

I — History of the Cause

Eighty-nine years elapsed between the death of the Servant of God Mother Mary St. Ignatius (3rd February 1837) and the first session of the Informative Process (16th October 1926) relative to her beatification and canonisation. This remarkable delay, even though it is common in Historical Causes, needs some explanation. Above all one needs to recognize that the life of the Servant of God was neither enriched by sudden illuminating graces nor by extraordinary actions. In addition, her work as Foundress remained, during her life, geographically limited to the two departments of Rhone and Haute-Loire, and definitively organized in four communities (two of which, Belleville 1821-35, and Monistrol 1823-26, were closed after a few years) and had not such immediate or resounding success as to attract the attention and admiration of her contemporaries. One must also add that Mother Mary St. Ignatius was always personally not only a great lover of the saying *Love to be unknown and counted as nothing*, but she so impressed this tendency towards silence and self-effacement on the spirituality of her Congregation, that the religious refrained entirely from giving any publicity to the example and virtues of their Sisters, justifying this attitude by appealing to a traditional line of spirituality which went back to their Foundress herself. Even in 1899 the Superioress General of the Congregation would not allow the publication of brief biographical accounts of a religious who died in the odour of sanctity, because: "It is better for us to preserve the customs which our first Mothers left us, and not give publicity to the memories of our Mothers and Sisters." (Doc. XXII, 2, p. 450).

This mentality and this reserve of the Congregation of Jesus and Mary, undoubtedly somewhat excessive, explain in some way the lack of a contemporary biography of the Servant of God, and also the delay in beginning preparatory work in view of a possible glorification.

However, the memory of the Foundress was always held in veneration within the Congregation, and the memory of her virtues remained a stimulus to imitate her and an encouragement to continue the work she had begun, as is documented in the third part of the *Positio*. Already in 1854 a *Memorial* was compiled on the history of the Congregation, with short biographical accounts of the Foundress (Doc. XXIII, p. 454). From 1867, a collection was begun of notes, anecdotes and biographical reminiscences, doubtless with a view to

preparing a biography, or keeping alive among the Sisters who had not had the good fortune to know her, the memory and example of the Servant of God (Doc. XXVI, p. 492). In the years that followed, historical facts and spiritual memories were collected until in 1896 the *Histoire de la Congregation*, containing the testimonies, more or less direct, of 56 religious who had lived for some time with our Mother Foundress, was published in Lyon (Doc. XXVII, p. 521). It is quite certain that this publication contributed much to deepening the knowledge of the virtues of the Servant of God and to spreading admiration for her life and work. However, twenty more years elapsed before serious thought was given to the possibility of commencing the process of beatification, but little by little the way was being prepared.

As we know from the registers kept in the archives of the Congregation, in the General Chapter celebrated in Rome in 1908, in various sessions, the virtues of the first Mothers of the Congregation were spoken of, with special insistence on the example of the Foundress. The same subject was discussed in the Chapter of 1913, and this time, as in the following Chapter of 1919, the Capitulars discussed whether it was opportune to take the initial steps necessary for the institution of the Diocesan Process. However, no concrete decision was taken about it.

By this time the wider and deeper knowledge of the virtues of the Servant of God, both within and outside the Congregation, made the superiors understand that there was a valid and solid basis for promoting the Cause of Beatification. It was decided to do so in 1923. Fr. Louis Copere, a Marist, was appointed Postulator. Whilst the necessary documentation was being built up, a new General Chapter, that of 1925, was celebrated, and two very important decisions were taken regarding the Cause:

1. Mother Eufemia (Rosa Mandri) was appointed to help the Postulator, in order to speed up the preparatory work for the Process.
2. The request was made for the necessary permissions to transfer the mortal remains of the Servant of God from Lyon to Rome.

The second proposal was not accepted, and the body remained in the cemetery of Lyon.

On the 11th February 1926, the Postulator of the Cause appointed a vice-postulator, Fr. Pietro Pitre, who in his turn, on the 11th October of the same year, presented to Cardinal Maurin, Archbishop of Lyon,

the request for the institution of the Informative Process. On the 14th October 1926, the Cardinal issued the relative rescript (c.f. *Public Copy*, pp. 7-10), and the Process was formally opened on the 16th October. It ended on the 7th September 1928, and was delivered to the Sacred Congregation by the new Postulator Fr. Carlo Miccinelli S.J. The Process was opened on the 20th November that same year.

In the following month of May, 1929, the lawyer, L. Toeschi, after having examined the *Public Copy*, said that it was necessary to complete the information and strengthen it with other documentary evidence. Consequently, on the 25th October, 1930, the Sacred Congregation authorized an Additional Process. This took place in Lyon from the 24th November 1930 to the 30th June 1933. Four Rogatory Processes, held respectively in Barcelona (1st to 13th December 1930), Madrid (22nd to the 26th December, 1930), Valencia (30th March to the 14th April, 1931), and Buenos Aires (1931), were included in it, as well as fifteen written reports and a list of 106 favours attributed to the intercession of the Servant of God.

