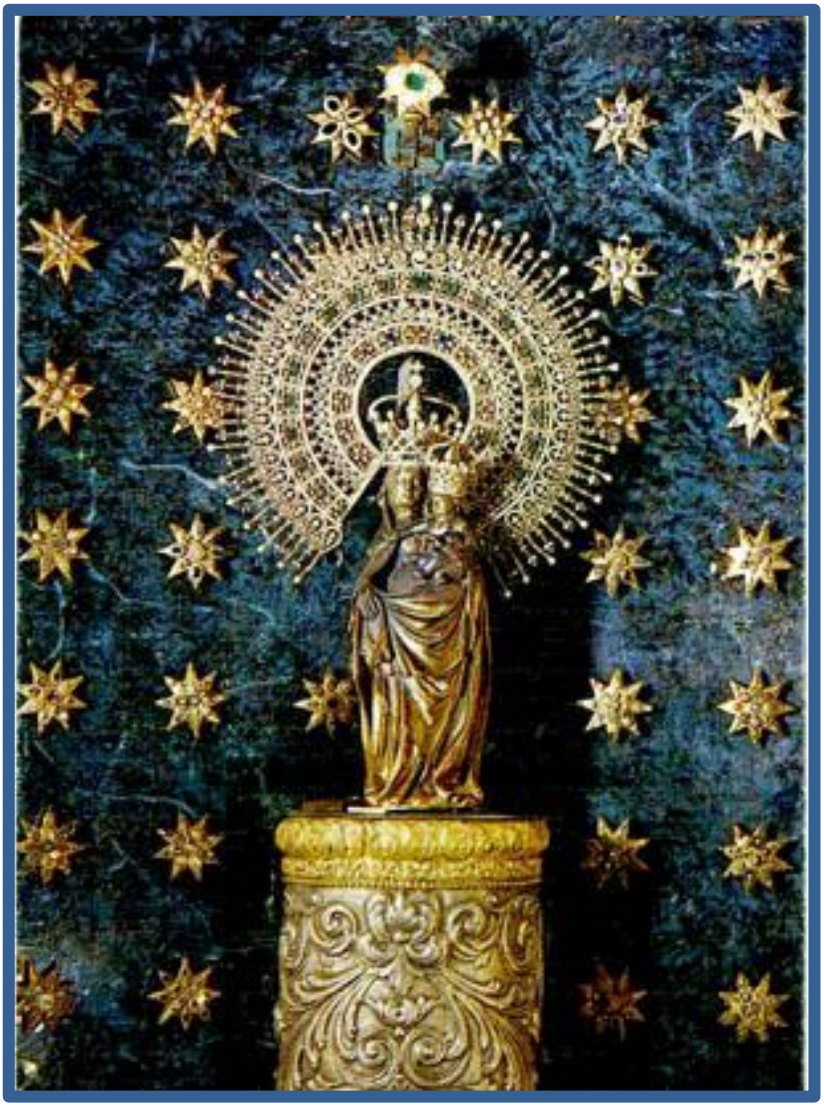


Chaminade's Last Years

Chapter 9

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Chaminade's Last Years: Who's Who

Abbreviations:
or = ordained, 1v = first vows, x = left the SM, * = priest, (SM) = left the SM before his death

Brother **Auguste**, *see* Perrière
Adèle **de Batz**, *see* de Trenquelléon
Charles **Bonnefoi**, SM (1795-1855)
1v 1827
Brougnon, *see* Perrière
Georges **Caillet**, SM* (1790-1874)
or 1816, 1v 1822
Antoine Jacques **de Chamon*** (1767-1851)
1823-1851 Bishop of St. Claude
Jean Baptiste **Chauvin**, SM (1808-1843)
or 1833, 1v 1842
Jean Joseph **Chevaux**, SM* (1796-1875)
1v 1826, or 1828
Jean de Lefebvre **de Cheverus*** (1768-1836)
1808-1823 Bishop of Boston
1810-1815 Apostolic Administrator of New York
1823-1826 Bishop of Montauban
1826-1836 Archbishop of Bordeaux
Feb. 1, 1836 created Cardinal (d. July 19, 1836)
Dominique **Clouzet**, SM (1789-1861)
1v 1817
Jean Baptiste **Collineau**, (SM)* (1796-1852)
1v 1817, or 1820, x1833
Ferdinand **Donnet*** (1795-1882)
1835-1836 Coadjutor Bishop of Nancy
1836-1882 Archbishop of Bordeaux
Mar. 15, 1852 created Cardinal
Jean Baptiste **Estebenet**, SJ* (1777-1848)
1834 entered the Jesuits
Augustin **Estignard**, (SM)* (1807-1878)
1v 1826, x1836 or after, x1869 second time
Jean Baptiste **Fontaine**, SM* (1807-1861)
1v 1831 or 1833
Pierre **Goudelin**, SJ* (1778-1863)
1832 entered the Jesuits
(François) Hippolyte **Hérail**, SM (1830-1913)
1v 1847
Valentin **Jamon** Music teacher
Jean Joseph **de Jerphanion*** (1796-1864)
1835-1842 Bishop of St. Dié
1842-1864 Archbishop of Albi

