

THE FRENCH SCHOOL OF SPIRITUALITY

Summary

- I. Introduction.
- II. The Social and Religious Background:
 1. Seventeenth-century French society;
 2. Christianity in seventeenth-century France.
- III. The Leaders of the Movement:
 1. The founders: Bérulle and Condren;
 2. A great missionary in the tradition of the Oratory: Jean Eudes;
 3. Jean-Jacques Olier and Saint-Sulpice;
 4. The Jesuit spiritual writers;
 5. The role of women in the French school.
- IV. Spiritual Doctrine, Spirit, and Pedagogy:
 1. Christ-centeredness, the spirit of religion, adoration;
 2. Mystical Christ-centeredness, Christian living, the spirit of Jesus;
 3. The sense of the Church;
 4. The French school and missionary activity;
 5. A specific pedagogy;
 6. The pessimism of the French school.
- V. Louis Marie de Montfort, The Last of the Great Bérullians.

I. Introduction

Louis Marie de Montfort is undeniably linked to what is generally known as the French school of spirituality (at times called seventeenth century spirituality, the Bérullian school, the Bérullians). He received his formation at Saint-Sulpice Seminary (1692-1700) and later kept in close touch with his directors of formation; as a result, he is one of the best heirs and witnesses of the French school. H. Brémond has justly called him “the last of the great Bérullians.” It must be noted at the outset, however, that although Montfort retained the main characteristics of the doctrine and teaching methods of Cardinal de Bérulle and Jean-Jacques Olier—among the many and varied spiritual writers used as his sources—he did it in a way distinctively his own.

In order to understand the thought, writings, and apostolic activity of St. Louis de Montfort, it is therefore important to be acquainted with the main features of the French school of spirituality.

In the nineteenth century, Bishop Gay made the main themes of the French school accessible to a large audience. In the early part of the twentieth century, Dom Marmion’s books, inspired by Bérulle, became very influential. But it was H. Brémond’s works, published from 1915 on, that brought Bérulle and his followers out of obscurity: *L’Invasion mystique* and *La Conquête mystique* clarified how eminent, influential, and theologically profound the leaders of the French school were. The spiritual and apostolic current of the school now holds a significant place in nearly all the histories of spirituality.

Some studies, such as the one by G. Salet (1938), have shown how deeply the Bérullian teaching was rooted in the thought of the Church Fathers. In the last thirty years or so, a large number of courses (and publications) have helped to make the wealth of that ever-relevant spirituality available to an increasingly large audience. Members of the communities founded by St. Louis de Montfort and by St. John-Baptist de la Salle are taking an active part in research and publication.¹

This article—an attempt to give an overview of one of the principal foundations of St. Louis de Montfort’s own spirituality—will first briefly present a general description of the French school and then develop some of the characteristics in more detail.

Since Brémond it has been customary to designate as the French school a powerful spiritual, missionary, and reform movement that animated the Church in France in the early seventeenth century. The movement was led by Bérulle, Condren, Olier, Jean Eudes, and St. Vincent de Paul. It had many followers: St. Louis de Montfort, St. John Baptist de la Salle, Louis Lallemand, etc.

The characteristics of the movement are:

- A deep mystical experience. Each of the leaders was a true mystic, nourished on Scripture, especially the writings of St. Paul and St. John.
- A stress on specific aspects of the Christian faith and Christian living: a sense of God’s grandeur and of adoration; a relationship with Jesus lived out mainly through communion with his “states,” his mysteries, his filial and apostolic sentiments; great devotion to the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of the risen Christ; the necessity for each Christian to surrender to the Spirit’s action; a highly theological contemplation of Mary’s mysteries.
- A mystical sense of the Church as the Body of Christ continuing and accomplishing the life of Jesus, his prayer and mission.
- A certain Augustinian view of man that underlines the pessimistic but also strongly stresses positive and optimistic elements: “man, pure capacity for God.”
- An extremely strong apostolic and missionary commitment.
- A detailed and well-adapted method for instructing others: methods of prayer, vows of servitude, and various other commitments and Consecrations.
- A special concern for the dignity of priests, their holiness and formation.

The main Christian attitudes of the members of the movement are adoration and “religion” (respect and love) towards the Father, adherence or “communion” to the filial and apostolic sentiments of Jesus, surrender to his Holy Spirit, and “true” devotion to Mary, in whom Jesus lives and reigns and who introduces us into his mysteries.

II. The Social and Religious Background

We know a great deal about seventeenth-century France, for it has been well documented by competent historians. We will, however, highlight only some of the distinctive features of that period that may help to understand the apostolic commitments and the spiritual teaching of the leaders of the French school. What Lacordaire has said of others could be applied to them: “What sets noble hearts apart is their ability to realize the most urgent need of their contemporaries and to devote themselves to meeting it.”²

1. Seventeenth-century French society

France was going through a period of revival after the wars of religion. In some border areas, however, like Lorraine and Picardy, the people were still living in poverty, and French peasants throughout the country and even around Paris were making a precarious living. It was in this period that the bourgeoisie grew. Its members lived rather close to the aristocracy, and the Christian renewal started with them. Most of those called “devout people” belonged to this “middle class.”

2. Christianity in seventeenth-century France

French Christianity had a great vitality, initiated by the renewal of the previous century. Some, however, have described the Church in France in the early seventeenth century as being “in a pitiable state.” Vincent de Paul said that “France’s worst enemies are the priests.”³ The French clergy had not been adequately trained, and they received little support from the bishops, many of whom did not even live in their dioceses. The religious orders were beginning to experience a renewal in the wake of the Council of Trent, and the early seventeenth century saw an explosion of reforms and new foundations. The result was an extraordinary dynamism. But most ordinary Catholics were uneducated and not immune to the influence of superstition and witchcraft.

The Church in France was thus in a fairly sorry state, and though the Council of Trent had come to an end in 1563, the decrees it had issued were not “officially” received in France until 1615. Against this background, vigorous missionary efforts were carried out in France with lasting results. It is difficult to exaggerate the paramount importance of the parish missions, given in rural areas as well as in the cities and even at the court itself. All the leaders of the French school not only took part in them but also clarified the underlying theology of the parish mission. Bérulle, Vincent de Paul, and others saw the preaching of missions as the continuation of the mission of Jesus himself.

The missionary renewal went hand in hand with an educational renewal and with a multitude of apostolic initiatives. Madame Acarie’s drawing room became a veritable center of Catholic revival, and the Company of the Blessed Sacrament, although giving rise to controversy, was very effective. The famous Tuesday Conferences brought priests together under the leadership of Vincent de Paul. There they exchanged ideas about their ministry and their spiritual life and planned the parish missions and their staffing. The Company of the Blessed Sacrament and Saint-Lazare Conferences spread to the provinces as well. Other apostolic undertakings were started to supply the needs of the foreign missions, e.g., the Company of the Associates of Our Lady of Montreal, which was established in the mid-seventeenth century, and the Seminary for the Foreign Missions, founded in 1663.