In the meantime, to be exact, on the 6th February 1930, the Supreme Pontiff published the *Motu Proprio Gia da Qualche Tempo*, by which he instituted the Historical Section, and the Cause of the Servant of God, Mother Mary St. Ignatius, had now to be dealt with according to the norms of the aforesaid *Motu Proprio*.

II — The Work of the Historical Section

The Informative Process of Lyon was opened by the Sacred Congregation of Rites on the 30th October 1933, and the preparation of the *Positio Super Introductione Causae et Virtutibus* was entrusted to the Historical Section. On the 1st October, 1935, the Postulator, Fr. Miccinelli, presented the *Copia Publico* to Fr. Ferdinando Antonelli, the Relator General who succeeded Dom. Enrico Quentin (14th February 1935) and who is today the Secretary of the Sacred Congregation.

Mother Eufemia, principal collaborator of the Historical Section of the Cause, died in Rome on the 18th April, 1936. That same year saw the beginning of the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939), and then came the Second World War (1939-1945). These events had a notable influence on the progress of the preparatory studies. The Holy Office granted the

nihil obst at for the introduction of the Cause on November 12th, 1940.

Before commencing the writing of the *Positio*, the documentation that had been collected, and which was in the possession of the Historical Section, was examined by two Historical Consultors. They recognized that the documents were insufficient, but that they offered a good foundation on which the *Positio* could be drawn up, in case new historical research and re-examination of the documentation collected for the Cause should clarify some points less well known, or insufficiently documented. Therefore it was necessary to carry out more research in archives. This work was entrusted to Fr. Bernardino Llorca, S.J., professor of Church History at the Pontifical University of Salamanca, who succeeded in completing the documentation with some important pieces of work. But his own work at the University did not leave him time to follow the work up with sufficient regularity. Fortunately in 1960 the Historical Section was able to give him, as collaborator, Mother Gabriela Maria (Clotilde Montesinos), a religious of Jesus and Mary who, having been occupied for several years with the study of the history of the Congregation, had a good knowledge of the documentation, both literary and in archives.

Towards the end of 1961 a first outline of work was presented. Mgr Amato Pietro Frutaz, Relator General from the 21st November 1959, and at present Under-Secretary for the Causes of Saints, did not find it completely satisfactory, and, under the direction of the Historical Section, Mother Gabriela Maria undertook more research in the archives of Lyon, Monistrol, Belleville, Le Puy and Rome, through which she succeeded in enriching the documentation in a notable way, thanks to the efficient collaboration of Rene Lecour, Director of the Departmental Archives of Rhone, of Henri Hours, Archivist of the Municipality of Lyon, and of Fr. J. Permezal, Superior of the "Institution des Chartreux". At the same time, other specialists studied particular problems, such as Canon J. Jomand, Archivist of the Archdiocese of Lyon, who worked on questions regarding the relations of the Servant of God with the Sisters of St. Joseph, and Dom. Mario Pinzuti, Director of the Institute for the Restoration of Books, who applied his calligraphic expertise to the Registers of the Congregation, which were among the principal sources of corroboration, indicating the historical situation of some facts, and resolving certain specific difficulties.

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While the work Oi research mentioned above was being carried out the mortal remains of Ilie Servant of God were transferred from the public cemetery to a place near the apse of the chapel of the Mother House of Fourviere, on the 4th and 5th July, 1963, under the presidency of Cardinal Gerlier, Archbishop of Lyon (fl 7.1.1965). At the same time the Process *De non Cultu* was instituted, and was opened on the 10th September, 1964.

The scarcity of documentation stimulated a microscopic research, as is well illustrated by the following catalogue of archives consulted, and by the bibliography quoted as occasion arises.

Casting the eye over the list, it can be seen immediately what was the result of the research. Positive results are indicated in two ways. If the Roman numeral of the document is preceded by an asterisk, this indicates that in the archives in question useful elements for the preparation of the critical introductions were found, and if the Roman numeral of the Document is not preceded by an asterisk, this indicates that one or more documents of those archives are reproduced here.

BELLEVILLE (Rhône)

Municipal Archives: * IX.

Parish Archives: * IX.

LE BLANC (Indre)

Archives of the Parish of St. Genitour: XVIII.

BLOIS (Loir-et-Cher)

Episcopal Archives: Negative result.

BOURG (Ain)

Departmental Archives: * I.

BOURGES (Cher)

Departmental Archives: * XVIII.

BUZANCAIS (Indre)

Parish Archives: * XVIII.

VATICAN CITY

Archives of the S. Congregation for Religious: * IV, XIX, * XVII.

Archives of the S. Congregation of Rites: V, VII, XVI.