Labastide, see Saint Vincent
Jean Baptiste **Lalanne**, SM* (1795-1879)
1v 1817 or 1821
Marie Thérèse **de Lamourous** (1754-1836)
Jacques **Mathieu*** (1796-1875)
1832-1834 Bishop of Langres
1834-1875 Archbishop of Besançon
Sept 30, 1850 created Cardinal
Jean Marie **Mémain**, (SM) (1797–unknown)
1v 1819 x1837
Pierre **Olive**, SM (1797-1864)
1v 1825. Director of the SM school in Orgelet from 1828 to 1838. He recommended Narcisse Roussel for admission to the SM
Auguste Brougnon **Perrière**, (SM) (1792-1874)
1v 1817, x1833
François Jean Baptiste **Prost**, (SM)* (1807-unknown)
1v 1832, or 1836, x1846
Auguste **Ravez** (1770-1849) Lawyer and jurist
The **Roussel** Brothers:
Narcisse Roussel, (SM)* (1813-1885) 1v 1836 or 1838 x1846
Philippe Roussel, (SM) (1816-unknown) 1v 1833 x1853
Justin Roussel, (SM) (1820-unknown) 1v 1838 x1840
Apollinaire Roussel (1823-1891)
1860-1863 Assistant and then pastor at Santa Cruz, California
1863-1874 Pastor at Immaculate Heart at Watsonville
1874-1890 Pastor of San Luis Obispo
See separate notes on Narcisse Roussel.
(Mère) **Saint Vincent** (Labastide), FMI (1789-1856)
1828-1856 Mother General of the FMIs
Adèle de Batz **de Trenquelléon**, FMI (1789-1828)
1816-1828 Foundress and Mother General of the FMIs



"John Cheverus." Engraving. In *Portraits et histoire des hommes utiles*. Paris: Société Montyon et Franklin, 1837.



Unknown Artist. *Portrait of Cardinal Ferdinand-François-Auguste Donnet*. 19th-century engraving. Available via Wikimedia Commons, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Donnet.jpg.

Last Years of Chaminade: 1841-50

1. Acquisition of School by the SM

1818 - SM buys building on Rue des Menuts next to school of Estebenet, a founding member of the Bordeaux Sodality. Brother Auguste Brougnon Perrière applies for authorization to open a school on the SM premises.

1819 - SM obtains authorization for its school and contracts to pay Estebenet 1500 francs annually for the rest of his life in exchange for the cession of his rights to his school. Auguste Brougnon Perrière signs contract, representing the SM. The two schools are merged into a single institution under Auguste Brougnon Perrière's direction. 120 pupils.

1825 - School moves to Hôtel Razac on Rue du Mirail. Name changed to "Institution Sainte Marie."

1828 – Adèle dies

1829 - Brothers in Bordeaux reject first draft of SM Constitutions, which had been drawn up by Lalanne under the guidance of Chaminade.

2. The Thirties: A Time of Troubles

1830 - July Revolution.

1831 - Riots in Bordeaux. Mobs threaten Madeleine, then march on St. Laurent in a vain search for hidden treasure. Chaminade moves to Agen.

1833 - Auguste Brougnon Perrière and Collineau leave SM. Lalanne takes over as Director of Institution Sainte Marie.

Chaminade makes contract with Auguste Brougnon Perrière. Chaminade agrees:

1) to assume the debts that Auguste Brougnon Perrière had incurred while in the SM;
2) to pay August Brougnon Perrière 14,000 francs to retire a mortgage that he had taken out before joining the SM.