III. The Leaders of the Movement

1. The founders: Bérulle (1575-1629) and Condren (1588-1641)

The scope of this article does not make it possible to give more than a brief survey of their lives, which will help to situate them in the Church of the seventeenth century.

Bérulle was born in the department of Yonne in 1575 and spent most of his life in Paris. He was a precocious child. He received a very good education from the Jesuits and then studied at the Sorbonne. He became well acquainted with the best spiritual authors of his time, thanks to his visits to his cousin, Madame Acarie. Early in life he read the Rheno-Flemish writers, from whom he derived an acute sense of God’s grandeur. Two retreats in 1602 and 1607 definitively oriented him towards highly

Christocentric devotion: “Jesus, the fulfillment of our being . . .” In 1604 he made a journey to Spain and brought back a few Carmelite nuns of the Teresian reform. Their increase in number was spectacular, and between 1604 and 1660 no fewer than sixty-two convents were founded in France. Bérulle was their “visitor,” and this brought upon him many difficulties. He proposed to the Carmelites that they take a vow of servitude to Jesus; this occasioned the marvelous (and difficult) *Discours sur l'état et les grandeurs de Jésus*, (*Discours on the State and the Grandeurs of Jesus*), published in 1623. In this work, Bérulle considers at length the “states and mysteries” of Jesus: “They took place in the past, but their power will never pass away.” Of all the mysteries, the Incarnation was the one on which he centered his contemplation. He also paid special attention to the mystery of Jesus’ infancy. His deep and loving devotion to Mary was rooted in these mysteries.

In 1611 he founded the Oratory of Jesus in order to “restore the state of the priesthood” and wrote an Office in honor of Jesus for the benefit of his confreres, whom he strongly urged to take the vow of servitude to Jesus.

Bérulle held various posts as a diplomat and reformer and was made a cardinal by Urban VIII in 1627, but he has gone down in the history of spirituality as an undisputed master and pioneer: “Without Bérulle something essential would be missing from the spiritual life in France and from Christian thought” (J. Dagens).

Charles de Condren succeeded Bérulle as superior of the Oratory. Though he did not leave many writings and did not carry out spectacular undertakings, his spiritual influence was profound: “Between 1630 and 1640 he was the spiritual director of all the saints in Paris.” He was the driving force behind the foundation of seminaries by Olier, for, as his spiritual director (following Vincent de Paul), he exercised much influence upon him. He introduced Olier to the Bérullian way of thinking, especially on devotion to the Blessed Sacrament, and taught him his “little prayer”: “Come, Lord Jesus, come and live in your servant.”

Most of Condren’s activities were connected with the Oratory. He established Oratorian communities at Nevers, Langres, Poitiers, and St-Magloire in Paris. He was elected superior general on Bérulle’s death in 1629. He died in 1641.

Condren’s spiritual doctrine was marked by a strong emphasis on sacrifice. He expressed the Bérullian theocentrism and adoration through sacrifice, immolation, and the state of victimhood. He frequently speaks of becoming nothing (*anéantissement*), of being consumed. The Eucharist is also central in his thought; at Mass “Jesus continues to offer the same sacrifice throughout the ages and multiplies the offering of himself on the altar every day.” His doctrine was spread by two of his followers: Jean Eudes and Olier.

2. A great missionary in the tradition of the Oratory: Jean Eudes (1601-1680)

St. Jean Eudes, like St. Louis de Montfort, is regarded as the founder and inspirer of several religious communities: the Eudists, the Sisters of Our Lady of Charity, the Good Shepherd Sisters, the Sisters of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, the Little Sisters of the Poor. The “Eudist family,” as these Congregations are often called, is nourished by the example and doctrine of the great missionary and spiritual master, Jean Eudes. His theological thought is very much along Bérullian lines; it is very solid, though occasionally verbose.

Unlike Bérulle, Condren, Olier, and Vincent de Paul, Jean Eudes did not spend much time in Paris. He was born in Normandy in 1601 and died in 1680. He preached many missions, particularly in

western France. Eudes founded several seminaries in Normandy and at Rennes. He was the leading spirit of the liturgical celebrations in honor of the Sacred Hearts of Mary (1648) and Jesus (1672). He published several books based on his missionary experience; some of them went through several editions even in his lifetime: *La Vie et le Royaume de Jésus* (*The Life and Kingdom of Jesus*) (first edition 1637), *Contrat de l'homme avec Dieu par le saint Baptême* (*Contract of Man with God through Holy Baptism*) (1654), *Le bon confesseur* (*The Good Confessor*) (first edition 1666), etc.

After twenty years as an Oratorian, he left the Oratory in 1643 to establish a seminary at Caen and also to found the Congregation of Jesus and Mary. Jean Eudes never disowned the specifically Bérullian teaching he had received at the Oratory. His writings are the most accessible of all those by the Bérullians, and a few passages from them may be the best introduction to the spirituality of the French school. In his view, “Christian living continues and fulfills the life of Jesus Christ.”⁴ “When a Christian meditates, he continues and fulfills on earth the prayer of Jesus Christ; when he works he continues and fulfills on earth the labor of Jesus Christ. . . . We ought to continue and accomplish in us the states and mysteries of Jesus, and frequently pray to him that he will continue and accomplish them in us and in all the members of his Church. For the mysteries have not yet reached their full perfection and fulfillment. Though perfect and fulfilled in the person of Jesus, they are, nonetheless, not yet fulfilled and perfect in us, who are his members, or in the Church, which is his Mystical Body. . . . So, the Son of God’s design is to accomplish and fulfill in us all his states and mysteries. His design is to complete in us the mysteries of his Incarnation, birth, and hidden life by forming himself in us and coming to birth in our souls by the holy Sacraments of Baptism and the divine Eucharist, by making us live a spiritual interior life hidden in God with him.”⁵

During his long and very busy personal life, from the time he pronounced the “vow of martyrdom” at the beginning of his priestly life to his death, he practiced what he taught. In the many missions he gave—over a hundred—and in his countless activities, he “bore witness to Jesus Christ,” as he put it. He expressed his mystical and apostolic Christ-centeredness in wonderful prayers to the “Heart of Jesus and Mary” (“Ave Cor”) and in the “forenoon prayers,” which were all focused on Jesus. He warned his followers: “The greatest of all practices . . . the greatest of all devotions . . . is to be detached from all practices . . . and to surrender to the Spirit of Jesus.”⁶ In his opinion, “the greatest work of all” is “that Jesus be formed in us” (cf. Gal 4:19). He devoted his whole life to repeating this teaching and to promoting the life and reign of Jesus in souls.

