

Controversy Provoked by a First Marriage at Spiri-Maria (continued)



June 10, 2006 - Marriage of Marie-Hélène Têtu and Jean-Gabriel Michaud.

from Father Eric Roy in which he sets out the reasons that led to the celebration of this first marriage at Spiri-Maria.

In the preceding issue of the paper, we published the letter His Exc. Archbishop Terrence Prendergast addressed to Father Denis Laprise on July 7, 2006, after this latter had celebrated the marriage of his nephew Jean-Gabriel Michaud with Marie-Hélène Têtu. We also published the letters sent to Archbishop Prendergast by Father Denis, by the parents of the young spouses, Guylaine and Roger Michaud, and Marie and Alain Têtu, and by the spouses themselves.

On August 15, 2006, Archbishop Prendergast wrote to the newlyweds as well as to their parents. We are reproducing here these letters (the letter addressed to Marie and Alain Têtu is similar to the one addressed to Guylaine and Roger Michaud). They will be followed by a commentary

Letter of Archbishop Terrence Prendergast, S.J., to Marie-Hélène and Jean-Gabriel Michaud



ARCHDIOCESE OF HALIFAX

P.O. BOX 1527 HALIFAX N.S. B3J 2Y3

Solemnity of the Assumption of Mary
Halifax, August 15, 2006

Dear Young People,

I read the letter you sent me after having been "united, before God, June 10, 2006, in the chapel of the Eucharistic and Marian Center Spiri-Maria at Lac-Etchemin", as you yourselves wrote.

The information that was given you concerning your commitment was certainly not adequate since it led you to an action that is invalid, unfortunately. Furthermore, persons in whom you had legitimately placed your trust provided you with means of taking an action which is harmful to you in your journey of faith, by introducing a false contradiction between the laws of God and the laws of the Church.

The noble ideal of married life which you describe and which you wish to pursue is a beautiful and great challenge. For baptized persons, the grace of the sacrament of marriage represents the effective assistance of God's love to help them travel along this often difficult road.

A shadow has been cast over the happy event of the commitment of your love by the unfortunate conduct of third parties who, more than you do, bear its responsibility. I encourage you to meet with a pastor of the Catholic Church who will be able to help you in an appropriate way to leave behind you what can only lead to a spiritual impasse.

Dear young people, I am well aware that you may have to take courageous actions. Be assured that I keep you in my prayer.

Terrence Prendergast, S.J.
Archbishop of Halifax
Pontifical Commissioner for the Sons of Mary

Sublime Moments!

Sunday, September 17, 2006: official appointment and solemn commitment of Padre Jean-Pierre.

Sublime moments! It was as though one could now hear the "new hymn of the redeemed of the earth".

Our determination: To follow the Lamb wherever He goes. I BELIEVE!

Benoît Landry

Path of Love That Gives Without Measure

Dear Father Pierre
or rather, Dear Padre Jean-Pierre,

From one ceremony to the next, we always have the impression of arriving at a summit that it will be impossible to surpass, and yet, yesterday, we reached a new summit that filled our soul with a profound adoration of the Wisdom, Mercy and infinite Goodness of God. Yes, His plan of love is more than adorable. It was really most appropriate to crown it all with the sublime Te Deum. What an excellent idea it was to have asked all the priests to turn towards the Blessed Sacrament at that so very solemn moment. Yes, to God all glory, praise and honor!

The ceremony of investiture which made of you the Father of the Church of John with the very beautiful name of Padre Jean-Pierre filled me with wonder because of its great simplicity, its lofty dignity, the harmonious unfolding of the different parts of the ritual, the respectful silence that reigned in the chapel. I cannot find the words to express what I experienced. It was truly divine.

