Br François 5



**School Director**

He soon became the director of the school. During the summer of 1824, he returned to La Valla to help in the construction of a large house, the Hermitage. An improvised mason’s helper, his time was spent moving stones and helping to mix the mortar while listening to some pious reading or reciting the rosary. At the end of the summer, he would no longer return to Vanosc, but would accompany Brother Hilarion to the village of Beulieu-les-Annonay, in charge of the senior class and therefore responsible for the school.

In 1825, a great deal of news arrives in Boulieu: two of the priests who, together with Fr. Champagnat, undertook to found the Society of Mary, Fr. Courveille and Fr. Terraillon moved to the new house at the Hermitage and the approval of the Brothers’ Project by the Archbishop’s Office, which will give them their name, they will be known as “Little Brothers of Mary”.

**The Crisis of 1826**

These were difficult times for his friend Fr. Champagnat as he had to overcome opposition to the new congregations of Brothers from both the government and the archdiocese. In addition, Champagnat had difficulties with Fr. Courveille, who considered himself the founder and superior of all the “Marists”, Fathers, Sisters and Brothers.

In January 1826, François received a letter from Fr. Courveille asking for prayers because Champagnat was ill, construction difficulties, debts and the hardships of travel had undermined his health.

During the retreat in the summer of 1826, François learned all the news from the Hermitage which they did not dare to send in writing: the recovery of Father Champagnat, the quarrels between Fr Terraillon and Fr Courveille, the steps taken by Br Stanislas to pay Champagnat’s debts. During the retreat, he made the decision to reaffirm his consecration to God, after having prayed and consulted, he decided to become a Marist Brother for life.

His teaching career ended at this point. Marcellin will ask him to stay there to help him, he became his secretary, house nurse, and teacher, among other occupations.

Almost all the rest of his life will be spent at the Hermitage at the direct service of the Founder, serving as master of novices, secretary, nurse: a role for which he prepared himself by studying medicine. It is certainly during this time that he acquires a great self-taught culture, religious and secular, of which are evident in his numerous notebooks.

<https://champagnat.org/en/to-be-marist/marist-saints-2/br-francois-rivat/>

**Prayer**

Loving God, You inspired Marcellin to meet the educational

and spiritual needs of children and young people

in their rural isolation.

You inspire us today to meet

the educational and spiritual needs

of the students committed to our care.

Give us the same audacity and vision

that you gave Marcellin.

Mary our Good Mother and Ordinary Resource,

if this work of education should fail,

it is not our work which fails, but yours,

for you have done everything for us.

Bless us Good Mother,

bless this school and all who work, study and dream here. Amen.

Mary, our Good Mother, pray for us.

St Joseph, pray for us.

St Marcellin Champagnat, pray for us.

**Champagnat Marist Spirituality and Charism:**

**God’s Presence and Love ✠ Trust in God ✠ Love of Jesus and His Gospel**

**Presence ✠ Simplicity ✠ Family Spirit ✠ Love of Work**

**In the Way of Mary**