

ALL FOR GOD! ALL THROUGH HOLY LOVE!

***Rejoice always, pray without ceasing,
in everything give thanks,
for this is the will of God for you in Christ Jesus.
Do not quench the Spirit,
do not utterly reject prophecies,
but examine everything.
Hold firmly to that which is good.***

1 Thess 5:16-21

Dear Members of the Spiritual Family of Saint Marie Rivier,

The Jubilee Year has been a time of light, of grace and of joy for the Church and for the world. The Holy Spirit desires to lead us on a journey of profound spiritual renewal that invites us to a joyful commitment to our vocation and mission as disciples of the Master, Jesus.

Our General Chapter offered us a ***Roadmap***, a demanding, creative and dynamic call. It emphasizes ***BEING***. We are called to be witnesses of ***BEING: Being guardians of the fire. Being signs of communion in diversity. Being prophets for our time. Being "transmitters" of our heritage. Being a mosaic of hope. Being, with and like Mary, women of the Magnificat.***

Our Novena in preparation for the Feast of our Holy Foundress, on February 3rd, proposes this pathway to us and invites us to walk with Saint Marie Rivier: a Woman of BEING, an Apostle, a Prophet with a heart of fire, a Woman of the Magnificat...

Let us ask for the Spirit of wisdom and discernment to make prophetic and courageous decisions, sometimes based on faith alone. Let us move forward, full of zeal, towards the peripheries where the Lord Jesus is already waiting for us. (Report of the 2023 General Chapter, page 4)

In Jesus Christ, we have known the love of God and we have believed in it. Charity impels us to reveal to those who question us the reason for the hope that dwells within us **C 100.**

Saint Marie Rivier accompanies us on the path of every day. She is always there, by our side, wherever her daughters and sons are. She gave of herself fully in order to entrust the Congregation to us. She said: ***I have offered myself for the conservation of this Institute!*** May we do as she did: give all! **ALL FOR GOD! ALL THROUGH HOLY LOVE!**

The humble Virgin Mary, the freest of God's creatures, is our model of availability and self-giving. We look to her as we journey in hope. **C48** Like her, let us move forward with haste following in the footsteps of Saint Marie Rivier, because **the love of Christ impels us!**

In communion with my Councillors, I wish you a fervent Novena and a very beautiful feast of Saint Marie Rivier.



Sister Maria dos Anjos Alves, p.m.
Superior General

Saint Marie Rivier: be a Child of God



Belonging to Christ, signified by the Spirit, makes us enter into a new dynamic: that of a child of God, the very reason for which we were created. This is our deepest genetic code. (Pope Francis, 16 May 2016) Marie Rivier immersed herself with faith in this mystery of rebirth. She lived the Word of God in all aspects of her being. She passed through the narrow gate and produced an abundance of fruit.

Office of the day

Word of God: Matthew 7:13-14

Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and there are many who enter through it. For the gate is narrow and the way is constricted that leads to life, and there are few who find it.

Reflection: To pass through the narrow gate means that we must find that very personal gate through which we must pass in order to leave a specific mark in this world. The wide path is the one that everyone takes, while the narrow path is the one that God has specially planned for us... This gate is narrow, not because it demands too much of us, but because it invites us to consciously feel within ourselves what corresponds to our being and what path God would like us to take. We must live the unique image that God has for us. We can only discover it by meditating mindfully, and when we live it, we become a blessing for others...

The narrow path requires awareness and constant attention so as not to deviate from the path. (Jesus the Therapist, Anselm Grün, 2011, p. 81-82)

Marie Rivier

For Marie Rivier, going through the narrow gate requires constant perseverance and a deep faith that transforms.

*Look within yourself often,
in order to revive the spirit of faith.*

On this point, Pope Leo XIV says: "The narrowness of the gate represents the humility of Christ and the following of his way, including his sacrifice, and this requires a continuous personal reflection... (Pope Leo XIV, Homily, 24 August 2025)

Marie Rivier always tried to get to know herself better, to discover what was going on in the depths of her being. She wanted to present herself to God as she was, with her strengths and her frailties.

*Surrender yourselves to our good God
with all of your miseries.*

She did not hesitate to show her fragility. She welcomed what came to her awareness during her prayer. She sought to relate to others by keeping in touch with the Spirit of God who dwelt in her. This humble relationship helped her to understand herself better and to cultivate lasting fruit. She understood the importance of simplicity and silence.

