MARIANIST *IMAGES* OF MARY AND PASTORAL NEEDS

The image of Mary has been central to the life and mission of the Marianist Family since its foundation. This fact is obvious to anyone who takes a serious look at Marianist history, or even to anyone who gives thought to the name, “Society of Mary.”

What is less immediately obvious is the way in which Marianists have continually reinterpreted and refocused their understanding of Mary, expressing it in a variety of images over time. Rather than trying to propagate one particular Marian devotion or one theological approach, Marianists in each era have reflected on their image of Mary in the context of current challenges and opportunities, aspirations and difficulties in the varied and evolving historic moments.

In what follows I hope to show that these different images arise as a response to perceived pastoral needs in each period of Marianist history. In this way Marianists have regularly sought to validate their vocation as *missionaries* of Mary. In fact, in this history the missionary dimension of the Marianist vocation takes priority: through many changes in mentality and in varied fields of work, Marianists have consistently seen themselves as people who respond to the needs of Church and world, and they have spontaneously reflected on the role and relevance of Mary to their current understanding of mission.

I aim to illustrate this process by examining the predominant images of Mary that we find at several successive stages of Marianist history. Beginning with the experience of Blessed William Joseph Chaminade, we will first note elements that were part of the basic Marian piety of his time, shared with him by most devout Catholics who grew to maturity in the eighteenth century. We will look more closely at some Marian images that played a significant role in his early life and in the overall French context. Then we will move on to examine more striking and original approaches to Mary which he developed during his long and creative career in the first half of the nineteenth century.

In Marianist history after the time of the Founder, we will attempt to distinguish several further developments that illustrate how Marianists have regularly rethought the image of Mary in terms of the opportunities and challenges of their times. For example, in the struggle to influence new generations of ordinary people dealing with urbanization and industrialization, Marianists have proposed Mary as mother and educator. This theme was very particularly developed in the era from 1830-1870, but it has greatly influenced most succeeding generations. In times and places when Catholic practice and family values were challenged in both Europe and the United States (especially in the era from 1870-1930), Marianists have presented Mary as a model for Catholic identity and for family life. Dealing with new Catholics living in predominantly non-Christian environments (especially in the era from 1970 to the present) they have stressed Mary as an inculturated woman appealing to all races and cultures. Meanwhile, during the twentieth century many Marianists rediscovered and developed forgotten Chaminadean insights as sources of inspiration, and in the period after 1965 they blended these fresh perspectives with those of the Second Vatican Council.

This survey will make it clear that the Marianist approach to Mary has a rich and varied history, invariably tied to the pastoral needs of each era.

I. CHAMINADE'S STARTING POINT: EARLY IMAGES OF MARY

Reading the life of Blessed William Joseph Chaminade, we find no evidence that he began his ministry thinking of himself primarily as a Marian devotee. Rather, it seems that his experience led him to discern a growing relevance of Mary to the pastoral needs of his time. At each step of his ministerial journey he discovered particular ways in which devotion to Mary focused his ministry and that of his disciples.

We may begin by examining Chaminade's own personal starting point. What were the initial notions, feelings and emphases that grounded his Marian devotion from the beginning? Like all convinced Catholics of his times, he imbibed a deep devotion to Mary from his familial and ecclesiastical environment. This relatively simple but intense devotion was nurtured in his childhood and youth by the influence of his devout mother, by teachings he received in his education, by answers to his prayers, and by pictorial images of Mary in places where he prayed.

Though today's devout Catholics also give special honor to Mary, we should not presume that Chaminade's initial understandings and outlooks were identical to those of our time. His approach had from its beginnings some characteristics rather different from those familiar today.

Typical Catholic Marian devotion everywhere and always focuses greatly on private and intimate personal matters. Mary is seen as a model of family life, of simple home virtues, of prayerful listening and contemplative pondering, of obedient acceptance of God's will and as support in sorrow. These elements were certainly present in Chaminade's youth, as they are to devout Catholics today. In Chaminade's time as now, Mary was constantly invoked for family needs and for the relief of suffering and sorrow.

But devout Catholics in the eighteenth century also focused more than most do today on the queenship of Mary. Mary was spontaneously understood as one who transforms history. A look at the Marian art of the time shows how believers gave great emphasis to her role as a dynamic sovereign. Today this queenly image of Mary can sometimes be unsettling to those of us who live in modern democracies. It almost seems to place Mary at the side of political powers whom we often critique as exploitative – or perhaps to liken her to influential but morally dubious stars of popular music and cinema. It seemed easier in Chaminade's time to see Mary as a glorious and triumphal royal Mother, a focus of popular enthusiasm, a ruler with a dynamic and wholly beneficent impact on the historical development of her people.

"The August Mary"

Along these lines, Chaminade characteristically refers to "*the august Mary*," using a phrase derived from the vocabulary of royalty. This title may sound pompous or

bombastic to twenty-first-century ears, but for Chaminade it clearly aimed to underline Mary's historic dynamism.

Like educated people on all sides of the political spectrum in his era, Chaminade interpreted events of his time in the light of Roman historians read in school like Livy, Tacitus and Suetonius. Classically educated people knew that the adjective "august" had been consciously assumed by Caesar Octavian to stress the sacral and beneficent style he wished to adopt after long year of a violent struggle for power. His title *augustus* alluded to a peaceful and illustrious dominion over practically all known humanity, within the limits of his immense Empire. Derived from the verb *augere* ("to increase, enhance") the title "august" conveyed an authority that was sacred, religious, awesome and simultaneously benign, surpassing any authority in military, legal or political realms. The golden shield awarded to Octavian along with this title by the Roman Senate in 27 B.C. bore the inscription *virtus, pietas, clementia, iustitia* – "valor, devotedness, clemency, justice" – and these qualities were all implied in the title "august." When Chaminade called Mary "august" (using a title common neither then nor now), he wished to underline her power and her divinely sanctioned queenship – qualities needed in order to re-establish the dominance of Catholic values after a chaotic revolutionary period in which they had been rejected.[1] For Chaminade it was clear that Mary was not simply a quiet, passive, obedient virgin or a humble housewife, but a powerful force in the history of the Church and world. He taught his sodalists to underline their commitment to this august Mary and to address her as "Glorious Queen of heaven and earth."

The Immaculate Virgin

Marian devotees of Chaminade's era dedicated special attention to the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception. The development of this Catholic doctrine is well known to students of doctrinal history: from disputes in medieval times through long and emotional debates among Dominican, Franciscan and Jesuit theologians, down to its solemn proclamation as a dogma of faith binding on all Catholics a few years after Chaminade's death.

The fact that in his day it was not yet binding Catholic doctrine is significant. From the seventeenth century on, Catholic theologians had been cautioned not to deny this doctrine, but before its proclamation in 1854 as officially binding Catholic doctrine, paying special attention to the Immaculate Conception was still seen as a distinctive sign of outstanding Marian devotion, a special and intense focus on the role of Mary in

[1] Chaminade uses this term already in the introduction to his collection of prayers for sodalists in 1801, and it is reproduced in his *Discours préliminaire* to the *Manuel du Serviteur de Marie*, first edition of 1804. In the same discourse he once even speaks of "the divine Mary," desiring to underline her intimate and powerful union with God himself. See *Écrits et paroles,* vol. I, no. 33. References to Chaminade's writings annotated in this essay will be based on the original seven-volume French text in *Écrits et paroles,* ed. Ambrogio Albano et al. (Casale Monferrato, Piemme, 1994 ff.). Reference will be made to document numbers in this critical edition rather than to page numbers, to facilitate matters for readers who use Chaminade's collected works translated into other languages.

salvation history. Defense of this still-undefined doctrine and special devotion to it was a mark of active and fervent Catholics especially devoted to Mary. Such theological partisanship had become a sign of identity for post-Tridentine Catholics who belonged to Marian groups like sodalities, various confraternities, and "AA"s. During Chaminade's school days this doctrine had apparently been carefully studied and advocated in the small sodality at Mussidan.[2]

Throughout his ministry, Chaminade continued to emphasize devotion to this mystery. Mary Immaculate was adopted already in 1800 as the key patron for the young men and women of the post-revolutionary Bordeaux sodality. In numerous sermons and conferences given to them at the Madeleine, Chaminade described the Immaculate Conception as a mystery of purity and victory over sin, especially for young people struggling to live a morally pure Christian life in the confusing and often libertine atmosphere of Bordeaux.[3] As special followers of Mary Immaculate in the Church, sodalists were called to imitate their patroness in her holiness and freedom from sin. In his preliminary discourse to the *Manual of the Servant of Mary*, already in its earliest 1804 edition, Chaminade qualifies Mary's Immaculate Conception as her "supreme dignity as Mother of God" and asserts that "no true Catholic" could fail to show love and respect for this "mystery of predilection."[4]

Repeated reflection on the Immaculate Conception led Chaminade to speak on many occasions of the parallel between Mary and Eve, which had echoed in Christian teaching since early patristic times. Beginning with an accommodated spiritual understanding of Genesis 3:15, Chaminade presented Mary as the New Eve, companion of her Son, the New Adam, in crushing the head of the serpent throughout human history. This parallel was portrayed in sodality medals as well as in sermons.[5]

Today, in contrast, the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception forms a part of commonly received Catholic doctrine, an "article of faith." Its acceptance and defense is no longer a sign of extraordinary devotion, but rather a component – sometimes a neglected one - of ordinary Catholic life and catechesis. While nearly every Catholic believer today sees Mary as a model of purity and holiness, standard Catholic theology on this point is perhaps too subtle and intricate to awaken much interest among most of the faithful. Attention to the Immaculate Conception has moved from being a sign of special and extraordinary Marian devotion that deeply moves many to the status of one more part of

[2] Evidence for this focus at Mussidan, a very few years later than Chaminade's own days as a student there, can be found in reference to Mussidan student Bernard Dariès in Joseph Verrier, *Jalons d'histoire sur la route de Guillaume-Joseph Chaminade* (Bordeaux: Maison Chaminade, 2007), vol. I, pp. 106ff. The sodality at Mussidan then met in a chapel dedicated to the Immaculate Conception (*Ibid.,* p. 113).

[3] For sermons and conferences on the Immaculate Conception, see *Écrits et paroles,* vol. II, documents 119-125 and documents 178-189.

[4] See *Écrits et paroles,* vol. I, document 33.

[5] The popular story that Chaminade even tried to comment on this theological theme during his interrogation by the Napoleonic police, who in November, 1809 suspected such medals as some kind of secret anti-government talismans, has no echoes in the detailed documentation on Chaminade's interrogation presented by Joseph Verrier in *Jalons d'histoire sur la routed Guillaume-Joseph Chaminade* (Bordeaux: Maison Chaminade, 2007), vol. III, pp. 183 ff. Is this story a slightly humorous invention of the pious imagination?

the "deposit of faith." Today this doctrine is more generalized and less distinctive than in Chaminade's day. Contemporary Catholic theology may rather under-emphasize this doctrine, to which Chaminade and his followers devoted such enthusiastic attention.

Influences of the "French School": Christocentrism and the Mysteries of Christ

As the young William Joseph pursued his education and preparation for ordination, he fell under the influence of writers of the "French School" or "Bérullian School" of spirituality. The French School of saintly theologians and "missionaries" lay at the origins of the small community of Missionaries of St. Charles in Mussidan, in which William Joseph received his formation and was ordained as a priest. The key members of this group of thinkers and spiritual directors had been active in and around Paris in the first half of the seventeenth century, a golden time and place for French Catholic spirituality. The French School had promoted the foundation of new and much-needed seminaries for diocesan priests, and this group of writers had provided a body of doctrine which continued to mark seminaries until long after the Revolution of 1789. But today their work is less prominent and will sound unfamiliar to many.

The programmatic work at the foundation of this school of spirituality was *Les Grandeurs de Jésus*, published in 1623 by Pierre de Bérulle (1575-1629), priestly diplomat, contemporary and sometimes rival of Cardinal Richelieu, and founder of the Oratory of France. Bérulle was named a Cardinal in 1627 shortly before his death.

Bérulle's work developed a Christocentric approach focused on the mystery of the Incarnation. He called on future priests to cultivate "conformity with Christ," becoming an *alter Christus* ("another Christ"), in accord with an exalted post-Tridentine ideal of Catholic priesthood. Bérulle's christocentric approach contrasts with the more anthropocentric approach of the *Spiritual* Exercises of St. Ignatius Loyola, which takes our fallen but striving human nature as its starting point. It also contrasts with the older Benedictine and Dominican styles, each in its own way more "theocentric."

Bérulle's vocabulary of spiritual life was distinctive. He called on his disciples to enter into the "states" or "mysteries" of Christ, to imitate Jesus both externally and above all internally, in the key phases of his life: his birth in the stable at Bethlehem, his mission as gospel herald, his suffering and death and his resurrection. The faithful priest was to contemplate these "mysteries" constantly, reproducing in himself the attitudes and outlooks of Jesus. Bérulle cultivated an intense devotion to Mary as the woman who was always associated in each mystery of Jesus. Bérulle stressed that Jesus performed his entire redemptive work as the son of Mary.

Bérulle's dense teaching was developed and popularized by Charles de Condren (1588-1641), his immediate successor as head of the Oratory and spiritual director for numerous religious luminaries and saints. Another prominent early follower of Bérulle was Jean-Jacques Olier (1608-1657), founder in the 1640's of the Sulpician Society and their French "flagship" seminary of Saint-Sulpice in Paris. Another follower, who also emphasized seminaries, was St. John Eudes (1601-1680), founder of the Eudists. A

somewhat later generation benefitted from the work of Louis Tronson (1622-1700), author of numerous manuals for the spiritual guidance for seminarians; St. John Baptist de la Salle (1651-1719), founder of the Christian Brothers of the Schools; and St. Louis Grignion de Montfort (1673-1715), fervent itinerant missionary and founder of the Montfortian religious family.

At Saint-Sulpice Louis Chaminade, slightly elder brother and long-time companion of Guillaume-Joseph, completed most of his seminary studied in the 1780's; his brother Guillaume-Joseph seems to have spent some weeks observing and visiting Saint-Sulpice. Guillaume-Joseph continued using concepts and approaches from French School writers for the rest of his life and delighted in recommending them to his disciples.

Chaminade revealed his formation in the spirit of the French School when he spontaneously referred in conferences and essays to the "mysteries" or "states" of Christ and to "conformity" with Christ as the goal of spiritual growth.[6] The French-School echoes of these expressions would have been immediately obvious to informed listeners and readers in Chaminade's time, but they may seem more obscure, unique or surprising today.

Visual Images of Mary that Chaminade Knew: Baroque Madonnas

Visual representations play a great role in forming religious sensibilities. Interestingly, a dynamic, transformational understanding of Mary and her role is of a piece with the baroque images of the Madonna that filled eighteenth century churches, expressing the triumphant spirit of post-Tridentine Catholicism. The newer Marian images Chaminade saw in his youth, especially in the large city of Bordeaux, showed Mary being assumed by angels into glory or being crowned by her Son surrounded by the heavenly choirs. Great French painters like Nicholas Poussin, Simon Vouet and Charles le Brun had portrayed her in this exalted way. Of course, these images did not replace the more familiar and more intimate ones of mother and child, but coexisted with them and taught ordinary believers to regard Mary as both a personal intercessor in ordinary life and a great queen with jurisdiction over all human history.[7]

The triumphalist, sometimes almost theatrical, baroque images reflect great respect for Mary, seeing her as a glorious, heavenly figure. They portray her as a powerful mediatrix sympathetically concerned with human lives. But they do not so much present her as an imitable type of the life of the Church or of human experience. In the baroque images which Chaminade knew she is seen as the embodiment of the Church in its ultimate triumph more than in its terrestrial experience.

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[6] See, for example, *Écrits et paroles,* vol. VII, documents 17-27. All these documents are lengthy developments on spirituality which seem to have been written under the influence of a new edition of the works of Olier, which Chaminade warmly recommended to Marianist formators.