Agitation instigated by Lalanne and others to exclude Chaminade from the SM because Lalanne claims Chaminade is unfaithful to original foundation. Lalanne portrays himself as the "real" Founder.

In December, Chaminade names Caillet and Mémain to his council to replace Collineau and Auguste, respectively, as 1st and 3rd Assistants.

1834 - Chaminade himself completes first book of the SM Constitutions. He moves from Agen to northeastern France.

1835 - Lalanne moves Institution Sainte Marie to Layrac and continues to drive it deeper into debt. Mémain, the school's business manager, accompanies Lalanne to Layrac.

In October, Narcisse Roussel, an ex-seminarian from the St. Claude Diocese, enters the ecclesiastical novitiate at the Madeleine. He is 21. His younger brother, Philippe Roussel, is already a member of the SM.

1836 - De Lamourous dies. Chaminade returns to Bordeaux. Lalanne sends a circular to all members of the SM asking to convoke a General Chapter to reform the Society, to exclude Chaminade, and to elect a new Superior General. Lalanne also calumniates Chaminade to Archbishop de Cheverus. On October 22, Narcisse Roussel makes first vows.

1837 - School asks Estebenet (who by then has become a Jesuit) to reduce the annuity it owes him from 1500 to 1000 francs per year. Chaminade gets no response from Estebenet, so he takes up the matter with another Jesuit named Goudelin (who was also a former Bordeaux sodalist). The obligation is reduced to 1000 francs per year. Narcisse Roussel makes perpetual vows on May 14.

Lalanne (2nd Assistant) and Mémain (3rd Assistant) resign from council of Superior General, leaving two vacancies.

1838 - In September, Chaminade sends SM and FMI Constitutions to Rome for approval.

In the same month, Roussel is appointed director of the SM collège in St. Hippolyte. In December, he is ordained by Bishop de Jerphanion of St. Dié. The dimissorial letters obtained from the St. Claude Diocese make no mention of the fact that Roussel had been expelled from the seminary for sexual misconduct. Roussel's sexual misconduct became known later through two confidential letters to Archbishop Mathieu discovered in the chancery at the Archdiocese of Besançon. (Benlloch, *Origins*, p. 259)

1839 - In March, Narcisse Roussel dismisses his brother Philippe from staff at St. Hippolyte for molesting several students at the school. Sends him to St. Remy where he can live under the direction and supervision of Chevaux.

On May 8, council in Bordeaux nominates Narcisse Roussel as new Head of Instruction to fill vacancy left by Lalanne. Later in May, before Roussel's nomination is made public, Father Prost reports from St. Hippolyte that, like his brother, Narcisse Roussel, too, has been molesting students at the school. Chaminade immediately recalls him to Bordeaux and assigns him to work as Chaminade's own personal secretary.

In July, Chaminade receives Decree of Praise of the SM and FMI from the Holy See. Roussel helps Chaminade write Letter to the Retreat Masters of 1839.

3. The Lawsuit

1840 - Estebenet does not receive his annual payment from Lalanne. Estebenet tries to make Auguste Brougnon Perrière pay because Auguste Brougnon Perrière is the person liable on the note. Auguste Brougnon Perrière claims that Chaminade should pay because Auguste Brougnon Perrière was acting as an agent of the SM when the contract was drawn up with Estebenet in 1819. Since then he has left the SM and according to the terms of the 1833 contract, Chaminade agreed to take over all debts Auguste Brougnon Perrière had incurred while in the SM.

At the same time, Jamon, the school's music teacher, summons Mémain to pay 5,333 francs which the school owes him in back salary. Mémain claims that the person liable for this debt is Chaminade. Both claims are merged.

In July, Jean Baptiste Fontaine sends Chaminade manuscript for a new edition of the *Manual of the Servant of Mary.* Roussel edits this manuscript, which includes a whole new section in volume 1 on "Our Knowledge of Mary." Manuscript sent to Archbishop Mathieu for ecclesiastical approval. In the archbishop's office, the 1st volume portion of the manuscript gets lost.

In December 1840, Chaminade takes action to avoid a civil lawsuit with public trial. He hires Ravez to be his attorney and seeks to have the dispute submitted to arbitration for an out-of-court settlement. None is reached. Chaminade believes Lalanne is liable for the Estebenet debt. Lalanne claims he has no personal liability for the debt.

