

Letter from the Founders Commission December 2020

Paris, December 15, 2020

Dear all,

In May, touched as we were all by the first Lockdown, we have already given you extracts from the Writings of Father de Clorivière during his five years of imprisonment. Father de Clorivière was giving us a fine example of how he had benefited from 'his confinement'. During the years in which he was imprisoned, he succeeded in carrying out an impressive activity which we had echoed in the second list of extracts from the Writings of Father de Clorivière proposed for the Bicentenary of his entry into Life. Reread the letter from the Founders Commission of May 2020. You can find it on the site

https://sfcinternational.org/ENG/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=95&lang=es

And in the interactive timeline below this letter, you will find these numbered extracts with the corresponding date.

Father de Clorivière spoke there of:

- his concern for the Society, with his memoir to Pius VII, a letter to Antoine De Lange, (extracts 11-12),
- the intense spiritual accompaniment of Adelaide and other DHMs (extracts 14-15-16),
- the last three Circular Letters written to the Society in prison (extracts 17-18-20) and
- his commentaries on Scripture (the letters of St. Peter, extract 19).

This rich experience of Clorivière's imprisonment was well synthesized by Father François Morlot in the extract 20b then proposed.

In the new series of excerpts from the Writings of Father de Clorivière that we are sending you today, we wanted to focus on **how he lived interiorly and for himself the ordeal of the prison**. We had already talked about this a little in extract 13. It is true that the letters of Direction of Adelaide and others tell us about this too, but indirectly. We therefore offer you other extracts here where he shares more personally about his prison experience. And this is very precious to us at this time when Lockdown is reimposed in several parts of the world, where our mobility is always limited, our mission greatly impacted, where disease or even death strikes our sisters, our families, or else others close to us. However, it must also be said, a great creativity was seen among the DHM to live this time "in the Lord" and "in Cor Unum".

In the preface to volume 3 (in French) of the Correspondence of Fr de Clorivière with Adélaïde, Father Salin, s.j. tells us: 'In these letters to Adelaide by the prisoner of the Temple, nothing allows us to suspect the anguish he must have experienced . The subjects of anguish, however, were not lacking. The clandestine life to which the founders of the DHM Society were condemned greatly weakened the Society. Relations with the ecclesiastical authorities themselves as well as with other religious congregations were more than delicate; communications were difficult, even perilous. Many letters bear witness to this. But always, with the Jesuit, an astonishing serenity. In a few short sentences most often, a situation is clarified, a firm judgment is formulated, and precise instructions are given. Confusion never arises. Nothing, no obstacle seems likely to undermine his confidence: the enterprise is not his, it comes under "the order of God". Nothing, except maybe the night Adelaide is going through. She who is not only his collaborator, placed by him at the head of the Society, but also his spiritual daughter, experienced in those years interior tortures of which he alone was the confidant and which we only glimpse through his answers...' *But that will be another subject for further study!*

Here are the final extracts from this bicentenary of the entry into the Life of Father de Clorivière:

21: What I am suffering is quite a small thing. Patience.

22: Death is possible. Surrender and confidence.

23: The cross in many forms. Conformity to the Lord.

24: His eventual exit: the matter of God alone.

25: Live everything with gratitude and Hope: Fiat, Blessed be God, Deo gratias.

26: His experience of the disease.

27: His experience of grief.

28: The science of the Cross.

29: Liturgical life as a support.

30: His Christmas and New Year's greetings.

These are only small incomplete extracts on these themes, but which make us touch the heart of the heart of our Founder and invite us to progress towards this Life of union with God, in the Hearts of Jesus and of Mary.

Last remark. As you know the letters are not always dated, they have a code (2a...) and the references are taken from the 3 volumes of the 'Correspondance 'collected in French by Marie-Louise Barthélémy.

May we taste them, pray with them, and receive from them strength, courage and confidence in the trials and challenges ahead for our Religious Society and each of our DHM lives, for the year 2021 which is very near.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Carmen Vergara González". The signature is written in a cursive style and is enclosed within a large, horizontal oval shape.

Ma. Del Carmen Vergara González

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Marie Frings". The signature is written in a cursive style and is enclosed within a large, vertical oval shape.

Marie Frings
Founders Commission