

13. Lefranc's advice to Marie Jotillon and Jeanne-Marie Chavoin

Also living in Coutouvre was Marie Jotillon, a gifted girl some years younger than Jeanne-Marie Chavoin. Even when quite young Marie had shown great promise. She was intelligent, gracious and remarkably pious. No doubt her parents recognised her potential and, being of reasonable means, sent her to boarding school. When Marie returned for holidays wearing ribbons in her hair - a fashion quite avant-garde in the village - Jeanne-Marie became concerned that her early promise was giving way to vanity. Somehow she managed to persuade Marie to go see Lefranc as she had been doing. The following text is Jeanne-Marie's own account of what Lefranc said to Marie and of what transpired.

...he bade her to join with me, in order to encourage one another to serve God.

A little later, M. Lefranc drew up a short rule of spiritual conduct. In addition, once a week we used to give one another an account of the interior state of our souls, which helped greatly in detaching us more and more from the world and its maxims, while strengthening us in the practice of every virtue.

Recollections of Mother St Joseph
Doc. 99: 2,3

Lefranc's insightful direction led to the development of a deep spiritual intimacy between Jeanne-Marie and Marie - they formed a strong, effective partnership for mission.

