



**Father Jean RAIMBAULT**  
**(1929 - 2014)**

*Died 6 June 2014, in Paris (France)  
aged 85, with 62 years of Religious Profession.*

Jean Louis Jules was born on 4 May 1929 in St-Quentin-en-Mauges (Maine et Loire), the son of Albert Raimbault and Marie Rabin. Jean remained always very attached to his family: to Albert his twin brother (who died a year ago), his sister Marie Renée (also dead) and his sister Hélène, Sister Jeanne de Chantal of the Augustinians of Charity, who is present here today. Father Raimbault was always present for the happy (or unhappy) family events: baptisms, marriages, burials... the presence of a priest-uncle for his 7 nephews and nieces, his 10 great-nephews and 14 great-great-nephews...

Born on 4 May 1929, Jean was baptised on 9 May 1929 and received the sacrament of Confirmation on 3 May 1941 in Beausse (Maine et Loire), at the hands of Mgr. Costes. The following year, he entered the Apostolic School of the Calvary in Pontchâteau, where he remained from 1942 to 1950; a secondary schooling that was disturbed by the war... Then he left for Celles sur Belle (Deux Sèvres) to make his novitiate with the Montfort Missionaries; it was there that he made his first profession on 8 September 1951. There followed his studies in Philosophy in Chézelles from 1951 to 1953; then his Theology studies at the scholasticate in Montfort-sur-Meu from 1954 to 1958, with one year's interruption (1953) for military service in Laval (Mayenne). His military chaplain wrote of him: "has done good work in his company, knew how to attract the friendship of his comrades by his good judgement and his amiable character"; while his formators would write: "good spirit, very devout, religious and apostolic; good judgement; relations with his confreres excellent and easy, with great loyalty, good with everyone and very helpful."

But already, he was showing some health problems with regard to his stomach. Father Jean made his perpetual vows on 15 September 1957 in the scholasticate chapel in Montfort-sur-Meu, where he was ordained sub-deacon by Mgr Rémy Augustin, SMM, auxiliary bishop of Port-au-Prince (Haiti) on 22 September 1957, deacon on 21 December 1957, and priest by Mgr Albert-Marie Guiot, SMM, bishop of Port-de-Paix (Haiti) on 16 February 1958.

His first obedience took him to Paris, to the community of the Rue du Commandeur, for a pastoral year (1958-1959). Then he was appointed to the Apostolic School in Pontchâteau to be a monitor and teacher (1959-1962). But of course, Father Jean had entered the Montfort Missionaries to be a missionary... ordained by two bishops from Haiti, he ought to have been sent to Haiti... But it was to Franche-Comté that his superiors sent him: he was to spend 4 years at Notre Dame du Chêne for parish missions (1962-1966). In full social and cultural

turmoil, Father Jean left for Lyon in 1966 and 1967 for studies at the Social Institute. There he presented a paper on "The passage from a traditional world to an industrial and urban world for the agricultural worker."

Father Jean had to make this journey himself, for he had to quit the missions in the rural world of the Franche-Comté for the town. In fact, he next returned to Paris and the Rue du Commandeur (1967-1970) as a member of the missionary team. It was from there that he left for Corbeil (Essonne) with other confreres to begin a new way of missionary presence in a society undergoing profound change and mutation (1970-1976). In 1967, the Provincial had written to him that he was asking himself "the question of new forms of Mission, while remaining in the role of intervention, and so of periods more or less long in the one place, and of contacts more or less prolonged, and in a missionary style"; in 1971, Father Raimbault wrote to the Provincial: "We are continuing our search for a religious life adapted to a small multi-functional team, committed for a longer term; we are anxious to live in an evangelical way in the spirit of Montfort."

These were missionary years when the Montfort Fathers and Brothers formed solid friendships, a sign of a pastoral and human rootedness that would bring forth beautiful apostolic fruits. The presence of Father Jean was to be very much appreciated by the group *Action Catholique Générale Féminine* (ACGF); we note especially that he took lay people truly seriously, treating them as responsible adults in a world that was still a clerical one that took many decisions without them...

From 1976 until 1990, Father Jean was in Angoulême: he lived first of all at Notre Dame d'Obezine (1976-1978), where he devoted himself pastorally notably to "My Country"; then he was appointed to the Ile d'Espagnac. Apart from his parochial responsibilities, Father Jean was diocesan chaplain to ACI (Action Catholique des milieux Indépendants) and to Christian employers. His studies in the social sciences and economics guided him in his concern for, and his interest in the problems of today's world in a domain where the Church is often absent... From 1990 to 1995, Father Jean served as parish priest of Déols in the diocese of Bourges and leader of the Montfortian team. Then he went to the diocese of Tours, where he was parish priest of Montlouis sur Loire. He then became a member of the enlarged community of Le Marillais (Maine et Loire), the Shrine so close to his family connections.

The time for retirement having arrived, Father Jean returned to Corbeil (Essonne) in September 2000... It was to be a very active retirement: he was appointed to be "cooperator priest" and would not cease to render many valuable services to the various parishes, and he would also accompany many groups. It was health problems that eventually forced him to stop despite his missionary zeal...

Having been very much affected by the death of his twin brother, Father Jean faced up to his own sickness with remarkable courage; he never lost hope, nor trust... "As long as there is life, there is hope," he used to say. He was still making plans for the future while being very aware of his own state of health.

It was in these days leading up to Pentecost that Father Jean left us for the Cenacle where he is of one heart and one soul with Mary, the Mother of Jesus, the Apostles, the disciples and the whole Church of Heaven...