

## THE CHARISM OF FATHER DE CLORIVIERE

Among the religious figures of the 18th century, Father de Cloriviere occupies a prominent place. Rooted in the past by his education and his spirit, he is at the same time turned towards the future by prophetic intuitions which allow him to realize a task that remains, after almost two hundred years, of astonishing actuality.

There is the difficulty in understanding Father de Cloriviere and the temptation to attribute to him intentions and views in line with current trends, but which were not his.

Originally, the work of Fr. de Cloriviere, the foundation of the Societies of the Heart of Jesus (\*) and of the Heart of Mary, is the fruit of a direct intervention of the Spirit: the inspiration of July 19 and of August 18, 1790. He receives it in a deep feeling of passivity and gratuitousness, in a conscious and lucid humility, but also in a total assurance, and throughout his life he will never cease to be astonished to have been thus distinguished by God.

"He was only amazed that God seemed to be looking at such a vile instrument for such a grand enterprise. "(1)

"... It was God who inspired me with the first thought of this work, when I was not meditating on anything like it; who gave me the strength to undertake it, and who has guided me from the beginnings until now by the hand of his Providence. "(2)

This charismatic origin deeply marks, not only the work, but the whole development of Father's thought: We find in it a total and unshakeable assurance as to the essence of his message, and trial and error, hesitation, successive and sometimes contradictory view points as to practical achievements, where the breath of the Spirit leaves space for human collaboration.

The essential of the message, which feeds into events and responds to a need of the moment, is the preservation of religious life in France. This emerges clearly from the drafting of the first document that we have on the Society of the Heart of Mary, written in August 1790, immediately after the second inspiration under the title of "Idea of a Religious Society of Daughters and Widows such as 'we could institute in these times of calamity ". We find here for the first time, this idea of supplementing traditional religious life, which will always remain dear to Fr. de Cloriviere.

"This Society, wherever it will be established, ... will supplement all the other religious orders instituted for persons of the sex, which the irreligious spirit of our century proposes to suppress. "(3)

The is the real aim: everything that follows is in function of this aim.

"But in order for this Religious Society to have any consistency in the midst of a perverse world, it must be in some way independent; and at the same time, it should not disturb civil order in any way. Consequently, the Society of Mary will have no real estate, nor Houses, Churches, nor Chapels which belong to the Society itself. Individuals will not have some sort of uniform clothing either. "(4)

This vision of things is found with the same clarity in the Exposition of the Work We Have Undertaken ", of May 29, 1808. (5)

"The formation of religious Orders was enough more than once to appease the indignation of the Lord... This means is taken away from us. But the Spirit subsists and will always subsist with the Church. The Spirit made it known to several of his servants that by carefully collecting the sparks of this divine fire that He had once aroused for the reform of the Christian people, it was necessary to take a slightly different route ... "

The historical documents in our possession allow us to appreciate the extent to which Fr. de Cloriviere acted in a determined atmosphere, striving to understand "the signs of the times" and to adjust to them in the concrete.

## THE CHARISM BEFORE THE CHURCH AND THE STATE

Most of the documents referring to his relations with religious authorities are found in a large volume which bears the improper title of "Constitutive Documents", but which is in reality only the collection of Memoirs sent by him to the bishops and to the Sovereign Pontiff; of his correspondence with Bishop de Pressigny and with Rome, and other documents of less importance, grouped around a few fundamental texts: the account of inspiration of 1790 and the Plans of the two Societies.

These documents were not intended for DHMs, and should be placed in their historical context; but they allow us to see what difficulties he found himself facing, and the reasons he had for declaring that the Societies could not have survived without the intervention of a particular Providence. (6)

They are written with an immediate and precise aim, that of obtaining from Rome that these two Societies be recognized as Religious Societies. It was not easy. The very style of Father is felt. There are long prophetic explanations of the Holy Scriptures, heavy development of ideas, a display of theological science, alongside rather sketchy forecasts for the future, and it lacks the firm and logical clarity which makes the charm of his other writings.

