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LEARNING

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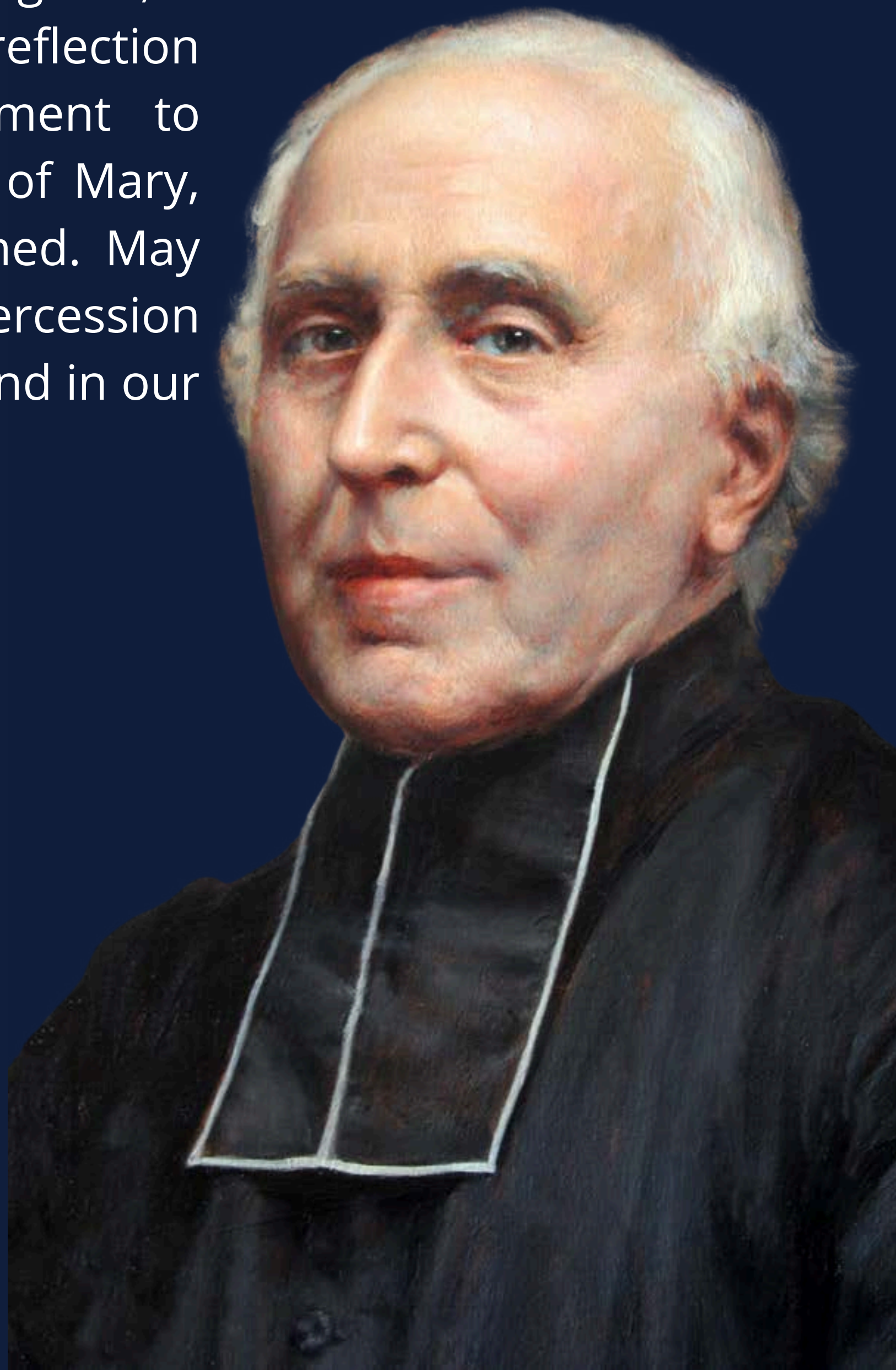
F R . C O L I N



INTRODUCTION

150 years ago, Jean-Claude Colin, founder of the Society of Mary, was called to the Father's house. His life, marked by humility, faith, and missionary zeal, continues to inspire us today. As we celebrate this anniversary, we are invited to rediscover the richness of our Marist charism and to live ever more deeply in the spirit of Mary — hidden, humble, and faithful.

