

Blessed DE MAZENOD

**LETTERS
TO THE OBLATES
OF FRANCE
1814-1825**



**Letters to the Oblates
of France**

Blessed EUGENE DE MAZENOD
1782-1861

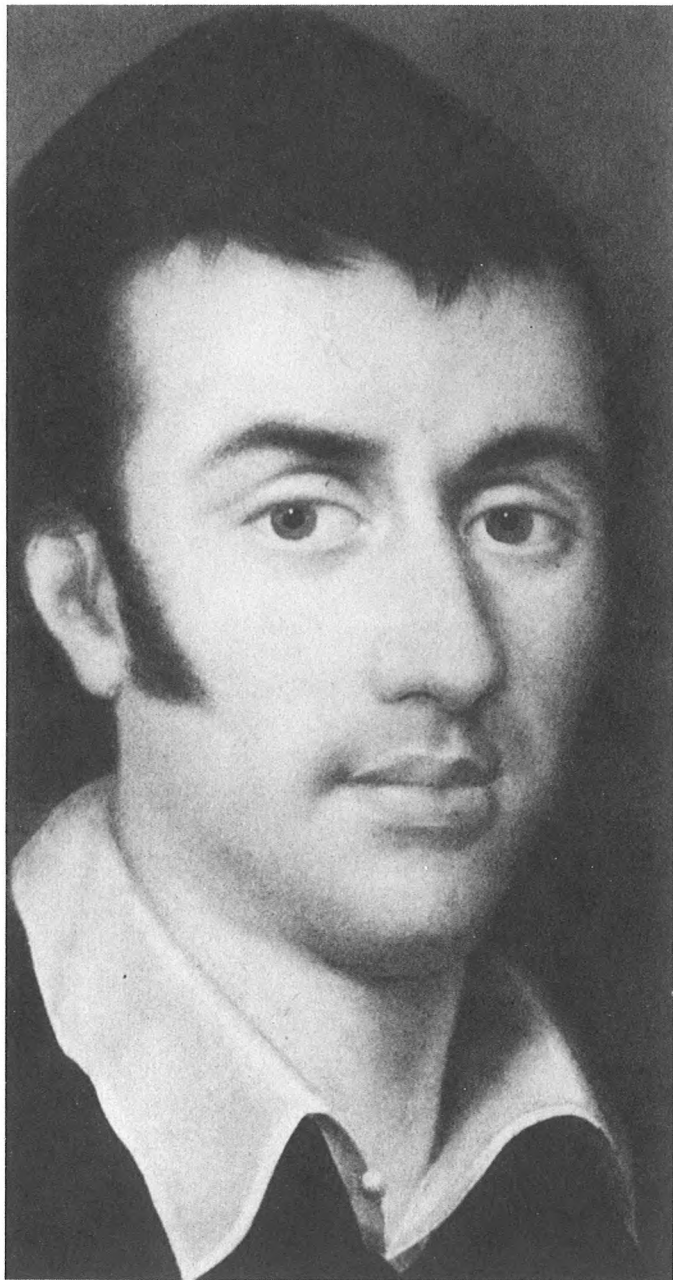
Collection: *Oblate Writings* VI

Letters to the Oblates of France

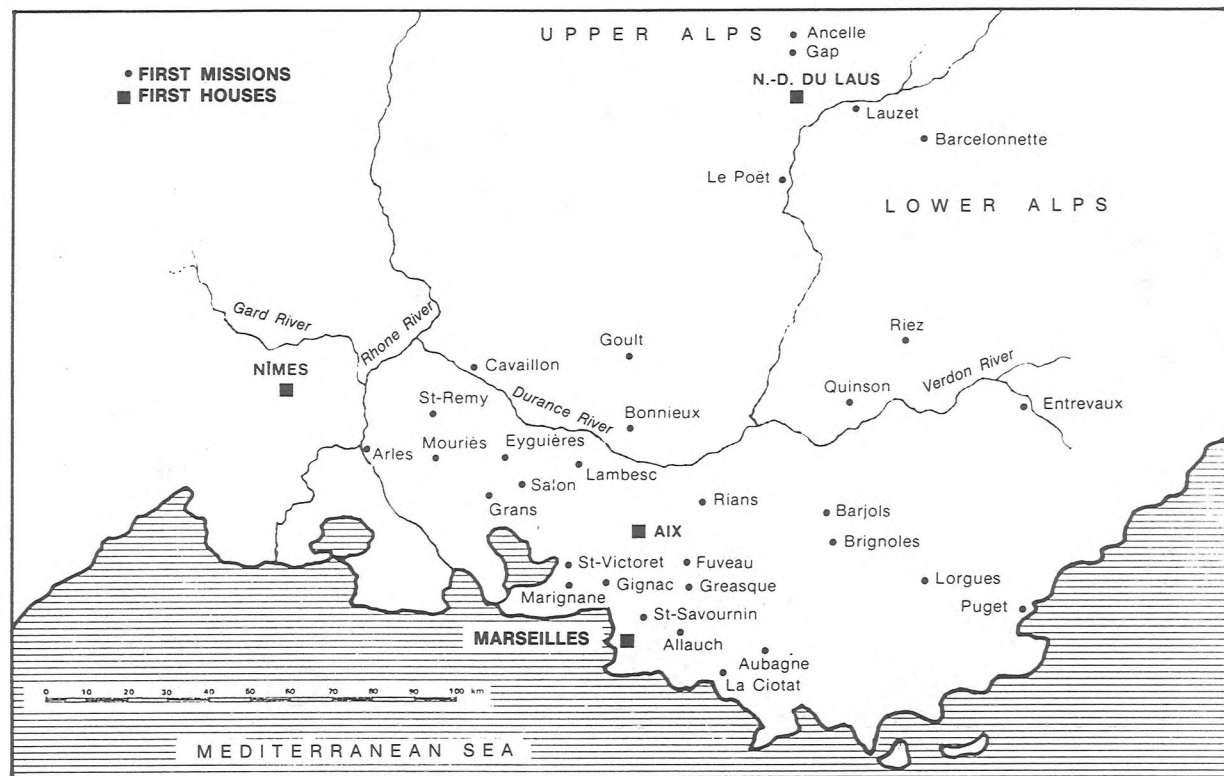
1814-1825

**Translated from the French
by
John Witherspoon Mole, O.M.I.**

**General Postulation O.M.I.
Via Aurelia 290
Rome - 1984**



*Father C. J. Eugene de Mazenod (1782-1861),
Founder of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate,
from a painting made between 1816 and 1818,
presently in the General House.*





*Father François de Paule-Henri Tempier (1788-1870),
first companion of Father de Mazenod,
from a painting presently in the Seminary of Marseilles.*

Chronological List of Letters

1814

- | | | |
|----|---------------------------------|---|
| 1. | To Forbin-Janson [September 12] | 1 |
| 2. | To Forbin-Janson October 28 | 2 |

1815

- | | | |
|----|--------------------------------|----|
| 3. | To Hilaire Aubert | 5 |
| 4. | To Father Tempier, October 9 | 6 |
| 5. | To Forbin-Janson, October 23 | 8 |
| 6. | To Father Tempier, November 15 | 11 |
| 7. | To Father Tempier, December 13 | 12 |
| 8. | To Forbin-Janson, December 19 | 14 |

1816

- | | | |
|-----|--------------------------------|----|
| 9. | To Forbin-Janson | 17 |
| 10. | To Father Tempier, February 24 | 18 |
| 11. | To Father Tempier, March 11 | 18 |
| 12. | To the missionaries, July | 19 |
| 13. | To Forbin-Janson, July-August | 20 |
| 14. | To Forbin-Janson, October 9 | 23 |
| 15. | To Father Tempier, November 20 | 25 |
| 16. | To Father Tempier, December 15 | 25 |

1817

17.	To the missionaries, July 19	27
18.	To Father Tempier, July 25	28
19.	To Father Tempier, August 5	29
20.	To Father Tempier, August 12	31
21.	To Father Tempier, August 22	34
22.	To the missionaries, August 22	36
23.	To Father Tempier, September 7	37
24.	To Father Tempier, October 9	37
25.	To Fathers Tempier and Maunier, October 19	39
26.	To Fathers Tempier and Maunier, October 22	41
27.	To Brother Courtès, October 22	42
28.	To Fathers Tempier and Maunier, October 31	43
29.	To Father Tempier, November 4	44
30.	To Father Tempier, November 24	46

1818

31.	To Father Mye, October	49
32.	To Father Tempier, November 10	49
33.	To Father Tempier, November 11-13	51
34.	To Father Tempier, November 14-15	51
35.	To Brother Honorat, end of November	52
36.	To Father Tempier, end of November	52
37.	To Father Tempier, December	53

1819

38.	To Monsieur Viguiet, January 6	55
39.	To Father Tempier, February 14	56

40.	To Father Tempier, February 22	56
41.	To the community of Aix, March 7	57
42.	To Father Tempier, April 26	59
43.	To Father Tempier, May 19	59
44.	To Father Tempier, June 25	60
45.	To Father Tempier, June 29	61
46.	To Marius Aubert, October 6	61
47.	To Father Tempier, November 16	62
48.	To Father Tempier, November 22	63
49.	To Father Tempier, November 27	64

1820

50.	To Brother Suzanne, February 2	65
51.	To Brother Suzanne, July 16	66
52.	To Brother Suzanne, July 21	68
53.	To Brother Suzanne, July 23	69
54.	To Father Tempier, October 20	69
55.	To the students and novices, October 24	70
56.	To the students and novices, November 29	70
57.	To the Oblate students at Aix, November 29	72

1821

58.	To Father Tempier, January 9	73
59.	To Father Tempier, January 18	73
60.	To Brother Suzanne, January 23	74
61.	To Father Tempier, February 4	75
62.	To Father Courtès, February 21	75
63.	To Father Tempier, March 13	76

64.	To Father Courtès, March 14	77
65.	To Father Courtès, March 31	78
66.	To Father Tempier, April 1	79
67.	To Father Tempier, April 26	79
68.	To Father Tempier, June 18	80
69.	To the novices and students, August 15	80
70.	To Father Suzanne, August 21	81
71.	To Father Bourrelier, August 27	82
72.	To Father Bourrelier, September 19	84
73.	To Father Tempier, October	85
74.	To Father Courtès, November 8	86
75.	To Bro. Honorat and the Fathers at Aix, November 17	86
76.	To Father Courtès, November 21	87
77.	To Father Courtès, November 28	87
78.	To Monsieur J. J. Marcou, (November-December)	88
79.	To Father Tempier, December 28	88

1822

80.	To Father Courtès, March 3	89
81.	To Father Courtès, March 8	89
82.	To Father Tempier, April 29	90
83.	To Father Courtès, May 5	90
84.	To Father Tempier, May 20	91
85.	To Brother Marcou, July 24	91
86.	To Father Tempier, August 15	92
87.	To Father Suzanne, August 24	96
88.	To the deacon A. Coulin, November 23	97

89.	To Fathers Courtès and Suzanne, November 24	99
90.	To Father Courtès, December 9	99

1823

91.	To Monsieur J. H. Guibert, January 20	101
92.	To Father Courtès, February 19	102
93.	To Father Courtès and to the community at Aix, February 22	103
94.	To Father Tempier, March 4	103
95.	To Father Courtès, March 6	104
96.	To Father Sumien and the Oblates of Aix, March 18 . .	104
97.	To my dear son, Father Guibert, March 19	105
98.	To Father Courtès, March 27	106
99.	To Father Jourdan, March 30	108
100.	To Father Courtès, April 2	109
101.	To Father Tempier, April 3	110
102.	To Father Suzanne, April 13	111
103.	To Father Sumien, May 2	112
104.	To Father Tempier, May 21	113
105.	To Father Courtès, May 27	114
106.	To Father Courtès, June 1	114
107.	To Father Tempier, beginning of June	115
108.	To Father Courtès, June 15	117
109.	To Brother Guibert, June 26	117
110.	To Father Tempier, July 5	120
111.	To Father Tempier, July 15	120
112.	To Father Courtès, August 13	121
113.	To Brother Guibert, September 30	122

114.	To Father Courtès, October 9	122
115.	To Father Courtès, October 10	123
116.	To Father Courtès, October 23-25	124
117.	To Father Courtès, October 29	125
118.	To Father Mye, October 31	126
119.	To Father Suzanne, November 11	128
120.	To Father Suzanne, November 19	128
121.	To Father Suzanne, November 29	129
122.	To Father Suzanne, December 16	130
123.	To Brother Guibert, 1823-1824	131

1824

124.	To Father Tempier, January 10	131
125.	To Brother Guibert, January 19	132
126.	To Father Honorat, January 24	132
127.	To Father Honorat, January 27	133
128.	To Father Marcou, January 27	134
129.	To Father Courtès, January 28	134
130.	To Father Honorat, February 9	135
131.	To Father Courtès, March 1	135
132.	To Brother Guibert, April	136
133.	To Brother Bernard, April 8	136
134.	To Brother Vachon, April 9	137
135.	To Father Marcou, April 12	138
136.	To Father Courtès, May 14	138
137.	To Father Courtès, May 22	139
138.	To Father Courtès, May 28	140
139.	To Father Honorat, May 28	141

140.	To Father Honorat, June 2	141
141.	To Father Tempier, June 2	142
142.	To Father Courtès, June 8	142
143.	To Brother Bernard, June 16	143
144.	To Father Mye, June 16	144
145.	To Father Tempier, July 7	145
146.	To Father Tempier, July 14	146
147.	To Father Courtès, July 24	147
148.	To Father Courtès, July 27	148
149.	To Father Courtès, July 30	149
150.	To Father Marcou, August 11	149
151.	To Father Courtès, August 13	150
152.	To Father Courtès, August 16	151
153.	To Father Courtès, August 25	151
154.	To Father Courtès, October 11	152
155.	To Father Courtès, October 15	152
156.	To Father Tempier, October 29	153
157.	To Father Courtès, November 9	153
158.	To Father Vachon, November 22	154
159.	To Father Courtès, November 24	155
160.	To Brother Guibert, December 15	156
161.	To Father Marcou, December 18	157
162.	To Father Courtès, 1824-1825	159

1825

163.	To Brother Martin, January 11	159
164.	To Father Honorat, January 15	160
165.	To Father Courtès, January 17	160

166.	To Father Courtès, January 18	161
167.	To Father Marcou, January 29	162
168.	To Father Courtès, February 2	162
169.	To Father Courtès, February 10	163
170.	To Father Courtès, February 21	163
171.	To Father Courtès, February 22	164
172.	To Father Vachon, February 28	164
173.	To Father Courtès, March 12	165
174.	To Father Mye, March 16	166
175.	To Father Courtès, April 5	166
176.	To Father Tempier, April 7	167
177.	To Father Courtès, May 21	168
178.	To Father Courtès, May 26	169
179.	To Father Tempier, May 27	170
180.	To Fathers Mye and Honorat and to Brother Guibert, June 2	171
181.	To Father Tempier, June 4	173
182.	To Father Tempier, June 13	173
183.	To Father Mye, June 19	174
184.	To Father Tempier, June 22	176
185.	To Brother Guibert, June 23	176
186.	To Father Honorat, June 23	176
187.	To Father Courtès, June 24	177
188.	To Father Suzanne, June 25	178
189.	To Father Tempier, June 28	179
190.	To Father Tempier, July 1	180
191.	To Father Marcou, August 2	180
192.	To Brother Guibert, August 3	181

193.	To Father Courtès, August 7	182
194.	To Father Honorat, August 18	182
195.	To Father Guibert, August 22	183
196.	To Father Mye, August 22	184
197.	To Father Touche, September 11	185
198.	To Father Mye, September 19	185
199.	To Father Vachon, October 3	186
200.	To Father Tempier, October 12	186
201.	To Father Mye, October 19	186
202.	To Father Mye, October 25	187
203.	To Father Tempier, November 1	187
204.	To Father Tempier, November 3	189
205.	To Father Tempier, November 8	192
206.	To Father Tempier, November 12	194
207.	To Father Tempier, November 16	196
208.	To Father Tempier, November 26	199
209.	To Father Tempier, December 3	202
210.	To Father Courtès, December 6	205
211.	To Father Tempier, December 9	208
212.	To Father Tempier, December 18	212
213.	To Father Tempier, December 22	216
214.	To Father Tempier, December 29	224

Table of Contents

Portrait of Father de Mazenod	VII
Map of first houses and first missions	VIII
Portrait of Father Tempier	IX
Yenveux manuscript	X
Chronological list of letters	XI
Introduction by Yvon Beaudoin, O.M.I.	XXIII
Letters of 1814	1
Letters of 1815	5
Letters of 1816	17
Letters of 1817	27
Letters of 1818	49
Letters of 1819	55
Letters of 1820	65
Letters of 1821	73
Letters of 1822	89
Letters of 1823	101
Letters of 1824	131
Letters of 1825	159
Index of names	229
Index of subject matter	235

Introduction

"...I ask myself how I, hithertho unable to make up my mind in this matter, suddenly find myself setting wheels in motion, renouncing my comfort and risking my fortune by launching an enterprise of which I know the worth but for which I only have a liking negated by other and diametrically opposed views. This is a riddle for me and it is the second time in my life that I see myself moved to resolve something of the utmost seriousness as if by a strong impulse from without." In this manner, on October 23, 1815, the abbé Eugene de Mazenod announced to his friend Charles de Forbin-Janson the founding of the Missionaries of Provence.