What justifies in his eyes this new form of religious life, what makes him confidently hope for the full approval of the Church, are - always and only - "the imperious circumstances of the time". (7)

"In these times of calamity... the erection of these Societies into Religious Orders would be something not only useful, but in some way necessary. "(8)

It is God Himself who, through events, leads in this way.

"... In this age, Religious Societies as we have seen them so far in the Church could not exist without a multitude of continually renewed miracles; and consequently if the Lord still wants to use this means to provide for the pressing necessities of his Church, it is as necessary that new ones be established which, while preserving all that is essential to the religious state , have a form which distinguishes them from all those which preceded them. "(9)

These views are repeated in all of Father's writings: Memoirs, circular letters, letters of direction, like a recurrent theme: to such an extent that if he feels in himself an assurance that his work will be lasting, this assurance is based on the conviction that these troubled times in which he lives are only the prelude to still more troubled times, where the two Societies will remain the only possible form of religious life. (10)

From here also comes the peaceful and detached firmness which he brings to the pursuit of his goal: it was not he who wanted it. "We do not do it by choice: it is necessity that constrains us. "(11)

Moreover, the establishment of a religious society needs very a special Providence. He alone who knows the times and moments which the Father has reserved for himself, knows what the proper time is for such an establishment. (12)

But much more than opposition on the part of the Church, it was the threat of the state which risked dangerously blocking the road to Father de Cloriviere.

The idea of the independence of religious power and political power has entered our mentality so much that we find it difficult to understand the state of mind of Fr; de Cloriviere and his contemporaries. However, the concern of not being approved by the State was one of the most serious concerns with him and it was also what kept many bishops from admitting the Societies in their dioceses. "This (civil) sanction, according to an imperial edit, is necessary for the admission of a religious body into the state. We readily agree and recognize that nothing has hindered the progress of the good work more. The first Pastors were prudently afraid to put themselves in opposition to the Government and thus harming it to the great interests of Religion. (13)

Even more striking is the letter which Father wrote to M. de Cice in July 1804, after the promulgation of the Imperial Decree of June 22, 1804 concerning religious congregations, in which he recognized the legitimacy of this right of scrutiny by the State:

"They did well to send me the Decree. We are not mentioned in it ... So we can stay quiet and remain silent. But since it is up to the legislators and not to us to interpret it, we must await with resignation what they order us, with the intention of submitting to it humbly and simply. "(14)

"Which may seem strange", he had written a few months before in his Memoir to the Sovereign Pontiff (15) "if we look at it only with physical eyes, no really serious measure has been taken against us on the part of the 'civil authority'.

This atmosphere forced him to be extremely cautious, especially to avoid anything that might have the appearance of Association, or possession of property, which would have

compromised the existence of his Societies. He therefore takes care to expressly mark that they will not have anything of their own (16):

“Neither Houses, nor Common Churches, nor Foundations”... (17)

And since he realizes that a center is nevertheless essential to ensure its life and cohesion, he also takes care to note that there will be members who “will live in Houses where they would be subject to a common rule. ", (18) and that" several will be housed together "(19), but he hastens to add that these Houses will not belong to the Society, but will be rented. (20)

These precautions are found in all official documents of the Societies and two small remarks from Father are very enlightening on this subject.

One of them is found in the Memoir to the Sovereign Pontiff of 1804 (21): “It is impossible that it (the civil authority) was unaware of what we had undertaken for several years, because although we use rightly the greatest caution, however, it has sometimes been necessary to show ourselves in broad daylight, even unwillingly.

The other is part of an undated document, published in the Constitutive Documents under the title "Objections and Responses", p.404: "It would be difficult if the Minister did not have knowledge of our Societies, the Preview having been distributed to most new Bishops. "

It is within this framework that we must also place the request which may seem surprising today, from Father de Cloriviere to the Sovereign Pontiff, to impose secrecy on these Societies and on what concerns them ... by virtue of the obedience due to the Holy See "(22), as are the recommendations of“ vigilance and precaution ”which surround the approval granted by Pius VII in 1801:“ It is the duty of our ministry to urge you earnestly to avoid all occasions which could give rise to the slightest unpleasant

suspicion in those who govern, and give, even without the slightest appearance of foundation, the smallest motive of embarrassment to the depositaries of authority. "(23)

