

## Historical memory February 25th

### **“Decretum Laudis” (February 25, 1888)**

*In December 1886 Father Dehon began the process of obtaining approval for his Institute. In accordance with the legislation in force at the time, he first collected a series of documents that testified to the Institute: constitutions, status of the houses and staff, and recommendations from bishops. After some time, twenty-seven testimonies from cardinals, archbishops and bishops had arrived in Rome in favour of the young Institute, and on February 25, 1888, the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars issued the decree of approval, which was signed by its prefect, Cardinal Masotti. The “Decretum Laudis” was received with great joy after many difficulties and many storms.*

*We quote the text of the approval:*

### **Decree of Praise (Inter vepres)**

Among the brambles and thorns that grow everywhere in our century, in the city of St. Quentin, diocese of Soissons, in the year 1878, the pious Society called the Priests of the Most Sacred Heart of Our Lord Jesus Christ of Soissons, whose purpose is to ensure that its members (*alumni*), renouncing earthly affections, abandon themselves in everything to the Divine Heart and strive to kindle both in themselves and in their neighbor that fire that Our Lord has come to bring to earth. What else does he want but for it to flare up!

To more easily reach the goal they have proposed, they are subject to the direction of a Moderator General. They make the usual three simple vows, first temporary then perpetual, and with an "exemplary life" they eagerly look after the spiritual and intellectual formation of young people, the exact fulfillment of ecclesiastical functions, popular missions and to other works of ministry in which they give valid help to parish priests. This pious Society, right from its birth, immediately began to spread its perfume, so much so that today it has already taken root in four dioceses in France and has eight houses with eighty-seven members (*sociis*). All this is confirmed with splendid attestations both by the bishop of Soissons and by the other Ordinaries in whose dioceses there are houses of the aforementioned Institute; all of them insistently ask that His Holiness Pope Leo XIII deign to decorate it with the decree of praise, believing with certainty that, once it has been irrigated with the Apostolic blessings, it will bear even more abundant fruit.

After having reported all this to the Holy Father, in the audience granted to me Cardinal Prefect of the Holy Congregation of Bishops and Regulars (Religious), on February 16, 1888, His Holiness, having carefully considered the matter, taking into account the aforementioned commendations, deigned to praise and highly recommend the purpose of the aforementioned pious Society of Priests of the Most Sacred Heart of Our Lord Jesus Christ. As in the terms of this Decree, it is warmly praised and recommended, without prejudice to the jurisdiction of the Ordinaries, according to the form of the most sacred Canons and

Apostolic Constitutions, postponing the approval of both the Institute and the Constitutions for another more appropriate time. In the meantime he has decided to communicate some observations (*animadversiones*) about these.

Given in Rome, by the Secretariat of the aforementioned Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars (Religious), on February 25, 1888.

*L.S. L. Cardinal Masotti, Prefect*

*Fr. Luigi, Bishop of Callinico, Secretary.*

## **You are God, Te Deum Laudamus**

You are God: we praise you;  
You are the Lord: we acclaim you;  
You are the eternal Father:  
All creation worships you.

To you all angels, all the powers of heaven,  
Cherubim and Seraphim, sing in endless praise:  
Holy, holy, holy, Lord, God of  
power and might,  
heaven and earth are full of your glory.

The glorious company of apostles praise you.  
The noble fellowship of prophets praise you.  
The white-robed army of martyrs praise you.

Throughout the world the holy Church  
acclaims you:  
Father, of majesty unbounded,  
your true and only Son, worthy  
of all worship,  
and the Holy Spirit, advocate and guide.

You, Christ, are the king of glory,  
the eternal Son of the Father.  
When you became man to set us free  
you did not spurn the Virgin's womb.

You overcame the sting of death,  
and opened the kingdom of heaven  
to all believers.  
You are seated at God's right hand in glory.

We believe that you will come, and  
be our judge.

Come then, Lord, and help your people,  
bought with the price of your own blood,  
and bring us with your saints  
to glory everlasting.

Save your people, Lord, and bless  
your inheritance.  
Govern and uphold them now and always.  
Day by day we bless you.  
We praise your name for ever.

Keep us today, Lord, from all sin.  
Have mercy on us, Lord, have mercy.  
Lord, show us your love and mercy;  
for we put our trust in you.

In you, Lord, is our hope:  
and we shall never hope in vain.



# Decretum

Vepres inter et Spinias undique aere nostro scatentes, in urbe S. Quintini Diocesis Suessionensis anno Mille-  
simo Octingentesimo Septuagesimo septimo, veluti flos pul-  
cher ac redolens germinavit pia Presbyterorum Societas a  
S. Jorde D. N. J. C. Suessionensi nuncupata, cujus scopus est  
ut illius calumni, terrenis affectibus abdicatis, Divino Jorde  
in omnibus obsequantur, et tum in seipsis, tum in proximis  
ignem illum accendere satagent, quem Dominus Noster unum  
mittere in terram, et nihil aliud vult nisi ut accendatur.

Ad finem autem sibi propositum facilius assequendum directioni  
Moderatoris generalis iidem subsunt, tria consueta vota sim-  
plicitatis, prius ad tempus, dein in perpetuum emittunt, ac vita  
exemplari, et peculiari studio in erudienda spiritali intelligen-  
tiae ac pietatis juventute, nec non in peragendis rite eclesiasti-  
cis functionibus, sacrisque missionibus, aliisque ministerii operi-  
bus, quibus Parochis valide subsidio sunt, sedulam operam navant.

Pia haec Societas vix ac nata fuit, illico bonum odorem suum  
diffundere coepit, ita ut in praesens jam in quatuor Galliae Diae-  
cesibus radices fixerit, et octo Domus numeret cum octoginta  
septem Sociis. Haec luculentissimis attestacionibus confirman-  
tur tum Episcopi Suessionensis, tum aliorum Ordinariorum  
in quorum Diocesis enunciato Instituti domus extant, qui  
omnes Summum D. N. Leonem P. P. XIII. instanter exorant ut  
illud Decreto laudis condecorare dignetur, pro certo habentes  
apostolicis benedictionibus irrigatum, uberiores fructus fore



N<sup>o</sup> 7676  
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producturum. Quibus omnibus S<sup>mo</sup> D. N. relatis in eisdem  
habita a me Cardinali Praefecto S. Congregationis Episcoporum  
et Regularium die 16. Februarii 1888. Sanctitas sua, omnibus se-  
dulo perpensis, attentisque praefatis literis commendatibus Institutum  
locorum, ununctae prae Societatis Presbyterorum S. Ferdin-  
di N. J. f. scopum seu finem, summoque laudare et commendare  
dignata est, prout praesentis Decreti tenore, summoque lauda-  
tur et commendatur, salva Ordinariorum jurisdictione, ad per-  
mam S. Canonum et Apostolicarum constitutionum, ditata  
ad opportunius tempus tam Instituti, quam constitutionum ap-  
probatione, circa quas interim nonnullas animadversiones com-  
municari mandavit. —

Datum Romae ex Secretaria memoratae S. Congregationis  
Episcoporum et Regularium die 25. Februarii 1888. —

I. Card. Masotti Praefectus



+ fr. Alojzij Guy Collinien: Suring