This sixth volume of Oblate Writings¹ contains letters that the Founder wrote to his sons from 1814 to 1826, and reveals him in the process of "renouncing his comfort" and "risking ruin" in order to found and provide for the growth of a frail company of diocesan priests called Missionaries of Provence but which in ten years was to become the religious Congregation of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate, a society of pontifical right, working in several dioceses in the south of France.

The initial start and steady widening of prospects stemmed from the "strong impulse from without" which continued to inspire and guide the ardent missionary but so also did the intelligence and will of a man who, once he sets forth on his way, goes forward resolutely and perseveringly towards his goal.

The growth of the Society was slow but sure: seven priests and nine novices in 1818, eleven priests and fourteen novices in 1821, fifteen priests and fifteen novices or seminarians in 1826.

Although around 1814-1815 the Founder wished to have only one house, the Society occupied four in 1826: Aix (1815-16), Notre Dame du Laus (1819), Le Calvaire at Marseilles (1821) and Nîmes (1825).

¹ The first five volumes comprise the letters of Blessed C. J. E. de Mazenod concerning the foreign missions of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate. There remain to be published about 1 500 letters written to the Oblates of France, that is to say, at least eight volumes.

Principal themes

Father de Mazenod and his early companions were very faithful to the main end envisaged: that of preaching popular missions to rural inhabitants in order to revive their faith. Although few in number, the Fathers preached more than fifty missions of four or five weeks duration² in the course of the first decade. The letters herein abound in details and advice on this subject. It is the principal theme of this correspondence.

Another recurrent theme of great importance to the Founder was the choosing and training of the Society's members. What worries and woes were his in seeking and persuading his first collaborators as well as admitting, educating, allowing to depart or dismissing the candidates who presented themselves! Out of sixty-eight who entered during this period, thirty-seven left, including seven who took vows. The statistic of those who remained is 55%³. During his sojourn in Rome in 1825-26, Father de Mazenod resolved on taking precise measures in view of being much more severe in selecting and training Oblates. "Reflect on what I have told you in one of my letters about the novitiate" he wrote to Tempier on November 26, 1825. "It is not set up to my liking. It is most unfortunate that this be so. We must absolutely reach the point of having as novices only those who truly wish to be such, who solicit this favour as a grace, on whose determination we can rely... All that I see since I have been in these parts has no resemblance at all to our situation. What modesty, what submission, what piety! While passing through Turin, Genoa, Viterbo, what sins of envy have I not committed or at least, how much I have longed for the happiness of seeing a similar spirit take root amongst us. Therein lies the whole trouble. It is urgent that we see to this in the future. A novitiate which is truly a novitiate where the subjects are fashioned with a master's hand, where care is taken to inculcate in them all that goes to form a true missionary, whence they will emerge full of virtue, inured to obedience and imbued with attachment and respect for the Rules and all they prescribe. I shall keep on saying endlessly that we have only an imperfect mixture which gives us scarcely any hope and whereof the results cannot be favourable..."

Such importance attached to the novitiate, then to the scholasticate, made for the strength and unity of the Institute, composed of members all

2 Cf.: J. PIELORZ, *Premières missions des Missionnaires de Provence in Missions O.M.I.*, t. 82 (1955), pp. 549-561, 641-655.

3 For these details, cf.: J. PIELORZ, *Les Chapitres Généraux au temps du Fondateur*, Ottawa, Éd. des Études Oblates, t. I (1968), *Introduction aux premiers chapitres*.

*trained at Aix or Marseilles, under the direction of the best of religious, themselves guided by Fathers de Mazenod and Tempier.*⁴

These letters inform us also of the numerous difficulties encountered which the Founder courageously overcame because, thanks to his spirit of faith, he knew them to be occasioned by the devil in order to prevent the conversion of souls. External difficulties arose less from the opposition of an anticlerical bourgeoisie hostile to their mission work than from the clergy of Aix and later from some bishops.

*Father de Mazenod speaks little in his letters of the opposition in certain quarters to the work of the missions. He expected it and the enthusiastic welcome given everywhere to the missionaries by the population as a whole made him quickly forget the obduracy of certain persons.*⁵

*The heaviest cross came from the parish priests of Aix. Elderly, tainted with Jansenism, acquiescent to the Napoleonic regime and fixed in a rut, they regarded first with a jaundiced eye then openly fought the team of young priests attached to the morality of Blessed Alphonsus, manifestly royalist and exercising a ministry beyond the reach of the parish, with young people and in the missions. The Mission Church at Aix, always full of worshippers, especially young ones, was the principal bone of contention of the parish priests against the missionaries of Provence whom they accused of drawing the faithful away from their own parishes.*⁶

Father de Mazenod suffered much from this opposition. He complained of it but urged nevertheless his Oblates to show respect and submission: "Always treat with honour the reputation of these gentlemen" he wrote to Father Courtès on May 5, 1822. "Be considerate to them personally in deference to the priesthood with which they are invested. Cover up if possible and hide their schemes from the eyes of the public. In no way provoke them but show a good countenance everywhere." He even admitted having paid too little attention to the susceptibilities of parish priests. "There are proprieties that I have neglected too much up to now," he wrote to Tempier on August 22, 1817, "but regarding which sad experience has taught me only too well that I must be more careful than I have hitherto been."

⁴ At this time, in 1822-26, Father P. B. Noailles was founding at Bordeaux the Society of Poor Priests and this was unsuccessful through lack of a proper novitiate. Cf.: Letter of P. B. Noailles to M. Richard, parish priest of Mirambeau, Dec. 20, 1847. Orig., Rome, arch. Ste Famille.

⁵ Cf.: J. LEFLON, *Eugene de Mazenod*, New York, 1966, Vol. II, pp. 129-152.

⁶ Cf. J. PIELORZ, *Les rapports du Fondateur avec les curés d'Aix (1813-1826)* in *Études Oblates*, t. 19 (1960), pp. 147-171, 328-367; t. 20 (1961), p. 39-60.

The problems raised by some bishops were of brief duration and can be explained by their being short of diocesan priests and by the fear, prompted by their Gallican training, of seeing their authority diminish as many priests entered Institutes of which quite a number were then springing up in France.

In 1823, the Bishops of Fréjus and Aix offered to dissolve the vows of Oblates who entered their dioceses. At the end of 1825, some bishops who had approved the Oblate Constitutions wrote to Rome to denounce them as contrary to the laws of the kingdom and to their own authority. Father de Mazenod, who was always at ease in dealing with bishops and cardinals, succeeded in resolving these problems by obtaining pontifical approbation from Leo XII in February, 1826.

His most acute sufferings were caused by internal difficulties, particularly during the crisis of 1823. Serious reasons had motivated Fathers de Mazenod and Tempier to agree to become vicars general of Marseilles and intimate collaborators of Bishop Fortuné de Mazenod. Several Fathers including two of the first companions, then left the Society. "...As long as blows were struck from outside," he wrote to Father Mye, October 30, 1823, "I paid no attention to them. But today Satan has succeeded in riddling us and, with the violence of his threshing, has thrown out with the straw some of the grain which ought seemingly to have stayed in the granary of the head of the household. I am overcome to the extent that I can only say with our Lord: Tristis est anima mea usque ad mortem. I had no idea that anyone could trifle with what is most sacred under flimsy pretexts and perhaps for reasons less than edifying..."

If Father de Mazenod succeeded in preaching innumerable missions and causing to flourish works such as Le Calvaire at Marseilles and the shrine of Notre Dame du Laus, it was not only thanks to his spirit of faith and tenacity but also to certain collaborators who excelled as such and to whom most of the letters of this volume are addressed: Fathers Tempier (75 letters), Mye (10 letters), Courtès (55 letters), Suzanne (14 letters), Guibert and Honorat (11 letters each).

Favourite co-workers and correspondants

It well seems that Father de Mazenod had a very keen eye when it came to judging men. From his first meeting with Father Tempier, he deemed him to be "an angel who appears as if made to delight any community".⁷ "I

⁷ The Founder to Forbin-Janson, December 19, 1815, January, 1816.

know you to be capable of embracing an exemplary rule of life and of persevering in it," he wrote to him on November 15, 1815, "...I count on you more than on myself to ensure the regularity of a house which, in my idea and hopes, has to reproduce the perfection of the first disciples of the apostles."

Tempier was truly a man faithful to religious life. In 1821-1822, then from 1827 until the death of the Founder in 1861, he was superior of the scholasticate. Throughout his life, he remained assistant general and exercised a very great influence on all the Oblates. His influence in the Congregation can be considered as one of its principal strengths. Father de Mazenod soon became cognizant of this and often expressed his gratitude. It was thus, for example, he wrote to Tempier on August 15, 1822, on the occasion of the latter having consented to remain superior of Notre Dame du Laus: "I recognize from your first page, the true religious, the just man, the good heart my dear Tempier through and through. I thank the good God unceasingly for having brought us together and pray him to fill you more and more with his spirit for our greater common good... No one has a greater right than you to my confidence. First companion of mine, you grasped from the first day we came together the spirit which must animate us and which we must communicate to others. You have not deviated in the slightest from the path we resolved to follow. Everyone in the Society knows this and counts on you as upon myself."

The most notable member of the Congregation, who entered novitiate in 1823, was Hippolyte Guibert (1802-1886), future Bishop of Viviers, Archbishop of Tours, then Cardinal Archbishop of Paris. Father de Mazenod gained from his first interview with this young man of Aix an intuition of his future destiny. He wrote to him on March 19, 1823, "It was a kind of presentiment I had from the first day I saw you; it seemed to me to have found again something of myself which quite naturally had just fallen into place and what was most remarkable was that from then on, you were considered by all the rest of the family as one who had belonged to it for a long time and had returned after an absence. All that augurs well for the good there will be for us to do together in the fold of the Church ravaged by so many wild beasts."

Brother Guibert had a variety of difficulties during his brief novitiate: first was a crisis caused by his father who opposed his vocation and summoned him home, this being followed by a personal crisis as to whether to choose to live with a religious congregation which, because of several departures in 1823, seemed to be breaking up. The Founder wrote to the dejected young novice: "The enemy would strike fewer blows at you and not

try so hard to seduce you were he not fearful of your ministry. While, properly speaking, he does not have certain knowledge of the future, his natural perspicacity enables him to perceive without fail events depending from secondary causes. He has concluded from the temper of soul you have received from the good God, from the particular graces with which he has willed to endow you bountifully, from the vocation to which he has called you and which sends you fully armed, so to speak, into the enemy camp with warriors of the faith who gain victories in the name of Jesus Christ as often as they engage in battle. He has concluded, I say, that you too would be a threat to his empire..." (June 26, 1823).

At the end of his novitiate, Brother Guibert left with Fathers Mye and Honorat to found the house of Nîmes. Upon being ordained in 1825, he was named superior of the shrine of Notre Dame du Laus, somewhat neglected under the direction of Father Touche. In withdrawing him from Nîmes, the Founder justified his decision to Father Mye for the reason that "Guibert is well balanced and, with his firm countenance, imposing. He loves order and is intensely economical" (August 22, 1825.) However, Father Mye only let him leave in 1826.

Father de Mazenod greatly loved Fathers Suzanne (1799-1829) and Courtès (1798-1863). They had both belonged to the Youth Sodality of Aix and were demonstrative in their affection for their former director. Moreover their qualities and virtues constantly evoked his admiration. Suzanne wholly resembled the Founder, having the same ardour, the same zest and, especially on missions, "the gift of captivating" (Mazenod to Mye, June 19, 1825). Father Courtès, a worthy and cultivated person, very attached to the religious life and the Oblate vocation, became master of novices as soon as he was ordained and superior of the motherhouse of Aix which he directed for forty years.

Father Mye (1768-1841), the Founder's companion of the first hour together with Father Tempier, spent his life preaching retreats and missions. "Few men have acquired to the same degree as he the art of imparting solid religious instruction to the ignorant," wrote Bishop Jeancard. "He explained the doctrine of the Church in dogma as well as morals with simplicity, clarity, preciseness of language and with such perfect coherence and sequence of themes that the least intelligent and most unrefined minds understood his whole discourse and had a complete idea of each truth on which he dwelt without redundancy or repetition..."⁸

⁸ Missions O.M.I., t. 5 (1866), p. 443.

Like Courtès and Suzanne, Father Honorat (1799-1863) had known the Founder through the Youth Sodality of Aix. Rather difficult in temperament but an obedient religious and zealous apostle, well suited to preaching and experienced in business matters, he was Bursar General from 1824 until his departure to found the mission of Canada in 1841. At the same time that he was preaching many missions, he was superior of Notre Dame du Laus, of Nîmes, of Le Calvaire and of Notre Dame de Lumières.

Further remarks pertaining to this volume

This volume comprises 214 letters of which not a single original is extant.⁹ The earliest handwritten letter written to an Oblate, conserved in the Archives of the Postulation, is the 492nd, dated October 11, 1835.¹⁰ Thus, only extracts of letters, some quite brief, are found herein.

Colligite fragmenta! This directive of our Lord,¹¹ the meaning of which is sometimes accommodated by archivists or historians when urging that anything useful for reconstructing the past be gathered up, is worth noting by us. There is need to collect the few remaining records pertaining to the beginning of the Congregation and especially to the Founder himself. After all, would this not be to comply with a desire of his already expressed in 1825? Writing to Father Tempier on December 10, 1825, he said, "Fulfil that intention of yours to write the reminiscences of the Society. We are the only ones who are neglectful in such an important matter. The damage is irremediable, whatever we do..."

We have had to reconstitute this correspondence from extracts found in biographical and historical works by Oblates: Yenveux, Rey, Rambert, Jeancard, Paguelle de Follenay, Missions O.M.I., etc.¹² But the task is something like a Chinese puzzle. Many pieces are missing and those we have are ragged in outline and make a picture that is very incomplete. Often identical texts copied by different authors are at variance and their dates do not coincide.

⁹ However, the originals of letters to Forbin-Janson have been preserved.

¹⁰ As to the motives for the disappearance of same, cf.: *Oblate Writings*, Vol. I, p. XXIX.

¹¹ John 6, 12.

¹² A. YENVEUX, *les Saintes Règles expliquées d'après les écrits, les leçons et l'esprit de Mgr de Mazenod*, 9 vols. manuscript; A. REY, *Histoire de Mgr de Mazenod*, Rome, 1928, 2 vols.; T. RAMBERT, *Vie de Mgr de Mazenod*, Tours, 1833, 2 vols.; J. JEANCARD, *Mélanges historiques sur la Cong. des Oblats de M.I., à l'occasion de la vie et de la mort du R. P. Suzanne*, Tours, 1872; J. PAGUELLE DE FOLLENAY, *Vie du cardinal Guibert, archevêque de Paris*, Paris, 1896, 2 vols., etc.

We have therefore had to establish certain criteria in order to choose the more dependable texts. One criterion is this: when extracts from various biographers differ, we generally follow the text of Yenveux. On comparing the originals preserved after 1834, we find that Yenveux has copied the texts with the greatest fidelity¹³ or rather, his transcribers have performed this work with the most objectivity without embellishing the style, without cutting out or softening phrases hurtful to the pious ears of Oblate authors of the latter part of the nineteenth century. Such was their attitude and that of Yenveux himself that they did not scruple, when copying certain brief passages, to modify the text, sometimes lightly as for example in always changing *tu* to *vous*¹⁴, and sometimes substantially by correcting the style and omitting names and phrases that were unedifying.

Yet one must read the text of Yenveux attentively in one respect. His copyists, though very honest, were not specialists conscious of accomplishing a rigorously historical task. They did not take the utmost care to be precise in noting certain names of places and persons which the Founder himself wrote by ear and often in a faulty manner. On this point Rey and Rambert were more precise and this must be taken into account.

Furthermore let it be noted that we are at the beginnings of the Society. Terminology is not yet fixed and we meet with words from the Founder's pen of which the meaning has yet to become clarified.

At first the Fathers and Brothers addressed each other as Monsieur. The word *Père* was adopted at the Chapter of 1821, even if the habit of saying Monsieur persisted for a while longer. After the Chapter of 1821, every Oblate could be called *Père*, even including those who were not priests.¹⁵ Only at the Chapter of 1826 was a distinction made between *Père*, reserved to professed priests, and *Frère* for the others.

Until 1826, the word "novice" was broader in meaning than it is today. Those who entered the Congregation were called postulants or guest¹⁶ until the taking of the habit when, at least until 1818, they were called novices

¹³ For those not familiar with the manuscript volumes of Father Yenveux, we reproduce one page X on which are copied three excerpts from letters.

¹⁴ In certain cases it is not easy to know if Father de Mazenod wrote *tu* or *vous*. He sometimes would use either for the same person, v.g.: Coulin (*tu* before 1822 and *vous* after he left in 1822), Guibert (*vous* during his novitiate and *tu* thereafter). He always addresses as *vous* Fathers Tempier, Mye, Jourdan, Vachon and always addresses as *tu* Courtès, Suzanne and Honorat.

¹⁵ Cf.: Letter to "Père" Guibert when still a seminarian, March 19, 1823.

¹⁶ De Mazenod to Tempier, January 18, 1821.

while continuing whatever classical studies remained to be made, during the novitiate properly so-called, and then during their theological studies.