3. Jean-Jacques Olier (1608-1657) and Saint-Sulpice

As Montfort was born in 1673, he never met Olier, but he must have heard a great deal about him at Saint-Sulpice. Many characteristics of Montfort’s message, as well as his own spiritual experience, are reminiscent of the founder of Saint-Sulpice. Perhaps too much has been made of the way J.-J. Olier’s successors, especially L. Tronson, distorted and hardened the teaching given at Saint-Sulpice in its early stages.

Olier was born in Paris in 1608 into a family of lawyers. He was educated by the Jesuits in Lyon (1617-1624). After he had led a lukewarm Christian life for a few years, he experienced a true conversion of heart and considered becoming a priest from apostolic motives. Under the guidance of St. Vincent de Paul, he took part in the Spiritual Exercises at Saint-Lazare and was ordained priest in 1633. Prompted by St. Vincent de Paul, he devoted himself to giving parish missions. He met Agnes de Langeac, Marie Rousseau, and Father Condren, and their influence was decisive in his founding a seminary at Vaugirard in December 1641, then at Saint-Sulpice, where he was appointed parish priest in

1642. He was convinced that parish missions could bear no lasting fruit unless they were based on a solid spiritual and apostolic formation focusing on union with Jesus Christ.

After going through the crucible of a psychological and spiritual trial between 1639 and 1641, he became an outstanding spiritual director. In imitation of Condren and the Oratorians, yet in a more personal way, he pronounced the vow of servitude to Mary in 1633, to Jesus in 1642. In 1644 he took the vow of victimhood, and in 1652 the vow of total oblation to the Trinity through Mary.

Olier dedicated himself to preaching parish missions in rural areas and to establishing seminaries (at Paris, Nantes, Viviers, Le Puy, Clermont), without neglecting his role as a zealous parish priest. In his last years he wrote a few spiritual books, which were to have a far-reaching influence: *La Journée chrétienne (The Christian Day)* (1655), *Le Catéchisme chrétien pour la vie intérieure (The Christian Catechism for the Interior Life)* (1656), *Introduction à la vie et aux vertus chrétiennes (Introduction to the Christian Life and Virtues)* (1657). He died on Easter Monday, April 2, 1657. It was not until 1676 that L. Tronson published the famous *Traité des saints ordres (Treatise on Holy Orders)*, drawing on Olier's writings but introducing into them some distorting shifts of emphasis, as a recent critical study has shown.⁷ A number of manuscript works, especially "Mémoires," which he wrote at the request of his spiritual director, Father Bataille, are of great help in attempting to understand Olier's thought. It is his letters, however, that best reveal what sort of spiritual guide he was.

H. Brémond describes Olier as an excellent follower and witness of Bérulle's teaching. Four points in his spiritual message and teaching method constitute the essence of his legacy to the Church:

The first chapter of *Directoire spirituel de Saint-Sulpice (Spiritual Directory of Saint Sulpice)* can be considered the "principle and foundation" of his whole teaching: "The primary aim of the Institute is to live completely for God in Christ Jesus our Lord so that the interior dispositions of His Son may permeate the deepest recesses of our souls and enable each of us to repeat what St. Paul confidently said of himself, 'It is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me'" (Gal 2:20).⁸

The apostolic spirit—the Spirit of Jesus—is the source of all ministry in the Church: "Apostolic men and all the apostles of Christ are Christ-bearers, they bring him wherever they go; they are like sacraments, which bear him so that under their appearance and through them he may proclaim the glory of his Father."⁹

His method of prayer is entirely centered on Jesus and is a real school of prayer. An historian of spirituality has written: "We consider that the most practical contribution to Catholic spirituality by the French school has been its resolutely Christ-centered approach to prayer, as aptly illustrated in what is called the 'Sulpician method.' This method comprises the successive stages: the stage of adoration: Jesus before the eyes; the stage of communion: Jesus in the heart; the stage of cooperation: Jesus in the hands."¹⁰

"O Jesus living in Mary" is the prayer that Olier learned from Condren and further adapted. It was and still is a prayer that "admirably sums up the teaching of Bérulle and his school."¹¹ H. Brémond writes that "it would be difficult to imagine a more perfect epitome of the French school."¹²

4. The Jesuit spiritual writers

The expression "Bérullian Jesuits" seems difficult to justify. Yet there was a mystical trend among the French Jesuits between 1610 and 1650, a current that had some kinship with the Bérullian movement. Father Pierre Coton (1564-1626) regularly attended the meetings of the Acarie Circle and deeply influenced the Christian public through his *Intérieure occupation de l'âme dévote (Interior*

Occupation of the Devoted Soul) (1608), as well as a large number of Jesuits of the next generation whom he guided towards the mystical life. Father Louis Lallemand (1588-1635) was the moving spirit of a spiritual renewal that caused some concern to the Jesuit authorities in Rome. He was novice master at Rouen and trained a host of missionaries, spiritual directors, and writers. His followers were responsible for editing *Doctrine spirituelle*, which they systematized while keeping the core of his message and his “passionate emphasis on the interior life and union with God in purity of heart and obedience to the Holy Spirit.”¹³

We know that Louis de Montfort used books by the Jesuit Jean-Baptiste Saint-Jure (1588-1657), the author of *De la connaissance et de l’amour du Fils de Dieu* (*Of the Knowledge and the Love of the Son of God*) (1633), *L’Union avec N.S. Jésus Christ dans ses principaux mystères* (*Union with Our Lord Jesus Christ in His Principal Mysteries*) (1653), and other books. The titles of the books alone tell us how much place the Incarnate Word held in the Christian life. The stress he laid on “application” and union with Jesus Christ ties in with the “adherence” promoted by Bérulle. Saint-Jure was the spiritual director of Renty and, for some time, of Marie des Vallées and Marguerite du Saint-Sacrement, and he also was in touch with the circles most influenced by Bérulle. The same cannot be said of Jean-Joseph Surin (1600-1665); after he had published his *Catéchisme spirituel* (*Spiritual Catechism*) (1659), however, his books became well known, and Montfort was acquainted with them.

During St. Louis’ formation years and later, several books by Jesuit priests were published that showed how well they had assimilated Bérulle’s teaching. The year 1686 saw the publication of *Vie du Père Rigoleau avec ses traités de dévotion et ses lettres spirituelles* (*Life of Father Rigoleau with His Treatises of Devotion and His Spiritual Letters*). Father Rigoleau was a disciple of Father Lallemand, who also stressed interior purification and obedience to the promptings of the Holy Spirit. The same period saw the publication of the works of Father François Nepveu (1639-1706), who was mainly concerned with the link between Christ and the Christian soul: spiritual directors ought to “strive only to form Jesus Christ in souls.”¹⁴ The place he accords to the Incarnate Word in his works is clear evidence of the widespread influence of the French school at the end of the seventeenth century.

Montfort was also able to draw spiritual sustenance from other Jesuit spiritual writers, such as Paul de Barry, François Poiré, Julien Hayneufve, Jacques Nouet, Claude La Colombière, and Jean Crasset, but their writings were not concerned with the main themes of the French school.

