

asleep in the arms of the Lord, surrounded by the most devoted care bestowed on her with a truly sincere affection. Two days before she died, Sister Bernard who was one of those who attended her most assiduously, as also did Sister St Marguerite, asked her after Communion if God had spoken to her in her heart. She replied: "Yes, my daughter, He said to me 'It is I, fear not'."

DOC. XXII

SCATTERED NOTES on the Servant of God from the year 1843 to about the year 1850. — *From Documents mentioned below.*

We have seen that, on the occasion of the last illness and death of the Foundress, the feelings of affection and admiration which the religious, the pupils, her family and all who knew her fell towards her were manifested.

Now we present here some pieces of evidence of the reputation of sanctity of the Servant of God, before the year 1854, the year in which the *Memorial* was probably finished. This contains the oldest biography of the Servant of God which has come down to us (Doe. XXIII, p. 454).

The information that we have proves that the spirituality of the Servant of God was based principally on the hidden life. In her family her reserve and her tendency to remain hidden, to disappear, were already well known, as was testified by her Carmelite great-niece, Sister Julie of Jesus (cf. *Informative Process*, pages 58'-68'). And so we see her advance in this form of asceticism both when she was President of the Association (Doc. IV, 2, p. 87), and in the rest of her religious life (Doc. XXV, 2, p. 486).

This same love of obscurity was imitated afterwards by the Superiors of the Congregation (*infra*, 1, 2), and this in itself provides a reason for the scarcity of laudatory documents and historical-biographical information. On the other hand, we know that some documents disappeared following the Revolution and the dispersion of the Community in 1848, and the expulsion in 1902.

It seems that there was no thought of writing any biographical notes until about 1850, when fifteen years had already elapsed since the death of the Servant of God, and even then, they were only composed in a very simple fashion, without consulting any archives, just by collecting whatever people remembered. Only in 1878 did they ask for information from her family (Doc. XXV, 2, p. 484), and about 1890 they began to prepare the *Histoire*, which was published in 1896 — a work compiled with the greatest accuracy (Doc. XXVII, *intr.*). Only in 1925, more than eighty years after the death of the

Foundress, when all the eye-witnesses had disappeared, was a methodical work of historical research undertaken.

It should be noted that six French religious succeeded one another in the Government of the Congregation. The Servant of God was succeeded by three religious who had lived with her and two who had entered the Congregation only a short while after her death in 1844 and 1850 respectively, and it was the first Superioress General who was not French, namely Mother St. Clare, who was English, who took the decision to initiate and carry forward steps for the Process of Beatification and Canonization of the Servant of God.

1

The Congregation of Jesus and Mary opposed to publishing information regarding deceased religious. — From the commentary taken from the periodical "Echo de Fourviere" Lyon, 18th February 1899, p. 83.

The tendency of the Servant of God towards the hidden life was imitated by the first generation of religious who considered publicity as contrary to the customs of the foundresses. This is shown in the following extract from the obituary of M. St. Nizier.

OBITUARY

It seems that it is contrary to all the traditions of the Religious of Jesus and Mary to write even a word of praise about those whom God has called to Himself. Like humble violets on the holy Hill, they are happy to live in the presence of the Master and His Mother, and when they die they await only the words, *Intra in gaudium domini tui*, welcoming good workers on the threshold of Paradise.

Nevertheless, it is difficult not to make known the pious death of Mother St. Nizier, nee Terrasse, Superioress of the Religious of Jesus and Mary, Fourviere, at least in order to obtain prayers for her. This good Mother was very well known. During the twenty-three years that she was Superioress in the house for the retired, where ladies of our good families of Lyon live, near to God, she had to deal with so many people, and it was sufficient to have met her to carry away a lasting memory of her kindly welcome.

A pupil of the Religious of Jesus and Mary in Le Puy, she entered the Novitiate when she had finished her education. The voice of her Superioress General, a voice which found a most joyful echo in her soul, called her to go and carry the love of Jesus and Mary to a distant

land. It was 1856. The Canadian Mission had only been in existence for two years. The young novice left for that Mission and she experienced all the difficulties of a remote foundation. When, on receiving a new order, she had to leave the field which she had cultivated with such complete success, she went away leaving half her heart behind her.

2

The General Council of the Congregation declares that it is against publishing biographies, because it desires to remain faithful to tradition. 21st September 1899. — From the original preserved in A. G. Roma.

The Director of the periodical *Echo de Fourviere* having requested authorisation to publish a brief biographical profile of M. St. Paul, Assistant General, who died on the 19th September 1899, the question was considered by the General Council. The reply preserved in the minutes of the meeting is as follows:

Our Reverend Mother wanted to know the opinion of the General Councillors about printing a biographical account, prepared by the Chaplain, at the request of the Chief Editor of *Echo de Fourviere* about our dear and much regretted Mother St. Paul, Assistant General.

However much esteem we may have for this saintly Mother, whatever admiration we have for her virtues and her perfect spirit of self-sacrifice, we all think that it is better for us to preserve the customs which our first Mothers left us, and not to surrender to publicity the memories of our Mothers and Sisters.

Marie St. Cyrille, Sup. Gen. Marie Aloisia, Sec. Gen.
Mie. St. Liguori, Econ. Gen. For Mother St. Joachim C.G.
Marie Aloisia

3

Extracts from two letters of M. St. Teresa (Marie Claudine Motte), Agra, 1843.

The evidence which we reproduce here has special interest because of the close relationship which the author had with the Servant of God. M. St. Teresa entered the Congregation in 1823; she had lived for fourteen years with the Foundress who, with her gift of clear discernment, was not slow to

discover the excellent qualities of the young religious, to whom she gave a solid formation (Doc. XXVI, 2, n, 6, p. 495), foreseeing that she would eventually govern the Congregation, as happened in 1857.

