The cult of images is as old as the Church itself; it responds to a need. Just as children love to discover the image of their father, so, from way back, the faithful enjoyed contemplating the traits of the saints proposed for their veneration.

At times, in order to represent them, lacking original documentation, the artists gave free rein to their imagination. At other times, documents have been the point of departure, but little by little under their influence a sort of conventional type or stereotype was created which the many works that have come down to us through the centuries followed, more or less.

This was the case with St. Francis de Sales, whose original portraits in the form of paintings or engravings, not counting statutes, actually number more than 200, differing greatly in artistic value from the portrait attributed to Phillippe de Champaigne to the crude painting of Epinal in which the harsh features and the coarseness of the colors do not at all resemble the saint’s features.

We found it interesting to point out to our readers, amidst this superabundant iconography, a certain number of pieces worthy to hold our attention. Our principal guide will be an in-depth study that appeared in Moûtiers, published by Duclos under the signature of Grand-Cateret and inserted in a splendid edition of the *Introduction to a Devout Life*, reproducing the text of the third edition, that of 1610 by Rigaud. Let us note in passing that by its study of the iconography, which we have just
mentioned, by the bibliographic study which accompanies it, and by the perfection of the presentation of the numerous engravings; this work constitutes a veritable monument of art and erudition.

Before dealing with the portraits themselves, let us first look at as a document of premiere value the one which in 1634 the pen of Bishop Charles-Auguste de Sales, who was both the nephew and the saint’s historian, drew for us: “Under many aspects, Francis was a great man, but in his mind he was small and humble. His body was straight and robust, his figure full, with large shoulders, bright complexion, his head was large and well-formed and almost completely bald, his hair auburn, his brow wide and full, well curved high eyebrows, blue eyes, well-defined but not prominent nose, ruddy cheeks, round mouth, a thick and medium length beard, a deep voice, slow in speech, hands well-formed and firm, a slow and heavy gait, noble and unaffected gestures and clothing that was always clean.” Grand-Carteret delighted in recognizing in this description the traits of the typical Savoyard: “He is an out of place highlander with strongly accentuated traits, a lumbering gait and at the same time an attractive and profound visage.”

Another basis for evaluation is provided for us by the anatomical study of his skull done by M. Louis Revon, curator of the Annecy museum, when in 1865, he was authorized by Bishop Magnin to make an inventory of the relics. Doctors Lachenal and Callies noted at that time the large development of the skull – with the anterior-posterior diameter measuring 19 centimeters and the lateral diameter 16 centimeters – and having at the same time a certain irregularity with the right parietal more prominent than the left. “But what struck the persons permitted to examine the saint’s head was the fact that the very wide forehead was not as monstrously high as many portraits depicted. On the contrary, it dropped down quite rapidly. The highest part of the head had a marked prominence which most painters did not take into consideration.”

We should note that in all of the portraits of the period, the left eye is affected with strabism and that this defect is noticeable at times in both eyes. Didn’t the saint himself say: “My heart sees better than my eyes.”

What is the date of the first portrait? If we were to believe the historians who rely on an account in the *Année sainte de la Visitation*, the saint would always refuse to pose and that it was only in 1618 that one of his spiritual daughters, Madame de Granieu, we believe, who came up with the following artifice. She told him via M. Michel Favre, the prelate’s confessor, that he was the cause of many venial sins of murmuring and of anxiety which were committed because of his resistance to allowing himself to be painted and that he would be well advised to change his mind. To which the saint replied: “Well, in due time may the portrait of this earthly man be painted, but may it be well done so that I can draw into myself the image of the heavenly Father.” At the time, the work was given to a painter named Jean Baptiste Costaz. But since the saint only agreed to sit for a very short time, the resemblance left something to be desired, and the copies the artist made did not sell. So the artist tried again: “My Lord, he said to him, I beg you in the name of charity, for this will put bread in my mouth to sit for me again. In the name of truth for the buyers made me swear that the portrait be done according to nature, and it is there, My Lord, the lie which only you can cause to cease, for if I do not see you, I will always make you more handsome than you are.” “I don’t know,” the saint replied smilingly, “if your reasoning is more ingenious than naïve.” In any event, I should not be obstinate this time.”

1 *Revue Savoisienne*, 15 avril 1863.
2 Saint François de Sales, d’après Phillipe Champaigne.
3 The play on words here is difficult to translate. The French reads: “si votre raison est plus ingénieuse qu’ingénue.”
He sat and posed for two hours. “Oh, my Lord,” said the painter as he finished, “you have given me a great gift!” “And you,” the saint replied, “have caused me a great mortification! But I forgive you, provided that you do not return again.” This is the origin of the first original portrait which is kept at the Visitation in Turin.