Lawyers on both sides of the arbitration insist that all positions on Superior General's council be filled. Chaminade orders Clouzet, the new Head of Temporalities, to return to Bordeaux to help reach a settlement. Chaminade makes public the earlier nomination and appointment of Roussel as Head of Instruction.

1841 - The new council (Caillet, Roussel, and Clouzet) vigorously opposes the claims of Auguste, Mémain, and Lalanne, and even asks for a renegotiation of Chaminade's 1833 contract with Auguste Brougnon Perrière.

The lawyers convince the council that it would be easier to get the liability for the school's debts shifted from Chaminade back to the school and Lalanne if Chaminade no longer holds the post of Superior General of the Society. The council would then be able to force a revision of the contract without Chaminade being involved in a legal procedure to compromise his own signature. The council argues that Chaminade had exceeded his powers when he entered into the 1833 contract and persuades him to resign his office as Superior General and to keep the resignation secret until a settlement is reached.

January 7. At a formal meeting of the new council, Chaminade resigns orally and instructs Roussel to draw up a written act of resignation which includes a statement of his intention to name his own successor (a right reserved to him in the 1839 Constitutions of the SM).

January 8. Chaminade reviews, approves, and signs the text of his resignation. He and the council agree that he will continue to function as if he were still Superior General until a settlement is reached. Then he will name his successor.

On January 8, Chaminade also signs the minutes of the meeting of the previous day which were drawn up by Roussel and which record Chaminade's intention to name his successor after a settlement is reached. These minutes have disappeared from the register. In their place is another set of minutes not signed by Chaminade, but signed by Bonnefoi (who was not present at the meeting of January 7). This set of minutes makes no mention of Chaminade's intention to name his successor.

January 14. Roussel writes to Mère Saint Vincent, Mother General of the Daughters of Mary, and tells her that Chaminade has resigned. Roussel says she must keep the fact secret. He also informs her that if things go his way, he hopes to succeed Chaminade as Superior General. The text of this letter is reproduced as an appendix in the English translation of the Confidential Memorandum published by NACMS.

1842 - At Roussel's instigation, new property at St. Anne's in Bordeaux is purchased and the novitiate for lay religious is moved there from St. Laurent.

1843 - Father Chauvin, novice master at St. Anne's, dies. Against Chaminade's will, but with seeming agreement of the council, Roussel takes over as novice master.

Fontaine produces new manuscript for volume 1 of the *Manual* with the help of Roussel. It is published in 1844.

1844 - In February, Ravez, the chief arbiter, reports the decision he and the contending lawyers have reached on the claims of Auguste Brougnon Perrière, Mémain, and Lalanne against the Society of Mary. The Chaminade-Auguste Brougnon Perrière contract of 1833 is judged valid and lauded as an "act of prudence and wisdom." The Society has to pay the various debts that the school owes. Lalanne is required to pay the Society the sums it has advanced him to finance the adventure of moving the school from Bordeaux to Layrac.

In the spring, Roussel organized a committee of zeal and perseverance in the young men's section of the Madeleine Sodality which rekindles the fervor of earlier days. However, he is soon obliged to quit this work for the same reason he had to be removed from Alsace. He has also made sexual advances on several novices and candidates at St. Anne's. Chaminade pressures him to resign from the

council. In May, Roussel writes to Chaminade that he intends to resign from the council; but he never acts on this intention.

Since a settlement has been reached, Chaminade announces that the time has come to designate his successor. Roussel objects, does some maneuvering, and, by the end of May, lines up the other two assistants. The three assistants claim that that is not how they remember the resignation that had taken place three years earlier. They say Chaminade had given up his right to name his successor and that the office of Superior General is now vacant.

In June Roussel leaves abruptly for Réalmont where he can work and write without interference. He takes over running the postulate and makes moves to displace Prost, who is now superior at Réalmont. Roussel also renews ties with de Jerphanion, who is now Archbishop of Albi. He alerts the Archbishop to disregard possible accusations that might be leveled against him by Chaminade. Clouzet has already returned to St. Remy. Chaminade dissolves the Council of Administration, replacing it by a Council of the Superior General. He moves to St. Anne's to repair the damage Roussel left in his wake at the novitiate.

In July, Caillet goes alone to visit Archbishop Donnet. With the latter's support, Caillet begins to work behind Chaminade's back. The assistants plan calling a General Chapter, but leaders of the Society object; so no Chapter is called.