*Jesus Christ does not like tumult,
he is born in the solitude of the heart.*

As Pope Leo XIV points out, "following Christ involves passing through the same narrow gate of the cross, living his message of love, service and self-giving. (Id. Homily, August 24, 2025) As for Marie Rivier, it is the pathway to heaven. *Jesus is strong enough to carry our crosses with us.*

*I find that crosses are treasures,
graces that enrich the soul
and make us practice all the virtues.
The works of God are only done
through all of this.*

Marie Rivier therefore invites us to constant vigilance in order to be what we are called to **BE**, to practice a spiritual discernment based on interior freedom, prayer, trust and surrender to the will of God.

Canticle

Intercession

Holy Father, we thank you for Marie Rivier, who allowed herself to be transformed by your Word by entering through the narrow gate, the gate of heaven. **R/** We give you thanks.

Holy Father, we thank you for Marie Rivier, who has allowed her inner qualities to shine in all their aspects. **R/** We give you thanks.

Our Father

Prayer: May the Virgin Mary, gate of heaven, gate of God's heart, help us to truly be children of God, the reason for our coming into this world.

Saint Marie Rivier: be a guardian of the fire



For Marie Rivier, divine love is like a flame that consumes her being. She has been the guardian of this fire since her encounter with the Pietà of Montpezat where she cried out: "Heal me". She is responsible for protecting this fire of love, for feeding it, but at the same time for propagating it, because this passion of love overflows from

her heart.

Office of the day

Word of God: Luke 12:49

"I have come to cast fire upon the earth; and how I wish it were already kindled!"

Reflection: "These words of Jesus are intended to help the disciples to abandon all attitudes of laziness, apathy, indifference and closure in order to welcome the fire of God's love; that love which, as St Paul reminds us, "has been poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit who has been given to us" (Rm 5:5). Because it is the Holy Spirit who makes us love God and makes us love our neighbor; it is this Holy Spirit that we all have within us.

Jesus reveals to his friends, and to us as well, his most ardent desire: to bring to the earth the fire of the Father's love, a fire which kindles life and through which we are saved. Jesus calls us to bring this fire into the world. This is how we will be recognized as his true disciples. The fire of love, kindled by Christ in the world by means of the Holy

Spirit, is a fire without limits. It is a universal fire. (Vatican News, Pope Francis, Angelus, 18 August 2019)

"The 'fire' of which Jesus speaks is a fire that transforms, that consumes prejudices, fears and attitudes of indifference." (Pope Leo XIV, August 16, 2025)

Marie Rivier is an apostle with a heart of fire



"The possessed, the truly possessed, are rather rare... Mother Rivier... is one of the very beautiful success stories of possession known in the history of the Church. This possession by Christ Jesus, of course, was reflected in her whole being and behavior, and this frightens us sometimes, so overwhelmed are we. Christ so powerfully took all the place in the depths of her being, that she was a living icon of him. She felt drawn by Christ, consumed, as it were, but, in essence, it is she who made her home in Christ Jesus to a greater extent than he in her. (A Flame of Fire, Louis Albert Lassus, o.p., p. 31)

... When you approached Marie Rivier, you felt as if you were being thrown into a fire, so overflowing was her zeal, so relentless her activities ... (Idem p.31) She would say:

Jesus Christ is near to us.

His heart of fire

is ardent and active, like the sun.

... Many witnesses recognized that it was impossible to live a single day with her without realizing very powerfully the secret source of so much magnanimity and lavish generosity – that is, the presence within her of the One who came to bring fire to the earth and who will not rest until he sees it ablaze: (Ibid., p. 37)

"Let us draw near to Marie Rivier so that at her contact the fire of Love kindled in us at the moment of our Baptism may be rekindled."
(Holy Virgin, Guard your House, Mother Carmen Barbe, p.m., p. 209)

Rule of Life

*Jesus Christ is at the heart of Marie Rivier's life
as it is at the center of God's plan for us. C 1*

<p>Am I the guardian of the fire that dwells in me? Do I feed this fire with the Word of God?</p>

Canticle

Intercession

Let us pray to the Lord that, like Saint Marie Rivier, the Holy Spirit, this interior flame, may transform us, transforming our hearts of stone into hearts of flesh, thus making us receptive to love and to the gift of self.

A/ Lord, we pray to you.

Let us pray to the Lord that he may help us purify our hearts with the fire that Jesus brings us. May he inspire us with the courage to bring his values to the world by making bold and committed decisions.

A/ Lord, we pray to you.