Archives of the S. Congregation of Prop. Fide: XVI, * XIX, * XXVII.

Archives of the S. Congregation of the Council: nothing
Secret Archives of the Vatican: Nunciature of Paris: * IV, * XVI,

* XXVII. *Rescripts S.C. of Indulgences: XVI*

*Registers of nuns: * XIX.*

*Napoleonic Period, France: * III, * XVI.*

*Library: * XIX.*

CHENAUD (Dordogne)

Archives of the family Montariol-Laporte: * IX.

GAP (Hautes-Alpes)

Episcopal Archives: * XXVII.

GRENOBLE (Isere)

Episcopal Archives: negative result.

LAUZON (Canada)

Archives of the Congregation of Jesus and Mary: XXVII.

LYON (Rhône)

Archiepiscopal archives: * I, IX, X, XI, XIV, XVI, * XVIII, XIX, XX, XXVII.

Departmental archives: I, II, * VI, VII, IX, X, XVI, XXVII.

Municipal archives: VI, VII, XX, XXVII.

Archives of the Propagation of the Faith: * V, * VII, * XVI.

Archives of the 'Missionaires des Chartreux': III, * IV, XVI, * XVII, XXVI, * XXVII.

Archives of the Notary Guinad: IX.

Archives of the parish of St. Bruno: III, * IV, * VI.

Archives of the Institute of the Sisters of St. Joseph: III, IX.

Archives of the "Dominican Fathers": * V, * VII, * XVI, XXIX.

Archives of the Mayet family: XXV.

MONISTROL (Haute-Loire)

Municipal Archives: * X, XV.

Archives of the parish: negative result.

PARIS

Archives of the Mayet family: I, II, * VII.

Archives of the Ministry of War: * XXVII.

National Archives: * III, * XIV, XV, * XVI, * XVIII, XXVII.

PRISSAC (Indre)

Parish Archives: * XVIII.

LE PUY (Haute-Loire)

Episcopal archives: negative result.

Archives of the parish church of Our Lady of Mount Carmel:
* XVI.

Departmental archives: XI, * XV, XVI.

Municipal archives: * XXVII.

ROME

General archives of the Congregation of Jesus and Mary: IV, VII, IX, X, XI, XII, XIII, XIV, XV, XVI, XVII, XVIII, XIX, XX, XXI, XXII, XXIII, XXIV, XXV, XXVI, XXVII, XXVIII, XXIX, XXX.

General archives of the Society of Jesus: XVIII.

General archives of the Brothers of the Sacred Heart: * IV, VIII, * XIV, XVI, * XVII, * XIX, * XXVI, * XXVII.

General archives of the Society of Mary: IX, * XXV.

SAINT-AMAND (Cher)

Parish archives: * XVIII.

SAINT-DIE (Vosges)

Episcopal archives: negative result.

VERDUN (Meuse)

Episcopal archives: * XXVII.

YSSINGHAUX (Haute-Loire)

Archives of the Seminary: * X, * XVI.

III - Notes on the documentation

Our documentation is divided into three sections, each of which groups together the historical and biographical information relative to a determined period in the life of the Servant of God. These sections are subdivided into parts which explain by means of documents a particular aspect of the life and reputation of sanctity of the Servant of God. The sequence of the documentation has always been in chronological order of the principal events, especially in the first two periods.

Within the first part are included five documents illustrating the most significant and characteristic points regarding the Servant of God, until the foundation of the Congregation of Jesus and Mary. In fact, Documents I-II (pp. 4-18) present the family milieu, together with the social and political background, which undoubtedly influenced the formation of her strong and unflinching character, and of which we can find traces in the initiatives undertaken by her, and carried into effect. Doc. III (pp. 18-38) describes her first apostolic and charitable good works undertaken in favour of young abandoned children and girls, who were gathered together and helped in the Institute called the *Providence*. This work, which would become one of the specific aims of her life and foundation, becomes a reality in both its spiritual and practical aspects in the Pious Union, the Society or Association of the Sacred Heart (Doc. IV, pp. 38-172), whose nature is perfectly outlined in the *Rule*, and is documented in the *Register* of the Minutes of the ordinary and extraordinary assemblies of the same Association. These are two fundamental documents which give information about the activities of the Servant of God in those years. For this reason they are published for the first time, preceded by a comprehensive introduction, and illustrated by explanatory notes. Finally, much light is thrown on the person of the Servant of God by some evidence of Pauline Marie Jaricot (f 1862) who was first her disciple and then her collaborator (Doc. V, pp. 172-181).

The second part includes 14 documents, which, within the general framework, can be divided into four sections.

