

TO ARTISTS, MUSICIANS, PREACHERS, POETS and MEMBERS OF THE MARIANIST FAMILY

This month we offer something to stimulate your artistic creativity around our Marianist “saints.” These items, - a portrait, a poem, a homily, a prayer – show what our own Marianist Family members have done through the years to honor our Founder. These items were used to celebrate special anniversaries of the Founder. As we prepare remotely for the coming bi-centennial anniversaries of both the founding of the Daughters of Mary and also the Society of Mary (1816-1817), perhaps these offerings will stimulate our contemporary artists, musicians, poets, preachers, and all of us to enrich the Marianist Family even more.

Thanks to **Bro. Dan Griffin, SM of Chaminade HS, Mineola** for the photo of this special art piece of Faustino and Fr. Chaminade. This was taken from an original painting in our **Marianist Parish** in Rome, Holy Name of Mary. The painting had been commissioned by the Fraternita Marianista (Marianist Family in Rome). This lay community took the name Faustino for themselves.

“It is wonderful to think that my whole life is going to be at the service of Jesus and Mary. “ Venerable Faustino



CHAMINADE'S MISSION: MULTIPLY CHRISTIANS

Homily by **Fr. Joseph Stefanelli, SM**,
Marianist Center, Cupertino, CA,
January 22, 2013.

The mentions of Abraham and David in the
Opening refer to the Scripture readings of the day:
Hebrews 6:10-20 and Mark 2:23-28.

In our first reading we remember Abraham, who waited patiently and labored perseveringly for the fulfillment of God's promise. And in the gospel, Jesus himself tells of how David stepped outside the traditional structure of his society to adapt to new circumstances. Both these positions are certainly reflected in the life of Father Chaminade: a patient and persevering living out of his call to multiply Christians, and his ability to adapt and re-orient his life in response to the many changes of his world. Let us reflect briefly on his long life, characterized, as it was, by repeated reverses and renewed initiatives. Through it all we find the same purpose, the same goal, the same intent: to multiply Christians under the leadership of Mary, who first presented Christ to our world.

We begin at Périgueux, where he is introduced to the Mother of Jesus by his own devout mother. At the age of ten he goes to Mussidan where he will be pupil, teacher, administrator, business manager, priest. The Chaminade family -- Joseph, his two priest brothers, his sister, his parents -- will all live there. They invest all their time and effort and funds into changing a small, isolated, country school into an enlarged, improved, and highly-respected institute attracting boarding students from other areas of France. They intend to make of it a center of Christian radiation, where even the pupils become little missionaries to their families and neighborhoods. This is his dream for the future. But, after twenty years, the Great Revolution destroys the dream; it also soon leaves the Chaminade family jobless, homeless and penniless.

They all move to Bordeaux, where he borrows money to purchase a property. There he becomes a trusted and enterprising member of the local clandestine Church, carrying out his priestly ministry and serving as business manager for

the clergy, most of whom are also homeless and penniless. A future archbishop, tracing back the origins of the multiple works of his diocese, will find the name of Chaminade at the head of all of them. But then comes exile, to which he must adapt. While in Spain he makes plans to regenerate Christianity in France, for he knows that the present upheavals cannot last.

In 1800 he is able to return to France where he develops energetic groups of the laity, men and women, to live and spread the Christian faith, to multiply Christians. But that work, too, is snuffed out and, like the clergy and religious of the Revolution, it is now the turn of the laity to operate underground. Under his leadership, they do -- with amazing success and perseverance and expansion.

Out of that work, at the age of 55, he draws two religious orders. Originally intended for the guidance and maintenance of sodalities, they develop apostolic centers based on schools. By 1830 he is ready, in collaboration with the government, to launch a nation-wide teacher-training program, only to undergo another political reversal which drives religious out of all higher education.

The highlight of his long life comes in 1839. His foundations have been recognized by both state and church, and his constitutions for the religious groups have been received and praised by the Pope. He is exhorted to develop their spirit in all his disciples. Barely two years later comes the great crisis of 1841, when he is 80 years of age. He continues for almost ten more years to carry out what he thinks is his mission, undaunted by opposition, misunderstanding, criticism, and illness.

Throughout his life of plans, frustrations, hopes and disappointments he has been at peace with his God, with the beloved Mother of Jesus, with his soul. His dispositions are perhaps best summarized in his letter to an unsympathetic archbishop on receipt of the Roman document validating the election of his successor: "I accept this Decree from the sacred and most venerable Congregation with the same docility with which I would receive an order from Jesus Christ himself."