As a distinctive sign you received the gold Miraculous Medal. How beautiful that was and how really appropriate it is for the pastor of the Church of John. Your motto, so concise and so simple, is the most powerful: "I BELIEVE!" In two words everything has been said with regard to your faith concerning the mystery of the Redemption and of the Co-Redemption. Your faith strengthens and reassures us. And what can be said of the ritual of the giving of the ring, the most touching moment of all. Who better than your mother could give you that ring, borrowing the famous words from the mother of a pope: "If I had not had this ring, you would never have had that one"? The handing over of the key, the solemn entry of the symbol of the Church of John so well represented on your coat of arms... Finally, everything had such a rich and deep meaning that it gives us food for meditation for a very long time.

It is the first time that I make a leap into the unknown with as much confidence. And here are the reasons why: God is guiding everything and that fact is so palpable. Furthermore, our dear Mother has never deceived us. And pardon me for saying this to you in all honesty: the fact that the divine choice fell upon you who, for so many years, have been formed by the cross, also impels me to have confidence. And if Marie-Paule tells us that the distance between Heaven and earth seems now to be so minimal, well it can be said that yesterday Heaven was on earth. Yes, Heaven visited earth simply, harmoniously, without any exaltation whatsoever. On the contrary, everything led us instead to recollection and adoration.

Dear Father Pierre, as I celebrated Holy Mass this morning, when we pray for the Holy Father, I also named you in my heart and I will always do so, hoping that one day

I will be able to do so out loud. Yes, I will make it my duty to pray for you daily. I also pray so that each one of us, Sons of Mary, may be a consolation for your heart of a Father. May we all walk along the path set out for us by our dear Mother, a path of love that gives without measure. I also count on your good prayers, that I may be faithful to the end... and to the point of martyrdom, if necessary.

I bow with joy and gratitude before your hand in blessing as the Father of the Church of John.

Sept. 18, 2006 **Father Carl Beaupré**

Everything Is So Beautiful and Simple With God!

What a beautiful weekend! It was beyond anything we could have imagined: simplicity, beauty, repeatedly touching, especially the moment of maternal tenderness with the giving of the ring, a moment marked by Heaven in which the divine was humanly palpable. The simplicity of the event and at the same time the grandeur of that moment delighted my soul. Heaven never repeats itself and it never copies the Works it has already done.

The figure of the spiritual Father of the Church of John is a new authority of the renewed Church, but not an imitation of the past. Everything is turned towards the future while at the same time preserving the heritage of Christ and of His pearl that is the Church of Peter, but this event opens new horizons and luminous perspectives. The Church of Peter has been renewed in divine Love. I am amazed when I consider the divine pedagogy, how God prepares us gently, slowly but surely, to advance towards the summits of the supernatural. Everything is so beautiful and simple with God!

I would like to put in my little chapel the coat of arms "I believe!", for we too believe, in the wake of Padre Jean-Pierre. The ring was the most touching moment for me, for I like so much the bond that was made with the mother and the words of Father Pierre's mother, words recalling the very beautiful reflection made by the mother of a saint. What divine maternal tenderness in all of that, which shows the link between the priesthood and the mother who deposited the seed of it and fecundated it through her life of oblation. This gesture also, while respecting the place of each one in the roles they will have within the Church of John, demonstrates the importance of the family and the sublimeness of the maternal vocation of leading the souls the Lord has entrusted to her and guiding her children to accomplish God's will in their life. I can well imagine the emotion felt by Mrs. Mastropietro.

I am so happy to have been able to participate in such an historical moment. I do not know how to explain all the supernatural love that overcame me as I thought of Father Pierre. Marie-Paule told me, some ten years ago, that it is from the clash of ideas that light bursts forth and, after having said very often the little prayer she asked me to say in the darkest "nights" – "My God, I want what you want" –, I can say how happy I am of the bond I feel with our Padre of the Church of John.

While we were preparing for Mass last Sunday, I had thought of asking Padre Jean-Pierre for his blessing for all the Sons of Mary present and absent, sensing just how much this unique moment established a supernatural bond between all of us. I did not

Letter from His Exc. Archbishop Terrence Prendergast, S.J. to the parents of the newlyweds: Guylaine and Roger Michaud Marie and Alain Têtu (similar letter)



ARCHDIOCESE OF HALIFAX

P.O. BOX 1527 HALIFAX N.S. B3J 2Y3

Solemnity of the Assumption of Mary
Halifax, August 15, 2006

Sir, Madam,

I read the letter you sent me following the marriage of your son Jean-Gabriel Michaud with Marie-Hélène Têtu last June 10 at Spiri-Maria.