Our Father

Prayer: Lord, infuse us with the determination to keep alive the flame of love that Jesus brought to the earth. May this determination animate all aspects of our being and urge us to help our neighbor, in the same way that our Foundress, Marie Rivier, did.

Saint Marie Rivier: be a sign of communion in diversity



Marie Rivier is distinguished by her finesse of mind, her humility and her universal love. She faithfully embraces the life of Christ, whom she cherishes above all by being close to everyone.

Office of the day

Word of God: John 13:34

I give you a new commandment, that you love one another; just as I have loved you, that you also love one another.

Reflection: According to Pope Leo XIV, beyond personal effort, this commandment is a collective and reciprocal call to love one another, overcoming individual differences. To love like Jesus implies the gift of self, the care of others and acceptance. Indeed, it is a love that goes as far as the gift of one's life, a form of unconditional and disinterested love (agape).

Through baptism, all are called to become "living stones" in order to build the edifice of God in fraternal communion. A united and loving Church becomes a sign of unity and communion that can fertilize a reconciled world. (Homily of Pope Leo XIV, 18 May 2025)

The Pope calls us to build in harmony with the Spirit, all the while considering our diversity. His words are inspired by the model of the early Church and the teachings of Saint Augustine.

Marie Rivier

For Marie Rivier, charity is inclusive and, therefore, universal, like that of God who makes his sun rise on the bad and on the good alike (Mt 5:45). Therefore, it was with prudence that, during the French Revolution, with fruitful zeal, she manifested hospitality towards wounded or sick soldiers, since they were housed in a house next to the convent. She appointed a few sisters to care for them. In addition, when needed, they could obtain medicine, or other items, from the convent's pharmacy. (The Venerable Marie Rivier, Fernand Mourret, p. 264)

Pope Francis mentions: "Welcoming others challenges individualism and makes us grow in love." (The 10 Commandments, p. 56) As a young girl Marie Rivier understood this when she helped a poor blind woman walk through the streets of her village, while the other children ridiculed them. What was a problem for the other children was a gift from God to Marie Rivier, especially since her behavior towards this lady brought her out of her self-centeredness and opened her up to love. Already, the virtue of charity was growing in her heart. And later, with orphans and the unloved, she would continue to see the face of Christ calling her to the joy of love. For her, inclusion meant *living in great unity with everyone and loving all of one's neighbors, even one's enemies. If we exclude a single person, we do not have charity*, she said. (On the Spirit and Virtues of Madame Rivier, p. 100)

Marie Rivier said to the sisters: *Your first duty, therefore, if you love one another, is to bear with each other, remaining united by the bonds of peace. When your sisters cause you to suffer, think that you may be causing them to suffer even more; forgive their failings with a good heart, as you want them to forgive and forget yours;*

do not poison their intentions... in this way you will fulfill the precept of Jesus Christ, you will love your neighbor as yourself (Lk 10:27) (Spiritual Writings, Anne Marie Rivier, p. 152). Charity will help you practice gentleness and patience in all circumstances, and with all kinds of people... it must extend to everyone equally, because everyone is entitled to it as a common good. (Last Instructions, p. 28)

Am I capable of loving without exclusion?

Canticle

Intercession

Lord, give us the grace to love like Jesus and to build authentic and harmonious fraternal communities.

R/ Lord, we pray to you.

Lord, like Marie Rivier, give us the strength to truly love and to overcome our human limitations. **R/** Lord, we pray to you.

Lord, help us to be leaven for the world, persons of communion, so that when they see us, people can say: see how they love each other.

R/ Lord, we pray to you.

Our Father

Prayer: Love is the universal language that we possess at birth. Let us learn to welcome one another, knowing that love is the greatest strength that will unite us, heal us, teach us and fulfill us. (Pope Francis, 13 March 2020)

Saint Marie Rivier: be a prophet for our time



Since her beatification and canonization, Marie Rivier no longer belongs to her religious family. She now belongs to the universal Church. She is a prophet, because she is a person of the Word, a spokesperson for God's love for our times. She was given to each one of us to accompany us in our quest for the Gospel and to illuminate our path to God.

Office of the day

Word of God: Acts 2:17-18

In the last days, says God, I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh; your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, and your old men will dream dreams. Yes, on my servants and on my handmaidens in those days I will pour out of my Spirit; and they will prophesy.