5. The role of women in the French school

All agree that Blessed Marie Louise Trichet played an important role in Montfort’s life. This is in keeping with the clear evidence that in the seventeenth century, women exercised a strong influence in religious circles, and particularly in the French school. P. Chaunu has described it as “the feminization of the Church in France during that period.”¹⁵

Although French society kept women in a subordinate position, their influence was recognized and often fostered. It has been said that “the lot of women in France was a happy one: they were able to enjoy all forms of freedom and pleasure.”¹⁶ Catholic women especially played a leading role in Christian renewal.

Many contemplative Congregations for women, such as the Benedictines, were renewed; others, for example, the Visitation nuns and the Carmelites of the reform of St. Teresa, began to flourish in France. The number of convents increased considerably, and some, like Port-Royal, were popular spiritual centers.

Among devout people, a large number of groups of “secular daughters” came into existence, though some of them were short-lived. They were dedicated to God’s service and engaged in many charitable works, such as nursing and teaching, without, however, forming a religious order as such. They heralded present-day secular institutes and societies of apostolic life. These women took no public vows, nor were they enclosed, and many of them wore no religious habit.

The world of pious women also included a number of laywomen who did not join any association but played an important part in the renewal process. Madame d’Herculais and Madame Hélyot were two of them.

Many women (nuns, “secular daughters,” and independent laywomen) had connections with the French school in various degrees. Madame Acarie, who was a pioneer and close to Bérulle, exerted a far-reaching influence and, together with her cousin Madame de Sainte-Beuve, contributed to the foundation or the reform of the Benedictine convents at Montmartre and Soissons and of the Ursulines; she was particularly instrumental in bringing the Discalced Carmelites to France in 1604. She helped with the foundation of other Carmelite convents before entering one herself. She certainly played a leading part in bringing the French school into existence.

Prominent members of the French school were influenced by women. Mother Agnès, Marie Rousseau, and Marie de Valence influenced and inspired Olier; Marie des Vallées influenced Jean Eudes; and Louise de Marillac had close ties with Vincent de Paul.

The most authentic Bérullian woman may have been Mother Madeleine de Saint Joseph, the first prioress of the first reformed Carmelite convent in France. She exerted considerable influence on the future prioresses of the forty original Carmelite convents in France. Her spiritual teaching was borrowed from both St. Teresa and Bérulle. She was responsible for spreading among the Carmelites the Bérullian doctrine of adoration, mystical Christ-centeredness through adherence to the states and mysteries of Jesus, and special devotion to the Mother of God. By infusing the Bérullian way of thinking into the Carmelites, she gave them a taste for doctrinal piety. A recent eloquent witness to this is Elizabeth of the Trinity.

The name Marie de l’Incarnation (Guyart) (1599-1672) should be added to those above. She was an Ursuline who lived at Tours and then Quebec, Canada. Although she was not typically Bérullian, her devotion to “the apostolic spirit that is the authentic spirit of Jesus” brings her surprisingly close to Olier’s thought, as expressed in his writings.

Finally, Marguerite Bourgeois (1620-1700), who founded at Montreal the Congregation of Notre Dame, urged her Sisters to imitate Mary, the Mother of Jesus, especially in “going about and associating with people.” Her writings show signs of influence by the teaching of Bérulle and Olier.

Though it may be more difficult to recognize the specific accents of the French school among the women of that period, their writings and religious commitments show that they drew inspiration from its members. It becomes clear, then, why so many religious Congregations founded in the seventeenth, eighteenth, and even nineteenth centuries acknowledge their indebtedness to the French school.

IV. Spiritual Doctrine, Spirit, and Pedagogy

1. Christ-centeredness, the spirit of religion, adoration

All the historians of spirituality have underlined the fact that Bérulle’s experience and message are characterized by the sense of the grandeur, absolute perfection, and holiness of God. Although these

qualities are typical of the monotheistic religions, for Bérulle and his followers, it is in Jesus alone, the perfect worshiper of the Father, that worship in spirit and in truth is fulfilled. Olier writes: “Our Lord Jesus Christ came into the world to bring reverence and love for his Father and to establish his kingdom and his religion. He bore witness to the respect and love for his Father that are the constituents of religion.”¹⁷

Man responds to the grandeur of God by adoring Him to the extent that he gives himself completely to God: “We must consider God first rather than ourselves and act out of reverence for God rather than seek ourselves.”¹⁸ The reason for this is that “nothing is great except God and what gives him honor.”¹⁹

These assertions of Bérulle were repeated by his followers and made an impression on his contemporaries. Condren, Olier, and Eudes, each in his own way, emphasized the grandeur of God and the importance of adoration and of the virtue of religion.

2. Mystical Christ-centeredness, Christian living, the Spirit of Jesus

This is the central core of the experience and teaching of the Bérullians. Their contemplation of the Incarnate Word and the relationship with Jesus that they advocate are at once traditional, deeply theological, and consistent. We are justified in claiming that there is a “Christology of the French school,” in the sense of a dynamic spirituality of this “science of the saints” that they mentioned so frequently. The theological thought of Bérulle and his followers was concerned with the mystery of the Incarnate Word and with Christian living. They understood and presented Christian living as a specific, personal, and ecclesial relationship with the person of the risen Christ. This relationship, which is realized by the Spirit, essentially implies a relationship of adherence, communion, and eventually deep identification with Jesus Christ. All the members of the school (Olier, J. Eudes, J. B. de la Salle, Louis de Montfort) experienced the influence of the Holy Spirit, called the “Spirit of Jesus,” and spoke a great deal about Him.

a. The Incarnate Word is at the center of the spiritual experience and message of the leaders of the French school. Pope Urban VIII reportedly described Bérulle as “the apostle of the Incarnate Word.” We are evidently speaking of Jesus, living, risen from the dead, but contemplated in the mystery of his Incarnation.

This mystery is central to the faith of all Christians, and all schools of spirituality are “schools of Christ” (St. Bernard). Bérulle and his followers, however, made strenuous efforts to focus the attention, prayer, and activity of the faithful on the person of Jesus. According to them:

- Jesus is to be adored in the mystery of the Incarnation and in all his other mysteries (and “states”); this adoration is expressed in the Bérullian “elevations,” in great devotion to the Eucharist, the Hearts of Jesus and Mary, the infancy of Christ, the Blessed Virgin . . .
- We must unite ourselves to Jesus (“adherence”) through communion in his mysteries, his dispositions, and his Heart.
- Jesus comes and lives in us through faith, love, and our apostolic commitment. This “life of Jesus in us” begins at Baptism, and it is nourished and grows by our participation in the Eucharist and in meditation, which is non-sacramental communion.
- Jesus sends us, as he was sent by the Father and as he sent his Apostles after they had been enriched with the gift of the Spirit.

- Jesus is linked to Mary in a unique, definitive way: she gave him his humanity, he lives in her, and she is still his mother and ours.

