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After Marcellin Champagnat died, he was clothed in his soutane, his professional cross placed in his hand and he was left exposed in this manner, seated in an armchair, in his room. On the day of his death the artist Mr. Ravery from St. Chamond was specially engaged to paint his portrait (which could not have been obtained beforehand). (Vie, p. 291.)

P R E F A C E

Marcellin Champagnat lived from 1789 to 1840. In 1856 Br. Jean-Baptiste Furet wrote the first book about him: it was entitled Vie de Marcellin-Joseph Benoît Champagnat. The author died in 1872, but the Superiors of the Marist Brothers issued a second edition in 1881, whilst a third edition, given the "Imprimatur" of the Catholic Church, was published in 1931. An English translation of the 3rd edition, entitled Life of Father Champagnat, was published in 1947. It is of interest to note that, although from time to time an occasional new book appeared on Champagnat, none of them provided any new historical insights into his life other than what was in the 1856 work of Br. Jean-Baptiste. Much publicity was given to Br. Marcel Colin's book Sur les Pas du Père Champagnat (Dumas, St. Etienne, France, 1958) since it was published shortly after Marcellin Champagnat's "Beatification" by the Pope in 1955. Once again, however, it dealt largely with the spirituality of Champagnat and, historically, it based itself on Br. Jean-Baptiste's VIE. In 1971, Br. Romuald Gibson of New Zealand published Father Champagnat, the Man and his Spirituality, but again he relied almost entirely on Br. Jean-Baptiste's work and hence failed to present us with any historical facts not previously known.

In more recent years two Frenchmen, Br. Jean Roche and Br. Louis Laurent (Pierre Zind) have written some short but very useful articles on the early history of Lavalla (the birthplace of the Marist Brothers) and of Marcellin Champagnat which have been published in certain editions of the small French magazine Voyages et Missions (in 1978 its name was changed to Présence Mariste), Lyons. This was a quarterly (now every trimester) small school magazine produced by the Marist Brothers' St. Genis-Laval College near Lyons. Jean Roche wrote three articles in 1967 - 68 on the geography, history and religious character of Lavalla, but these contained no new personal history on Marcellin Champagnat. Pierre Zind has so far (early 1983) written nearly forty two-page articles (including pictures) (1) under the title "Sur les Traces de Marcellin Champagnat".

1. His first article appeared in October 1972.

The present author has made use of these articles where it was appropriate and has also been helped by communicating both verbally and by letter with several people who have all played their part in enabling this thesis to reach fruition. I must thank, in particular, the Australian Brother Owen Kavanagh, who has himself spent some years in France studying Marcellin Champagnat. The Frenchman, Brother Gabriel Michel has been a tower of strength in enabling this author to gain access to many previously unknown documents in the archives of various civic authorities and other centres in France, but particularly in the Département de la Loire.

I was also fortunate in having been able to spend time in France on three separate occasions, on each of which much time was spent in research into the history of Marcellin Champagnat's life. The last occasion was during November, December and January 1981-82 when about a month was also spent on research in Rome. There, most time was spent in the archives of the Marist Brothers (whose General House is now in Rome), and also in the main archives of the Marist Fathers where Fr. J. Coste (the principal author of the four large volumes, containing mainly documents - particularly of the Marist Fathers, entitled Origines maristes) was most helpful.

In France, the opportunity was taken to visit Macon and discuss many matters with Pierre Zind (mentioned above). This Marist Brother, besides teaching in the Marist Brothers' school at Macon, also lectures at night at the University of Lyons where he is "Professeur d'Histoire des Institutions Educatives". It was mainly through his help that I was able to gain access in the French National Archives to documents that have put a completely new light upon Champagnat's early years in the field of education at Lavalla. He has also been most generous in aiding me, by mail, to obtain invaluable information on further matters.

The Marist Brothers' archivist in Rome, the French-American Brother Simeon Ouellet, has been most friendly and cooperative and I am deeply indebted both to him and his assistant, the French Brother Raymond Borne, for the tremendous amount of work they undertook to obtain whatever documentary material was thought to be useful. Brother A. Balko, originally of Czechoslovakia but now centred in Rome and who is himself doing research into Champagnat's spirituality, has been of assistance in the interpretation of

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certain documents and I was privileged to have had several hours of discussion with him on such matters.

