

6th Anniversary of the Reunification of the Congregations of Our Lady of Charity & Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd (June 27, 2014)



Photo :
Pediment of the « Vieux Berceau » (« Old Cradle ») Monastery OLC in Caen

“For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways.” (Is 55, 8)

***“For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven.”
(Ecclesiastes 3, 1)***

"Our Lady of Charity (founded in 1641 by St. John Eudes) has expanded in France: 80 years after the first beginnings in Caen, there were 7 houses in France... Fraternal relationships unite the sisters, but each house remains legally independent from the others. When the revolution of 1789 occurred, the tree was shaken... but the work restarted... and even began to develop again. The desire for fidelity to the founding intuition is very present, but fidelity can sometimes be interpreted differently... What will become of the source of the origins?"

Sister Mary Euphrasia, who entered the house of Our Lady of Charity in Tours, will be the craftswoman of a kind of refoundation ... With a different organization, it is at the same time a new Congregation which is born in 1835 (in Angers). Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd took off very quickly, while Our Lady of Charity continued on its way and also expanded... The initial intuition remains the same in both groups... But the internationality implemented from the beginning by the Good Shepherd, with the mobility that it involves, gives a new breath of life, at the same time as the reference to a single "Mother House", all of which shapes mentalities differently. The source is the same, it has become a river. But the river separates into two arms... From now on, for more than 100 years, history will be written in parallel on both sides...

The Second Vatican Council invites all Religious Congregations to an update, by a return to the sources. The two arms of the river then rediscovered all that they have in common, the source that nourishes them? Don't we then have richness to share, experiences to exchange? Don't we also have reconciliations to live through?... This is how, for several years, since 2007, we have undertaken a "journey of enrichment".

On this 27th of June 2014, the day of Reunification... we are going to symbolize all this with the sign of the Heart... this is the first insignia that the Sisters of Our Lady of Charity have worn... the Sisters of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd have kept it, adding the image of the Good Shepherd on the back: it is in this Heart that we can signify our newfound unity, because it represents for us the HEART of GOD."

(Extracts of the speech of Sr. Marie Françoise Le Brizaut on the day of the Reunification)