Unfortunately, this marriage was not performed according to the rites of the Catholic Church, rites which are required for the validity of the sacrament of marriage. To declare that the young spouses, after having been informed, "took the decision to follow their path according to the laws of God" is like saying that the Church's laws do not come from God.

Obviously the young spouses do not have the theological or canonical formation or the proper perspective of history required to evaluate, in the truth, all the elements at stake in this situation. If it is affirmed that they acted freely and in good faith, then we can only deplore the fact that this beautiful project and their good intention were led astray by an entourage and directors who misled them.

In this situation we can see that the young spouses were improperly counselled and that they were given, wrongly, the means to act outside ecclesial communion. Those who acted in this manner bear a much greater responsibility than the young spouses who are more the victims of the misconduct of others.

With all possible care and thoughtfulness and for the good of their spiritual life, it is necessary that the young spouses be informed of the whole truth with regard to what happened at Lac-Etchemin last June 10.

Hoping that you will give to this letter the thought it requires, under the influence of the Holy Spirit who is the source of unity within the Church, I assure you of my prayer for you and the young spouses.

Terrence Prendergast, S.J.
Archbishop of Halifax
Pontifical Commissioner for the Sons of Mary

Father Eric Roy's Comments Following His Exc. Archbishop Prendergast's Letters to the Spouses and Their Parents



A DISCONCERTING SOLICITUDE

As we read the letters addressed to the newlyweds and to their respective parents, we can only ask ourselves what Archbishop Terrence Prendergast's real solicitude is with regard to the members of the Work. He casts the fault upon the shoulders of third parties who, according to him, would have given the young spouses the means to act outside ecclesial communion, loudly proclaiming for all to hear, the misconduct of these persons. Was his gesture of refusal just towards the spouses who expressed the desire to be united before God? Was Father Denis incapable or unfit, to the point of refusing him permission to bless the marriage of these two young people? We can only reply to these two questions by asking a third question: In what way does Archbishop Prendergast exercise his solicitude for souls?

THE TRUTH THAT IS THE STUMBLING BLOCK

It is surprising that Archbishop Prendergast cannot seem to realize that he himself is the one who unjustly brought about this whole situation. It would never have come about, in fact, if a real desire for unity had formed the basis of his undertakings. The person who is really looking for unity does not refuse legitimate requests, and he who is really seeking unity seeks also, and above all, the truth. Now, the truth has not been Archbishop Prendergast's main concern, as much in this last episode as during the fulfilling of his mandate with the Sons of Mary and the Work in general. We have had the proof of this so many times.

Therefore, we can ask ourselves the following question: What then is this truth that frightens, that paralyzes Archbishop Prendergast and so many other religious authorities before him? It is to see and

then to accept that God passes and wishes to pass by means of unfathomable paths that are not the paths we would choose... It is to realize that He is the Master of His Church, and that His divine plan has no need of the approval of the authorities of the time. In the history of the Church, the same thing happened at the time of the Redemption, and it is the same thing today in this time of the Co-Redemption. In all honesty, it is the mystery of the Co-Redemption that frightens them..., and yet this is the mystery of Unity par excellence, for it is a mystery of love, of the solicitude of God for the men and women of all peoples; it is the Truth for our time.

THE LAWS OF GOD AND THE LAWS OF THE CHURCH

Archbishop Prendergast accuses us of having introduced a contradiction between the laws of God and the laws of the Church. But, as far as we are concerned, there really is no contradiction between the laws of God and the laws of the Church. On the other hand, that does not prevent the authorities from being able to

act unjustly even when it is a matter of applying the laws of the Church, nor does it prevent God from acting as He sees fit and when He wants. And that is what we believe took place in the series of events leading to the first marriage at the Eucharistic and Marian Center Spirimaria. The authorities, and particularly Archbishop Prendergast, acted unjustly, for their part, in the refusal given the spouses and Father Denis Laprise. And we do believe that this marriage was well and truly in God's plan.