However, whatever the authenticity of the *Année sainte*, its assertion is difficult to admit in the face of authentic documents establishing with certitude the existence of other portraits done before 1618. First of all, this assertion does not jibe with that of Bishop Camus in *L’Esprit de saint François de Sales*: “I have known,” he said, “great servants of God who, for no matter what reason, would not have allowed anyone to paint their portrait… Our Blessed one, making himself all things to all men, had no difficulty at all with this.” Moreover, we have facts that testify to this.

The archives of the Annecy Visitation mention a portrait done in 1606 by Martel Ange, the saint’s secretary who was originally from Lyons and later became a Jesuit brother. He made a little opening in one of the panel walls of the Bishop’s bedroom through which he observed the traits he wanted to paint. This would be the first painted image. According to the testimony of St. Jane de Chantal, this work expresses a true likeness of the saint and is located today in the Annecy Visitation. The portrait is small (17cm x 13cm); with clear blue eyes looking up, the beard more prominent than in the usual portraits, the face indicating a certain mental fatigue.

But apart from this portrait done furtively, we have several others mentioned by the saint himself, such as a portrait on canvass with his coat of arms given by him in 1611 to the nobleman, Jean de Ville, Lord of Salins, and owned today by the Furet de Prébarons family of Salins.

We find the year 1613 inscribed on three portraits, one belonging to the Count de Loche in Grésy-sur-Aix (Savoy), another currently in the Saint-Gatien hospital in Tours and about which the Canon Bosseboeuf did an historical study in 1932. This painting (58cm x 47cm) painted in 1613 “from the very person of the bishop and prince of Geneva” was given by him to one of his best friends, Guillaume-Philippe de Foras. The Canon Bosseboeuf mentions a third portrait bearing this date which would have been given by Francis to his friend Monsieur de Blonay, the father of Mother Marie-Aimée de Blonay. Could this be the one that is preserved by the de Foras family in the Château de Thuyset near Thonon?

We now count a sixth portrait, the one under the care of the municipality of Porrentruy (Switzerland) and about which Bishop Folletête did a study last year in our *Annales*, giving its history and a description. Let us recall that it bears the date of 1617, when the saint was 50 years old, and was sent by him to Guillaume de Rinck de Baldestein, Prince Bishop of Basle.

Finally, the year 1618 brought to light another portrait which is found in the archives of the Annecy Visitation monastery. It bears the inscription “*aetatus suae*” [his age] 52. 1618.” M. Antoine Despine, who wrote a booklet about it, sees in it the type most frequently found in the old families of the region. The face is dreamy, the beard full, the features differing slightly from the customary ones. Could this be the first portrait done by Costaz? There is no historical document that can nail this down.

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4 See the article, p. 17.
We see that the statement in *L’Année sainte* entails more than reservations. It is evident that, in fact, in 1618 Francis de Sales was not unaware of the existence of his portrait since he himself gave it as a gift. How valid are these portraits in portraying his resemblance? The saint himself declared that he was never well depicted. This may be the reason why Madame de Granieu intervened and the saint graciously gave in to what she wanted. He wrote to her on 8 June of that year: “I could not refuse you anything, my dear Daughter” and hence the two portraits will be done. (The other was that of Mother de Chantal). He added: “How I have desired to keep the image of our heavenly Father in my soul with the integrity of his resemblance.” Was the integrity of resemblance realized in the second portrait by Costaz, that of Turin? Henri Bremond finds it irritating. Madame de Granieu did not agree. This portrait touched her deeply. “She never looked at it,” said Father Balthasar de Bus, S.J., who was her spiritual director after St. Francis de Sales, “without receiving new insights” that were almost miraculous. Nonetheless, it betrays a certain stiffness which does not reflect the simplicity and goodness of the holy bishop. Doesn’t the same thing often happen in taking photographs, namely, by posing one loses one’s natural appearance?