Many passages could be quoted to illustrate this. For instance, the *Discours sur l'état et les grandeurs de Jésus*: "A great mind of this century (Nicolas Copernicus) maintained that the sun and not the earth is the center of the universe. He maintained that the sun was motionless and that the earth, in conformity with its round shape, orbited the sun. This theory goes counter to all appearances that incline us to believe that the sun is constantly revolving round the earth. This new theory, which few astronomers accept, can be helpful and should be adhered to when applied to the science of salvation. Jesus is the great motionless sun around whom all things revolve. He is like his Father and sits at His right hand; like Him he is motionless and sets everything in motion. He is the real center of the world, and the world should continually move towards him. Jesus is the sun of our souls, and from him come all grace, enlightenment, and influence. The earth of our hearts should continually move towards him. . . Let us, then, turn to Jesus every movement and every affection of our heart; let us raise our hearts to him and praise God for his only Son and the mystery of his Incarnation with the following thoughts and words."²⁰ This is followed by an "elevation" to the Trinity.

b. Christian living is essentially Christ living in us. The words "Christian" and "Christian living" frequently recur in the speech and writings of Olier and of Jean Eudes especially. The terms possess a profound meaning for these Bérullians. Jesus is not only the Master to be listened to and followed, the King to be served, the Friend who wants to be close to us, but the Life of our life: "Christian living is the continuation and fulfillment of the life of Jesus. . . . When a Christian meditates, he continues and fulfills the prayer of Jesus" (Jean Eudes).²¹ This is the application of Paul's words: "It is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me" (Gal 2:20). This identification takes place through the formation of Jesus in us (cf. Gal 4:19) by the Holy Spirit when we are in communion with the states, dispositions, and even the sentiments of Jesus. In more recent times, St. Theresa of the Child Jesus said to Christ on the day of her religious profession on September 8, 1890: "You, Jesus, be everything"; and shortly before her death she wrote, "I can feel that when I love my sisters, it is Jesus who loves them through me." Elizabeth of the Trinity prayed to Jesus to "come into me as Adorer, Restorer, Savior." She prayed to the Holy Spirit to "take possession of me so that the Word may, so to speak, become incarnate in my soul and that I may be to him an additional humanity in which he renews his mystery." This is perfectly in line with the teaching of St. Paul and Bérulle.

The reason that so much prominence is given to the Holy Spirit is, then, quite clear: He forms Jesus in us. For Jean Eudes, the secret of all secrets was to call on the Spirit. Olier said that we should "surrender to the Spirit," Who will then create in us the dispositions and sentiments of Jesus.

3. The sense of the Church

The leaders of the French school were steeped in the teachings of St. Paul and St. John and had an extensive knowledge of the early Church Fathers (which became, in turn, the primary source of St. Louis de Montfort's knowledge and love of the early Fathers). It is therefore not surprising to find that their insight into the mystery of the Mystical Body is highly theological. E. Mersch writes, "Some aspects of our incorporation into Christ can only be understood by reading some of their works."²² Their teaching contained the germ of the recent theological advances concerning the Mystical Body as well as many of the ideas set out in the Second Vatican Council constitution LG. If Bossuet could say that the Church is "Jesus Christ expanded and communicated," he was, in fact, expressing in resume the thought of the entire Bérullian school.

There is no need to dwell on this aspect of their doctrine and of their contemplation. However, we will draw attention to the fact that their broad and deeply mystical vision of the Church contrasts starkly with the idea, then prevalent, of a Church with a highly centralized government preoccupied with legalistic matters. They did not look at the Church through rose-tinted glasses. They were well aware of her “stains and wrinkles”; but they still looked on her as the Spouse of Christ and ultimately as Christ himself. They were anxious to see the Church expand: “All we do in this world contributes to the ‘construction’ of the Body of Christ. All the saints have worked to this end.”²³ They pointed out, however, that without Christ the Church is nothing and she can accomplish nothing except in Jesus.

“Beautiful as she is, the Church has many stains and wrinkles, whereas God is a stainless mirror; the moon can only give the light it reflects; likewise, the Church owes her light to the Sun. Just as the moon by itself is nothing and can give no light without the sun, so the Church is nothing by herself, and she is helpless without Jesus Christ our Lord.”²⁴

Jesus lives on in the Church. The Bérullians laid emphasis on two aspects of the mystery of the Church: liturgical prayer and missionary activity. In their view, the liturgical year offers opportunities to relive the states and mysteries of Jesus, and by their preaching and dedication, the missionaries, animated by the apostolic spirit of Jesus, continue and fulfill the mission of the Incarnate Word.

4. The French school and missionary activity

The criticisms leveled at the French school include those of concentrating exclusively on mysticism and of standing aloof from apostolic activities. According to some critics, the French school taught prayer and adoration but not a missionary spirit. Bérulle and his school would—according to this opinion—be far from the teachings of LG.

Such criticisms show that their authors are guilty of anachronism or are purely and simply ignorant of what actually took place in France in the seventeenth century. Admittedly, the current of spiritual and missionary renewal did not always progress smoothly, and some followers of the French school misinterpreted the thought of its founders. Having said that, we must be fair and acknowledge also that the seventeenth century in France was marked by great missionary activity, and the theological teaching of the spiritual masters of that period shows remarkable consistency, still of great value to the Church. The contribution of the Bérullians includes its vision of the Church from the “apostolic” angle as continuing the mission of Jesus, and not only their profound sense of Christian life and prayer.

One of the reasons that opinion is divided about the French school of spirituality is that such spiritual masters as Bérulle, Condren, Olier, Jean Eudes, and Vincent de Paul are too often depicted only as spiritual masters and mystical writers, whereas they were “apostolic” men, men of action, in touch with their times.

If we look closely at seventeenth-century France, we find that the mystical dynamism and the missionary development of that time went hand in hand; they stemmed from a keen sense of the Church and of the Gospel, coupled with total docility to the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Jesus, the first One to be sent.

a. The seventeenth century saw great missionary activity in France. It is impossible to speak of the seventeenth-century spiritual and mystical masters without taking a close look at their apostolic commitments and examining the connection between their mysticism and their missionary activity. We must consider the seventeenth century’s very strong missionary current *ad extra* within the wider framework of the pastoral and spiritual Christian renewal of that period.

