

SUMMARY
OF THE LIFE, VIRTUES, MIRACLES AND
REPUTATION OF SANCTITY OF THE SERVANT OF GOD
MARY OF ST IGNATIUS
PREPARED FROM THE DOCUMENTS PUBLISHED IN THE
POSITIO

*Roman numerals indicate the Documents, arabic numerals the pages.
Numerals in heavy type indicate sections of greater importance.*

I. OF THE LIFE OF THE SERVANT OF GOD

1. *Of the birth, country and parents of the Servant of God.* I (*intr.*), 4-5; XXVI 5, 509; 8, 515; 10, 518; **XXVII**, 532; XXVIII 6, 693.
- The Servant of God Claudine Thevenet — called in Religion Mother Mary of St. Ignatius — was born in Lyon, France, on the 30th March 1774, of parents imbued with profound piety.
- On the next day, Holy Thursday, she was baptized at the sacred font in the parish church of St. Nizier, by the curate of the parish, J. Reynard. She was given the name of Claudine. Antoine Burdet and Claudine Guyot, her mother's sister, who were her God-parents, Philibert Thevenet, her father, Pierre Guyot de Pravieux, her maternal grandfather, the widow Steinman, her mother's sister, M. Chenavard, a neighbour of the Guyot family, and Rev. J. Reynard signed the Baptismal Register. **11,7.**
- Philibert Thevenet, the father of the Servant of God, was born on the 21st October, 1734, in Seyssel-en-Bugey (Ain). At some time he moved to Lyon where he worked in the textile firm of M. Guyot de Pravieux. On August 7th, 1770 he married Marie Antoinette, daughter of Pierre Guyot de Pravieux, who was born on March 28th, 1746. I (*intr.*), 4; XXV 2, • XXVII, 532.

Claudine was the second of the seven children born of the Thevenet-Guyot marriage. Three of them were sons — Louis, Francois and Jean Louis, and four were daughters — Claudine, Elizabeth, Fanny and Eleanor.

(*intr.*), 5; XXVII, 532.

2. *Of the youth of the Servant of God and the vicissitudes of the Thevenet family up to the year 1792.*

In the year 1783, when Claudine was nine years old, her parents suffered a reverse of fortune which greatly reduced their standard of living. At that time, Claudine was a boarder in the Benedictine Abbey of St. Pierre, where we may suppose she received the sacraments of Confirmation, Penance, and the Eucharist, but there is no written record of this. Claudine remained in the above-mentioned Abbey until she was fifteen years old, when a violent upheaval of the State obliged the community to send the novices and pupils home.

I (*inn.*), 5; XXV 2, 489; XXVII, 532-533.

3. *The French Revolution. The Siege of the City of Lyon. The reign of "Terror", and the Clandestine Cult. 1792-1801.*

The upheaval in France raged furiously in the city of Lyon right from the beginning.

II (*inn.*), 8-9.

In the year 1793, Philibert Thevenet decided to take his four younger children away from the city to his sister's house in the town of Belley, where it was peaceful, but circumstances made it impossible for him to return to his home afterwards. Therefore his wife, Marie Antoinette, remained alone in Lyon with the three older children, Louis, Claudine and Francois.

II (*inn.*), 10; II 2, 15; XXVII, 534.

These two brothers of Claudine took up arms with those who, under the leadership of General Precy, defended the city against the Jacobins. The battle was very fierce on the night between the 24th and 25th August, but Claudine's brothers escaped unharmed. On

II (*inn.*), 9-10; XXV 2, 489; 3, 492; XXVII, 534-535.

the 9th October, General Doppet's army entered the city, and the followers of the "Convention" began their revenge which was much worse than the siege itself.

Claudine's brothers were thrown into prison. On the 23rd November, the same lot befell their uncle Louis Guyot, who had not taken any part in the fighting. When the plight of those who were in prison was known to the members of the family, nothing was left undone to rescue them from their misfortune.

(*inli.*), 11; XXV 2, 489; 3, 492; XXVII, 539.

The Servant of God courageously performed works of charity, visiting those who were in prison, giving them food, clothing and whatever they needed, using astonishing skill to carry out her intention, and enduring very great derision.

XXVI 4, 501-502; 8, 515; 9, 516; 10, 518; XXVII, 535.

Louis Guyot was condemned to death on the 21st December, 1793.

II (*inn.*), XXVII, 539.

Claudine remained steadfast, giving aid, as far as she was able, to her family and to those who were suffering in the prisons. She helped especially her brothers and two priests who were imprisoned with them, and who heard their last confession.

II (*inn.*), 11; XXV 2, 489; 3, 492; XXVI 4, 501-502; XXVII, 536.

On the 5th January, 1794, when Claudine went to the prison to see her brothers, she was completely dumbfounded to see a group of people leading forty-three men who had been condemned to death, to their execution. Her surprise changed to immense sorrow when she saw her two brothers among these men.

U (*int.:*), II; 1, 13-14; 2, 15-16; 3, 16-17; XXV 2, 489; XXVI 4, 502; XXVII, 536-538.

With great strength of mind she dared to approach them and took from their hands the letters in which they said their farewell.

II 2, 15; 3, 16.