M. St. Teresa, who is one of the most distinguished figures of the Congregation, faithfully preserved the memory of the virtues of the Foundress; of this there is undoubted proof, notwithstanding the circumstances which have contributed to the loss of documents. Here, in brief, is the evidence coming from M. St. Teresa:

a) Extract from a letter dated 21st September 1843.

b) Extract from a letter dated 21st October 1843.

Although these two letters say very little, nevertheless they prove that the memory of the Servant of God was habitually present to her. Moreover we believe that it is opportune to publish them because they are the oldest pieces of evidence that have been preserved (*infra*, a, b).

c) Her diligence to have a portrait of the Servant of God painted in India, and one in Lyon which was destined for the province of Canada, in 1843 and 1856 respectively. These portraits are still preserved today. The first was painted on ivory by Mother St. Paul (Julie Ferrand), the second is a painting executed in oils on canvas, life size, done by Elisabeth Mayet, niece of the Servant of God, who also painted the one which was always in the place of honour in the house in Lyon and which was taken to Rome in 1902 when the religious had to leave the houses in France. The portrait in Canada, which is preserved in the Provincial House of Sillery, Quebec, has the inscription on the back "Eth Mayet, 1856 June".

d) During the Generalate of M. St. Teresa, they began or intensified the first historical work on the Congregation. In fact one of the pieces of information that have been preserved, perhaps the most important one, bears corrections made in her own handwriting between 1854 and 1859 (Doc. XXIII, p. 454) and probably the information published by Badiche (Doc. XXIV, p. 479) came from her.

e) Arrangements made regarding the tomb of the Servant of God (cf *Informative Process* p. 262^v).

a)

Extract from a letter of M. St. Teresa to M. St. Andrew, Agra, 21st September 1843. — From the copy preserved in A. G. Roma.

M. St. Teresa gives the Superioress General an account of her recovery from a long and serious illness, and of the dispatch, on the part of Mons. Borghi, of the Approbation of the Rules. We find the memory of the Servant of God present in the many and varied items of news of the Mission and of its fruitful apostolic harvest.

We reproduce only the fragment which refers to her.

Our dear little Indians always give us great satisfaction. Several are beginning to know how to sew very well. How I would like to have a much greater number. These poor children, as I have told you, are as capable of becoming good as our children in Europe are. The good God took one of them last month. I feel sure that our holy Father Founder and our Mother Foundress, as well as the Community of Jesus and Mary in heaven, must have given her a great welcome and undoubtedly they must have presented her to God as the first fruit of our Indian Mission. This poor little one was taken from us within a few hours by the cholera. During the last two months, cholera has wrought great havoc.

b)

Extract from a letter of M. St. Teresa to M. St. Andrew, Agra, 21st October 1843 — From the original preserved in A. G. Roma.

The letter begins with the good news that the house of Agra bears the names of Jesus and Mary. Then M. St. Teresa goes on to speak of Mgr Borghi, who on the 6th had begun the pastoral visitation, following an itinerary which will take him to Calcutta where he will embark for Italy, and he will also go to France, where he hopes to find missionaries — priests and sisters.

Before going into detail about the consoling fruits of the Apostolate, in the part which we reproduce she gives the news of the Clothing of a postulant to whom she has given the name "of our Mother Foundress". After a short time this religious died and M. St. Teresa gave the name again to another Novice.

I have to announce a new daughter to you. Before his departure, our good Bishop Borghi gave the Habit to Miss Murphy, our Postulant from Calcutta. We gave her the name of our Rev. Mother Foundress. I hope that she will be a worthy member of our dear Congregation. She is very much like our dear M. Ste Marie, her health is perhaps still more delicate. She writes to you, as well as to the Novices.

4

Extract from a poem of M. St. Jean, entitled 'To the Memory of M. St. Ignatius, our venerated Mother Foundress' (1850). — From the copy preserved in A. G. Roma.

M. St. Jean, Josephine Limozin, was the daughter of Marie Francois and of Catherine Louise Rocher-des-Champs. She was born in Sauge (Aveyron) on the 23rd October 1810. She made her Profession on the 8th December 1834, in Lyon, where she died on the 17th December 1893. She had lived five years with the Servant of God, and even though she had lost her sight towards the end of her life, she was always ready to compose poetry and songs for the special occasions of feasts of the Community, until a very advanced age. We are unable to establish the exact date when she wrote this poem, of which we are reproducing only a part, because the copies preserved (some of which bear the name of the author, though this is not usual) are without a date. We have put it in the year 1850 because it seems that she must have written it before the foundation of the house of Cayrol (Aveyron), where she was Superioress from 1852 to 1864. It should be noted that even though it is not a writing of historical character, it reflects with accuracy the more characteristic traits of the Servant of God, and is one of the best pieces of evidence of the veneration in which she was held by the religious.

To your dear memory, and before your portrait
 It is sweet for me to come and pay you my respects dear Mother.
 I am proud of you, of your noble virtues.
 Obtain for us that our hearts may always be clothed
 With your virile energy, and that, full of tenderness
 They may be like yours: support for the young,
 Counsel for those who have reached maturity, and a prop for the
 aged.
 Watch over your children like a Guardian Angel.
 I see a halo surrounding your venerated forehead,
 A halo that the Church could with a single word show to all
 To see, but your humility is pleased to remain in silence and truth.
 It is God's secret. Hide yourself in His face.
 Your name is written there. Let nothing efface it.
 Keep your crown hidden in God and rest in His Heart.
 That hope sustains us and makes us happy.
 I see at his sides the valiant throng
 Of those attracted by love of sacrifice.
 And I am justly proud to have such ancestors
 Unknown here below, but known in heaven.