To which Father de Cloriviere responded by assuring Bishop de Pressigny that we would avoid "all appearance of a corporation" and that we "take all possible precautions so that nothing transpires outside. "(24)

But when, beyond the official documents, Fr. de Cloriviere writes to DHMs whose fidelity and fervor he knows, then he can freely express his thoughts and he does not fail to do so. So he wrote in 1802 to Mlle d'Esternoz:

"I like the plan you have for a Reunion very much ... but you are right that it should not be limited to two people. "(25)

Upon this approval, Mlle. Esternoz, by an act of November 7, 1805, bought the house in Besancon, 11, rue du Chapitre, which is considered to be one of the oldest in the Society.

In July 1805, he wrote to Mme de Clermont: "I also greatly approve and I praise your intentions with regard to a common House. The thing seems to me very necessary, but until now Divine Providence has not provided us with the means: we will bless the charitable hand which will come to our aid. "(26)

But it is a concrete case which allowed Fr. de Cloriviere to clarify all his thoughts on the subject of community life, for the benefit of the DHMs.

The Carmelites of Tours had the possibility of resuming their religious life, but on condition of taking charge of a school, which the Imperial Government imposed on the old Orders to allow them to reconstitute themselves. This occupation was contrary to their contemplative and penitent vocation, and in the spring of 1807, Fr. de Cloriviere

and M de Cice agreed to send DHMs to support this work. They would form a Community, living alongside the Carmelite Community, with their own superior.

On October 17, 1807, Fr. de Cloriviere sent them one of his most beautiful letters: "Do not believe, my dear Daughters, that there is anything contrary to your vocation as DHM, in a community life such as the one to which you commit yourself, according to our advice and that of your Superiors. If the body of the Society is not bound to this kind of life, it is not that we are less filled with esteem and reverence for it; but for reasons taken for the glory of God, for the greater service of the Church, for the imperious circumstances of the times, from the very necessity which we believed to be marked with the seal of the will of God; seemed to us to prevail over our inclination and our feelings.

I don't want to insist on it; but what clearly shows the case that we make of community life is that we come as close as possible to it... At the end of the Summary we have common rules which are for those who live in common . Our first associates were mostly people who lived in community. Finally, we have always proposed to have one or two common houses in each of our main establishments. "(27)

And he ends by saying to them: "Consider yourselves as being particularly favored by divine Providence, and know the great advantages that you can derive from a common life . "

But to understand this text in its value and its nuances, it is necessary to compare it with another episode of the life of Father de Cloriviere which was preserved for us by Mme de Saisseval in her "Souvenirs" and which can be found in the Annals, volume II, page 272. A DHM, Miss Puech, begged with great insistence for her and for the Sisters who worked with her, the permission to adopt a religious costume. She thought it would add



to their influence. "It was with force and raising his voice", wrote Mme de Saisseval, "that the Founder replied: No, never! They would no longer be DHM: this is contrary to the Institute. "

He had allowed them to live together, to take care of the same work: why this firmness on the detail of the costume? And a firmness so maintained thereafter, that we would prefer that this group break away from the Society (1820), and another break away in 1859 (28), rather than accede to their desire.

It is that a costume would have bound them to their house and their work and in a way separated them from their surrounding environment. However, for Father de Cloriviere, there were not two distinct forms of religious life in the Society of DHM, one in community and the other "in the open", but a single life characterized by a same spirit and absolutely independent of external modalities.

"Although the establishment of the Common Houses now appears to us to be necessary to consolidate and perfectly organize these two Societies, yet we do not believe this necessity so absolute that the existence of the Societies depends on it. We can foresee a time when the houses will be forced to dissolve or at least will not subsist in the same way. The Societies will not lose their existence and their organization because of this ".

(29)

## A NEW CONCEPT OF COMMUNITY LIFE

His very new and interior conception of religious life is reflected - and this is normal - in his way of conceiving life in community: there is an innovative aspect of which we perhaps have not sufficiently underlined the importance. .

