

1650 - 15th October - 2024
Prayer on the anniversary of our foundation

Introduction

On the occasion of our 374th anniversary of foundation, we unite spiritually with all the sisters, the lay people of the Little Plan, our co-workers and volunteers to praise and thank God for giving birth to the Congregation of the Sisters of St Joseph, in this city of Puy, where we have the joy of meeting today.

Opening Song

We read from an extract from the origins

The small Congregation of the Sisters or Daughters of Saint Joseph originated in the city of Puy en Velay, where it was founded by Henri de Maupas, bishop of that city, at the suggestion of Father Jean-Pierre Médaille, a great missionary of the Society of Jesus, who had happily dedicated his life to preaching the missions. During his missions, this good father met several widows and pious young women who, not wanting to marry, wished to retire from the world and devote themselves to God and pray for salvation. Therefore, he matured the project of proposing to some bishop the foundation of a congregation in which those widows and young women could retire to attend to their salvation and devote themselves to all the activities of which they would be capable of, for the service of others.

Bishop de Maupas gathered all these young women in the Hospice of the Orphans of the Puy, entrusting them with their direction, and on 15th October 1650, on the feast of St Theresa, and, full of the anointing strength of the Holy Spirit, he exhorted and animated all these new sisters to the purest love of God and the most perfect charity towards their neighbour. He gave them his blessing and then placed them under the protection of St Joseph and wanted their Congregation to be called the Congregation of the Sisters or Daughters of St Joseph.

Moment of silence to remember our origins

We bless the Lord and give thanks for the gift of the Little Plan, for the work of Father Médaille and the presence of so many other people who collaborated in the birth of the Sisters of St Joseph. We bless the Lord for what He has worked through the life and mission of our religious congregations. **Let us pray with Psalm 100.**

Shout joyfully to the Lord, all you lands;
serve the Lord with gladness;
come before him with joyful song.

Know that the Lord is God,
he made us, we belong to him,
we are his people, the flock he shepherds.

Enter his gates with thanksgiving,
his courts with praise.
Give thanks to him, bless his name;
good indeed is the Lord,
his mercy endures forever,
his faithfulness lasts through every generation.

Glory...

Let us listen to a passage from the Eucharistic Letter where Father Médaille speaks of the Congregation on its day of birth.

Dear Sister, our association will be a body without a body and, dare I say it, a congregation without a congregation and perhaps, in time, a religious order without being a religious order. In short, it will always appear a nothing in the world and will be in the eyes of God what He Himself, out of infinite mercy, will want to make of our Institute.

Let us pray together that the Lord will continue to bless us and give us the same creative spirit of the beginnings, to live and witness communion today.

Remembering the blessings we have received from the Lord over the years helps us to grow in the spirit of thanksgiving and praise.

Spontaneous prayers of praise, thanksgiving and invocation, with sung refrain.

Our Father... Each in his own language

Final hymn

May the charism of Father Médaille
renew in us the Spirit of wisdom, strength and discernment in order to
to understand and live our mission today
and strengthen the bonds between our religious families
spread all over the world.

Happy feast day!