At the same time she heard these words come from their lips, "Courage Glady, forgive as we forgive." The Servant of God did not leave her brothers, but followed them the whole way to their death and was present when they fell, shot with lead bullets.

XXVII, 538; XXV 489.

She saw the cruel soldiers finishing off those who were still alive. She was not allowed to go near the mutilated bodies.

XXVI 4, 502.

The terrible scene cruelly pierced the soul of Claudine, whose constitution, until then robust, was marked for the rest of her life by a tremor of the head and difficulty in breathing.

From that time Claudine renounced the idea of raising a family; her only desire was to serve God and to help souls.

The Church of Lyon, harassed by its enemies, began to offer clandestine worship to God. Claudine who was on fire with zeal for promoting the glory of God, applied herself ardently to do whatever she could in the circumstances.

There are no records of the period after the murder of her brothers. It would seem that she took part in the work of the so called "missions of Linsolas" collaborating with all her strength in the apostolate secretly begun when the siege had ended: afterwards she proceeded to do the same when the way was left free for exercising divine worship.

4. *Work of the social apostolate: 1802-1818.*

In the year 1795, the Thevenet family moved from their home in the centre of the city of Lyon into the house of the two sisters of Marie Antoinette, which was situated in rue Masson, in the district of Croix Rousse. This house was near the ancient Carthusian monastery. When the Concordat of the year 1802 granted partial liberty to the Church, the former Carthusian Church became the parish church dedicated to St. Bruno. It became the centre of Claudine's apostolate.

Little by little the Thevenet family diminished: Jean Louis moved successively to Valence and Macon; Elizabeth married Jean-Baptiste Mayet; Fanny took the habit of the Congregation of St. Thomas of Villanova in Paris; Eleanore joined the foundress of the new Congregation of the Nativity.

XXVII 538.

XXV 3, 492; XXVI 4, 502, 508-509; 5, 509-511; 8, 515; 9, 516-517; 10, 518.

XXVII, 540-541.

XXVII, 539-540, n. 18.

III (*intr.*), 18; VI (*intr.*) 184.

III (*intr.*), 18-19.

I (*intr.*), 5-6; 2, 7-8.

Only Claudine remained at home with her parents. The author of the *Petit manuscrit* tells us: "Claudine Thevenet had suffered too much to seek consolation elsewhere than in God. Once order and religious freedom had been restored in France, she devoted herself to pious practices and works of zeal. An urgent need had developed within her to do good, above all to help the poor."

Other proofs of the apostolic activity of the Servant of God are to be found in the various parish registers and in the testimony of Anne Guyot, the widow Burdet, and the widow Steinman, and also in the writings of Pauline Marie Jaricot. From these sources we see Claudine, in the year 1804 at the age of thirty years, devoting herself totally to apostolic works and giving powerful aid to her parish priest.

On 16th March 1815, Philibert Thevenet, the father of the Servant of God, died at the age of eighty years.

Her mother, Marie Antoinette, feeling lonely, complained about the absence of Claudine, who spent her time in apostolic works, saying: "What silk-weaver's charm has bewitched you, tell me, that you should leave your old mother so often to be with those young girls at Pierres Plantees?"

At the end of the year 1815, Fr. A. Coindre came to the parish of St. Bruno to take up his duties as curate of the Parish Priest, Fr. S. Gagneur. A little while afterwards he joined the association of priests called the "Carthusian Missionaries".

"One day Fr. Coindre brought two little girls from Lyon. They were without parents or home. He had picked them up, quite literally, from the street. Fr. Coindre showed his small burden to Fr. Gagneur and to Mile Thevenet. All three looked upon the incident of the two little girls as a sign of the hand of God at work."

This first meeting of Claudine with Fr. Coindre changed the way of life of the Servant of God and gave rise to the beginning of a two-fold apostolate: the

XXVI 4, 502.

III (*intr.*), 18-19; 1a, 22; b. 24; c, 25.

V (*intr.*), 172-173.

III (*intr.*), 19.

XXVII, 548.

III (*intr.*), 19-20; XXVI 4, 502; XXVII, 541.

III 4, 33.

III (*intr.*) 20, 21; 4, 32-37; IV (*intr.*), 38-49.

Providence of St. Bruno and (he *Pious Union of the Stoic Heart*.

The commencement of the work of the *Providence* WAS precarious. "They needed premises and resources." Since it was impossible to keep the two orphan girls either in Claudine's home or that of any of the associates, they were placed for a while in the care of the Sisters of St. Joseph. A little while afterwards, Marie < Ithrat, a friend and associate of the Servant of God, gave up part of her home to house these same orphans, Until in the month of August 1817 the Servant of God brought them to a 'cell' of the former Carthusian monastery.

"Some days afterwards, the *Providence* counted seven little girls. Mile. Thevenet was the Superior and Directress of the *Providence*. As for resources, they thought of providing them for this new work by forming an association of Ladies of the Parish. Mile Thevenet was responsible for the direction of the *Providence* but without living there. She obtained from M. St. Jean, the Superioress General of the Sisters of St. Joseph and Rev. M. Bochart, the Superior and restorer of that Congregation in the diocese of Lyon, a sister as cook for the little *Providence* and also to direct the little sewing room — the only work done by the children at this time."

