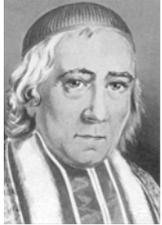


SEPTEMBER 2011

With William Joseph CHAMINADE, Nova bella! A new mission!

In a time of great upheavals, Father Chaminade knew how to adapt and to create a mission that was new in form and methods.



"We are in the midst of so new a world! I am in France almost like one in a foreign land. I seem not to know any longer what to say or do. For my part, I am waiting for events to come my way instead of going forward to meet them. I have no other policy than that of having daily recourse to the Blessed Virgin".

(L II-575 – 20 January 1831 to Fr. Lalanne)

"We believe that to the august Mother of God who, according to the teaching of the Church, alone has overcome all heresies, is reserved in our days a great glory and an amazing triumph over the combined efforts of modern philosophism and the religious indifference that results from it."

(Letter to Canon Valentini, 1839 – v-1182)

"This is certainly the distinguishing character and family trait of both our Societies. We are in a special manner the auxiliaries and the instruments of the Blessed Virgin in the great work of reforming morals, of preserving and propagating the faith, and, by the fact, of sanctifying our neighbor. She communicates to us the zeal and means of action inspired by her almost infinite charity, and we make a vow to serve her faithfully until the end of our lives, and to carry out punctually all that she tells us. We are glad that we can thus spend in her service the life and strength that we have pledged to her."

(Letter to retreat preachers of 1839)

"Jesus wishes that all people be saved; he wishes to reign over all hearts.... That is why Mary also wishes that none of those perish for whom her Son died; that is why her solicitude is universal. Inspired by that example, Father Chaminade at first did not adopt exclusively any specific work, in

any limited apostolate; he put himself at the disposal of his Mother, so as to be always ready to assist her in her universal solicitude by going wherever she might call him and by doing whatever she might tell him to do"

(J. SIMLER, 4th Superior General, Circular 71, 1896)

SOME WORKS OF FATHER CHAMINADE

We can only admire the diversity of works conducted by Father Chaminade and his collaborators. They show a great capacity for adaptation to the needs of the times, to the calls of God and to the possibilities for action. Let's look at them!

"Heaven has inspired me ... to revive or to rekindle everywhere the divine torch of faith, while presenting to the astonished world on all sides, imposing masses of Catholic Christians of every age, sex, and condition, who, reunited in special associations, practice our holy religion with neither vanity nor human respect, in all the purity of its dogmas and morals." (L 1076, to Pope Gregory XVI)

"Since the catastrophes of the Revolution, what wise person does not see that the levers which moved the moral world need somehow other fulcrums? We need to know if the new Sodalities offer more means and resources than the old. We believe they do." (EP 1-154.8)

If the Sodality is a mission in itself where one can come to revitalize one's faith, it is in order to work better at reawakening that of others. Here are some of the numerous **activities conducted by the Sodality**:

1. Catechetical instruction for children and adults, to prepare the members for the sacraments.
2. The "children of Auvergne": catechesis and education of the little chimneysweeps. One of the Sodalists, Adolphe Dupuch headed it up before becoming the first Bishop of Algiers.
3. Visits to the poor, the sick, the dying, at home and in hospital.
4. Sponsorship of instruction periods.
5. Clothing for poor children.
6. Visits to prisoners by the men.

7. Association of bakers animated both religiously and professionally.

8. Annual retreats as follow-up to the Bordeaux mission of 1817.

The works headed by the Sodalists, often imitating the Sodality of the Madeleine:

1. The work of **The Miséricorde** for repentant prostitutes: Marie-Thérèse de Lamourous took charge of it on January 2, 1801. Father Chaminade had been her spiritual guide for six years. On March 25 she was also one of nine young women who, in consecrating themselves to Mary, founded the feminine branch of the lay Sodality. From 1813 onwards, The Miséricorde evolved towards the structure of a religious congregation.



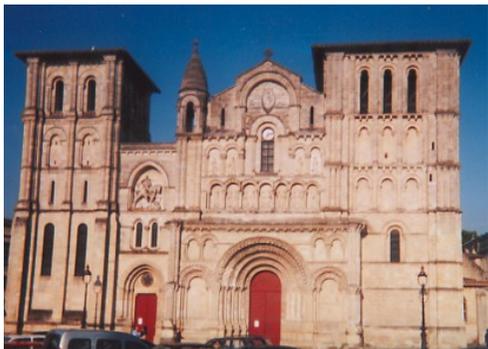
2. The **Chartrons Sodality** (Saint Louis Parish, Bordeaux) by Father Rigagnon, priest Sodalist.

3. **The Christian Friends**, a cultural group, in Saint Eulalia Parish, by Father Martegoutte, priest Sodalist. Pierre-Bienvenue Noailles, future founder of the Congregation of the Holy Family of Bordeaux would be one of its first members.

