

“NON POSSUMUS!”

## “WE CANNOT!”

(Reflections on the Pastoral Letter from  
Bishop Paul-André Durocher)

by *Dominique POULAIN*



His Exc.  
Bishop  
Durocher



His Exc.  
Bishop  
Prendergast



His Em.  
Cardinal  
Ouellet



Marc  
Bosquart



Dominique  
Poulain

“*Non possumus!*” (*We cannot!*), that is what the first Christians replied when their persecutors asked them to repudiate Christ and sacrifice to idols.

On August 15, 2001, a Doctrinal Note from the Bishops of Canada exhorted “*the members and sympathizers of the Army of Mary to take no further part in any activities of this group, whether these involved its publications or participation in prayer meetings and liturgical celebrations, including those notably at its Centre Spiri-Maria, located in Quebec.*”

On April 4, 2005, Archbishop Prendergast, Pontifical Commissioner for the Sons of Mary, asked them “*to stop, for the time being, all public manifestations to the Lady of All Peoples until a more opportune time when the question of Marc Bosquart’s writings will have been clarified.*”

On the same day, Cardinal Ouellet, Archbishop of Quebec, reiterated the exhortations of the Doctrinal Note of 2001.

Finally, on May 25, 2005, Bishop Durocher, Bishop of Alexandria-Cornwall in Ontario, addressed a pastoral letter to his diocesan faithful “*Regarding the ‘Fils de Marie’*” in which he spoke of an even more concrete demand, since he indicated having “*established one condition to their continued presence in the diocese: that they sign a document in which they would profess the Catholic faith, publicly reject the heretical (sic) teachings of Marc Bosquart and recognize the authority of the doctrinal note of the Canadian Bishops.*”

Bishop Durocher addressed this invitation “*to all the members and friends of l’Armée de Marie: open your eyes to the perilous (sic) way in which you are engaged*” given that they apparently belong “*to a movement that continues to promote teachings that are contrary to the faith*”.

A simple lay person from France who is neither a diocesan

faithful of Quebec nor of Ontario, I nonetheless feel that I am being “challenged” by all these demands, for I am a member of the Army of Mary and its associated Works, the Family of the Sons and Daughters of Mary and the Oblate-Patriots.

And I ask myself if I too could “sign a document in which I would profess the Catholic faith, publicly reject the heretical (sic) teachings of Marc Bosquart and recognize the authority of the doctrinal note of the Canadian Bishops”.

Bishop Durocher reminds us in his letter that “*the Bishops of Canada, after consultation with the Congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith, whose prefect then was Cardinal Ratzinger, published a doctrinal note in 2001 declaring that the Army of Mary could not be considered a Catholic association.*”

As soon as August 17, 2001, Sylvie Payeur-Raynauld replied to the accusations in the Note, point by point, and I do not have to come back upon it. Her conclusion was the following:

“*‘Life of Love’ is the result of the intervention of God and Mary in a soul which accepted to let itself be crushed in all kinds of ways for the salvation of souls. By wishing to condemn this life sustained by Heaven, are not the bishops judging themselves to be ‘above the Master’? As for us, are we to obey God, or men, the Master or His disciples?*”

If Jesus and then His disciples had “obeyed men” (the high priest, the heads of the priests “installed in the chair of Moses”, the scribes and the Pharisees) rather than God, the Church would simply not have existed! And today, we would not even have bishops to obey, but only druids or rabbis...

Therefore, can I “recognize the authority of the Doctrinal Note of the Canadian Bishops”? In all honesty, and having “to obey God rather than men”, no! “*Non possumus!*”

Bishop Durocher went on in his letter to detail “*the good points to the Army of Mary: Marian devotion, love of the Eucharist, respect for the priesthood, attention to the teachings of the Pope, to name a few*”.