- The controversies between Catholics and Protestants were of considerable interest at that time. First Francis de Sales, then Bérulle, Condren, and many others worked hard to bring Protestants back to the Catholic Church. This apostolate came high on the list of their priorities. To give only one typical example, Bérulle brought Mlle. de Raconis into the Catholic Church, then was instrumental in her joining a Carmelite Convent. Bossuet and Fénelon continued this apostolate later on.
- The “Home missions” developed considerably and were very successful in the seventeenth century. Vincent de Paul called his community the Congregation of the Mission. Many priests of the Oratory and others gave missions throughout France, working either independently or in connection with Vincent de Paul and his missionaries. Besides teaching at the Oratory, Jean Eudes gave 117 missions. Father Maunoir, a Jesuit priest working in Brittany, gave 375 missions. Vincent de Paul and his community gave as many as 700 missions. These figures may help to form an idea of the number of priests engaged in mission work. In their letters, Vincent de Paul and Jean Eudes mention the sermons they gave, the size of their audience (as many as 20,000 on some occasions), the number of priests (sometimes several dozen) engaged in hearing confessions, etc.
- Great efforts were made to renew the liturgy and the teaching of catechism and to promote charitable activities in the parishes, e.g., by Bourdoise in the parish of St Nicolas and by Olier in the parish of Saint-Sulpice.
- Care of the poor and the reform of prostitutes were the constant concern of such great reformers as Vincent de Paul and Jean Eudes, and of many others as well.
- The training of priests was the constant preoccupation of the French school, whose members were aware that most priests—in spite of their great numbers, especially in the cities—sadly lacked almost any training whatsoever. Besides, the French school, especially Olier, wanted to make sure that the missions would bear lasting fruit, and this could only be done by a reform of the clergy.
- The education of youth in secondary schools (run by the Jesuits and Oratorians) as well as the education of poor children in “charity schools” developed tremendously in seventeenth-century France.
- An in-depth spiritual renewal took place in France in the early seventeenth century; this renewal brought in its wake the missionary and pastoral renewal. Referring to sixteenth-century Spain, Baruzi has written: “The people flocked to prayer”; the same could be said of some Catholic sections of the French population in the seventeenth century. Madame Acarie’s drawing-room is a good illustration of this.²⁵ The spiritual and apostolic elite of Paris met there; they used their influence to bring a group of Carmelites from Spain to France (thanks to Bérulle’s efforts, more than forty Carmelite convents were established within twenty-five years). It was there that spiritual and missionary experiences were shared for the benefit of all. In seventeenth-century France the people read the Bible and the writings of the spiritual masters a great deal, and religious art blossomed.
- The foreign missions fired many priests and lay people with enthusiasm. Canada attracted the Jesuits, as well as Recollects, Sulpicians, Ursulines, Augustinians, laypeople like Jeanne Mance and Jérôme de la Dauversière, and many others who gave themselves wholeheartedly to the evangelization of Canada. Later Montfort himself seriously considered going there. The

Capuchins and others left for the Middle East; the work of Jesuits like Alexandre de Rhodes in Vietnam was to bear lasting fruit. The seminary for the foreign missions opened in Paris in 1663.

b. Two meaningful words: “mission” and “apostolic”. When they used the word “mission,” the members of the French school, like Bérulle, Condren, and Vincent de Paul, were referring ultimately to the mission of the Incarnate Word. Similarly, the seventeenth-century French spiritual writers often used the word “apostolic”: apostolic men, apostolic grace, apostolic spirit, apostolic dispositions, apostolic lifestyle, apostolic wisdom.

In the seventeenth century, “apostolic” did not just mean “relating to the Apostles,” or living like the Apostles or the early Christians, or filled with zeal for the Gospel. To the members of the French school, it meant all this, but the core meaning was the spirit of Jesus, as illustrated by Marie de l’Incarnation when in her *Relation* of 1654 she spoke of one of the greatest graces she had received: “It was an emanation of the apostolic spirit, which is none other than the spirit of Jesus Christ.”

The following examples illustrate the use of “apostolic” by members of the French school. Condren wrote to Olier about a missionary: “I seem to detect in him something of apostolic grace, for which I respect him and beg our Lord to grant some of it to you and me.”²⁶ Before he left to give a mission at Montdidier, Olier wrote to religious living in Nantes: “I entreat you to pray earnestly and frequently that God may grant me the apostolic spirit. . . . With this spirit we will be able to do a great deal of good. . . . We must strive to obtain this gift.”

When he spoke of his community, Olier often called it an “apostolic house,” and he wrote: “If in a seminary there were three apostolic men with the Gospel virtues of knowledge and wisdom . . . they would suffice for the sanctification of the entire diocese.”²⁷

We notice something similar in Jean Baptist de la Salle’s writings. In his *Meditations* for the time of a retreat, he draws the attention of his Brothers to the fact that they are “successors of the Apostles in your task of instructing the poor and teaching them catechism”; God has “given you the grace to share in the ministry of the holy Apostles.”²⁸

Long before Jean Baptist de la Salle, St. Francis de Sales, Peter Fourier, and Alix le Clerc had addressed nuns as “female apostles” (*apôtresses*), because through prayer or teaching these women were continuing the ministry of the apostles in their time.

The terminology used by the French school shows that its members were considering mission work from a theological point of view: it was the mission of the apostles themselves, and it had to be carried out in an apostolic spirit.

c. A theology and a spirituality of mission work: the contribution of the Bérullian school. All these men and women, so dedicated to promoting apostolic and missionary activity in their time, were driven by strong convictions:

- Jesus, who was the first to be sent by the Father, is the origin of every mission, of every proclamation of the Gospel. This theme recurs frequently in Bérulle’s writings, especially in the *Discours sur la Mission des Pasteurs* (*Discourse on the Mission of Pastors*).
- The zeal animating today’s apostles, their apostolic spirit, is none other than the Spirit of Jesus, which they share with him. Missionaries, apostolic persons, not only try to imitate Jesus but are bearers of Christ and borne by his Spirit.

In his “Mémoires,” J. J. Olier writes: “During my meditation I have been granted the grace to understand that Our Lord has come to reside in the Blessed Sacrament of the altar in order to continue

his mission until the end of the world and to reveal the glory of his Father. I also realized that all apostolic persons and the apostles are Christ-bearers: they take Our Lord with them wherever they go; they are, as it were, sacraments bearing Christ in order that under their appearance and through them he may proclaim the glory of his Father.”²⁹

Similar passages can be found in the writings of most members of the Bérullian school. They give ample evidence that their apostolic commitment was rooted in their faith and their spiritual experience. Their “communion” in the states and interior dispositions of Jesus led them to imitate the Heart of Christ in his universal charity and to “surrender to his apostolic Spirit.”

The little-known prayer composed by J.J. Olier and hinting at the zeal of the Blessed Virgin for the Church runs along the same lines: “Jesus living in Mary, grant us a share in her holiness, through which she dedicated herself only to God; grant us a share in her zeal for your Church; and grant us to be so completely possessed by you that we may count for nothing so that like Mary we may only live through your Spirit to the glory of your Father. Amen.”³⁰

5. A specific pedagogy

Nearly all the spiritual masters, as well as the founders of world religions, have been remarkable teachers. We find evidence of this in the Old Testament with the oracles and deeds of the prophets, the sayings and writings of the sages, and the Psalms. Jesus himself was a great teacher, as were the Apostles and many holy Christians. The leaders of the French school sought to initiate their followers into a deep “Christian” life, rooted in the Word of God and finding its expression in prayer nourished by the great spiritual writers of the past; their Christian life included commitments, especially those inherent in Baptism, and in the form of vows of servitude.