The word "Oblate" was in current use for those who had made their vows, after 1818, even if the Society only adopted the name of Oblates of St. Charles in 1825 and that of Oblates of Mary Immaculate in 1826.

The words "Institute" or "Congregation" are practically never found before 1826 but rather that of "Society" or sometimes, in 1825-26 for example, that of "Company".

A final remark must be made in regard to why extracts of only two or three lines¹⁷ are reproduced and why letters written from Rome in 1825-26¹⁸ are herein published for the second time. To answer the first question, we formulate it otherwise: as these very brief extracts take up little room and as there is greater risk that they will not be noticed or disappear and as they also reveal something of the Founder's mind, why should they be omitted? In order to elucidate their meaning, we have added more historical notes than usual.

As for the letters written from Rome in 1825-26, the review *Missions O.M.I.* published only those concerning the comings and goings of the Founder and his endeavours to gain approval of the Constitutions. Yenveux cites several passages of letters not extant and which speak of the life of the Congregation at Marseilles and especially about the novitiate at Aix. In any event it is appropriate to bring together into one collection all the correspondence of the Founder with his sons.

* * *

It is ever with a tinge of tenderness that one stoops over a cradle and admires with wondering eyes an infant still so frail, so vulnerable to ills of every kind.

The letters which follow leave that impression. They give witness to the hope and anguish, the joy and suffering that, as a mother for her child, Eugene de Mazenod felt for his Institute during the first years of its existence.

Yvon Beaudoin, O.M.I.

¹⁷ Four or five have been omitted, yet entered in footnotes, because the meaning was not clear or the date was doubtful.

¹⁸ Letters published in *Missions O.M.I.*, t. 10 (1872), pp. 153-332.

1814

1. To Monsieur l'abbé de Janson, Vicar general of Chambéry, at Chambéry.¹

Eugene cannot enter the Society of the Mission of France. He must take care of his father and uncles on their return from exile. Numerous occupations at Aix. Desire of solitude. Is attracted by contemplative Orders.

L.J.C.

Aix [September 12, 1814].²

...How is it with me, you ask!³ As to myself, I have no idea at the moment. Apart from my lack of all means of success, especially with priests, I see that I am soon going to be in a state of disruption. My father and my uncles will shortly return.⁴ I will be indispensable to them when they arrive. Then I will have to find them a situation. Eventually I will be on my own, possibly. For the time being, as for a long while now, *I am the servant* [of everybody]⁵ and whoever comes first has to be waited on by me. This is apparently the will of God. [I have little liking] for this occupation. I do not know if this will make me change my vocation. I yearn sometimes for solitude and those religious Orders which confine themselves to the

¹ Orig.: Paris, arch. de la Ste-Enfance. We include some excerpts of letters written in 1814-1817 to Charles de Forbin-Janson, an intimate friend of l'abbé de Mazenod. It is in these letters that the greatest number of details are found on the beginnings of the Congregation of the Missionaries of Provence.

² Letter undated. The postmark on arrival at Chambéry bears the date of September 14, 1814. At the end of the letter, Eugene says that "yesterday" he confessed until one o'clock. Given that the post from Aix to Chambéry took two or three days and that the 11th was Sunday, we can establish the date as September 12, 1814.

³ We omit the beginning and end of this letter. Eugene proposes two priests for the Mission de France and says that he has not received the parcels which Charles had sent him from Rome.

⁴ The president, Charles-Antoine, father of Eugene, l'abbé Charles-Fortuné and Sir Charles-Louis-Eugène, his uncles, had left France in 1790 after the outbreak of the Revolution. They resided at Palermo from 1799.

⁵ The paper is torn and a portion is missing.

sanctification of the individuals who follow their Rules without concerning themselves with people, other than by prayer, are beginning to be attractive to me. I would not mind thus spending the rest of my days and certainly, it would mean being somewhat different from what I was. Who knows! Perhaps that is how I shall end up. When I shall no longer be confronted by the extreme needs of my poor sinners, I shall feel less sorry about not coming to their aid. Besides I may be persuading myself that I am more useful to them than I am in reality. In the meantime, however, my time and energies are theirs.

Again this morning, just before going up to the altar, I had to hear confessions. Scarcely had I taken off my vestments than I had to hear more confessions. Yesterday, it was one o'clock and I still had not said Prime because I remained all that time in the confessional. In the morning I scarcely said any thanksgiving because I had to be with a crowd of young people who had enough after two hours and three quarters of religious exercises. I cannot keep this up; it is always everything for others and nothing for oneself. In the midst of this turmoil, I am alone. You are my sole friend – I mean that forcefully – as for good and virtuous friends lacking in so many ways, I am not short of those. What use are they? Can they lessen my cares? Can I converse with them about the good one would wish to bring about? To what avail? All I would get would be compliments or discouragement. For the rest I keep on my way, albeit sadly, and put my confidence in God alone. Let us ever love him more. Adieu...

**2. To Monsieur l'abbé de Forbin-Janson, Vicar general of Chambéry,
28 rue St-Guillaume, Paris.⁶**

Eugene must choose either to enter a religious Order or found a society of missionaries for the needs of the people of Provence.

L.J.C.

Aix, October 28, 1814.

I keenly desire to know your Constitutions, not that I think I will probably come to join you. I still do not know what God wants of me but

⁶ Orig.: Paris, arch. de la Ste-Enfance. We omit the beginning and end of this letter. Eugene rejoices over the foundation of the Mission of France. He has not received the books he has ordered. Regrets that the Youth Sodality of Aix has not been approved by Rome.

am so resolved to do his will that as soon as it is known to me I will leave tomorrow for the moon, if I have to. I keep nothing secret from you. So I will tell you without ado that I am hesitating between two plans: either to go off and bury myself in some well regulated community of an Order that I have always loved; or do in my diocese exactly what you have done successfully at Paris. My illness has played havoc with me.⁷ I was feeling more inclined to the first plan because, to tell the truth, I was quite sick of living solely for others. It has come to pass that I have not had time to go to confession for three whole weeks. You can see for yourself how tied down I am. The second plan, however, seems to me more useful, given the dreadful plight to which the people have been reduced. Several considerations have held me back until now, the absolute lack of means being not the least drawback in this affair. Those who might be able to join me have nothing at all and I myself have little for, out of my pension of a thousand francs,⁸ I have to pay my servant who, for that matter, will soon leave me and return to the Trappist monastery.⁹ That's a new inconvenience because I was counting on him for our mission house. The community, which in any event, only exists in my head, would be set up in my house. Mother, as far as I can see, would not be loath to yield to me, for the time being, the house by the city gate¹⁰ in which I live alone at present. There is enough room to lodge eight missionaries. We would subsequently look for a larger place, etc. I also have in mind some rules to propose for I insist that we live in a completely regular manner. That's as far as I have got. As you see, it has not progressed very far.

Now, you will perhaps ask why, since I wish to be a missionary, I do not join you as well as the little band I could bring together. Were I to reply *en gascon*¹¹ I would tell you right away that it is because you did not try very hard to have me. Not that this is the real reason since I really think, considering what I mentioned in my last letter, that I am not in a position to be of much use to you. But what must be remembered is that our regions are without any help, that their peoples offer hopeful signs of being converted and must not therefore be abandoned. Yet abandon them we would if we joined you because we alone, and not you, can help them. We

⁷ During March and April of 1814, Eugene was gravely ill with typhus contracted in caring for the Austrian prisoners at Aix.

⁸ A pension furnished by his mother.

⁹ The Trappist brother Maur (Pierre Martin Bardeau) who served him at the seminary and followed him to Aix.

¹⁰ *L'Enclos*, country house of the Joannis family from which his mother came.

¹¹ To reply *en gascon* means to make a neat reply.

have to speak in their own tongue in order to be understood by them. We have to preach in Provençal. Should we form a band, nothing would prevent us from affiliating with you if such a union would be for the best. May God be glorified, may souls be saved – that is what matters. I see no further than that. Despite all, a secret desire could draw me elsewhere.

1815

3. To Monsieur Hilaire Aubert, priest and director of the Seminary of Limoges.¹

Invitation to enter the future society of the Missionaries of Provence.

[Aix, 1815].²

No one is fonder than I of the holy Company of Jesus. Its re-establishment has always been to the fore in my wishes and I attach the greatest importance to its growth. However, I would better like to have you here, just now, than with the Jesuits. The good we intend to do ought to remedy the most pressing ills. Those who deal with them dwindle; there is nothing more urgent. It is a matter of some priests banding together and continually preaching missions in all sectors of this vast diocese and surroundings. We wish to do modestly, but not less effectively, what they are striving to do at Paris on a larger scale. We would want to act without commotion but what blows we would strike at hell! Oh, dear friend, if you would be one of us! We would begin in your part of the country where religion is practically extinct as in so many other places. I almost dare to say you would be necessary. Ah! if we could form a nucleus, there would soon cluster round it the most zealous elements in the diocese. Think a while about that before the good God. You know that we must have, in order to do any good in our regions, people of the country who know the language. Oh! do not doubt that we will become saints in our Congregation, free but united by bonds of the most tender charity, by exact submission to the Rule we would adopt, etc. We would live poorly, apostolically, etc.

¹ Orig.: Parish, arch. de la Sainte Enfance. L'abbé Aubert first joined the gentlemen of the Mission of France. He came to preach the retreat at the house of the Mission at Aix, at the end of October, 1816.

² Undated letter. From the context, it appears to have been written shortly before the month of October, 1815.

4. [To M. l'abbé Tempier, at Arles].³

Miserable state of the inhabitants in the country. Foundation of a stable group which will provide missionaries. Purposes of the Society which comprises at the moment four members. At least six would be needed, ready to set forth in the footsteps of the apostles. The presence of Tempier is indispensable.

Aix, October 9, 1815.

My dear friend, read this letter at the foot of your crucifix with a mind to heed only God and what is demanded in the interests of his glory and of the salvation of souls from a priest like yourself. Stifle the voice of cupidity, love of comfort and convenience; dwell deeply on the plight of our country people, their religious situation, the apostasy that daily spreads wider with dreadfully ravaging effects. Look at the feebleness of the means employed to date to oppose this flood of evil; ask your heart what it fain would do to counter these disasters and then reply to my letter.

Well, dear man, what I say to you, without going fully into details, is that you are necessary for the work which the Lord inspires us to undertake. Since the head of the Church is persuaded that, given the wretched state in which France finds herself, only missions can bring people back to the Faith which they have practically abandoned, good men of the Church from different dioceses are banding together in response to the views of our supreme Pastor. We likewise feel that it is utterly necessary to employ the same remedy in our regions and, full of confidence in the goodness of Providence, have laid down the foundations of an establishment which will steadily furnish our countryside with fervent missionaries. These will ceaselessly engage in destroying the empire of the demon, at the same time as providing the example of a life worthy of the Church in the community which they will form. Indeed, we will live together in one house, that which I have bought,⁴ under a Rule we shall adopt with common accord and for which we will draw the elements from the statutes of St. Ignatius, of St. Charles for his Oblates, of St. Philip Neri, of St. Vincent de Paul and of the Blessed Liguori.

³ Copy in T. RAMBERT, *Vie de Mgr C.-J.-E. de Mazenod*, Tours, 1883, t. I, pp. 165-167; A. REY, *Histoire de Mgr C.-J.-E. de Mazenod...*, Rome, 1928, t. I, pp. 181-182; *Circulaires administratives...*, no. 15, vol. 1, pp. 133-134.

⁴ On October 2, 1815, l'abbé de Mazenod bought from Madame Gontier the former Carmelite convent. He went to live there with l'abbé Tempier as from January 25, 1816.

Happiness awaits us in this holy Society which will have but one heart and soul. One part of the year will be devoted to the conversion of souls, the other to seclusion, study and our individual sanctification. I say no more for the moment; it suffices to give some intimation of the spiritual delights we will taste together. If, as I hope, you wish to be one of us, you will not find yourself in unknown terrain; you will have *four companions*.⁵ If presently we are not more numerous, it means we wish to choose men who have the will and the courage to walk in the footsteps of the apostles. It is important to lay solid foundations. The greatest regularity must be planned and introduced in the house as soon as we enter it. And it is precisely for that reason that you are necessary to me because I know you to be capable of embracing an exemplary rule of life and of persevering in it. For the rest, we will not be bound by vows. But I hope that it will be the same with us as with the disciples of St. Philip Neri who, free as we shall remain, would die before thinking of leaving a congregation for which they have the same affection as for their mother.

When I shall have your reply, I will give you all the details you could wish for. But, dear friend, I conjure you, do not let yourself say no to the greatest good that may possibly be done in the Church. Vicars will easily be found to replace you but it is not so easy to come across men who are dedicated and wish to devote themselves to the glory of God and the salvation of souls with no more reward on earth than much sorrow and all else that the Saviour announced to his true disciples. Your refusal would be incalculably detrimental to our newborn enterprise. I speak with sincerity and reflection. Your modesty will suffer but no matter. I will not hesitate to add that, if I believed it necessary to make the journey to Arles to convince you, I would wing my way there. All depends on how we begin. We need perfect unanimity of sentiments, the same goodwill, the same disinterestedness, the same devotedness – that sums it up.

Keep this a secret. Be sure that confiding in anyone at Arles would only result in being dissuaded from a project of which you will never be able to appreciate the worth until you have begun to execute it. We will have a certain tactic to follow in respect of the vicars who approve so strongly our initiative that they have written to Paris to make it known through the press. We will have to plan the steps necessary to obtain your replacement. The least imprudence would thwart our plans. They would be tempted to think that four of us would be enough when it is certain that we

⁵ De Mazenod, Deblieu, Mye and Icard.

need at least six. They have promised me this number of persons. Who will (not fail to) say that the difficulty is to find them? It is true that we are being difficult because we wish everything to go well and we will succeed if you are one of us. So quickly reply to me affirmatively and I shall be content. Adieu, well beloved brother.

5. To Monsieur l'abbé de Forbin-Janson, Vicar General of Chambéry, rue Notre Dame des Champs, No. 8, at Paris.⁶

The diocesan authority of Aix approves the foundation of the Society of the Missionaries of Provence. Proceedings. Concern for the upkeep of the members and for repairing the Carmelite church of Aix.

L.J.C.

Aix, October 23, 1815.

Well did I see, my dear friend, that what decidedly cooled the ardour of our Grand Vicars for mission work was the fear of seeing themselves deprived of people truly needed in the diocese. All obstacles fell before the decision I took. The proposal that the missionaries I would band together would not go outside the diocese calmed them so well that they became avowed protectors of our enterprise. And I am all the more grateful to them in that not all their priests are of the same mind.

Now I ask you and I ask myself how I, hitherto unable to make up my mind in this matter, suddenly find myself setting wheels in motion, renouncing my comfort and risking my fortune by launching an enterprise of which I know the worth but for which I only have a liking negated by other and diametrically opposed views! This is a riddle to me and it is the second time in my life that I see myself moved to resolve something of the utmost seriousness as if by a strong impulse from without. When I reflect on it, I am convinced that it so pleases God to put an end to my irresolution. And in such a way that I am engaged to the hilt! I assure you that in such circumstances I am quite another man. You would no longer call me a stick-in-the mud if you were to see how I fly around. I am well nigh up to your standard in acting with so much authority. I move carefully though I have not a moment of respite and yet proceed nonetheless with a will. It is nearly two months now that I fight on at my own expense, some-

⁶ Orig.: Paris, arch. de la Ste-Enfance.

times openly, sometimes discreetly. With trowel in one hand and sword in the other, I am like the good Israelites rebuilding the city of Jerusalem. And my pen is busy. I dare not tell you how much I have written since being involved in this affair, which you are right in calling ours. For I certainly intend that our two enterprises be but one. However at this moment, as we begin, we must appear to have in common only the name, so as not to frighten both our superiors and the missionaries themselves who, with the exception of Deluy⁷ do not want to travel or work outside the diocese or who at the most (would go) into neighbouring dioceses where they speak the Provençal tongue. Explain all that to M. Rauzan.

How do matters stand? Without going into the whole business – that would take too long – *Les Minimes* was for sale. This place suited us perfectly. I thought it should not slip through our fingers and considered my duty was to buy it. To this end, I braved enormous difficulties, but all for nothing. The Blessed Sacrament nuns politely whisked it from me by sleight of hand. In proceeding, I had broached the matter to some priests whom I believed suitable for the holy undertaking and who indeed are so. These did not think the cause was lost when my efforts failed. I would have been ashamed and upset to let their enthusiasm be quenched and tried to obtain the only other place in the city wherein we could set up our community. My overtures were unexpectedly successful. In a single interview the affair was settled and I found myself proprietor of the major part of the old Carmelite convent situated at the top of the Cours with a charming church attached, somewhat the worse for wear, to tell the truth, but which we could restore to use for less than a hundred sovereigns.

So much for my story. But the amusing thing is that all that was done without my being held back by the thought that I had not a single sou. To prove I was not mistaken, Providence immediately sent me twelve thousand francs, loaned to me without interest for this year. Now tell me how to reimburse them. I have made a golden deal since the whole establishment, including repairs to the church, will cost me only 20 000 francs. But where shall I find this sum? I have no idea. In the meantime the missionaries are on my back. They want to begin tomorrow. In vain I tell them we need time to fix the rooms and make the house inhabitable. They cannot wait that long. And then, what about means of livelihood when we set up the community? I think I will commend myself to St. Gaetan de Thienne. When he rang the bell, the people would come and bring him something to eat.