This novena is a time of grace, a journey of prayer and reflection to renew our commitment to follow Christ in the way of Mary, just as Fr. Colin envisioned. May his example and intercession guide us in our mission and in our daily lives.



DAY 1

November 6th



In 1844, he told us that in his position it was almost impossible for him not to spend from time to time the whole night working, that in this way he had for himself three or four hours of guaranteed calm, without fear of disturbances, for important matters. It sometimes happened that he went to bed at four o'clock in the morning and had two hours rest. When he was very busy, he would say: just one night, and I shall get through it all right. (FA 278)

Reflection

Father Jean-Claude Colin showed how mission often calls for silent sacrifice. By working through the night in peace and trust, he taught us that dedication sometimes means giving even our rest for the sake of greater things. His example invites us to consider how we might offer our time generously, especially in moments that require silent perseverance and hidden labor.

Prayer

Father Jean-Claude Colin, faithful servant of Mary and tireless worker for the Gospel, intercede for us. Help us to recognize the sacredness of our daily tasks, and to embrace the quiet hours with patience and trust. Teach us to give ourselves with love, even when it costs us sleep, comfort, or rest. May we follow your example in our mission, offering all with peace of heart. Amen.

DAY 2

November 7th



“I have entrusted to God all my spiritual and eternal interests, and I continue to renew that offering frequently. Only since I resolved to make that offering have I been able to enjoy perfect peace. The only thing I ask of God is that I may perfectly fulfill His will.” (FS 29)

Reflection

Father Colin reminds us that interior freedom begins with surrender. By handing over all to God—dreams, fears, and eternal hopes—he discovered not loss, but peace. His example invites us to live our vocation with open hands and trusting hearts, knowing that when we stop clinging, God begins to act more deeply in us. In this trust, we find not only strength, but joy in simply doing His will.

Prayer

Father Jean-Claude Colin, you found perfect peace in offering everything to God. Intercede for us, that we too may surrender our lives with confidence and joy. Teach us to trust in God’s will above all else, and to renew that trust each day. May our peace not depend on success, but on surrender; not on knowing the path, but on walking it with God. Amen

DAY 3

November 8th



“Blessed is the Marist religious who knows how to value for himself the crosses that conform him to Jesus, his Savior. Nothing is more pleasing to God, nothing more beneficial in this world than to suffer willingly out of love for Jesus... for through crosses and tribulations we find the path that leads to the kingdom of heaven.” (CS III, 319, February 7th 1848)

Reflection

Father Colin reminds us that suffering, when embraced in love, becomes a path to holiness. In a world that avoids pain at all costs, his words are a quiet call to see our crosses not as burdens, but as moments of deep union with Christ. The Marist way teaches us to carry them with peace, trusting that every trial, accepted with love, draws us closer to the heart of the Savior and opens the way to the Kingdom.

Prayer

Father Jean-Claude Colin, you taught us to recognize the grace hidden in suffering. Intercede for us, that we may accept our crosses with faith and love, as a way of being conformed to Jesus. Help us to walk the path of Mary, silent and strong beneath the cross, trusting that through every trial, God is leading us to life. Amen.

DAY 4

November 9th



I can tell you, Messieurs, and I am pleased you should hear it, that I have been asked for information about the Society. I have not given it; I prefer us to remain hidden, in oblivion and obscurity. God forbid that the Marists should want to put on a show! Look at the blessed Virgin: what did she do? Not that I condemn those who follow another way of making God loved, of working of his glory. They do right, because that is the spirit of their vocation. Not everyone is called to be a Marist: the church would have good cause for complaint if it had only the little Marists to serve it! But the spirit of our society is different. We must behave like our mother. (FS 18)

Reflection

Father Jean-Claude Colin embraced a hidden, humble way of serving—modeled after Mary, who worked quietly for God's glory. In a world that often seeks visibility and recognition, his words challenge us to rediscover the power of silent witness. The Marist vocation is not about being seen, but about making God known through simplicity, discretion, and love. Today, his vision invites us to live our mission without seeking applause, confident that quiet faithfulness still transforms the world.

Prayer

Father Jean-Claude Colin, you chose the quiet path of Mary. Intercede for us, that we may be content to serve in hiddenness, to love without needing praise, and to trust that God sees what the world does not. Make us faithful in the small things, and joyful in the silence where God dwells. Amen.