In spite of all the authorities can and will continue to say, we are convinced that on that blessed day of June 10, 2006, God generously gave His grace to two young spouses so that, through the example of their married life, they may be an authentic sign of unity and love within His Church of Love!

With the Virgin Mary, the Lady of All Peoples, and all the heavenly court, let us give thanks to God; to Him all glory and honor for ever and ever!

Aug. 29, 2006 **Fr. Eric Roy, O.F.F.M.**

do it, but I know that in the blessing he gave us at the end of the celebration, we were included in a special way.

Those are my spontaneous thoughts after the ceremony of Sunday, September 17. Now, my heart is turned to the present moment, and the future is a perspective of light, for I have difficulty expressing all that my heart seems to guess at with regard to the supernatural events that will mark our path in the coming months. I am anxious to see all of that, but what also fills my heart is the prospect of being able to continue this Church of John wherever we go.

In my little chapel, in the morning adoration of each day, I think of the symbiosis that takes place as I light the candle on which we see the Blessed Sacrament at Spirimaria. We are united with all the adorers who are praying at the heart of the Kingdom, and I am happy to be able to prolong its radiance in a humble basement where the warmth of the place fills our members.

Sept. 19, 2006 **Father Gilles Devaux**

A Powerful Beacon

The two days we lived on Saturday and Sunday were truly celestial. Sunday's texts shed extraordinary light upon what we are living intensely. The texts we heard contained many elements already known through *Life of Love*. I had the impression that this grouping of texts formed a huge painting as it were, covered by a transparent veil.

The reading of these texts and the bringing to light of the things we knew gave me the very clear feeling that the veil had been lifted and that, little by little and with a powerful beacon, light was being shed upon the details of this magnificent painting. The passage of the Church of Peter into the renewed Church of John fascinates me and I want to adhere to it with all my strength and with as much enthusiasm as I have always done, and with all that this may involve. I reiterate my gratitude to you and filially, I bless you.

Father Denis Laprise

A Gift From Heaven

Dear Marie-Paule,

After a very touching historical day, eloquent in its discreet message, grandiose in its simplicity, our prayer of thanksgiving ascends to God the Father who is realizing His plans of love at the time that suits Him and amid the countless crosses and snares set by men. The coming of "Padre Jean-Pierre" at this precise time in the history of the Work is a gift from heaven. The ministry that God entrusts to him with the power of the keys takes up the torch abandoned by Bishop Jean-Pierre van Lierde who had been called to share a sublime mission with you of a primary order.

The events we have just lived in an atmosphere of deep recollection and emotion remind me of a message from Filiola which seems to be linked to them. Speaking of the splendor of the Church of Light, she recounts: "Jesus let me see the new Apostles advancing along this road of light that leads to the New Jerusalem (the new Church of Light)... Enlightened by the light of the Holy Spirit, they advance in silence... (The one who leads them) has opened this Road through Jesus who lives in him. He carries a very large cross, bent under the weight of the cross. Jesus, in His Holy Humanity, is fully alive in his person... (9-8-1975)

"Once again Jesus shows Filiola... the future Apostles... (Their Leader) opens a formi-

Pressure Put on the Sons of Mary (continued)

We saw, in the preceding issue of the paper, the letters addressed to two Sons of Mary by the bishop of the diocese in which they were incardinated. Bishop Gordon D. Bennett, S.J. of the Diocese of Mandeville in Jamaica, announced to Father Eric Roy that he was revoking his faculties to hear confessions and calling him back to the diocese. Bishop Joseph Molinari of the Diocese of L'Aquila in Italy informed Father Serge Chamberland that he no longer had the faculties to exercise his ministry and indicated to him how to proceed to recover these faculties.