⁷ This priest did not enter the Society.

We are four at the moment, without counting Deluy whom they sent to a parish not more than fifteen days ago. For the four, I have my pension of a thousand francs; that will take care of two. A third tells me he would have enough to live. As for the fourth, God will see to it, no doubt. How do you manage at Paris? To which saint do you have recourse? If I remember aright, the house costs a thousand crowns to rent. There's your pension *e poi e poi*⁸ for all the rest! Tell me what you think I ought to do to stay afloat and sail on with you, without upsetting people who have to be humoured. Write me twenty times if you wish but don't practice your grand official script on me. Twelve lines per page is hardly fair; there are thirty in mine! How can you, even if you wish, delve into a question with all your curlyjigs? Behave yourself or I will be cross.

It would be a pity if, with so many friends in the regime, you obtained nothing for my relatives. I shall send you a résumé on each of them. You will manage all right, I hope. It is time these unfortunates saw the dawn of better days.

October 24.

I am at my wits end. Never has anything given me more trouble than this undertaking. Every moment some new difficulty crops up; it is the death of me. How shall we manage without the church? It is all right for you to say it would be fair to let the Carmelites reclaim it. Who will provide them the money to pay for it? The present occupant, who is yielding his tenancy to me, has never put in a claim to have the edifice repaired. The whole roof is delapidated. The estimate I have obtained for urgent repairs increases the price to seventeen (thousand) and several hundred francs. The estimate will be sent to Paris and certainly the bureaucrats will shy away from it when it comes up for approval. In the meantime, can I take it upon myself to make considerable expenditures without knowing if the edifice will be ours? In the state in which it is, it can be of no use to us. We will, however, be able to have religious services in the chancel which is ours and which is very large. Here is what M. Guigou proposes: his idea is to ask for the church in order to put it at the service of the people and then hand it over to us afterwards. I do not see why this would be unjust. The Carmelites are presently with the Fathers of the Oratory. Three parochial churches of the city belong to religious orders. The Incurables and Blessed Sacrament nuns occupy the houses and churches of

⁸ *Poi e poi* (Italian): then and then.

two other religious Orders. Why should we also not have charge of the Carmelite church? Would it not be better to hold divine services in it rather than see it used as a warehouse for all the circusses that come through and as barracks for soldiers of every nation? Busy yourself a little with this matter. I myself am at the end of my tether. If I had foreseen all the nuisance, worry, anxiety and disarray this establishment would throw me into, I believe I never would have had the zeal to undertake it. I ask God every day to sustain me in my anguish of heart and commend myself over this to all the holy missionaries in whose steps we wish to follow. Help me yourself and pray the good God for your best friend.

6. [To M. l'abbé Tempier, at Arles].⁹

His joy at learning that the abbé Tempier agrees to become a member of the future community of missionaries. Negotiations with the authorities of the diocese.

Aix, November 15, 1815.

God be blessed, my very dear brother, for the dispositions he has put in your good heart. You would not believe the joy I felt on reading your letter¹⁰. I opened it anxiously but soon was comforted. Be sure that I regard it as most important that you be one of us. I count on you more than on myself for the regularity of a house which, in my mind and my hopes, must reproduce the perfection of the first disciples of the apostles. I base my hopes on that much more than on eloquent discourses. Have they ever converted anyone? Oh! how well will you do what must be done! Were you but close enough for me to press to my heart, give you a fraternal

⁹ REY, I, 184-185; RAMBERT, I, pp. 169 and 300; *Missions O.M.I.*, 1897, 173; *Circulaires administratives*, No. 15, vol. I, pp. 135-136.

¹⁰ Fr. Tempier had delayed replying to the letter of October 9th as it was not signed. He willingly accepted the invitation: "...May the good God be blessed for having inspired you with the plan to provide the poor inhabitants of our countryside, those who have the most need of instruction in our religion, with a house of missionaries who will go and announce to them the truths of salvation. I share entirely your views, my dear brother, and far from waiting for new overtures to enter upon this holy work so in keeping with my desires, I avow on the contrary that had I known your intention, I would have been the first to beg you to receive me into your Society. So it is for me to thank you for having judged me worthy to work for the glory of God and the salvation of souls. It is true that I do not see in myself the ability to preach necessary to a missionary but *alius quidem sic alius vero sic*. What I shall not do with great discourses, I will do in teaching catechism, in giving talks, in hearing confessions, and by all other means which can establish the reign of Jesus Christ in souls..." Cf. REY, *ibid.*, p. 183.

accolade, that would express better than any letter the sentiments with which the good God has inspired me in your regard. How sweet the bonds of perfect charity!

The manner in which I speak will prove to you that I regard it as certain that they will not put invincible obstacles to our coming together. M. Guigou, whom the Lord has made zealous for this great enterprise, is persuaded that our small number does not suffice; he agrees that we need to be six. So I have begun this morning to let him know in advance, saying that I know you love community life and that our project will offer all you can desire. He has not been adverse to the idea... I expect new difficulties but the good God protects us. I fear nothing. Adieu, I embrace you with all my heart.

Eugene de Mazenod

7. [To M. l'abbé Tempier, at Arles].¹¹

Joy at knowing that l'abbé Tempier would soon join the community of missionaries who aspire to become "truly saints". M. Guigou, Vicar General, promises that he will free him as soon as possible from parochial ministry. They must begin the year 1816 together.

Aix, December 13, 1815.

My heart felt a presentiment, my dear, good friend and brother, that you were the man the good God had set aside to be my consolation. How can I show you all the happiness conferred on me by the holy state of resolve at which you have arrived? How great the promise I have made to myself to do all that depends on me to contribute to yours! Let me say that as soon as I read your first letter, I surrendered to the sweetest of hopes: that I had found the man who lays hold of good, latches on thereto and consequently with the help of grace, succeeds perfectly in effecting it. Your second and third letters confirmed me in the opinion that I had formed and now the thought that we shall succeed, in spite of obstacles, in working together for the glory of God and for our sanctification, sustains me in the midst of all the sorrows that hell has brought upon me since I have positioned strong batteries to destroy its empire. Be as humble as you wish but know, just the same, that you are *necessary* for this mission work. I

¹¹ REY, I, 186-188; RAMBERT, I, 171-173; *Circulaires administratives*, n. 15, vol. I, pp. 136-137.

speak to you before God and openly from my heart. Were it a question of going out to preach more or less well the word of God, mingled with much alloy of self, of going far and wide for the purpose, if you wish, of winning souls for God without taking much trouble to be men of interior life, truly apostolic men, I think it would not be difficult to replace you. But can you believe I want merchandise of that sort?

We must be truly saints ourselves. In saying that, we include all that can possibly be said. Now are there many priests who thus wish to be saints? Only by not knowing them could we believe that they do. I myself know the contrary. Most wish to go to heaven by a road other than that of abnegation, renunciation, forgetfulness of self, poverty, fatigue, etc. Perhaps they are not obliged to do more or otherwise than they do but at least they should not be so obstructive if some, believing that more is demanded by the needs of the people, want to try to be more devoted in order to save them. The second reason, which made me regard it as a present from heaven the resolution to join us at which you have arrived, is the need we have of a priest who thinks as you do about the interior life of our community. I am so convinced of this that I said yesterday evening to the Grand Vicar that I would not undertake to form this community if you took no part in it. I am so assured that we will always agree that I would not fear to promise never to think otherwise than you on all that has to do with the interior life and its obligations, more extensive than one ordinarily believes, of the priest who wishes to live as his state requires.

It is time that I gave you an account of the conversation that I had about you with M. Guigou. You know that he is completely interested in mission work. I let him know my resolution not to continue the undertaking if I were not sure that you would be one of us. I told him what I think: that your dispositions and character guaranteed to me the constancy of your resolutions, that I regarded you as the one on whom I ought to count for the love of order and regularity, that I needed to have you as the confidant of my aspirations for good, that in advance we were of one mind; in a word, I repeated that without you I did not feel courageous enough to go further. The Grand Vicar most positively reiterated his assurance that you would be one of us, but he asked as a favour that it be not immediately. This delay was not entirely agreeable to me because I would wish, rather, that you would be one of the first to enter the house, which is quite ready to receive missionaries.¹² This first step is, in my opinion, of the highest importance.

¹² Father Tempier arrived at Aix on December 27, 1815.

At this meeting we will draw up the Rule which we will have to follow. We will confer on the manner in which we will carry out our good work. We will help each other mutually with advice and with all that the good God will inspire in each of us for our common sanctification. We will then issue our first declaration for the edification of the Church and of the people. This will be a decisive step. I count on having you then. That is what I have not yet obtained.

Write to our Grand Vicars what your formal intentions are. In the meanwhile, do not undertake any task which may last beyond the Christmas festivities for it is following them that I would wish us to meet. We must begin together the year of 1816. We will begin by working on ourselves. After, we will rule on the kind of life we will adopt for the city and for the missions. Then we will become saints.

Even if we were twenty, we would not suffice for the work there is to do. We are requested on all sides. I refer the demands to the good God. Let us hope he will at last look upon these entreaties. Pray to him that he will give me the strength and patience I need. They are terribly overtaxed. Had I not got half this letter done during the night, it would still not be ready for the post. Adieu, very dear and good brother, I embrace you with all my heart and long for the happy moment of our reunion.

Eugene de Mazenod

8. [To l'abbé Charles de Forbin-Janson, at Paris].¹³

Difficulties in founding the Mission of Provence. Dilly-dallying of first companions. Mission at Pignans. Opposition of priests of Aix. Inability to take part in the mission at Marseilles.

L.J.C.

Aix, December 19, 1815.

You will no doubt be surprised, my beloved brother and friend at not yet having received any letters from me. But to have something to write, I would have had to know what was going on and at times I have seen what I was building tottering from top to bottom. Everything has been put into motion to bring it down, and I cannot say that it is solidly on its feet. The

¹³ Orig.: Paris, arch. de la Sainte-Enfance.

house was bought a long time ago; the church leased and partly repaired. All is ready on the material side but my men dither, the few that they are. He on whom I was counting the most is letting himself be deterred by the cackling of the pious hens of his parish. He is convinced there is much good he can do his backyard. He hesitates to leave and I am dismayed by his indecision.¹⁴ Another who excels constantly in proclaiming the word of God to the people is only partially attached to our mission, being persuaded that he does enough good by himself on his travels to and fro.¹⁵ A third, who is too incensed and vexed with the slowness of the others, threatens to take off by himself if they do not promptly make up their minds.¹⁶ A fourth, who is an angel, and who seems destined to be the joy of a community, cannot obtain permission to leave his vicariate, although he protests that he cannot bear to stay and wants to work only in the mission field, etc.¹⁷ I myself, overwhelmed with worries and cares, wage war listlessly, supported in the midst of this bother only by the supernatural outlook which inspires me, but which does not prevent me feeling the whole weight of my situation and all the more woefully in that I am helped neither by my taste or inclination which indeed are quite contrary to the kind of life which I am leading. All this God sends my way for my embarking on such a difficult venture. How can I put up with a priest who pledges himself with words of absolute devotion and then comes to retract them for the reason that his mother, who has lived separately from him for ten years, cannot live without him – he would regard it as homicide were he not to give her the consolation of eating with her – and more twaddle of this sort?¹⁸ And the only reply of the Grand Vicars to this beautiful argument is: “That will grieve M. de Mazenod very much; take it up with him”, when what was needed was to repress such weakness, rather than do nothing other than go along with it on such terms. You will understand now why men of this type can hardly make the journey to Paris: “he would not have Mother at his side and be able to eat with her.”

I resume my letter in January. Decidedly we are flapping along on only one wing, although two of our missionaries have already done wonders

14 Jean-François-Sébastien Deblieu (1789-1855), parish priest of Peynier. Cf.: J. PIELORZ, *Nouvelles recherches sur la fondation de notre Congrégation*, in *Missions O.M.I.*, 1957, pp. 116-118.

15 Pierre-Nolasque Mye (1768-1841), missionary. *Ibid.*, pp. 118-120.

16 Auguste Icard (1790-1835), vicar at Lambesc. *Ibid.*, p. 126.

17 François de Paule-Henri Tempier (1788-1870), vicar at Arles. *Ibid.* pp. 120-125.

18 M. Deblieu.

in the town they have just evangelized¹⁹, where eighteen hundred people came to the sacraments. All the parish priests around were asking for them but we are upset just the same. The one who should have rendered us the greatest service went back on his word; he remains in his parish wherein he stirred up such a commotion with his ridiculous farewells and got the people so worked up that they opposed his departure.²⁰ I am obliged to warn you not to count on us for the mission at Marseilles. The missionaries are unwilling and I myself am unable. I have had no time to write anything and have not a single sermon. I trust in my ability to preach to a small gathering or to country people but I will never take it upon myself to speak thus in a large city, especially at a mission. I know this decision will indispose you somewhat but no one is bound to do the impossible. I believe that if you were here you could persuade one of our men²¹ to follow you to Marseilles because I believe he is full of goodwill and quite resolute but he will not be very useful to you because he only has three or four sermons, at the most. However, he preached every day and sometimes twice a day during the mission at Pignans which he has just finished. Pignans is only a small town but preaching there is done in Provençal.

M. Guigou does not think it possible this season to have the priests' retreat of which you speak. He thinks it can take place only in summer. I think he will write to you about that. And yet it should be arranged if only to teach priests²² that it is not permitted to calumniate and that it is hardly Christian to rage at and obstruct the good that others would wish to do. The yapping that goes on amongst them never ceases. Only my presence keeps down the complaints. When facing me, all is well but beware when I turn my back! Our people are a sorry lot, dear friend. I scarcely would have believed it possible!²³

19 At Pignans, a small place in the department of the Var. Cf. *Missions O.M.I.*, 1955, p. 550. This mission had been given, it seems, by Mye and Icard. Cf.: G. COSENTINO, *Un inconnu: le p. Icard in Études Oblates*, t. 16 (1957) pp. 337-338.

20 M. Deblieu.

21 Icard (Cf.: G. COSENTINO, *art. cit.*, p. 338) or Mye, who however had been preaching for a long time, cf.: J. PIELORZ, *art. cit.*, p. 120.

22 Especially Canon Rey and the abbé Florens, Gallicans and supporters of Napoleon. Cf.: J. PIELORZ, *art. cit.*, pp. 115-116, 160.

23 The end of this letter, concerning a priest of Marseilles and of the mission at Orleans, is omitted.

1816

9. [To Abbé Charles de Forbin-Janson, at Paris].¹

Obstacles encountered by Eugene in his apostolic activity. To be able better to defend himself, he would accept a post as Grand Vicar of the future Archbishop of Aix.

Second letter [1816].²

...³ For goodness sake, be on the look-out for the archbishop they are to give us, so as to put me in his good graces. Otherwise our house will fall to the ground; the wind and tide are against missionaries.⁴ We go forward because we have on our side a Grand Vicar (Guigou); but woe if he gives in. All would be lost. I believe that for the good of the cause and considering all the other little benefits I contribute, in spite of many people of the cloth who abhor whatever they do not do themselves, I can without being pretentious aspire to be Grand Vicar, even though I ought not to get mixed up in anything. But I should have a little authority and independence in order to do good, without these continual hindrances which undermine and reduce me to despair. I keep going but do not make half as much progress as I could otherwise. It is pitiful to have to say this and seek after what they would have thrown my way in other times...

1 Orig.: Paris, arch. de la Sainte-Enfance.

2 Undated. It begins with these words: "Second letter". According to the context, it must have been written during the first months of 1816.

3 With this letter, Eugene sends a *Memoir for the Chevalier de Mazenod* and insists that Forbin-Janson endeavour to obtain something in favour of the father and two uncles of Eugene. We only publish several lines which deal with the question of the missionaries.

4 There was opposition to the missions but especially, on the part of the parish priests of Aix, to the Chapel of the Mission because of the success of the Youth Sodality. Cf.: J. LEFLON, *Eugene de Mazenod*, Vol. II, p. 53 ff.

10. [To Father Tempier at Aix].⁵

Worked to exhaustion during the mission at Grans. Need more missionaries.

Grans⁶, February 24, 1816.

It is absolutely impossible for me to write to you, my good brother and friend. We have no time to eat, nor even to sleep. I should at this moment be at the office of *pacification*; but I have had to write to M. Guigou (capitular vicar.) I send this to you as an open letter so that you may read it and have it read to our friends. Were I to enter into details, you would be moved to tears. I miss you ten times daily. Religion would be lost in this country without the mission. It is a triumph. Though it be the death of us, I will not complain. Our work is indispensable and only if we are twelve shall it be able to continue. Plead for recruits in your prayers. I shall regret all my life that you have not been here with us, but God will take into account your sacrifice.

A thousand regards for all friends, great and small.⁷ I think of them every day in the holy sacrifice. Let them not forget us.

I embrace you with my heart, cherished brother that you are.

Adieu, adieu.

P.S. Between us missionaries... we are what we ought to be, that is to say, we have but one heart, one soul, one thought. It is admirable! Our consolations, like our hardships, are unequalled.

11. [To Father Tempier at Aix].⁸

Large numbers at confession. May the Sodalists keep up their fervour.

Grans, March 11, 1816.⁹

[We remain] quite united to our dear and good brother Tempier, despite the sacrifice that we make in putting off for eight days our leaving to

⁵ RAMBERT, I, 181.