Reflection: The prophet allows himself to be guided by the Holy Spirit, listening to all his inspirations and putting them into practice. It is in this way that Jesus, the great prophet, proclaimed the reign of his Father by the power of his words and by the example of his life. (Lumen Gentium 35)

The prophet is the one who prays and contemplates God. He feels compassion for his people and suffers when they go astray. He sheds tears. Such was the case with Jesus, who, on the one hand,

severely rebukes, using harsh words, such as "perverse and adulterous generation"; and on the other hand, sheds tears over Jerusalem. (Pope Francis, 17 April 2018)

Marie Rivier

Marie Rivier knew how to transmit and live the Word of God. From a young age she sought and found the precious pearl, as mentioned in the Gospel according to Matthew (13:45). Her long contemplation of the Pietà wrote the names of Jesus and Mary in golden letters in her little girl's soul.

Our Foundress understood, over the years, what is written in the Letter to the Colossians (2:3). *In Jesus Christ are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.* Her prayer was rooted in the essential; that is why she would say: My heaven is Jesus Christ. He is ours; he is close to us, he is in us (Spiritual Writings, p.7). In other words: *Let us make our home in Jesus Christ* and take care of it if we want to be happy. This is how she acquired the wisdom that consists in seeing, hearing, and loving according to God's heart.

This wisdom of God allows her, as a prophet, to behave with righteousness. Sometimes, with some of her daughters, she acts gently, while with others, she finds it important to set limits for them and show them the way forward.

She insists on the need to guard our heart, which is the surest way to correct our faults, because sometimes we see things according to what pleases us or according to the state of our heart. *Instead of entering deeply into your hearts, you are content to peek here and there into the vestibule of your interior, and you do not enter it. No wonder your faults... and your dominant passions, instead of*

diminishing and weakening, grow stronger. (The Knowledge of the Heart by Marie Rivier, Sister Isabelle Bouchard, p.m., January 1, 1995)

She was able to spread the Gospel in all aspects of daily life, community and social life. She had a prophetic vision: "*One day, my daughters will cross the seas.*" Also, during the French Revolution, she risked her life several times. She told those who came to listen to her, in a clandestine setting: "It's true, our church is closed, our village has no parish priest. But courage! Promise to die for Jesus Christ, like the first Christians. (Anne Marie Rivier and the Journal of the Sisters of the Presentation of Mary)

Today, Jesus speaks as he did in the past, but he wants to do so through us. He gave us the Holy Spirit at Baptism, and it is this same Spirit who inspires us and puts the Word of God on our lips to share it with others.

How can I be a prophet for our times?

Canticle

Intercession

O Christ, help us bear witness to You in this world where so many voices draw us in so many different directions. **R/** By the power of your Spirit.

O Christ, grant us the grace to transmit and live the Word of God within our communities, so that we can identify with Marie Rivier and become prophets for our time. **R/** By the power of your Spirit.

Our Father

Prayer: Lord, listen to the voice of our prayer, so that we may serve you with generosity as Marie Rivier did.

Saint Marie Rivier: be a "transmitter" of a heritage



Among the spiritual treasures that Marie Rivier bequeathed to us is the precious gift of prayer. This gift was not only intended for her, it was entrusted to her so that she could share it with all of humanity.

Office of the day

Word of God: 1 Thess. 5:16-18

Always be joyful. Pray without ceasing. Give thanks in all things, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

Reflection: Joy, prayer, and gratitude are essential pillars of the Christian life. Joy is a deep and interior conviction that flows from encountering Christ in prayer. *Praying without ceasing* does not mean reciting prayers all the time, but rather maintaining a relationship of constant communion with God. This relationship is not limited to specific moments, but extends to all aspects of our lives. As for gratitude, it is a state of mind that always recognizes God's goodness, even in difficult situations. (Pope Francis, 31 December 2020)

Marie Rivier

Marie Rivier's legacy is vast and continues long after her death in 1838. Its influence can be measured both locally, with the creation of several schools, and globally, thanks to the expansion of her

religious community. Marie Rivier left us a spiritual and educational legacy, as well as a legacy of commitment and resilience.

Her spiritual heritage is marked by the founding motto: *All for God! All through Holy Love!* **C4** Her missionary zeal was fueled by her determination to make Jesus Christ known and loved. *Zeal to make Jesus Christ known and loved is the special characteristic of the Sisters of the Presentation of Mary.* **C9**

The spirit of prayer, the central pillar of her spiritual life, animated her life. Marie Rivier showed unwavering trust in God despite the persecutions of the French Revolution and financial difficulties. She always opened her door to orphans. She invites us *to never undertake anything without first calling on God for help.*

She left us a Marian legacy through her devotion to the Virgin Mary, who is *the inspiration and guardian* of our Congregation **C11**. The very name of the Sisters of the Presentation of Mary underlines the importance of Mary in her life.