In the first section are described the first stages of the new Congregation which began its activity (1818) with the foundation of a new *Providence* situated in *Pierres-Plantees* (Doc. VI). It was soon transferred to *Fourviere* (1820), which became the Mother House (Doc. VII, pp. 186-200). At the same time as these events were taking place the Servant of God was providing for the internal organization of the Institute in collaboration with Fr. Andre Coindre, drawing up the Rules in accordance with the experience gained in the first years of the Institute, and inspired by the Rule of St. Augustine and the Constitutions of St. Ignatius (Doc. VIII, pp. 200-215). Fr. Coindre gave the same Rules to the Brothers of the Sacred Heart, which he founded. Later on this led to a certain confusion about the origin of these Rules, and for whom they were first intended — a confusion

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ROME

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which was eliminated once and for all in 1956 in the course of the preparation of our *Positio*. The accurate researches of our collaborators established with certainty that the first text was not meant for a Congregation of men, but for an Institute of women, and precisely for the Congregation founded by the Servant of God. The discovery is of great value for our *Positio*, and for the history of the Brothers and of the Religious of Jesus and Mary, and therefore we publish the whole text, restoring the primitive feminine form, and annotating the variants which relate to the Brothers.

The geographical expansion of the Congregation of Jesus and Mary outside Lyon is the subject of the second section. The history of the house in Belleville (1821-1835) is reconstructed in Doc. IX, pp. 215-244, from information drawn from the original Registers. We consider that the documentation regarding the diploma of Mistress and Assistant Mistress of a boarding school, obtained by the Servant of God in 1822 at the age of 48 years, is very important. Then after this, in 1823, followed the foundation of Monistrol which lasted only for three years. Finally, with the establishment of the Congregation at Le-Puy-en-Velay in 1825, the principal events of which are referred to in Doc. XV (pp. 263-271), substantially reported from the original registers, the Congregation reached its maximum geographical development during the life of the Foundress, acquired well-deserved renown for its pedagogical methods, and secured numerous and excellent vocations.

There follows, in the third section, another group of five documents which illustrate the internal problems of the Institute. In 1823 came the diocesan approbation (Doc. X, p. 245). Particular solemnity was given to the first professions (Doc. XI, p. 250), as also to the canonical election of the first Superiors (Doc. XII, p. 254). Some particular norms for the good organization of the *Providence* were issued (Doc. XIII, p. 257), and on July 18th 1825, the first Statutes of the Congregation were approved (Doc. XIV, p. 259).

The personality of the Servant of God is studied more directly in the last five documents, which fill almost half of the first part of the *Positio*. The principal questions are these: government (Doc. XVI), legislation (Doc. XIX), correspondence (Doc. XVII), relations with the priest Fr. F. X. Pousset (Doc. XVIII), and death (Doc. XX).

Doc. XVI (pp. 271-333) is fundamental and of a certain complexity. In it we have grouped various passages with the intention

of offering a general view of the activity of the Servant of God as Superioress General, and of making more easily understood the direction of her government, her relations with certain persons who influenced the life of the new Congregation, her assiduous and active co-operation in the internal life of the communities and in the expansion of the Institute. Among the historical sources from which we have drawn for this reconstruction, *Register III* stands out; and precisely because of its importance and because it had been interpreted in different ways which gave rise to confusion and inaccurate conclusions, reflected in the Informative Process, it was the subject of a profound and integrated critical study by an expert calligraphist, carried out in the *Institute for Scientific Restoration of Books*, by its Director Fr. Mario Pinzuti.

Document XVII (pp. 333-363) is devoted entirely to the analysis and publication of the writings of the Servant of God. These are reduced to the sixteen letters which have been preserved, addressed to members of her family. We have divided them into five sections, according to the subject matter. All, except the first (1828), correspond to the last five years of the life of the Servant of God and constitute a good means — although of limited proportions — of penetrating into her spirituality and psychology. It was precisely in those same years as Doc. XVIII (pp. 363-370) explains and illustrates, that she had to support misunderstandings and sufferings inflicted by the chaplain of the Mother House of Fourviere, Francis Xavier Pousset (128th August 1878).

Doc. XIX (pp. 370-420) presents the definitive text of the Constitutions, preceded by a full introduction, in which an attempt has been made to explain their sources and development, and to establish to what point and in what degree, the rules are the work of the Servant of God. In preparing the critical work we have limited ourselves to presenting the parallel passages of the Constitutions of St. Ignatius. This seemed to be necessary in order to document the Ignatian spirituality that the Congregation of Jesus and Mary has always considered as an integral part of the spiritual patrimony transmitted by the Foundress.

Finally Document XX (pp. 421-433) gathers together the information relative to the death and burial of the Servant of God.

In the third part of the documentation we have put together the testimonies relative to the reputation of sanctity of the Servant of God and its continuation up to our own times. The documentation given here can be divided into three periods or stages.

In the first period, from the death of the Servant of God to the end of 1854, it seems that no one was concerned about writing any biographical account; but nevertheless there are preserved some writings which testify to the continual veneration with which she was remembered (Doc. XXII, pp. 448-453).

