

## **"I am like a brook. . . . "**

This quotation is taken from an article by Jean Baptiste Lalanne, SM, entitled "The Society of Mary," published in the third edition of Helyot's *Dictionnaire des ordres religieux*.

But no one knew the power of time and patience better than Father Chaminade. He used to readily liken his way of proceeding to that of a quiet brook, which when it encounters an obstacle, makes no effort to overcome it. By stopping the brook, this very obstacle makes it grow wider and deeper. Soon it rises above its ordinary level, overflows the obstacle and leaves it behind, and continues on its way. [Translation by Lawrence J. Cada, SM]

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The paraphrase which we usually see first appeared in *The Marianist*, volume 52, number 3-4 (March-April, 1961). This edition was in commemoration of the bicentennial. It appears on the last picture of a 16-page pictorial biography entitled "Mosaic in Cobblestone."

. . . I am like a brook that makes no effort to overcome obstacles in its way. All the obstacles can do is hold me up for a while, as a brook is held up; but during that time it grows broader and deeper and after a while it overflows the obstruction and flows along again. That is how I am going to work." Father William Joseph Chaminade

According to Father Joseph Stefanelli, SM, in a telephone conversation on December 2, 1996, this quotation has been authenticated as Father Chaminade's, but he did not know the source of the documentation.