

## 15. Jeanne-Marie Chavoïn with the Colin brothers

*When in 1817 Jeanne-Marie Chavoïn and Marie Jotillon travelled to Cerdon, they met with difficulties. The church authorities would not yet give permission for them to begin to live a communal life and so they lived for a time with another order. Then Jean-Claude Courveille, leader of the "Fourvière Twelve", called for Marie to assist in a female group begun by him in Lyons. Around the same time, the housekeeper at the Cerdon presbytery became ill. Jeanne-Marie went to take her place providing a remarkable opportunity for her and the Colin brothers to collaborate at a deep level. The text below is what many years later the then Mother St Joseph remembered of those times and which she passed on to the young Fr Gabriel Mayet when he would often visit in Belley from 1837 onwards.*

**"When the Fathers Colin were at Cerdon, they ... used to receive very harsh letters from M. Courbon, vicar general of Lyons. Another vicar general, M. Bochart, made them suffer a lot. He meant well, otherwise, she added laughing, the Blessed Virgin would be vexed with him. When the fathers were almost overwhelmed by these annoying difficulties, I felt full of courage and cheered them up. At other times, when they were untroubled, my turn came. Ah! Those were our finest hours. One day they received a letter which upset them very much and the same post brought an important answer. The fathers were discouraged. I said to them, 'Let's go to the church.' We all three went. We prayed for an hour and a half, and we came out feeling peaceful and contented."**

Recollections of Mother St Joseph

Doc. 101: 3

Recorded by G. Mayet

This passage gives us a glimpse of the mixed communal life in which Jeanne-Marie Chavoïn received her formation in the Marist spirit.