The very way of conceiving life in community is reversed. Until then convents were "safe sanctuaries", "shelters in solitude", the place where "far from the worries of the world, in the obscurity of retirement, a crowd of innocent victims, in union with the Lamb without spot, immolate themselves for the salvation of sinners "(30). For Fr. de Cloriviere, on the contrary, the Common Houses - and this is perhaps the reason which prompts him to replace by this name that of convent or cloister - have an active and apostolic role. They are not made to shelter DHMs, but to ensure the smooth running of the Society "without having the exterior of a religious community, which would not fully accord with the nature of the Society." '(31)

"The other religious societies seek to take shelter in solitude, these place themselves on the contrary in the midst of the tumultuous waves of the world. "(32)

The purpose of the Society remains, for all its members in whatever condition, the good of the Church and the salvation of souls. (33) Goal which will be achieved according to the providential circumstances, sometimes by a life in the middle of the world, in any condition or work, sometimes "when they are free in their choice" by a life "where more services are found. to render to the Lord and more means to sanctify oneself and to sanctify others. (34)

This was done at the beginning through a personal and isolated apostolate, but soon through a community and organized apostolate, supported by common houses of which Fr. de Cloriviere felt the apostolic importance.

A letter sent by him on June 5, 1805 to Mme de Clermont (35) leaves no doubt

... It is very necessary that there be in every place a common House ... Until then our Societies will not be in the process of rendering great service to the Church. "

Everything is here. The reason for the existence of the Society is there.

The Society "will have no other spirit, no other interest than that of the Church and will devote itself entirely to its service, seeing itself as chosen by God to supplement religious orders which the impiety of these times would manage to destroy. "(36)

#### LIVING IN COMMUNITY OR IN TEAMS / GROUPS?

We wondered if Father de Cloriviere did not have in view a form of religious life lived preferably in small groups, "as a team", as we would say today ... We can answer with all assurance of truth that Father de Cloriviere had nothing definite in view. His texts, very contradictory on this subject, prove it. We find in his writings, passages where it is expressly said that these common houses "can contain only a very small number" (37) or even the Superior with one or two associates "(38) next to other passages which speak of "many".

"Members are urged to live, as much as they can, several together" (39). "As for the inconvenience of separation, it is real, but it must partially disappear, when the number of subjects is greater and we have been able to form a few common houses. "(40)

Sometimes the two expressions are found in the same document (41) or even in the development of the same thought. (42)

A typical case is offered to us by the Mémoire to the Bishops p. 157 where it is said: "However nothing will be omitted to compensate for the lack of common residence: frequent gatherings, the living together of several groups", a text which establishes a distinction which we are no longer able to grasp exactly today. the scope.

We have rightly noticed how much Father de Cloriviere had a sense of the event and the concern to recognize in it the breath of the Spirit and to follow It always without ever preceding It.

"We must look at circumstances as the signs by which Providence shows us its will.

"(43)

He simply followed It, depending on the circumstances.

"Experience will learn what other regulations should be made," he wrote to Mlle. D'Esterno, approving her plan for common houses (44).

"The Societies being still in emerging stage, it would not be astonishing that they lacked several things suitable for their perfection: Time and Experience will supplement this... I do not doubt the good intention of those who put in writing their objections ; but they reason as if the thing were being born in a state of perfection which time alone can give it. "(45)

"If the Lord gives his blessing to the Society of Mary; of which we only add a general idea here, He will inspire some of his servants to draw up more extensive and detailed rules, "he humbly wrote at the conclusion of the Plan of the Society of the Heart of Mary.

## A NEW WAY OPEN TO RELIGIOUS LIFE

But what places Father de Cloriviere in the rank of innovator and places him fully in the present times, is to have understood the possibility of living an integral religious life within a family and a profession. You have to look back in time to realize the change in mentality that this represented : it was unheard of.

And it was not just a new mindset to be formed; it was religious life itself that had to be structured in a new way, with a view to a new orientation. What is most essential to religious life, the very practice of the Vows had to be readapted.

