

*From: The Marchioness Giulia Falletti of Barolo nee Colbert
Memoires of Silvio Pellico*



*Silvio Pellico narrates about the journey
and sojourn of the Marchioness in Rome
for the approval of our Institute
and that of the Magdalenes*

Since the necessary trial period of some years for the Institutes of the Sisters of St. Ann and of the Magdalenes was completed, she [the Marchioness] considered it was now time to go to Rome to make them known to the Holy See and to ask for Pontifical approval. She discussed this opinion with the Archbishop, he deemed it good, and the pious Foundress got ready for the journey.

She was not dismayed to learn that such solemn approvals were very difficult to obtain, and that recently the Holy See had refused it to some respectable Congregations, existing for many years, among others the Sisters of St. Joseph. The Supreme Pontiff used to grant to similar Religious Bodies a kind of minor authorization, called *laude*, but he hesitated to pronounce a definitive judgment. Despite the examples, either of no success, or of unsatisfactory results, the Marchioness did not want to neglect that important step, **eagerly seeking, if it was pleasing to God, to consolidate those beloved establishments and to draw upon them more abundant blessings.**

She regretted not being able to travel accompanied by a priest [...]. The Marchioness of Barolo asked Canon Tua d'Acqui to accompany her, and he, having received the consent of the Bishop of Acqui, accepted the grateful proposition.

My brother Francesco, from the Society of Jesus, also having to go to Rome, I went ahead of the Marchioness by a month, making the trip with him. We did the journey by sea, and she then took the land route. [...] During the time that I was in Rome, waiting for her to come, I was lovingly accommodated by the Fathers of the Company in their House of the *Gesù*, [...]

When the Marchioness of Barolo arrived, she rented a beautiful two-storied house, along with the ground floor, in *Via della Croce* near Piazza di Spagna; I said goodbye to my Reverend hosts, and came to stay with my benefactress.

Cardinal Lambruschini was known to her, she had seen him in Paris when he held the office of Apostolic Nuncio in that capital. Now for several years Gregory XVI had entrusted him with the greatest responsibility of all, that of Secretary of State. The Marchioness went to introduce herself to the Cardinal, to explain to him the reason for her coming, and the venerable old man welcomed her with the most particular honours and with paternal affection, neither did these demonstrations diminish later on. The merit of the petitioner was clear to him and he was able to discern and evaluate that of the Institutes in question. However, he declared that **the obstacles were great**, and that it was difficult that they would be overcome in the circumstances that prevailed. He was soon prompt to come and pay a visit to the



**Marchioness Giulia Colbert
Falletti of Barolo**



Card. Luigi Labruschini

Marchioness, and he told her that he had spoken with earnestness to the Holy Father, and found him full of esteem for her and for her works; but the obstacles foreseen were really many and it would perhaps take a long time to get through them. She, not desiring anything but **the fulfillment of the divine will**, did not however feel disheartened and **considered it her duty to persist in taking the appropriate steps to bring to completion the issue.**



Pope Gregorio XVI

All the other Cardinals whom she visited and consulted gave her the best welcome, none however concealed the serious impediments that were arising towards the good outcome of her request.

The Holy Father was considerate in granting her an audience, he listened to her words with the affection that one could expect, and replied so kindly that she seemed to see some ray of hope shining through.

But the Pope, hearing that she was confident of obtaining a complete approval, did not leave her with this consoling idea, and said that after the Cardinals had made an examination of the Institutes of St. Ann and of the Magdalenes, he hoped to be able to give the *laude*, but not immediately the approval. - **Oh Holy Father! She exclaimed with a surge of filial confidence, the *laude* is much more than we deserve, but it is not enough for me.**

At that cry from the heart, the venerable Pontiff smiled and assured her of all his good will.

Comforted by this first audience and by the blessings received, she went ahead tirelessly with the normal procedures. She had other

similar audiences, and obtained that instead of submitting the two Rules to many Cardinals, which would have resulted in an incalculable length of time, the examination be delegated only to some. She asked that the presidency of those to whom this assignment would be entrusted, be given to Cardinal Lambruschini. Here the Pope replied negatively, given the overwhelming tasks that kept the Secretary of State busy. She replied asking for permission at least to try if the said Cardinal, despite his many affairs, could consider taking on that one too, and she implored that if so, His Holiness should agree to it. The Pope said that in such a case he would have consented, she went to Cardinal Lambruschini and narrated to him about the audience, and was able so well to plead, that he accepted the aforementioned presidency.

