

DOC. XII

OF THE FIRST CANONICAL ELECTION of the Superiors of the Congregation, 1823. — *Excerpt from the original text of Register I preserved in A. G. Roma.*

From the foundation of the Association of the Sacred Heart, in 1816, Claudine was unanimously elected President, in the first, as in all the successive elections, carried out according to the Rule (Doc. IV, 2, p. 88).

Likewise, in 1818, while she was still president, when Fr. Coindre placed her at the head of the religious community established in Pierres Plantees, she was again unanimously accepted as Superioress (Doc. XXVII, *Histoire*, p. 545).

In 1821, the Servant of God wanted to give up the presidency of the Association, considering it incompatible with her charge as Superioress of the Congregation which was beginning to expand, but in the election of that year she was, on the contrary, confirmed in the office, for life (Doc. IV, 2, 48b, p. 143; 49f, p. 147).

On the day after the religious profession of the Servant of God and her first companions (Doc. XI, p. 250) on the 26th February, 1823, they proceeded officially at Monistrol, to the election of the Superioress General of the new Institute, according to the customary canonical form, summarily described in the document which we present. The five newly professed religious, united in Chapter, under the presidency of Fr. Coindre, cast their vote, and the scrutiny resulted as was logical: Claudine Thevenet, in religion M. St. Ignatius, was elected Superioress General, an office which she had exercised from the very beginning of the Congregation. The election of three Assistants General followed immediately, and Mother St. Ignatius, in virtue of her office, officially named the Superioresses of the houses of Belleville and Monistrol (cf. *infra*, 1).

After a few days, the Servant of God returned to Lyon and, as when she was leaving, went and prostrated herself at the feet of Our Lady of Fourviere to thank her and ask for her blessing on the growing religious family. She then took the necessary steps to send Mothers St. Andrew and St. Stanislaus from the community of Fourviere, and M. St. Gonzaga from the house of Belleville, to Monistrol, so that they would be able to prepare for their profession on the 16th March.

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Report of the first election of the Superioress General of the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, and of her Assistants, 26th February, 1823.

This document is written by Fr. Coindre himself, who began the first Register of the Congregation (Doc. XI, *intr.*, p. 251), and he signed it, adding

to his name the title of Superior. He wrote that all the religious who had the right to vote had united in Chapter, namely the five who had made profession the previous day, and that, after their votes had been collected and counted, the result was that M. St. Ignatius was elected Superioress General of the Congregation. In virtue of the power given him by the bishop of Saint-Flour, Fr. Coindre confirmed the election and appointment of the Servant of God, and all the religious made their act of submission, kissing her hand. At the same session they proceeded by secret ballot, to elect three Assistants general.

It is noteworthy that all the Capitular religious, including the Superioress General, signed their name preceded by the word "Sister", whole or abbreviated, and that afterwards M. St. Ignatius signed again, placing before her name the title of "Mother".

In the year eighteen hundred and twenty-three on the twenty-sixth of February, we the Superior of the Ladies of the Heart of Jesus and Mary, whose signatures appear below, assembled in Chapter all the sisters who have the right to vote and, after collecting the votes of Mothers St. Ignatius, Borgia, St. Peter, Xavier, Bruno, and counting them, we found that Mme St. Ignatius was elected Superioress General of the Congregation.

In virtue of the power which has been confided to us, we have confirmed this election and all the sisters have been admitted to acknowledge her and have kissed her hand.

After this we proceeded by secret ballot to the election of three Assistants General, and Mme St. Peter, Mme Borgia, Mme Xavier were elected for that office.

Afterwards, Madame Superioress General named Mme St. Peter as Superioress of the house of Monistrol, and Mme Borgia as Superioress of the house of Belleville, in witness whereof we have signed the present document.

Coindre Sup.

Sister Ignatius, nee Thevenet
Sister St. Peter, nee Bedor
Sr. Bruno, nee Jubeau

Sr. Borgia, nee Blanc
Sr. Xavier, nee Chipier
Mother St. Ignatius, nee Thevenet

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Report of the election of M. St. Andrew, first Assistant General, 16th March 1823.

Mother St. Ignatius, in organising the first ceremony, chose for profession those religious whom she considered best prepared, either on