In September Caillet proposes arbitration by the three archbishops whose metropolitan provinces include the regions of France where there are houses of the SM: Archbishop Donnet of Bordeaux, Archbishop Mathieu of Besançon, and Archbishop de Jerphanion of Albi. However, he drops the idea because it would favor Chaminade.

4. The Confidential Memorandum

1844 - October. Roussel draws up a Confidential Memorandum which is signed by himself, Caillet, and Clouzet and then sent to the three archbishops.

The Memorandum explains why Chaminade should be removed from office:

1) Chaminade is not an administrator, and age has accentuated his lack of talent. He has not left any administrative books, any notes, any register of biographical data on the members. His administration is a mess and in chaos. He is inept to govern a religious society, especially in these forward-looking times.

2) Chaminade has sown the seeds of the loss of the legal proceedings of Auguste Perrière Brougnon against the SM.

3) Chaminade has alienated the clergy and public opinion in Bordeaux, Agen, and elsewhere. He is a rich man. He is clever and gets gold and silver everywhere. He

is tricky and astute; he uses any means to reach his ends, whether or not the means can be avowed. He is two-faced and always has the last word. He can always find his way out of an obligation.

4) SM government needs new direction. Moral unrest reigns in the SM. Everyone is saying, "The Good Father cannot carry on."

5) The state of finances and personnel imperatively require Chaminade's retirement, because he is incapable of remedying the evil he sees or achieving the good he wants to accomplish.

Donnet sends the Confidential Memorandum and supporting documents supplied by Caillet to Rome. Chaminade is not consulted by Donnet or Rome. Chaminade never sees the Confidential Memorandum.

5. Chapter of 1845 and Its Aftermath

1845 - Lalanne closes the school in Layrac. He takes a leave of absence from the SM, moves to Paris to find ways to pay the school's debtors. Ten years later, he ended his leave of absence and became the first Marianist to direct Collège Stanislas. In the meanwhile, Institution Sainte Marie of Bordeaux (and Layrac) remained closed. Subsequently, in 1875, the school was reopened at the old Rue du Mirail location in Bordeaux. In 1901, it merged with St. Mary's School and moved to Grand Lebrun in a suburb of Bordeaux where it is still located.

In July, Rome answers the communication from Donnet, declaring the office of Superior General vacant and calling for a General Chapter to hold elections.

In October, the Chapter meets in Saint Remy and elects Caillet as the new Superior General. Chaminade remains in Bordeaux and is thus absent from the Chapter. The Chapter sends him a letter pledging its fidelity. Chevaux, Fontaine, and Clouzet are elected as the new council. Roussel is present as secretary of the Chapter, but is eliminated from the running after receiving only nine votes out of 38. He is neither Superior General nor a member of the council.

After the Chapter, Caillet returns to Bordeaux and tells Chaminade he must move back to the Madeleine from St. Anne's, where his presence might cause unrest and be a bad influence on the novices. Caillet assigns Roussel back to the novitiate in Réalmont and charges him with the supervision of the SM communities in Cordes, Brusque, and throughout Tarn-et-Garonne.

In Réalmont, Roussel resumes his pederasty. He seduces young François Hippolyte Hérail, a novice who later went on to a career of leadership in the SM.

In December, election of Caillet and the new council is confirmed by pontifical rescript.

1846 - In January, Chaminade is informed of Rome's decision. He writes letters of submission to Caillet and Donnet. He gives up all claim to the office of Superior General and explains to Caillet that he hopes to exercise his responsibilities as Founder by working with members of the Society for the reform of abuses. Caillet thinks his authority will be compromised if he accedes to the desires of Chaminade.

Chaminade has various categories of abuses in mind: abuses in the government of the SM by the General Administration, both after his resignation of 1841 and after the Chapter of 1845; abuses in religious discipline; and, above all, adulterations of the spirit of the Society and, in particular, abuses manifesting lack of faith and religious poverty.

Gradually, Caillet cuts off access of most members of the SM to Chaminade. He intercepts Chaminade's mail and behind his back often stops letters from being sent or received. He forbids Chaminade going to the novitiate.

In August Caillet assigns Roussel to Saint Remy. For several months the latter had drifted into irregularity and lassitude. Roussel leaves Réalmont, but never shows up at Saint Remy. Instead, he returns to his home diocese and starts the process of incardination.

1847 - Roussel makes a general confession at Our Lady of Victories in Paris and writes to Caillet begging forgiveness for all the wrongs he has inflicted on the SM.