The second period, from 1854-1878, begins with the composition of a historical narrative on the origins of the Congregation, and into it have been inserted short biographical notes on the Foundress; the *Memorial* remained at that time in manuscript, but it has great value, not only because it was drawn up from accounts of eyewitnesses, but also because its contents were revised and approved by the Religious who had the highest authority at that time, and were contemporaries of the Servant of God: Mothers St. Teresa and St. Pothin (Doc. XXIII, pp. 454-478). To that period belong the report of M. L. Badiche (Doc. XXIV, pp. 479-483) and the testimonies taken from the correspondence of Claude Mayet, S.M., nephew of the Servant of God (Doc. XXV, pp. 483-492).

The third period covers the years from 1878 to 1896, when the Superiors began to collect in a systematic way information which could serve for the compilation of a definitive work. As the first collaborators and contemporaries of the Servant of God gradually disappeared, the desire was felt more keenly to record for ever the memory of her virtues and her teachings; and in this work Mother St. Pothin, Superioress General from 1867 to 1885, played a distinguished part. All these scattered testimonies have been analysed in Doc. XXVI (pp. 492-520).

The fourth and last period goes from 1896 to 1930. Fifty-nine years after the death of the Servant of God came the publication of a full biography, joined to the History of the Congregation (Doc. XXVII, pp. 521-685). This document is of capital importance for the Cause. Therefore, before reproducing the text, enriched with the corresponding critical notes, in the introduction we have attentively developed the usual questions which precede historical criticism and which serve to facilitate its use and evaluate its importance, also

because the historical consultants will have to give a personal and authoritative judgement on the text. The *Histoire*, which gathers together the memories and testimonies of the first generation of religious of Jesus and Mary, outlines in a certain way and with sufficient characteristic traits the personality of the Servant of God. For a judgement on her virtues, chapters VII, XVIII, and XIX, seem to us to have particular importance.

The publication of the *Histoire* made known the person and work of the Servant of God, and aroused ever more interest both within and outside the Congregation (Doc. XXVIII, pp. 685-701), until from 1926 to 1928 the Informative Process was instituted in Lyon (Doc. XXIX, pp. 701-723), and was completed with an Additional Process from 1930 to 1933 (Doc. XXX, pp. 723-750). From the historical point of view these Processes offer nothing interesting or new, and for this reason only some testimonies relative to the continued reputation of sanctity of the Servant of God are given.

IV — Biographical Profile of the Servant of God

In order to appreciate and do justice to the moral portrait of the Servant of God it is necessary to consider the environment and the circumstances of time and place in which she lived.

Claudine Thevenet was born in Lyon of a well-to-do and pious family in 1774, the year of the death of Pope Clement XIV and of King Louis XV, and of the succession to the throne of Louis XVI. Lyon, second in importance among all the cities of France, enjoyed, in the first years of that reign, a period of prosperity and calm.

The spouses Thevenet-Guyot had seven children, of whom Claudine was the second. Gifted with precocious intelligence, great sensitivity and an upright and peace-loving character, she was the favourite of her brothers, and the one from whom they sought protection and support. The little girl lived happily in the heart of a united family, and was the object of care and affection on the part of her parents, uncles and aunts and maternal grandparents.

She was nine years old when her parents suffered a reverse of fortune which obliged them to adopt a more modest life-style. It was probably at that time that she entered the Abbey of St. Pierre as a boarder. These two events undoubtedly made an impression on her through their influence. According to the custom of the time, Claudine

In the third part of the documentation we have put together the testimonies relative to the reputation of sanctity of the Servant of God and its continuation up to our own times. The documentation given here can be divided into three periods or stages.

In the first period, from the death of the Servant of God to the end of 1854, it seems that no one was concerned about writing any biographical account; but nevertheless there are preserved some writings which testify to the continual veneration with which she was remembered (Doc. XXII, pp. 448-453).

The second period, from 1854-1878, begins with the composition of a historical narrative on the origins of the Congregation, and into it have been inserted short biographical notes on the Foundress; the *Memorial* remained at that time in manuscript, but it has great value, not only because it was drawn up from accounts of eyewitnesses, but also because its contents were revised and approved by the Religious who had the highest authority at that time, and were contemporaries of the Servant of God: Mothers St. Teresa and St. Pothin (Doc. XXIII, pp. 454-478). To that period belong the report of M. L. Badiche (Doc. XXIV, pp. 479-483) and the testimonies taken from the correspondence of Claude Mayet, S.M., nephew of the Servant of God (Doc. XXV, pp. 483-492).

The third period covers the years from 1878 to 1896, when the Superiors began to collect in a systematic way information which could serve for the compilation of a definitive work. As the first collaborators and contemporaries of the Servant of God gradually disappeared, the desire was felt more keenly to record for ever the memory of her virtues and her teachings; and in this work Mother St. Pothin, Superioress General from 1867 to 1885, played a distinguished part. All these scattered testimonies have been analysed in Doc. XXVI (pp. 492-520).