However, he added: “*Unfortunately, there is more to the Army of Mary than these good points. Using the writings in which Mrs. Giguère describes her numerous mystical experiences (which, by the way, have never been officially recognized by the competent Church authorities), members of the Army of Mary have developed a series of teachings that raise serious questions. Among them, Mr. Marc Bosquart has written a number of such books and articles.*”

First of all, with regard to the refusal to acknowledge as authentic the “*mystical experiences*”: how could one develop anything (actions, foundations, “*series of teachings*” and so forth) from “*mystical experiences*” if one had to wait until these latter were “*officially recognized by the competent Church authorities*”?

The Bishops’ Doctrinal Note of 2001 itself acknowledges this: “*The possibility of private revelation through visions and auditory*

experiences has always been recognized by the Church. Indeed the tradition and practice of the Church, in many of its devotions and recognized prophetic figures and mystics such as Saint John of the Cross and Saint Teresa of Avila, presuppose the existence of genuine private revelations."

If Saint John of the Cross, Saint Teresa of Avila, Saint Louis Marie Grignion de Montfort, Saint John Bosco, Saint Maximilian Kolbe, Saint Pio of Pietrelcina and so many other saints or founders, the majority of whom were persecuted by their bishops, their superiors or their confreres (excommunicated, banned, imprisoned, considered to be crazy, to say nothing of Saint Joan of Arc who was burned at the stake), had waited for the recognition of their "private revelations" before beginning to take action, what would have become of their works?

Bishop Durocher went on to say, concerning the "heretical teachings of Marc Bosquart", some of which "were explicitly condemned in the doctrinal note of the Bishops of Canada":

- "that there is a feminine person, the 'Immaculate,' who shares eternity with God;
- "that this Immaculate was incarnate in Mary of Nazareth, who is thus more than a simple woman: divine, she shares certain divine attributes with God;
- "that this Immaculate is today reincarnate in Mrs. Giguère"; and others which he considered to be "just as erroneous":
- "that God the Father fertilized this Immaculate to create the world;
- "that Mrs. Giguère is completing the redemption that was inaugurated by Jesus Christ and is in fact the feminine equivalent of the Redeemer;
- "that Mrs. Giguère participates in the Eucharist in the same manner as Jesus Christ;
- "that we can conceive the divinity as a 'quinternity' in which we find not only the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, but also Mary of Nazareth and Marie-Paule Giguère".

Are these "teachings" heretical? And if so, do these teachings really come "from Marc Bosquart" or are they the result of an incomprehension of his writings?

It suffices to reread "Marc Bosquart's Reply to His Exc. Archbishop Prendergast" of May 22, 2005, to be enlightened. We can read on page 6: "Your Excellency, if you were to accept... not to raise Catholicism like a wall against the action of God today, you would be subjugated by the coherence of our 'ideas' and you would be filled with wonder in realizing that they are, at one and the same time, absolutely Catholic... and yet already somewhat beyond the present Catholicism, of this 'narrow' Catholicism 'turned in upon itself' that declared that Revelation is closed once and for all and that God has nothing more to reveal to us until the end of the world."

But, have the bishops read Marc Bosquart?

"Your Excellency, please forgive my straightforwardness, my outspokenness, but if you had read, you would have known!" (Marc's reply, page 7)

In fact, are Marc's statements so scandalous, once we have read his explanations with simplicity? And he has explained things so much! We need only take one example:

"With regard to the point of the 'eternity' of the Immaculate, the essential difference lies in the dependence - and what a difference that is in reality! Consequently and in relation to the Divine Trinity, there will always be, next to the Creator, the CO-Creatrix, next to the Redeemer, the CO-Redemptrix, next to the Sanctifier, the CO-Sanctificatrix! And, in fact, the Lady of All Peoples drew our attention to this: 'I insist particularly on the "CO-" ' (32nd message), because it is in the little 'co-' that the truth on the nature of the Immaculate is revealed, that is to say, divine and not of God, co-eternal and not eternal of herself!" (page 9)

Why can't Their Excellencies the Bishops understand such simple things? Would it be because "these things have been hidden from the wise and the learned and revealed to the little ones" (cf. Mt 11:25)?