This is where the originality of Fr. de Cloriviere appears to us above all, at the same time as his keen sense of the Church, which leads him to choose, among all the possible options, precisely those that the Church will choose some hundred years later, and made him an innovator “in” the Church and “with” the Church.

Poverty and Obedience were the two Vows that caused the problem.

For Poverty, Fr. de Cloriviere had an example from which he could draw inspiration and in fact inspired himself:

“It is in this dependence on the use of things, to which we commit ourselves in the sight of God, that the essence of the Vow of Poverty consists, according to the use and practice of the Church, which recognizes as true and as constituting the Vow of Poverty where one retains the ownership of one's goods, as was done in the Society of Jesus after the emission of simple vows. ”(46)

In his Memoir to the Sovereign Pontiff, 1800, p.279, he refers to this same example: What we say is based on the Apostolic Constitutions and in particular on that of Gregory XIII, *Ascendente Domino* by which it was defined that the simple vows which were made in the Society of Jesus after the Novitiate constituted truly Religious, even though after the emission of these vows, the religious retaining the domain and the ownership of their goods.

From there to consider a religious life where the permissions are "very extensive" and "each of them is at home like those in the Communities who are responsible for the handling of funds and the administration of goods" (47), including quite a practical and clear detailed adaptation - the step was still logical.

But for Obedience, there was absolutely nothing he could refer to. It was therefore he who, in the grace of his charism, understood that religious obedience could assume all

other obediences and make them his own, since any act of obedience accomplished in love makes one adhere to the mystery of the will of God, that mystery of adhesion which constitutes the essence of the Vow of obedience.

This new perspective, so ahead of its time, has led some to see in Fr. de Cloriviere the founder of secular Institutes, and in the Society of the Daughters of the Heart of Mary, the first Institute of this kind. In reality, nothing is further from the truth.

It suffices to read how he sees this Vow:

"The Obedience that is vowed in the Society; it is this religious obedience by which a person, in the sight of God, draws back so much from the exercise of his own will; that he wants to be governed in everything, as much as it depends on him, by the will of those who are his Superiors in religion. If, therefore, there is anything in which he is not under the dependence of his Superiors, it arises only from the fact that these things are not in his power at all. "(48)

Fr. de Cloriviere therefore does not ask the members of his Societies to perform acts of obedience but constitutes them in a state of obedience, which is characteristic of religious societies.

The form that God inspired in him has thus become the modern form of obedience in any congregation of active life, even the most classic: it is understood that a nun in a hospital will obey the doctor in her profession, and that her Superior "will not be able to order her anything contrary to the orders of this legitimate authority".

The Vows will nevertheless be true religious vows. This is clear from a letter from Fr. de Cloriviere to Mgr de Pressigny of March 24-25, 1801 (49).

In granting his approval to the two Societies, the Pope had only allowed them annual vows. Father de Cloriviere wrote to his bishop that "this decision pains him" because

"this one condition would almost nullify all the approval given by His Holiness to our form of life, which is based entirely on the perpetuation of the Vows that 'one day we propose to do in the Societies, in such a way that we would not regard as being duly called by God those who would not have the will to make a full consecration of themselves to God- by the perpetual Vows of religion." Annual Vows which would not tend to become perpetual would not be religious Vows and would not constitute the one who would make them in a stable state ..." He therefore hopes that "it is only a provisional disposition and of short duration".

Father de Cloriviere thus freed religious life from any external conditioning likely to prevent entry into the cloister, while remaining firmly attached to what constitutes the essential part of the religious state.

"The essence of the religious state consists in the three Vows of poverty; chastity and obedience: this is what makes it commonly defined as the state of those who strive for perfection by observing the Vows of poverty, chastity and obedience. We could add: and who live under a common rule which constitutes them as a religious body, and serves to distinguish between them the different religious societies. It is therefore not the lack of uniformity in clothing, nor a separate residence, nor other similar things, which could prevent one from being religious; "(50)

Henceforth, "all those who, in order to obey the call of the Lord", aspire to religious life "will be able to be admitted to it... without being forced to leave their first state. "(51)

"Each of them will be able to remain in his profession, if this profession is not incompatible with evangelical perfection, to keep (in the external forum) the possession of his property, and to remain even within his family; if motives taken from the glory of

God, from his own perfection and the good of the Church do not oblige him to do otherwise. "(52)

Thus in his first approval, on September 18, 1790, Bishop de Pressigny could write: "that ... no one could complain that the path to evangelical perfection is closed to him". (53)

The members of the two Societies, like Christ, the Virgin Mary and the first Christians, will therefore be full citizens, children devoted to their families, professionals and workers committed to their task. But they will live this seemingly ordinary life in a way that will not be ordinary. It is no longer enough for them to live it as Christians, they must live it as consecrated persons.

