

10 JANUARY

ANNIVERSARY OF THE FIRST DECREE OF THE DEFINITIVE APPROBATION OF THE CONGREGATION



On December 20, 1816 the **Congregation of Bishops and Regulars** gave the final approval of the decree of the Congregation, which was confirmed by **Pope Pius VII** in Rome on **January 10, 1817**.

From this time on the Congregation is recognized as such in the whole Church, with Pontifical Right. To give greater legal strength in difficult political circumstances in France, this decree was later confirmed with the Bull *Pastor Aeternus*, given by the same Pope Pius VII, in Rome, on 17 November 1817. The decree was received by the Good Father on March 24, 1817 and on April 14 he sent a circular letter announcing the good news.

Excerpts from the Circular of the Good Father (14 April 1817)

"As you know, dearly beloved brothers and sisters, our Institute, in particular, began at the time that the blood of God's servants ran on the gallows, and we have twenty-three years of existence. They have been necessary wonders of divine goodness to sustain us in the midst of the storms. The Lord has not ceased to shine upon us the miracles of his providence; has led us by the hand. Each day we have received proof of his powerful protection "....

*"We would have wanted to announce this happy news together at the same time with a copy of the apostolic decree approving and confirming us, that at the same time approves and confirms the Constitutions which had been submitted to the Holy See ... but it would have to wait too long to copy and we have not wanted to delay informing you, as the holy angels did to the shepherds, we announce to you a great joy: **Gaudium magnum annuntio vobis.***

Graced by so many favors from the God of all mercy, let us beware, our beloved brethren and our very dear Sisters, not to forget the greatness of our vocation. We are destined to worship the Heart of Jesus, to repair the outrages that it receives every day. We enter into the inner pain of this Sacred Heart. "