The fourth and last period goes from 1896 to 1930. Fifty-nine years after the death of the Servant of God came the publication of a full biography, joined to the History of the Congregation (Doc. XXVII, pp. 521-685). This document is of capital importance for the Cause. Therefore, before reproducing the text, enriched with the corresponding critical notes, in the introduction we have attentively developed the usual questions which precede historical criticism and which serve to facilitate its use and evaluate its importance, also

because the historical consultants will have to give a personal and authoritative judgement on the text. The *Histoire*, which gathers together the memories and testimonies of the first generation of religious of Jesus and Mary, outlines in a certain way and with sufficient characteristic traits the personality of the Servant of God. For a judgement on her virtues, chapters VII, XVIII, and XIX, seem to us to have particular importance.

The publication of the *Histoire* made known the person and work of the Servant of God, and aroused ever more interest both within and outside the Congregation (Doc. XXVIII, pp. 685-701), until from 1926 to 1928 the Informative Process was instituted in Lyon (Doc. XXIX, pp. 701-723), and was completed with an Additional Process from 1930 to 1933 (Doc. XXX, pp. 723-750). From the historical point of view these Processes offer nothing interesting or new, and for this reason only some testimonies relative to the continued reputation of sanctity of the Servant of God are given.

IV — Biographical Profile of the Servant of God

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must have received her First Communion and Confirmation at the age of twelve years, in 1786. On the 9th February her maternal grandfather died; her godfather, Antoine Burdet, had died two years previously. Claudine still remained in the Abbey, but in Lyon the situation began to be difficult on account of the great crisis in the silk manufacture and trade. In spite of this the people remained faithful to their religion and to the monarchy, and public order was not disturbed.

In the winter of 1789 it was extraordinarily cold. The River Rhone froze, and the poor especially suffered from the bitter cold of that cruel winter. In Paris events succeeded one another with great rapidity and while the forerunners of the great revolution were evident in the Capital, in Lyon there were some disturbances, but these were not of a political nature.

In these circumstances, Claudine who was fifteen years old, left the Abbey and returned to her family. The revolution had broken out, with its anti-religious policy: a decree suppressing religious orders, the Civil Constitution of the Clergy, the robbing of churches, the inauguration of the Tree of Liberty, the enthroning of the constitutional Archbishop Lamourette, the protest and "Briefs" of Pius VI and the condemnation of anti-religious measures; the "Reign of Terror" with its horrible crimes, beginning on September 2nd, 1792; the emigration of the clergy; the proclamation of the Republic on the 21st September 1792; and the death of Louis XVI on the scaffold on the 21st January 1793.

During this revolutionary period, the Servant of God passed through a critical stage of her life, from sixteen to twenty years of age, which totally changed not only the direction she had given to her life, but also her physical and moral personality. The most terrible times for Lyon in general and for Claudine in particular, were the two months when the city was under siege. The Servant of God had remained at home alone with her mother; her father had gone to Belley with the four younger children, whilst the two eldest boys were fighting for the defence of the city. When the siege of the city came to an end, reprisals began on those who took part in it; on the 21st December 1793, Louis Guyot, her mother's brother, was put to death and on the following 5th January her two brothers, Louis and Francois, were shot, in the presence of the Servant of God, who was terrified and powerless to do anything, but with the words "I forgive" on her lips.

All these horrifying deeds and her acts of heroism accomplished during the siege of the city and the imprisonment of her brothers, in order to procure some solace for them and for her mother, greatly undermined her health. Until then she had a robust constitution and enjoyed good health. She was tall, with regular features, a lively intelligence, a sensitive nature, and it would seem that she believed she was called to found a Christian home like that of her parents. But the terrible blow she suffered ruined her health for ever, made her lose all interest in the things of this world, allowed her to discover in herself an energy unsuspected until then and stirred up the fire of her charity.

Claudine devoted herself to her parents, to her brother and sisters and to the good of souls, as far as circumstances permitted her. She began in a way that was more or less clandestine, and later when she was able to work more openly, she looked for collaborators who would help her to cope — as far as was possible — with the physical and moral needs of the poor, directing her efforts especially to children and young girls. Later, when they were grouped together to form an Association under the direction of Fr. Coindre she founded a *Providence* for young working girls, embarking at the same time on a life of perfection, and directing her associates towards the same end, and, finally, almost without realising it, she became the foundress of a new religious Congregation, which she governed and edified by her work and example until the last moment of her life.

After her religious profession, which took place on the 25th February, 1823, the Servant of God was elected Superioress General of the young Congregation, which numbered, besides the two houses in Lyon, a house in Belleville and another recently founded in Monistrol. As she had now reached the culminating point of her life and of the mission confided to her by God, this seems a good point at which to study her moral portrait and her spiritual characteristics.

