

Philippine's Journey – Lesson 2 Timeline Quotes

August 1817 - "God seems to be listening to my prayers. I saw the Bishop of Louisiana on the eve of his departure. He must be in America now. Our Mother General promised him six of our nuns for next spring, and I am one of them. So we must prepare what is needed for a sacristy... You told me once that you had in Grenoble a quantity of things which would be useful to us. Look them up, my dearest friend, or beg contributions. God will bless you."

— Philippine Duchesne, RSCJ, in a letter to her cousin, Josephine (August, 1817)

September 1817 - "The Periers shared the mission secret before Mother Duchesne wrote it to her sisters, though the date of the departure was actually set before she had the courage to tell anyone but Josephine that she was leaving France. Preparations for the voyage were, however, under way...In all the convents contributions for the mission were being collected and aspirations offered for the venture to America, but Mother Barat was slow in announcing her choice."

— Louise Callan, RSCJ, Biographer of Philippine Duchesne

October 1817 - "Can you believe it—Philippine is always thinking about her mission overseas, and my brother has almost smoothed the way for her. In spite of the terror such a venture causes me, we shall, perhaps, see it carried out. I tremble to think of it. Pray about it, but do not talk about it, lest people get excited and lose their heads. We live in an age in which it does not take much to upset people."

— Madeleine Sophie Barat, RSCJ (October 1817)

November 1817 - "Your superiors have recognized the supernatural character of your vocation, and (the Bishop) wants you to help with the work in his vast diocese. You desire it sincerely and steadfastly, so the matter is arranged. There remains only to decide on the time of your departure and the means of accomplishing the project."

— Louis Barat, Brother of St. Madeleine Sophie Barat (November 1817)

December 1817 - "On December 3, feast of St. Francis Xavier, I went to Mass at the Church of the Missions. These words of the Epistle sank deep into my soul: 'How will they ever know the truth if no one instructs them, if no one is sent to them?'"

— Philippine Duchesne, RSCJ in a February, 1818 *mémoire*

January 1818 - "Mother Duchesne...set to work vigorously...she packed the trunks, cases, satchels, without the least anxiety or trouble. Everything ran smoothly, everything was ready on time. Seeing her joy, we could not be sad at her going; and I fancied to myself the emotion she would experience on setting foot in that land she has longed for so ardently and embracing the first little Indian girl."

— An RSCJ in Philippine's community

February 1818 - "When my thoughts revert to what I am leaving in France—all that is dear to me—I put them aside, being intimately convinced that, as I have desired only one thing—to answer God's call and abandon myself to His Providence—so the voyage and the trials ahead will never be as great as the help I may confidently expect from Him."

— Philippine Duchesne, RSCJ, to her cousins (February 1818)

February 1818 - “When I see myself in the midst of a crowd of simple, innocent souls, I shall say: ‘Pray for the children I left in France, for every dear memory of them adds value to my sacrifice. Pray for your very first benefactors. They did not know you, yet they prayed for your conversion and helped procure it by the gifts they contributed for you.’”

— Philippine Duchesne, RSCJ to her family, friends and children in the school in Paris
(February 1818)