[7] A German image from Augsburg, painted at the turn of the eighteenth century, lately made prominent by Pope Francis, combines these aspects, portraying the Madonna ascending among angels into glory while busy in her task as "Untier of Knots," powerful in loosening the bonds of sin and conflict that bedevil human lives. This image joins together the glorified and exalted Mary with her role as mediatrix of mercy.

These baroque images contrast with better known images, both earlier and later ones, which show Mary as a familial or intimate figure, with the child in her arms, highly imitable and inspirational for ordinary life. The baroque images portray Mary as a forceful associate of her Son in glory, sharing in his task of directing the course of world history. Chaminade notes, in the same preface to his *Manual of the Servant of Mary* already quoted, that Mary has a key role "for the militant Church,"[8] and the baroque images seem to invite to a certain militancy. At any rate, the Mary that Chaminade knew in his formational years was often pictured in a more forceful and extraordinary manner than is normally the case today, especially in the years since Vatican II's emphasis on the ecclesiotypical approach to Mary. Today's Catholics tend to stress Mary's closeness to our human experience more than her glorious and exceptional privileges and powers.

Some Specific Images from Verdelais, Mussidan, Bordeaux and Saragossa

Other visual images of Mary, both intimate and glorious, abound in Catholic places of worship, in Chaminade's day as in our own. We learn a great deal about people's devotional outlooks – explicit and subconscious – by examining these images. For Chaminade's early outlook, they provide some important clues.

In his first years at Mussidan Chaminade seriously injured his foot while at play, and he feared that the injury might have permanent effects. Under the guidance of his elder brother and teacher, the priest Jean-Baptiste, he prayed for healing to Mary as Lady of Pity and patroness of the important shrine of Verdelais, located some sixty miles from Mussidan. He experienced complete healing, and in thanksgiving he walked on pilgrimage with Jean-Baptiste to Verdelais. There he viewed a rough medieval wood statue of Mary elaborately crowned and arrayed in splendid baroque robes. Throughout his life, Chaminade continued to have a special love for this particular Marian shrine and hoped for the day when his followers could restore it and renew devotion to Our Lady of Pity of Verdelais. This hope was not fulfilled during his lifetime, but the image of Our Lady of Pity of Verdelais, relatively close to home and source of healing as well as gloriously majestic, continued to inspire him.

Another striking image was one he frequently visited at Mussidan, in a small plain chapel overlooking the river Isle. This image, dating from the fifteenth century, is also a fairly rough wood-carving which shows Mary seated, as mother with the infant Jesus on her shoulder, and at the same time as the Pietà, with the body of her dead son on her lap. Some have tried to rationalize this image by alleging that the infant on Mary's shoulder is actually an angel, but it seems clear that this is rather an attempt to represent the role of Mary comprehensively throughout the life and mission of her Son. This country image, with a complex theology underlying it, helped Chaminade reflect on the way in which Mary, to use the terminology of the French School, was involved in "all the mysteries" of her Son.

[8] *Écrits et paroles,* vol. I, doc. 33.

Shortly after Chaminade arrived at Bordeaux in the early stages of the Revolution, he witnessed the closing of many churches and chapels and the auction of much ecclesiastical art. He used this opportunity to purchase two rather large and elegant Renaissance-style statues, one of Mary and one of the angel Gabriel, which before the Revolution had graced a Church at Talence on the outskirts of the city. Chaminade saw that these statues were safeguarded through the years of violence and sacrilege during the Terror, and he eventually erected them in the Madeleine chapel in the heart of Bordeaux, which he acquired as the center of the Bordeaux Sodality from 1804 on. These statues form an eloquent link between the great ecclesial tradition and the origins of the Marianist Sodality, representing Mary receiving and accepting her call from the angel as a sign of the new call for Christians in modern, post-revolutionary times. They do not represent any new theology, but certainly a reverent new appropriation of the Church's Marian tradition in new circumstances.

During his three-year exile at Saragossa (1797-1800), Chaminade frequently prayed at the national shrine of Our Lady of the Pillar, a key center of devotion for Spanish-speaking Catholicism. There he saw a gracious but very small (15 inches high) image of the Virgin Mother with a look of tenderness, crowned and dressed in a Baroque mantel, holding the child Jesus while he in turn holds a bird (the Holy Spirit?) in his left hand. Legends concerning this image evoke Spanish national identity and patriotism, claiming that it portrays an apparition of Mary (then still alive on earth) to the apostle James the Greater, encouraging and empowering him to plant the message of Jesus against all opposition in the Iberian peninsula.

Chaminade must have been overwhelmed when he arrived from secularized France in Saragossa on the eve of the feast of Our Lady of the Pillar, October 11, 1797, and witnessed the fervor and exuberance of Spanish public devotion. For three years he was able to pray frequently at this shrine, meditating on the uncertain possibility of a future role for himself as missionary to rekindle the light of faith in his homeland. Surely his prayer before this famous image, in a confusing time of exile, must have motivated him for mission, and he refers to it later as the source of his inspiration, the place where he conceived and perhaps saw a vision of his future ministry.[9]

In summary, we can say that Mary has been a key figure in Catholic life always, but approaches to her have varied and developed in time. Most Catholics carry some at least implicit understanding of Mary and her role. Most of these understandings stress the imitation of her virtues, her role in personal and family life and her capacity to intercede for our felt needs. To these Chaminade surely added some elements concerning personal formation in virtues and a dynamic missionary outreach in view of the transformation of society in post-revolutionary times. He saw Mary as having a key role in such matters.

We should not too quickly presume that the Marian images we may have internalized in our time are identical with those coming from other times and places. None of the elements of Marian devotion outlined above were unique to Chaminade, though some were a bit different from what we take for granted in the twenty-first century.

[9] Noël Le Mire, "Le Dessein inspire par Dieu à G. Joseph Chaminade, Fondateur," in *Revue Marianiste Internationale*, no. 1 (mars 1984), pp. 17-23, and no. 2 (octobre 1984), pp. 28-35.

I believe that the Founder began his life ministry with a rather more active and powerful sense of Mary's role than is common in the popular mind today. Building on this background, he felt motivated to envision an ample and unique role of Mary in the mission he undertook on returning to France at the end of the year 1800.

Thus, visual images reinforced the young Chaminade's focus on the role of Mary. As his ministry developed after his return to Bordeaux in 1800, he inculcated new and distinctive approaches which linked Mary to his consciousness of mission – a missionary outlook which he would perseveringly fulfill and project to his followers during the next fifty years.

II. CHAMINADE AFTER 1800: ORIGINAL APPROACHES TO MARY, FOR REBUILDING A SHATTERED CHURCH

From 1800 on, Chaminade's key missionary focus was that of rebuilding a French Church which had been shattered by the bitter resentments and anti-ecclesiastical fury of the Revolution. In this context he came increasingly to view Mary as a model for a new kind of Christian, formed in her likeness and sharing in her mission.

His way of presenting Catholic doctrine on Mary became more focused and often quite original, characteristic of a new kind of spirituality. In what follows, we will examine some of the new and dynamic approaches to Mary that emerged during this period as Chaminade sought to carry out this mission.

Mother of Youth

Chaminade's first and primary effort on returning to Bordeaux at the end of the year 1800 was to found a movement for young adults which eventually became the Madeleine Sodality. From the beginning he invited its members to formalize their commitment by an act of consecration to Mary in which they promised to "honor her and make her honored, insofar as I can, as Mother of Youth."

Explaining this act of consecration in the 1804 edition of his *Manual of the Servant of Mary* Chaminade affirms that "the tender Heart of the august Mary must have been very sensitive to the delightful names of Mother of Christians and Mother of the Predestined…but today it is in some sense a new glory which she is receiving in the new title,…Mother of Youth." This title, Chaminade notes, arises "in the most perverted world that has ever existed" and gives birth to "a chaste generation" which forms a "virtuous family of Mary" contrasting with "youth who have been brought forth by the corruption of the world."

Making allowances for the ornate rhetoric that corresponded to the taste of the First Empire, it is interesting for us to note that Chaminade qualifies this title as "in some sense a new glory." The title Mother of Youth perhaps seems rather obvious to many Catholics today, who have grown up surrounded by many Marian faith groups for young people. However, this title does not seem to have a long or widespread history in

Catholic spirituality, and Chaminade seems to be correct in qualifying it as a "new glory" for Mary amid Catholics of his time and place.

This Marian title implies the recognition of "youth" (late teens and young adults, roughly 16-25 years old) as a distinctive category within human society, marked by its own typical concerns, culture and customs, with its own particular sympathies amid revolutionary rhetoric for change and social renewal. Youth have always existed, of course, but the recognition of a distinctive youth culture with its own style and outlook, requiring a special approach in ministry, seemed new in 1800. Chaminade aimed to use this youth culture as a starting point for Christian formation and mission, and he aimed to secure the involvement of youthful sodalists in ministry directed at their contemporaries.

The consecration to Mary, "Mother of Youth" which Chaminade proposed to his early followers aimed to foster a "true alliance" between Mary and her young followers, with its own list of specific obligations.[10] The 1804 edition of the *Manual* proposes a seven-point list of concrete obligations for sodalists: calling on Mary's help in all spiritual and temporal needs, taking part in Marian devotion with respect and veneration, avoiding anything that could harm her interests, imitating her virtues and combating vice under her leadership, never going to bed in a state of mortal sin, fostering acts of prayer addressed to her, cultivating devotion to and trust in St. Joseph her spouse). Another, slightly later list of obligations for the consecrated person includes more numerous moral attitudes especially necessary for young Christians: modesty and recollection, flight from bad companions, zeal for the good of others, obedience and docility, dedication to hard work and study, reading good books and avoiding bad ones, practicing voluntary penances and acts of service for the good of others, having frequent recourse to the sacraments, and choosing one's state of life (marriage, priestly ordination, joining a religious community) in the light of one's commitment to Mary. All in all, these lists of obligations flowing from Marian consecration constitute a wise and practical plan of life for fervent and activist Catholic youth.

These lists also constitute an agenda for ministry in the name of Mary to young Catholic leaders. In this focus on Mary's link to modern youth, Chaminade from 1800 on began a distinctive and extensive, long-lasting ministry to young adults that has been passed on to his followers ever since.

Woman of Faith

For Chaminade, there was no question of cultivating Marian piety merely as a special devotional practice. Serious young Christians of his time, having grown up in the Revolution, amid closed churches and schismatic confusion, were eager to make up for their lack of early catechetical and devotional formation, especially if it was presented in an attractive way. They knew they needed to be evangelized and sent on mission, especially to other youth, their friends and peers.

[10] See *Écrits et paroles*, vol. I, documents 34 and 35.

Chaminade was convinced that their formation in Christian life was to be founded on a solid and reflective faith – not merely a rote acceptance of some abstract truths taught in a catechism, but an intuitional and experiential adherence of the whole person to the following of Jesus.[11] He aimed to form sodalists in such a way that they would avoid the lax and merely superficial Catholicism that had characterized much of pre-revolutionary French life and that had given rise to misguided and popular religious enthusiasms like Quietism and Jansenism. This deeper interiorized faith was what Chaminade understood under the rubric of "faith of the heart" or the "spirit of faith."

He devoted the main part of meetings of his Bordeaux Sodality to creative modes of catechesis, calling on the young people themselves and coaching them in the presentation of plays, dialogues and discourses to instruct, intrigue, and sometimes untertain their peers.[12] The key focus was instruction in the truths of faith, turning faith into an interior principle that structures all of life.

To this newly prominent Christian youth cohort Chaminade proposed Mary as a model of faith and fidelity. First among believers in the message of her Son, she served as a natural and prominent model of the "spirit of faith." Again and again, he returns to key Marian passages of scripture. Most frequently cited are the following: the Vulgate text of the proto-evangelium (Genesis 3:15) which he clearly understood as applying to Mary, the New Eve; Matthew's account of the birth of Jesus (Matt.); Luke's narrative of the Annunciation (Luke 1: 26-38), the Magnificat (Luke 1: 39-46), and the scenes at Cana (John 2: 1-11) and Calvary (John 19: 25-27) which frame the fourth gospel. He aimed not only to form Marian devotees, but above all Christians who would link love for Mary with a convinced and informed life based on faith. When Chaminade later came to found his religious communities, he emphasized this Marian spirit of faith as central to their spirituality and mission.[13]

Spiritual Mother: a Favorite Set of Quotation

As a solid foundation for the spiritual growth of his young disciples, Chaminade placed strong emphasis on the special role of Mary as spiritual Mother of the entire Mystical Body of Christ. Thus he called his followers to be "formed by Mary." In his extensive work as spiritual director this stress on formation by Mary as one's spiritual mother was a key characteristic: the spiritual deepening of his disciples was understood as a process of "formation" by Mary in their Christian life. Of course this insight is in no way unique or original to Chaminade, but his often repeated insistence on it indicates an intense reflection on the role of Mary as spiritual mother, helping people grow in faith. The call

[11] *Écrits et paroles*, vols. 2-4, preserve numerous notes for sermons and conferences to sodalists, which were extensively devoted to topics of faith and catechesis, in no way limited to questions of devotion and ethics. See also *L'Esprit de notre 11oundation* (Nivelles: Havaux-Houdart, 1910), vol. I, chapter 4, (pp. 241-329) for an analysis of Chaminade's use of the terms "spirit of faith" and "faith of the heart."

[12] See Joseph Verrier, *La Congrégation mariale de M. Chaminade* (Fribourg: Séminaire Regina Mundi, 1964) in 2 volumes.

[13] See, for example, Chaminade's extensive treatment of this theme during the retreat he preached at Saint-Laurent in 1818 (*Écrits et paroles*, vol. V, doc. 24 - notes of Lalanne), especially for the ninth and following meditations.

to "formation by Mary" became a hallmark of Chaminade's spiritual teaching, from the beginning of the Bordeaux Sodality and on until the end of his life.

In this context Chaminade often cites scripture, in the long tradition of patristic exegesis, in accommodated and spiritual senses that go beyond the literal meaning of the texts. A recurring example of this approach is his repeated use of the romantic imagery of the Song of Songs 7, 3: "Your womb is like a heap of wheat fenced about with lilies…" He typically comments: "In Mary's very pure womb, there is a single grain of wheat; still it is called a heap of wheat because all the elect were enclosed in this chosen grain, which was to be called the first-born of many brothers."[14] On several occasions he immediately proceeds to allude to a commentary of St. Ambrose[15] and a phrase of "St. William" (actually an uncanonized and fairly obscure twelfth-century English canon, William of Newburgh).[16] Chaminade apparently drew this curious concatenation of quotations about Mary's spiritual motherhood from a seventeenth-century preacher's source-book, of which he owned a copy, the *Hortus Pastorum* of Jacques Marchant.[17]

He cites this set of texts already in the introduction he wrote in 1801 for the handbook for sodalists and repeated in the first (1804) and all subsequent edition of the *Manual of the Servant of Mary* (EP, I, 83-84). The same group of texts is cited in sermons given to sodalists on "Mary, Hope of All People" (EP II, 352) and on "Devotion to the Blessed Virgin as a Sign of Predestination" (EP II, 359). Still many years later, as Chaminade struggled around 1830 to write formation manuals for his religious, he returned to the same group of biblical, patristic and medieval texts in his *Manual of Direction for Religious Life and Virtues in the Society of Mary* (EP VI, p. 646), in the *Society of Mary Considered as a Religious Order* (EP VII, p. 254) and in *Principles of Direction* (EP VII, p. 285). Finally, the same set of texts appears in the treatise on Mariology authored under his guidance by Fr. Fontaine and published with the last (1844) edition of the *Manual,* under the title of "Our Knowledge of Mary."

This set of centuries-old texts was no doubt all the more appealing because it had foreshadowed the thinking of the French School, giving prominence to incarnational spirituality and to Mary's role as spiritual mother of Christians, forming other Christs in her womb. From 1800 on until the end of his life, Chaminade frequently cited this *catena* of quotations to express the way in which his followers should aspire to be

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[14] In his *Manual of Direction to the Religious Life and Virtues in the Society of Mary* (1829-30), *Écrits et paroles,* vol. VI, no. 83.

