

## 45. Marcellin Champagnat

*This text is a tiny fragment of a letter written by Marcellin Champagnat in late July, 1833, to Bishop Devie of Belley, requesting a delay in the Brothers' taking charge of the school in Bresse.*

FROM THE COPY OF A LETTER WRITTEN  
BY FR CHAMPAGNAT

**I very much like Father Colin's idea of a Third Order. I think, that as your Excellency envisages it, it will succeed.**

AFM, 113.22; published in OM I, doc. 273, pp. 594-595

After writing this letter  
Marcellin Champagnat would live only another seven years.  
In his short life, all his commitment and energy went into creating  
the Teaching Brothers' branch of the Marist Family.

As tiny as the above fragment is, it is valuable for two reasons.  
First, it is the earliest known allusion to Fr Colin's idea of the Third Order.  
Second, even though it is almost a throw-away line in the body of the letter,  
it shows Marcellin's familiarity with the vision for  
a confraternity of lay people and  
his unity with Colin on this matter.

In 1834, Colin wrote Champagnat a letter in which he excitedly tells him  
of the "precious indulgences" granted by Rome  
to the Third Order of the Society.

The Marist Brothers,  
through their schools and other works,  
have passed on the Marist spirit  
to countless numbers of lay people.