My own research into Fr. Champagnat's life has revealed that the 1856 publication by Br. Jean-Baptiste contained many errors. Occasionally documents had been edited so as to fit in, it seems, with what Jean-Baptiste himself wished. In fact, although his book is invaluable in many respects, it is far from being a critical history: rather, it is as much a book on how a Marist Brother should behave as it is the story of Father Champagnat. I consider it significant that in the first 20,000 words or so of this thesis there are only about ten of the approximately 350 footnotes where reference is made to Br. Jean-Baptiste's book. To make matters worse, the English translation of his work contains several omissions and alterations which distort the original meaning.

Several other people have written articles, and even books, about Champagnat; but they have all concentrated on either his spirituality or his pedagogy: historically, none have added anything of value beyond what was in Br. Jean-Baptiste's book. Works on Champagnat (other than the 1856 book written by Br. Jean-Baptiste) have been:

Mgr. Laveille, Marcellin Champagnat, Téqui, Paris, 1921.

Guy Chastel, Marcellin Champagnat, Aisatia, 1939.

Br. Ignace Thery, Vie du Bienheureux Marcellin Champagnat, Genval, 1956.

Br. Romuald Gibson, Father Champagnat: the Man and his Spirituality, Rome, 1971.

L. Laurand, Un Berger Vint de la Montagne, le Bienheureux Marcellin Champagnat, Genval, 1963. (2)

No work of this nature could have been accomplished without the assistance of many people additional to the aforementioned. So many have given assistance that I fear they could never be mentioned without the inadvertent omission of some names. Hence I will not attempt to list all: but I certainly owe a great deal to my university supervisors. Professor Russel Ward of the History Department of the University of New England has been helpful both for

2. Omitted are about ten works, mainly theses (most of these having been written to fulfil the requirements of the Jesu Magister spirituality course at Rome), that have concentrated on either Champagnat's spirituality or pedagogy.

his criticisms and his encouragement. Dr. John Kidman of the French Department gave much scholarly advice whilst, when he was absent on Sabbatical, Professor G. C. Jones was most helpful in solving some last-minute problems and in giving some expert advice. Brother Quentin Duffy (Vicar-General of the Marist Brothers), Br. Kieran Geaney (Provincial of Sydney Province when this work commenced) and his successor, Br. Alman, never hesitated to give whatever assistance they could. For the help given by the above-mentioned few and the large number of other people who have generously assisted in countless ways, I am heavily indebted and wish to express my deep gratitude.

Let it be said, finally, that the work of Br. Jean-Baptiste Furet in 1856 on Marcellin Champagnat was an excellent production in accordance with the requirements of the hagiography of his time. The present author, in presenting this critical historical survey of Champagnat, has had the tremendous advantage of ready access to both national and local government documents that would simply not have been available to any author in 1856. This is really the first attempt of anyone, I believe, to write a critical history of the man, Marcellin Champagnat.

This author has sought the opinions of many people in the compilation of this thesis: for instance, opinions on matters where documentary evidence was not conclusive. For whatever is printed here, the responsibility rests entirely with the author, since on many issues he obtained different viewpoints from various people and hence had to make his own decision.

ABBREVIATIONS USED

- FMS = Marist Brothers ("Fratres Maristae a Scholis") - Marist Brothers of the Schools.
- Fr. = Father (priest)
- Br. = Brother (religious)
- P.P. = Parish Priest
- V & M = Voyages et Missions (several references have been made to some articles in these magazines: all other details are supplied in each footnote).
- O.M. = Origines Maristes (the four volumes of documents, mainly on the Marist Fathers, that were published in the 1960s by Fathers Coste and Lessard).
- VIE = Vie de Joseph-Benoît-Marcellin Champagnat, written by Br. Jean-Baptiste Furet in 1856.
- Bulletin = Bulletin de l'Institut des Petits Frères de Marie. Normally one published each one or two years: commenced in 1910.
- Circulaires = Circulaires des Supérieurs Généraux de l'Institut des Petits Frères de Marie. First volume published in Lyons, 1914.
- RCLA = Register of the copies of the letters of the General Administration. (FMS).
- SI = Edition Frère Sester, Volume One. (Br. Sester has typed many of the archival letters, in French, and has had these copies bound in two volumes).
- SII = Edition Frère Sester, Volume Two.
- AFM = General Archives of Marist Brothers, Rome.
- APM = General Archives of Marist Fathers, Rome.
- CCH = Cahier (exercise book) of Father Champagnat.
- ADL = Archives of the Department of Loire.
- AN = National Archives of France.
- AAL = Archives of the Archdiocese of Lyons.
- N.C. = Pierre Zind, Les Nouvelles Congrégations de Frères Enseignant en France de 1800 à 1830, Lyons, 1969. (A thesis for Doctorat of Letters presented at the Faculty of Human Sciences at Lyons and published with the approval of the Minister of National Education in France).