4. The **parish groups of postulants** (youth of twelve to sixteen). That of Holy Cross Parish was animated by Antoine Cantau, laborer, Sodalist and future Marianist religious.

5. **The Friends of Wisdom**, groups of boarding school students who would meet during vacation times with Father Armand Gignoux, priest Sodalist and future Bishop of Beauvais.

6. **The Good Books**, a lending library started by Father Julien Barault. From 1820 the work was approved by Father Chaminade and maintained by the Sodalists. It was sheltered at the Madeleine from 1852 to 1870.



Eglise
Sainte
Croix,
Bordeaux

THE GROUPS OF INTERNAL DEVOTION

These developed above all during the suppression of the Sodality by Napoleon between 1809 and 1814. They had some points in common with the Secular Institutes of today. Generally secret and unknown to other members of the Sodality, they disappeared little by little after the foundation of the religious congregations.

Among the girls:

1. The **Gathering in honor of the ten virtues of Mary**.
2. The association of **Perpetual Devotion to Mary**. In order to render perpetual their love for Mary, the members divided the week among themselves hour by hour to meditate upon the virtues of Mary in view of imitating them.

Among the young men:

1. The **Sodality Center** secretly gathered those who were committed by private vows and worked for the holiness of the group.
2. The religious **State**, probably the continuation of the preceding. They professed the three vows of chastity, of obedience and of "consecration to the salvation of young men" (EP 1.127.1). "Zeal for the salvation of souls is the specific purpose of the **State**. (It) is directed especially towards young men and the preservation, growth and perfecting of the Sodality" (EP 1.128.5).

Among the young women

1. Widows or over-thirty's could make the "three vows of chastity, of obedience and of

devotedness to the Sodality. This last included that of stability in the Sodality' (EP 1.131.1).

2. A **Third Order Secular** of the religious Daughters of Mary, founded in 1817 in Agen with devout Sodalists, at the service of the Sodality.

THE RELIGIOUS INSTITUTES

1. May 25, 1816, in Agen, Adèle and three friends founded the first community of the **Daughters of Mary**. The "dear project" was finally realized after a long time of maturation and of epistolary dialogue between Adèle and Father Chaminade.
2. October 2, 1817, Jean-Baptiste Lalanne and four other Sodalists put themselves at the disposal of Father Chaminade in order to found a new religious order. The **Society of Mary** was born.

Their missionary activities were numerous:

1. Service to the **lay Sodalities**: this was the first activity of the two religious congregations as they were born: support the growth of the lay branches. They collaborated in their works: Christian Friends, Good Books, the Children of Auvergne,
2. **Primary and secondary teaching**. Already in place with the lay Sodalists, the Sisters and the Brothers committed themselves to it from the beginning and in an increasing number of places. W.J. Chaminade wrote in 1836: "And what means can we have for renovating the city, if we neglect the education of the coming generation?" (L 4-914).
3. The **Normal Schools for Teachers**. Only two would materialize. The revolution of 1830 blocked the development of the project foreseen by the Founder: nothing less than the rechristianization of the whole of France through a network of schools, teaching the teachers to "win hearts to virtue and to religion." "The end which we propose: that of multiplying Christians, of propagating everywhere the true principles of virtue."
4. **The evangelization of the countryside**, thanks to the foundation in 1836 in Auch (Southwestern France) of a Third Order Regular

of the Daughters of Mary (combined with the FMI in 1922).

5. **Agricultural and Trade School work**. In order to respond to the great needs of vocational, humanistic and Christian education of the youth of these milieux.

AN INSPIRING HERITAGE!

"If we look back to the origin of all our works, the name of Father Chaminade is written at the head of each one of them" (Cardinal Donnet, Archbishop of Bordeaux from 1837 to 1882).

FROM POPE JOHN PAUL II...

"In a period as turbulent as the one experienced by Chaminade, the signs of the times can be hard to read. However, he had the unusual ability to understand the needs of the moment and the measures required. Faced not only with revolutionary unrest, but also with the less dramatic but no less dangerous threat of religious indifference, which erodes Christianity at its heart, your Founder proved to have an imagination and an apostolic courage rooted in a genuine holiness" (July 7, 2001).

"The beatification during the Jubilee Year of William Joseph Chaminade, founder of the Marianists, reminds the faithful that it is their task to find ever new ways of bearing witness to the faith, especially in order to reach those who are far from the Church and who do not have the usual means of knowing Christ. William Joseph Chaminade invites each Christian to be rooted in his Baptism, which conforms him to the Lord Jesus and communicates the Holy Spirit to him" (September 3, 2000).



Dates in the month to celebrate: 3 11th anniversary of beatification of Father Chaminade (2000) – 5 Our Lady of the Apostles : 5 Sept 1818, 1st vows SM – 12 Holy Name of Mary, patronal feast of SM