[15] *De institutione Virginis,* chapters 14, no. 91 and chapter 15, no. 94. (Migne, *Patrologia Latina* vol. 16, pp. 327-328).

[16] See studies of this complex of quotations in William Cole, *The Spiritual Maternity of Mary According to the Writings of Father William Joseph Chaminade: A Study of His Spiritual Doctrine* (Fribourg, 1958), pp. 64-65, with illuminating notes on pp. 109-110; and, especially in reference to William of Newburgh, see John C. Gorman, *William of Newburgh's* Explanatio Sacri Epithalamii in Matrem Sponsi*: a Commentary on the Canticle of Canticles (12th-C.)*, in the collection *Spicilegium Friburgense*, vol. 6 (Fribourg: University Press, 1960), pp. 308-310.

[17] Jacques Marchant, *Hortus Pastorum*, first published in 1630, with many later editions. The library of the General Administration of the Society of Mary (BIGMAR) has two editions of this work, from 1644 and 1679, which probably belonged to Chaminade himself. Chaminade's use of Marchant as a source of texts and hints for preaching is studied by William Cole, *The Spiritual Maternity of Mary,* pp. 253-260 and 331-340.

formed by Mary in the likeness of her first-born Son. The devotion to Mary which he recommended consisted above all in letting oneself be molded by her in the likeness of her Son, taking on the stances and attitudes which she had helped him to interiorize, above all by her example. In fact, these quotations brought together several of Chaminade's characteristic themes: spiritual formation by Mary, a conviction of her active role in the life of the Church, and an emphasis on a deeply internalized spirit of faith.

Woman on Mission; Sharing in her Mission

As Chaminade returned from Spain at the end of the year 1800 and began his new ministry in Napoleonic Bordeaux, he was appointed for a brief period as administrator of the nearby rural diocese of Bazas – a diocese which was soon to be suppressed by the Concordat between Napoleon and the Holy See. Apparently because of his role at Bazas, he received from the Holy See an appointment dated March 28, 1801, as "Missionary Apostolic." Elsewhere I have noted the origins of this title in the worldwide missionary expansion of the seventeenth century and its gradual extension to a variety of abnormal and challenging situations, in Europe as well as abroad.[18]

Although the specific canonical status of this title was never very precise, Chaminade correctly understood it as a call to wide-ranging responsibility, creativity in meeting new pastoral challenges, a special bond with the Pope, and an encouragement to adapt familiar pastoral methods to new times (e.g. post-revolutionary years), new places (e.g. a secularized France) and new groups of people (e,g, the above-mentioned cohort of young adults).

Chaminade had been educated at Mussidan in a context with a similar understanding of "mission," not as some kind of foreign service for the Church but as creativity and breadth of vision in Church ministry. This sense of " mission" can be traced back to the post-Tridentine strategies adopted by such figures as St. Charles Borromeo, St. Vincent de Paul, Cardinal Pierre de Bérulle, St. John Eudes, and St. Louis Grignion de Montfort. In accord with this creative pastoral tradition, Chaminade felt called and empowered for the rest of his life as a "Missionary Apostolic" sent by the Holy See to deal with pastoral situations in abnormal circumstances.

Until the end of his life he continued citing his title as Missionary Apostolic, while rarely using other titles like "Doctor in Theology" or "Honorary Canon." His role as Missionary Apostolic is a key to understanding his pastoral options and his new foundations, as well as his deepening approach to Mary. In his mind this title justified his use of new pastoral means for a new era in history, in which he was convinced that Mary would play a central role. He understood himself and his followers as "missionaries of Mary" in this new era.

[18] "The Founder and Ourselves: Marianists as 'Missionaries Apostolic'" in *A New Fulcrum: Marianist Horizons Today* (Dayton: NACMS, 2014), pp. 15-21.

Chaminade clearly came to understand his mission in connection with Mary's role in the Church of his time. His concept of a "mission of Mary" does not seem to be a common one. This concept may have been suggested to Chaminade by his readings in the influential and exhaustive treatise of a seventeenth-century Jesuit, François Poiré,[19] who devoted many pages of his two-volume work to Mary's role in defeating heresies and spreading true faith; he was surely influenced by the Sulpician writers, notably Jean-Jacques Olier, who emphasized the link between Marian devotion and priestly ministry. Whatever the sources and influences, the concept of sharing in a "mission of Mary" became key to Chaminade, very especially as in the final decades of his life he developed a body of teaching appropriate to religious men and women.

Another notable aspect of the importance Chaminade attached to his title of Missionary Apostolic was a positive bond with the Holy See. Missionaries Apostolic could be appointed only by the Pope. In a close linkage to the Holy See, Chaminade seems to have foreseen the possibility for France to overcome its history of Gallicanism, enthusiastic aberrations like Quietism and Jansenism, the schism caused by the Civil Oath of the Clergy, the subsequent radical violence against the Church, and the recurrent conflicts between Napoleon and two Popes. In this sense, Chaminade can be classified amid the currents of the nineteenth century as "Ultra-Montane." To him, a bond with Rome seemed essential to realign his people with the full Christian tradition.

Taking a creative and innovative approach to mission and renewing France's close link with Mary and its bond with Rome, Chaminade was convinced that his native country could rediscover its true Catholic identity.

New Eve Crushing the Serpent's Head: A Marian Apocalyptic

On occasion, Chaminade ventured a bit further into theological speculations about the new age of history into which he and his disciples were entering.

French clergy in exile during the years of Revolution sometimes speculated that the coming triumph and renewal of their Church which they fervently desired would usher in a new era in ecclesial history, one which they thought would very probably be the final one before the Second Coming of Jesus, and which would be the "Age of Mary."[20]

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[19] François Poiré, *La triple couronne de la Bienheureuse Vierge Marie* ("The Threefold Crown of the Blessed Virgin Mary"), first published at Paris in 1630 in 2 volumes. BIGMAR possesses a copy of the 1858 edition of this work by Migne. The most striking passage on this topic comes at the end of the second volume, pp. 842-847. Chaminade's similarity on some points to the work of Poiré is studied in Théodore Koehler, « Notre Dame des derniers temps, » *Cahiers marials* II, 1958, pp.115-120, 133.

[20] This conception - which also influenced the founders of the Marists around Lyon, as well as Louis-Marie Baudouin, founder of the Sons of Mary Immaculate in the Vendée - is carefully studied by Timothy Phillips, S.M., in a work as yet unpublished. Various aspects of this important group of Chaminadean themes are studied in several articles: Koehler, Théodore, « Notre Dame des derniers temps, » *Cahiers marials* II, 1958, pp.115-120, 133 ; Jean-Baptiste Armbruster, "Marie dans les derniers temps chez le P. G.-Joseph Chaminade," in *Marie et la fin des temps*: *Approches historico-théologique* (Paris: O.E.I.L., 1987), pp. 67-81, in a paper delivered to the Société Française des études mariales in 1986; and, in regard to the Marist founders, a series of articles by Jean Coste in *Acta Societatis Mariae* for the year 1960.

Visionary eighteenth-century spiritual leaders like Louis Grignion de Montfort and Pierre-Joseph de Clorivière had spoken and written in this sense. The idea of an "Age of Mary" which would signal the final days of the Church was in the wind of the times, and it gained greater attention among exiled Catholics longing during the Revolution for a new upsurge in Catholic life. More than a century before, Poiré had emphasized the triumphant and omnipresent influence of Mary in Church history. It was perhaps only a short step forward for disconsolate exiles to foresee a new and final era of sacred history, in which the power of Mary protecting the embattled Church and ensuring its victory, traced by Poiré throughout the past, would play a definitive and dominant final role in ecclesial life.

Some of the exiles dreamed of a new religious order dedicated to Mary which would dynamically restore Catholicism in France and beyond. Chaminade's brilliant young student from Mussidan, Bernard Dariès, tutor to the high nobility in Spain during the 1790's, drew up a plan for such a new religious order, which in the name of Mary would seek to replace the role of the Jesuits (then long suppressed throughout the Catholic world) and bring a new vitality to the Church.[21] Dariès envisaged an order with three subdivisions, devoted respectively to perpetual Marian prayer, to the education of youth, and to the preaching of the gospel at home and abroad. This plan of Dariès cannot fail to intrigue Marianists. The plan was not implemented in any literal sense, but it reveals much about the mentality, the hopes and dreams of clerical exiles in places like Saragossa; and it points ahead to new foundations, including the Marianists, in the nineteenth-century French Church. Such a plan could not have failed to leave its traces on the actual foundations of religious communities Chaminade made about two decades later.

Most of the time Chaminade was not very prone to millennial enthusiasms. Yet, nearly forty years after the dreams of his time in Saragossa, he evokes an apocalyptic image of Mary's role in Church history on an occasion of extraordinary solemnity. This occasion was his letter to those preparing to preach the annual retreats to Marianist religious men and women in 1839, on the occasion of the Holy See's approval of their foundations.[22] At least at this culminating moment toward the end of his life work, he evoked a vivid description of a great struggles at the end of time, echoing the vision of the Woman and the dragon in chapter 12 of the Apocalypse. With the help of the florid style of a brilliant but erratic secretary[23], Chaminade sketched the role he believed Mary would play in end

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21 The proposal was preserved in papers left by Louis Chaminade at his death. A copy is preserved in General Archives of the Society of Mary, AGMAR 46.10.2. It is tempting to speculate that the Chaminade brothers (both Guillaume-Joseph and Louis), in Spanish exile at the same time, may have exerted an immediate influence on their former student Dariès or at least interacted with him as he prepared the proposal.

22 *Lettres de M. Chaminade,* vol. V, no. 1163 (August 24, 1839).

23 Much of the letter of August 24, 1839 was composed, under Chaminade's supervision, by Narcisse Roussel, who played a key role in creating the troubles of the Founder's last years.

times, and expressed his conviction that his new foundations (divided into three different branches with different tasks close to those foreseen by Dariès) were destined to play a central role in this new era of history. Marianists were to be missionaries of Mary, combining prayer, teaching and preaching in their effort to become the "heel of the Woman," crushing the serpent's head in modern times. This dramatic Marian image, rarely but decisively evoked by the Founder, has colored the imagination of Marianists ever since.

An Alliance with Mary

A more pervasive and characteristic Chaminadean theme is that of the "Alliance" with Mary. English speakers may need special help in grasping the full force of this bold expression. In English, the word "alliance" is generally restricted to diplomatic or military contexts, while the word "covenant" is more readily applied in biblical ones. But in French and other Romance languages this word has richer and more deeply spiritual connotations. *Alliance* is the principal word available to cover both religious and political situations: both "covenant" and "alliance" are accurate translations, depending on the context, and it is clear that Chaminade is thinking more of what we would in English call "covenant." *Alliance* is even a usual French word for the wedding ring. Effectively, Chaminade was calling his followers to make a "covenant" with Mary, or to enter into a spousal relationship with her.

This theme about "Alliance" or "Covenant" with Mary came into special prominence in Chaminade's teaching at the time of the foundation of the Society of Mary. But it had already been emphasized in his earlier conferences to the Madeleine Sodality, on the occasion of solemn renewals of baptismal vows (the foundational "alliance" or "covenant" for Christians).[24] In fact, the general theme of *alliance* permeates many of Chaminade's homilies and conferences on a variety of biblical, sacramental and moral themes.

When Chaminade sought to motivate his followers to found a new religious society, he presented their vocation as an "alliance with Mary." In so doing, he built on this long practice of renewing Baptismal promises in the Madeleine Sodality as the expression of conscious and adult commitment. It is interesting also to note how his pastoral approach seems particularly adapted to a somewhat educated urban population, living in close proximity, eager to analyze social and moral problems and ready to work in common to solve them.

During the founding era of the Society of Mary (especially 1817-19 in the urban context of Bordeaux), the Founder regularly devoted retreat conferences to this theme of "Alliance with Mary," drawing parallels with the covenant theology of the Hebrew

[24] See, for example, *Écrits et paroles,* vol. II, nos. 317-324.

Scriptures.[25] Just as God had made covenants with Abraham, Joshua, and Moses to form a chosen people with a special mission in world history, so in post-revolutionary France God was now inspiring groups of people to make an alliance with his Mother Mary to meet the urgent needs of modern times. Marianists were to be people totally dedicated to living out this missionary alliance, consciously and explicitly as followers of Mary.

This Chaminadean concept of the "Alliance" (or Covenant) with Mary offers a valuable approach to Marian devotion still in our days. Since the eighteenth century, several influential Catholic thinkers and saints have sought to motivate the faithful to a special, apostolically active dedication to Mary as a way to express their love and fidelity and to motivate their ministry. Prominent among them, besides Chaminade, are St. Louis Grignion de Montfort, St. Maximilian Kolbe, Frank Duff and Pope St. John Paul II. Chaminade was not familiar with any of these movements other than his own: influential works of Montfort were not available in his time and other prominent representatives of this kind of devotion came later. The Founder did not propose the "Alliance" as a conscious alternative to other devotions, but simply as a way of expressing the intense dedication which he advocated.

Still, his vocabulary about the "alliance with Mary" seems particularly valuable today. In the twentieth century these movements generally spoke of "consecration" to Mary. The word "consecration" normally implies the setting apart and exclusive dedication of a person or thing to a unique and special holy purpose. The consecrated person, for example, aims to be dedicated for holy uses, like a communion chalice or a church building. Some theologians have been dissatisfied with the terminology of "consecration to Mary" since the word "consecration" readily evokes images of material things (a chalice, an altar) rather than persons, and in any case the word is normally reserved to the realm of the adoration due to God alone. Is it appropriate, some have wondered, to speak of a consecration directed to Mary, one of God's creatures? In any case, the term "consecration" perhaps echoes the realm of ritual more than missionary outreach.

In searching for an alternative, leading advocates of this kind of Marian dedication have invented different images and vocabularies to express the special apostolic bond with Mary which they wish to inculcate. Montfort, also identifying himself as "missionary of Mary," spoke of a "holy slavery." Maximilian Kolbe and his followers spoke of a "militia of Mary," seeming to imply a hostile and warlike context like those which Kolbe knew both in Poland and during his short time in Japan. Frank Duff harks back to Roman history and to military imagery in speaking of a "Legion of Mary." Pope St. John Paul II, having been deeply influenced by Montfort and by Kolbe, but perhaps dissatisfied with these comparisons in a world which rejects all slavery and is highly critical of militarism, spoke of an "entrustment" (*affidamento* in Italian, *powierzenie* in Polish). On occasion he used the term "alliance of the two hearts of Jesus and Mary."[26]

[25] *Écrits et paroles,* vol. V, nos. 24-26, 38-39; see especially the 5th Meditation of the Retreat of 1817 (vol. V, no. 20, p. 378) for a clear and succinct development of this theme.
[26] See www.christendom-awake.org for details.

Chaminade's vocabulary of "alliance" or "covenant" better echoes the scriptures and underlines the free choice of the faithful person (as opposed to "slavery"), the call to a relationship based on love rather than simple obedience to commands (as opposed to a "militia" or a "legion") and an active role, ready to take initiatives (as opposed to the more passive sense of "entrustment"). Of course, all these parallel metaphors have the capacity to motivate, but Chaminade's original approach of "alliance or covenant with Mary" seems especially valuable. Echoing the biblical history of the Chosen People, it invites us to think of a corporate mission shared with other missionaries of Mary, and of forming "a people of saints," as opposed to a purely individual and private commitment. It invites to an explicit imitation of Jesus as Son of Mary. It stimulates Christians to take active and corporate initiatives for the sake of God's kingdom. Chaminade's contribution enriches and deepens this kind of modern spirituality. It has a great deal to recommend itself to all who feel called to be particularly devoted to Mary and to mission in today's world.

