

I Consecration to Mary, Prayers to Mary, Joseph

Consecration to Mary

To the greater glory of God and the honour of Mary, the most tender of all mothers. Holy Virgin Mary, I consecrate myself fully to you in life and in death. I wish to merit your protection by imitating your virtues. Grant this out of your great kindness. Regard each step, each breath that I take from now on as if they were acts of renewal of this present consecration which I would want to sign with my blood, so that I may renew it each morning, until at last, oh Holy Virgin, I can die with you in the heart of Jesus.

APM 2096 / 07500 (Jean-Claude Colin)

Consecration to Our Lady (8 September 1831)

Blessed Virgin, behold the children your divine Son has given you and whom you have chosen to work for the advancement of your Society. They know that they are unworthy of this favour, and, prostrate at your feet, beg you to accept this just tribute of their gratitude. O gentle and loving Mother, we place in your hands now and forever our hearts, our wills, our persons, our possessions and all we are. We promise to labour with all our strength for the prosperity and extension of your Society. We pledge to work our whole life for our glory and that of your divine Son, to spread devotion to you as much as possible and never to do or undertake anything without imploring your aid. Blessed Virgin, be for us always a most tender and compassionate Mother: be our advocate and protector before God. Keep far from us all spirit of discord or dissension. Obtain for us the grace to remain faithful until death to our vocation and to be united one day around the throne of your glory, as we are now assembled around your statue. Amen.

Done at Belley, at the end of eight days retreat, this eighth day of September 1831. The members of the Society present have signed thus:

Rouchon; Terrailon; Champagnat; Chanel; François Grandclement; Jean-Baptiste-François Pompallier; Jallon; Maîtreperre; Déclas; Deschamps M.; Convers; Jean Humbert M.; Debelay; Bret; Colin junior; Bourdin senior; Cellier, o Maria; Colin senior.

OM, doc. 236; English translation: APM SUS 3000 S6103

Consecration to our Lady by teachers and Marist priests at Belley College (8 December 1831)

A.M.D.G.

(To the greater glory of God)

Holy Virgin, we are your children, you are our mother. At your request, without considering our weakness or our unworthiness, your divine Son called us and brought us together in this refuge, the cradle of your Society, to be the first members of a family whose special mistress you want to be, to which you give your name and which wants to devote itself entirely to your service because it is proud to belong to you. Holy Virgin, what shall we give you in return for such a signal favour, which we value more than any good or honour on earth? May the angels and saints join with us in rendering you the fair tribute of our gratitude. With your servant St. Ildephonse, we wish to proclaim everywhere your greatness and your privileges, especially that of your immaculate conception, to publish your deeds of kindness and mercy, to love you and to have others serve you as much as we can and as long as we shall live. Mother of God and of men, accept the homage of our total dependence and the offering we make of all that we are and all that we have; we sacrifice it to you irrevocably. We install you as the mistress and superior of this house, which is yours. This solemn day when we celebrate the feast of your immaculate conception will become for us the time when, each year, we renew our fervour and increase our zeal in serving you. Purest Virgin, we pledge ourselves to celebrate each year this feast with the greatest devotion possible, to defend and sustain the glorious privilege of your immaculate conception till our last breath and to spread your glory everywhere. Amen.

J.L.V. Rollet; Chanel; J. Humbert; Colin senior; Colin junior, sup.; Bret, subdeacon; Deschamps; Debelay, priest; Déclas, priest; Ch. Balmont, priest; Convers; J.A. Bourdin senior, priest; F. G. clement; M.A. Lacôte, priest; Guillaumot, priest; J.P. Bordat; Jallon, priest; Peretière.

December 8, 1831. Consecration to the blessed Virgin signed by the teachers and missionaries at the minor seminary of Belley.

Background: In April 1829, Colin had been appointed superior of the minor seminary of Belley. During the school year 1830-1831, there were conflicts between the teachers and the superior (cf. OM 2, doc. 746, § 15) and on August 9, 1831, in a letter to the Marist aspirants at the Hermitage, Colin described his policy for the following year: "Next year it is our aim to have in the house only teachers affiliated (to the

Society); we are thinking of giving the house a course that will be different and in accord with our aim” (OM, doc. 233, § 5). This policy seems to have been put into effect, for the following text was signed by all teachers at the seminary as well as by three home missionaries (Déclas, Jallon and Convers) and by two other clerics who did not persevere in the Marist project.

OM, doc. 240; English translation: APM SUS 3000 S6103

Most supreme and eternal God, you who preserve the universe. In your ineffable clemency you have begun the work of this little Society of the mother of your divine Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. Your infinite wisdom, Lord, does not leave incomplete the works of your goodness and your mighty right hand. Raise then to its highest perfection this work which you have been so gracious to inspire.

O God, may the sins of the children whom your divine Son has given to his most pure mother, not hold back the arms of your mercy. That the voice of their malice may not be greater than the voice of your blood and of the death of your Son and the son of the most august Mary. The cry of the precious blood does not demand vengeance like the voice of the blood of Abel. They implore your clemency even for those who have fallen away from you.

Direct your gaze on the present children and those who will come to the Most Holy Virgin, Your mother and our mother. Give your divine spirit to the superior of this family and to those who assist him, so that they may know and embrace with all their heart the rules which you have assigned to them in your adorable plan, to lead them to the perfection of their state. Grant them to merit by their fidelity in following those rules the protection of their august and tender mother and the grace to see and bless you in all eternity.

A prayer dictated by Colin to Father David (1869)

O most blessed Virgin, how are we to speak about your spirit unless you yourself inspire us. Indeed who are we to dare to treat of such a subject? You must have pity on our ignorance and weakness; take no account of our unworthiness, but dictate to us, as it were, each word we need to take into account. O good Saint Joseph, for the love you bear for your immaculate spouse, grant us your assistance. O holy angels be here with us and before the throne of God pray for us. Amen.