Her educational legacy is remarkable. For Marie Rivier, the Christian instruction and education of young people occupied the first place, especially among the poor. She understood that evangelization was about human development. Therefore, she encouraged all those who shared her vision to continue to commit themselves to this cause that was so dear to her heart.

Her commitment to the vulnerable and her strength in the face of adversity in troubled times, notably by founding a Congregation in the midst of the Reign of Terror, reveal her capacity for resilience despite the obstacles she faced. That is why she says to us: *"Be full of courage and trust in the One we call our Father, and who has all the tenderness of a father for us."*

Marie Rivier left an indelible mark on the world. She led the way and inspired others to follow. *Let us come together and we'll teach school! Either we make Jesus Christ known or we die!* These words have crossed the centuries and today, they are more relevant than ever before.

Today, Marie Rivier tells us again and again: *Let us come together! Let us come together:* sisters, consecrated laity, associates, collaborators, friends, young and old. Let us work together in the Church.

This is the legacy that Marie Rivier left us and that we must perpetuate...

<p>Following Marie Rivier, what is the imprint that I wish to leave on this earth?</p>
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Canticle

Praise

Holy Father, we thank you for Marie Rivier, who has bequeathed to us a generous legacy of promising prospects for the future.

A/ Father, we thank you.

Holy Father, we thank you for Marie Rivier's "*Let us come together.*" May we move forward together, making you known and loved and transmitting the joy of the Gospel to our contemporaries.

A/ Father, we thank you.

Our Father

Prayer: Lord, nothing is impossible for those who put their faith in You. Your gifts are remarkable, and you distributed them generously to Marie Rivier so that she could share them with the universal Church. You made her a daughter of heaven.

Saturday, January 31, 2026

Saint Marie Rivier: be a woman of hope



Marie Rivier's entire life and work bear witness to an unshakeable hope, even in the face of the greatest trials. She drew strength from faith to fulfill her vocation of teaching and evangelization, in a context of deep crisis.

Office of the day

Words of God: Rm 15:13

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you will abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Reflection: In the trials of life, hope is animated by the firm and encouraging certainty of God's love poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit. For this reason it does not disappoint (cf. Rom 5:5) and Saint Paul can write to Timothy: "For it is for this we labor and strive, because we have set our hope on the living God" (1 Tm 4:10). The living God is indeed the "God of hope" (Rm 15:13) who, in Christ, through his death and resurrection, has become "our hope" (1 Tm 1:1). We cannot forget that we have been saved in that hope in which we must remain rooted. (Pope Leo XIV, June 16, 2025)

Marie Rivier

From a young age, Marie Rivier experienced suffering. After a fall that left her disabled and made her lose the use of her legs for four difficult years, she was able to keep alive the hope born of this ordeal. This is why she tells us:

Be steadfast in your courage and trust in God.

In addition, she prayed with unwavering determination to the Virgin Mary. It is thanks to this that she regained the use of her legs. This event radically transformed her life and strengthened her commitment. This healing is the first indication of the deep hope that dwells in her, a divine favor obtained through her tenacity in prayer.

*Be a woman of prayer
and you will be strong with the strength of God.*

At a time when believers were being persecuted, Marie Rivier demonstrated remarkable boldness in opening schools and gathering together her companions. Her actions were a demonstration of faith and hope, a refusal to give in to widespread discouragement. Thus, in fifty years, she founded 141 schools, often associated with dispensaries, to educate the poorest. Each school that opened was a concrete sign of hope for the future.

She discovered in the Good News a treasure to be shared. Her hope was dynamic, focused on mission and evangelization.

Let us come together and transmit Hope.

Marie Rivier remains a "spark of hope". She reminds us that, even in the midst of difficulties, it is possible to cultivate hope, to pray fervently and to commit ourselves to creating a better world.

Am I a sower of hope in my milieu?

Canticle

Intercession

Holy Father, help us to be persons of prayer, because prayer opens the door to hope. **A/** Lord, we pray to you.

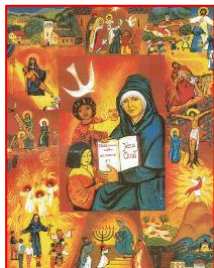
Holy Father, guide us so that we may move forward together in hope and be sources of joy in our surroundings. **A/** Lord, we pray to you.