In the following year, the work of the *Providence* went very well. Three sisters were added to it, the pupils numbered thirty; lack of space prevented the number from growing further. The fruits of this work both in the social and moral order began to be gathered immediately.

A little after the beginning of the work of the *Providence*, the *Association* or Pious Union of the Sacred Heart was formed.

The preface at the beginning of the Rule has these words "When several people desire to unite in order to achieve their own sanctification and that of others, they

III, 4, 33; IV 2, 28 c
121; XXIII § 2, 460
XXVI 4, 503; 9, 517
XXVII, 542-543.

III 4, 34.

III 2, 26-27; 3, 28-31; IV
2, § 28 c, 121.

IV (*inn.*), 38-49.

IV 1,54; XXIII §§ 1,2,
459-460; XXVI 4,
503, 508; 5, 510; 9,
517; XXVII,541-542.

are worthy of the highest praise. A number of pious people, who come together and form a society with the aim of drawing nearer to God, of helping one another by their prayers, their good works, their counsel, to advance in the way of perfection and of devoting themselves to all the spiritual and corporal works of mercy within their powers, are only following the example set by all true servants of God."

The *Association* officially came into being on 31st July, 1816. From the 28th to the 30th of that month, the Servant of God and seven of her associates made a spiritual retreat conducted by Fr. Coindre. On the 31st they made their act of consecration. At the same time, after voting, they divided the various works among themselves.

Claudine was elected President with an absolute majority of votes, as happened also on all later occasions when they voted.

The *Association* was divided into four sections, and the various works were distributed among them. Particular care was taken about the spiritual formation and progress of the Associates.

The Servant of God looked after the poor in their homes, taught children and young working girls, etc., but her special apostolate was the active exercise of the office of president of the *Association*. By word and example she incited all to keep the rules and to fulfil their duties towards their neighbour properly, as with care she watched over the spiritual perfection of the associates.

When spiritual fervour declined, she kindly warned the persons at fault. "I hope that no one will take offence at the observations that I made in my report; they were only dictated by the desire for our mutual perfection and to fulfil my obligation to point out the omissions that we have to reproach ourselves with in the course of the year."

IV 2, 87-88.

IV 2, 88.

IV (*intr.*) 40-47.

IV (*intr. D*), 47-50.

IV 2, § 28 d, 124.

When on the contrary the *Association* was making good progress she added a IV w words of encouragement to the associates. "I think that I K* numerous graces which the Lord has showered <n the associates during the course of the whole of this yeai must have produced fruit in souls, and that each one has been zealous to correspond with the benefits God has poured on her and to serve Him with great fidelity and indent love."

IV 2 § 66 b ' II

5. *Preparation for religious life, 1818* IH23.*

a) *Pierres Plantees, 1818-1820,*

Two years passed in which the *Association* happily increased in number and in fervour. The associates were engaged in the apostolate of good works and at the same time in eagerly pursuing their own perfection.

\\ (intr.h 1831 XXIII § 5,460 XXVI 1.503; 7, 51 I; 10, 519

Fr. Coindre thought that the time had come "to raise this work up under another form, and to open up broader horizons for it". Heaven seemed to him to have designated Mile Thevenet as the cornerstone of a new building. . . . With that authority and decision which indicate inspiration from on high, he made known to the group of friends the intentions of God for the little *Association*. "You must," he said, "without hesitation or delay, form yourselves into a community. . . ." This command, which seemed to bear a divine seal, left the little assembly speechless with astonishment. But without giving them time to recover from their surprise, Fr. Coindre presented Mile Thevenet to her companions as the one whom Providence had designated to accomplish its mission. As she fell on her knees and seemed crushed he said resolutely, "Heaven has chosen you, answer its call."

XXVII, Mi S46.

VI, 182-185; XXIII § 3, 460-461; XXVI, 4, 503; /. 513; x x v 2, 487-488; 3, 492; XXVII. 546-547.

Claudine leased a small house in *Pierres Plantees* in that quarter of the city of Lyon called La *Croix Rousse*. There she installed a skilled textile worker, with one orphan, who was the first pupil of the new *Providence*,

repeating what had been done successfully in the former Carthusian monastery.

The Servant of God went to her new home herself on the night between the 5th and 6th October, with the widow Ferrand. Little by little other associates joined her, according as their parents and circumstances allowed them to do so. "The first night that she passed outside her mother's home was for her a night of such desolation and anguish, that, to the end of her life, whenever she spoke of it, Mother Foundress said it was the most dreadful night she had ever experienced."

XXVI 4, 504; XXVII, 549.

The little house in *Pierres Plantees*, had no chapel. The associates and pupils went to the church of St. Bruno, twenty minutes walk away, in order to assist at the sacrifice of the Mass and other liturgical ceremonies. "When we went to Mass", recounted Mother Foundress, "the urchins used to throw stones at us. Then Fr. Coindre, to console us, would say, 'It is a good sign, my daughters, it is a good sign!'"

VI (intr.J. 184-185; XXIII § 3,461; XXVI 4, 503; XXVII, 549.

On 28th May the mother of the Servant of God died. On that occasion Claudine's human qualities and supernatural virtues shone forth even more clearly than usual, inspiring the confidence and esteem of her family.