What was it that sustained this man during all these ups and downs, all these successes and tragic failures, all these dreams and disappointments? I believe there were two special insights. Like Abraham, he firmly believed that God would keep his promise, that "she shall crush Satan's head." His vocation, he was convinced, was to follow Mary's lead in bringing Christ into the world. His correspondence is replete with this idea which he seeks to communicate to his

disciples. Like David, he firmly believed that God would provide the means to carry out his mission, that for those who love God, all things, both the ups and the downs, truly though mysteriously, work together unto good. He lived constantly in the presence of God, convinced that the creator would surely achieve the purpose of his creation, however distant it might seem to be to us.

As we recall his memory today, let us hope that we, too, may share in those dispositions: Deus providebit; Maria duce: God is in charge; Mary will lead us.

Thanks to **Fr. Joseph Stefanelli, SM** for his timely words.

And finally we join together with **Fr, Stephen Tutas, SM** in a prayer to our Founder.

Almighty and gracious God,
thank you for the gift of Blessed William Joseph Chaminade.
Blessed Chaminade lived and died long before I was born
yet his life has influenced mine ever since my association with the Marianists
at Hamilton Catholic in 1940.
I truly believe that Blessed Chaminade is one of the great men of history
and destined to become a saint for our time.
Thank you for making him better known, first as Venerable,
then by effecting a miracle through his intercession, leading to his Beatification.
I realize that the Church needs another sign that it is truly your will
that Blessed William Joseph Chaminade be recognized as a saint.
Even as I pray for such a sign, I know that Marianists
have the privilege and the responsibility
of making Blessed Chaminade better known in the church
as a great model of the apostolic Christian life.

I am inspired by remembering
how Blessed Chaminade courageously risked his life during the French
revolution
in order to minister the sacraments to the people of Bordeaux, France.
I pray that others may also be inspired by his daring devotedness.

I am inspired by remembering Blessed Chaminade's great devotion to Mary
recalling how he insisted that a great victory in our time would be Mary's work.
I remember how Blessed Chaminade's devotion to Mary grew

especially during his three years of exile in Spain
where he prayed and reflected at the shrine of Our Lady of the Pillar in
Zaragoza.

I pray that others may also be inspired
to share in this awareness of Mary's role in your plan.

I recall those exciting years when Blessed Chaminade returned to France
after the revolution to devote his time, talent and energy
to help rebuild the Church in France
by guiding groups of dedicated men and women under the leadership of Mary.

I venerate Blessed Chaminade as an inspiring model of courage
disposed to die during the revolution
and tireless in his efforts to overcome the de-Christianization of France
and build a new and better world.

I remember those times
when Blessed Chaminade founded religious societies of women and men
in the hope of extending the Marianist Family
beyond Bordeaux and France and Europe to the whole world.

Blessed Chaminade was the great animator of the laity
and builder of Christian communities.

He was an ecclesial leader inserting the Marianist lay communities
into the broader context of the local church.

He was the Apostolic Missionary who reminded us that we are all missionaries.

For all Christians, Blessed Chaminade is a great example of openness to the Spirit
and of confidence in the light and strength of the Spirit.

For all Christians, Blessed Chaminade is a model of true devotion to Mary,
recognizing her role in your plan of salvation and her mission in the church
today.

For all Christians, Blessed Chaminade shows how to bring out the best in others,
recognizing the potential in each person, encouraging personal development
and creating an inspiring unity out of diversity.

For all Christians, Blessed Chaminade is the model of openness and availability,
not restricting himself to any unchangeable expression of the apostolate
or to any particular class of people.

I ask Blessed Chaminade's intercession for all our needs,
not just the hopeless cases that require your evidently miraculous intervention.
May his intercession help us to be truly open to your action in our lives day by
day.

Many cures are being sought by invoking Blessed Chaminade's intercession.
Today I pray especially for Peter Ng, Jerry Pleva, Joe Mariscalco.

Your healing of these friends
would be clearly seen as a sign of your approval
of the efficacy of Blessed Chaminade's intercession.
But if it is your will not to grant these requests
I ask for the grace to see that you do always answer every prayer
but not always in the way that I am asking for...
May your will be done!

And, as always, I pray in the name of Our Risen Savior. Amen.

WILLIAM JOSEPH CHAMINADE

by James Metcalfe

Her great apostle on this earth
he lived in much restraint
And in the patience of his soul
he truly was a saint.

For Chaminade endured his cross
and always in his heart
Our Lady of the Pillar was
the most important part.

To fire men with fervor
and to bend their humble knees
In recognition of Our Lord
and of His mysteries.

From Saragossa to Bordeaux

to our United States
And unto all the world he fought
against religious hates.

That all might honor Mary
and receive their rich reward
In glory and salvation through
the Mother of Our Lord.

James Metcalfe was a widely published poet-journalist in the 1940s and 1950s.
This poem was composed for the centenary of Chaminade's death celebrated in
1950.

Let's all keep praying for the many intentions that are being asked of God
through the intercession of our Marianist saints. Thank you.

HAPPY EASTERTIDE