What properly constitutes the Society ... is the alliance of purely Christian perfection ... with evangelical and religious perfection. "(54)

#### THE TESTIMONY (WITNESS)

In his Circular Letter to the DHM living with the Carmelites (p. 346), Fr. de Cloriviere marked with striking clarity that the witness to be given, which he called, according to the terminology of his time, edification... " not to do anything extraordinary. It is by fulfilling the most common duties of Christianity, but doing so accurately, with constancy, with the perfection of which we are capable, that we can edify others. This is what Christian edification requires. For religious edification, without omitting any of these things, even doing it with great perfection, we must add a great detachment from the earth, a great death to oneself, great modesty, perfect obedience. , and a great fidelity to the observance of the Rules proper to the Institute that we have embraced ".



In his 9th Circular Letter and in the Summary, Father goes into more detail, and we can see how demanding a seemingly common form of life is in reality.

Also, "however harsh the (civil) laws appear, one must submit to them when they have nothing which is obviously contrary to divine law, not by constraint... but in view of God... not only without murmuring, but with joy ", because" this is how the God-Incarnate, our divine Model, submitted to the most unjust orders ". (55)

Thus, even if parents "have considerable faults and vices, that they have only harsh and annoying manners, that they demand painful services", the children will nonetheless be held to respect them. , to obedience, to filial piety, recognizing in them "those whom God used to give them being ... the first to whom He wants us to fulfill the gratitude that we owe to Himself ". (56)

Those who work, "although they may demand a fair wage for their work, let them never do so by force and restraint, even if they are unfairly denied it, but receive what is their due as alms from the hands of divine Providence ". That in business, "they do not lose sight of what is required by the evangelical perfection of which their state obliges them to profess, and that they remember what the Lord has said to all Christians: \* if anyone wants to sue you for your coat, give him your cloak too ". And in order "to be on guard against greed ... they will make it a law to promote the rights of others instead, even to their detriment." (57)

We see how, in the thought of Father, the societies aim to offer "the means of leading a truly religious life even in the midst of the world" (58), and "to so flourish, even outside the cloister, and as far as possible in all classes of society, the desire for evangelical perfection, so that wherever they are established, some image of the early Church will be seen ". (59)

The early church will be the ideal model for DHM. But not only, nor even above all, because these first Christians did not separate from their environment. In the 2nd Circular Letter, which with the 8th on the interior spirit is one of the most beautiful and most characteristic, Father highlights - and insists on it - their union with Christ, their assiduous contemplation of Him, in prayer, their fidelity to the Spirit, their love of the Cross, and the fraternal charity which united them all "in one heart and one soul. "

Through such a deeply evangelical life, DHM will be "the model and the support of others" (60), in other words: "a sign which can and must effectively enthrall all members of the Church to the fulfillment of inherent duties. to their Christian vocation ". (61)

#### AGAINST ALL ODDS (AGAINST WINDS AND STORMS)

DHMs will therefore simply fit into the structures of their time, as Christ fitted into the structures of his, bringing a new spirit to them. But just as, because of this Spirit, Christ found himself in opposition to his environment, even to persecution and death, they must also expect all kinds of great and small contradictions.

It was on purpose that from his first Plan of the Society of the Heart of Mary, 1790, Father asked them for the spirit of virginity and martyrdom (62), and that he proposed to them as a model "these illustrious virgins of the first centuries of Christianity who, like them, have lived in the world and many of whom have sealed their faith with their blood ". (63

It is normal for any spirit, if it is alive and vivifying, to incarnate in its own form. It is this spirit that expresses itself in the course of life in judgments, actions, choices to be made, that keeps DHMs from being "with the world".

