

14. The Fourvière Pledge to the Blessed Virgin Mary, July 23, 1816

On July 23, 1816, twelve young men, led by one Jean-Claude Courveille, made a promise to the Blessed Virgin Mary at the shrine of Our Lady of Fourvière. The event marked the beginning of the Marist Project. Later when Jean-Claude Colin (one of the twelve) explained the idea to his brother, Pierre, he mentioned the participation of women. Pierre remembered the two he had met while curate in Coutouvre, Jeanne-Marie Chavoin and Marie Jotillon. Some time in September 1817, Pierre invited them to come to Cerdon where he and Jean-Claude were ministering at the parish church.

**...We, the undersigned, striving to work together
for the glory of God and the honour of Mary,
the Mother of Jesus Christ our Lord,
assert and declare our sincere intention and firm will
of consecrating ourselves as soon as possible
to the establishment of a most holy congregation of Marists.
And therefore, in so far as we are able,
we irrevocably dedicate ourselves and all we have,
by this present act, and by our signatures,
to the Society of the Blessed Virgin...**

**We are doing this for the sole motive
of working for God's greater glory
and the honour of Mary...**

**We solemnly promise to give ourselves and all that we have,
in every way possible, for the salvation of souls,
in the most honoured name of the Virgin Mary
and under her patronage.**

Formula of Commitment [OM 50]

Jeanne-Marie Chavoin was always conscious of the place of
the Marist Sisters as a branch within the Society of Mary;
the words of the pledge indicate Mary's place for all Marists,
including the sisters.