Among the portraits done during the saint’s lifetime, there is one, although a simple miniature whose date and artist are unknown, that has genuine value by reason of its history. It is the one given by Jane de Chantal to the Duchess of Montmorency. It was in 1632 that the Duke, drawn by Gaston d’Orléans into the revolt against the authority of Richelieu, had just been decapitated in Toulouse. He died there as a Christian hero. His widow, seeking to be consoled by Mother de Chantal, wanted to stop by Lyons to see her. The all-powerful Cardinal was opposed to this and demanded that she go directly to Moulins, which had been assigned to her as her place of residence. It was at that time, to console her over her disappointment, that the holy Foundress divested herself of the miniature which she had so greatly cherished. The Duchess, who fifteen years later became a Visitandine in Moulins and was present at the death of St. Jane de Chantal in that monastery, had the little miniature reproduced and gave the reproduction as a gift to Mother Françoise de Musy, superior of the monastery. The latter donated it to the community of Nevers, as attested by the signature attached to the back of the miniature which authenticates it. “It is,” she says, “a token of my affection, having nothing more valuable in this world.”

Let us also point out a curious portrait discovered in 1891 by M. and Mme. Burnod of Annecy at a very modest antique dealer’s shop in Turin. This oil painting is not without defects: the head which looks out straight ahead, though well depicted, appears to have been artificially placed on the body seen from a three quarter perspective; with the left hand, he is pointing to the monogram of Christ; the right hand rests on a book, under which are an hourglass and a skull. The pose is stiff. What is interesting is the fact that the painting appears to have been inspired by the words of the *Introduction to a Devout Life*: “Our days glide away; death is at

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the gate …. Look upon Jesus Christ, and do not renounce him for the world.‘6 The canvass is not signed. It was probably done during the saint’s lifetime, with the halo probably added after his beatification. We can assume that numerous copies of the 1618 portrait (known as the Turin portrait) were made and spread out everywhere, especially after the saint’s death in 1622, in such a way that a specific type was created which the majority of later portraits followed.

From that time on, it seemed no longer permissible for an artist to give free rein to his imagination so as to give the saint features different from the traditional ones. One fact would suffice to substantiate this. In 1626, an engraver from Lyons made a woodcut of the saint’s portrait which substantially differed from the other portraits done during the saint’s life time. This act was considered an intolerable insolence. A formal complaint was filed by the leaders of the merchants and members of the City Council of Lyons with the city’s criminal prosecutor “for the purpose of bringing him to trial, verification made and that the engraver be reproved for his malice.”

But it was especially on the occasion of St. Francis de Sales’s beatification in 1661, then his canonization in 1665, that the cult of his iconography greatly intensified. The features of the new saint were depicted everywhere in paintings, decorative frescoes, stained glass windows, engravings, statues, medals, even the embroidery on chasubles, banners, and altar hangings. In 1877, with the proclamation of St. Francis de Sales as a Doctor of the Church, we witness new celebrations and a new expansion of this iconography.

Amidst so many diverse works, there are some that are signed by well-known painters or which are, at least, attributed to them. One of these portraits, attributed to Phillipe de Champaigne, which is kept at the first Paris monastery in rue Denfert-Rochereau, depicts the saint seated with a halo around his head. Another is that of St. Francis de Sales by Hippolyte Flandrin on the famous border of the church of St. Vincent de Paul in Paris. Still another is the one of Restout, of which a smaller reproduction was done as an etched engraving by Hérisset. It is a large painting where we see St. Francis de Sales presenting St. Vincent de Paul as Superior of his Daughters of the Visitation of Paris. A certain number of these artistic works have been reproduced in the booklet of M. Léon Lecestre published by Henri Laurens in the collection “l’Art et les Saints” from which we have borrowed some material.

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6 Part 5, chap. 18.
Just when we thought we had concluded the series of original portraits done during St. Francis de Sales’s lifetime, our study led us to make a new discovery which perhaps will not be the last.

Their interest aroused in reading our iconographic study, the Visitandines of Thurnfeld (Tyrol) have just pointed out to us, for which we are very grateful, the existence of an authentic portrait which they have in their possession and a photograph of which they sent us.

This portrait is all the more interesting since it constitutes, to our knowledge, the only portrait that was done during the very year the saint died. There is no doubt about this, for it bears the date in the right corner – a 5, the second number is blurred but has to be either a 4 or a 5, hence the 54th or 55th year of his age, depending on the month [when the painting was finished]. The saint was born on 21 August 1567. Below these numbers is the notation “AN. 1622.” We know that the saint died on 28 December 1622. Moreover, the portrait itself bears signs of its own authenticity. Examined by experts, it was recognized by its colors, the way it was painted, and the manner in which the canvass was stretched on the frame as being a work necessarily belonging to the beginning of the seventeenth century. On the other hand, you can notice the perfect resemblance with the best portraits and certain characteristics which correspond well with the time when it was done. The whole face expresses fatigue; the beard is already turning grey. It calls to mind the words spoken by the saint to the Bishop of Belley several months before his death: “I am so heavy and so worn out that my legs have trouble carrying me.”