1. *Simplicity.* — The Servant of God was simple always and in everything; she was natural, without artifice, sincere, uncomplicated, unostentatious, and a lover of perfection and beauty. Her spiritual life and the life she put before her religious, was of great evangelical perfection. "A pronounced disposition towards extraordinary things was justly suspect in her opinion; she was far from favouring it, and worked to form her daughters to the simple practice of common duties, accomplished with the greatest possible perfection, entirely to please God." (Doc. XXVII, p. 632).

When she wrote, she did so correctly; her style was good, but it did not exclude that naturalness which revealed her warm heart and supernatural spirit. The Rule puts it this way: "In their correspondence they shall not use affected expressions, worldly assurances of merely natural affection, or ridiculous and exaggerated demonstrations."

From this same point of view, there is a significant contrast between the wording of the Registers of the Congregation kept during her life, and those kept after her death. She advised speaking "with simplicity, rather from sincerity of heart than with a vain search for words" (Rule).

2. *Equilibrium.* — As one advances in the study of the soul of the Servant of God, one is surprised to find oneself confronted with an unsuspected moral greatness which a superficial glance would not have revealed, concealed as it was on the one hand by her simplicity and on the other by her wonderful equilibrium. Those who were accustomed to deal with her expressed their judgement in words such as these: "She has such a good head" (in a letter of her niece Melanie); "She is a capable woman"; thus spoke the Vicar General Barou after a canonical visitation of the community, wishing to express in these words his unreserved admiration for Mother St. Ignatius.

She was docile and ready to follow the voice of God and of ecclesiastical authority, but she would not allow herself to be carried away by the wind of novelties. In this regard, it has been observed that Lyon had become one of the principal hotbeds of the "Petite Eglise", and the most important place for fostering the propagation of the cult of St. Philomena, which at the time of the Servant of God had so many followers among priests and religious communities, but the Servant of God and her community kept on the periphery of these movements.

We think that it is possible to say that, at the centre of that indisputable balance which constitutes one of her most signal characteristics, charity was the dominant virtue of the Servant of God and prudence presided over all her actions.

3. *Fidelity to her vocation.* — There is no doubt that the Lord destined the Servant of God to consecrate her life to works of charity and to found a new religious Congregation, and that she gave herself without reserve. But what characterizes her vocation is the way in which the Lord led her, as it were by stages to the knowledge and

fulfilment of His will. It seems that one can see as it were five steps 01 calls in this spiritual journey of the Servant of God.

a) She believed that she was called to found a model home like that of her own parents. At nineteen years of age, faced with the tragedy of the "Terror" and the death of her brothers, despising the world she gave herself entirely to the Lord, striving in all things to accomplish His will. But the circumstances existing in France obliged her to remain at home, sacrificing herself for her parents, her brother and sisters, and collaborating, as far as she could, in the secret apostolate and cult, b) In 1802, when a certain amount of freedom was allowed for public worship, the Servant of God felt called to a greater secular apostolate, amongst all classes of poor people and those in need, c) The third call, to a life of greater personal perfection, was realized in 1816 when, with her collaborators, she formed an association, d) The fourth stage came when God called her through the mediation of Fr. Coindre; this was the call to leave her home and found a Congregation of religious destined to work for the education of the young of all social classes, and, in Lyon in particular, for the young who were working in the silk trade, e) The fifth stage began in 1823, after her religious profession, when her collaborators elected her to be Superioress General. She accepted the charge as coming from the hand of God, zealously devoting herself until her death, to the government and direction of the works, to her own sanctification and that of the souls entrusted to her, struggling with heroic energy until her last breath to preserve for the Congregation the spirit she believed she had received from God.

4. *Evangelical Spirit.* — The Jesuit theologian Fr. Jose M. Bover, in his introduction to the Spanish translation of the biography of the Servant of God, written in French by Fourier Bonnard, expresses himself in this way: "Looking at the personal sanctity of the Foundress, I was really surprised by the evangelical spirit which informed and inspired her. At a time when the Sacred Sciences, both biblical and theological were so little studied and appreciated, it is marvellous to see that spirituality, so delicate and carefully pondered, so solid and at the same time so sensitive, which can be explained only by the action of the Holy Spirit who directs the souls of his chosen ones in all wisdom and security". (Cf. FOURIER BONNARD, *La vida de la Sierva de Dios M. Maria de San Ignacio*, Barcelona 1947, p. XIII).