Our Father

Prayer: Lord, we thank you for having given Marie Rivier the inner strength of hope, which made her risk her life for the Good News, for the Church in distress and for the evangelization of peoples. Amen.

Sunday, February 1, 2026

Saint Marie Rivier: be an open Gospel



Marie Rivier was so immersed in the Word of God that she became an open Gospel by her whole life. Every moment of her life embodied the Gospel explained through her words and actions.

Office of the day

Word of God: Mark 16:15-16

At that time, the risen Jesus manifested himself to the eleven apostles and said to them, "Go into all the world. Proclaim the gospel to all creation Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved; whoever refuses to believe will be condemned."

Reflection: The message of the Gospel is not intended for a specific group, but for everyone, regardless of people or nation. This emphasizes that, while the message is for everyone, the acceptance of faith is necessary for salvation.

If you have faith, you must necessarily go out of yourself, and make your faith socially visible. Faith is social, it is for everyone. (Pope Francis, 25 April 2020)

The call to carry this Gospel "together" shows that sharing our faith is a collective action, with a call to rely on others.

Marie Rivier

We must be for everyone by our holiness and by all our actions an open Gospel, the Gospel explained, whether we speak or walk, whatever we do, everything in us must lead those who see us to think of Jesus and to honor Him. (Marie Rivier. VJC, pp. 430-431)

For Marie Rivier, the Gospel should not be a closed book or an abstract theory, nor simply a text to be read, but a lived reality that is reflected in everything we do, in a concrete and daily way, a life experience to be shared. It is a question of letting the presence of Jesus shine through our daily acts. But to do this, we must *meditate on the Scriptures, the path to contemplation which God himself opens for us.* **D24b** *Every day, preferably in the morning, we are happy to find ourselves intimately present to the Lord, at the same time and place, in the same silence, listening and waiting before the Book that has remained open from the night before.* **D24c**

Therefore, holiness is not an unattainable ideal, but a union with Jesus to which all the baptized are called. It is manifested in a life of charity, that is, the love of God above all else and the love of neighbor. Holiness is not passive; it is lived to the fullest on a daily basis. Marie Rivier tells us:

*Charity must shine in all our actions,
our words and our conduct.*

Marie Rivier's appeal is total. It is not limited to times of prayer or formal service, but extends to all aspects of daily life. Whether speaking, walking, or performing the smallest task, the believer must act in a way that reflects the love and teachings of Jesus. This

underlines the omnipresence of this testimony. It is not an isolated activity, but a way of being that permeates every facet of our existence, whether it be in our words, our movements, or any other activity. Marie Rivier's appeal highlights the importance of authenticity and coherence between what we believe and what we live.

*If our heart is in everything we do and say,
everything is of great value, even the smallest things.*

Indeed, our actions, even the smallest ones, thus serve as a living and explicit commentary on the Word of God. Through our compassion, patience and generosity, we make Jesus' teachings accessible and understandable to those around us.

*Everything in us must make Jesus Christ known
and must proclaim His greatness.*

Our actions should make others wonder about the source of our peace, joy and goodness. They should encourage them to question themselves about the presence of God in our lives. It is this witness by example, which is often more powerful than words.

This is why Marie Rivier insists: *It is better to prove to God that we love Him than to tell Him.*

Marie Rivier embodied this open Gospel, revealing God's love to others, especially to the poorest.

*Let us begin by helping Jesus Christ in his poor
if we want Him to help us in our poverty.*

To be an open Gospel for Marie Rivier means, above all, to recognize her poverty. She never had any illusions about herself. First of all, physically, she did not meet the standards of beauty: she was small in stature and fragile. Despite these limitations, with God's help, she performed wonders. *It is with great trust in God that I have dared to undertake the work that Divine Providence has entrusted to me, knowing full well my incapacity and my misery in all respects.*

It is out of great trust in God that I dared... This is Marie Rivier's secret. God calls her as she is, poor and handicapped, to go and carry the fire of love and of the knowledge of Jesus Christ. She goes forward, in faith, in trust, supported by the strength of God. (Marie Rivier, a Woman of Hope, Mother Carmen Barbe, July 19, 1996)

Is my life in coherence with the values of the Gospel?
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Canticle

Intercession

Lord, give us the grace to reveal to our contemporaries, by our whole life, that we are rooted in Jesus Christ. **A/** Lord, we pray to you.

Lord, grant that we may be channels so that the light of Christ might reach others. **A/** Lord, we pray to you.

