

18. The move to Lyons

That our foundress was deeply affected by the loss of her life-long companion is indisputable. An eye-witness recorded that as Sr Marie's body was carried out of the house, Mother St Joseph was heard to say: "Half of myself is leaving the community today."

However, it is a simple fact that only five days after this event she was on the road to Lyons, leading a group of sisters to form the first foundation in that diocese. It seems that the sisters had long been waiting for permission to move into the vibrant Lyons diocese. While we have no written documentation, it is likely that the foundress moved as soon as she was free to do so.

1838 –

February 25:

death of Sr Marie Jotillon, first companion of the Foundress. "Half of myself is leaving the community today."

March 2:

first establishment of the Sisters at Lyons; the Tertiaries meet in their chapel between the 16th and 21st of March.

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This bespeaks the character of a leader:
the ability to continue to lead, to seize the moment, as it were,
in spite of personal concerns.
She may not have used the term,
but Mother St Joseph was fired by and led by the Mission.

