, to count oneself for nothing and to sacrifice oneself totally...” (p. 522). This devotedness must be fatherly, even motherly, the same author adds, “for only a father or a mother never lets their little children lag behind...” (p. 523). Finally, “to carry out the beautiful and laborious ministry of education, one must first of all love God and souls” (p. 524). So we are dealing with a “ministry” which can be carried out worthily, effectively, only by persons vowed to God, because they will have to deal with the soul, with the intimate depths, of the child. But Brother Jean-Baptiste immediately adds, on his own behalf or Father Champagnat’s, that one must not forget that the salt of love and devotedness is wise firmness, exercised not through material force, of course, but through moral force. To be the master of one’s class, one must first of all be master of oneself, and clothe one’s manly love with firmness toward the tender but fragile child.

The fifth virtue rounds out the picture: “unfailing zeal for enlightening, correcting and forming the child with all patience” (p. 527). This notion seems so self-evident that Brother Jean-Baptiste feels no need to develop it further. On the contrary, he goes on at length about correcting defects in childhood, knowing that they are the roots of all evils, that small defects undermine great characters. However, in the context, this duty to correct loses its apparent intransigence and severity. There is a hint that one must carry it out with constancy, with “great discernment...so that severity does not degenerate into hardness, nor gentleness into weakness” (p. 532).

CONCLUSION

And so the beginning and end of the presentation are linked. To cultivate the virgin soil that is the child come forth from the hands of the Creator, to help him to acquire the perfection of his being, requires a worker who is himself connected to the Creator, so as to be capable of carrying out his work according to God’s creative intention. It is true that such a

formulation is not found anywhere in Brother Jean-Baptiste's work, but can we not suggest that it appears between the lines?

In the *Life of Father Champagnat* this conclusion is easier to reach, especially because of the passages dealing with education, and even because of the tenor of the whole book. But when the author, aware of the reality presented by groups of children, adopts a severe tone, he does not renounce that strong and intelligent love which aims for the goal and takes the most promising means to reach it.

In any case, one cannot deny that these few chapters assign to the educator a place in society which the latter scarcely acknowledges any more, given its secularized mindset. It is true that during Christianity's resistance against liberalism, the educator, in the Christian sense of the term, maintained his traditional authoritarian and severe demeanor. Brother Jean-Baptiste, as we have seen, did not let go of it. Because of this fact, he would be less ready than Father Champagnat to assign to the educator the role of catalyst in the service of a person who must necessarily develop by himself, rather than that of a teacher convinced that he is the guardian of a truth which he must hand on, even by force.

One final remark concerns most particularly the Marist educator. You will note the lack of any development of the Marist character which should impregnate the educational work of a Brother, according to the prescriptions of his Founder. He should no doubt make Mary known and loved, spread devotion to her among his students, and finally, teach the catechism of the Blessed Virgin. But there is another aspect pointed out in article 9 of chapter VI of the rule of 1852, that of Mary, the educator of Jesus, and hence the model of all educators. Love and respect for the student, self-effacement in order to allow him all the space he needs in order to grow, the humility to accept oneself as the servant of this little one whose hope for the future is still unshaken — all that coupled with care to watch over him, and constant firmness in pointing out the only road by which any human being reaches fulfillment — that is the lesson which the Mother of God gives us, and such is also the attitude which should guide any educator worthy of the name. The author of *Avis, Leçons, Sentences* by failing to evoke that theme, certainly lost an opportunity offered to him to make a synthesis of a Marist understanding of education.

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