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.

1

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	Sr. Borgia, nee Blanc
Sister St. Peter, nee Bedor	Sr. Xavier, nee Chipier
Sr. Bruno, nee Jubeau	Mother St. Ignatius, nee Thevenet

2

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 account of age or of length of experience in the work. Among those professed on the 25th February was M. St. Borgia, first companion of the Foundress at Pierres Plantees on the 5th October 1818; Mothers St. Xavier and St. Bruno who followed a few days later, and Mother St. Peter. This last had entered the Congregation when she was already in her fifty-sixth year, and although she had only been in it for a single year, she had gained the trust of the Servant of God by her maturity and other circumstances, on account of which important offices were quickly confided to her. After the events of Monistrol, namely, the profession of the 25th and the elections of the 26th February, M. St. Ignatius returned to Lyon, made arrangements for three others of her first companions to make profession, and remained with M. St. Xavier to govern the house of Fourviere. She sent to Monistrol M. St. Andrew, who, since the end of 1816, had been a member of the Association of the Sacred Heart, and M. St. Stanislaus who, like M. Gonzaga, came from Belleville for the occasion and had entered in Pierres-Plantees. All three were young in age.

On the very day of this ceremony in Monistrol M. St. Andrew was elected first Assistant General. The Servant of God and M. St. Xavier sent their votes in writing from Lyon and M. St. Borgia sent hers from Belleville.

This act also, contained in Register I, and drawn up by Fr. Coindre, is signed by those present, and later, by the Servant of God.

In the year eighteen hundred and twenty-three on the sixteenth of March, we the undersigned, assembled in Chapter, after collecting the votes of Mothers St. Ignatius, Borgia, Xavier, who had sent their votes by post, and those of Mothers St. Peter, Bruno, Stanislaus and Gonzaga here present, have counted the votes and have declared that Madame St. Andrew has been elected by an absolute majority of votes to the office of First Assistant General, in witness whereof we have signed the present act on the above-mentioned date.

Mother St. PeterMother St. BrunoMother StanislausMother GonzagaMother St. Ignatius, nee ThevenetFather Coindre, Sup.

3

Act of appointment of the first Provincial Superioresses, 16th March 1823.

From the first years of development of the Congregation, it was considered well to name a Provincial Superioress for each of the dioceses in which it was established. The Servant of God named M. St. Andrew Provincial Superioress of Lyon and M. St. Peter of Le Puy.

The document is written and signed by Fr. Coindre.

In the year eighteen hundred and twenty-three, on the sixteenth of March, we the undersigned, have received by letter from Madame St. Ignatius the appointment of Madame Andrew as Mother Superioress Provincial of the Sisters of the Heart of Jesus and Mary for the diocese of Lyon and that of Madame St. Peter as Mother Provincial of the same sisters for the diocese of Le Puy, in witness whereof we have signed the present act in the year and on the day mentioned above.

Mother St. Bruno Mother Stanislaus Mother Gonzaga

Father Coindre, Sup.

DOC. XIII

NORMS for the pupils of the Providence, 27th June 1823. - From the copy kept

in A. G. Roma, Register HI.

We are including here a document which demonstrates the care of M. St. Ignatius for the efficient running of the *Providence* of Fourviere and for the order and discipline of the novices.

As is clear from what has been said, the Servant of God had a particular predilection for poor girls, in order to preserve them from the moral danger of the factories and to procure for them the greatest possible good (Docs. III, p. 28; IV, 2, p. 122; XVII, 5, p. 356). From 1823 her efforts were intensified and the *Histoire* gives interesting information on this (Doc. XXVII, pp. 573-580). Undoubtedly the Foundress was very interested in the development of the three boarding schools which by 1823 she had organised for the upper class girls, at Fourviere, Belleville and Monistrol, but her predilection was for poor and abandoned children.

In the minutes of the meeting of the 27th June 1823, which we present here, it appears that the Council meeting was presided over by Fr. Coindre. Although the name of the Servant of God does not appear, because habitually the minutes report only the name of the one who presided over the meeting, there is no doubt that the Servant of God was present; she presided over the meetings before and after that of the 27th June at which Fr. Coindre was not present. On one occasion, on the 16th March 1823, when the Servant of God was absent, the minutes confirm that she had sent her vote in writing.

At this meeting of the 27th June the council treated:

1. of some norms observed in the *Providence*. As this had been established for the greater moral and material good of young working girls, it was decided that not only would they be allowed to remain there until they were 21 years old, but that, when the conduct of these young girls was entirely satisfactory, they could continue to remain in the house indefinitely. There is