VII (intr.J, 187.

The work of *Pierres Plantees*, begun with as much zeal as poverty of human resources, grew more than anyone could have hoped as the days went by.

VII (intr.J, 186; XXIII § 4, 461; XXVI 4,504; 7, 514; XXVII, 550.

In the year 1820 the house had become too small to accommodate the people who were living in it. It was necessary to look for larger premises which could house both the newly-born religious institute and the work of the *Providence*. Claudine began to look for a suitable house in the district of *Croix Rousse* where the work had first been founded, and she commended the project to the Blessed Virgin Mary. But she found nothing.

Pauline Marie Jaricot, who had joined the *Association*, and whose family was bound by ties of friendship with Claudine and the Thevenet family,

V (intr.J, 172; VII (intr.J, 1, 186, 188; 4 196-197.

helped with the purchase of a piece of land in Fourviere, which her brother had acquired the previous year.

b) *Fourviere, 1820.*

The house in Fourviere was suitable for present needs and future work. Proximity to the Sanctuary dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary made it especially pleasing to the Servant of God.

On 12th July Claudine and her collaborator Catherine Laporte, signed the deed of purchase.

In the month of August work was begun on adapting and enlarging the building. From the 2nd to the 11th November, 40 members of the community and the first small group of children, as well as the furniture and looms, were moved from *Pierres Plan tees* to the new residence.

The new house was not yet suitable for the needs of the foundation. Works to adapt that part destined for the use of the community were carried out together with preparation for the boarding school, which they were able to open the following year.

At the same time the construction of a new building destined for the orphan girls and the textile workrooms of the *Providence* was begun.

The difficult circumstances of the times in the diocese of Lyon prevented the Servant of God from obtaining the canonical approbation of her Congregation. After various attempts she obtained only permission for the celebration of Mass and reservation of the Blessed Sacrament in the oratory prepared for this. Although they were not yet allowed to make their religious profession, she took care to imprint a character most like that of religious life on the house and the community living there. The Associates wore a black dress, and each one took the name of a saint.

In the month of November 1821 the Servant of God took the name of Mother St. Ignatius.

VII 1, 188-192; XXIII § 4, 461-462; XXVI 4, 504; 7, 514; XXVII, 550-553.

VII 1, 188.

VII 3 a, 195; 5, 197-199
XXIII § 5, 462
XXIV 4, 504; 7, 514
XXVII, 550-553.

XXIII § 7, 463; 9, 463-464.

VII 5 c, 198-199.

X (intr.), 245; 1, 246-247; XXIII § 6, 462-463; XXVII, 557-558.

VI (intr.), 182.

In the last three months of the year 1821, the newly born Congregation was also completing its structures little by little. It already had its own Constitutions, Rules, Religious — although they were not yet canonically recognised as such — Novices, Postulants, a *Providence* for the formation of workers and an establishment for girls of higher social condition. At the same time the apostolic spirit which was later to be characteristic of the work began to manifest itself.

c) *Belleville, 1821*

In the year 1821, during the month of November, two teachers from Belleville — a small town near Lyon — offered a small school to the Servant of God. They themselves wanted to try some form of religious life.

After a few months they withdrew. The Servant of God had already begun to imprint the same distinctive marks on that work as were found in Fourviere. In the circumstances in Belleville the Servant of God saw the signs of the Will of God, and so in promoting this work, she exercised the same fervent zeal as in the works begun previously in Lyon. The organisation was similar, but on a smaller scale. There was a community with postulants, boarders and a *Providence*, and everything was developing prosperously and rapidly, with great praise from the people.

In the year 1822 many events took place. Fr. Coindre left the Association of "Carthusian Missionaries" and went to Saint Flour, so that he could, at the request of Mgr. de Salamon, found a society of missionaries for the diocese of Le Puy, of which Mgr. de Salamon was the Apostolic Administrator.

At the same time, Fr. Coindre obtained the approbation of the two congregations founded by him, namely, the Congregation of the Servant of God and another called the Brothers of the Sacred Heart, recently founded.

VIII (intr.), 200-202.

VII 5, 197-199.

XXVII, 557-558.

IX (intr.), 216; XXIII § 8, 643; XXIV 4, 506; XXVII, 565-566.

IX 1, nn. 5, 7, 218.

X (intr.), 245-246; XXIII § 12, 465; XXVII, 568.

X 2 247-248; 3, 248-250; XXIII § 13, 465-466; XI (intr.), 250; XXVII, 569-571.

In the month of July Sr. Bonaventure died in Belleville, aged 21 years. She was the first member of the Association of the Servant of God to pass from this life to eternity.

In the month of October the Servant of God had to bear with an unexpected difficulty in financial matters, caused by the Laporte family. Aided by the grace of God she overcame this trial, but not without a great struggle.

At that time, the Servant of God wanted to comply with the new civil laws regarding education for girls, and, as she always did, set the example and presented herself for the examination at the age of 48 years with five other associates much younger than herself.

d) *Monistrol, 1823.*

During the month of November 1822, Fr. Coindre had established a new society of Missionaries in Monistrol, as we mentioned above. He had also taken on the direction of a certain college which already existed as a "Junior Seminary", and reorganized it. With the consent of the Servant of God, he looked for a house in which a new community could exercise their apostolate among the surrounding people, and at the same time could work with the Missionaries. But what was more important was that it was hoped that, with the approbation of the Apostolic Administrator of the diocese of Le Puy, the associates could make their religious profession and obtain canonical approbation of their institute.