The Name of Mary

Many devout Christians prominently focus on some particular event in Mary's life (e.g. the Annunciation or the Visitation). Others stress some aspect or stance of her personality (e.g. Mother of Good Counsel, or Our Lady of Perpetual Help). Still others highlight some shrine famous for devotion to Mary (e.g. Our Lady of Lourdes or of La Salette). Chaminade's Sodalities for laypeople had a sharp focus from the beginning on the Immaculate Conception, and they celebrated its feast-day, December 8, as their patronal feast. However, after the founding of the Marianist religious societies, Father Chaminade directed that the patronal feast of his two orders for women and men, with an all-encompassing commitment to Mary's mission, should be that of the Holy Name of Mary, celebrated on September 12.[27]

To explain this choice some years later,[28] Chaminade drew a parallel with the Jesuits. St. Ignatius of Loyola had taken the "standard of Jesus" as an integrating image of all Jesuit spirituality and mission and had chosen simply to call his followers the "Society of Jesus." The name of Jesus was their universal focus and somehow their trademark. They celebrated their patronal feast in honor of the naming of Jesus close to the beginning of January, on the feast of the Circumcision (January 1) or on a special day dedicated to his name (January 3). Thus they expressed their desired to identify with all aspects of Jesus' life and personality. Similarly, Chaminade felt that no single Marian image, doctrine, event or "mystery" was sufficient to express the relationship with Mary he wished to inculcate. He preferred to take a more universal approach that would integrate into the Marianist religious vocation the whole of Christian life in all its aspects. He wished his followers to see all their activity – not only prayer but also ministry, community, the practice of the vows, daily chores, personal use of time and

[27] *Lettres de M. Chaminade*, vol. I, no. 246, pp. 443-444 (letter to Mother Adèle, dated 22 August 1823).
[28] *Lettres,* vol. V, no. 1163, p. 74 (August 24, 1839, to retreat preachers of 1839). Translation of passages from letters is my own.

energy – as the result of their comprehensive dedication to Mary. Everything was to be done in Mary's name.

Chaminade was fully mindful of the fact that In the Bible personal names usually stand for the whole person and point to that person's role or mission. Thus he chose the day in the liturgical calendar dedicated to Mary's name (September 12) as the patronal feast for his religious. He wanted them to celebrate, not one particular aspect or event, but the very person of Mary herself, expressed in her name. Bearing her name signified the desire to ground in her the whole of the religious commitment. Chaminade wanted his religious societies to glory in bearing Mary's name, to undertake their ministries in her name (for example, creating schools named *Collège Sainte-Marie, St. Mary's, Our Lady, Santa María, Marianum*, *Morning Star, Star of the Sea*) and to celebrate her name-day as their own. Chaminade wanted his followers to consider the name of Mary as their own (Brothers of Mary, Marianists), their distinctive mark of identity.

Dedication to Mary's name was not to be seen as a private act of piety but as a participation in mission affecting all dimensions of human life: "What I regard as the proper characteristic of our Orders," he wrote, "and what I consider unprecedented in all known foundations, I repeat, is that it is in her name and for her glory that we embrace the religious life."[29] In the Founder's mind, the focus on Mary's name, rather than on any event or special title, implied a totality and universality of commitment. His religious were to be people who devoted their entire lives in as full a way as possible to the service of Mary. Focusing on the "name of Mary" was understood as a way of subsuming every aspect of life into an integral and all-embracing religious commitment.

In particular, Chaminade stressed that actions like classroom teaching of "secular" subjects should be seen as a work of "missionaries" and a means necessary for the "regeneration of contemporary society in all its situations and conditions."[30] Such seemingly secular work was also to be done "in the name of Mary." He stressed that the Society was "essentially missionary in the whole of its members" and described its "great objective" as "the support of religion, the multiplication of Christians, the sharing of the faith." Chaminade felt that dedication to the name of Mary was the best method to express such a vast and comprehensive commitment of the entire person to the service of God's plan. This plan had been first realized in Mary and it was still confided to her as an ongoing mission.

A particularly forceful understanding of the role of Mary in more recent salvation history was also echoed in his choice of the feast of the Holy Name of Mary. The feast had originated in local celebrations in Spain, but it was extended to the universal Church by Pope Innocent XI in thanksgiving for the decisive victory of combined Christian forces on September 12, 1683 on the outskirts of Vienna. In this battle, captained by the Polish general Jan Sobieski, Turkish invaders were decisively and finally repulsed from their effort to take over the Christian countries of central Europe. Under the leadership of Sobieski and the inspiration of powerful Capuchin preachers, the Christian forces

[29] *Lettres,* vol. V, no. 1163, p. 75 (August 24, 1839, to retreat preachers of 1839).
[30] *Lettres,* vol. II, no. 388, p. 177 (15 February 1826, to Fr. Noailles).

entered this battle in the name of Mary, struggling to save what they considered to be the civilization of her Son. Thus this feast became a celebration of the dynamism of Mary and her victorious power in defeating enemies that threaten God's People. In focusing on this feast, Chaminade was emphasizing that Marianist religious were to understand their mission as a struggle to assure the spreading of the true faith in each time and place.

The feast of the Holy Name of Mary highlights a strong and assertive role of Mary in the life of the Christian community. To this strong and assertive role Chaminade called Marianist religious to commit the whole of their lives and energies. They were to be proud to bear the name of Mary and to do everything for her glory.

Conclusion on Chaminade's Thought

Thus, in his long life and ministry, Chaminade moved from a base in the widely shared traditions of Christian devotion common in his generation to a distinctive and all-embracing approach to Mary which could motivate lives of total service and dedication. His characteristic approaches, as we have seen, came to include a focus on Mary as Mother of Youth, Woman of Faith, and Spiritual Mother of Christians. He viewed Mary as bearing a special mission in the entire history of salvation and invited disciples to share in that mission. They were to commit themselves to being Missionaries of Mary in close union with the Apostolic See. He urged them to struggle under Mary's guidance, seeing her as the victorious apocalyptic woman who was to crush the serpent's head in modern times. He urged them to make an Alliance with her, and professedly to act in her Name.

A number of these characteristic themes were synthesized in the later work of the Founder, for example in the Constitutions of the Society of Mary which he submitted to the approval of the Holy See in 1838, and in the little "Treatise on Our Knowledge of Mary" composed by Fr. Jean-Baptiste Fontaine under Chaminade's guidance, which was attached to the last edition (1844) of the *Manual of the Servant of Mary.*

Taken together, these characteristic Chaminadean themes combine to create a distinctive Marian outlook that is original and dynamic, ready to be play a role at the service of the shattered post-revolutionary Church in France and its successors in the subsequent ages of modern Catholicism.

III. MARIANISTS AND AN EMERGING LOWER-MIDDLE CLASS, STRUGGLING FOR THE "DOMAIN OF THE SCHOOLS": MARY AS EDUCATOR AND MOTHER

Despite the richness of these developments, after the Founder's death knowledge of his doctrine was greatly eclipsed. Unfortunately, the bitter disputes of his final years led

Marianist leaders to adopt a policy of silence about him. In the Second Empire (1852-71), Marianists shifted their focus and definitively shaped their organization as a teaching congregation. They continued to live an intense life of devotion to Mary, but the broad missionary and historic perspectives that characterized the Founder's vision became narrower, focused on their educational ministry. The Marianist charism became in a way narrowed, standardized, even routinized in the work of school-teaching.

Intent on this all-absorbing ministry, Marianists focused on Mary's role as mother and educator, cultivating and passing on a tradition of culture, spirituality and faith to new generations. They also developed a distinctive educational approach, articulated in great detail in a series of pedagogical manuals[31] which aimed to inculcate and articulate a Marian style of educational ministry.

This intense, all but exclusive focus on school education led the second and several succeeding generations of Marianists to stress Mary's role as mother and educator, cultivating and passing on a tradition of spirituality and faith to new generations of young people. In France, where the overwhelming majority of Marianists lived and worked, the Falloux Law of 1850 opened new possibilities. Along with great numbers of religious of other congregations, Marianists were employed in the work of education in government-funded schools, especially primary schools, across large swaths of the French countryside, in the Midi, in Franche-Comté, in Alsace, and eventually more broadly, reaching into the hinterlands of Paris, into Brittany and the Vendée, the Pas-de-Calais, Lorraine and occasionally elsewhere.

School education does not seem to have been prominent in the initial thinking of either the Founder or his disciples in 1817, but Marianists quickly devoted themselves fully and almost exclusively to this ministry, with active encouragement from Chaminade. Education in schools seemed to be a work uniquely adapted both to their abilities and to the needs of the Church and general society in their time. By 1825, less than a decade after their foundation, Marianist religious men and women were engaged in this work in growing numbers of places across France. In that year the Founder applied for civil approbation for the Society of Mary as an organization dedicated to the primary education of youth.

The context for this rapid development is the newly urgent desire for universal primary education. Social changes were making literacy and numeracy highly desirable for everyone. In France the bulk of the population remained semi-rural throughout the nineteenth century, but the urbanized proportion steadily increased, moving from 25% in 1800 to 45% by 1914.[32] Most French people lived in countless semi-rural hamlets, but these centers began to take on some urban characteristics, with post offices, markets, banks, offices for doctors and lawyers, schools, and eventually railroad stations.

[31] The first of these pedagogy manuals, from 1829-30, in which Chaminade had a directive hand, are included in *Écrits et paroles,* vol VII, docs. 1-8.
[32] See *Industrialization and Urbanization: Studies in Interdisciplinary History*, ed. Theodore K. Rabb and Robert I. Rotberg (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981).

Eighteenth-century Europeans had not considered basic elementary education – fundamental literacy and numeracy – necessary for the rural masses. By 1800, however, it was evident that elementary literacy was essential for purposes of communication, work and citizenship in a rapidly developing society. City dwellers desired new and higher levels of communication and exchange of information. Those employed in factories, unlike agricultural workers, needed to decipher standardized directions for their tasks and to observe an obligatory timetable. Soldiers enrolled in the huge armies first spawned by the Napoleonic Wars needed to follow instructions and observe military uniformity. Governments depended increasingly on the votes of people who could be reached by political propaganda and cast legible ballots. Means of communication, especially newspapers and pamphlets, multiplied rapidly.

In France, politics became intricately involved with the extension of primary education. Each in the series of national governments which succeeded and replaced one another in the eight decades between 1789 and 1871 (three republics, three kingdoms, two empires) sought to capture the loyalty of the people and form a national mentality, whether royalist or republican, devoutly religious or secular and anti-clerical. Each group contended to gain the loyalty of the population and reach them by the rapidly expanding media of popular publicity. Politicians advocated universal primary education for the masses, not to form the people as independent thinkers but rather to influence them and gain their support, forming widely shared public mentalities. For these purposes, everyone seemed to agree that schools should be established everywhere. As the nineteenth century progressed, councils of towns and municipalities took up this task with vigor.

In this movement the *petite bourgeoisie* (or what in English is known as the "lower middle class") played the key role: people who were neither peasants nor aristocrats, neither wealthy nor impoverished. This emerging class is richly sketched in such well-known literature as Victor Hugo's *Les Misérables*, Gustave Flaubert's *Madame Bovary*, and many tales in Balzac's *Comédie humaine.* Members of this emergent class quickly developed their own characteristic outlooks. They took the gains of the Revolution for granted, without interesting themselves greatly in its ideology. Universal primary education for this class provided the clerks and officials, the traders and secretaries who were increasingly necessary. Popular support of successive governments depended above all on their ability to influence or manipulate this lower middle-class.

It is interesting to reflect that Chaminade himself had his origins in this class, having been born and educated as a son of a small merchant in a small city. Tensions in his own family between supporters of the Revolution (like his brother François) and unwavering religionists (his three priest-brothers) probably reflect a widespread situation among this lower middle class. Chaminade spent all his life predominantly in similar milieux, working for the most part with faithful from backgrounds comparable to his own, and migrating in young adulthood from a smallish city in the countryside to a

major commercial center.[33] He was well equipped to understand and respond to the mentality of the lower middle class. The Marianist Family began in Bordeaux as an urban phenomenon solidly anchored in this class. Most of the early members of the Madeleine Sodality and also of the religious Societies seem to have come from this milieu, although as time went on and the schools staffed by the religious reached farther into the hinterlands, more and more religious who entered in the second and succeeding generations of Marianist history seem to have been sons and daughters of farmers.

Opposing French ideological groups desired to gain control of the universal primary education which was to determine the future of the nation. The idea of a non-ideological education was hardly even imagined. Given the limited pool of people available and willing to serve as teachers for the huge number of lower-middle-class pupils, the options were in stark contrast. In many towns the school masters would be either local free-thinkers from the political left with a smattering of education in the secular Enlightenment tradition, or local religious men and women formed and guided by the Church. Chaminade himself describes this situation, in writing to Pope Gregory XVI, as "a struggle for the domain of the schools."[34] The struggle was real, a fight for the future of the national mentality, for the "soul" of France. In the light of this struggle, Chaminade's much cherished but unrealized plan to blanket the country with a network of departmental teacher-training schools (*écoles normales*) was logical and creative.

This new pedagogical struggle would absorb the energies of several generations of Marianists. For them, a new and simple image of Mary seems to come spontaneously to mind. Mary could easily be understood as educator and mother, one who patiently passed on the riches of a religion-based culture, one who had dealt steadily and untiringly with the development of the child Jesus, and thus a model for a distinctive style and spirituality adapted to those who deal with children and adolescents. No theological subtleties were necessary to see Mary in this light.

In the *Constitutions* for Marianist religious which he submitted for the Pope's approval in September of 1838, after nearly a decade of consultation with the religious, Chaminade himself developed the image of Mary as gentle educator, adding this approach to the mariological perspectives noted above. This approach was less complex than his earlier, subtler mission-oriented Mariology, but it was capable of strongly motivating religious educator-missionaries in the long campaign for universal literacy.

In the Constitutions of the Society of Mary (1839), Chaminade speaks of the religious as Mary's "humble servants and ministers," ready to "immolate themselves in order to save souls which are so dear" to Jesus and Mary" (1839, art. 252). He speaks of the Society's preference for the "surest and easiest" way to "secure the salvation of souls," namely, to educate "the poorest and youngest children" without excluding other groups. He urges his religious educators to take up in their work the "solicitude and sweetness of Jesus and Mary" (art. 253). He wants them to focus on institutions which could reach the

[33] In this respect Chaminade contrasted with several of his key associates coming from the minor aristocracy like Mother Adèle de Batz de Trenquelléon and Marie-Thérèse de Lamourous.
[34] *Lettres de M. Chaminade*, vol. IV, no. 1076 (16 September 1838).

masses: "free primary schools, preparatory primary Schools, higher schools, Normal Schools, and Arts and Trades Schools" (art. 254).

His Constitutions urge the religious, "as soon as they are put in charge of an establishment or of a class" to "envisage Jesus and Mary confiding their children to him" and reminding them that "it is not the will of the Father that one of these little ones should perish" (Matt. 18:14; art. 2xx). The religious were urged to "penetrate themselves with all the sentiments of our Savior and the tenderness of Mary," praying and doing penance for their pupils, to make up "for the deficiencies caused by their weakness and ignorance" (art. 259). The religious were to cultivate "the heart of a teacher filled with the love of God" (art. 260). They were to give special attention to patience, an "unalterable calm" and to respect the rhythms of human growth (art. 261). Marianist religious teachers were exhorted to gather the more devout children into "little societies" (junior versions of the Bordeaux Sodality) in order to cultivate prayer and the sacramental life. In these groups it was possible, Chaminade believed, to fortify children, individually and collectively, against temptations. All school sodalities were to be "under the invocation and protection of Mary, the Immaculate Virgin," cultivating "a true devotion to, and a filial confidence in, her whom they should call their Mother in heaven" (art. 263).

Thus, young Marianist teachers were invited to develop a personalist, familial style largely based on the example of Mary as mother and educator. This Marian style of educational work is made clearly explicit by the brilliant first Marianist, Jean-Baptiste Lalanne (1795-1879), in addresses given during his years as head of prestigious Marianist schools in Paris.[35] For example, in 1852, as head of the first Marianist school in the capital, he inspired the parents who constitute his audience:

> "The name of Mary! It betokens the tenderness of a mother raised to the degree of a supernatural virtue. The name of Mary! It stands for the purity of innocence, safeguarded by the force of a special grace from God. The name of Mary! It is zeal of Divine Charity in alliance with patience in labor, and generosity in sacrifice. The name of Mary! It is the contentment and joy of the heart in the simplicity and seclusion of the most humble ministry. Happy are those who have comprehended and believed all that this pious name signifies in wise counsel and good example: happy are they of whom I am the representative, who have adopted it long ago and placed it as a seal on their institutions and undertakings."[36] (SpF III, p. 568).