Glorious St. Joseph, thy bounty is beyond comparison and thy power with Jesus and Mary has no limits. Confiding in thy mercy, I fly to thy

powerful protection and, sinner that I am, I implore thy aid. No sinner has ever called upon thee in vain; despite, then, my unworthiness and the infinite number of my sins, I hope that thou wilt be my advocate with Jesus and Mary to obtain these graces:

1. Perfect contrition for my sins, and the grace to commit them no more.
2. A sincere love of Jesus and Mary.
3. A true and sincere devotion to Mary, thy glorious spouse, and to thee, most glorious patriarch.
4. The spirit of the hidden life and of prayer.
5. Grace to know what I ought to do in order to accomplish god's will, and strength to do it faithfully.
6. Finally, the grace of a holy death in thy arms and those of Mary, my tender Mother.

Mighty St. Joseph, I choose thee anew as my tender father and protector; look on me as thine own, as thy servant and unworthy slave; into thy hands I resign my salvation and all that concerns me.

Thy unworthy slave, J.Cl. Marie Colin, priest.

LM, doc. 410 (1877)

II Blessings formulated by Colin for the Marists in general, the Third Order, particular groups

The Blessed Virgin is at the head of the barque which is bringing all her children to harbor. How could we perish under the banner of such a General? No! Let us have faith... Let us see the great goal that Providence has destined for you. Our age is one of impiety. In the time of Noah all flesh had entered into the path of corruption; God commissioned Noah to build a barque to save the human race. In our day all truths are under attack. Well then, God has prepared a barque. It is the barque of his Mother. It is up to you, to finish and to consolidate it and to preserve its spirit. So let us march at the head of the faithful. There is your mission.

May the blessing of Almighty God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, descend upon you and all your ministries, all your friends, relatives, and benefactors and remain forever. May the blessing of the most blessed Virgin Mary, your most gentle Mother and the most August Queen of the whole Society, descend upon all your ministries, all your relatives, benefactors, and all the members of the Third Order. And at the same

time, the blessing of saint Joseph, spouse of the Virgin Mary, and of all the holy Angels and all the Saints. And may the blessing of the most Sacred Heart of Jesus likewise descend upon you.

LM, doc. 357 (25 August 1873), Blessing of Colin for the capitulants and Third Order

May the blessing of God descend upon the Society of Mary, upon all Marists, upon the Third Order.

May the blessing of the Blessed Virgin Mary, our lovable Foundress, of Saint Joseph, and of all the angels descend upon the Society of Mary, upon all Marists, upon the Third Order.

LM, doc. 404, Colin's blessing for the TOM (Late 1875).

Everyone got down on their knees and asked for his blessing.

Finally he said to us, it is in the name of the Good God: I am a priest like you, miserable like you are and even more so. May God, may the Holy Virgin pour onto you their blessing.

Then he used the Latin formula to bless the assembly.

27 September 1842, end of the yearly retreat (Mayet 4, 172)

After Colin had finished his short instruction, the superior of the students approached him and asked him to bless them. And so, Colin rose up, we went down on our knees, and he said to us:

Let us begin, Messieurs, as you want me to bless you. It is so that the good God himself gives you his holy blessing... Then, after a short pause in silence, he stretched out his right hand above our heads and continued: My God, in the world so many loose their path... Let at least these here be saved. Ah. Bless this little flock as you blessed your apostles. Form them into willing instruments of your hands to work for your glory and the salvation of souls. Oh Mary, yes, in this moment, grant that it may be Jesus and not I who blesses these children.

Benedictio D.N.J.C. descendat super vos et maneat semper vobiscum. 19 October 1842, end of an instruction to the scholasticate at Belley (Mayet 1, 676)

As Father Colin looked as if he would retire, he was asked for his blessing. All got down on their knees. And so he said:

Very well, my children, it is not me who will give you the blessing. If it were only my blessing, hélas, it would be nothing. But it will be Jesus Christ who is going to bless you through my hands. I direct my

eyes towards heaven and I realize that the priest, unworthy as he maybe, is vested with the merits of Jesus Christ and can attract through his benediction great graces. And so, my children, it is Jesus Christ who blesses you: *Benedicat...* Etc.

31 December 1843, end of the ceremony at the scholasticate for the new year (Mayet 5, 663)

Father Lagniet got down on his knees and all the others did likewise. Father Superior General was surprised first, he paused for a moment, but then, he said, well, it will not be me but the Holy Virgin. And so, deeply moved, he lifted up his arms and eyes to heaven and with a solemn voice and while shedding tears he exclaimed:

Oh you Heavens, do open! Holy Virgin you see all your children at your feet. Ah, give them your spirit. Bless your children. Pour out upon them all the dew of your mercy. Do not allow anyone of those here, anyone whose name is enrolled in the register of Mary, to perish. In particular, pour your spirit on the one who from now on will be your representative for here. Grant that all of us will be one day reunited with you in heaven.

Then he made the sign of the cross over all of us who were shedding tears of joy.

21 September 1846, at the end of the general retreat when Colin had appointed Lagniet as his provisional replacement (Mayet 6, 342-343)

Colin to the priest-novices at La Favorite (Lyon):

“It will not be a man who will bless you, the man is nothing. But on the day of his ordination the priest received the power to bless. It is Jesus Christ who blesses by means of his hand: May the good Lord bestow on you the blessing he gave to his apostles; may Mary give you a mother’s blessing. I hope it will do you good.”

29 June 1847, FS, doc. 140, 15

[Compilation: Alois Greiler sm]