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Newsletter Good Shepherd Museum

MOTHERHOUSE OF THE CONGREGATION OF
OUR LADY OF CHARITY OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD
ANGERS

Editorial

This new issue is primarily an opportunity to celebrate the centenary of the canonisation of St. John Eudes which took place on 31st May 1925. This is a wonderful opportunity to discover the rich day of celebrations organised on the Angers site in parallel with the official ceremony in Rome, as recounted in the Bulletin of the Congregation of August 1925.

The work initiated by St. John Eudes, which continues today in the four corners of the world, was present in the exhibition of the cribs of the world held between December 2024 and January 2025, a report on which you can read. This annual exhibition continues to be a great success, with a record number of visitors this year and visitors always very receptive.

As new years bring new things, we are inaugurating a new section highlighting our vast collection of glass plates. These treasures, long dormant at the Mother House, are now being brought to light thanks to a major inventory and digitisation project by the Angers archives department.

Enjoy your reading!

Sarah Elbisser

Interim Coordinator,
Spirituality Centre of the Congregation of Our Lady of
Charity of the Good Shepherd

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"I don't want people to say I'm French anymore. I am Italian, English, German, Spanish, American, African, Indian, etc. I am from all the countries where there are souls to be saved."

ST MARY EUPHRASIA

A Museum on display!

Exhibition of Cribs all over the World From 30th November 2024 to 12th January 2025

A record number of visitors!

The 2024-2025 edition of the traditional exhibition of nativity scenes from around the world was a huge success!

3200 visitors came to admire 153 cribs from the 5 continents, including this year some thirty never-before-seen nativity scenes which had been kindly lent to us by a father from Brittany region in France, a great collector of nativity scenes from around the world.

Every year, these representations of the Nativity enchant young and old alike. Visitors are always amazed by the diversity of the nativity scenes on display, typical of the culture of the country. They often tell us "It's fantastic, we've been around the world in an hour!"



The sharing fair, which sells handicrafts made by women supported by the congregation at purchase price, had also set up a temporary shop in the cloister for the occasion. This was an opportunity to introduce visitors to the congregation and its charism, and to raise their awareness of the message of solidarity that emanates from it.



Sister Annamma inside the Solidarity Shop, set up in the cloister of the Mother House for the duration of the exhibition.



One Object, One History

The statue of Our Lady of Mount Carmel



This plaster statue comes from the house of the Congregation in Avignon, in the South of France.

Sister Mary Genevieve of the Sacred Heart Petitqueux acquired it from an antique dealer during her term as Superior of the community, between January 1950 and October 1954.

The statue, which is believed to date from the 19th century, was installed in a niche at the corner of the house, between rue Guillaume Puy, where the entrance was located, and rue Puits des Toumes, as can be seen in this photo.



The position of the Virgin's hand suggests that she was holding an object, probably a sceptre.

It is also likely that the Child Jesus was crowned.

These elements were lost before the statue was acquired by the Congregation.



Photos of the house of Avignon, Guillaume Puy Street. Archives of Angers.



DATES TO REMEMBER

*** Solidarity meal “Bowl of rice” to benefit migrants in Central America**

Friday 4th April 2025 at the Motherhouse

*** Contemplative Sisters Day to mark the feast of St. Mary Euphrasia**

24th April 2025

*** Exhibition on the history of the Contemplative Sisters**
30th May - 21st September 2025, Museum of the Good Shepherd

Gems from the *Bulletin*

The celebration of the canonisation of John Eudes at the Motherhouse

The canonisation of John Eudes on 31st May 1925 led to a long account of the Roman ceremony in the Bulletin of the following August. Here is an account of the day of celebrations held on the same day in Angers. The “Curé d'Ars” (“the parish priest of Ars”), Jean-Marie Vianney, who was canonised on the same day, was not forgotten. It was a day of joyful celebration to which the entire Angers site was invited (without the Superior General, Mary of St. Domitilla Larose, who had travelled to Rome), as they made their way from the Motherhouse to the Abbey of Saint-Nicolas, in what looked like a marathon: the writer of the article points out that the Sisters had “exactly 7 minutes to “breathe”!

You can download the full text of the Bulletin, in three languages, **by clicking here.**



Photo of the statue of Saint John Eudes, in St Peter's Basilica in Rome.



Pages of the Congregation's history on glass plates



Device for projecting glass plates in the Museum



Box



Box and its content

What is a glass plate?

A glass plate is a silver gelatin-bromide negative. These glass plates were developed in 1870 and used until the 1940s. Then came photography: the plastic negative we all know!

Glass plates were found in the attics of the Motherhouse. They had been stored in their original boxes for many years. They were protected from humidity, but not from dust or temperature changes!

After meticulous cleaning, the plates were numbered and described.

This work has enabled us to learn more about this collection, as follows :

- A large number of photos of the Sisters taken on the occasion of the habit and vows ceremonies. The religious names of the Sisters were written on the back of the plates in pencil... a fortunate initiative that allows us to find their civil names. These Sisters have emerged from anonymity.
- Collections on the lives of Saint Mary Euphrasia Pelletier and Saint John Eudes.
- Views of Anjou regional area and the Motherhouse: landscapes, buildings, statues and processions, as well as some from Ireland and Bangalore, etc...



- The girls and women in care are also photographed, sometimes in class, during shows, in sports or on walks.
- Several collections on the lives of saints or the history of religion had been purchased.

The collection comprises 5,865 plates, dating from 1909 to 1961.



A device for digitising the plates, lent by the Angers diocesan archives.

In the summer of 2024, in order to make better use of this collection, we scanned these photos using equipment loaned by the Archives of the diocese of Angers.

We then used image-processing software to reverse the polarity to make the photo legible and switch from negative to positive.

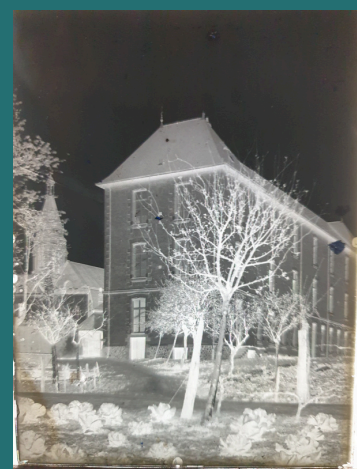
And that is when the magic happens – details and nuances appear!

In future articles, we will use these plates to illustrate a theme. The next one will tell the story of the statues of Angers.

Fabienne Ouvrard, Archives Department, Angers.



Box containing glass plates



Negative of a plate

The software processes the image and the magic happens... details and nuances appear! !



In the News of the Motherhouse

Celebration of Women's Day, 2nd March 2025



On the occasion of International Women's Day, a meeting of reflection and prayer was organised between the communities within the ambit of the Mother House in Angers: the international community, the Garenne community (Contemplative Sisters), the Magdala community, the Mary Euphrasia Pelletier community and the nursing home.

It was a festive and reflective meeting inspired by the Latin American pastoral methodology: see, judge, act, celebrate.

This process allowed us, on the one hand, to observe the reality of women today and, on the other hand, to be grateful for how the Congregation has responded to gender inequality since its foundation.

We also reflected on the question: how do we become pilgrim Sisters of hope today? Motivated by the words of Pope Francis :

"Looking to the future with hope also means having a vision of life full of enthusiasm to share with others".



The Museum is open on Friday, Saturday and Sunday from 2 to 5 pm.
Groups welcomed all week on request.

Free admission for all!

Contacts
02.41.72.18.93 / 02.41.37.59.49

bonpasteurmusee@gmail.com / archivistemm@gmail.com

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