On the feast of the Epiphany 1823, the small community officially took possession of this house.

6. *Religious Life. Foundress and Superioress General 1823-1837.*

a) *Religious Profession.*

On 4th February 1823, Mgr. de Salamon sent to Fr. Coindre the document by which he approved the new

XXVII, 588, n. 2.

IX, 2, 3, 221-227. XXIII § 10, 464; XXVII, 556-557.

IX 4, 228-234.

X (inn.): 246; XXIII 12, 465; XXVII, 568, 570.

XXIII § 12, 465; XXVII, 570-571.

X 3, 248-250. XXIII, 13; 465-466; XXVII, 571.

Congregation, and at the same time authorised the first associates to make their religious profession.

Fr. Coindre transmitted the good news in writing to the Servant of God. On the 17th she set out for Monistrol with Mother Xavier and the first associates who were to be clothed in the religious habit. Mother St. Peter and Mother St. Bruno were already in Monistrol, living in that house, and Mother St. Borgia came from the house of Belleville.

On the 22nd they began a three day retreat in preparation, under the direction of Fr. Coindre.

On the 25th, in the chapel of the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, the Servant of God and Mothers St. Borgia, St. Xavier, St. Bruno, and St. Peter pronounced the simple vows of poverty, chastity and perpetual obedience and also stability in the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary.

On the 26th the first ceremony of clothing took place, and also the election of the first Superioress General.

b) *The Elections.*

The five newly-professed religious, assembled in Chapter under the presidency of Fr. Coindre, elected Mother St. Ignatius Superioress General. There followed the election of three Assistants General. The Servant of God, using her recently-obtained faculty, named Superioresses for the houses of Belleville and Monistrol, confirming in office those Who already filled these posts.

Returning to Lyon, the Servant of God prepared everything for another group to make profession. This took place in Monistrol on 16th March. On that same day the election of the first Assistant General took place, and Mother St. Andrew was elected for this office. This completed the Council. The Servant of God sent her vote in writing from Lyon.

XI (intr.), 250; XXVII, 571-572.

XI (intr.), 250-251; 1, 252-253; XXIII 14, 466; XXVII, 572.

XII (intr.), 254, 1, 255; XXIII 14, 466; XXVII, 572-573.

XI 2, 253; XII 2 256; XXIII 14, 466; XXVII, 572-573.

c) *The Government of the Servant of God.*

Mother St. Ignatius had successfully brought the work given to her by Divine Providence to a high degree of excellence. She united in herself experience in religious life and in government. She had formed a group of associates who would follow and imitate her, thus assuring the continuity of the work. Already three communities constituted a new and fervent religious congregation, protected by the approbation of the Church.

For the remainder of her life she was to devote herself to completing the work and writing the Rules, which had been kept from 1818, in the most suitable form.

The year 1823 was one of joy for the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, but it was a year of many sorrows for the Servant of God.

After various vicissitudes, her sister Eleanor left the Congregation of the Nativity. Her other sister Elizabeth suffered a long and serious illness, during which, according to the testimony of her son Fr. Mayet, she was consoled by the Servant of God. "She was the great consoler in a very long and dangerous illness about the year 1823."

But neither these nor other difficulties prevented the Servant of God from carrying out her duties as foundress and Superioress General, as documents that have been preserved clearly testify. At the same time she guided the *Association* and directed the work of the *Providence* of St. Bruno.

According to the *Histoire* "Each category of children was equally dear to her, and she would have sacrificed herself for one or other of them without hesitation. She attached great importance to education of upper class children. She saw with legitimate satisfaction three boarding schools already opened and filled with a charming and happy crowd of students; but no one could deny that the predilection of this excellent

XVI C 1, a, 301-3P2;
XXIII 15, 466-467;
19, 470; XXVI 4, 504-
507; XXVII, 573-
580.

XIX (intr.), 370-371; 2,
374-376; XXIII §29,
478; XXVII, 621.

XI (intr.), 250; XXVI 4,
505; XXVII, 573,
580-581.

XVII (intr.), 334.

XXV 2, 487.

III 3,28-32; IV (intr. D),
48-50.

XXVII, 574.

Mother was always for the weakest and most abandoned!"

On 27th June we see her drawing up some norms in favour of her students.

The parish priest of St. Sigolene had asked for the collaboration of the religious for the direction of a *Providence*.

The Servant of God, inspired by zeal and charity, was in favour of this petition. In the year 1824 a new *Providence* was being got ready in Lucenay.

On 28th April 1824 the blessing of the little chapel dedicated to St. Aloysius Gonzaga took place in the house of Belleville.

Official documents testify that in that year the Congregation, including novices, numbered 88 members who were taking care of 320 pupils of whom 170 were receiving free education.

d) *The Providence of St. Bruno, 1823-1825.*

The annual report of the *Association* for the year 1823-1824 informs us that the *Providence* of St. Bruno then numbered 36 orphans, of whom 7 or 8, in that same year, had received their first Holy Communion. This *Providence*, fruit of the zeal of the Servant of God, was an occasion of great sacrifice for her.