5. *Religious Spirit.* — When the Servant of God embraced the religious life in its fullness on making profession in 1823, she had already applied herself for years to living it with the perfection and courage that marked all her works. She was consistent in her conduct, always logical and prudent, so that we never see her showing inconsistency. If occasionally she seemed to give way, it was not so in reality; on such occasions she was practising acts of virtue that we can call extraordinary, such as the abandoning of the *Providence* of St. Bruno or the work of Belleville. "The Foundress Mother St. Ignatius, grew up during a tragic period, in anguish and heroism; serious and silent, she decided 'Never to speak about herself, neither good or ill.'" She was a lover of austere virtues, attached to humility, to poverty, good besides, with that kind of goodness, sensitive to suffering, which is practised by those who have suffered. Never sad, she decided on the contrary, to make the children of whom she took charge, blossom forth. She was affable and gentle towards the poor, to whom she devoted herself with unflinching patience and delicate charity; but when it was a question of religious life, she did not look kindly on caprice and fantasy, or soft and weak sentiment. She herself gave an example of firmness and energy of soul, governing with order and good sense, and maintaining her docility and abandonment to Providence and her sound equilibrium through all the events which went against her." To these observations of Mons. Blanchet, Rector of the *Institut Catholique de Paris*, who some years ago made a study of the life of the Servant of God (cf. AUGUSTE VIATTE, *Histoire de la Congregation de Jesus-Marie*, Quebec 1952, p. 8), one may add as principal traits of her spirituality, her love of silence and of prayer. "The founders of religious orders have so strongly recognized and appreciated its advantages that, although the Rules on their Institutes vary, some being based on mortification, others on poverty, others on zeal, etc., all are united on this point, namely prayer, because without it the spirit of fervour cannot be maintained, nor can any virtue be practised with constancy." (IV, 2 18b).

"Fervour cannot be maintained in religious houses except in so far as silence is observed, and with still greater reason piety cannot continue to exist except in persons who avoid using a great number of words." (*ibidem*, 9b).

So thought and spoke the Servant of God regarding these two points which she esteemed to be of capital importance for religious life.

Finally, we point out her great devotions: to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, and the spirit of St. Ignatius which she made her own, and desired for her Congregation.

The examples of the virtues of the Servant of God, Mother St. Ignatius, and the beneficial effects of the Religious Congregation which she founded have extended through time and space. Today (1966) the religious of the Congregation of Jesus and Mary number 2,500, and there are 210 novices. They are dedicated to the education of youth in 130 houses spread over five continents, with a total of 72,000 pupils.

V. — Doubts put before the Historical Consultors

It does not seem that the documentation of the *Positio*, taken as a whole, presents particular problems of historical criticism. Often, especially in the first two parts, official documents are in question, the authenticity and veracity of which are beyond doubt, apart from a few cases relating to legislation, and these are presented with objective explanations. Unfortunately the same official style of the information deprives the documents of human warmth and that richness and freshness of personal data that a biographer prefers; and in fact, the private and intimate life of the Servant of God frequently remains in obscurity. In order to fill up the gaps and make up for the scarcity of full contemporary biographical accounts, a great deal of research and presentation of particular events was necessary, but always in connection with the central subject of our investigation. The aim of this latter research, which may at times seem too minute and excessively detailed, was precisely to reconstruct without important omissions, the itinerary of the Servant of God, and to throw light, as far as possible, on the historical, social and religious environment in which she carried out her work, and consequently to be able to evaluate better her human personality and her Christian and religious virtues.

The historical and biographical elements scattered in different parts of the documentation are found in systematic order in the *Summarium de vita et virtutibus*. As is customary, this part of the *Positio*, put together with praiseworthy care by Mother Gabriela Maria under the direction of the Historical Section and with the efficient co-operation of Fr. Candido de Dalmases S.J., contains a summarized and orderly exposition of the life and virtues of the

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Servant of God, with the usual reference to each of the documents contained and illustrated in the volume.

We have added in the Appendix (pp. 751-776) a very full *chronology* to offer the possibility of contemplating in one synthesized vision both the events of the life of Mother Mary St. Ignatius, and those connected with her, and their part in the progress of the Cause. The specific *Bibliography* has no particular critical value. Therefore we have limited ourselves to presenting a simple catalogue of titles (pp. 777-779).

The Historical Consultors are asked to explain their point of view, using the usual form of expression, about each of the following questions, illustrating and enriching them with observations and opportune suggestions, the fruit of their personal study and their historical competence. Their wise and carefully weighed critical evaluation will facilitate the task of those who will have to work at the Cause in its successive phases.

Here is the formulation of the questions put to the Very Reverend Historical Consultors.:

- I. *Whether the historical investigations to illustrate the life of the Servant of God Mary St. Ignatius were made so completely, and according to the prescribed form, that they are useful to explain fully the subject proposed.*
- II. *Whether the documents which were examined and inserted in the Positio possess the qualities which merit historical belief*
- III. *Whether in the series of these documents one can find useful and necessary elements which can lead to an appropriate and sufficient knowledge of the life of the Servant of God, and offer a solid and certain foundation to give a favourable judgement about her virtues.*

Rome, 1st July 1967.

Fr. MELCHIORRE DA POBLADURA. O.F.M. CAP.
Relator General