"... Although we do not profess to be outwardly separate from the world, our way of thinking takes us further away from it in spirit and heart than the most remote desert could do", writes Father (64).

"Being with the world" is a phrase that never comes from the pen of Father de Cloriviere, an idea that remains foreign to him.

The "slogan" by which he summarizes the attitude of the DHM and which is found everywhere and at all times in his writings is on the contrary: "in the world, without being of the world". (65)

The word "world" is taken by him in the classic sense of the Gospel, of Saint Paul and of the Fathers, as a mentality and an atmosphere. It is to react against this atmosphere that sin has spread on the earth, that the DHM will remain "in the midst of the world", charged with a mission of preservation and unification, "leaven thrown into the dough, leaven that will make it. germinate ". (66)

It is at the same time a question of an animation from the interior of these "seeds of the Word" (67) which the Incarnation has hidden in the depths of human hearts and of a resistance to the forces of evil which threaten them,

The word that comes up most often from the Father's pen is that of "dike" (68), and the role of the DHM is thus summarized by him in the Rule of Conduct: "... That they strive to be, according to the extent of their power, the support of the weak ".

The DHM, in the mind of Father de Cloriviere, is therefore a religious who, firmly attached to the directives of the Church (69), is able to hold out against all odds, in a fidelity so unshakable that her entourage can find support in her. It is for the accomplishment of this mission that God "retains them in the world".

This witness will be both an individual witness and a collective witness. Each one will do it in her proper place, either in isolation or in community, but a mysterious bond, charity, this same charity which made the unit of the primitive Church, will give them "one heart and one soul" and will bring them together as one. This unity of which "the Holy Spirit is the bond" (70) assures religious families of the effectiveness of the mission entrusted to them by God and makes "a religious community formidable". (71)

Every religious family, in fact, receives from the Spirit the same charism of the Founder and ensures its extension and development over time, always in the same line. This is its "living tradition".

Each religious family has its own and it is up to them to interpret and develop their own charism.

We know the difficulties that usually oppose the authors and the interpreters of their works: the words are there, the gestures are there, and yet ... that is not it. The spirit was not caught. So it often happens when a worthy writer publishes essays on a Founder: the facts are there, the documents too, and yet his religious family is not there. The spirit was not caught. The charism escaped him.

It is in this perspective that the Decree "*Perfectae Caritatis* 4" and the *Motu Proprio "Ecclesiae Sanctae"* declare that "the main role in the renovation and adaptation of religious life belongs to the Institutes themselves".

There is therefore no reason to worry: the graces of the Holy Spirit will not be lacking to the Daughters of the Heart of Mary for an *aggiornamento* in line with their vocation. It is on the Community as such that the breath of the Spirit descends ... and it is always in the same line, for "God is faithful" to his own purposes.

(\*) The Society of the Heart of Jesus, which had never reached the development of that of the Heart of Mary, ended shortly after the death of the Founder. A parish priest in Paris, M. Fontaine, in search of a way of priestly sanctification, resurrected it around 1920, but with other views and a different orientation.

(1) Historical overview of the foundation of the Soc. - D.C., p.18

(2) Specimen from S.C.J., 1799 p.234, D.C.

See also Memoire au Souverain Pontiff, 1800. D.C., p.281

Abrege plan of the S.C.J. --- D.C., p.103

Summary, 1 (1), etc

(3) D.C., p.55

(4) D.C., p.55-56

(5) D.C., p. 442

(6) Memoir to the Sovereign Pontiff, p; 415

(7) Letter to FCM among the Carmelites, p; 340

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(9) Memoir to the Bishops, 1798, p. 181

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(11) Memoir to the Sovereign Pontiff, p.277

(12) Memoir to the Sovereign Pontiff, p. 281

(13) Exhibit of May 29. - D.C., p. 468

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(14) D.C., p. 605

(15) D.C., p. 415

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(22) Memoire au Sovereign Pontiff, 1800, p. 289

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