"Sister Clotilde, who until then had been only the directress of the sewing workroom, made herself a full-blown Superior, without having been named such, either by the Parish Priest of St. Bruno, or by anyone else. The Ladies of the Committee inspected the accounts, but Sister Clotilde accepted this with great reluctance . . . She saved a lot of money each year but this did not appear in the account books. . . ."

The Sister, even if she had the good of the *Providence* in view, created difficulty for the work by her way of acting.

The Servant of God, when she saw that an opportune time had come, ceded to the parish priest all

XIII (intr.), 257-258.

XVI C 1 c, 303.

XXVII, 574, n. 2.

IX (intr.), 216-217.

XVI C 4, 311-314.

IV 2 § 77 b, 165.

IV 2 § 82 b, 167-168, n.
76.

III 4, 34-35.

IV 2 § 82 b, 167; § 83 a,
b, 169. n. 76.

rights over the foundation and the direction of the work. This was done with such prudence that nobody suspected at the time how much pain this affair caused her. Only many years after her death, when Sister Clotilde was also dead, new difficulties arose which made clear with what great patience, prudence and charity the Servant of God had conducted herself on this occasion.

e) *Love and obedience towards the Church.*

Towards the end of the year 1823 Pope Leo XIII decided to put an end to the anomalous condition of affairs in the diocese of Lyon, and for this purpose named Mgr. de Pins Apostolic Administrator. The new administrator entered the diocese on 18th February, 1824.

The arrival of the new Apostolic Administrator, while Cardinal Archbishop Fesch was still alive, proved an occasion of serious division in the diocese, among both clergy and faithful.

Although the new religious Congregation of the Sacred Hearts had not yet been approved in the diocese of Lyon, the Servant of God called on the Apostolic Administrator without delay, in order to pay her respects, and ask him for permission to proceed with the clothing of some postulants, and for the making of profession on the part of those who had completed their time of probation.

The prelate easily assented to these requests and promised that he himself would come to distribute holy communion to the pupils.

On 18th July of the following year, Mgr. de Pins approved the Rules of the Congregation, which had been presented to him a little while earlier; and he also sent a memorandum to the King, in which he praised the work begun by the Servant of God and asked for royal approbation for it, so that it would be legally authorized.

X (*intr.*), 245; 1, 246.

XVI C 2 a, 304-305.

XIV (*intr.*), 259; 1, 260.

XVI C 2 a, b, 304-305.

XIV 1,2,3,260-262.

f) *Le Puy, 1825.*

The diocese of Le Puy, without a bishop since the year 1793, was administered from 1820 by the Bishop of St. Flour until its own bishop Mgr. de Bonald was appointed.

He began the pastoral visitation of the diocese without delay, and went to Monistrol on 20th August, 1823. To his great admiration he saw in this small town the flourishing institutions of Fr. Coindre and the Servant of God.

A few months after this visitation, he proposed the transfer of the small community which was in Monistrol to the town of Le Puy. The Servant of God agreed to the wishes of the bishop and ordered the transfer to be made in the year 1825 during the month of August. On 13th October the first clothing ceremony took place in the little chapel dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary. Soon the property purchased near the parish church of St. Lawrence became too small, and, when the attempt to enlarge it failed, on 22nd August 1833, the Servant of God bought a big property on the other side of the town. Here a large house with a beautiful chapel was built. This house still exists.

The house of Le Puy enjoyed an excellent reputation and provided good vocations for the Congregation. The happy outcome from the beginning can be ascribed to the abnegation of the Servant of God and to the sufferings she endured at that time, among which may be counted:

a) the departure of Mother St. Peter, the first superioress of that house, from the Congregation;

b) the proposal to unite her Congregation with another, founded by St. Madeleine Sophie Barat;

c) the unexpected death of Mother St. Borgia, who had succeeded Mother St. Peter as Superioress.

XV (*intr.*), 264; XXIII § 16, 467; XXVI 4, 506; 10, 520; XXVII, 580-581.

XV (*intr.*), 264; 1, 265.

XXIII § 25, 475; XXVII, 612-613.

XV (*intr.*), 264; 6, 270.

XV 4, 267; 5, 268-270.

XVI C 6, 318-320.

XXIII § 27; 476; XXVII, 613-616.

g) *The Death of Fr. Coindre, 1826.*

While exercising the sacred duty of preaching a mission in Le Puy on 17th November, 1825, Fr. Andre Coindre received the news that he had been named Superior of the seminary and Vicar General of the diocese of Blois.

He went there in 1826, at the beginning of the month of February.

On May 3rd, Fr. Coindre wrote a letter warning against the attempts of Rev. Simon Cattet, Vicar General of the diocese of Lyon since 28th December, to unite two religious institutes which had similar aims.

He also sent the Servant of God the rule of the directress, which no doubt she had submitted for his approbation.

In the middle of the month of May, news came of Fr. Coindre's illness. The Community received further information on its course with trepidation. On the 30th the Servant of God had a premonition of the fatal and imminent event. In fact this proved true. Fr. Coindre had died on that day, in very sad circumstances.