⁶ The mission of Grans took place from February 11 to March 17 and was preached by Fathers de Mazenod, Deblieu, Mye and Icard. Cf. *Missions O.M.I.* t. 82 (1955), pp. 550-551.

⁷ The members of the Youth Sodality of Aix who gathered at the Mission house. Father Tempier remained in order to take care of them and of the services at the chapel.

⁸ RAMBERT, I, 181-182; YENVEUX, V, 211.

⁹ Father Yenveux quotes the first lines of this letter under the date of February 24th, which is obviously incorrect. Father Rambert indicates March 1st which seems equally

rejoin him. Not that we can help it; but, in conscience, we cannot leave our work undone. Enormous would have been the number of men we would have left in the lurch, if we had finished on the intended day. It is for the sake of these men that we are prolonging our work until the third Sunday of Lent. State clearly to our dear friends that this delay annoys me as much as them and even more; but, in the name of God, let them not give me the sorrow of finding them less fervent than I left them. It has been claimed, at Salon, that they were less assiduous; they are mistaken, no doubt, but this rumour has grieved me.

The good work proceeds; blasphemy has been banished from this place. The inhabitants do not know how this prodigy has happened for there had been no other place where it had been more frequent.

As for us, we never stop hearing confessions. We take in every variety; therein consists our prayers, our preparation, our thanksgiving and everything else, day and night. The other day I could not say Matins until six o'clock in the evening. If you do not pray for us, we are in a bad fix. Not until next Monday shall we leave.

I hope that the good God will take into account the sacrifice that we are making for his glory and for the greatest good...

12. To our dear brothers, the missionaries at Aix.¹⁰

It irks him to be far from the community. He is storing up health and virtue. Litanies proper to the Congregation.

From the place of my exile¹¹, July 1816.

On the banks of the Huveaune¹², I am saddened as I think of our dear mission. Did you really think of that my good brothers, when you chased

incorrect, given that the letter states: "Not until Monday next shall we leave." This means that the Fathers would have left on Monday the 18th, since the mission ended on Sunday, the 17th of March. The letter should then have been written by Father de Mazenod on Monday the 11th. Hence the error of putting the 1st was Rambert's or the printer's. This is also the explanation of the words: "in putting off for eight days..."

¹⁰ RAMBERT, I, 190-191; REY, I, 200; YENVEUX, V, 141, 181.

¹¹ For the latter part of July and the beginning of the month of August, the Founder, being exhausted, had to go and rest with his cousin Émile Dedons, Marquis de Pierrefeu, on the banks of the Huveaune at Bonneveine.

¹² Rambert writes: Huvonne.

me from it so cruelly? I am like a fish out of water here. My sole consolation is to follow you in your pious exercises. I am more faithful to them than when I was amongst you.

Since you so wish, I will replenish my health. I would also wish to store up virtue so as no longer to be a subject of scandal in your midst; but the second undertaking is not as easy as the first. I have no great hope of succeeding therein; pray then to the good God to give you grace to enable you to endure me. I beg our brother Maunier to excuse me for not having taken leave of him when I left, it was not all my fault, my flight being so precipitate that I had time to do nothing I would have wished to do.

If the good God heeds me, there will be no priests more saintly than you, my dear brothers, whom I love tenderly in the Lord, our common love.

I embrace our dear novices and pray God that he will grant that they imitate your virtues.

Adieu, pray always for me, all of you.

Your unworthy brother.

P.S. I wish you to change the end of our litanies; instead of saying *Jesus sacerdos*, we must say *Christe salvator*. That is the aspect under which we ought to contemplate our divine Master. Our particular vocation is such that we are associated in a special manner with the redemption of men; the Blessed Liguori has likewise put his Congregation under the protection of the Saviour. Would that we all endeavour, by the sacrifice of our entire being, not to render his redemption useless, both in regard to ourselves and in regard to those whom we are called upon to evangelize.

13. To Monsieur l'abbé de Janson, vicar general of the Bishop of Chambéry, at Chambéry.¹³

The Vicars general of Aix and the Fathers do not wish the Missionaries of Provence to join the Missionaries of France. The opposition of some priests of Aix. Necessity of an authorisation of the Government. Impossible to take

¹³ Orig.: Paris, arch. de la Sainte-Enfance. Undated letter. According to the context, it was written in July-August of 1816.

part in the missions at Arles, Toulon, Martigues and Marseilles. The next mission at Fuveau.

Aix, July-August, 1816.

...¹⁴ Do not think I have disregarded the proposals you have repeatedly made to me on the subject of uniting our houses. I have, on the contrary, been quite busy taking them up with both our Grand Vicars and our members. The constant attitude of the former is that such a union would not be to the advantage of the diocese. My confrères share this feeling. They are concerned, and in this I agree with them, more with evangelizing poor people of the rural areas than city dwellers. The need of the former is incomparably greater and the fruits of our ministry amongst them more assured. However, in wishing to rid myself of the kind of superior status which circumstances have imposed on me, I would ask nothing better than to see this union and, were I to have my way, would shut myself up in seclusion. But I must not think of that for the moment. Providence wills that I push things forward around here. Not only is hell to be stormed but we must defend ourselves against jealousy and all other mean passions which agitate certain priests, pitiable though they are since they are judged by the public in a manner quite mortifying for them. As, happily, they have not much to say against the missionaries, they have made their attack against the missions themselves with a hypocrisy which could have seduced large numbers had we left their speeches unanswered. A parish priest went so far as to write *ex officio* a syllogistic letter to one of our group to prove to him that he had compromised his conscience by abandoning the service of his parish in order to become a missionary. It is a curious specimen which it could have entertained you to see, if the recipient had been here at this moment I write to you. There is not one of us who has not been fired at. I will even say confidentially that only one of the Grand Vicars is on our side; the other¹⁵ overwhelms me with compliments but were it not for his being obliged to live in dependence on the other, who is infinitely superior to him in merit, he would have blocked us; we would have been nipped in the bud. This little schemer, whom I was kind, not to say virtuous, enough to recommend to you, is our bitter enemy, although in secret for he dares not attack me frontally. Our response to all such people is to do as much good as we can; but they are truly pitiable.

¹⁴ The beginning and end of this letter are omitted. Eugene says that he is overwhelmed with work and that he is ruining his health. He is sorry that so little is being done at Paris on behalf of his relatives.

¹⁵ Jean-Joseph Beylot.

To return to the question of uniting, I desire it but do not see it yet to be feasible since it is no more to the liking of the Grand Vicars than of our missionaries. We must not, however, lose sight of the possibility. We would need, both of us, to be recognized by the government and authorized to receive legacies. A man has just died and left us four thousand francs which it will be much trouble to obtain. I am surprised that you have not made more progress. Our house will always be quite a fine establishment and of major importance for the whole of Provence. I hope then that the future archbishop will protect it; the difficulty of supplying it with personnel should determine him not to oppose its being united to yours. The same reason should convince our missionaries who (at present) insist that they see no advantage therein for us and for the work as we see it. If we can give them good reasons, it will not be impossible to have them change their stance. For the moment, they absolutely wish to work only in villages and not leave Provence: one for family reasons; another for reasons of health; another because of an invincible repugnance and another, because he could be sent anywhere save in his own region. We are five in all, a number so inadequate for the work we have to do that we will infallibly succumb, myself especially for whom the time that we are not on missions is not a time of rest. Patience! Were I alone to perish...

I resume my letter for the hundredth time. Had I begun it six months ago, it would have been finished before you could complain. But enough said about that. You ask if we could do the missions of Arles and Toulon with you. I have proposed this to our little community but they do not think it possible. First, because we have refused to put on a mission for two parish priests at Marseilles for the reason that we are determined to begin with the villages; 2° because, after promising to go to Martigues, we drew back, partly on the same grounds and partly because of our fewness in number; 3° because we have also put off to a remote date the mission they asked us to do at Brignoles¹⁶; finally, because we are engaged to work in villages for the whole mission season. Particular circumstances oblige us to begin even in advance; indeed we will be setting forth on the first of September. We are going to preach underground perhaps. Would to God we can make ourselves heard in hell. I do not joke by saying that since we may be preaching underground; we are going to do this first mission in a region inhabited only by miners who spend their lives in coal pits. I expect we will be obliged to

¹⁶ Ms.: Brignolles.

go and unearth them, showing them a light more brilliant than the sun and which will blind them less...¹⁷

14. To Monsieur l'abbé de Forbin-Janson, Vicar General of Chambéry, house of the Mission of France, Rue Notre-Dame des Champs, No. 18, at Paris.¹⁸

Legal authorisation for the Missionaries of France. Expulsion of a member; virtues of the other missionaries of Provence. Hilaire Aubert at Aix. It is important always to wear the cross of the missionary. Opposition of certain priests.

L.J.C.

Aix, October 9, 1816.

It was impossible, my beloved brother, to reply to the letter which you last wrote to me. I was on a mission and our missions leave us no time to eat or sleep. They are feats of strength. But here I am, back again, and I hasten to thank you for your kind remembrance. The details that you give me about the avidity of the Parisians for the stations of Calvary¹⁹, made up for the deprivation which your faithless correspondants inflicted on me by keeping to themselves the stories that you relate to me about the missions of Nantes and elsewhere. I add to these thanks the compliment that I owe you for the official declaration that we have just read in *Le Moniteur*: so much for that, you are now recognized. They should subsidize you as well for the services that we render are somewhat more difficult and useful in a manner other than that of the Vicars, etc. We have considered ourselves very fortunate to be able to extend our hospitality to the good brother Hilaire. I would wish that everyone of your group be of his kind, which is ours too; but I have reason to believe that much has to be done to achieve this. If I were you, I would aim at somewhat less brilliance and I would insist more on soundness.

Of what use are fine speeches if one is conceited? Humility, the spirit of abnegation, obedience, etc., and the utmost in the way of fraternal charity are also necessary for the good order and the happiness of a Society. Not all

¹⁷ This refers to the mission at Fuveau, September 1-29, 1816. Cf. *Missions O.M.I.* 1955, pp. 551-552.

¹⁸ Orig.: Paris, arch. de la Sainte-Enfance.

¹⁹ At Mont-Valérien.

your people have properly understood that. I attribute this failing to a certain necessity wherein you find yourself to accept men capable of preaching. Here we agree on no such arrangements. We were six. Of these six, one²⁰ did not have the spirit of a man of the Church. He did poor work. We asked him to withdraw. Our community is very fervent. There are no better priests throughout the diocese. Hilaire will give our young people a retreat of eight days in preparation of the Feast of All Saints. I hope it will have a good effect. I will see that he does not exhaust himself too much but I warn you about him generally: he does not take enough care of himself. At Marseilles, he preached up to three times a day. He does not have the constitution for that. If care is not taken, he will perish as a victim of his zeal. While on this subject, I take the liberty of telling you that you would have done well to adopt the use of the crucifix, at least during the conducting of your missions. You would hardly believe the effect it produces and how useful it is. People accustomed to ecclesiastical attire are little impressed; but the crucifix to them is awesome. How often have I seen, even amongst libertines, some who, when they see it, cannot help removing their hats. It gives a decided authority; it distinguishes the missionaries from other priests; and that indeed is good because the missionary should be regarded as an extraordinary man. It is useful to the priest in the confessional and, on the day of absolution, it helps the penitent, in whose hands we place it, to conceive sorrow for his sins, to detest them and even to weep because of them. It must needs be that what we have experienced has at all times been acknowledged since, in other Catholic countries, all missionaries carry it as a sign of authority for their mission, etc. I cannot imagine how you have been prevented by the feeble reasons that those who think you should not carry it have given. This to me is an act of weakness, a shameful tribute that you are willing to give to the philosophy of a small number of persons whose antipathy you should have scorned. It would seem that you are fearful of taking part in the folly of the cross. What shall I say to you? I blame this human prudence. You must be more openly a Christian, a priest and an apostle than you have been in this circumstance. You know that I speak my thoughts frankly. But only to you do I say this. It is not a matter for excuses.

Here I am as displeased as ever with priests who cannot stand hearing the sound of the benedictions that all around are pronounced on our work. There are those who have gone so far as to turn people away who, had it

²⁰ M. Icard.

not been for their “charitable” concern, would have been benefactors of our house. They apparently have illusions about their intentions, which might be good. As for me, when they meet me, they are always full of compliments. May the good God change them!...²¹

15. [To Father Tempier at Aix].²²

Poverty. Mortification.

[Marignane²³, November 20, 1816].

...They have played a trick on me by sending me new trousers as if my old patched ones did not suffice; but they are bound they will not leave me just this mark of poverty...

...Buy a scourge from the Carmelite Sisters and have M. Maunier bring it to me. I am not afraid you may be alarmed at seeing me armed with this instrument...

16. [To Father Tempier at Aix].²⁴

Instructions to prepare the Statutes of the Society.

[Marignane, December 15, 1816].

...Busy yourself with our Statutes. We need not take much from those of Paris since they concern a Society composed of several houses whereas

²¹ The end of this letter is omitted where Eugene asks that influence be brought to bear on the Chief Almoner so that his uncle Fortuné might obtain some means of livelihood on his return to France.

²² YENVEUX, III, 5; IV, 210. According to YENVEUX (IV, 210) the second paragraph of this letter was written in 1819 but he would seem to be in error since Father Tempier was then at Laus. This text was written while Father Tempier was residing at Aix and Father Maunier was preaching with Father de Mazenod. Such was the case during the mission at Marignane in 1816. We have inserted these few lines here because we cannot find the precise date on which they were written and they correspond well enough with the content of the first paragraph and with the historic circumstances of the letter of November 20, 1816.

²³ Father de Mazenod was preaching the mission of Marignane (Nov. 17 to Dec. 15) with Fathers Deblieu, Mye and Maunier. Cf. *Missions O.M.I.*, 1865, pp. 276-286, 418-431.

²⁴ REY, I, 203.

ours will never have more than one. Spend two hours every day at this occupation. I see that the Minister's intention would be that we form but one society together with that of the Missionaries of France.²⁵ Read again St. Philip of Neri and the Petition²⁶ that we have presented to the Vicars General...

²⁵ M. Guigou, Capitular Vicar of Aix, had written to the Minister for Religious Affairs, on August 31, 1816, to request royal authorisation in favour of instituting the Missionaries of Aix. Lainé, the Minister, replied on November 19 by asking for further information and observed that the Mission of Aix "appears to be entirely similar" to the Mission of France. Moreover, on December 9th he announced that, by Order of the King, the church of the Mission had been ceded to the Missionaries of France. This obviously was an error but Father de Mazenod could not help making the remark that we find in his letter of December 15th. In order to enlighten the Minister, he had the Statutes of the Mission drawn up and sent to Paris on December 30th. Cf.: J. PIELORZ, *Démarches du Fondateur pour obtenir l'autorisation du Gouvernement (1816-1817)*, in *Missions O.M.I.*, 1958, pp. 87-119.

²⁶ Petition to the Vicars General of Aix, January 25th, 1816. Text published in *Missions O.M.I.*, 1957, pp. 137-144.

17. To my beloved brothers.¹

Arrival at Paris. Forthcoming visit to the Minister of the Interior.

Paris, July 19th, 1817,
Feast of our holy Patron.²

I write only these two words, my dear and good brothers, to give you news of my happy arrival at Paris³ without mishap other than having shivered all the way from Lyons to here, while from Aix to Lyons, we could not breathe because of the heat. For the rest, my appetite was good and I slept soundly if not peacefully; the company was passable but not able to arouse me from a kind of musing which brought me back ceaselessly to you whom I had left so regretfully. It is to be hoped that it will not be long; I have already requested an audience from the Minister who will write me one of these days.

I believe, from what the person who took my letter to him said to me, that he has Corsica on his mind more than anything else;⁴ we will see what will come of it. The King dealt in Council yesterday with the missions in general; he spoke well of them. On Wednesday, the same question will be taken up. I hope I shall have seen the Minister by then.

¹ RAMBERT, I, 232-233; REY, I, 209.

² At the beginning of the Mission of Provence, St. Vincent de Paul was chosen as patron of the missionaries; later he was replaced with St. Alphonsus Liguori after the latter was canonized (May 26, 1839).

³ The Founder remained at Paris from July to November, 1817, in the hope of obtaining official recognition from the Government for his Society which was quite opposed at Aix. He also sought to obtain favours for his father and uncles. Cf.: J. LEFLON, *Eugene de Mazenod*, Vol. II, 61-86.

⁴ The Minister of the Interior had sent to the Capitular Vicars of Aix on April 15th, 1817, a pressing request for missionaries for Corsica. They replied to him that de Mazenod and some other priests could perhaps go there. See letter of May 16 from the Vicars to the Minister; and that of May 31 from the Minister to the Prefect of Corsica.

I am only inclined to speak of you, of our good novices. Tell them many a thing on my behalf; let them not forget me in their prayers. I celebrate today our Feast with you, at least in spirit. May our holy Patron communicate to us something of his spirit. Let us love one another in God and for God and for ever.

Eugene

18. [To Father Tempier at Aix].⁵

Visit to Mont Valérien. The Society of the Missionaries of Provence can only be approved by a law voted in both Chambers (of Parliament). Watch over the health and regularity of the novices and the Oblate students. Is united with them in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament.

Le Calvaire near Paris, July 25th, 1817.