The French school has left us formulated prayers like “*O Jesu, veni in me*,” which was composed by Condren and augmented by Olier to become “*O Jesus living in Mary*,” so highly recommended by Montfort. Jean Eudes imitated Bérulle and composed the Office of the Heart of Mary in 1648 and the Office of the Heart of Jesus in 1672. He also promoted the recitation of several prayers, the best known of which is “*Ave Cor*”, a prayer to the Heart of Jesus and Mary.

The Bérullians punctuated their day with prayers and examinations of conscience. The texts of these were nearly always centered on Jesus, like the fore-noon exercises composed by Jean Eudes, which were eminently Christological. The particular examinations by Tronson, in spite of their limitations, show a great pedagogical concern.

The best-known method of mental prayer worked out by the Bérullian school is that of Saint-Sulpice. It was originally a simple method, consisting in keeping Jesus before the eyes, in the heart, and in the hands. It was later cluttered, however, with a variety of acts designed to help beginners at the risk of becoming, like the particular examinations, too much of a “psychological” exercise.

During the parish missions organized by the apostles of the seventeenth century, a variety of methods were used to impart solid instruction to the faithful and prepare them for general confession and the renewal of the baptismal promises. Montfort used their methods in his own distinctive way. It would be interesting to compare his principles and methods with those of Jean Eudes and others.

6. The pessimism of the French school

One of the criticisms leveled at the leaders of the French school—and also at St. Louis de Montfort—is that they took an excessively pessimistic view of human nature. By insisting on the sinful

condition of man and his nothingness as a created being, Condren's and Olier's views appear to go counter to what the Bible says about the "goodness" of creation and therefore to be at variance with the teaching of the Second Vatican Council.

In order to understand the way of thinking of the Bérullians, we must study them in context. They had their limitations, due to the time they lived in, and without wishing to defend them, we must say that their writings are worth reading today with great attention. Their idea of human nature and Christian self-denial challenges us today; it invites us to read the NT more carefully and to reread our own experience with closer attention.

We must, first of all, make a distinction between their view of human nature and the emphasis they placed on counting oneself as nothing (*anéantissement*) and dying to self in order to live; the two, of course, are connected. Bérulle, Olier, and Jean Eudes emphatically assert that we have to die to self but what is essential is life: "We must pray that God may grant us the state and spirit of death to self in order to live to Jesus, which we cannot do unless we die to self."³¹ Olier points out first that, in imitation of Jesus, "we must die to self and immolate ourselves to God . . . count ourselves as nothing for the sake of the One we love . . . die to all created things . . . not just to one thing but to all." He goes on to say, however: "Love of the Cross and death to self are not the whole of the Christian religion. They are only the principles and foundations. They remove the obstacles to progress on our way to religion. . . . Religion is summed up in the words '*Sequere me, Follow me.*' St. Jerome himself points out that Christian and religious perfection does not consist in being stripped of all things, as some philosophers were. The perfection of the Christian religion consists in following the interior life and the holy and divine ways of Jesus Christ."³² In addition, Olier is well-known for emphasizing the mystery of the Resurrection of Jesus, even though L. Tronson weakened this emphasis when he published Olier's writings in *Traité des saints ordres*.

We may, however, still think that the French school overemphasized the radical weakness of human nature and man's fundamentally sinful condition. Undeniably, some passages in their writings underline man's separateness from God rather than the "image and likeness" mentioned in the creation narrative. But unless we have a comprehensive knowledge of their writings, we cannot make the necessary qualifications. When "he listened to the birds singing" or watched the fire burning, Olier became almost Franciscan.

We have to bear in mind that the times were penetrated with Augustinianism and even rigorism. The extreme views adopted by Port-Royal are witness to this. We must also remember, however, that contempt for the world as advocated by Port-Royal and the Jansenists was promoted in reaction against the commitment "to the world" advocated by the Bérullians, priests and laypeople alike. The stand taken by Gaston de Renty is abundant proof of this.

Condren and Olier had read the works of St. Augustine and meditated many times on Rom 7 and on what St. John says about "the world" and the opposition between light and darkness. In addition, their pessimism was fostered by their human and spiritual experience. Olier's experience had been a particularly severe test for him. Few seem to have experienced as acutely as Olier the distress caused by the human condition and the anguish of opting to live the Christian life. This may be partly due to the fact that he was a highly sensitive man, and also to the interior and exterior trials that had made him "feel prostrate" during a crisis between 1639 and 1641. He came out of it, however, experiencing a new freedom, happy and filled with apostolic zeal. But he never forgot that dark period of his life.

We must also keep in mind that the leaders of the French school were real mystics. We have a long way to go before we can experience God and our nothingness as radically as they did. Their

message to us, however, is an important one. Before them, St. John of the Cross had written about “the greatest and highest state we can attain in this world. It does not consist in amusements, indulging one’s tastes, or spiritual sentiments, but in dying resolutely to all things interior and exterior.”³³

Finally—and this is perhaps the essential message of the French school—only in Jesus can humanity be both reconciled and re-created. Our aim should be total communion with Jesus, and the only way is total death to self. The way to Jesus is through the Cross, and “without him we can do nothing.”

V. Louis Marie de Montfort, the Last of the Great Bérullians

What we have said so far should make fairly clear what H. Brémond meant by this expression. We will conclude by giving briefly the reasons Montfort belongs to the French school. Other articles in this manual point to additional reasons. What we are offering here are avenues for further exploration.

- As an apostle of Eternal Wisdom, i.e., the Incarnate Word, Montfort took up and developed in his own highly distinctive way Bérulle’s idea of Christ-centeredness. When he considers at length the mysteries of Jesus lived in Mary and communicated by her, he develops Olier’s thought and prayer. The fervent writings of Olier about the interior life of Mary are powerfully echoed by Montfort. In season and out of season, however, this “last of the great Bérullians” keeps pointing out that faith and Christian living demand that Christ be given absolute preeminence: *“Jesus, our Savior, true God and true man must be the ultimate end of all our other devotions; otherwise they would be false and misleading. He is the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end of everything. We labor,” says St. Paul, ‘only to make all men perfect in Jesus Christ.’ For in him alone dwell the entire fullness of the divinity and the complete fullness of grace, virtue and perfection. . . . If then we are establishing sound devotion to Our Blessed Lady, it is only in order to establish devotion to Our Lord more perfectly by providing a smooth but certain way of reaching Jesus Christ. If devotion to Our Lady distracted us from Our Lord, we would have to reject it as an illusion of the devil. But this is far from being the case. As I have already shown and will show again later on, this devotion is necessary, simply and solely because it is a way of reaching Jesus perfectly, loving him tenderly, and serving him faithfully”* (TD 61-62).
- Like many of his contemporaries, Montfort was a missionary, but his activity was as firmly based on theology as Jean Eudes’. His concern for teaching the renewal of the baptismal promises and Consecration to Jesus through Mary fit in and further clarify the practices advocated by Jean Eudes. The secret that he reveals, i.e., the practice of holy slavery of love, is a continuation and, at the same time, a splendid union of the vows of servitude to Mary and to Jesus practiced and advocated by Bérulle and Olier. Montfort goes into great detail when dealing with the advantages of this practice and specifies its practical approach so that it may become an authentic and fruitful commitment. (St. Louis, although loud in his praise of Cardinal de Bérulle [cf. TD 162], does not hesitate to modify radically both the theological underpinnings and the practical specifics of the Consecration as it is generally taught by the Bérullians.) The short SM, which makes the specifically montfort Consecration to Jesus Wisdom through Mary easily accessible, cannot substitute for TD, which remains the classic on Marian devotion.

