



Figures in the Work



Saint Philippe Marie, “the Greatest Director of the Marian Work” (born on November 8, 1916 – passed away on February 22, 1988)

In the Army of Mary, Father Philippe Roy was called “Father Philippe” because of his paternal goodness. He fully embodied the words written on the holy picture which accompanied his blessing as a Son of Mary: “*He walks before them and the sheep follow because they know his voice.*”

The eighth in a family of eighteen children, he was born at Saint-Rémi-de-Métis (Matane county) on November 8, 1916. With a keen intelligence and great sensitivity, open to mystical ways, a musician in his soul, he was ordained a priest on June 29, 1942, at Rimouski. His tasks as a professor, a chaplain and an organist were interrupted by postings as chaplain with the Canadian Armed Forces where he served especially in the Second World War and the Korean War. So many trying experiences but also so many graces marked the course of his life and he won the esteem of all. Several military decorations underlined his fruitful ministry.

As of 1957, his health began to deteriorate. Ten years later, his pituitary gland was removed and then, in 1969, an acute attack of bronchial asthma and a heart attack led him to death’s door. He recovered but his health remained precarious and he had to reduce his activities.

In January 1972, Mrs. Rose Dessureault asked him to help found the Army of Mary in Rimouski, and he met the directors the following month. “*There was an immediate union of two souls. Mary was our bond of union,*” Marie-Paule wrote. (*Life of Love VIII*, p. 155)

Upon an indication from Heaven, she asked him to be her spiritual director and his affirmative reply gave her great joy. She wrote: “*I have a ‘glimpse’ of ALL that we shall be able to do for the glory of God. I know that this priest will do nothing to hinder God’s plan. YES, he will be prudent, but he will always be ready to follow providential events or divine inspiration.*” She would indicate that this title of “director” meant he would carry out or have carried out the orders from On-High. (*Id.*, pp. 156-157, 176)

On May 1, 1972, he received from Marie-Paule the blessing as a Son of Mary, with the following formula: “*... to the end that you may become the greatest Director and the greatest defender of the Marian Work*”. (*Id.*, p. 157) On November 4, 1972, he became the Director General of the Army of Mary.

Providence would give him just enough strength to fulfill his mission, and he took pleasure in repeating: “*In the Army of Mary, the sicker one is, the more useful one is!*”

Marie-Paule had told him he would be cured if he gave himself to Mary. As he lay on his deathbed, he was miraculously cured on May 24, 1973. From then on, he devoted himself to the Marian Work, uplifting souls through his preaching, his fervor and his masterful playing of the organ during our ceremonies in Quebec as well as throughout the world during our international pilgrimages. He also gave catechism courses which the Knights of Mary deeply appreciated.

He was loved by all because of his great sense of humor, his simplicity and his refined soul. Residing at the Army of Mary Center in Quebec City as of 1976, he was united in a wonderful complicity with Fathers Denis and Victor as well as with Raoul Auclair, and he was a support and a consolation for Marie-Paule.

Over the years, Father Philippe would be a link between the Army of Mary and several religious authorities, including Cardinal Maurice Roy, as well as with different works, such as the Marian Movement of Priests for which he was in charge in Canada and the eastern United States. He was very generous towards all.

During a pilgrimage of the Army of Mary, he was received as the Marian Father in St. Peter’s Basilica on June 9, 1984, a title given to him by Heaven ten years earlier.

For this great defender of the Marian Work, Cardinal Vachon’s decree of May 4, 1987, whereby he revoked the Army of Mary’s status as a Pious Association, was a tremendous suffering. Less than a year later, his soul would wing its way to God on February 22, 1988, after a heart attack.

Father Philippe had set out his ideal and he fulfilled it perfectly: “*To love Mary in a practical way, to cause her to be loved so that the reign of her Son over this world may be established and that souls may be saved – such is the dream of my life as a priest.*” (*Id.*, p. 167)

After his death, he would often manifest himself to Marie-Paule. On December 30, 2005, he gave her the following order which was the solution to a difficult situation: “*YVAN’S CHILD IS TO BE BAPTIZED HERE, AT SPIRI-MARIA. THEN, SOON, IT WILL BE INSCRIBED IN THE REGISTRY OF THE NEW CHURCH.*” (*White Book I*, p. 95)

He was canonized in the Church of John on June 1, 2008. The one who left behind the unforgettable memory of a good shepherd will be invoked under the name of Saint Philippe Marie.

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