Our Father

Prayer: God, our Father, make of us models of faith, education and charity. Grant that the Gospel of Jesus might be written between the lines of our lives.

Saint Marie Rivier:
be with and like Mary, a woman of the Magnificat



Marie Rivier lived such an intimate union with the Virgin Mary that she identified herself with her by abandoning herself completely to the will of the Father.

Office of the day

Word of God: Luke 1:46

My soul exalts the Lord, my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour!

Reflection: The Magnificat of the Virgin Mary is a biblical song of praise. It praises the goodness of God who looked upon his humble servant. The text expresses Mary's joy in the face of God's promise to lift up the humble and bring down the powerful.

Mary's song, her Magnificat, strengthens in hope the humble, the hungry, the zealous servants of God. These are the women and men of the Beatitudes who, even in tribulation, already see the invisible: the powerful overthrown from their thrones, the rich empty-handed, the promises of God fulfilled. These are experiences that we, in every Christian community, must be able to say we have lived. They seem impossible, but God's Word continues to manifest itself. When the bonds by which we oppose good to evil, life to death, are

formed, then we see that nothing is impossible with God (Lk 1:37). (Pope Leo XIV, August 15, 2025)

Mary was called and made capable of participating in her own way in beautifying the future of the world. This is immense. "The Mighty One has done great things for me." (Lk 1:49) Mary is given to us in this passage so that we may identify ourselves with her.

She knows that she is small, and this has not prevented God from allowing her to participate in the fulfillment of the promise made to Abraham: we are blessed by God and we are enabled to be a blessing to the whole world (Genesis 12:2).

Marie Rivier

Saint Marie Rivier is compared to the Virgin Mary of the Annunciation and of the Magnificat for her humility, her faith and her commitment to God, expressed by her total "YES" to the divine will. She herself had promised the Virgin to devote herself to children. Her life, marked by physical suffering and a promise made to the Virgin Mary, is an echo of the Magnificat, singing the love of God and the humility of the faithful servant that she was.

Like the Virgin Mary, Marie Rivier's life was marked by the gift of self to God and to the service of others. She is totally available to do what God asks of her. This attitude is that of a heart educated to *say yes in small things*, a heart educated to think more of others than of itself.

The desire to reach out to the poorest, those who have not yet heard the message, is an important part of Marie Rivier's life. It emphasizes the social and compassionate dimension of faith.

Like Mary, she is consumed by her zeal for the knowledge of Jesus Christ.

Am I, like Marie Rivier,
modeling my life by following the example of the Virgin Mary?

Canticle

Praise

Holy Father, we thank you for the Virgin Mary, who had an experience that convinced her that God is not just a beautiful idea: he acted in her being and in her life. **A/** Father, we thank you.

Holy Father, we thank you for Marie Rivier, who learned from Mary to have this openness, this boundless generosity that gives of itself completely to God and to others. **A/** Father, we thank you.

Our Father

Prayer: Lord, we all feel profoundly human. By accepting our humanity, we can bring something of God's hope for the world. This is the surprise that the Virgin Mary underlines in her Magnificat. Amen.

FEAST OF SAINT MARIE RIVER



Saint Marie Rivier, a woman of many facets, a witness for today, was elevated by God beyond her purely human condition. The grace of God that she welcomed into her life, day after day, contributed to her holiness.

Office of the day

Word of God: Romans 12:2

Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may discern what the will of God is, what is good, acceptable and perfect.

Saint Marie Rivier

Ever since she was very young, Marie Rivier meditated on the promises made by God. She let him be the center of her life, she opened herself up to his love. And thus, she became a woman of discernment, developing the ability to distinguish between what is good and pleasing to God and what is not.

Over time, she made room for the Child of God within her. She became a guardian of the fire of the Holy Spirit that dwelt in her and was a sign of communion through her attitudes and behaviors towards the people she came into contact with, manifesting a universal love. Thanks to her ardent zeal to embody the Word of

God and to transmit it, she became a prophet for our time and a transmitter of a heritage. A woman of hope, she knew how to draw from trials a boundless hope, believing in the infinite love of God. Finally, she found in the Gospel the words that helped her to live a life of holiness with and like Mary, being a woman of the YES, a woman of the Magnificat.

To conclude this Novena, let us look at the various elements that were chosen during the 2023 General Chapter and meditate on some commentaries from different sources.

