



JEAN-MARIE "BROTHER OF MARY"



Mary is our mother as she was the mother of Jesus, our brother. But she is also, somehow, our sister, because she is also a disciple of Jesus. Jesus restores to her true place the role and the greatness of Mary: she is not "blessed" because she brought Jesus into being, because she welcomed him into her womb, because she suckled him: no, she is "blessed" because she listened to the word of God and put it into practice. She is also one of the brothers and sisters of Jesus because she obeyed the word of God and the will of the Father.

Jean-Marie also loved the Virgin Mary very much and exhorted the children, the Brothers, the Sisters, and the people of God to stand beside her. And for him, the way of being devoted to Mary was to live like her the faith of a disciple in her earthly pilgrimage, passing through moments of light, but also of darkness, always looking forward with hope, even under the Cross. In these times – sometimes obscure --in the life of the Church and of the Mennaisian Congregations, we find the strength of Mary who will bring us back – like John the beloved disciple --to the foot of the Cross and before the light of the Resurrection.

Thursday 18 May 2017

We are sometimes tempted to consider 'devotion' to Mary as something secondary and private. As Jean-Marie exhorts us, let's take advantage of the month of May to revive our 'true' devotion to Mary.

Do you not see that everyday the devotion to the Holy Virgin grows weaker, like anything else? If it could be revived a little! That should be our desire (ah, with all our heart!). How? Do you think that a small, well-chosen, well-printed volume could contribute to the spreading of the devotion and the love of this good Mother? My dear friend, it is a bouquet that you have to present her.

Féli's letter to Bruté; John added the note in parentheses!. Ant. p. 159

**MARY, MAY YOUR FAITH OF DISCIPLE
OF THE LORD
BE FOR US AN EXAMPLE OF STRENGTH
AS IT WAS THE CASE FOR JEAN-MARIE**

Friday 19 May 2017

Already at the time of the persecutions of the Revolution, Jean-Marie confidently turned to Mary, praying before her image inside the cathedral of Saint-Malo. Let us seek refuge also in the heart of Mary.

Mary, I come to you; Mother of mercy, have pity on me, take my poor, broken soul into your hands and give it refreshment and peace. Mother of goodness, of forgiveness, of hope and of grace open your bosom to me, that bosom in which my Saviour Jesus was conceived for it is there that I want to live and where I want to die.

Mémorial, 124-125. Ant. p. 153

**MARY, WHEN WE ARE AT THE FOOT
OF THE CROSS,
IN THE MOMENTS OF DARKNESS,
HELP US TO FIND THE LIGHT
OF FAITH AND HOPE.**

Saturday 20 May 2017

Saint Louis de Montfort spoke of "slavery", that is to say, of the absolute service of Mary, which St. John Paul II translated in the formula "TOTUS TUUS". We too would like to belong to Mary, to be her brothers and sisters, in the faith of the humble servant of the Lord

Allow two poor sinners, united less by blood than by the desire to be yours and to uniquely belong to you, and through you to Jesus Christ, to put at your feet this declaration of love and their humble and sweet engagement of an eternal slavery.

Féli and John Mary, June 19, 1809. Ant. p. 153

**MARY, GRANT THAT OUR DAYS BE SERENE
IN THE ACCOMPLISHMENT OF GOD'S WILL
IN WHICH WE FIND OUR PEACE.**

Sunday 21 May 2017

The Council affirms that "Mary was advancing in her pilgrimage of faith, faithfully keeping her union with her Son up to the cross" (LG 58). In the same way, Jean-Marie exhorts to choose Mary as the star of our pilgrimage on earth. "Look at the star, invoke Mary" (St. Bernard).

Oh! You whom the Church calls the Morning

Star, the Star of the sea, Stella matutina, Stella maris, guide these children through the earthly waves to the port of the celestial fatherland. Oh! Queen of angels, protect them from heaven above and watch over them. Oh! Mother, take them and carry them in your hands so that none of them perish. I give them to you. I consecrate them to you, for they are yours forever.

End of the retreat of the pupils of Malestroit. Ant. p. 155

**AS JEAN-MARIE,
HELP US ALSO TO INVOKE YOU
IN ALL THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF OUR LIFE,
BUT PARTICULARLY
IN THE DARK OR DIFFICULT MOMENTS
FOR US AND FOR THE CONGREGATION.**

Monday 22 May 2017

Our Congregation has a spirituality very close to the Montfortian spirituality: in particular, one of our founders, Father Deshayes, was called to support the works of St Louis de Montfort; and Father Jean-Marie listened to and spread the Marian spirituality of the great apostle of Mary. Mary's obedience means passionate love and trust.

Oh! Queen of mercy, for I want to belong solely to you. Receive this protestation of love, this humble and sweet engagement of an eternal slavery. Receive it with that ineffable goodness which is perpetually the admiration of heaven and the consolation of the world.

To the collegian "Congreganists" for the feast of the Purification. Ant. p. 156

**MARY, GRANT THAT FOLLOWING THE EXAMPLE
OF OUR FOUNDERS, WE MAY BE DOCILE.
WE ASK YOU TO HELP US TURN
TO THE HEART OF YOUR SON JESUS:
"TO JESUS THROUGH MARY".**

Tuesday 23 May 2017

Jean-Marie made devotion to Mary a powerful means of apostolate. He founded and directed groups that lived a deep Marian spirituality. Through this they acquired an evangelical mentality and became witnesses of faith and love for others.