This Marian style of education was to become an easily understood inspiration for the Marianist mission of hundreds of future religious. It was to determine the characteristic Marianist mission, particularly among lower middle-class children of the later nineteenth century in the Midi, Alsace, Switzerland, Austria, Belgium, the United States and elsewhere.

[35] See *Spirit of Our Foundation*, vol. III, pp. 566 ff.
[36] *Ibid.,* p. 568.

As the religious, later under the Third Republic after 1871 were constrained to move into different sociocultural contexts, both in France itself under pressure from anti-clerical educational policies, and then in countries like Spain, Italy, and Japan, they carried with them this devotional outlook that inculcated an educational style in which Mary played a key role as model. With time a somewhat higher group in society came into their purview. But Marian devotion was still intimately linked, explicitly and implicitly, to a mission as educators.

IV. FILIAL PIETY TO MARY: MARIANISTS ADAPT TO THE CATHOLIC BOURGEOISIE

After the 1870's Marianist ministry in France, responding to new political circumstances, began gradually to shift toward the service of a somewhat more prosperous social class than the *petite bourgeoisie* in the countryside. Circumstances propelled Marianists toward a more prosperous bourgeoisie group, still clearly middle-class, but composed of professionals, officials and modestly successful businessmen, many of them living in cities.

In the last third of the nineteenth century this traditionalist but prospering group eventually came to dominate French Catholicism. Its members were looking for stability, respectability, preservation of traditions, support for conventional family life, and the maintenance of the French Catholic ethos. This group was clearly under attack from anti-clericals who managed to maintain political dominance well into the twentieth century. To defend themselves, Catholics grouped together in associations of like-minded people who sought to preserve their faith while successfully pursuing cultural, social, economic, recreational and educational purposes in a rapidly changing society. A vibrant life of popular devotions provided opportunities for these groups to give public expression to their faith and their community life.

Marianists in the last third of the nineteenth century developed a new devotional and doctrinal approach to Mary in response to this situation. The new Marianist doctrine of "filial piety to Mary" was especially adapted to members of this developing, traditionalist but upwardly mobile middle class.

Confrontation of French Ideologies in the Nineteenth Century

To understand this evolution, it is necessary to trace the key contours of the ideological divide which long characterized post-revolutionary French society. In reaction to the brutal shock of the Revolution of 1789, which nearly destroyed previously existing ecclesiastical structures, French Catholicism in the nineteenth century was dominated by defensive traditionalists, many of whom were also reactionary monarchists who refused

to take part in public democratic life. Many Catholic leaders, clerical and lay, opted for a return to something very close to the *ancient régime,* in which the Catholic heritage, proudly interpreted with a Gallican slant, would form the all-embracing ideology of national life. This movement saw France as the much vaunted and prestigious "eldest daughter of the Church." This movement clearly predominated in religious circles from the fall of Napoleon 1815 on to the end of the century.

Chaminade's avoidance of overt political stances is significant in the light of the steadily increasing rightward turn of most Church leaders in his old age. Perhaps he was not really in disagreement with this trend but simply prolonging the policy of political non-involvement which had served him well during the chaotic years of Revolution and Napoleonic dominance. In any case, the Church around him, including many of his disciples, grew steadily more conservative and resistant to new political developments, while Chaminade remained loath to promote any particular political ideology.

After the Founder's death, under the Second Empire of Napoleon III (1852-71), the French government took a rightward trend. A key option of the Second Empire was to facilitate the spread of Catholic schools, using public funds to employ an eager work-force of youthful religious women and men who saw universal primary education as an arena in which they could shape the development of culture. In the same period, France became the political and military protectress of the Holy See in its battles against Italian nationalist anti-clericals. A defensive and ultra-montane Church of France erected its monument in the form of the great basilica overlooking Paris from the top of Montmartre, explicitly constructed in the 1870's in reparation for the sins of the Revolutionary era. Inspired by ultraconservative calls against social change emanating from Popes Gregory XVI (e.g. *Mirari vos,* 1832) and Pius IX (e.g. *The Syllabus of Errors* and *Quanta cura*, 1864), French Catholic leaders long resisted any efforts for compromise with the rising politicians of the left wing. Such resistance at high levels continued for many decades, even when calls for compromise (*ralliement*) emanated from Rome itself during the reign of Pope Leo XIII.

Many prominent leaders of this anti-republican restorationist mentality were descendants of the old nobility. But their supporters were varied. Reactionaries usually met with acceptance from the bulk of the peasantry, distrustful of change, greatly influenced by their clergy, and still deeply tied to their land and (despite all resentments) to their traditional landlords. Many of the more prosperous sections of the middle class also allied themselves with reactionary forces, because these forces were regarded as guarantors of order, stability, and solid traditions, holding out hope for slow but steady upward mobility. This powerful group, which may easily be likened to the Victorians of the same era in the English-speaking world, emphasized the virtues of thrift, hard work, respectability, conventional morality, honesty, self-assurance, order, tradition, dependability and predictability. They can be roughly compared, in 21st century terms, to defenders of "family values" and "continuity," as opposed to proponents of new "human rights" and "social change."

The radical enemies of this traditionalist and restorationist mentality were mostly led by successful capitalists and industrial magnates, and they won the support of workers in the new industries, university students and migrants to the rapidly expanding cities (Paris above all). Taking on a smattering of Enlightenment ideals and rejecting the influence of the Church, these were the people who felt they had ultimately gained the most from the revolutionary ferment. Their ideology stressed free-thinking, optimism about progress, individual rights, attachment to the Republic, and anti-clericalism. They tended to band together under the banner of Free-Masonry. This group held fast to an unshakeable confidence in human reason, which was thought to be capable of solving all problems without any need for help from revelation or tradition. Like their Revolutionary forebears, the dominant republicans believed that society was malleable and due for a liberal and logical refashioning. Their key values were modernity, the prime authority of the State over all other social forces, liberty, equality and fraternity. Their monument, facing down Montmartre from the banks of the Seine, was the Eiffel Tower, erected by a free-thinking industrialist in celebration of the first centenary of the Revolution.

Neither side of this long-lasting ideological divide seemed to harbor doubts about French superiority. In this apogee of French cultural dominance, both groups were convinced that France was called to show the way into modern society. A self-assured, dominant, colonialist French ethos, both sides agreed, was called to bring high culture to the rest of the world. But would this French ethos be secularist or religious?

By the 1890's French society seemed permanently polarized between reactionary traditionalists and anti-clerical republicans. It is impossible to be precise in calculating their relative weight at different points in the nineteenth century, but the traditionalists clearly held power in their hands during the Second Empire (1852-71), while the republicans steadily imposed their ideas during the long era of the Third Republic from 1871 on. Despite some more moderate voices, Catholic leadership remained steadily, often intransigently, traditionalist throughout this long period. Only after World War I, under pressure from evident facts and from progressive Popes, did the dominant leaders of French Catholicism, clerical and lay, come to accept an accommodation (*ralliement*) with republic governments.

The Marianists in Social Context

For the Society of Mary, then overwhelmingly composed of French citizens, many from very humble backgrounds, these political pressures played a major role. From 1871 on, the dominant anti-clerical leadership in the Third Republic directed events, step by step, to a culmination in 1903 in the wholesale expulsion of religious, not only from school teaching but from all visible and legal existence in the country. Over the final decades of the nineteenth century, it became increasingly difficult and eventually impossible for the Society to maintain its link to the lower middle-class in the French countryside.

In 1903, under the draconian measures of the Law of Associations, 95 Marianist schools (along with thousands under the auspices of other religious congregations) were summarily nationalized, sold for the benefit of the Republic, and forbidden to hire religious teachers or administrators.[37] This expulsion was followed in 1905 by the Combes Law which enshrined the policy of *laïcité,* separating Church from State and renouncing the Concordat with Rome which had been negotiated under the first Napoleon. In France, unlike many other countries, separation of Church and state did not signify a benign and non-interfering division of powers and spheres of influence, but rather a mutually hostile attitude, which has still not been wholly erased more than a century later.

Despite these pressures, Marianists grew to their highest number in France during the long period from 1845 to 1903.[38] At the end of Chaminade's active leadership in 1845, there were 310 Marianists. When his successor, Fr. Caillet, completed his term in 1868, the total number of Marianist men religious had more than tripled, to 1076, still overwhelmingly French citizens. For them, political and religious developments meant that their ministry in primary schools, largely in small towns, mushroomed rapidly during the Second Empire of Napoleon III. Thus in the early 1850's, the Society sent its very young members to as many as 10-12 new schools in rural municipalities every year. With the help of the policies of the Second Empire, there could no longer be any doubt that the Society of Mary was a "teaching congregation," devoted almost exclusively to this apostolate and principally at the primary level. The young members of the Society, many fresh out of the novitiate, found their key inspiration in the figure of Mary as educator and mother discussed above.

The situation of Marianists gradually changed under the Third Republic after 1871. In this era anti-clerical forces first imposed challenging requirements for granting the teaching license (*brevet*) – a good thing in itself, but one which aimed to slow down any increase in the number of religious teachers. Then, in the mid-1880's French municipalities were forbidden to hire any members of religious orders as teachers in publicly funded schools. This measure was implemented gradually and inconsistently, depending largely on the ideology of political leaders in each municipality and on the local availability of other teachers. But over time it meant that religious communities were forced to withdraw from most of their free schools in small country towns and concentrate their members in private institutions without any public financing, dependent on the payment of fees, often in larger towns. Naturally this meant a focus on a rather more prosperous public, no longer on "the most numerous and the most abandoned" whom the Founder had targeted.[39]

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[37] Marianist schools were auctioned off by a liquidator, E. Duez, who was shortly afterwards condemned for corruption and deported to Guyana. Close to half of the schools eventually returned through various legal maneuvers to tacit Marianist control or influence, but they could not display any open signs of a religious character.

[38] Statistics drawn from L. Cada, SM and Carol Ramey, *Basic Handbook of Marianist Studies*, 4th edition (Dayton: NACMS, 2015 on-line at www.nacms.org), p. 8.

[39] *Lettres de M. Chaminade,* vol. IV, no. 1076 (16 September 1838) to Pope Gregory XVI.

Such Catholic schools, with a strong Catholic and somewhat traditionalist identity, increasingly became the ambiance of a burgeoning Marianist mission. Prosperous rural Catholic parents often chose to send their children away from home to Marianist boarding schools, while larger Marianist schools reaching the secondary level were founded in places, especially cities, which could support them. More than previously, the religious teachers were set apart from local population, and they had to concentrate their attention on groups of parents and students from somewhat more comfortable backgrounds, who expected more out of their schooling than basic literacy.

In the life of the religious, as Kaufmann has noted in reference to the United States,[40] it was possible to experience a certain dichotomy between the mentality in the school and that within the religious community. In the school Marianist religious were committed to modern life, integrating the study of science and business, adaptable and innovative. Meanwhile, within the religious community, they were expected to adhere strictly to tradition and conformity, uniform regularity being prized for everyone.[41]

Through this gradual evolution in the publics served, the number of Marianist male religious kept growing. We have good statistics for the year 1902, near the end of Fr. Simler's generalate, three decades after the forced closure of all Marianist schools under Prussian rule in Alsace and also three decades after the beginning of anti-clerical dominance in France, on the eve of wholesale expulsion of religious from their country of origin. In that year, despite the many threatening influences, the total number of Marianists had nearly doubled from the figures given above for 1868, to a total of 2048, more than 1600 of whom were French.[42]

"Filial Piety": A Spirituality Adapted to this Context

For rising middle-class Catholic publics - devout, upwardly mobile, feeling threatened by anti-clerical secular politics, and in search of articulate and eloquent defense of the Catholic tradition - a series of prominent French ecclesiastical writers from the 1870's on developed a spirited defense and reaffirmation of Catholic tradition, sometimes called

[40] Christopher J. Kauffman *Education and Transformation: Marianist Ministries in America since 1849* (New York: Crossroad, 1999), pp. 134 and *passim.*
[41] See Antonio Gascón Aranda, *Historia general de la Compañía de María* (Madrid: Servicio de Publicaciones Marianistas, 2010), vol. II, pp. 765-779, 846-852 and *passim* on this theme of "regularity."
[42] Meanwhile, the much smaller number of Marianists working in the foundations made earlier outside France (Switzerland, the United States, Germany, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Hawaii) tended to continue their focus on the lower middle class. But from 1887 on, burgeoning new foundations in Spain, Italy and Japan extended Marianist educational service to substantial local bourgeois classes eager to bring their sons up to the prestigious French level.

the "piety movement." Prominent among these voices were Bishops Charles Gay,[43] and Maurice d'Hulst,[44] and Cardinal Louis-Edouard Pie, Archbishop of Poitiers.

Drawing on their writings and inspired by their example, Father Simler seems to have felt that a new spiritual approach to Mary was needed. His aim was to provide deeper theological bases and to mold the middle-class public of Marianist schools into a unified and thoroughly orthodox voice in French Catholicism. Simler and his disciples wanted to propose, both to the religious and to laity under their influence, an easily understandable, motivating devotional life that would link Catholics together and give them a sense of community under Marianist auspices. For such Catholics, Simler gradually developed a body of spiritual teaching and devotional practice centered on the concept of "filial piety" directed toward Mary, in imitation of Jesus. Such filial piety was declared to be the fundamental trait of the Society of Mary.

In this context "piety" is understood, not only as devout religious practice, but also in the root sense of the Latin word *pietas*, so familiar to students of the Aeneid, denoting fidelity to familial duty, emphasizing respect and consideration between parents and children. Simler's doctrine of filial piety took its cue from strongly felt bonds of kinship in the immediate home. He frequently invoked the model of the Holy Family of Nazareth – a devotion especially beloved among late nineteenth-century Catholics. The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph served as a model for ideal family life and ultimately for all human relations.[45]

Simler thus introduced a novel approach in the presentation of the Marianist charism. Like Chaminade, he stressed the link between devotion to Mary and imitation of Christ,[46] who "associated her in all his mysteries."[47] Both Chaminade and Simler inculcated the need to imitate Jesus precisely as Mary's Son. But Chaminade laid greater stress on a missionary alliance with Mary, while Simler focused more on intimate spiritual life. Simler's "filial piety" was very family-centered, emphasizing dutifulness as a son to Mary, and highlighting the explicit analogy with the Holy Family of Nazareth. Simler even extended this parallel to the inner life of the Blessed Trinity,[48] stating at one point that Mary "forms an order apart, nearer to the higher order of the Creator than the lower order of creatures."[49]

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[43] *La vie et les vertus chrétiennes* (1872), *Les conferences aux Mères chrétiennes* (1877), *Fleurs de doctrine et de piété* (1882) and many other volumes of "spiritual reading."

[44] Founder and rector of the *Institut Catholique* in Paris, author of *L'éducation supérieure* (Paris, 1886); *Le Droit chrétien et le Droit moderne* (Paris, 1886), *Mélanges philosophiques* (2nd ed., 1903); *Mélanges oratoires* (Paris, 1891 and 1892) and *Conférences de Notre-Dame* in 6 volumes (Paris, 1891–96).

[45] Devotion to the Holy Family can be traced back to St. François de Laval in seventeenth-century Quebec. The feast of the Holy Family was instituted in 1893 by Pope Leo XIII. References to the Holy Family are particularly frequent and fervent in nineteenth-century Catholic spirituality.

[46] *Constitutions* of 1839, art. 5: "Devotion to Mary is…the most salient point in the imitation of Jesus Christ."

[47] *Constitutions* of 1839, art. 5 and *Constitutions* of 1891, art. 4.

[48] Cf. *Constitutions of 1891,* art. 303.