Father Stéphane Bouchet, a Son of Mary ministering in France, also received a letter from the Diocese of Mandeville. On July 15, 2006, Deacon Dennis Hendriks wrote to him on behalf of Bishop Gordon D. Bennett to inform him that he no longer had the faculties to exercise his priestly ministry and to invite him to return to the diocese.

Shortly thereafter, on August 8, 2006, Pope Benedict XVI accepted that Bishop Bennett relinquish the pastoral government of the Diocese of Mandeville, in conformity with canon 401 §2 of the Code of Canon Law.

We are reproducing below Deacon Hendriks' letter to Father Stéphane Bouchet, followed by this latter's reply.

Deacon Dennis Hendriks' Letter to Fr. Stéphane Bouchet, O.F.F.M.



Office of the Bishop

The Roman Catholic Bishop of Mandeville

P.O. Box 8
Mandeville, Jamaica, West Indies
Tel: (876) 962-1269

July 15, 2006

Reverend Father Stéphane Bouchet, offm
10, route de Formerie
Bouricourt
76220 GANCOURT-SAINT-ÉTIENNE
FRANCE

Dear Father Bouchet,

His Excellency, Bishop Gordon D. Bennett, S.J. the Bishop of our Diocese of Mandeville into which you are incardinated, has received word that you are no longer doing pastoral work in the Diocese of Beauvais, France.

As a result of this, His Excellency has asked me to remind you of the Policy of our Diocese, published this year, which reiterates that priests incardinated into our Diocese have canonical faculties "until a cleric has definitely departed from the territory of the diocese". This canonical limitation of faculties by our diocesan policy implies by extension that, since you no longer hold canonical Office in the Diocese of Beauvais, the priestly faculties issued by our Diocese no longer apply to you.

I take this time to remind you, on behalf of our Bishop, that sacramental absolution would be invalid if you attempt to celebrate the sacrament of Reconcili-

dable door, as though in gold, that opens and leads into a Light of Light, more dazzling than a thousand suns, which is the New Church. (The number of new Apostles, still small, will increase rapidly.) (13-8-1975)" (Filiola, *Chemin de Lumière*, Paris, Librairie Téqui, 1975, pp. 261-262)

If we associate the visions received by Filiola with the indications you received from Heaven concerning Father Pierre, there is reason to believe that everything is being realized according to His precise indications. How can we not be filled with joy, hope and gratitude?

Thank you, dear Mother, you who followed such a long way of the cross before seeing the divine plan announced in 1958 concretely taking shape. May we be ever more and more apostles who spread the light along all roads by accepting our small share of the co-redemption.

Sister Jeanne d'Arc Demers

A Great Moment in Religious History

Dear Marie-Paule,

After having attended the ceremony of September 17, one single thought kept constantly coming to mind: thank you! Thank you for the total giving of your life which allowed us to experience this great moment in religious history and in the history of humanity. Thank you for your human sacrifice which permits us once again to be drawn up to Heaven, to the Promised Land.

Thank you to Padre Jean-Pierre and his family who, through their sacrifices and their acceptance of God's grace, are giving us the opportunity to live this new Time, the Time of the Lady. How touching it was to assist at this appointment which drew tears from me and which, still today, keeps me in an attitude of lowliness and gratitude.

I have a feeling that this appointment will bring much suffering to Padre Jean-Pierre who will have to keep fighting against those who do not want this divine Work. I pray so that he will remain faithful to his vocation as a priest and as the first Pastor of the Church of John. As the very touching hymn of Pretorius said: "It is the Lamb of God who will die on the cross", that cross which has followed you all your life and has been your most faithful friend. It is not surprising that we should all be encouraged to follow that same path, the way of the cross and total abandonment to the Holy Will.

Thank you! Thank you for the great grace granted me to be a Knight of Mary, to be a daughter of Mary. I pray that I will always remain faithful to the Work and to the Lady of All Peoples so that, after the example of Padre Jean-Pierre, I too may be able to repeat my "I believe" with as much conviction and forcefulness. Oh yes, faithfulness in the giving of myself and my dedication to God's Work. All for His Glory!