We are not able to say how this treasure was found at the beginning of the century at a coiffeur’s shop in Hermansdadt (Transylvania). A physician of the town found it there. Since he sensed its value, he was eager to purchase it and even at a high price so as to help its owner who was in financial difficulty. Later, this physician sold it at a relatively modest price to the sisters of the Thurnfeld monastery who hung it in their chapter room, happy to possess such a treasure.

Let us now resume the remainder of our study after this long digression.

The artist often applied himself to reproducing some salient event of the saint’s history. This enables us by means of the iconography, to follow the different stages of his life.

First of all, let us point out the engraving of Scolpi, reproducing Novelli’s eighteenth century drawing, which the Annales Salésiennes published in no. 20, September 1907 and which we publish again here. The subject is the encounter of St. Philip Neri when he was 77 years old and Francis de Sales when he was a student in Padua. Tradition has it that the former, who had the nickname “Pippo buono,” encountered the young Francis in Rome and kissed him on the forehead saying: “I have just placed a kiss on the brow of a saint.” The artist pictured the encounter of the two saints as taking place at the Piazza della Rotonda, i.e., at the Pantheon. Curiously, he painted the young law student wearing an ecclesiastical cloak, a pious anachronism, but at the same time he knew enough to give his face angelic features, very pure lines, a recollected appearance, while Philip Neri, with his energetic visage and the index finger pointing up to heaven appears to call it as witness to the truth of his prediction.
And now we come to Francis and his cousin Louis in the Chablais which they want to regain for the Catholic faith. A beautiful composition of the Chablaisian painter Baud, kept in the chapel of the Thonon Visitation, represents him kneeling, invoking the angel of Providence at the moment when they are crossing the border. An engraving of Pitau done by Chauveau shows him preaching in the countryside to the peasants of the Chablais.

In an engraving of Wenzel, on a drawing of Biglioli, we see the saint crossing the raging Dranse river by crawling on a shaky wooden beam in order to come to celebrate Holy Mass in the chapel of Saint-Etienne de Marin. It is a composition in which one would look in vain for local color. It is the same in an engraving of Elmerich done after the painting of Gamen-Dupasquier who intends to represent the apostle of the Chablais talking with Theodore de Bèze in the latter’s study. One would have a hard time imagining Francis wearing ecclesiastical garb for such a daring undertaking that put his life in danger. Moreover, the black beard of de Bèze would scarcely fit his age since he was in his eighties at that time.

More gracious and authentic is the painting of Deschwanden, a Swiss artist, who left some of his paintings in the Visitation of Soleure and whose works are marked with a great religious sentiment. The one we discuss here is found in the church of the Sacré-Cœur in Geneva and renders very felicitously an anecdote of the saint’s life. Before going to see de Bèze, the apostle of the Chablais, who was carrying in his bosom several consecrated hosts in order to bring Holy Communion to the sick living in Geneva, stayed at the hotel of L’Ecu de France. There he encountered a virtuous young woman, Jacqueline Coste, who got a job in this hotel as a servant so that she could be of service to Catholics who lodged there. After having heard her confession, Francis de Sales told her he was going to give her Holy Communion with one of the hosts which he was carrying in a silver pyx. “Well, sir,” she innocently said to him, “how are you going to do that since you do not have any altar servers?” “Our angels present here,” he said to her, “will be altar servers.” Let us add that Jacqueline Coste was to become the first out-sister of the Visitation. Deschwanden depicted the saint standing, holding the sacred Host with his eyes fixed on her, the pious servant kneeling, with hands joined, as two angels contemplate this scene, one holding the crosier, the other the mitre of the Bishop, a slight anachronism since at that time, Francis had not yet received episcopal consecration.

Now we are in Rome. Nominated as bishop by Bishop Granier and by the Duke of Savoy, Charles-Emmanuel, Francis de Sales had just undergone in the presence of Clement VIII and the most eminent members of the Sacred College of Cardinals, among others Bellarmine and Baronius, a theological examination in which “he was asked thirty-five questions, and, to which he responded with very subtle and convincing reasoning.” The Pope was so pleased that at the end of the examination, he left his throne to embrace Francis. An engraving of Pitau done on the design of Chaveau depicts the scene but with much less authenticity than a painting whose author is not known in the church of Saint Jean in Troyes.