[49] *Instruction sur la piété* (Circular no. 10, 28 June 1878), p. 24.

Simler thus took what later came to be identified as a Christocentric, as opposed to an ecclesio-centric or anthropo-centric approach to Mary. Besides the more familiar focus on going to Jesus through Mary, Simler and followers invite the faithful to go to Mary through Jesus, that is, to become devout and dutiful sons of Mary, considering her as their spiritual mother and imitating the attitudes of the first of dutiful sons, Jesus himself.

Both Chaminade and Simler focused on Mary as spiritual mother and as model and inspiration for Christian life. Both developed a close sense of union with Mary in all spiritual life and in ministry; but their accents are different, largely influenced by the different audiences they have in mind.

Even before Simler, Jean Lalanne (1795-1879), close but problematic disciple of Chaminade, the first male Marianist religious, had in fact been a forerunner of Marianist presence and ministry to an upwardly mobile middle class. Himself a representative of this class, Lalanne had already developed a devotional approach to Mary which appealed to it. From the beginning of the Society of Mary, Lalanne had argued that his fellow religious should focus their educational work on a more prosperous middle class, leaving the children of the nobility and *haute bourgeoisie* to the Jesuits and those of the poor to the Christian Brothers of de la Salle (*ignorantins*).[50] While the majority of his fellow religious in the 1820's until the Third Republic, as we have seen, focused on primary education in the countryside, Lalanne led a small band of religious in serving more prosperous Catholic groups and in developing Marianist education for the newly developing secondary level, first at Gray, then St. Remy, then Bordeaux, Layrac, and later at Paris and Cannes. Lalanne published numerous essays and discourses on education, in which he articulated progressive pedagogical creativity. Thus he made the Marianists enjoy a modest reputation for progressive pedagogy for societal leaders, even while the majority of his fellow religious were working in country primary schools.[51]

Lalanne became the first Marianist director of Collège Stanislas in Paris, serving a clearly prosperous group of professionals, military officers and government officials and at times reaching up into the privileged aristocracy. As time went on, his Stanislas came to be identified as the exemplar of Marianist education worldwide. For more than 40 years its campus included the headquarters of the Society's General Administration. Stanislas was a model to be reproduced in new foundations in the French colonies of North Africa and in such countries as Spain, Italy, and Japan.

The focus of this kind of Marianist education for a bit more privileged upper-middle class was less to transform society than to enable good Christians to transcend the great ideological divide of their time and succeed, finding a secure place within the existing,

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[50] Reference to pamphlet of 1858, Jean Ph. Auguste Lalanne, *Notice historique sur la Société de Marie de la Congrégation de* Bordeaux, ed. A Albano (*La Gerbe*, no. 3): Rome, 1996. Where does he speak of the *ignorantins?*

[51] See *The Spirit of Our Foundation* (Dayton: Mount St. John, 1920), vol. III, pp. 566 ff. for a selection of Lalanne's addresses on education. Lalanne's educational approaches are cited by Cardinal John Henry Newman in the opening discourse of *The Idea of a University* (Chicago: Loyola Univesity Press, 1927), p. 27.

highly secular environment. Such an outlook appealed to people who were at once fully modern and still anchored in their Catholic tradition. Lalanne's explicit linking of Mary to this kind of educational work impressed many. Without using the term "filial piety," Lalanne from the 1850's was already adapting Marianist spirituality and mission for a successful professional class. He presented Mary to the parents of students as a model educator, an example of tenderness, innocence, purity, patience, simplicity, generosity and "a distinguished family tradition."[52] Thus he brought together most of the elements which Simler, a bit later, combined as a basis for a new approach to Mary.

Simler in turn developed his new approach to Mary gradually. The term "filial piety" appears occasionally in earlier Marianist writings (though not in those of the Founder), but without always directly referring to Mary.[53] Among Simler's first circulars as Superior General was a very lengthy treatises on "piety" with substantial sections on "Mary as masterpiece of divine piety" and as "source, channel and mother of piety," and on Jesus as "model of filial piety." This circular for the first time qualifies the Marianist vow of stability as a "vow of filial piety toward the Blessed Virgin."[54]

Building on this foundation, Simler's doctrine of filial piety was developed in the text of the Constitutions which he submitted to successive General Chapters in 1881 and 1886 and eventually to the approval of the Roman Curia. Especially noteworthy was the new thirtieth and final chapter Simler composed for Book I of the Constitutions, on the "characteristic virtues of the children of the Society of Mary." This final chapter, much loved by succeeding generations of Marianists, clearly states: "that which may be considered as the gift of God for the Society of Mary, that which constitutes its physiognomy and forms its distinctive feature, is a truly filial piety towards the Blessed Virgin Mary" (art. 293). The chapter continues with a treatment of other key virtues as "most conspicuous in the family of Nazareth" especially "humility, simplicity, the spirit of faith and mental prayer, and the family spirit" (art. 296). The chapter concludes by alluding again to the example of the family of Nazareth (art. 303) and by evoking the Marianist's "happiness in bearing the name of Mary," and "acting under the inspiration of filial piety toward Mary" especially by "laboring for the glory of his Mother" (art. 305).

On the basis of this constitutional chapter, Simler himself wrote a lengthy treatise on the "Characteristic Traits of the Society of Mary," published as his Circular no.62 to the religious in July, 1894. In this substantial treatise, the second chapter is fully devoted to filial piety to Mary.

Against this ample background, succeeding generations of Marianists developed a considerable body of devotional and catechetical literature, booklets, pamphlets and prayer cards, culminating in Emil Neubert's enormously successful booklet of 1933

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[52] *The Spirit of Our Foundation* (Dayton: Mount St. John, 1920), vol. III, pp. 585 ff.

[53] Occasionally as a kind of synonym for "devotion," then in a series of examens by Fr. Chevaux, and in a work of spirituality for novices by Bro. François Girardet. See E. Neubert, *Notre Don de Dieu* (Paris: Mame, 1954), pp. 126-127. See the illuminating summary of Lawrence Cada on early use of this term by Marianists in *A Short History of Marianist Spirituality* in the series "Modern Theology and Marianist Spirituality" (Madrid, 2000), pp. 91 ff.

[54] Joseph Simler, *Circulaire* no. 10: "Instruction sur la piété," pp. 75-76.

entitled *My Ideal: Jesus Son of Mary.* This work has remained in print ever since as a popular devotional work; it has reached more than a half million people and been translated into more than twenty languages.

In developing this rather original approach, Marianists evidently struck a resonant chord. The devotional concept of "filial piety to Mary" proved highly capable of touching the hearts of ordinary Catholics, eventually even in realms otherwise foreign to the influence of Marianist religious. This approach had great appeal for the middle-class ideal of dutiful family life. "Filial piety" became the leading formulation of Marianist spirituality from the 1880's until the Second Vatican Council (1965). It enjoyed growing success and over time came to be identified as the distinctively Marianist approach to Mary.

The new approach of Simler and his followers was simple and easy to understand, drawing on analogies from family relationships and especially appealing for people who felt under attack from secular approaches to family, faith, duty and morality. It was a spirituality that appealed, especially in an age of Marian maximalism in the Church, to people who wished to keep one foot grounded in Catholic devotion and tradition, but another in the evolving new social climate. In this sense "filial piety" may be seen as a spirituality for an upwardly mobile but still threatened middle class, anxious to further its progress in modern society, but not yet pretending to transform that society, rather to defend itself against its hostility. Its followers clung to traditional Catholic values, especially in the life of the family and the local neighborhood. Filial piety as a spirituality also conformed to an ecclesiastical strategy that urged the faithful to a limited acceptance of new social structures without losing a Catholic sense of community and hierarchy.

Filial piety to Mary became a spirituality for Catholic children and their parents (perhaps especially their mothers), motivating them to maintain, defend and interiorize traditional values. Mary came to be seen as the model of devout Catholic family life. In the age of Industrial Revolution and colonialism, Marianist filial piety affirmed disciples to be aggressively united under the leadership of the Holy See to defend much-attacked Catholic doctrine and assert its relevance in modern society. This was a spirituality much at home in the great network of special Catholic associations for all purposes (labor unions, sporting associations, publishing houses, and above all, schools) advocated by the popes and bishops of the era. It fostered devout life in a thoroughly Catholic environment in which principles greatly under attack by secular anti-clericalism could be defended, developed and lived.

"Filial piety to Mary" introduced perhaps a more intimate nuance to devotion and ministry than Chaminade's notion of "missionary alliance." The concept of filial piety was well adapted to supporting the Catholic identity of a vast public which felt assertive but threatened by anti-clerical secular voices stemming from the Enlightenment and the Revolution. Lalanne's and Simler's approaches were less explicit than Chaminade's in attending to cultural change, social awareness, or solidarity with the poorer segments of

society. But ultimately the differences between Chaminade's approach and those of his successors were mainly matters of degree and emphasis, above all of social context.

After the Second Vatican Council, the doctrine of "filial piety to Mary" lost a bit of its sheen, as the Catholic focus on Mary first waned, then shifted, in accord with Council documents, to see Mary as a Type of the Church, icon and model of Christian life, and a bit less as an object of piety in herself.

Today, the rich Marianist heritage of filial piety still motivates many faithful Catholics. It stands at the side of Chaminade's doctrine of missionary alliance as the twin foundations in the heritage of Marianist approaches to Mary.

V. IN SEARCH OF A SPIRITUALITY FOR SOCIAL CHANGE AND CONFLICT

Even as Simler and his followers were spreading the intimate spirituality of filial piety, many Marianists were caught up in particularly tense conflicts concerning social change in the public sphere. The French context sketched above resulted in steadily increasing strictures against educational work by Catholic religious orders. The situation seemed to demand an engagement with the republican government, even though that government - very obviously in France and more subtly in some other countries - was clearly anti-clerical hostile to the Catholic Church. Could such an engagement lead to any good results? "Integrist" Catholics, on the one side, believed any collaboration with the Republic impossible; they remained defensive and reactionary, aiming at the restoration of monarchical or Bonapartist rule. They opposed freedom of speech, thought and religious practice and instead proposed a traditional Catholic stance as the key to national identity. These integrists were countered on the other side by anti-clerical Freemasons, bent on obliterating all Catholic influence on the national mentality. More moderate Catholics, most Marianists among them, were looking for a way forward that could allow them both to maintain the priority of their cherished faith commitment and still take up an active role to counter or mitigate the secularist evolution of civil society.

The Catholic press played a noteworthy role in this conflict. The best known Catholic daily newspaper, *La Croix*, under the control of the Assumptionists, stood unflinchingly against any accommodation with Republican structures, urging its numerous readers to avoid any involvement in what was considered an irredeemable anti-Catholic regime. The role of *La Croix* in fanning anti-Semitic public sentiment in the Dreyfus case is a notorious example of this attitude.

How did Marianists situate themselves in this public context? Marianist works everywhere in France struggled to find a way forward, but the public context had a particularly strong influence on Collège Stanislas in Paris, the Society's most prestigious work, devoted to the education of the children of numerous Catholic professionals, public servants and military officers. Father Simler (who lived on the Stanislas campus) carefully avoided any public stance on the political debates of the era, but the overall

Marianist attitude seems to have been in favor of some kind of accommodation between the Church and the Republic. "*Français et catholique*" was a motto enshrined over the entrance to Marianist schools of the era – not a bland generality but an explicit assertion of the possibility of being fully Catholic while still collaborating in new republican social structures. It was not necessary, this motto affirmed, to choose between a return to an *ancien régime* in which Catholic thinking was the official state ideology, and a republican nation with a participative government which remained neutral or even skeptical in matters of religious faith, dedicated to principles of liberty, equality, and fraternity and to majority rule. The age-old Constantinian alliance of Church and State was not to be seen as an article of Catholic faith. French Catholics could be inspired by both the Montmartre basilica and the Eiffel Tower.

Pope Leo XIII called for *ralliement* – the discerning but activist participation of French Catholics in republican society and government – but his calls were ignored or rejected by *La Croix* and many Catholic political leaders. The encouragement to *ralliement* was blandly ignored even by many Bishops. However, the idea of *ralliement* seems to have been positively received in Marianist circles. New Catholic social and political thinking was echoed in groups of Marianist students and alumni who devoted themselves to social questions and activism under the leadership of such educators as Brother Louis Cousin and Father Joseph Leber. These groups made significant efforts to reach out to the general public, in Paris and eventually in other centers where Marianist educators were present.[55] Marianists attempted to continue this work, seemingly with encouragement from the highest superiors, even after 1903, when their 95 French educational institutions were summarily closed and put up for auction, when Marianist houses of formation, administration and retirement had to be moved beyond French borders, and when 40% of the French members, seeing little future prospects for their Marianist life in their homeland, withdrew from the Society.

Political conflicts in other countries, usually less intense and confrontational but often echoing similar dynamics, motivated Marianists of those countries to follow the example of their confreres in France and make similar efforts at peaceful integration – an approach that might be qualified as "live and let live" or, even better, a respectful dialogue of differences. A significant American example is the turn-of-the-century motto of the University of Dayton (then known as St. Mary's Institute): *Pro Deo et Patria.* At the time this motto was no bland generalization, but an assertion in face of an American culture then perceived as aggressively anti-Catholic that it was possible and admirable to combine staunch Catholic faith with active patriotic American citizenship. You could be proudly American and Catholic at the same time. For most American Marianists and their followers, this meant that it was not necessary to restrict one's Catholic teaching and practice to the German language and to ethnic parishes reserved for recent immigrants.[56] For the United States, it was an ideology of integration,

[55] See Gascón, *Historia general de la Compañía de María,* vol. II, pp. 789-809.
[56] A notable exception to this stance was the Marianist Damian Litz, seemingly a great individualist and loner among his confreres, who became well known for his many articles in the German Catholic press of America defending the links between ethnicity, language, Church authority and parochial life. See Kaufmann, *Education and Transformation*, p. 130 ff.

assimilation to the dominant language and lifestyle, of what was called the "melting pot" model of immigration as opposed to a defensive separatism.

In France, Bro. Louis Cousin (1855-1931) took up an important leadership role in focusing the Marianist response to these social conflicts. A brilliant administrator and student of sociology, Cousin had devoted his early adulthood to founding Marianist life in Spain, before becoming a member of the General Administration of the Society of Mary as Inspector of Schools at the age of 41. In this role he proposed formation programs for the brightest young religious who studied in the new higher scholasticate at Antony, and also founded clubs for social study and the inculcation of the then-novel social doctrine of the Church. As a member of the General Administration in 1903 at the time of the expulsion of religious from France, Cousin played an important role in establishing alternative centers for Marianists in Belgium and Switzerland, and a bit later he unsuccessfully sought to promote a foundation in Catholic Poland, then under Russian rule. Cousin was a key figure in developing a progressive social thrust for Marianists – one that was open and collaborative as opposed to reactionary and integrist. Cousin was an important forerunner of social and political attitude that prevail among French Catholics today.

It is important to keep in mind that relatively progressive social and theological stances did not prevail without conflict, pain and disappointment. Louis Riest, a Marianist theologian and seminary rector of the same generation, ended up leaving the Society and priesthood in this era, partly because he was frustrated with negative measures taken by the Vatican against "modernism." Many Marianist seminarians of the era, having studied in Paris under leading theological lights eventually condemned as modernists, learned the wisdom of silence amid ecclesiastical arguments and controversies. Cousin himself, as we shall see, lived to see one of his favorite organizations condemned by the Vatican.

