



You will find attached the account of an experience proving that people can still appreciate the "fruits" of the Army of Mary. How beautiful it will be when the clergy and the laity will drop their prejudices against us. Please note that I am not sending this piece to you for publication. I simply wanted to share it all with you.

P.S.: – When we sang at the Cathedral in Nicolet, I remembered the beautiful ceremony we had there on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the Army of Mary in Nicolet, in 1981, a ceremony I attended with my husband and children. It was sublime! What a beautiful memory!

Some Encouragement!

On Tuesday, October 5, 2004, the annual Mass for the movement "Les Marguerites" (whose members pray for priests) was held at the Cathedral in Nicolet. It was celebrated by His Excellency Raymond St-Gelais, accompanied by some fifty priests and a few deacons. The person in charge of the movement, Monique Vachon, had asked Christiane Leblanc to play the organ, requesting that she also find singers for the occasion. So Christiane put together a quartet from the members of the *Fidéllys* Choir from Ste-Clothilde-de-Horton. In this quartet, three were members of the Army of Mary: Marie-Josée Plaisance (soprano), Jean-François Camirand (tenor) and myself (alto), along with Hertel Boisvert (bass) who is sympathetic to the Army of Mary. The choice of hymns was traditional except for this movement's rallying hymn.

Marie-Josée Plaisance sang *Maria Mater Gratiae* at the Offertory and Jean-François Camirand, the *Panis Angelicus* at Communion. Christiane on the organ and Jonathan Hélie, a young twenty-year-old violinist, interpreted Bach's *Arioso*, Mozart's *Ave Verum* and other beautiful selections.

After Mass, Bishop St-Gelais came to encourage each one of us individually, saying: "Congratulations, you sang very well for us!" He also went to congratulate Christiane, the organist, and Jonathan, the violinist.

Christiane asked him: "You didn't find the ceremony too long, Your Excellency?" And he replied: "On the contrary, your hymns helped us to pray!"

Father Raymond Tremblay, a Redemptorist Father from Sainte Anne de Beaupré, who composed the rallying hymn for the movement, came to tell us: "The manner in which you interpret your hymns is very prayerful. Do you often accept engagements like this?"

Then, at least a dozen priests, among them a Montfortan, and two deacons came to offer compliments such as:

"It was very professional. – You have a wonderful repertoire. – Your hymns were very pious and very prayerful. – Your voices blend well together."

A priest who was wearing his roman collar even admitted: "You had us ascend to heaven!"

A lay woman also told us, speaking to Marie-Josée: "We had the impression of being in heaven. You have an angel's voice. I had the impression of hearing an angel sing!" Marie-Josée then told us: "Just before Mass began, I had prayed that our hymns might touch the hearts of the priests." Obviously, this prayer was answered. The lay people were also touched. A few days after this event, Christiane met Mrs. Vachon, the person in charge of the movement, who wanted to tell her again that she had received a chorus of praises for the hymns and the music interpreted during that Mass. We should mention that we had discretely recited the *Prayer to the Lady of All Peoples* just before the celebration began. It would appear that she did her work.

Among the crowd of several hundred people gathered together in the Cathedral in Nicolet, a canon, a few priests and some lay people knew full well that we were members of the Army of Mary. There is no doubt that Bishop St-Gelais will eventually find out as well. We hope that our humble contribution will serve to remove a few prejudices.

Jeannine Thiffault-Blanchette

– *Le Royaume!* Reading it lifts us up more and more to heaven. It is so fulfilling and filled with hope. Thank you to all the collaborators.

Georgette Major

The other day, I sent you a short account of a Mass at which we had sung at the Cathedral in Nicolet. This time, we were asked to sing at a Mass in the parish of Sainte-Anne de Danville in the diocese of Sherbrooke. Here is an account of it.

More Encouragement!

On Saturday, October 23, 2004, a special Mass was held for the Knights of Columbus at Sainte-Anne de Danville church, during which medals of merit were to be given to members, particularly those who had given 25 or 50 years of faithful service in this movement. A member of this group who sings with us had asked our directress, Christiane Leblanc, if the *Fidéllys* Choir could sing during this Mass. Eleven choir members accepted the invitation, nine of whom are members of the Army of Mary. At the very beginning of Mass, the kind priest, Father Léo Durocher, said: "I welcome the members of the *Fidéllys* Choir. It is always a pleasure to have them here." (We must say that this was the fourth time we were asked to sing in this church for various celebrations. This new church was rebuilt after fire devastated the old church. We should also mention that in spite of the opposing opinions that attempted to dissuade them, the courageous pastor and faithful of this small community held firmly to their desire to rebuild their church which is a beautiful expression of hope in the future.) At the end of Mass, this noble priest warmed our hearts with these words: "We thank the members of the *Fidéllys* Choir for their beautiful hymns which, besides being pleasant to listen to, help to elevate our souls in the contemplation of the mysteries of Christ."

We presented in four part harmony traditional hymns and several Latin hymns, two of them by Father Hervé Lemay, all of which was accompanied at the organ by Christiane Leblanc. There was much praise from the faithful at the end of Mass. One comment in particular was heard very often: "You helped us spiritually!" Mary touches souls by means of sacred hymns, using her humble instruments. We have more and more evidence of this, because, with the decline in religious practice, church choirs tend, increasingly, to disappear.

The liturgical prayers of this Mass were quite eloquent, speaking of "the Kingdom" and "all peoples". The prayer that preceded the first reading read as follows:

"God, you who wish to make yourself known of all human beings to bring them into your Kingdom, look down upon the extent of the fields to be harvested. Send forth a great many laborers who will proclaim the Gospel to every creature, so that from all the peoples of the earth a new people may be born and develop, a people that your Word will have brought together and your sacraments sustained."

The prayer over the gifts spoke of "a God of love" and also of "all peoples".

"Look, Lord, upon the face of your Christ and remember that He offered Himself for the salvation of all. In Him who glorified you to the point of offering you His life, grant that you may be acknowledged as the God of love from one end of the world to the other, that all peoples of the earth may send up to you the praise and thanksgiving of Jesus, your Son, our Savior."

May Mary, Mother and Lady of All Peoples, keep us faithful and cause His Church to blossom again!

Jeannine Thiffault-Blanchette

Thanks to Jeannine

Dear Jeannine,

Your appreciations are pleasant to read. The one you prepared on October 29, as well as the one that preceded it, prove that your *Fidéllys* Choir has a vast field of apostolate going well beyond the confines of your parish.

The compliments you receive and which you recount so well echo the quality of your repertoire and the love you spread as you sing for the glory of God and Mary. What beautiful encouragement to carry on!

Sr. Micheline

– "God's patience seems to me to be the flower of His mercy." (Sister Jacqueline Desrochers)

– "The love of the heart is the heart of love." (Mariano Izquierdo)