DAY 5

November 10th



“We will attain simplicity if all our thoughts, affections, and intentions are directed straight to God, without being divided by any other desire.” (CS III 1, September 6, 1845)

Reflection

For Father Jean-Claude Colin, simplicity was not about doing less—it was about loving with an undivided heart. In a world full of distractions and mixed intentions, he calls us to center everything in God. Simplicity, then, becomes a way of living with clarity and peace, where our actions flow from a heart entirely given to the Lord. This is the Marist way: quiet, focused, and wholly directed to God.

Prayer

Father Jean-Claude Colin, teach us the path of true simplicity. Help us to direct all we are—our thoughts, desires, and intentions—toward God alone. Free us from distraction and division, so that like Mary, we may live with a clear heart, fully given to the mission of love. Amen

DAY 6

November 11th



Messieurs, he said to us, each century has its sickness. In the past there was faith but the heart was sick; now the malady has risen to the head. We live in a century of pride, of madness. We must cure the spirit by our simplicity, by our humility. In the pulpit let us not seem domineering, or else we shall alienate people. Man is more jealous than ever of his freedom, and his independence. (FS 267)

Reflection

Father Jean-Claude Colin saw clearly the challenges of his time—and his words still echo today. We, too, live in an age marked by pride, confusion, and a deep thirst for meaning. Like him, we are called to respond not with harshness, but with humility, simplicity, and compassion. His example urges us to be a healing presence in a restless world, offering not control but witness, not power but gentle truth. The mission remains the same: to touch hearts and minds with the quiet strength of the Gospel, in Mary's way.

Prayer

Father Jean-Claude Colin, you discerned the wounds of your century and responded with faith and humility. Intercede for us. In an age marked by pride and self-reliance, teach us to lead with humility and to speak with simplicity. May we never dominate, but always invite with love. Amen.

DAY 7

November 12th



Someone reminded him that he had said the whole world must be Marist. He said, “yes, God the father has appointed our Lord as judge of the living and the dead. The congregations of Jesus is a simple body. With Jesuits you must have talents and many other things. In the congregation of the blessed Virgin, it is not so. She is the mother of mercy. Her congregation will have several branches. It will be open to all kinds of people. (FS 2)

Reflection

Father Jean-Claude Colin saw the Marist vocation as rooted in the mercy of Mary, not in human merit. While Christ is the judge, Mary is the mother—welcoming all with compassion. Her congregation, he believed, must be a home for every kind of person, reflecting her universal embrace.

Prayer

Father Jean-Claude Colin, faithful son of Mary, intercede for us. Help us to build a community open to all, not through judgment, but through mercy. May we reflect Mary’s heart—tender, welcoming, and full of compassion—in all we do. Amen.

DAY 8

November 13th



Fr. Colin was wont to say, “We must sacrifice everything so as to open their hearts; that is where everything lies”. Often the children stopped him on the corridors and everywhere else, saying to him, “Monsieur, I need to see you” – He was completely at their disposal- it was some other little weakness they wanted to entrust to his heart. (FA 234)

Reflection

Father Jean-Claude Colin understood the value of a child’s heart. He believed that everything begins there and was always ready to listen, no matter how small the concern. His gentle availability teaches us that opening hearts often requires selfless presence and loving attention.

Prayer

Father Jean-Claude Colin, who welcomed children with tenderness and care, intercede for us. Teach us to value each child’s heart, to listen with love, and to be present with humility and patience. May we reflect Christ’s compassion in every encounter. Amen.

DAY 9

November 14th



Personally, those who move me most are men, the young men. Busy as I am, I never refuse them.
(FS 40)

In 1844, although very busy, he stayed an hour with one of them, one of his former pupils in Belley, who was about thirty years old, getting him to chat about everything that interested him, and by slow degrees bringing him round to things concerning his soul, and it was practically agreed the young man would make a retreat. Later he told us, "I, stayed nearly an hour in the parlour. Ah! If it had not been young man, I would have seen the back of him straight away!" (FA 279)

Reflection

Father Jean-Claude Colin had a deep love and patience for the young, even in the midst of his many responsibilities. Though busy, he made time to listen, gently guiding hearts toward God. His attentiveness shows us that mission often begins with simply being present, especially to the young who seek meaning and direction.

Prayer

Father Jean-Claude Colin, friend of the young and tireless guide of souls, intercede for us. Help us to welcome the young with patience and love, to listen with care, and to lead them gently to Christ. Amen.



“Let them always bear in mind tha they belong by a gracious choice to the family of blessed Mary, Mother of God, from whose name they are called Marists”

Const. 228