I have come to spend half the day at Mont Valérien⁶, my very dear friend, and as I enjoy no Feast unless you are part of it, I come to speak with you for a while. I am sad indeed to find myself two hundred leagues from my dear, my very dear friends, from my family, my children, my brothers and especially from you who are unique to me; but one must bear one's exile with patience and resignation. It will be prolonged until I have met and seen our new archbishop⁷; it is with him that I must deal regarding our affairs. There is nothing to do at the moment with the Government. The Minister has convinced himself that we can only be approved by a law. I leave it to you to judge if we should try it! I asked him for an interview which he granted; he received me very well but kept on insisting on his procedure: "Keep on until the opening of Parliament" he told me. On my making the remark that it would be funny to take up the time of both Houses with so small an enterprise as ours, he replied that not a few less important ones would end up there...

July 26th.

...I call attention to your health and to that of the whole of our dear family. Observe indispositions from the moment they begin. Watch out for

⁵ RAMBERT, I, 233-234; REY, I, 211, 222; YENVEUX, V, 181; VIII, 171.

⁶ The Founder lodged at Paris with the Missionaries of France. He visited the Calvary of Mont Valérien with Forbin-Janson.

⁷ Archbishop Ferdinand de Bausset-Roquefort, transferred from Vannes to Aix, August 8th 1817.

the lungs of our young men. Give me news of each one in particular. Let them get lots of rest; be willing to let them remain an extra hour in bed. During vacations, when they no longer have the daily exercise of going to and from the seminary, have them go for a walk two or even three times a week if necessary, but do not allow them to go until the sun is declining; the midday heat will be more harmful to them than useful. But after having cared for their bodies, see that they do not neglect their souls. Let fervour be sustained, interior life, love of abnegation, of mortification, solitude, assiduity for study. All that is necessary. Tell them they are ever before my eyes, that I think of them, that I love them. Almost every evening I am with you before the Blessed Sacrament when you are saying your evening prayers. I delight in this thought in the chapel of M. Liautard⁸ where I go at that hour to adore our divine Master. Think of me at that moment. It is my only consolation for I pine far from you; nothing assuages our separation. Pray for the blind or the wicked who are vexing us.

Adieu, my dear, my very dear friend; I love you as myself, pray for me.

Adieu.

19. [To Father Tempier at Aix].⁹

The Society of Missionaries of Provence is recognized by the Government. Anonymous memorandum against Father de Mazenod. The new concordat.

Paris, August 5, 1817.

You can let it be known throughout the city, my dear friend for the consolation of worthy people and to the despair of the wicked, that we are recognized by the Government and authorized to continue *the functions* that we have *so happily begun*.¹⁰ These are the very terms of the letter which the

⁸ Founder of Stanislas College.

⁹ Authenticated copy sent by Father Tempier to Madame de Mazenod. Rome, arch. of the Postulation: DM IX, 2.

¹⁰ Father de Mazenod could not hope to obtain shortly the recognition of his Society by a law voted in the Houses. Hence he requested from the Minister a royal ordinance which "provisory and until a law will have definitely stipulated the mode of being of this establishment" would authorise "the reverend de Mazenod to join with several priests of good will... in order to devote themselves to the religious instruction of the youth (of Aix) and thence to go forth into the parishes of cities and especially of the countryside." He added: "If I return to my diocese without bringing the least sign of the approbation of the Government, I

Minister has just addressed to *M. de Mazenod, superior of the Missions of Aix*. You will note that M. de Mazenod had never assumed this title in speaking or in writing to the Minister. Apparently it is to belie the author of the anonymous letter which denounced me to the Minister while designating me, such is the regard he has for my person, as *a certain Sieur de Mazenod, priest of this diocese, calling himself a missionary*.

Yes, my dear, will you believe it, in the midst of the unanimous chorus, as the Minister says further, of ecclesiastical, civil and military authorities who hasten to give him the most flattering tributes about me and our work, has been raised the voice of an anonymous wretch who has denounced the Sieur de Mazenod, who calls himself a missionary, as a man whose principles in respect to the hierarchy are most dangerous, who has dared to teach publicly in catechetical instructions that the Pope is infallible, who is at open war with all the parish priests of the city, against whom these same parish priests have brought a judicial complaint before the Vicars General over a grave insult that he took the liberty of perpetrating against them, etc., etc. His Excellency was indignant over the foulness of this man for whom he has the utmost disdain. Instead, he holds this Sieur de Mazenod in real esteem, is well pleased with him and has not judged him anything like as dangerous as M. Anonymous.

The noble¹¹ courier has brought three cardinals' birettas for the Périgord, de Bausset and de la Luzerne. The concordat is abrogated, that of Leo X is re-established.¹² The organic articles are destroyed. Seven more archdioceses, 35 dioceses. The present dioceses are reduced. Aix will bear also the title of Archdiocese of Embrun but is reduced to the *arrondissement*. Marseilles is re-established, Arles also, and Fréjus. We will have as suffragans only Fréjus, Digne and Gap. Bishoprics, chapters, pastors and seminaries will be endowed. Five bishops, not having resigned, have written a letter of excuse to the Pope; some, still obstinate, will be put aside. The

have lost half my strength and even run the risk of seeing the priests who have joined me being discouraged and returning home..." Letter to the Minister, July 31st, 1817, National Archives, Paris, F 19 5556.

The Minister could not obtain this Ordinance but repied by declaring, in his own name: "You can, while waiting for the day which cannot be far away, continue with your worthy collaborators in the functions which you have so happily begun" (August 4, 1817, I b.) For want of something better, the Founder was satisfied with this token and, in order to amplify its effect, wrote the enthusiastic letter of the 5th of August.

¹¹ Ms. *nobile* (Italian): noble.

¹² Allusion to the Concordat of June 11, 1817, which re-established the Concordat of 1516 and abrogated that of 1801.

King has explained the oath that is made to the Charter. The whole of it has been printed, following the agreement with the Pope, We will know the bishops within two days. It is certain that ours is Archbishop de Bausset. He will not have a vast diocese.

All that I report to you is certain, with the exception of the nomination of Archbishop de Bausset which is certain but with a lesser degree of certitude. All that has to do with our affairs is before my eyes...

20. [To Father Tempier at Aix].¹³

Grieves over living far from the community. Virtues on which religious Congregations are founded. Regularity. Opposition. Let the novices go frequently to the l'Enclos. Be attached to one's house. List of new bishops.

[Paris, August 12, 1817].

My very dear friend and brother,

If my letters give you as much pleasure as that which I experience on receiving your letters, I imagine that you wish to receive them oftener. As for myself, I would wish to have such happiness every day. I am bored when separated from you and pine for my return. Nothing on earth is worth being kept from dwelling pleasantly in our holy house with such good brothers as yourselves. Never have I appreciated so much *quam dulce et quam jucundum habitare fratres in unum*.¹⁴ This strikes me all the more in that I see with my own eyes that it is not given to all communities to taste this happiness, harder to find than one thinks in this world below. Let us pray God to preserve for us this precious blessing that men cannot snatch from us except by our own fault...

For the love of God never cease to inculcate and preach humility, abnegation, forgetfulness of self, disdain for worldly esteem. May these be ever the foundations of our little Society which, combined with a truly disinterested zeal for the glory of God and the salvation of souls, and the most tender, affectionate and sincere charity amongst ourselves, will make

¹³ RAMBERT, I, 234-235, 265; REY, I, 213-214, 222, 223; YENVEUX, I, 35, 50; V, 26 a, 26 b, 142, 181, 211, 235; VIII, 9, 171.

¹⁴ Ps. 132: *Ecce quam bonum*, etc. How good, how agreeable it is for brothers to dwell together.

of our house an earthly paradise and will establish it in more solid a manner than all possible orders and laws. Hold firmly the reins of discipline for this is the way to ensure perseverance. Slackness, as I see it, is the beginning of destruction. Insist that dissipation not enter by all the doors and windows that our ministry prevents us from closing. It will be more virtuous to be faithful to the rules when observed in spite of the obstacles that ceaselessly occur...

Venerable Paul of the Cross, founder of the Congregation of disclalced Clerks of the Passion and Death of Jesus Christ, whose life I am presently reading, said *le fondazioni devono essere parto della orazione*,¹⁵ which is to say that it is by prayer that foundations are laid. And thus with nothing he accomplished many things. If we knew how to pray better, we would have more courage. I cannot express how much I would wish that our little community might raise up in full view of the Church the fervour of the religious Orders and regular Congregations from which sprang such shining virtue in the first days of their establishment.

It seems to me that, although few in number, we could do still more good, console the Church for so many plagues that consume her on all sides, and sanctify ourselves in the most consoling and happy manner. I would prefer to show forth and practice this than to write about it but the good God has exiled me in punishment for not having availed myself enough of the means of salvation that his mercy provided in our holy house, in the midst of such good brothers as yourselves...

Dissolute or bad priests are the great plague of the Church. Let us wholly exert ourselves to mitigate this cancerous growth by keeping ourselves aloof both in conversation and conduct; we must not be afraid to be thought singular in that respect. Were we to behave like them, they would be our friends. On those terms, I prefer to have them as adversaries and calumniators. Saints have had to put up with this before our time. Let us imitate them and rejoice to be treated like them.

Venerable Paul, of whom I spoke a little while ago, wrote one day to one of his friends, at a time when he was much opposed: "Oh God! how

¹⁵ An Italian phrase which literally means: the foundations ought to spring from prayer. The Founder was no doubt reading the life of the Venerable Paul of the Cross († 1775) written and published in 1786 by the Venerable Vincent Marie Strambi, Passionist, Bishop of Macerata and Tolentino. A second biography of Paul of the Cross was not published until 1821. Paul of the Cross was beatified in 1853 and canonized in 1867. Vincent M. Strambi was beatified in 1925 and canonised in 1950.

the demons rage and what a tumult is raised by evil tongues! I do not know which side to turn and God knows in what a state I am... Patience, we must pray hard because storms arise on all sides and contrary winds blow from all quarters. May God be blessed!" He said moreover: "The ship is far at sea without sails or oars but is steered by the great Pilot who will guide it unfailingly to port. Although battered by the storm, it is thus that the great power and wisdom of the great Pilot at the helm will be more evident. Long live Jesus Christ who gives us strength to suffer all manner of grief for his love! The works of God have always been opposed so that divine magnificence may shine more brightly. When matters seem the most desperate is when they are on the point of succeeding. *Dominus mortificat... deducit an inferos et reducit*¹⁶ and may God give us the victory through *Jesum Christum Dominum nostrum*." So speak the saints, so they behave. On they went and prayed, letting others say what they would. Let us do the same!

... We must be sure that our good novices enjoy themselves three days of the week at *L'Enclos*¹⁷. I would not want them to go running in the fields or on the highways but that they go and breathe the excellent air at *L'Enclos* when it is no longer hot. One could delay supper an hour so that they might have time to profit from the coolness. They should not go late to bed but thus have recreation before supper. They would have adoration before leaving and the reading in a room or on a bench of *L'Enclos*. On returning they would only have to sit at table and dine and have evening prayers so that they would always be in bed at half past nine. This routine would be important for the health of our young people. For the rest, one should arrange everything in daylight for it would not be well for the community to come in after nightfall. I prefer *L'Enclos* because it is closer and the air is better there.

If some priest wished to join us, he should do so at this time... However we ought never to decide to receive doubtful candidates whose virtue has not been well tried.

One must moreover be greatly attached to the house. He who only looks on it as a hotel where he only passes through would do not good therein. One must be able to say like St. Thomas: *haec requies mea*¹⁸ for

16 I Sam. 2, 6: The Lord puts to death [and gives life]; he casts down into the dwelling of the dead and he raises up again.

17 *L'Enclos* is what it was called in French. It was the country house of Madame de Mazenod and was close to Aix.

18 Ps. 131, 14: It is ever my place of rest; I will dwell there...

the whole of one's life. I see that communities where this spirit reigns the most are those which do the most good and where one lives the most happily. May God give us the grace to be imbued with this truth and let us neglect nothing to instil it in our young people.

The list of bishops is not yet public. I could have been included if I had not preferred the obscure life of our holy community and the kind of ministry to which the Lord has called me in favour of youth and the poor.

21. [To Father Tempier at Aix].¹⁹

Regrets being far from the family. A notable grace received from God. The spirit that is proper to the Congregation.

[Paris] August 22, 1817.

I begin my letter today, my very dear friend and brother, by indulging in the pleasure of scolding you. Keep in mind that since your letter of the 7th I have received nothing from you. Do you not know that I regard myself as exiled in Paris, that I cannot live long separated from my dear family, and that my sole consolation is to converse with you and about all of you. Yet you wish to deprive me of this under the pretext of a greater good!

Oh I fear not to sacrifice the happiness of living with her whom they call in the world good fortune; I consider myself happy, on the contrary, to be able to credit myself for having known how to appreciate and prefer this family of my choice, to everything the world can offer...

...You want me to speak of something edifying, because that does good to the community but explain to me how it can happen that I may say something which can produce such an effect, preoccupied as I am with a thousand matters extraneous to piety...

We must admit however that we serve a great master and that one never loses anything on his account. I have just been more than ever confirmed in this conviction; so have I told myself, no later than this very day, in the Church of the Assumption where I went to thank him for a

¹⁹ RAMBERT, I, 236-237; YENVEUX, V, 87, 142, 261; VIII, 9-10.

notable and unexpected grace²⁰ which he had just granted me, and of which the consequences will be so felicitous for our holy house, that I wish to abandon myself to Him without ever being anxious about anything, doing everything for his glory and leaving him to care of the rest. It is truly inconceivable how he makes everything accord with his designs by ways we never would have thought of.

All that is very enigmatic for you. This is not yet the time for me to explain. I shall not delay in associating you with my gratitude, and all the more because I feel incapable of making any return by myself for all that I owe to this good Master, who truly arranges everything *suaviter et fortiter*. He has only to decide and kings themselves are obliged to obey. It is astonishing; it is stunning. I cannot say more to you; only let the community pray for my intention.

But who are we indeed that the good God should listen to our pleas? We are, or we ought to be, holy priests who consider themselves happy and very happy to devote their fortune, their health, their life in the service and for the glory of our God. We are put on earth, particularly those of our house, to sanctify ourselves while helping each other by our example, our words and our prayers. Our Lord Jesus Christ has left to us the task of continuing the great work of the redemption of mankind. It is towards this unique end that all our efforts must tend; as long as we will not have spent our whole life and given all our blood to achieve this, we having nothing to say; especially when as yet we have given only a few drops of sweat and a few spells of fatigue. This spirit of being wholly devoted to the glory of God, the service of the Church and the salvation of souls, is the spirit that is proper to our Congregation, a small one, to be sure, but which will always be powerful as long as she is holy. Our novices must steep themselves in these thoughts, which must sink deep in them and be often meditated. Each Society in the Church has a spirit which is its own; which is inspired by God according to the circumstances and needs of the times wherein it pleases God to raise these supporting bodies or rather it would be better to say these elite bodies which precede the main army on the march, which excel it in bravery and which thus obtains the more brilliant victories.

²⁰ He alludes to the unexpected nomination of Fortuné de Mazenod to the bishopric of Marseilles. Cf.: J. LEFLON, *Eugene de Mazenod*, Vol. II, pp. 73-79.

22. [To the Missionaries of Provence at Aix].²¹

In order to remain faithful to his missionary vocation, the Founder has refused important posts. However, he will possibly agree to become Vicar General of the new archbishop of Aix.

Paris, August 22, 1817.

Has it now been proved that I love you more than anything, my dear friends of the city of my birth? No, nothing has been able to seduce me. I have sacrificed for you what is called in the world one's fortune and I am well pleased. I am not referring to the two positions of Grand Vicar in the provinces for they were not worth counting or comparing with our holy mission and our dear Congregation, but to something more.²² And how could I consent to live two hundred leagues away from what is most dear in the world? I did not have the strength to acquiesce to that idea. The refusal might have seemed surprising but was not displeasing, such was the respect for my motive. So much so that I shall still have the happiness of living amongst all that I love. Let us pray God that this will always be for his greater glory and for our salvation. I shall never regret what I have just done because I believed myself obliged to be more interested in the spiritual good of my fellow citizens than in my fortune, this being the term we have to use. Nevertheless, it can happen that this devotedness on my part be quite detrimental to all. The Archbishop will give you the solution of this problem for, whatever disdain I profess for all possible honours, I could not, without lacking in my duty to my ministry, reappear at Aix without having previously received an authentic sign of the approbation and confidence of the new pastor that Providence has granted us. There are proprieties that I have neglected too much until now but in regard to which sad experience has taught me only too well that one must be more strict than I have been until the present...

²¹ YENVEUX, V, 261.

²² He is probably alluding to his refusal to be named Vicar General of Amiens in 1811 and of Chartres in 1817. Cf.: Journal, August 31, 1847. The latter promotion would have prepared him soon to become bishop for Bishop de Latil was chaplain of Count d'Artois, brother of the King, and member of the commission in charge of inquiries relative to the nomination of new bishops.

23. [To Father Tempier at Aix].²³

Fortuné de Mazenod has been named bishop of Marseilles. This will be advantageous for the Congregation. Pray that the bishop elect will return from Sicily and accept the nomination.

[Paris] September 7, 1817.