Marc Bosquart went on to say: "that you have not read (or at the very least, not read well) the writings I have authored and from which you extract sentences and expressions, to then accuse me of heresy'. That, Your Excellency, is not a serious way of proceeding! And that alone, in my eyes, discredits all that you could subsequently say, imagine in the form of tendentious interpretations, or draw as inaccurate conclusions." (page 10)

Marc then gave "a few examples of the 'tendentious interpretations' and 'inaccurate conclusions' that have formed the basis of your repeated accusations of 'non-Catholicity'." (page 10)

An example:

"ATP: To claim that in God there is something other than the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit is a heresy.

"MB: I did not say that, but rather this: "The fact of "placing" the Trinity of the Immaculate "alongside" the divine Trinity... takes absolutely nothing away from this latter'..."

And there are any number of examples to be found in Marc's pages. Let them read them! Then the "heresies" of which Marc Bosquart is accused, are they really "heresies"? And when there are "heresies", do they really come from Marc Bosquart or from those who claim to be able to comment upon his writings?

Therefore, could I "sign a document in which I would publicly reject the so-called heretical teachings of Marc Bosquart"? In all honesty, no! "Non possumus!"

Bishop Durocher raised another problem in his letter:

"Recently, Archbishop Prendergast asked that, in the name of the obedience due to him as personal representative of the Pope, the Fils de Marie cease all devotions to the Lady of All Peoples (a devotion founded on a series of supposed Marian apparitions in Amsterdam which are said to be fulfilled by Mrs. Giguère)."



His Exc. Bishop Punt, Netherlands

Yet, how can Archbishop Prendergast make such a request of the Sons of Mary, given that on May 31, 2002, His Excellency Bishop Punt, Bishop of Haarlem (Netherlands) signed a decree recognizing the supernatural nature of the apparitions of the Lady of All Peoples, declaring that these latter were "a help in understanding the signs of the times and to help live more fully the Gospel" (which can sum up in just a few words the program of the Army of Mary)!

Can we not see in this the realization of the message of the Lady of All Peoples at Akita in Japan on October 13, 1973, (private revelations, the supernatural nature of which was recognized by the local bishop, Bishop Ito, on April 22, 1984, on the feast of Easter):

"The work of the devil will infiltrate even into the Church in such a way that one will see cardinals opposing cardinals, bishops against other bishops."

Bishop Durocher's final thoughts relate to the "three fundamental problems with the leadership of L'Armée de Marie":

- "First, they do not seem to understand that in Jesus Christ, God has spoken his ultimate Word. There is no new revelation to be awaited."

With all due respect to His Excellency, I believe I can affirm that he and the Army of Mary are not speaking of the same thing... Assuredly, "God has spoken his ultimate Word" with regard to what is required in order to benefit from salvation for eternal life....

But what about what we need to know in order to fulfill the promises of God found in Holy Scripture, from Genesis to the Apocalypse, concerning the terrestrial Kingdom which will be the prelude to the celestial Kingdom (and, it is necessary, according to Saint Irenaeus)? This kingdom which is called for every day in the "Our Father": "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven."

Does not God still have much to say to us, just as He has already said so much in two thousand years to numerous privileged souls through the voice of Jesus, Mary, the saints and the angels, things which we would not have been able to understand previously?

- "Secondly,... saying that there exists an 'Immaculate' co-eternal with God is not a development of doctrine, it is a contradiction of doctrine." Now, as we have seen above, there is no contradiction. God alone is eternal, the difference is to be found in the "CO-".