Clement VIII embracing St. Francis de Sales

7 Histoire du Bienheureux par Charles-Auguste de Sales.
Then there is the consecration of Francis de Sales in the church of Thorens. Chaveau treated this subject, depicting the saint seated in front of the ordaining bishop and his two assistants, but this work lacks the value of a painting in the grand style of the Toulousian artist Despaz as well as the one we will discuss later that adorns the chapel of the Toulouse Visitation. These two very large canvasses during the French Revolution came into the hands of the city, which had them placed in the museum, but around the middle of the nineteenth century they were returned to the Visitation. They are very well preserved and remarkable in their richness of tones, the varied disposition of the personages, and above all by its local color – noblemen proudly portrayed with their hand on the hilt of the sword, young women in collars of lace, everything in harmony with the period.

The second of these paintings deals with the founding of the Visitation. St. Francis de Sales, standing in a mitre and chasuble, hands Mme. de Chantal, who is kneeling, the book of the Rule. Behind the Foundress are her first two companions, also kneeling. One can’t help notice in a dress with a leafy pattern and a large lace collar Marie Jacqueline Favre, who, before saying farewell to the world, had been extremely popular in the salons of Chambery.

Let us also point out as relating to the Founder the beautiful painting by Restout found in the church of St. Marguerite of Paris. St. Francis de Sales is depicted as presenting as confessor to St. Chantal and the Visitation the one whom all of Paris then called Monsieur Vincent and who also was destined to be canonized. Its features are of an authenticity all the more striking because it presents the Bishop of Geneva in full view. The woman in the center of the painting could well be Mme. Lhuillier who entered the Visitation a little later.
After the founder, the mystical writer. This was a subject which had to tempt the imagination of artists. Hence we find it treated by several. One of the best, in our opinion, is the one found in the chapel of the Oblate Sisters of St. Francis de Sales in Perugia (Italy). It is related in the life of the saint that on the Feast of the Annunciation in 1615, while writing one of the most beautiful chapters of the Treatise on the Love of God, he was rapt in ecstasy. It was no doubt this event that inspired an unknown artist of the eighteenth or nineteenth century. The Bishop of Geneva is depicted in front of his desk kneeling on one knee with arms extended, his eyes fixed on the partially opened sky. Above his head hovers the divine dove whose rays purposely strike the inspired face and the hand holding the quill. The work exudes a profound religious sentiment.

Among several curious works, we should mention a painting in the church of Abondance (Haute-Savoie) which bears the date of 1668 and, as the inscription indicates, was done by a certain Chappuis. The composition represents the crowning of the Blessed Virgin, but we see standing at her right and at her left the two founders of the Visitation – St. Francis de Sales in surplice, resembling the better portraits, and St. Jane de Chantal, in lay dress and holding a pair of scissors as if to present it to her saintly director. This is an allusion to the acts of detachment that he had made her do.

We will only mention for the sake of calling to mind, for the artist is unknown, a painting reproduced by Léon Lecestre which depicts the death of the saint in the poor gardener’s hut of the Lyons Visitation.

But the church of Saint-Leu in Paris possesses a remarkable work. It is St. Francis de Sales on his death bed. This painting, entitled “The Sleep of the Just,” is one meter long and seventeen centimeters high. The saint’s head, which has a light yellowish tint, is lying on a pillow of red velour. An elusive ray of light emphasizes the features which gives an impression of profound peace that justifies the title “The Sleep of the Just.” However, in certain details the face diverges from the traditional type. His nose is slightly hooked, his beard is short, his forehead less bald than in the usual portraits. The attribution to Philippe de Champaigne is not doubtful, for beside the painting’s inscription which explicitly indicates this, there are the personal qualities of the Flemish master – reworking of the drawing, authenticity of the use of colors, depth of sentiment. It is very likely a work of his youth done in accord with verbal guidelines but in which the imagination had a great part. This painting, done before the Revolution, was part of the artistic furnishings of the church Saint-Jean-en-Grève, resulting from an inventory required in a decree of the Convention declaring churches and their contents to be property of the state.
If we now move to modern or contemporary works, we are faced with such an abundant production that our enumeration, however extensive it may be, would necessarily be incomplete. Hence, we will limit ourselves to point out those which particularly merit our attention.