1848 - Throughout the year Caillet wrangles with Chaminade about the separation of the SM's property from Chaminade's personal property. Various versions of Chaminade's will are drawn up.

1849 - In June, Chaminade orders Caillet to move out of the residence at 2 Rue Lalande (next door to the Madeleine chapel) which Chaminade owns and where both of them have been living. In September, Caillet moves to the SM residence on the other side of the Madeleine. Oral tradition has it that in retaliation Caillet walled up the door connecting Chaminade's house and the Madeleine. This action meant that whenever Chaminade wanted to enter the Madeleine during the last months of his life, he had to go out onto the street and through the front door of the chapel. There are some doubts about this tradition. We know that the door was walled up, but we do not know exactly when or by whom. It was not reopened until 1935. [Vasey summarizes Verrier's reservations about the tradition in note 28 on pp. 343-44 of *Chaminade: Another Portrait.* Kramer recounts the traditional story on pp. 336-39 of *Chaminade Lore.*]

In November, Chaminade writes his last letter to Caillet and repeats his appeal for confidence and unity and his hope for reconciliation.

1850 - On January 6, Chaminade suffers a stroke of apoplexy which leaves him unable to speak, even though he retains the use of his other faculties. Caillet, Chevaux, and many others come to his bedside and exchange signs of reconciliation with him. Collineau administers the last sacraments to Chaminade before his death on January 22 at the age of 88.

On January 24, Chaminade is buried in the priests' crypt of the Carthusian cemetery in Bordeaux. In 1871, his remains were transferred to their present resting place, a grave in the same cemetery that had been purchased by Father Estignard, a former member of the SM. When Estignard died, he was buried next to Chaminade at this gravesite. In 2000, a portion of Chaminade's relics were moved to the community residence of the Madeleine.

Reading List

Benlloch, Eduardo, SM. *Origins of the Marianist Family: Notes on Marianist History*. Dayton: NACMS, 2010. Chapter 19, "Calvary of the Founder: Last Years of Blessed Chaminade," pp. 255-325.

Gadiou, [Louis], SM, and [Jean Claude] Délas, SM. *Marianists in a Continuing Mission.* [St. Louis]: MRC, 1973. Chapter 11, "The Crucible of Satan," pp. 73-76. This chapter is a good short summary of the Last Years.

Gizard, Vincent, SM. *Blessed William Joseph Chaminade: Founder of the Marianist Family.* Dayton: NACMS, 2000. Chapter 12, "The Last Years (1841-1850)," pp. 102-106. This chapter is a good short summary of the Last Years.

Roussel, Narcisse, SM. *Confidential Memorandum.* Dayton: NACMS, 2002. This is a translation of Chapter 10 of the *Inquisitio historica* listed below. It is introduced by an excerpt from Vincent Gizard's biography of Chaminade.

Vasey, Vincent, SM. *Chaminade: Another Portrait.* Dayton: MRC, 1987. Chapter 12, *"Tenax Vigor,"* pp. 229-89. This 60-page account is not only shorter but better written and easier to follow than Vasey's book on the Last Years.

[Vasey, Vincent, SM]. *Guilelmi Josephi Chaminade: Sacerdotis fundatoris Societatis Mariae vulgo Marianistarum († 1850). Inquisitio historica de quibusdam animadversionibus in Servi Dei vitam ex officio concinnata.* Roma: Sacra Congregatio pro Causis Sanctorum, 1970. The *Inquisitio historica* was part of the effort that led to Chaminade being declared Venerable in 1973. Vasey submitted the work to the Vatican to answer the objections about the Last Years raised by the Devil's Advocate at the Preparatory Session of 1936, which had brought Chaminade's cause to a standstill. The book is less a narrative than a series of legal briefs. There are extensive citations of documents, which amplify and elaborate the arguments Vasey makes in *Chaminade: Another Portrait* and the *Last Years.* The French text of the Confidential Memorandum, complete with Latin footnotes, is found on pp. 361-88.

Vasey, Vincent, SM. *Last Years of Father Chaminade: 1841-1850.* [St. Louis: MRC, 1970.] This book is a good backup to the *"Tenax Vigor"* chapter in *Chaminade: Another Portrait.* Contrary to what is printed at the bottom of the title page, the book was published by the MRC in 1970. The French original was published by the GA in Rome in 1969. The editing and printing of this English translation leave much to be desired.