7. *The Vicar General Simon Cattet and the Servant of God, 1827-1837.*

Fr. Coindre, co-founder of the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, and appointed its ecclesiastical superior by Mgr. de Salamon, from 1816 onwards was well aware of the natural qualities and virtues of the Servant of God and left her full liberty to act, placing complete trust in her.

Mother St. Ignatius governed the Congregation, but she frequently sought advice from Fr. Coindre. "Mother St. Ignatius is far more frequently at my door than you are. She is always finding something to ask me, and I find something to answer."¹

Towards the end of the year 1827, the Vicar General Cattet was named ecclesiastical superior. His

XXIII §§ 17, 18, 467-470; XXVII 613-616.

XVI B 1, 298-300.

XVI C 1 f, 304.

XXIII § 18, 468-469; XXVI 4, 506; 10, 520; XXVII, 581-587.

XVI B (*inn.*), 296; XXVI 7, 513-514; XXVII, 571.

XVI C 1 b, 302.

XVI B (*intr.*), 296-298.

disposition and way of going about things created difficulties for the Servant of God.

Whilst she held both the title and jurisdiction of Superioress General, she could not act now with full liberty as she had done before. "But as far as I could see, Mother St. Ignatius never did anything out of the ordinary without the express permission of the community's spiritual father, M. Cattet, Vicar General. It seems to me that I can still hear the phrase 'With the permission of M. Cattet'."

8. *Of the Government of the Servant of God, 1826-1837.*

From the month of February 1823, when the Servant of God was established in the office of Superioress General, we see her fully intent on governing the Congregation, which was established in Lyon, Belleville and Monistrol. This last house was then the head house of the Congregation. The approbation of the Institute, obtained from the Apostolic Administrator of Lyon in the year 1825 and the almost simultaneous transfer of the house from Monistrol to Le Puy, resulted in the transfer of the general Council to the city of Lyon.

Meanwhile the life of the Congregation proceeded in a sure and orderly way, even though there were still difficulties.

Clothing ceremonies took place frequently, sometimes in Le Puy and sometimes in Lyon. The same may be said of profession ceremonies.

Meanwhile the death of some of the Religious and pupils filled the soul of the Servant of God with grief.

The year 1827 was marked by two serious problems: on the one hand the dispute with the parish priest of Belleville; on the other hand demands and complaints from Mmc. Dioque (formerly Mother St. Peter), which continued until the year 1828.

XXV 2, 487.

XII 1, 255; XXIII § 14, 466; XXVII, 572; XIII (*intr.*), 257; XVI A, 271-278. VII 5 d, 199; XIV 2, 260-261; XV (*intr.*), 263-265.

VII 2, 192-194; 197; IX 1, 216-220; XIII, 257-258.

XV (*intr.*), 263-264; 2, 266; 6, 270-271.

XVI (*intr.*), 271-278; XXIII § 19, 470; XXVI 4, 504-507; XXVII, 626-636.

IX (*intr.*), 217; 5, 237; 7, 240; 8, 240; 10, 241; 11, 242.

XV 4, 267; 5, 268-269; XVI A 3, 280.

In that year, the Servant of God was struck down with a serious illness, and two young religious in whom she had placed great hope, died.

XVII 1, 334-337; XXVII 577, n. 4; 588.

From that time until the year 1836, serious afflictions afflicted the city of Lyon, caused especially by political insurrections of the years 1830, 1831 and 1834, and the deadly cholera raging in the year 1832. During all these troubles we always see Mother St. Ignatius trusting in God, overcoming her own fears and those of others and encouraging all to hope for better things.

XVI A 5, 282; 6, 283; 7, 286; XVII 3, 346-352; XXIII §20, 470; §22, 472-475; XXVI, 2, 495, 496; 4, 506-507.

XXVII 589-592; 595-600.

The good influence of her words also extended to the workers who were in revolt.

XXVII, 541.

Among other outstanding talents, the Servant of God excelled in the work of educating youth.

XVI A 1, 278-279; XXVI 4, 504-506;

She penetrated the souls of others and she knew how to guide persons according to their natural ability, taking circumstances into account as well.

XXVII, 564-565; 576-580; 632.

She watched carefully lest any danger could bring harm to the community. She did not proceed with excessive haste; but when the occasion arose, she did not hesitate to put the common before the particular good.

XVI A 4, 281-282.

There is an example of this in the way she acted on the occasion of a theft in the house of Belleville.

XXVII, 566-567.

Among other gifts, she was outstanding in the way she governed, forgetting herself, and showing great charity to the religious committed to her care. "In her private conversations she set aside, as it were, all superiority, and gave herself up freely to an intimacy which consoled her and won the hearts of others. Her open approach called forth confidence, and people trusted her unreservedly."

XXVI 4, 504-505; XXVII, 626-632.

To confirm what has been said about the way the Servant of God governed, we know that in both the canonical visitations made by the Rev. Fr. Cattet in 1831 and 1833, and in the visitation of the archbishopric of Lyon, nothing reprehensible can be found with regard

XVI A (inn.), 272; 6, 283-286.

to the way the Servant of God acted, or in the account of the life of the community.