Hence, the congregation of the young that I was directing at Saint-Breuc was admirable. It consisted of eighty to ninety students

To the Collegians of Saint-Méen, S III, 1052-52 bis; aNT P; 157

**FOLLOWING JEAN-MARIE,
AND ATTENTIVE TO HIS EXHORTATION,
HELP US, MARY,
TO PROPOSE YOUR EVANGELICAL LIFE
IN SCHOOLS AND IN OTHER EDUCATIONAL
WORKS WHERE THE LORD SENDS US**

Wednesday 24 May 2017

Although he had a lot of activities and responsibilities, and at a high level, Jean-Marie did not forget relationships with people. Especially in the Marian associations, he was attentive to the growth of the young people who had entrusted themselves to the protection of Mary and had taken her as their guide. Thus he spoke of a young man whom he had followed:

this lively love of virtue and this tender piety that, I hope, opened for him the doors of the heavenly city?

**HELP US, MARY,
TO FOLLOW THE EXAMPLE OF OUR FOUNDERS
WHO DID NOT HESITATE TO PROPOSE TO
THE YOUNG GREAT IDEALS
AND TO ACCOMPANY THEM ON THIS PATH.**

Thursday 25 May 2017

Every religious man or woman, every lay person, every Community and every Province or District, the whole Congregation, lives difficult times and must make choices that engage. To entrust ourselves to Mary is a sure way to find the right path and to revive our fidelity to Jesus in a courageous way.

You are going to place yourselves under the protection of this august and holy Virgin that Jesus himself gave us as our mother from the Cross. Never has it been heard, as Saint Bernard remarks, that anyone who had confidence in her was ever abandoned. My very dear little children, come to Mary, then, come to your Mother.

End of the retreat, to the "Congreganist" collegians. Ant. p. 158

**AS JEAN-MARIE EXHORTS US,
WE WANT TO PUT OURSELVES, MARY,
UNDER YOUR PROTECTION,
FREE US FROM ANY DANGER,
BUT HELP US ALSO TO BE REAL DISCIPLES
OF YOUR SON AS YOU WERE.**

Friday 26 May 2017

Introduction

The Church sees in Mary the model of the disciple who follows Jesus to the end, in the pilgrimage of faith, hope and love. And because Mary followed Jesus to the Cross and accompanied the nascent Church, she became our mother in faith, the mother of the Church. It is from this perspective that Jean-Marie developed his Marian devotion and that he vigorously proposed it as a powerful means of apostolate.

The Word of God (Mk 3, 31-35)

His mother and his brothers arrived and, standing outside, they sent for him. There was a crowd sitting around him, and they said to him, "Behold, your mother and your brothers and your sisters are outside looking for you. He replied, "Who is my mother?" And my brethren? And looking at those who were sitting around him, he said, "Behold my mother and my brethren. Whoever does the will of God, he is a brother and a sister and a mother to me. "

The Church's Word ("Marialis cultus", Paul VIth, n. 37)

Mary of Nazareth, while completely devoted to the will of God, was far from being a timidly submissive woman or one whose piety was repellent to others; on the contrary, she was a woman who did not hesitate to proclaim that God vindicates the humble and the oppressed, and removes the powerful people of this world from their privileged positions (cf Lk. 1:51-53). The modern woman will recognize in Mary, who "stands out among the poor and humble of the Lord,"(104) a woman of strength, who experienced poverty and suffering, flight and exile (cf. Mt. 2:13-23). These are situations that cannot escape the attention of those who wish to support, with the Gospel spirit, the liberating energies of man and of society. And Mary will appear not as a Mother exclusively concerned with her own divine Son, but rather as a woman whose action helped to strengthen the apostolic community's faith in Christ (cf. Jn. 2:1-12), and whose maternal role was extended and became universal on Calvary

Jean-Marie's Word

I very much approve of the little Association you have established in honour of the most holy Virgin, and I hope that God will derive glory from it. Keep on devoting yourselves to it with zeal, and Our Lord will continue to bless what you are doing to increase the number of his Mother's faithful servants.

Ant. p. 160

**HELP US JESUS, TO FOLLOW OUR FOUNDERS
IN THEIR FILIAL DEVOTION TO MARY,
IN THE IMITATION OF HER JOURNEY OF FAITH
AND IN THEIR INVITATION TO FOLLOW MARY.**

**Prayer for the beatification
and canonization
of John Mary de la Mennais**

Choose a suitable song for each day.
We pray for the sick, the needy, and the following
intentions (they can be said aloud).

Prayer for the beatification and canonisation
of Jean-Marie de la Mennais

God our Father, you gave Jean-Marie de la Mennais,
a generous heart and an unwavering zeal
to make known and loved your Son Jesus
and his Gospel.

Grant us to follow his example.

Give us to build united and fraternal Communities.

Help us to proclaim your Gospel
to the youth of today.

For the glory of your Name, grant that the holiness of
Jean-Marie de la Mennais
may soon be recognised
and proclaimed by the Church.

Deign to grant us, O Lord, through his intercession,
the healing of the persons recommended...

Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

**O Lord Jesus, glorify your servant,
Venerable Jean-Marie de la Mennais!**