

DOC. XI

TESTIMONIES OF THE FIRST TWO PROFESSIONS OF RELIGIOUS in the recently approved Congregation. - *From the original document preserved in A. G. Roma.*

When in 1818, Claudine Thevenet left her mother to found a religious Congregation, she had already for some time resolved to consecrate herself entirely to God by the vows of religion. We do not know how far back such a determination goes, but one of her first companions in the apostolate, referring to that moment, told us that her mother, who was old and infirm, had opposed her generous resolution for a long time (Doc. XXIII, p. 477). Finally, in 1823, Fr. Coindre in communicating to the Servant of God the authorisation he had obtained for religious profession wrote: "The passage of the Red Sea is over, my daughter! You and your companions have had your years of wandering in the desert. Rejoice, for God has shortened your sojourn and after four years of trial, of waiting and longing, he is opening the gates of the Promised Land of religious life to which you aspire" (Doc. XXVII, p. 571). These two pieces of evidence, which are doubtless well-informed, throw into relief the long time of waiting before 1818, before beginning to live the common life with her companions, and then the *aspiration* of the Foundress, as a religious.

The letter of Fr. Coindre reached the Servant of God on the 10th February 1823, and she immediately began to prepare for the first ceremony of profession, which was to take place at Monistrol (cf. *infra*, 1), organising the religious in groups, in order not to disturb the order of the different houses. Of the five ceremonies which took place that year, the first two concern the Servant of God in a special way.

On the 17th February, Claudine Thevenet confided the care of the house of Lyon to M. St. Andrew, and departed for Monistrol in the company of M. St. Xavier and the three postulants prepared for clothing, together with M. St. Simon and M. St. Peter and M. St. Bruno who lived there. The Superior of Belleville, Mother St. Borgia came from there. On the 21st, all the candidates for the first ceremony had arrived at Monistrol. On the 22nd they began their retreat, directed by Fr. Coindre, and on the 25th, they made their religious profession with the customary solemnity (cf. *infra*, 1); on the 16th March it was the turn of M. St. Andrew and M. St. Stanislaus who came from Lyon and M. St. Gonzaga who came from Belleville (cf. *infra*, 2).

We now introduce briefly the religious named above:

M. St. Andrew (cf. Doc. XXI, p. 434).

M. St. Xavier, Jeanne Pierrette Chipier, daughter of Michel and Jeanne Marie Coton, was born in Lyon on the 4th January, 1795. She entered the Congregation on the 20th October, 1818, made profession on the 25th February, 1823, was Superioress of the *Providence* and Assistant General. She died on the 2nd September, 1828 (cf. Doc. XVII, p. 336).

M. St. Simon, Agathe Daval, daughter of Antoine and Claudine Giraudier, was born in Saint-Jean Lavestre (Haute-Loire) on the 11th February, 1798. She entered the Congregation on the 1st June, 1822, received the habit on the 26th February, 1823, and was professed on the 1st November 1825. She died on the 31st December, 1847.

M. St. Peter, Marie Antoinette Bedor, daughter of Benoit and Anne Benoite Fougier, was born in Lyon on the 27th May, 1765. She contracted a marriage with Jacques Dioque, and on the 10th December 1820 she became a widow. She entered the Congregation on the 22nd September, 1822, made her profession on the 25th February, 1823, and held the (Congregation on the 14th August, 1826, after holding important posts. She died on the 5th April, 1848 (cf. Doc. XV, 4 & 5, pp. 267-269).

M. St. Bruno, Catherine Jubeau, daughter of Jean and Marguerite Defoy, was born in Lyon on the 28th October, 1803. She entered the Congregation on the 22nd December, 1818, made her profession on the 25th February, 1823 and she always held important offices. She died, Provincial Superioress of India, on the 12th March, 1877.

M. St. Borgia, Françoise Blanc, daughter of Andre and Françoise Benoit, was born in Lyon on the 26th June, 1782. She married Gabriel Ferrand on the 20th November, 1805, and became a widow on the 27th September, 1810. She entered the Congregation on the 5th October, 1818, made her profession on the 25th February, 1823, being at the time Superioress of the house of Belleville. She died when she was Superior of Le Puy on the 21st September, 1835 (cf. Doc. XXVII, *Histoire*, p. 613).

M. St. Stanislaus, Jeanne Marie Planu, daughter of Marie Claude and Françoise Bertrand, was born in Lyon on the 6th February, 1793. She entered the Congregation on the 20th October, 1818, made her profession on the 16th March, 1823 and died on the 21st January, 1869 (cf. Doc. XXIII, *intr.* p. 454).

M. St. Gonzaga, Susanne Chardon, the daughter of Antoine Balthazar and Catherine Marie Barre, was born in Messimy (Ain) on the 11th October, 1801. She entered the Congregation on the 27th July, 1820, made her profession on the 16th March, 1823, and died on the 30th January, 1836, after holding the office of Mistress of Novices in Lyon and Superioress of Le Puy (cf. Doc. XV, 2, p. 266).