I have sent word to M. Maunier that my uncle is named bishop of Marseilles... With regard to all this, I assure you I consider only the greater good of our work, and that I am not thinking merely of the honour that can accrue there by for my uncle; and that is so true that I would not stir an inch to have him named elsewhere. My rejoicing over his nomination was only because of the great advantages that our undertaking would derive from it. I regard them as incalculable. So have prayers said lest, if I do succeed at this end, I fail with my uncle who could be quite unwilling.²⁴ I have written volumes on that aspect, I have elaborated excellent reasons *ad infinitum*, God alone can dispose hearts persuasively...

If my uncle ends up as bishop of Marseilles, I think that you will believe that I have employed my time well enough for our work, for it is the happiest thing that could happen in its favour. We will be assured of being able to do good in the diocese of Marseilles.

24. [To Father Tempier at Aix].²⁵

Visits to the newly named Archbishop of Aix. A cordial first interview in the course of which Archbishop de Bausset announced that he will name Father de Mazenod as Vicar General. Subsequently the attitude of the prelate is more reserved.

[Paris] October 9, 1817.

I am well aware, my dear friend and good brother, that the prolongation of my stay at Paris demands some explanation. It would seem strange to me to find myself still here if I did not know my position better than anyone. Providence evidently had its intentions when it inspired me to

²³ RAMBERT, I, 238-239.

²⁴ Fortuné de Mazenod returned to France at the end of December with his two brothers, Chevalier Charles-Eugène and the president, Charles-Antoine, father of the Founder. However, Fortuné did not become bishop of Marseilles until 1823. In the meantime, he lived with his nephew at the house of the Mission of Aix.

²⁵ RAMBERT, I, 246-247; REY, I, 216-217.

come to Paris. The principle affair which brought me was finished in eight days. Moreover, my presence here having evoked the memory of my uncle, he was named in twenty-four hours to the bishopric of Marseilles. I have regarded this nomination as the greatest proof of the protection of God and I shall not change my opinion, even if my uncle were to stand firm in refusing a see that I believe him, in conscience, obliged to accept, were it only for our sake. There now remains one last thing for me to do: Archbishop de Bausset, named Archbishop of Aix, arrived while I was on retreat. He had written to me himself to congratulate me over the nomination of my uncle. He told me in this letter that he had written to his nephew, the Prefect of Marseilles, to felicitate him. He added that he considered my uncle as infinitely more suitable for the archbishopric of Aix than himself, etc. I go to see him and he receives me with open arms, goes into a thousand details with me about the diocese and finishes by telling me that he proposes to make a clean sweep and name me as his grand vicar together with another person whom he indicated to me.

That was something to be glad about, I believe, for that was all we needed, not that I want to be a grand vicar; for me that is of little moment and would even be burdensome; but the advantage for our work was incalculable and I only envisaged it from that point of view. Apparently since then our enemies have set in motion all their machinations and must have succeeded in changing the mind of the archbishop; I am at least constrained to think so, judging by his subsequent attitude towards me. In the five or six times that I have been to see him, I have met him only once. We came together in fact at Issy but not the least little sign of confidence, not a word about the diocese, about his projects and I came to the conclusion that I am irksome to him personally for, after he has made so many overtures to me, he dares not overcome the opposition that they have shown to him. There, my dear friend, is where we stand.

I shall wait a little while longer and, if he continues to act in this manner, I shall really see to it that I have an explanation.

25. [To Fathers Tempier and Maunier at Aix].²⁶

Bishop de Bausset, fearful of the parish priests of Aix, will not name Fr. de Mazenod as Vicar General. Is reproachful about his behaviour. Must he continue the work of the missions?

[Paris] October 19, 1817.

I must not leave you ignorant, my very dear friends and unfailingly good brothers, that our cause... I needed a very special grace not to quarrel openly with the Prelate for letting himself be influenced to the point of being drawn into the maelstrom of the passions of men who for a long time now have impeded and persecuted us...²⁷ This is perhaps the greatest sacrifice of my self-love I have made. Twenty times in my discussion with the Prelate, I was tempted to jump up... But the Mission, the Congregation, and all those souls who have yet to be saved through our ministry held me back, nailed me to the hard cross which my nature could scarcely put up with... He gave me all the blame and vindicated the parish priests... If I showed the Prelate some surprise at being so badly rewarded for my unstinting devotedness, his Lordship interjected Scriptural passages to prove to me that one must count solely on eternal reward, that one must sincerely say, like the prophet: *elegi abjectus esse in domo Dei*²⁸, that I must beware of pharisaic pride which loves to be saluted in public places, take the first seat, be adorned with beautiful stoles, that he was free to make or not make me his Vicar General... In all this, I certainly find only this last assertion reasonable but it was a quarrel about nothing since it was not I who had asked him to make me his Grand Vicar, that it was he who had broached the matter to me and if I had not refused, it was because I was inclined to believe that this title would be useful to gain more respect for our holy work...

We parted good friends, that is to say, he embraced me two or three times as if the wounds which rent my heart could be healed by passing a sponge over my face.

I beg you, my dear friends, to join in finding out before God what we must do. Put aside all that is human, consider only God, the Church and the

²⁶ RAMBERT, I, 247-248; REY, I, 217; YENVEUX, V, 71-72. Text written by Yenveux himself.

²⁷ Archbishop de Bausset had by then become cognizant of the complaints of the parish priests of Aix against Father de Mazenod and the missions. Moreover, his nephew, Villeneuve-Bargemon, prefect of the Bouches-du-Rhône, had counselled him, it seems, to be very prudent and not to indispose his clergy. Cf.: J. LEFLON, *Eugene de Mazenod*, Vol. II, p. 82.

²⁸ Ps. 83, 11: "Willingly would I reach but the threshold of God's house, so I might dwell no more in the abode of sinners!"

souls to be saved. I will go by what you decide. I am ready to drink the chalice to the dregs. Note that the humiliations are for me; there never was any question about yourselves in all the words exchanged. The Archbishop seems fairly favourable towards the missions but we will have to expect that he will harass us from all sides. He will only let himself be advised by our enemies of whom he is afraid.

My first natural impulse was to leave him in the lurch, but I shall, with the help of God, do exactly the opposite. I have refused to be Grand Vicar and theological advisor of the bishop who is most influential²⁹, who in a few years would have made me bishop and I refused new offers made to me the day after I received this cruel setback... The fact is my conscience forces me not to consider my personal interest in the policy I have to follow... God will be our judge; I am not afraid to appeal in his court against all the injustices of men. That is the extent to which my intentions are pure and my views are upright. So now, see for yourselves and decide. I feel courageous enough if supported by your virtue, encouraged by your resignation to endure all the outrages which are still in store for me. You will be my strength and we will mutually console each other when the wicked have their way. The piety of the young plants which grow about us will compensate us for our sorrows. I will be very humiliated, myself, because it is supposed that I take much to heart what I have undertaken; this humiliation will be useful to me otherwise for I am so little attached to what I have undertaken that in this moment the greatest act of virtue that I can do, the greatest victory that grace can gain over nature is to be steadfast and bear the brunt.

Certainly, one's unregenerate nature that has to be crucified would revel in this circumstance if, with a haughty tone proportionate to the outrages that I endure, I went and notified His Grace the Archbishop that I want nothing more from his diocese, that I will take back my house to do what I like with it, that I let the youths go free and that I let fall all the bane of the measures that the indignity of this business determines me to take, on those who are the authors thereof and that, in order that there be no mistake about it, I am going to publish all that I have done for the good of my country and the obstacles that self-interest and jealousy have never ceased to oppose to it, etc... But God would hold me to account. I shall not do it unless you do not wish to put up with it anymore. In this case, it would not be my choice so I would no longer have to give an account before God. So

²⁹ Bishop de Latil of Chartres.

there you are, in possession of the facts and positions. Reply to me immediately. Your response will be the rule of my conduct. But you must lose no time. Adieu, dear friends; when I wish consolation, I think of you whom I love with all my heart.

26. [To Fathers Tempier and Maunier at Aix].³⁰

Hopes to be able to continue working at Aix, unless it be impossible to come to an agreement with Archbishop de Bausset.

[Paris] October 22, 1817.

Although I wrote you at some length the other day, my dear friends and good brothers, I take up my pen today once more to speak to you about my dispositions and reassure you properly concerning myself. I am perfectly at peace and disposed with all my heart to continue the good work begun. I am disposed not to leave the *Midi* where our ministry can be most fruitful and I entirely refuse Chartres whose bishop I have avoided seeing, precisely not to be impeded in my determination.

If it is absolutely impossible to reach an agreement at Aix and if the Archbishop deludes himself to the point of depriving his diocese of all the good we could do there, we will go elsewhere. It would cost me dearly to abandon Aix but the sacrifice would not be in vain. Nevertheless I think that we ought not to decide this except as a last resort; the Archbishop will decide. M. Duclaux, whose saintliness you well know, is much inclined to think that we should do our best to remain at Aix; but does not wish them to leave us short of any amenities that we have a right to demand. I assure you on this score that I will not be difficult; I will never ask for anything beyond what is necessary for us to be able to do good. I believe, for that matter, that it would be better to practice patience and bide our time while things work out for the best. Let us stand together, let us be for God alone, and we will be strong.

You will have received my letter of the 19th which perhaps disquieted you somewhat; take heart; I will say to you as Saint Paul did to the Ephesians: *Peto ne deficiatis in tribulationibus meis pro vobis, quae est gloria vestra.*³¹ It is quite simple, the devil wishes to do us evil because we

³⁰ RAMBERT, I, 249; REY, I, 217.

³¹ Ephes. 3, 13: "So I beg you, never lose confidence just because of the trials that I go through on your account: they are your glory."

are doing it to him. Please God we will do him still more by snatching away from him, if possible, all the souls he is dragging into hell. He would certainly want to seize back those of our youths at Aix; ought we to deliver them to him? God would hold us to account for them.

27. [To Brother H. Courtès at Aix].³²

Sorry for not having written sooner. Be prudent in regard to health and give a good example.

Paris, October 22, 1817.

The missionaries who are going to Arles³³ will bring you, my dear friend, this tardy response to the letter which you had the goodness to write to me on August 29th. I think, my child, that I would not have dared to face you on my return had I not been preceded by this letter. What did you think of me? That I was lazy, nothing else, is that not so my Courtès? Take care for I would not forgive your coming to any other conclusion. As for idleness, I'll let it go although I may still be able to defend myself on that score. Anyway my heart is free from reproach. That is all I need.

You say nothing to me about your health as if I must be indifferent about the condition in which you find yourself. I clearly see that I will have to go and find out for myself on the spot. I could well wish to press you against my heart to give you warmth. What I would not give to see you well! So help yourself a little, do not leave it all to the doctor to do. Must it be that we shall never live under the same roof? You do not wish to close my eyes? It would nevertheless be a consolation for me; but who can read what is at the back of your mind? If you desire health, it is only to escape more quickly from me... Become well just the same whatever it must cost me when I shall lose you for ever.

Word reaches me that your pupils are making an astonishing progress. I hope that you do not tire yourself too much.

I believe you follow the exercises of the house. Continue, my dear child, to give the good example of regularity, of modesty, of obedience and

³² RAMBERT, I, 257-258. Hippolyte Courtès, in minor orders, 19 years, had been a novice with the Jesuits in Paris. Illness obliged him to return to Aix. He asked Father de Mazenod to let him stay at the house of the Mission which he well knew as he had been a Sodalist. He decided to remain with the Missionaries of Provence and became professed on November 1, 1818.

of all the religious virtues. It is only by such means that we will be able to overcome the efforts of the enemy of all good; we will be invincible as long as we are virtuous. So be it ever increasingly, that is the best reply that we can make to those who do us evil; also pray for them; give them in all circumstances good for evil.

Adieu, dear friend, I embrace and love you with all my heart.

Eug[ene] de Mazenod, missionary priest.

28. [To Fathers Tempier and Maunier, at Aix].³⁴

Father de Mazenod will show himself worthy of his co-workers. Together, in spite of difficulties, they will strive like good soldiers of Jesus Christ.

[Paris] October 31, 1817.

Well do I recognize you, dear and good brothers of mine, from the letter you wrote me on the 23rd.³⁵ Very well! I shall be worthy of you. It is God for whom we suffer; we shall not let ourselves be disheartened: *Ob quam causam etiam haec patior sed non confundor*.³⁶ The demon would triumph were we to fail since souls redeemed by our Lord would be abandoned. So let us continue to strive like good soldiers of Jesus Christ: *Labora sicut bonus miles Christi Jesu*.³⁷ What does it matter after all if some

³³ Missionaries of France who preached, in company with the Missionaries of Provence, the mission of Arles from November 2nd to mid-December.

³⁴ RAMBERT, I, 250-251; YENVEUX, V, 67-68.

³⁵ Father Tempier had replied to his letter of October 19th: "One must admit that God treats us with great goodness since he shares with us gifts that he has made to his own Son... You will (we trust) not permit us to be dissociated from you, although seemingly these humiliations may be personal to you. Whatever we may have done, how have we deserved this grace thus to share in the precious cross of the Son of God? Truly, as regards myself personally, I am quite abashed and feel that I am far from deserving this favour. It is a grace of predilection which God gives only to his saints; how could we then complain? Please God that his Providence might always treat us thus and above all that we respond well thereto! Our poor family, so humiliated and so despised would soon become quite holy and then what fruits..." (RAMBERT, I, 250).

Father Maunier added: "In God alone we place our confidence and, in consequence, we could not be blamed. To endure being reproached for having wished to do good, such glory is too much for us, let us admit, at least for me who am only a midget in the Church. But since it is God alone for whom we act and for whom we ought to act, let us always do what we can, let us not flinch from this hard road which lies before us, let us not lose sight of our divine Master who goes before us, carrying his cross and who deigns to invite us to follow him..." (YENVEUX, V, 231).

³⁶ 2 Tim. 1, 12: Therefore I suffer as I do. But I am not ashamed.

³⁷ 2 Tim, 3: Share in suffering as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.

individuals may have revolted against us? Saint Paul the Apostle was treated worse than us for not only was he abandoned by Demas, but he met an Alexander who did him much evil and all those who were in Asia went away and left him: *Demas me reliquit, diligens hoc saeculum. Alexander multa mala mihi ostendit, reddet illi Dominus secundum opera ejus. Aversi sunt a me omnes qui in Asia sunt.*³⁸ And when he had to defend his case before the Emperor, no one stood by him; they all abandoned him: *in prima mea defensione nemo mihi affuit, sed omnes me dereliquerunt.*³⁹ Nonetheless he did not lose courage and with the powerful help of God he accomplished his allotted mission and was delivered from the jaws of the lion:⁴⁰ *Dominus autem mihi astitit et confortavit me ut per me praedicatione impleatur et audient omnes gentes; et liberatus sum de ore leonis.* It would indeed be foolish for anyone to desire to do good but not experience opposition: *omnes qui pie volunt vivere in Christo Jesu persecutionem patientur.*⁴¹ Saint Paul was subjected to it everywhere but nevertheless was helped through it by the Lord. Let us be firm in our confidence that it will be the same for us: *persecutiones, passiones: qualia mihi facta sunt Antiochiae, Iconii et Lystris; quales persecutiones sustinui, et ex omnibus eripuit me Dominus.*⁴²

29. [To Father Tempier at Aix].⁴³

Father de Mazenod preferred not to be superior. Virtues which novices and students ought to have. Rules to follow when leaving and on the way to the seminary.

Paris, November 4, 1817.

God is my witness that it is not my ambition to be in command. That is so true that I cannot take it upon myself to give orders and just the word 'superior' upsets a certain interior feeling which resists every time it is

³⁸ 2 Tim. 4, 10, 14; 1, 15: For Demas, in love with this present world, has deserted me... Alexander... did me great harm; the Lord will requite him for his deeds... All who are in Asia turned away from me.

³⁹ 2 Tim. 4, 16: At my first defense no one took my part; all deserted me.

⁴⁰ 2 Tim. 4, 17: But the Lord stood by me and gave me strength to proclaim the message fully, that the Gentiles might hear it. So I was rescued from the lion's mouth.

⁴¹ 2 Tim. 3, 12: Indeed all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.

⁴² 2 Tim. 3, 11: ...my persecutions, my sufferings, what befell me at Antioch, at Iconium, and at Lystra, what persecutions I endured; yet from them all the Lord rescued me.

⁴³ RAMBERT, I, 268-269; REY, I, 222-223; YENVEUX, III, 110; VIII, 170, 195.

pronounced, but I quite insist on order which cannot exist where there is no subordination. Let them give me a superior and I swear to him in advance to be entirely submitted to him and promise him to act only by his will which will be, in my eyes, that of God whose instrument he will be in regard to me. Please God you would wish to grant me this favour! That will come about, I hope.

As the number of young people who belong to the house has increased⁴⁴, exactness and regularity must grow in proportion. This is the time to form the spirit of the house which I have discussed with you in another letter. You have to beware of frivolity, of self-sufficiency, indiscipline, independance... I quite insist that all give a good example at the seminary... They ought not to forget that we are a Congregation of regular clerics, that we ought in consequence to be more fervent than simple seminarists, that we are called to replace in the Church the piety and all the virtues of the religious Orders, that all their actions ought to be done with the dispositions in which the apostles were when they were in the Cenacle waiting for the Holy Spirit to come and enflame them with his love and give them the signal to go forth swiftly and conquer the world, etc. They ought to be more holy than the pupils of the Fathers of the Retreat⁴⁵ who have only their own sanctification to think of while ours must make provision thereof doubly, both for themselves and for those whom they will have to lead to the knowledge of the true God and to the practice of virtue.