September 24, 2006 Lucie Beauchemin

What Wonderful Spirituality!

Dear Padre Jean-Pierre,

Only a few words to express to you all our joy following your recent appointment. It was with a heart filled with emotion and gratitude that we lived that celestial ceremony. What wonderful simplicity! What wonderful spirituality! We are very grateful to you for your Fiat to God's will. May we, like you, follow the Lady, against all odds, in an unflinching love and fidelity, repeating after you: "I believe".

Stéphane and Isabelle Palud

ation unless and until your canonical situation is remedied.

His Excellency bids me to bring to your attention that, should you wish to remain in France, you will have to seek canonical faculties from the Bishop of your place of residence or, of course, from the Pontifical Commissioner, His Excellency Archbishop Terrence Prendergast, S.J., in order to validly administer the Sacrament of Penance.

Lastly, as His Excellency is seriously intending to call you back to apostolic labor in our Diocese, he hopes to hear from you by letter as soon as possible your willingness to accept this mission. Please write directly to him.

Hoping to hear from you and your plans for the future which will need to be discussed with our Bishop or the Pontifical Commissioner,

I remain sincerely yours in Christ,



Rev. Deacon Dennis Hendriks,
Chancellor of the Diocese of Mandeville

Father Stéphane Bouchet's Reply Addressed to His Exc. Bishop Gordon D. Bennett, S.J.



«Totus Tuus»

La Communauté des Fils de Marie

10, route de Formerie
Bouricourt
76220 Gancourt-Saint-Étienne

Bouricourt, August 22, 2006

His Exc. Bishop Gordon D. Bennett, S.J.

Bishop of Mandeville - Jamaica

P.O. Box 8

Mandeville

Jamaica, West Indies

Your Excellency:

I received your letter dated last July 15, on August 22, the feast of Mary, Queen of the World. After having read it attentively and for the purpose of giving you an honest and clear answer, may I be permitted, quite humbly, to bring to your knowledge some information and to remind you of the agreement signed on December 8, 1995, with the Diocese of Mandeville at the time it was an Apostolic Vicariate.

Since my return to France in September 2003, although I was a resident of the Diocese of Beauvais, I was not engaged in pastoral ministry, having been sent there solely in the service of our religious Community. Bishop James, the Bishop of Beauvais, had given me the faculties, and occasionally I would help or replace one of my confreres in his ministry.

During my stay in Jamaica, just before my ordination as a deacon, I signed an agreement with Bishop Paul Michael Boyle, the delegate of the Superior General of the Sons of Mary, Father Michel Palud and in the presence of a witness of this agreement, Father Bruno Ruel. Paragraph 2 of that agreement stipulates: "The local Bishop leaves to the Superior General the responsibility of the above-mentioned member of the Community of the Sons of Mary, with the freedom to also assign him outside the Diocese in which Father Stéphane Bouchet has been incardinated."

Still being a Son of Mary, and not having the least thought of changing either my commitment in the future or my vocation, I rely completely on the second paragraph of our agreement, leaving all the decisions regarding my person as a religious and my ministry as a priest to Father Eric Roy, our Superior General. Before God, since I have not committed any serious fault I cannot see any reason for or find any motive justifying the right to strip me of my faculties to celebrate the sacrament of Reconciliation. In regard to this latter point, I leave everything, in all conscience, up to the grace of God and the help of Mary Immaculate.

I thank you for the invitation to return to the Diocese of Mandeville; however, if in the past Divine Providence led me to that land, my primary vocation is and remains that of being a Son of Mary. My duty is to remain in the service of my Community in a spirit of humility, charity and fidelity for the glory of God and the triumph of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, without forgetting the welfare and salvation of souls.

I assure you of my humble prayers for your intentions and those of the Diocese of Mandeville.

Sincerely yours in Jesus and Our Lady,
Respectfully,



cc.: To whom it may concern

Father Stéphane Bouchet, O.F.F.M.