- "Another example: our faith teaches that God is a Trinity; to affirm that God is a quinternity is not to deepen our understanding of the Catholic faith, it is to contradict it." Now, there again, there is no contradiction, since Marc Bosquart explains: "if there are always only Three Persons in God, the divine Trinity can henceforth be considered as forming, with the Trinity of the Immaculate, a kind of Reality of a different order and which I have named 'Divine Reality.'" (Marc's reply to His Exc. Archbishop Prendergast, page 11)

Thus, I could very well sign, this time, "a document in which I would profess the Catholic faith", because I accept the totality of the Catholic Credo, and would proclaim that Marc's statements,

which stem from an attentive and "inspired" reading of the work of *Life of Love* and its complementary elements, do not contradict Catholic faith.

Furthermore, I remember having read some time ago an opinion poll on the faith of "practising Catholics" (these latter going to Mass only "at least once a month"). Only 1% of these "practising Catholics" accepted the totality of the Catholic Credo (as I do, without boasting, for "all is grace", to which it suffices to respond...). Why don't the bishops (from Canada or elsewhere) ask the other 99% to "sign a document in which they profess the Catholic faith"?

– "Finally," wrote Bishop Durocher, "they refuse to recognize that it is up to the Bishops of the Church to judge what is in conformity with faith and what is not. God has entrusted to Bishops the ministry of teaching, and God gives to Bishops the charism of discernment in this domain. To continually refuse the Bishops' judgment is to reject the magisterium, the teaching authority God has given to his Church. One cannot claim to be faithful to the Bishop of Rome while being unfaithful to the Bishops who are in communion with him."

Far be it from me to question the bishops' ministry, their charism and their authority. I know that, in his letter of June 4, 2005, to Mother Paul-Marie, Archbishop Prendergast reproached "the Sons of Mary" and the "lay members" with having "a poor understanding of the Catholic faith and the ecclesiastical laws" so that they must be "purified" of "a certain dross to bring them, together, to a greater understanding of the Church and its mystery", for, "at this time, this understanding of the Church and its mystery is quite poor".

I will not be so insolent as to return the "compliment" to Their Excellencies, but all of this reminds me of the texts read at Mass not so very long ago, for example, on the Friday of the octave of Easter:

"While Peter and John were still addressing the crowd, the priests, the captain of the temple guard, and the Sadducees came up to them, angry because they were teaching the people and proclaiming the resurrection of the dead in the person of Jesus." (Acts 4:1-2)

On the Saturday of the octave of Easter:

"The priests and elders were amazed as they observed the self-assurance of Peter and John and realized that the speakers were uneducated men of no standing.... So they ordered them out of the court while they held a consultation. 'What shall we do with these men?'..."

"So they called them back and made it clear that under no circumstances were they to speak the name of Jesus or teach about him. Peter and John answered, 'Judge for yourselves whether it is right in God's sight for us to obey you rather than God. Surely we cannot help speaking of what we have heard and seen.'" (Id., 4:13-20)

"Cannot": "Non possumus!"

Or, on Wednesday of the second week of the Easter season:

"The high priest and all his supporters..., filled with jealousy,

arrested the apostles and threw them into the public jail. During the night, however, an angel of the Lord opened the gates of the jail, led them forth, and said, 'Go out now and take your place in the temple precincts and preach to the people all about this new life.' Accordingly they went into the temple at dawn and resumed their teaching." (Id., 5:17-21)

Finally, on Thursday of that same week:

"The high priest began the interrogation in this way: 'We gave you strict orders not to teach about this name, yet you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching... To this, Peter and the apostles replied: 'Better for us to obey God than men!'" (Id., 5:27-29)

As I was about to put an end to these reflections, and being currently in the process of rereading all the writings of our foundress and her collaborators (that is the best thing to do, for we find in them all the answers to the many "problems" brought up by the Bishops), I "came across", providentially, the following passage, whereas I had decided on the title of my article at the very outset:

"They 'tried' to force Padre Pio 'to sign a declaration' stating that he had renounced – willingly – the property of the House for the Relief of Suffering, as well as all the legacies, donations, funds and inheritances which he administered in accordance with the Rescript of Pius XII, for this voluntary surrender of his ownership rights would put an end to all protest, or so the Apostolic Visitor thought.