9. *Writings of the Servant of God.*

The writings of the Servant of God which have come down to us are few in number: *a*) sixteen letters sent to her family; *b*) pages 43-46 of the register of the Association; *c*) the greater part of cash books I, II; *d*) various notes, loose or attached to bills; *e*) the Rule approved in the year 1838 (copy).

XVII (intr. J. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 333-363. IV 2, 122-124; VII 2, 192; 3, 195-196; XVI C 5, 316-318; XIX 370-415.

For various reasons some documents which we know existed have been lost, and probably other things also written by the Servant of God, of which we have no record.

XVII (intr. J., 333.

Among the family letters, the oldest is dated 11th September 1828. In it a sense of supernatural piety, a grateful and affectionate heart, and an exceptional and clear indication of her many sufferings, are manifest.

XVII 1, 333-337.

The rest of the letters pertain to a later period of the life of the Servant of God, a time when political and social events created a number of difficulties for her which were injurious to her health. In spite of these things, it is evident that she was always careful about the good of others, forgetting herself, always inculcating a sense of duty, careful to promote the best interests of her community, an excellent superior and bursar.

XVII 2, 3, 4, 5, 337-363.

Some of these letters pertain to the time of the revolution in Lyon.

XVII 3, 346-352.

Two were written on the occasion of the first Mass celebrated by her nephew.

XVII 4, 352-356.

Others inform us about the work for the orphans or the *Providence*.

XVII 5, 356-363.

The Rule approved after the death of the Servant of God was the fruit of the long and patient toil carried on almost through the whole course of her life.

XIX (intr.), 370-377.

The first group of future religious gathered together in *Pierres Plantées*, kept the Rules which were in force in the *Association* from the year 1816.

IV 1, 49-82.

Between the years 1818-1820, Fr. Coindre wrote rules, touching on certain general points. As a foundation of the spirituality of the Congregation he laid down the rule of St. Augustine and the Constitutions of the Society of Jesus.

VIII, 200-215; X 2, 247-248.

When he died in the year 1816 he was on the point of writing, with the collaboration of the Servant of God, the rules which would be definitive for the Congregation.

XIX 2, (intr.) 374. XVI C 1 d, 303, f, 304.

Mother St. Ignatius alone put the final touches to these, carefully keeping unchanged the spirit with which he had imbued them from the very beginning. When Mgr. de Pins assigned Fr. Pousset to help her perfect the external form of the rules, the Servant of God found in this Father more of an obstacle than a help.

XXVIII (intr.), 364.

She died without being able to see the rules approved, having endured painful opposition in the last year of her life.

XXVII, 621.

When, a few months after the death of the Servant of God, they were presented for definitive approbation, these rules, as far as their substance is concerned, were the same as those of Fr. Coindre and the Servant of God had written, but some changes and suppressions had been introduced into them which we cannot now discern. The intervention of Fr. Pousset seems to have been negative. But about this Father we must give some information.

XIX 1, 371-373.

10. *Francis Xavier Pousset.*

Towards the end of the year 1835, after the departure of the chaplain J. Rey, who was succeeded for a time by Rev. N. Desgarets, the Servant of God thought it opportune to ask Rev. Mgr. de Pins to name a new chaplain who at the same time could help her in the definitive composition of the rules to be submitted to the Roman curia. Francis Xavier Pousset, who had recently been dismissed from the Society of Jesus and frustrated in his plan to remain in the diocese of Paris, and who had earnestly asked Mgr. de Pins for an

XXVIII (intr.), 363: XXVII, 620, n. 5.

appointment in the diocese of Lyon, was appointed for this work.

From the beginning the difference of opinion between the new chaplain and the foundress was evident. He felt that he was the superior with all a superior's rights, and he looked upon himself to change everything according to his own taste. She made every effort to keep the spirit and formation which the Congregation had from the beginning.

XXVI 9, 517; XXIX 2, 705; 5, 709; 6, 715; 10, 721.

"She had no respite" — says Sr. St. Bernard — "after the installation of Fr. Pousset; and she never let the community perceive her sufferings and worries. But for myself, who was in charge of the chaplain's quarters, I would have had to be deaf and blind not to understand that all wasn't going well. Fr. Pousset is trying to be our Superior, I said to myself; but it seems to me that our Mother is enough for us." "Fr. Pousset is for us what Napoleon I was for France," said the witty Mother St. Bruno. "He did a lot of good and a lot of harm!"

XXVII, 620-621.

The conduct of Fr. Pousset towards the Servant of God, and after her death towards Mother St. Andrew, cannot be explained in a person who has the normal use of his faculties. Specialists who have studied his case think that he was suffering from some mental disturbance.

XXVIII (intr.), 367.

II. VIRTUES OF THE SERVANT OF GOD

1. *Of the virtues of the Servant of God in general.*

Throughout her whole life Mother St. Ignatius practised all the virtues. An eyewitness, Mother St. Pothin, when she was the Superior General, wrote this about her. "Let us recall the heroic virtues of our Mother Foundress, above all her great humility, her sublime love for God and souls. . . . She has left us a living memory of all the religious virtues."

XXVI 3 b 499.

In one of the earliest biographies it is said, referring to the first years that followed the revolution: "and so, as soon as order and religious freedom were re-

XXVI 4, 502-503.