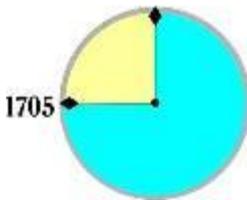


10. EVENT: Meeting with Mathurin Rangeard

- **DATE** : 1705 at Summer's end
- **PLACE** : Church of the Penitents, Poitiers
- **VALUE** : Mathurin the catechist: helping faith to grow: speaking of his faith, presenting it in an accessible manner, suggesting faith.
- **THE STORY** :



Our saint was hearing confessions in the Church of the Penitents, when he saw a young man come in who was praying with devotion and reciting his Rosary; his recollected attitude struck the missionary who, having finished hearing confessions, went up to the unknown young man and questioned him about his plans. - "I intend," he replied, "to enter the Capuchins; one of their Fathers has just preached in my parish; it seems to me that God is calling me to follow him. I came by chance into this church to pray." - "Not by chance," the man of God replied, "but providentially. Would you not like to help the missionaries in their labours? Follow me: that is your certain vocation." The traveller was Mathurin Rangeard, from the parish of Bouillé-Saint-Paul in Poitou, on the border with Anjou; born on 7 November 1687, he was then eighteen years old. Won over by Montfort's virtues, he was to be forever associated with him and to follow him in the majority of his missions. After the saint's death, he would receive the tonsure at the hands of Mgr de Poudras, the coadjutor of Mgr de la Poype, during the mission in Jaulnay in 1722; he would end his life in Saint-Laurent-sur-Sèvre on 22 July 1760, having worked for fifty-five years in the work of the missions. Having an excessively delicate conscience, he would never take vows; but he was to bear the name "Brother Mathurin", and would be the first of this line of coadjutor Brothers who, in their obscure role, were to render so many services to Father de Montfort and his successors. (*See Le Crom, pages 148-149*)

- **FROM MONTFORT'S WRITINGS:** (*Rule of the Missionaries of the Company of Mary, 79, 80, 82, 83*)
- The catechist has the most important function of the whole mission, and

the one who is appointed catechist by obedience must do all he can to fulfil his function worthily. It is more difficult to find an accomplished catechist than it is to find a perfect preacher.

– He must endeavour to make himself both loved and feared at the same time but in such a way that the oil of love predominates over the vinegar of fear. Consequently, while he inspires a certain fear in the children, as an experienced teacher does, by warnings and punishments which humble them, he must also, like a kind father, encourage them by praising them, by promising and giving them rewards and by showing them affection. He must never strike them either with his hand or with the cane. (...)

– (...) He can, however, and indeed must, enliven the catechism lesson (of its nature a rather dry subject) by adopting a pleasant manner, making little jokes or telling interesting little stories which entertain the children and bring their attention back to the lesson.

– One great principle he should follow is to put a lot of questions to the children while saying very little himself. Afterwards, at the end of the lesson, he or another missionary will give a well felt exhortation of about fifteen minutes. The topic of this talk will be one of the great truths of our faith so that, after the children's minds have been enlightened by the questions on the catechism, their hearts may be moved and touched by this exhortation. It is a fact of experience that this is the best of all methods for teaching catechism in a short time and for turning the children's hearts to God.

● **LIGHT FROM THE BIBLE:** (*Luke 10:21-22*)

Just at this time, filled with joy by the Holy Spirit, Jesus said, 'I bless you, Father, Lord of heaven and of earth, for hiding these things from the learned and the clever and revealing them to little children. Yes, Father, for that is what it has pleased you to do. Everything has been entrusted to me by my Father; and no one knows who the Son is except the Father, and who the Father is except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.'

● **PERSONAL INTEGRATION/SHARING**

- In the examination and understanding of my faith, which person or author has helped me most?
- Today, what is the greatest help to me for nourishing and deepening my faith?
- How are we to pass on our faith to others, especially the young?

- **PRAYER/CELEBRATION**

Let us pray for all those who work to proclaim the faith and to cause it to grow.

- We offer to you, Lord, the parents and grandparents who bear witness to their faith before their children and grandchildren.

Give them light and support, Lord.

- We pray, Lord, for the bishops, priests and deacons whose task it is to give a taste for the Word in their homilies.

Give them light and support, Lord.

- We pray, Lord, for our Pope Francis: guide him in the ways of Saint Peter, that he may strengthen the faith and guide your Church.

Give him light and support, Lord.

- We entrust to you, Lord, those children who have never heard tell of you: send them witnesses of your presence in their lives.

Give them light and support, Lord.

- **SYMBOL:** A child's drawing

- **COMMITMENT:**

- I choose some way of witnessing to my faith.

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