"But he came up against a 'non possumus', humble but irrevocable." (Mother Paul-Marie, brochure no. 5, *La Purification*, 1984, p. 59, quoting Ennemond Boniface, *Padre Pio, le Crucifié*, p. 67)

I find myself in good company with Saint Padre Pio, "a victim... tortured with impunity..., the priest... died condemned, and condemned by the Church", a victim of "calumnies, old and new,... repeated over and over". His faithful followers were "hatefully bullied in a multitude of ways and accused of being heretics, fanatics in revolt against the Church, visionaries, etc. Since there was no success in dissolving the prayer groups, they were forbidden to meet in the churches." "Padre Pio died condemned by the Church at the instigation of very highly-placed religious and ecclesiastical authorities. Like Jesus, his own did not receive him; they preferred their darkness to his light." (E. Boniface, *op. cit.*, pp. 12, 31, 68, 134 and 76, quoted by Mother Paul-Marie, *op. cit.*, pp. 56 to 60.)

And Padre Pio is now a saint canonized by the Church...

How could I sign the document requested by Bishop Durocher after having read and reread the writings of Marie-Paule and Marc Bosquart? "I read, I believed," as the late Father Mélançon said. And if I were asked to "sign a document in which I would profess the Catholic faith, publicly reject the heretical (sic) teachings of Marc Bosquart and recognize the authority of the doctrinal note of the Canadian Bishops", I could give no other answer than the cry uttered by the martyrs of former times: "Non possumus!" ("We cannot!")

June 22, 2005,

the feast of Saint Thomas More

Dominique Poulain

## Readers' Comments

– Thank you for this wonderful paper which enlightens us and keeps us on the right path. We feel particularly blessed to have been chosen to belong to this marvelous movement. **Blanche Pierret**

– The Army of Mary, what a school of holiness! The meaning of suffering and the love of the Cross which this school teaches us transform us. Yes, this is the only way that will allow us to obtain so many graces and make us love the Eucharistic Jesus always more and more. Let us adore and give thanks. **Ghislaine Légaré**

– Thank you for the wonderful little booklet, *The Angels of the Priesthood*. How many holy priests owe a large part of what they are and what they have accomplished to the kind assistance of these "angels".

A cordial thank-you as well for the luminous conferences from Father Denis

Thivierge. What wise advice for the preparation of the "final battle" and the formation of an elite that will proclaim and defend the truth. "Engaged in combat" is a rallying cry: we are all responsible... we must unite..., remain faithful, follow the example of Saint Paul who could say: "I have fought the good fight... I have kept the faith." (2 Tim 4:7)

Issue no. 171 of the paper *Le Royaume* urges us to read and reread *Life of Love* in order to understand the Army of Mary, the need for unity among Christians and the gathering together of the sheep into one single sheepfold, as well as the need for interior conversion for each one of us.

*Life of Love* makes known to us the divine plan. It is "the Work of the Lady of All Peoples". Then comes the Immaculate Conception: that luminous beacon for humanity under the guidance of one single Shepherd, Christ. **Two Missionaries**

– In a homily heard in Montreal, the priest

told us that the gestures of love and charity we make in the world serve to extend God's Kingdom. The formation we received in the Work encourage us to always surpass ourselves more and more so that His Kingdom may come on earth as it is in heaven. How beautiful it is to have been called to be a part of this Work for our time, this time in which the three worlds are being revealed to us little ones.

**Yves and Nicole LeCorre**

– Thank you for all this spiritual richness. Yes, no other words describe it; it is food for the soul. What beautiful writings and touching testimonials which make us realize that we must draw our strength from God, especially in these difficult times.

Thank you for collaborating in this return to God! **Myriam Délisle**

– God continues to intervene in the times of history. We must be able to discern the signs of the times, discern the time of God. **Marc Élie**