

Historical memory December 5th

Definitive approval of the Constitutions (December 5, 1923)

In July 1923 our Constitutions were definitively approved and adapted to the new Code of Canon Law, promulgated by Benedict XV, as shown in the acts of the General Council of July 24 of that same year. It lacked only the Pope's signature.

Pope Pius XI signed the Constitutions on December 5, 1923. They were printed the following year in Louvain and promulgated June 27, 1924, on the Feast of the Sacred Heart. In his Diary, Father Dehon writes: "December 5: the Holy Father has signed the definitive approval of our Constitutions. It is the result of 45 years of effort and work amid a thousand difficulties and contradictions"¹.

And again, in May 1924, he wrote: "Our Constitutions have been printed, I will promulgate them. It is the result of almost half a century of work to organize the Congregation. It is Our Lord who did everything for the work, I was an obstacle and many times I put everything in danger. I recite the Miserere every day"².

In the thoughts of Father Dehon: "Our new Constitutions are about to enter into force. The Holy See has not changed anything in the first pages that indicate the purpose and spirit of the work. This is because the Church believes that the founder has the grace to be able to do all this. It receives the necessary light from Our Lord. The foundation is of divine inspiration"³.

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,

¹ NQT 44/136.

² NQT 44/144.

³ NQT 44/149.

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.