First of all, there are the brilliant paintings of Alexandre Hesse that decorate the chapel of St. Francis de Sales in the church of St. Sulpice in Paris. In one of them, de Sales, standing on a rock, is preaching to the peasants. In the second one, he is handing the book of the Constitutions of the Visitation to St. Jane de Chantal, in the third on the vault, the glorification of the saint.

If we go to the church of St. Francis de Sales in Paris, we will see there twenty-two stained glass windows depicting as many scenes in the life of the saint.

At the Sacré-Coeur de Monmartre in the chapel dedicated to St. Vincent de Paul, there is a mosaic showing St. Francis de Sales presenting St. Jane de Chantal to St. Vincent de Paul.

In Beaune, a stained glass window of the church of Collégiale de Notre-Dame, executed around 1863, recalls the visit that St. Francis de Sales made in 1609 to the famous hospital of this city. He was coming back from the château of Motheleon, near Autun, where he had blessed the marriage of his young brother, the Baron of Thorens, to Marie-Aimée de Chantal, the daughter of the saint. The Bishop of Geneva was accompanied by President Fremyot and Archbishop André Fremyot, respectively father and brother of Mme. de Chantal. The artist depicted Mme. de Chantal kneeling at the feet of her saintly director who is blessing her, while one nun of the hospital presents a child.

Let us also point out to the admirers of St. Francis de Sales a work less remarkable for its artistic value than for the one who executed it and the aura of piety that it exudes. It is a simple pencil drawing of Bishop de Segur depicting a profile view of Francis de Sales celebrating Holy Mass. The saint is in a chasuble with this hands folded, his eyes lowered, his mien profoundly recollected. The shoulder is not drawn clearly enough. It is known that Bishop de Ségur, despite remarkable talent, did not want to formally study art (take art lessons). This explains the anatomical imperfection of his works. But what is of much more value, one senses the spirit and the simplicity of the drawing. The delicate features makes one think of the primitive artists.

We know that Pius XI in 1922, the 300th anniversary of St. Francis de Sales’s death, made him the patron saint of Catholic journalists. This no doubt inspired the author of a recent engraving which Léon Lecestre reproduced in the opusculum which we have mentioned. The saint appears in glory surrounded by angels. He is looking down upon a group of ecclesiastical and lay writers among whom it is easy to recognize Bishop Dupanloup, Cardinal Mermillod, Bishop de Ségur, Louis Veuillot, etc.

Finally, philatelists will be happy to see the face of St. Francis de Sales on the 1 lire 25 stamp published by the Vatican post office on the occasion of the Catholic Press Exposition.

We do not intend, with regard to iconography, to point out the statues that have been produced. That would take us too far afield without discovering anything noteworthy. Nevertheless, special mention should be made of that statue which the people of Lullin erected in 1898, perched by brute strength, we should note, at the summit of Mont Forchet, 1,545 meters high. The saint is depicted standing, an open book in one hand and a quill in the other. From this summit, which dominates all of the Chablais as well as the basin of Lake Geneva, where one can see as far as Mont Blanc, Francis de Sales continues to bless and protect the region that he re-conquered for the Catholic faith.
In his book, *Saint François de Sales et notre coeur de chair*, Henry Bordeaux states that if he were a sculptor, he would show his hero mounted on a horse, for this is the attitude which best corresponds to the activity of the Good Shepherd, indefatigable in the pursuit of souls.

This idea has just been realized by a great Savoyard artist, André Jacques, in a remarkable etched engraving. To give greater authenticity to his work, the artist undertook the task to analyze the principal portraits, visit the places, read the saint’s correspondence. Steeped in the knowledge of his subject, he depicts the saint mounted on a white female donkey, the *Controversies* in his hand; his mount is at rest; one surmises that, addressed by a passer-by, he halts his journey to listen to him. His features are set forth with an exquisite gentleness, and, as a background a Chablaisian landscape – here a pasture with sheep, on the right a silhouette of the Allinges fortress, several steeples, in the distance that of Thonon, around which are grouped the city, then the lake, and on the horizon are discreetly outlined the Dent d’Oche, the plateau of Memise and the Jorat. The ensemble is bathed in a light which admirably draws the attention to the center of the work – the apostle of the Chablais.

St. Francis de Sales, as we have seen, stated that he was never painted well. Also, it is unfortunate that his contemporaries did not have for their use photographic resources. For one snapshot taken furtively would have doubtlessly given us, better than all the portraits, the exquisite gentleness of his face, which joined to the strength of his word, was so powerful in attracting souls and conquering hearts.