

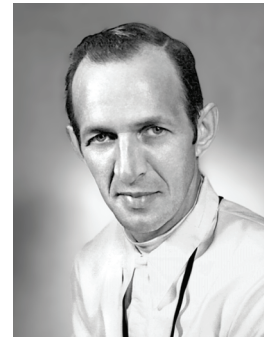


Figures in the Work



Brother Majella Demers, O.M.I., “Marian Messenger”

(born on July 10, 1923 – passed away on November 11, 2015)



In September 1963, following providential events and upon a request from Father Veilleux, the Superior at the Monastery of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate at Sainte-Agathe-des-Monts, Marie-Paule accepted to take on the responsibility of the lay personnel of that residence. In particular, she would have the heavy task of being in charge of the kitchen, despite her very poor health and the suffering of being so far from her children. Fortunately, they would come to join her later.

In December, she met Brother Majella Demers, a missionary who had come back from Africa in order to rebuild his health. She was able to get to know him better because he helped renovate the rooms reserved for the lay people. Mary indicated to Marie-Paule that Brother Majella “[would] be linked with the Work She [was] preparing” and She showed him to her often in a jet of light. Mary also told her that he “should read ‘Life of Love.’” (*Life of Love* II, pp. 396-397)

This humble and self-effacing Brother, with a deep Marian devotion, suffered much in his life, always abandoning himself to the divine will and pardoning. In a vision, the Lord showed Marie-Paule Brother Majella’s silhouette rising in the middle of thousands of men religious, which meant that he surpassed them all on the level of charity.

Having been sent to Maniwaki in order to help out in his Community, Marie-Paule “saw” him in a jet of light, as though thinking about what he wanted to write. When she received a poem from him two days later, she heard interiorly: “THIS IS WHAT YOUR MISSIONARY WAS DOING WHEN I SHOWED HIM TO YOU.” Prompted by inspiration, she would answer him with a poem, the seventh verse of which surprised her when she reread it, and this to such an extent that she left it out in the copy she sent him.

“You will go and you will return

For the Marian cause.

You will be the protector,

For everything will hurt Mary.” (*Id.*, p. 400)

Those prophetic words would be fulfilled in June 1965. In fact, after Mary had indicated to Marie-Paule, “YOUR HUSBAND [Georges] WILL PULL HIMSELF TOGETHER AND WILL COME TO THE MONASTERY,” (*id.*, p. 443), after Georges’ coming had been accepted by the Provincial Superior of the Oblates as well as by Father Veilleux, Georges had just arrived in Sainte-Agathe-des-Monts when Father Veilleux asked Marie-Paule and her family to leave.

This brutal shock was softened by Brother Majella’s kindness as he devoted himself to helping the family settle in Quebec City. Thanks to him, two of Marie-Paule’s daughters found work at the *Enfant-Jésus* Hospital. Afterwards, he would visit Marie-Paule and her children (Georges had already

abandoned them) with his mother, Mama Julia, to shower them with all kinds of thoughtful things and thus bring a smile back to their faces.

In 1964, Marie-Paule met Majella’s sister, Sister Jeanne d’Arc, S.C.Q., (the “bosom friend” announced by the Lord in 1958). In September 1965, Marie-Paule had the joy of seeing her again at Mama Julia’s in Montreal along with Brother Majella. She had the impression that the trio formed her “Bethany home”, to such an extent was she happy in their company.

When Brother Majella left for Africa again in October 1965, Marie-Paule would greet him one last time on the ship moored in the harbour in Quebec City. She could not help shedding a few tears at the thought of losing “a confidant, a protector”, and his “sister-soul” which she admired because “he lived to the full his evangelical life”. (*Id.*, p. 498)

In the course of several stays, Brother Majella would spend about fifteen years in Cameroon where his many talents would be put to good use, to such an extent that when he would definitely leave it, several men would be required to replace him.

Because of his trips and his postings, Brother Majella would no longer be very present in Marie-Paule’s entourage, but he “always remained very open and ready to accept everything, while waiting for his Superior to give him the opportunity to consecrate himself to the Work – something which Majella hoped for with all his heart.” (*Id.*, XII, p. 356)

On September 6, 1976, as the “Marian messenger” he was photographed with the Marian Father (Father Philippe) and Bishop Van Lierde, and then with Marie-Paule.¹

In 1977, when Mama Julia was living at the Army of Mary Center in Quebec City, she began to have serious problems with her vision. Brother Majella would move not far from the Center so as to be able to help her, while Sister Jeanne d’Arc would live with her. The Lord indicated to Marie-Paule: “THIS IS THE RECONSTITUTION OF YOUR ‘BETHANY HOME’.” (*Id.*, XIV, p. 46) Brother Majella would build the altar in the chapel at the Center.

That altar continues to be a sign of his generosity towards Marie-Paule and the Marian Work. Brother Majella passed away in his Community in Richelieu on November 11, 2015, at the age of 92, after a life of merits accumulated under the sign of the most eminent of virtues: charity.

Sylvie Payeur Raynauld

1. Those pictures were printed in *Vie d’Amour en Images* IV, pp. 102-103.