

Paris, December 5, 1995

**Les Fils de la Charité  
Région France**

**Bernard LACROIX (1914-1995)**

From step to step our brother Bernard LACROIX has just made the last one. On Saturday December 2, at 6.30 p.m., in St Joseph house and holding Louis Poope's hand in his, he fell asleep forever in the rest of God. Louis told him: "Bernard, be at peace. It is the Lord who comes to meet you with all his tenderness and mercy". And Bernard who was so often anxious closed his eyes peacefully.

Bernard was born in 1914 near Verdun. That is where he grew, did his studies and was ordained a priest in 1938. During his formation years he had as professors two priests who had known Father Anizan and had spoken to him about the Sons of Charity. During his military service he met with Pierre Dupé who was also born in 1914. He had made up his mind to enter the Sons of Charity but the bishop of Verdun appoints him as director of a religious institution in his diocese. The war began a year later in 1939. It was a decisive step for Bernard who was a prisoner of war and put in a disciplinary camp.

In 1945 he entered the Sons of Charity. When his novitiate ended he was assigned to Vaise in the diocese of Lyon and he became a worker-priest in 1949. A year later he falls sick and has to go for a cure at St Hilaire du Touvet until 1952. From that date until 1973 he remained there and worked as a male nurse. He was there in 1954 when the order came from Rome to put an end to work for priests. That was another step, a very painful one. But with the consent of Cardinal Gerlier he kept on working. On May 1<sup>st</sup> 1973, he leaves for Grenoble to work on a permanent basis for the departmental Union of the General Confederation of Labor (CGT). He came to Issy-les-Moulineaux on May 31, 1991.

On a sheet written by him and dated in 1990 with the title "Instructions to attach to my last will" one could read in the fourth paragraph:

"No flowers, nor wreath, no speech, no obituary. Simply:

Bernard LACROIX

Born on April 12, 1914 (on Easter Sunday)

Baptized on April 26, 1914 (on the feast of the Good Shepherd)

Ordained a priest on June 29, 1938 (on the feast of Saint Peter and Saint Paul)

Religious profession on October 7, 1947 (feast of Our Lady of the Rosary)  
Called back to God  
Pray for him (end of quote)

Those dates noted with precision, the feasts celebrated on those days and the indefectible solidarities that were his, must have been keystones for Bernard amid the hardships he met with. We could talk at length about him especially during the funeral service. But to respect his will we will not do it. He said: “When I die I don’t want bowings and scrapings.”

Today we can complete the list of dates, the one that up till now was unknown:  
Called back to God on December 2, 1995 (first Sunday of Advent).

But Bernard does not wait anymore. The time of the encounter and of the clear vision has arrived for him, thanks to Christ Risen from the dead: that is our Hope.

Let us end on a light note that he repeated much of late: “When I will die don’t tell anyone. But after my funeral send this word from me to my pals: hey men, Bernard has closed his luggage; he’s waiting for you on the other side”.

Regional Council of France

Translated by *Lorenzo Lortie f.c.*