This organization, a key interest for Cousin, was the movement called *Le Sillon* ("The Furrow"). It had been founded in the early 1890's by a recent Stanislas alumnus, Marc Saignier, and it remained closely linked throughout its existence to Stanislas students and alumni, with its headquarters on the premises of the collège. Devoted to discussions and publications by young intellectuals on social questions of the day, *Le Sillon* promoted an active articulate progressive Catholic voice in leading political debates and issues. It aimed to show that it was feasible to be fully Catholic and at the same time open to new horizons in French politics and society. In time, as ecclesiastical politics became more reactionary after the expulsion of religious (including Marianists from Stanislas), the death of Leo XIII and the French renunciation of the Concordat by the Combes Law of 1905, *Le Sillon* was opposed by integrist Catholic leaders and accused in some Vatican circles of links with modernist theology. Finally, in 1910 *Le Sillon* was condemned by the Vatican and forced to disband. Cousin and the much younger Saignier regretfully accepted this Vatican measure and sought other realms for their activism. Cousin turned his attention to writing on less controversial subjects of education and Marian devotion, while Saignier remained allied with the socially more progressive wing of French Catholics until his death in 1950. Saignier lived, in fact, to see the position of *Le Sillon* vindicated, eventually becoming the predominant position

of French Catholics, lay and clerical, in face of successive governments of the Third and Fourth Republics.

Was there an image of Mary that particularly inspired Marianists of this tumultuous era to seek accommodation and dialogue for the sake of social progress? We have no records of explicit efforts by Marianists to link Mary to liberal Catholic socio-political activism. Cousin, Leber, Saignier, their confreres and supporters, were not theologians, and they showed every sign of fidelity to the dominant Marianist doctrine of filial piety. Cousin, in particular, later published several books that aimed to present Mary as a dynamic model for young people. Perhaps the proliferation in Marianist houses of this era of statues of Mary standing alone as Queen of the world, often holding a globe in her hands, was a tacit effort to link social involvement with Marian devotion. Looking back today, we may speculate that their focus on Mary helped them to be more dialogical and open to a changing world, less confrontational and defensive than many of their Catholic contemporaries. There seems to be a certain coherence between an open and dialogical approach to society and the imitation of Mary's virtues. At any rate, it is worth noting that these devout Catholics, consciously focused on Mary, were marked by an open and progressive approach to social issues at a tense moment in modern French history.

VI. BUILDING A MARIAN CATHOLIC COUNTER-CULTURE FOR AMERICAN IMMIGRANTS

While the majority of Marianist religious were French citizens, struggling with issues of educating a somewhat higher and more urban middle class and then with confronting anti-clerical hostility, the second largest cohort of Marianists, citizens of the United States, maintained a social and ministerial profile much closer to the commitment of earlier French confreres, focusing on the lower middle class rather than those who were already prosperous. In America even beyond the First World War, the great majority of students in Marianist schools were urban children of struggling immigrants.

Throughout their first century after arriving in America in 1849, Marianist religious were absorbed with the mission initially entrusted to them: educating and preserving the Catholic faith of struggling immigrants, especially those who spoke German. At the mid-nineteenth century, hordes of German-speaking immigrants flooded the United States. Today, the descendants of German immigrants, now wholly assimilated into American culture, even outnumber Americans whose ancestors migrated from the British Isles. Whatever their previous occupations in Europe, rural or urban, the vast majority of them on arrival in America found employment as laborers in rapidly expanding industries in the Northeast quadrant of the country; a smaller number managed to take up farming in the Midwest.

Nineteenth-century German Catholic immigrant families found themselves surrounded by an overwhelmingly Protestant, English-speaking society which was suspicious and

often hostile to them. The hostility ran in both directions. Occasional violent confrontations between Catholics and Protestants were no surprise.

Even among their Catholic co-religionists from other cultures, the new German immigrants long formed a rather separatist group. The dominant group in the Catholic Church at the time was Irish, generally uneducated but fluent in English and culturally somewhat closer to the Anglo-Protestant American majority. When German Catholic immigrants appeared on the scene, Irish Catholics were already establishing themselves as the dominant force in the American Church. Distrust, suspicion, and defensiveness on all sides were inevitable.

To shore up their identity and pass on their heritage to their children, German Catholic immigrants emphasized ethnic parishes and primary schools, where prayer, preaching and catechetical instruction were in the German language and style, passing on as an integral whole the cultural and religious heritage brought over from Europe. A lively German-language Catholic press linked this far-flung German-Catholic community on the national level.

The first Marianists arrived in America from German-speaking Alsace in 1849, and they were soon at work among the numerous German Catholic immigrant community in southwestern Ohio (Cincinnati and Dayton), which had invited them. Before long, their labors in Catholic primary schools spread widely from this Ohio base across the Northeast of the country.

Meanwhile a distant and rather independent cohort of their confreres, totally separated from other Marianists during the Civil War of 1861-1865, took up a similar mission in San Antonio, Texas. Even in Texas, where many Catholic students and their families were Spanish-speaking, the Marianists still long remained closely linked to a substantial group of immigrants from Germany.

The immigrant communities among whom these Marianists worked were mainly composed of people who were poor, sometimes illiterate, but entrepreneurial, industrious and upwardly mobile: a lower middle-class with many points of similarity to the first recipients of Marianist ministry in rural France.

Before long, Marianists everywhere in the United States took up primary schools in English as well a German, at times in parishes dominated by the Irish Catholic majority. From the 1850's on, beginning in the metropolitan industrial center of Cleveland, Irish Catholics and newer immigrant groups from southern and eastern Europe took increasing advantage of Marianist schools. Finally, after a long evolution and much debate, all remaining vestiges of the German language disappeared under pressure from the hostility generated by the First World War.

In the twentieth century the Society evolved to become identified mostly with the burgeoning network of secondary schools, which was much less focused on any single ethnic group. Still, the Society of Mary long retained a predominant link with German

immigrants. Until the mid-twentieth century the majority of American Marianist religious were of German ancestry.

Faith in this era was consciously interwoven with culture. Devotion to Mary was an integral part of the culture of immigrants from every part of Europe and from Latin America. Marianists in their first century in America did not produce many noteworthy works of theology or treatises on Marian devotion. But a latent Marian approach to spirituality guided them through this long evolution in the United States. The American Marianists of the time knew little about their Founder, but in due time they became enthusiastic promoters of Father Simler's doctrine of "filial piety," producing a series of pamphlets, catechetical materials and prayer books to popularize this devotion. The long presence of Father Emil Neubert as a formator of young American Marianists in St. Louis and Dayton (1908-21) helped ground the religious in the dominant Marian approach of the era. Mary as the model Mother of the Holy Family appealed at least as widely in America as in Europe. Mary was spontaneously seen as a model for poor people aspiring to preserve their tradition, to respect and transmit their religious and cultural roots. She helped immigrant families in their search for a place in a social environment often perceived as foreign and hostile, always as challenging. Marianists joined the families of their pupils in this kind of Marian devotion.

American Marianists also joined other Catholics in prayer and pilgrimage to images of Mary promoted by various ethnic groups: Our Lady of Starkenburg and Maria Stein among German farmers in Missouri and Ohio, Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe in Texas, elsewhere Our Lady of Czestochowa, Our Lady of Pompei, or the omnipresent images and grottoes of Our Lady of Lourdes.

The school ministry of Marianists and many others thus linked the spread of faith to the transmission of culture. Education was universally accepted as a matter of political interest. Schools in America, as in France, were seen as political instruments in competition for the souls of coming generations. State-funded schools in America were considered clearly Protestant or secularist in outlook, and great sacrifices were made to provide parochial education for Catholics everywhere. American Catholics, often led by German immigrants especially eager to preserve their unique cultural heritage, took this link of faith and culture as obvious and of great importance.

Catholic educational work in America, largely in primary schools until long after 1900, was a key factor in the upward social mobility of many American immigrants. Immigrant parents served as an industrial labor-base, but their children and grandchildren often moved on to higher education and to professional and administrative roles, leadership positions in society. Succeeding generations of Catholics were leaders in the prosperous move to the suburbs after World War II, having been fully assimilated to a culture now simply seen as American, with ethnic overtones considered as no more than folklore. For white American Catholics of European origin, ethnicity lost much of its importance for success in the mid-twentieth-century, first among fully assimilated Irish and Germans, then among people of Italian, Polish and other backgrounds.

Meanwhile, like their confreres in France only much later, American Marianists gradually shifted their focus from the lower middle class to a more successful and prosperous middle class. But in the United States they simply stayed with the same groups of people, in their process of upward mobility. The shift to a solid and relatively prosperous middle class came much later in America than in France. Only around the Second World War did it become clear that Marianists, like the majority of Catholic Americans at that time, were associated with this relatively successful class.

After World War II, Catholic faith no longer seemed to clash so markedly with American traditions. While a few Catholic leaders began to aspire to transform society in accord with Catholic religious idealism, many others simply assimilated to the prevailing mentality. This gradual successful assimilation of the numerous Catholic immigrants can largely be attributed to the education, by Marianists and many others, of immigrant children, between 1850 and the Second World War.

For deeper theological grounding and Marian spirituality during this long period, Marianists mainly relied on the base given by a few novice-masters like Neubert, who gave retreats, taught short courses in theology, wrote manuals of spirituality, and served as spiritual guides. After World War II, American Marianists became more active in writing and research, especially about Mary. With help from the extensive Marian Library then founded in Dayton, and under the urging of European seminary directors like Neubert, Noel Le Mire, and Théodore Koehler, a series of American Marianist scholars, most of them university professors, played key roles in a new series of studies and publications which aimed to analyze the heritage of the Founder and explore new approaches to Mary.

Thus Mary remained central to the American Marianist heritage, but in large degree the American approach was a prolongation of images of Mary developed earlier in Europe and then adapted to a local audience. This history shows how Catholic Marian devotion corresponded to cultural and ethnic identity and had the capacity to evolve and blend traditions across the decades.

VII. SEARCH FOR AN INCULTURATED MARY: MARIANISTS REACH OUT TO NEW CULTURES

Meanwhile, a small but gradually growing proportion of Marianists began to reach out beyond the European and American horizons which were so closely linked to Catholic faith. Marianist outreach beyond Eurocentric cultures began already in 1880, with foundations of schools in Libya and Tunisia, in predominantly Muslim areas under French "protection." At first, Marianist teachers aimed primarily at the families of Christian European colonists – French, Italian, Maltese, Spanish – but before long they found themselves attempting also to educate the children of the numerous Jewish and Arab families who aimed at succeeding in an environment that was religiously and culturally mixed.

The first Marianists came with minimal consciousness of any cultural heritages or religion other than their own Roman Catholicism. They saw their mission as defending, preserving and transmitting the Roman Catholic faith while at the same time passing on the basics of European (especially French) civilization. In contrast to the situation at home in France, abroad in the colonies and "protectorates" they found their efforts warmly welcomed by government authorities, who regarded them as agents for spreading French language and culture, enhancing the prestige and influence of France. The goal, largely shared by government authorities and Marianist teachers alike, was to form good French outlooks among the colonists and the colonized, as a permanent basis for a new kind of racially mixed colonial society. In this task religion and culture were presumed to be inextricably united. Conversion was desirable, both to a new religious faith and to a new cultural lifestyle. Similar goals were shared by other Catholic missionaries of the time, led most famously by Cardinal Lavigerie, head of the Church in Tunisia and founder of the Missionaries of Africa (formerly known as the "White Fathers" because of their white habit, now often known as the "Society of Our Lady of Africa"). His cathedral-monument, dedicated to Our Lady of Africa at Carthage just outside the Arab city of Tunis, bears eloquent witness to this mentality of fusion between a superior faith and a superior culture.

Before long, Marianist work spread more broadly to other settings without long-standing Christian roots. In 1883 a substantial Marianist community took up educational work in the Hawaiian Islands, still then an independent country with a heritage of animist religion and a dominant colonial group of Protestants.

Four years later, in 1887, the first Marianists arrived in Japan from France and from the United States to found a significant network of Marianist schools in a rapidly changing oriental country which was then eager to modernize through European education, and which recognized the French model as outstanding. Further early Marianist ventures into the "non-Christian" world reached out to China, then ambivalent and often hostile to Western religion and culture, first at Xufu (the cradle of Confucianism) and briefly at Jingdao under German auspices at the service of the missions of the Divine Word Fathers (1903-09), and later from 1933 to 1948, under American auspices at Wuhan (Hankow) and Jinan.

Inculturation and inter-religious dialogue were hardly in the purview of any of these rather early Marianist efforts. Such concerns were foreign and suspect to the Catholic mentality of the times, which took for granted an indissoluble link between Christian faith and European culture. People of non-European cultures who converted to Christian faith were routinely, unreflectingly, expected to adopt European habits (presumed to be superior) in such cultural matters as posture, dress, food, and architecture.[57]

A larger wave of new Marianist works outside the Euro-American ambit took shape after World War II, and in this period many Marianists were gradually but deeply

[57] Despite this overall tendency, photos of the earlier Marianist foundations in Japan and China sometimes show the Brothers wearing Asiatic clothing in their educational work. They certainly made outstanding efforts to learn the Japanese and Chinese languages, which must have been very difficult for them.

influenced by growing inter-cultural and inter-religious sensitivity. French Marianists began this movement in Africa with a foundation in 1946 in Brazzaville, capital of what was then known as the French Congo. This foundation eventually reach out, integrating much initiative from French-Canadian Marianists, to the Ivory Coast and the Central African Republic (at Bangui for a short period in the 1950's and 1960's) and eventually to Congo-Kinshasa. Swiss Marianists followed with their foundation in Togo in 1958, which much later came to reach Bénin as well. American Marianists quickly followed with foundations in Nigeria (1957-1983) and then, more permanently, in Kenya, Malawi and Zambia.

Meanwhile other groups of American Marianist religious focused on Asia, with foundations in Korea (1960), India (1980), Nepal (1982) and the Philippines (2004). A few Korean Marianists spent lengthy periods in China, learning the language and culture and hoping eventually to serve in that context. Permanent Marianist roots were planted in Korea and India, with substantial groups of local vocations.

Spanish-speaking Marianists, with help from a small number of North Americans, concentrated on developing Marianist life and mission in Latin America – an area which was already baptized and largely westernized in culture, but which still remained economically underdeveloped, with latent remnants of earlier native cultures. Eventually Marianists developed foundations in Puerto Rico (1930), Argentina (1934), Peru (1939), Chile (1948), Colombia (1965), Brazil (1974), Ecuador (1979), Mexico (1980), and Cuba (2003), while a few Marianists carried out individual ministry among the poor in other countries like Guatemala and Venezuela. With backing from Canada, Marianists began work in Haiti in 2003, which had to be interrupted in 2013 because of a series of tragedies (earthquake, deaths).

Most of the Marianist foundations outside the Euro-American ambit began with school ministry, since Western education, in which many Marianists were experts, was highly prized everywhere. Marianist schools became a passport to entry into new cultural worlds.

In many cases, religious and cultural change went together (as was often the case in all of Africa and in Korea after its emancipation from Japanese and Chinese domination). In other cases (as in Japan and India) the new mentality inculcated by Western education did not lead to many personal religious conversions. The difference seems to depend principally on the level of sophistication and the depth of articulated tradition in the locally dominant religions. Those who previously followed animist religions often accept Christianity, even though attempts to revive and modernize the animist traditions regularly appeared; meanwhile, Muslims, Buddhists and Hindus much more rarely converted to Christianity and sometimes resented efforts to promote Christianity.

Whether conversions are numerous or few, educational ministry in countries without a predominant Christian tradition inevitably leads to a prolonged and articulated dialogue of life and social action among different faiths, and sometimes, on higher levels, even to

a dialogue of spiritualities and theologies.[58] Even primary students learn to witness and sometimes join in the rituals and festivals of other religions, and they begin to understand the meaning and intent of pious gestures and songs. In such contexts, Christian catechesis inevitably involves some comparisons with the language and mentality of other religions.

Christian missionaries quickly learn that their effectiveness depends on their capacity to respond to the felt needs of the people, which are often very concrete – matters relating to family life, financial success, respectability, cultural identity, and the like. Western missionaries and educators in colonial times were often called in as mediators and interpreters of such local concerns before European colonial authorities. In any case, Christian missionaries in these situations were led over time to rethink their outlook, even their theology, and relate it to parallel local categories.[59]

Above all, they were challenged to develop new devotional images which would be capable of communicating Christian faith in an immediately understandable way to the local people. The great precursor of this effort to promote images of Mary appealing to people from non-European cultures is Our Lady of Guadalupe, *la virgen morena* ("the brown virgin"), who exercised a great appeal from the beginning of the evangelization of native peoples in Mexico and eventually in all of Latin America.