The documents from which we have copied form part of Register I of the Congregation, begun by Fr. Coindre in Monistrol on the 10th October 1822.

a) *The manuscript.* This is an exercise book of 22 pages, 21 cm X 32 cm, of which the 18 central pages are completely written on, 11 in the hand of Fr. Coindre, the remaining pages by some unidentified secretary. The title written on the first page, a note in the margins of the third page and of the last page are in the hand of Fr. Pousset, doubtless written in 1843 (cf. Doc. XVI, *intr.*, pp. 272-274, and *Appendix*, p. 292).

b) *The contents.* The title which appears on the first page, after the address "House of Le Puy (Haute-Loire)", indicates the contents: "Register

containing the deliberations relative to clothing, professions, elections, appointments and other subjects. Commenced on the 10th October, 1822, and closed on the 13th November, 1827."

1

Ceremony of first profession: 25 th February, 1823.

We, the undersigned, Sr. St. Ignatius, legitimate daughter of Philibert Thevenet and Marie Antoinette Guyot, living in the parish of St. Nizier, Lyon, aged forty-eight years; and Sr. Francis Borgia, Francoise Blanc, widow Ferrand, legitimate daughter of Andre Blanc and Francoise Benoit, of the parish of St. Pierre, Lyon, aged forty years; and Marie Antoinette Bedor, widow Dioque, Sr. St. Peter, legitimate daughter of Benoit Bedor and Anne Fougier, of the parish of St. Pierre, Lyon, aged fifty-seven years; and Sr. Xavier, legitimate daughter of Michel Chippier and Jeanne Marie Coton, of Lyon, parish of St. Francois, aged 28 years, and Sr. St. Bruno, legitimate daughter of Jean Jubeau and Marguerite de Fois, of the parish of St. Pierre, Lyon, aged 20 years, state solemnly and certify that by the grace of God, we have today¹ the twenty fifth of February in the year eighteen hundred and twenty three, voluntarily and freely made profession into the hands of our Rev. Father M. Coindre, the Superior named by Mgr Louis-Siffren- Joseph de Foncrose de Salamon, bishop of Saint-Flour, in the chapel of the missionaries of the diocese of Le Puy, after being tested in our house in Lyon for several years, and having practised the exercises and kept the Rules of the Congregation of the Sisters of the Heart of Jesus and Mary. This profession was made by the simple vows of poverty, chastity and perpetual obedience and of stability in the said Congregation, according to the Rule of St. Augustine and the constitutions of the Sisters of the Heart of Jesus and Mary in the presence of Fr. Romain Montagnac, missionary priest, rector of the minor seminary, of Fr. Francois Vincent Coindre, chaplain of their Providence of Fourviere, of Fr. Benoit, missionary priest, of Fr. Loual, of Fr. Montagnac junior, priest director of the minor seminary

¹ There is a word crossed out and the word "vingt" (20) is repeated.

of Monistrol, of Brothers Augustin, Bail lie Win v, Bernard, I LHH->I . and of Sisters Blandine, Angele, St. Jean and St. Simon, in witm whereof we have all signed this present deed on the aforesaid div

Soeur Ignace, nee Thevenet; Sr. Borgia, nee Blanc; Soeur St. Pierre, nee Bedor; Soeur [St] Xavier, nee Chippier; Sr [St] Bruno, IUV Jubeau; Coindre, Superior; Coindre; R. Montagnac, priest.

2

Second ceremony of profession: 16th March 1823

We, the undersigned, Sister Andrew, nee Victoire Ramier, legitimate daughter of M. Abraham Ramier and his wife Marianne Ribaud, of the parish of St. Pierre, Lyon, aged twenty-seven years, and Sister Stanislaus, nee Jeanne Marie Planu, legitimate daughter of Claude Planut and his wife Francoise Bertrand, of the parish of St. Nizier, Lyon, aged thirty years; and Sister Gonzaga, nee Suzanne Chardon, legitimate daughter of Mr. Antoine Balthazard Chardon and his wife Catherine Barri, of the parish of Messimi, dept. of Ain, aged twenty-two years, pledge our word and certify that, by the grace of God, after taking the habit of the Sisters of the Congregation of the Hearts of Jesus and Mary and having been tested for three years in the houses of Lyon and of Belleville, during which time we practised the exercises of piety and kept the Rules of the said Congregation, have made profession today, the sixteenth of March in the year eighteen hundred and twenty-three, voluntarily and freely, into the hands of our Superior, Fr. Coindre, Superior of the Missionaries, in the chapel of the Missionaries of the Heart of Jesus of Monistrol, making the simple vows of poverty, chastity, and perpetual obedience, and of stability in the Congregation according to its rules and constitutions, in the presence of the Sisters mentioned above and of Madame St. Peter, Mother Superior of the establishment of Monistrol and of Madame St. Bruno, in witness whereof we have signed this present deed the same day.

Mother St Pierre; Mother [St] Bruno; Sr. Andre nee Ramier; Sister [St] Stanislaus, nee Planu; Sister Gonzaga, nee Chardon; Father Coindre, Superior.