Pope Francis: Being a Guardian of the Fire

Holy women and men do not have an easier life than others since they are often the objects of opposition. But, through prayer, they fan the flame of their faith, as is done with oil from lamps. Tweet of June 30, 2023

Mother Saint Seraphine: Being a sign of communion in diversity

Our religious family will be strong in proportion to the unity that is ours. This is more important than the number and the individual value of the subjects. Therefore, each of us has the sacred duty of fostering intimacy of hearts, harmony of views and feelings in our various communities. July 1899, When Holiness Gets Involved, p.68

Mother Maria dos Anjos: To be a prophet for our time.

Our charism and our mission of education in the faith extend to all the places where we are present. Since our mission often involves vulnerable situations and people, we are committed to consistently upholding the highest spiritual, ethical, and professional standards in our interactions... We strive to create a true atmosphere of interculturality within our communities and throughout our

Congregation, thus responding to Marie Rivier's fervent desire: "Let us come together!"

Inspired by our mission as educators, we are driven to create safe and nurturing environments to protect those who may find themselves in vulnerable situations.

We categorically declare that any form of abuse is unacceptable within our Congregation.

2024, Excerpts from the Message of the Superior General, Safeguarding Policy of the Congregation of the Sisters of the Presentation of Mary.

Mother Jean-Théophane: Being a "transmitter" of our heritage

Let us never stop seeking to find all the means we possibly can to reach out to the young, to help them. May all of us, from the eldest to the youngest, carry them in our prayer, as a mother her child, as the Virgin Mary carried the beloved Son of the Father; let us carry them in this unceasing prayer – our life given with Christ's. Return to the Heart II , p. 301

Mother Angèle Dion: To be a mosaic of hope

Has the "I believe in the resurrection of the dead" that we recite regularly had the same effect of persuasion on us that it had on Saint Paul, when in certain periods of our life, we go through tribulations similar to his?

And yet, it is in these moments of "emptiness" that hope springs up more frequently, like a grace, like a gift. On one condition however! That we stop discussing with God, that we recognize once and for all that we are powerless to come out of it alone. Then in all freedom, God will be able to bring out in us the gentle power of his

mercy and his tenderness. His strength will bring relief and will make up for the failure of our energies. In a life where hope regains its vigor, zeal is reactivated in a dynamism stripped of all vain glory... We then become transmitters of hope in our apostolic and community surroundings, and joy becomes our usual state of mind.
Circular letter. Let us go forward in hope. 2001

Charles de Foucauld: *To be an Open Gospel*

Those who are far from Jesus must, without books and words, come to know the Gospel, , by seeing my life... When they see me, they must see who Jesus is. Directory of the Union, 1909

Mother Carmen Barbe: *To be with and like Mary, men and women of the Magnificat.*

Mary's canticle puts the axe to the root; it is a school of continual turning back towards God and towards God's way of doing things.
Holy Virgin, Guard your Home. 1 May 1996, p. 344

Nicolas FARGERÉ, Director of the Marie Rivier Institute, Le Puy en Velay, France:

Today, Saint Marie Rivier represents the strength of going against the tide in a society that is hostile to the spirit of the Gospel. In a very difficult period, she was not afraid to develop the mission that was inspired by Christ. She tells us not to be afraid, Christ and the Blessed Virgin are there! So, go, venture out, create, be bold, and don't be afraid to proclaim the Good News.

Saint Marie River inspires us in the choices we must make. In the missions entrusted to us, which are sometimes difficult, we must constantly draw inspiration from the strength received from God to act according to his will and get back up again every time an

obstacle has prevented us from moving forward. God knows how many obstacles Saint Marie Rivier had to face.

Like Saint Marie Rivier, we must bear witness to the faith she radiated. Let us teach young people to pray, let us abandon ourselves to the will of God, let us detach ourselves from superficial things and let us help others discover God's love as Saint Marie Rivier did. Let us bear witness to the humble and courageous life of Saint Marie Rivier. The smaller you are, the greater things you can do. Let us continue the actions already undertaken within the Presentation of Mary, actions that strengthen our "Let us come together". The joy of praying together, the joy of sharing together and the joy of meeting one another again.

Canticle

Praise

Lord, we thank you for this memorable feast that we celebrate today. May it renew our hearts so that you may always be the center of our lives. **A/** Lord, we thank you.

Lord, we thank you for helping us to follow in the footsteps of Saint Marie Rivier and for guiding our paths so that we may come to taste the joys of eternity. **A/** Lord, we thank you.

Our Father

Prayer: Most Holy Father, like you did in the life of Saint Marie Rivier, grant us the grace to be your witnesses in our world today. Amen.