He therefore presided over the delegation of examiners, who were, besides himself, Cardinals Ostini, Bianchi and Polidori. The preparatory work on the things to be discussed was entrusted to Rev. Fr. Giusto Recanati da Camerino of the Capuchin Order, who was later made a Cardinal. Fr. Giusto was a Consultor of the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars, a man of very refined intelligence and holy fame, held in great esteem by Gregory XVI and Pius IX. Monsignor Corboli had some part in that affair and was not in favour; but this and other oppositions gradually disappeared.

One day the Marchioness of Barolo was in the Church of St. Peter in Chains, and I was with her. We had understood that Fr. Giusto was there and she asked to speak to him for a moment. He came to grant her an audience in a secluded place, and told her that the issue in question was proceeding satisfactorily, having no doubt that the two Institutes would receive the *Laude*. - **What! The Marchioness replied with her usual frankness, the *Laude*? I do not want it, I do not want it. She renewed her requests energetically, with eloquent reasons, with all the exuberance of a hope that nothing could extinguish.** The holy religious was shaken by it, and promised to continue to work hard, as much as he could, to support her cause.

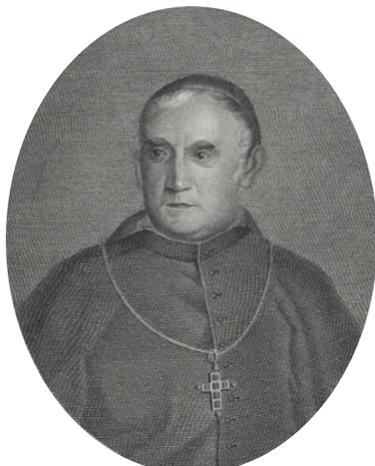
There is no doubt that that magnanimous hope that she nurtured, despite so many strong manifestations against her desire, did not but come from heaven. She prayed much, and although very busy with visits, with many types of duties, with letters she received and wrote, she did not miss the opportunity to take part in the Stations, processions, the particular Church celebrations in honour of the Saints, and most of all adoration of the Blessed Sacrament exposed on the altars.



Father Giusto Recanati da Camerino
future Cardinal

She had written to Carlo Alberto about the affairs that had kept her away from Piedmont for such a long time: the King held her in the highest esteem. Quite often in the past she had addressed some letters to him, for matters of charity and justice. He had replied to her each time with expressions of benevolent concern, declaring himself ready to consider her requests and to satisfy one of his subjects who lavished so many benefits in his country. Carlo Alberto replied immediately to the letter she sent from Rome, and said how much he valued her pious Institutes, and how much he hoped they would receive papal approval. This remarkable testimony of the King was held in high esteem by the Holy Father and the Cardinals, and was found printed in the Acts with the other documents.

When it **finally pleased God that all the minds of the examiners would come to an agreement in favour of those Institutes**, the Rules and Constitutions were revised with the modifications that they deemed appropriate, and **received complete approval** to the great wonder of many who had thought it was impossible.



Card. Pietro Ostini

The excellent Cardinal Ostini, who from the beginning was one of those most contrary (for which the Marchioness used to say jokingly, that the name Ostini was the root of the word obstinate) had in fact changed. It is said that one evening he went to announce to her the good result fully achieved. She was filled with inexpressible jubilation and **she threw herself on her knees to bless God who had consoled her so much, and to pray to him that the authorization of the Vicar of J.C. would make those two fortunate Institutes grow in virtue**. She therefore turned with deep gratitude to thank the Cardinal.

The venerable Lambruschini also came to her, and oh! how lively and tender were the words of gratitude that the exultant lady addressed to him who had given her such great support.

Each of the other Cardinals was also moved by the gratitude that she expressed to them. All called her a new St. Paola.

What then did she not say when she obtained an audience with the Vicar of our Lord? He renewed to her his most paternal support and most extensive blessings for her, for her daughters, for her home, for all her works.

She remained there for the days required to fulfill every duty towards the different families and the numerous people to whom she declared herself obliged, then we left. The good Canon Tua had previously returned to Piedmont.

The Marchioness could not but stop for some time in Florence to see the Grand Duchess. After we took up our journey again, we finally arrived in Turin on 6th May 1846, and **it was a day of joy for the poor and for all those who knew how to appreciate the distinguished benefactress of so many people**.

Above all, immense was the consolation of the Magdalenes and of the Sisters of St. Ann, who owed her such a great debt and such a desired benefit, which had cost her such long and tiring vigils and concern. The tenderness of her maternal heart felt their affections with great pleasure, and this compensated her abundantly for all that she had suffered.