Of all the saints of that period and perhaps of all times, Father de Montfort probably delved deepest into the theological foundation of devotion to the Blessed Virgin to improve the Christian way of life of ordinary people. Pope John Paul II, who likewise considers TD a classic

on Marian devotion, has said: “Montfort introduces us into the very interplay of Christ’s mysteries, which nourish our faith, help it to grow, and make it bear fruit.”³⁴

- When considering the Cross, Montfort took a positive view and disapproved of suffering for the sake of suffering. His view is reminiscent of St. Paul and of Olier’s *Pietas Seminarii Sancti Sulpitii (Piety of the Seminary of Saint-Sulpice)*. Like Bérulle and Olier before him, Montfort maintains that the severe austerity of the Cross and of death to self is tempered by the love and maternal presence of Mary. He longs for an increase in the number of “willing slaves who, moved by generous love, commit themselves to Christ’s service after the manner of slaves for the honor of belonging to him” (TD 73).³⁵

R. Deville

¹ We are especially indebted to Pourrat, Gautier, G. Rotureau, L.Cognet, P. Cochois, M. Dupuy—whose works are mentioned in any general study of the French school itself—for their recent publications, which have supplied us with texts as well as a solid historical and theological basis for a better knowledge of the school of Cardinal de Bérulle. Cf. William M. Thompson, ed., *Bérulle and the French School: Selected Writings*, Paulist Press, New York 1989. The Montfort Missionaries publish a large number of studies and important documents; the recent foundation of the International Montfort Center in Louvain, Belgium, should spur on research into montfort spirituality. The De la Salle Christian Brothers publish a very interesting series of *Cahiers lasalliens*.

² *Eloge funèbre de Mgr Forbin-Janson (Funeral Oration of Bishop Forbin-Janson)*, Nancy, August 28, 1844, in *Oeuvres complètes, notices, et panégyriques (Complete Works, Notices, and Panegyrics)*.

³ *Entretiens spirituels (Spiritual Conferences)*, Dodin, Paris 1960, 502.

⁴ *Vie et royaume de Jésus (Life and Kingdom of Jesus)*, part 2, Paris 1924, 166.

⁵ *Ibid.*, part 3, 310-312.

⁶ *Ibid.*, part 6, 452.

⁷ G. Chaillot, P. Cochois and I. Noye, *Traité des saints ordres (1676) comparé aux écrits authentiques de Jean-Jacques Olier (1657) (The Treatise on Holy Orders [1676], Compared to the Authentic Writings of Jean-Jacques Olier [1657])*, critical edition, La Compagnie de Saint-Sulpice, Paris 1984.

⁸ *Pietas Seminarii*, transl. F. Tollu, Amiot, 1954, 163. Joseph Bruneau, *Our Priestly Life*, St. Mary’s Seminary, Baltimore 1944.

⁹ “Mémoires,” ii, 314.

¹⁰ John Seward, *Bérulle and the French school*, in *The Study of Spirituality*, SPCK, London 1986, 395.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 386.

¹² *Histoire littéraire du sentiment religieux—L’Invasion mystique: l’Ecole française (Literary History of Religious Sentiment—The Mystical Invasion: The French School)*, Paris 1925, 98, note 1.

¹³ G. Bottereau in *Dictionnaire de spiritualité*, vol. 9, col. 133.

¹⁴ Preface to *De l’amour de Notre-Seigneur Jésus-Christ (On the Love of Our Lord Jesus Christ)*, 1684.

¹⁵ P. Chaunu, *L’Eglise, culture et société (Church, Culture, and Society)*, Paris 1984, 401.

¹⁶ *Femme*, in *Dictionnaire du Grand Siècle (Dictionary of the Grand Siècle)*, Paris 1990, 579.

¹⁷ *Introduction à la vie et aux vertus chrétiennes*, chap. 1.

¹⁸ Bérulle, *Op. de pit*, XI, Migne, col. 1245.

-
- ¹⁹ Bérulle, letter 44, dated October 1608.
- ²⁰ *Discours sur l'état et les grandeurs de Jésus*, 2, Migne, col. 161.
- ²¹ Op. cit., p. 165.
- ²² E. Mura, *Le Corps mystique du Christ*, (*The Mystical Body of Christ*), Desclée de Brouwer, Paris and Brussels 1936, 2:343.
- ²³ Archives of Saint-Sulpice: Condren and Amelote, "Théologie chrétienne," ms. 347, p. 574. Cf. J. Eudes on the "formation of Jesus in us" in , part 2, 271-276.
- ²⁴ Olier, "Mémoires," 2:321.
- ²⁵ Cf. among others P. Cochois, *Bérulle et l'Ecole française*, Paris 1963, 8-11.
- ²⁶ Letter 65 to M. Olier, in Auvray and Jouffrey, *Lettres du Père de Condren*, Cerf, Paris 1943, 201.
- ²⁷ *Projet de l'établissement d'un séminaire* (*Project of Establishing a Seminary*), in I. Noye, *La tradition sacerdotale* (*The Sacerdotal Tradition*), Mappus, 1959, 10:228.
- ²⁸ *Huitième méditation pour le temps de la retraite* (*Eighth Meditation for the Time of Retreat*), in *Méditations*, Paris 1982, 596 passim.
- ²⁹ "Mémoires," 2:314.
- ³⁰ Cf. I. Noye, *La prière à Jésus vivant en Marie* (*The Prayer of Jesus Living in Mary*), in *Cahiers marials* 123 (June 15,1980), 173-179.
- ³¹ Bérulle, Op. de pit, 144, Migne, col. 1183.
- ³² "Mémoires," 4:12-122.
- ³³ *Monte du Carmel* II, 7, 8.
- ³⁴ Cf. A. Frossard, *N'ayez pas peur: André Froissard, dialogue avec Jean-Paul II*, Robert Laffont, Paris 1982, 186. Engl. translation, *Be Not Afraid!* trans. J. R. Foster, St. Martin's Press, New York 1984.
- ³⁵ TD 73.