In this long and complex process, Marianists have not developed many new approaches on the conceptual level, although they have regularly taken an active role in the development of catechesis, worship and missionary proclamation. But their role in designing and spreading locally meaningful images of Mary has been particularly noteworthy.

From the beginning of Marianist presence in Japan, Marianist schools were given evocative names like "Morning Star" (*Gyo-sei*) and "Star of the Sea" (*Kai-sei*), which echoed positively both in Japanese culture and in Christian tradition about Mary. Very large statues of Mary, erected on the roof of Japanese Marianist schools and dominating the local neighborhoods, were found to appeal to the overwhelmingly non-Christian local populations, suggesting a kindly maternal influence in a competitive world.

In the Ivory Coast, Marianists were placed in charge of the national shrine of *Notre Dame d'Afrique* (a new one, not its still-existent predecessor at Carthage) and erected a very striking statue of a young black woman, presenting her eager child, almost jumping out of her arms and ready to serve the needs of the contemporary world. In Ranchi, the capital of Jharkhand, the center of aboriginal India, the Marianist-inspired image of "Our Lady of Jharkhand" for a brief period in 2014-15 gave rise to fervid conflicts, as some politically-motivated animists campaigned to destroy it, claiming it was a ploy for conversion rather than an effort to show the presence of Mary in the family life of local

[58] These four levels of inter-religious dialogue are distinguished in the ground-breaking document by the Pontifical Council for Inter-Religious Dialogue, *Dialogue and Proclamation* (1991) no. 42.
[59] For example, discovering parallels in Hinduism between Incarnation and *avatars;* dealing with Islamic approaches to Jesus as Prophet and to Mary as a highly admired holy woman; dealing in China and Korea with veneration of the ancestors.

Christians. The conflict quickly died out once its instigators lost their election, and the resistance to the tribal Mary now seems almost forgotten.

It is important to note that, despite the very early exemplar of Guadalupe in Mexico, inculturated images of Mary are still relatively rare. For example, most Marian shrines and centers in Latin America copy Spanish models, while those in Asia and Africa still show Mary, Jesus and the Holy Family as white people with European features. Marianists have been particularly active in promoting images with more local features.

The question of inculturation and inter-religious dialogue on many levels is a key one as the Roman Catholic Church becomes definitively what Karl Rahner called a "world Church"[60] and seeks to root its faith in cultural expressions meaningful in non-European contexts. Marianists are both challenged and intrigued to play their role in this development. Young African and Asian Marianists from the local context play an especially important role in this key development of our time. A basic, many-sided and evolving understanding of Mary emerges from several centuries of Catholic missionary experience in these contexts, linking Marian dedication with active mission. This heritage serves Marianists well for the task of presenting a locally understandable and attractive image of Mary. This task remains an important dimension of Marianist missionary work in our time.

VIII. REDISCOVERING A DISTINCTIVE HERITAGE AND RENEWING THE CHARISM

For Marianists, the twentieth century was a time to rediscover origins and rethink mission. The publication of Simler's detailed and scholarly biography of the Founder in 1901 signaled a new awareness of Marianist origins, far outstripping previous interpretations and rehabilitating Chaminade as a dynamic and creative, saintly man of mission.

Simler had begun researches into the life of the Founder as early as 1870, rummaging in boxes of documents from the Founder during imposed curfews in the besieged Paris of 1870-1871. Research continued intermittently during the following years, marked by a series of controversies in the Society of Mary concerning the Society's essential characteristics and by the long-lasting struggle to obtain Vatican approval for the Society's Constitutions. Simler's 94-page work on the history of the Society (*Notice historique sur la Société de Marie*, published very shortly before the long awaited Roman approbation along with Circular no. 55 in 1891) became the occasion for acquainting members of the Society with some initial results of research on the Founder's life and with facts largely unknown until then. Eventually the task of writing

[60] Karl Rahner spoke and wrote in this vein often, beginning at Cambridge, Massachusetts in April, 1979. See especially his article, "Towards a Fundamental Theological Interpretation of Vatican II," in *Theological Studies* 40 (1979), 716-27. Another translation may be found under the title "Basic Theological Interpretation of the Second Vatican Council" in his *Theological Investigations* XX (New York: Crossroad, 1981), pp. 77-89.

a full scholarly biography - as opposed to a work of hagiography for devotional and motivational purposes - was assigned to Simler's promising young scholar-secretary, Father Charles Klobb.

The deepening crisis caused by the anti-clerical measures of the Third Republic only heightened the urgency of understanding and perhaps re-interpreting the Marianist charism and mission. In 1904 and 1905 Klobb gave a series of important retreats to Marianist leaders assembled at Fayt in Belgium and at Fribourg in Switzerland, with the explicit aim of helping them understand Chaminade's intentions – much broader than school work – in founding the Society.

With Simler's encouragement, members of the General Administration evolved an ambitious long-range plan for a series of publications on the Marianist charism. This plan included *The Spirit of Our Foundation* (three volumes of analysis and documentation from the Founder's era, published for the most part by 1910) and a collection of all extant letters of the Founder (first annotated and published after decades of work under the editorship of Fr. Henri Lebon in five volumes in 1930, then expanded with additions and new discoveries thereafter, so that today we have a collection in nine volumes of all that has been discovered to date). In large measure, after Klobb's early death (1906), Lebon became the patron of painstaking historical research by himself and several others on the heritage of the Founder.

Subsequent generations of twentieth-century Marianists continued and expanded this work of research and rediscovery. Emil Neubert, long-time Rector of the seminary for all future Marianist priests in Fribourg (1921-49) played a pivotal role in this task. His long experience as seminary rector, combined with his earlier years as novice-master and retreat-director in the United States (1907-1921), served to spread his understanding of the charism and his outstanding advocacy of Marian devotion, not only to all members of the Society of Mary and those influenced by them, but also to a much broader general public. His most popular work, *My Ideal: Jesus, Son of Mary* (1933), has been noted above. It is hard to over-estimate its influence. In addition to this devotional masterpiece, Neubert authored an extensive series of books of scholarship and spiritual inspiration, some eventually translated into English and other languages, exploring the role of Mary and detailing his understanding of the Founder's charism. His work *Notre Don de Dieu* ("Our Gift from God," 1954) deserves particular mention as a scholarly explanation of his understanding of the role of Mary in the Marianist charism and mission, and in particular his interpretation of the Marianist vow of stability. Neubert's works reflect something of the individualistic and intimist approach of pre-conciliar spirituality, but they also motivate their readers to become actively involved as "soldiers of Mary" in the struggles of the Church in their time.

Meanwhile other Marianist scholars multiplied their activity. In the United States, at mid-century and beyond, William Ferree (1905-1985) and John Totten (1914-) produced stimulating syntheses of the Founder's thoughts and introduced a numerous generation of young Marianists to a new and inspiring vision of their charism. Like Ferree and Totten, other key figures in the revival and rethinking of the Chaminadean

charism went beyond Neubert's approach based on filial piety. Joseph Verrier (1904-1993) was an historical researcher who made the Founder known with painstaking precision in his *Jalons d'histoire, La Congrégation mariale de M. Chaminade* and many other essays. Jean-Baptiste Armbruster (1922-2008) devoted the work of his lifetime to collecting and publishing scholarly editions of Chaminade's texts. Vincent Vasey (1916-1985) and Enrique Torres (1934-), canonists, historians and Postulators General, worked with the Vatican Congregation of Saints in research that cleared the way for the declaration of the Founder's heroicity of virtues (1973) and eventually for his beatification (2000). Ambrogio Albano (1924-2014) , long-time Marianist General Archivist, published intriguing foundational texts. Joseph Stefanelli (1926 -) works as high-level popularizer of the charism in the United States and tireless translator of fundamental Marianist writings. Eduardo Benlloch (1927-2012) synthesized the charism and served as a resource-person for a substantial audience in the Spanish-speaking world, and also worked creatively as co-editor of the 1983 *Rule of Life* of the Society of Mary. Quentin Hakenewerth (1930 –) authored numerous popular presentations of Marianist spirituality, for the use of lay Marianist communities and young religious. In addition, a series of American Marianist scholars under the influence of Noël Le Mire (1916-1997) published important doctoral theses on such aspects of the Founder's thought as the Mystical Body of Christ (Thomas Stanley, 1952), the spiritual maternity of Mary (William Cole, 1958), the spirit of faith (James F. Kunes, 1964), and the Marianist Social System (Adolf Windisch, 1964).

The list of twentieth-century scholars in the Marianist charism could continue at great length. Among key figures we should mention Theodore Koehler, Jean-Claude Délas, Raymond Halter and Vincent Gizard in France; Lawrence Cada, Raymond Fitz, Hugh Bihl, Timothy Phillips and Thomas Giardino in the United States[61]; José María Arnaiz, Antonio Gascón, Manuel Madueño and Juan Manuel Rueda in the Spanish-speaking world; Marie-Joëlle Bec, Franca Zonta, and Lucia Ubbiali among the Marianist Sisters. The list of authors could be greatly expanded.

Nearly all these twentieth-century Marianist scholars began with a firm base in Simler's doctrine of filial piety to Mary as the key Marianist characteristic, but with time and further research into the Founder's thought many of them began to believe that difference approaches to Mary offered better representations of the Founder's charism. Armbruster and his associates, in particular, came to believe that Chaminade's view was inadequately represented by the doctrine of filial piety; in their view, the Founder's approach was more missionary in outlook, less focused on private and intimate devotion and better seen as a "missionary alliance" with Mary.

More than a century of Marianist efforts to rediscover and rethink the Founder's charism have thus led to a rich development in both Marian devotion and in the understanding of mission.

[61] My own efforts in this domain have been published mainly in the revised *Rule of Life,* in circulars written as Provincial and Superior General and more recently in a book entitled *A New Fulcrum* (Dayton: NACMS, 2014).

IX. MARY AS TYPE OF THE CHURCH: POST-VATICAN-II TRANSFORMATIONS

New perspectives of the Second Vatican Council (1962-65), almost contemporary with the dawning of this reinterpretation of the charism, have had decisive impact on Marianist understandings of Mary.

Counciliar teaching, especially as expressed in the final chapter of the foundational document *Lumen Gentium,* shifted Catholic Mariology away from what came to be identified as a "Christo-typical" perspective, long predominant in the theological tradition, which emphasized Mary as the *alma socia Christi* ("loving companion of Christ"), recipient of extraordinary privileges because of her unique closeness to her Son, her role as Mother of God. In a way, she was viewed closer to her divine Son but more removed, exalted far above struggling Christians like ourselves. Without denying her extraordinary privileges, a key debate early in the Council shifted the focus to Mary as Archetype of the Church, an ecclesiological or anthropological approach, which stressed the full humanity of Mary. She was presented as one like Christian believers of all time, model and companion for Christians in every age. More than a Queen, she was presented as a Mother or even a sister to struggling Christians.

Thus the Second Vatican Council aimed to bring Mary closer to the life of Christians, sharing our human nature but not our sinfulness. The Council placed her clearly at the side of human recipients of grace and saw her as archetype and model of humble and wholehearted human collaboration with God's grace. Mary thus shows us the deepest and purest nature of what it means to be human disciples of the Lord and to form the Church. This approach came to be called an "ecclesio-typical" or sometimes an "anthropo-typical" perspective on Mary, emphasizing her as the archetype and image of the Church in its ideal, sinless and whole-hearted in response to the mystery of her incarnate Son Jesus Christ. Mary was thus seen as closer than before to human beings touched by grace, like us except for the enormous difference of our rebelliousness and half-heartedness in responding to God. Mary is recognized as the perfect exemplar of the disciple of her Son, one who sought to cooperate wholly and unreservedly with Jesus in his redemptive mission and in the transformation of the world according to God's plan.

Much influenced by these conciliar perspectives, Marianist thought after the Council sometimes found the term and concept of filial piety inadequate. The *Rule of Life of the Society of Mary* - the result of a fifteen-year post-conciliar process of consultation and composition, approved by the Vatican and promulgated in 1983 - avoids the use of the century-old term "filial piety." It presents an approach to Mary and to the Christian life that is less intently focused on private family values and intimate personal spirituality, although of course it includes them. It emphasizes the Founder's call to take up Mary's mission and share in her dynamic but discreet role as the first disciple of her Son Jesus.

The 1983 Rule speaks of Mary, for example, as one who "totally opened herself to the mission the Father gave her in his plan of salvation" and as "the promised Woman, sharing in all his [Jesus'] mysteries" (art. 5). It evokes the image of St. John standing with Mary at the foot of the cross (John 19: 25-27) and declares that, like John, "we accept Mary as a precious gift of God." It goes on to stress Mary's work to "form us more fully to the image of her Son" and evokes "our alliance with Mary" by which we seek to "assist her in her mission of forming in faith a multitude of brothers for her first-born Son" (art. 6). These fundamental articles clearly echo the Founder's teaching and vocabulary.

The new Rule continues in an anthropo-centric vein by asserting that "in Mary is summed up the longing and searching of the whole human race for God" (art. 7) and that "she shows us the way of true Christian life" with "a warmth of welcome to God and to others" (art. 8).

In speaking of mission and ministry, the foundational articles of the 1983 Rule evokes the Founder's much-loved Gospel passage about the wedding at Cana (John 2: 1-11) and draws a parallel between the servants at the wedding feast and Marianists in mission today (art. 10). Summing up the key elements of the charism toward the end of its first chapter, the Rule stresses the Marianist aspiration "to portray a more faithful image of the Church" (art. 13).

In later chapters of this Rule, Mary is regularly evoked: as a model of the vowed life (art. 16), as inspiration for family spirit and community life (arts. 34-35), as exemplar of prayer and contemplation (art. 57), and as inspiration and model for apostolic work (art. 65). The first book of the Rule ends with a quotation from the Founder which sums up this Marian character: "the spirit of the Society is the spirit of Mary" (art. 114).

Among post-conciliar Marianists, as well as in their Rule of Life, great emphasis is given to the socially transformative dimension of the Church's mission: to solidarity with the poor and oppressed, to social justice and peacemaking. This socially transformative role comes to be seen as a key dimension of dedication to Mary. Thus any vestige of "bourgeois" and intimist piety and of values adapted mainly to a middle class mentality is left behind. Mary is increasingly understood as the "poor virgin of Nazareth" and the courageous woman of the Magnificat, who aspires to "put down the mighty from their thrones and exalt the lowly" (Luke 1:52)." Thus the evolving image of Mary motivates many Marianists to challenging new ministries.

During the first years of our twenty-first century, in the light of conciliar Mariology, the "Marian model of Church" has been proposed as a new way of articulating Chaminade's intention for our times.[62] This approach stresses such Marian attributes as being a "Hearer of the Word," model of intent and responsive listening, both to the Word of God in the scripture and especially in the life of her Son, and also to the deep-seated words and longings of her fellow human beings. Mary is understood as one who pondered and contemplated God's words and actions (Luke 2: 19, 51), who "heard the Word of God

[62] See my circulars as Superior General, nos. 7 (3 September 2000) and 8 (12 October 2001).

and kept it" (Luke 11:28). She is recognized as mother and educator, as transmitter of Jewish religious culture even to her Son Jesus in his natural human development, attentive to his gradually unfolding human life-rhythms. She is recognized as later taking a patient and merciful approach to God's children of the early Church, never rejecting but urging Christian disciples forward. Mary is admired as a laywoman. She is a representative of the poor and the colonized, of an often rejected minority. Thus she is understood to summon people today to solidarity with the poor, the colonized, the hard-working and the outcasts of today's world.

This view of Mary certainly strikes many themes welcome in our time. Above all it corresponds closely to the image of Mary given us in the Gospels. It evokes key emphases of the Founder in his teachings on Mary and on the mission of the Church in modern times. Whatever forms and ministries the Marianist Family takes up in the near future, this ecclesio-typical and anthropo-typical image of Mary seems promising as the next dominant motif of Marianist life and mission.

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