In the meanwhile, until we decide what must be added to the Rules, as soon as the bell for departure has been rung, the student novices⁴⁶ must present themselves before the superior to receive his blessing; they will thence proceed to the church to adore Our Lord; after that they will leave and go in silence to the seminary, two by two or three by three, but not in a group. They can however break silence to speak in a low voice and without gesticulating, only with their companion and about class subjects. Once arrived at the seminary, if it is not time to enter into class, they will go into the church to adore the most holy Sacrament. If they are obliged to wait,

⁴⁴ Several young men had entered the novitiate: Jean Baptiste de Bausset (April 1816), Alexandre Dupuy (October 3, 1816), H. Courtès (October 15, 1816), H. Bourrelrier (November 4, 1816), Marius Suzanne (January 21, 1817), G. Dalmas (March 30, 1817) and Lalande (October 29, 1817).

⁴⁵ YENVEUX, VIII, p. 195, states: "as the pupils of Father Charles who are not called to do such great things, and who have only..." Father Charles was the superior of the boarding school of the Fathers of Christian Retreat or Grey Brothers, founded by Father Receveur, and established at Aix after the Concordat of 1801.

⁴⁶ YENVEUX, VIII, p. 170, states: "These gentlemen" instead of "the student novices."

they will study their lesson and continue to observe the strictest silence. In class they will follow the seminary rules exactly and will leave as soon as it is ended, again entering the church to thank Our Lord. They can never penetrate within the seminary to speak even with a director without having obtained permission before leaving the house and when they are in the superior's presence. He will give such permission only reluctantly because the others would be obliged to wait for whomever had gone into the seminary so that all can always return together in silence. In the case of not having foreseen the need to speak with someone at the seminary and this being truly indispensable, permission should be asked from the most senior who would be obliged to refer the matter to the superior on reaching the house; it is to him that they present themselves after having adored the Blessed Sacrament. If anyone commits some fault against the Rule during the walk or at the seminary, he will accuse such to the superior on returning.

30. [To Father Tempier at Aix].⁴⁷

Is sorry to learn that the priests of Aix are adamant and continue to speak ill of Father de Mazenod. Is glad to decline honours in order to stay with the community.

[Paris] November 24, 1817.

Is it possible that our patience has failed to soften the anger of these worthy parish priests? The only thing that afflicts me in all this is that these people, with dispositions so contrary to charity, do not refrain from ascending to the altar. If I had the misfortune to do a hundredth of what they permit themselves to do, I would celebrate the sacred mysteries only after having done penance, while not only asking God's pardon but also making reparation to my neighbour. And these are men who have one foot in the grave! I pity them with all my heart yet, apart from the offence against God which I regard as very grave, I am little concerned about their wrath.

As for the unbecoming remarks they let fall in my regard, how I laugh for pity's sake. If I had as little fear of God as they, I would have tricked them. But far be it from me to render them evil for evil; on the contrary, I would well wish to do them all the good they could desire for themselves.

⁴⁷ YENVEUX, I, 50-51; V, 65, 255.

As for the honours that it amuses them to say I am soliciting without being able to obtain them, they must know that I had only to stoop in order to make them mine; but if they knew all the strength and extent of the affection I have primarily for yourselves, who are my brothers, my friends, my other selves and moreover my concern for the souls of the young so cruelly forsaken as long as I had not undertaken to lead them in the right path by the same means that are in the power of the parish priests to use and which, in consequence, they ought to use as I have done by the grace of God, and just as you have done who concert your efforts with mine; if they knew, I say, my sentiments in this matter, they would cease to be surprised at my renouncing the honours offered to me and returning as a simple priest to this cherished family in order to undergo once more all the perfidiousness of which I have already experienced such cruel attacks. When one prefers eternity to temporality, poverty to riches, work to repose, when one is more concerned with the sanctification of a soul than with all the kingdoms of the earth, one returns with joy to a community where reigns peace, union and all sorts of virtues and one does not pine for the princely house, canonries, grand vicariates, etc., and one cares so little for all these things that one refuses them as I insist I have done, without effort, without regret; on the contrary, with joy and satisfaction...

31. [To Father Mye].¹

The Society opens a second house: the sanctuary of Notre Dame du Laus.

[Aix] October, 1818.

We have formed an establishment at Notre Dame du Laus² thus bringing ourselves into direct relations with the dioceses of Gap, Digne, Embrun and Sisteron. We have become the guardians of one of the most celebrated shrines of the Blessed Virgin where the good God is pleased to manifest the power that he has granted to this dear Mother of the Mission. More than 20 000 souls flock there every year to renew themselves in spiritual fervour in the shelter of this truly impressive shrine and which inspires one with something indefinable but which marvellously draws one up to God. From there, after having preached penance to these good and faithful people and after having shown them the grandeur and glory of Mary, we will spread throughout the mountains to proclaim the word of God to these simple souls, better disposed to receive this divine seed than those who live around us, corrupted as they are.

32. [To Father Tempier at Aix].³

Opening of the mission. The Founder suffers from loss of voice and can no longer preach.

Barjols, November 10, 1818.

I am decidedly immobilized, my dear friend; my wretched chest absolutely refuses to render service and I have the sorrow of not being able

¹ REY, I, 232.

² The Founder and Father Tempier went to visit Notre Dame du Laus on September 24th. Shortly before they had agreed to serve this shrine and preach missions in the diocese of Digne, in response to the desire of the bishop, Bishop Bienvenu de Miollis, a native of Aix. The first community, however, did not enter the house until January, 1819.

³ RAMBERT, I, 294.

to force this carcass to fulfil its functions. It is mulish and when I want to force it to preach, it refuses to speak; if I do not wish to become dumb, I must needs humour its caprice and remain a spectator and simply listen to the good things that the others say⁴.

You realize how diverting that can be in a mission and especially in a mission like this one when the church is not big enough to contain those who wish to profit therefrom. One must be patient, since the good God wishes this to be so.

Our journey has been a happy one; only, in my opinion, it was not apostolic enough. In future, we must take precautions not to be treated so delicately and so dearly.

Our reception seemed like a triumphant march. Vespers had finished when we arrived; the whole population rushed pell mell to meet us before the procession started. The principal townspeople, the mayor and his colleagues in full dress followed the clergy.

When we arrived at the church, we found it crammed and as many people remained outside as there were inside. Unfortunately too much had been said to me about the church being unresonant, which is untrue. On seeing this immense crowd, I overstrained my voice in my opening discourse, which I made in French. I strained it again in the announcements in Provençal which I prolonged still more because I had spoken French in the discourse. The result of all that is that I cannot preach any more. I gave the announcements yesterday evening quite softly without in the least sounding forth; I was heard well enough because of the great silence; but, as for preaching, I must not think of it.

In the meantime, the root juices⁵ flow and the barley water and all the rest of it. Both my body and mind are sick of it.

⁴ Fortunately the missionaries were numerous: Fathers Deblieu, Maunier, Mye, Marius Aubert and Moreau.

⁵ Concoction of roots of various plants, containing starch, gum and liquorice.

33. [To Father Tempier at Aix].⁶

Confessions during the mission.

[Barjols, November 11-13, 1818].⁷

Dear friend,

I was able yesterday evening to give the important announcement about the confessionals. I write you this so that you will not worry. All is going marvellously well here. I am now letting the others speak but I insist on hearing confessions because many of the people are inclined to come to me.

Take care of yourself so as not to become a crock similar to what I am. Adieu.

34. [To Father Tempier at Aix].⁸

Confessions. The Founder only gives announcements because of his hoarseness.

[Barjols, November 14-15, 1818].

Here we are in the confessional, without stirring, from morning until evening.

The men came flocking at the first announcement and God knows they needed to do so! What we have here, for them and the women alike, are (lapses) of thirty, forty and fifty years. People are astonished at the success of the mission. They are kind enough to accept the little that I give. I hold on to the announcements which, in conscience, can only be given by myself. They are so attentive, the silence they keep is so great, that they hear me everywhere although I speak in a low voice. Also I am better; I gulp down goat's milk, donkey's milk and fresh eggs. That does me good.

⁶ RAMBERT, I, 295.

⁷ This letter and the following are given by Rambert without dates. From the context, they were sent between that of the 10th to Father Tempier and that of the 22nd to Bishop Fortuné de Mazenod. On November 16th, Fortuné wrote to his brother, the president: "Although [Eugene] has already written several times to Abbé Tempier..."

⁸ RAMBERT, I, 295.

35. [To Brother Honorat at Aix].⁹

He can receive the habit from the hands of Father Tempier.

Barjols, End of November, 1818.

What would you say, my dear friend, if I did not reply to the urgent letter you have written to me. It is too bad that the occupations which absorb us permit me to say only two words of thanks for your devotedness which touches me greatly. I am vexed at delaying the happiness for which you long by prolonging my stay in this city but if you knew all that the good God is doing here through our ministry, you would make us remain still longer. If your holy desires cannot bear to wait, you can receive the habit from the hands of M. Tempier. I consent very readily.

Adieu, very dear friend, I embrace you.

36. [To Father Tempier at Aix].¹⁰

Ceremony at the cemetery.

[Barjols] End of November, 1818.

I cannot enter into details about what is happening here. The work is ever increasing each day. We are back from the cemetery. There were as many men as women. The weather was splendid. In full voice, sobs and, I hope, compunction.

Adieu, pray for me. All goes well but I miss you. Let us offer to God this sacrifice.

⁹ YENVEUX, VIII, 39. Father Yenveux does not indicate to whom this letter was addressed but adds the detail: Barjols, 7 bre, 1818. The mission of Barjols took place from November 8th to December 20th, 1818. We should therefore read "9 bre" instead of "7 bre". According to the register of admissions to the novitiate, compiled only in 1820, Brother Honorat was the only one to begin his novitiate in the autumn of the year 1818, but he might have been authorized to begin it on October 21st. The context of the letter indicates that it was written when the mission was quite advanced, hence at the end of November.

¹⁰ RAMBERT, I, 295.

37. [To Father Tempier at Aix].¹¹

Father de Mazenod only gives announcements and hears confessions.

[Barjols] December, 1818.

My health is better, I am sincere in telling you this. So I beg you to give me a little more scope. The announcements have not tired me, nor has the confessional, which is besieged. I confess only at the time of the evening instruction (that is to say, eight o'clock) the people who wait from three o'clock in the morning and no one complains. The tradespeople set the example and up until now, I have been their man; this is not what interests me most but I cannot decline the *laborem*.

As for the announcements, they are indispensable; they have more effect than all the rest... So I hope you will leave me free to give them and all the more because, given the situation, it seems necessary. Yesterday evening I abstained from giving them and they were displeased. You know I twine things together¹² somewhat. This way of going into matters has pleased them extraordinarily here. Do not think I preen myself because of it. I am affected only by the grief of seeing myself unable to do more.

¹¹ RAMBERT, I, 295-296.

¹² The verb used by the Founder is *radoubier* which means "to repair", say a fishing net.

1819

38. [To M. Viguier, priest].¹

Virtues required to be a missionary.

[Aix], January 6, 1819.

The missionary, being specifically called to the apostolic ministry, should aim at perfection. The Lord destines him to show forth anew, amongst those of his own time, the marvellous things that were done of old by the first preachers of the Gospel. He ought then to walk in their footsteps while being firmly persuaded that the miracles he must do are not the effect of his eloquence but of the grace of the Almighty who will communicate himself through him with all the more abundance if he is more virtuous, more humble, or, to say it all in one word, more holy. So he ought to do everything to arrive at this desirable holiness which is to produce such great effects. What we have found most apt to help us attain thereto is to come as close as we can to the evangelical counsels, faithfully observed by all those who have been employed by Jesus Christ in the great work of the redemption of souls. That is what has resolved us to despise honours and detest riches which are the obstacles which trip up too great a number of priests who thereby render their ministry unfruitful and endanger their salvation. We live in community under a mild Rule which fixes our duties and gives a very great value to the least of our actions. The spirit of charity and of the most perfect brotherhood reigns amongst us. Our ambition is to gain souls for Jesus Christ. All the wealth of the earth cannot satisfy our avarice, we must have heaven or nothing or, to say it better still, we wish to assure ourselves of heaven while earning nothing on earth but to be persecuted by men. If this prospect does not frighten you and if you are

¹ YENVEUX, IV, 132: VIII, 11-12. Joseph Augustin Viguier, born at Manosque, diocese of Digne, November 19th, 1790, entered at Notre Dame du Laus as postulant, November 10th, 1820.

firmly resolved to persevere all your life in our holy Society, come running – our arms and our hearts are open to you and we promise you the same happiness that the Lord deigns to let us enjoy.

The will of God manifests itself in a manner that is evident in your case. One cannot say that the decision concerning yourself was extorted from the Grand Vicars by importunate pleading since you and I had placed our wishes in the keeping of the Lord so that he might communicate his orders to us in due time and place.

39. [To Father Tempier at Notre Dame du Laus].²

Behaviour while travelling.

[Eyguières], February 14, 1819.

...Tell Father...³ to be extremely prudent while travelling; we are surrounded by enemies⁴; let him say absolutely nothing, let him pray to God and go to sleep; let him nor wear his cross in plain view...

40. [To Father Tempier at Notre Dame du Laus].⁵

Prayers for a sick young man. Recite the Office unhurriedly.

[Aix, February 22nd, 1819].

...I say to the good God during the Holy Sacrifice and during the adoration of the Forty Hours that, if this child⁶ were not to persevere in

² REY, I, 238.

³ This concerns either Father Touche or Father Marius Aubert. According to Father Simonin (*Missions O.M.I.*, 1897, p. 105) only Father Touche went to Eyguières. But according to Fortuné de Mazenod, Touche and Aubert were both expected there in order to help Fathers Mye and Maunier and take the place of the superior who had to go and spend a week at Aix (Fortuné to the President, February 4th and 14th). On February 24th, Fortuné again states that "the mission of Eyguières" has been reinforced with Aubert and Touche.

⁴ The new ministry Dessales-Decazes, installed on December 29th, 1818, had shown itself little favourable to the missions. On January 21st, 1819, it had dismissed sixty Prefects and Sub-Prefects for being too devoted to the King and to religion, amongst whom was the Sub-Prefect of Bouches-du-Rhône, M. de Foresta, a friend of the Founder.

⁵ YENVEUX, II, 134; IV, 80.

⁶ YENVEUX (IV, 80) who cites this excerpt under date of February 22nd, 1819, says "a young child of the family" of Eugene was gravely ill. He is referring to his spiritual family, that is to say, to a young man of the Youth Sodality. None of the Boisgeline children were then ill. Fortuné would have mentioned it to his brother in his almost daily correspondence that we have in our keeping. In the Journal of the Youth Solidarity, which however relates few events

grace, I would not request his cure but the Lord is powerful enough to grant him both things: his cure and perseverance. As you see, I am not timid with the good God; it is at the moment of communion that I permit myself these indiscretions...

...Remember how much importance I give to the Office being said very unhurriedly; I lay it on your conscience because nothing seems more unedifying to me, more incongruous than precipitation in the psalmody. Whether we are in a hurry or not, we must go slowly with the psalms. I reiterate this to you, I much insist on it – it is my duty. Do not hesitate to impose a penance on whomever may infringe this indispensable rule of decency. Maintain in everything a most exact discipline; you are beginning to form a community in regularity⁷, do not let abuses creep in...

41. [To the community at the Mission House, Aix].⁸

Fatigue of the missionaries. Numerous confessions.

[Eyguières], March 7th, 1819.

You are too lazy, my dear friends and beloved brothers. We are nearly at the end of the mission and I can say that I have received practically nothing from you for can I take into account the four lines that my dear brother Moreau wrote to me before ascending the altar? Meanwhile I know nothing of what you are doing or how you are. However it is understandable not to be at ease when this solicitude of mine bears on a hospital such as yours. If you are the sick ones of our company, we have all the appearance of convalescents. Our pale, drawn features, our cracked voices and our languid mien give us quite a remarkable appearance. We pretty well resemble warriors returning from a long, hard battle who painfully drag

in the year 1819, there is found mention of Irénée Bouteuil and Paulin Castellás who died on May 5th and June 5th respectively, both after several months of illness. The latter even lived at the mission house. The remainder of the letter corresponds with events. Eugene who was present at the mission of Eyguières came to Aix from the 17th to the 25th of February for the Forty Hours (February 21st-23rd) held on the occasion of the Carnival.

⁷ This directive seems quite strange at this date, at which Yenveux puts it (II, 134). At Notre Dame du Laus, on February 22nd, 1819, it seems there was only Father Tempier with Brother Bourrelrier and a brother carpenter. It was however the beginning of a community since they had entered in January and in the course of the summer several Fathers came to help Father Tempier during the season of pilgrimages.

⁸ Excerpt copied by Fortuné de Mazenod in his letter to the President, March 10th, 1819. Rome, arch. de la Post., Fonds Boisgelin.

along their weapons of victory and yet who retain the noble assurance that portends new success at the first onslaught of the enemy.

Our work is endlessly exorbitant and without the least respite. We daily and repeatedly have to send away men who present themselves in as great a number as the women whom we cannot abandon, because their needs are as pressing as those of the men to whom, as you know, we can grant an extra week. So we have to go beyond our strength, we are in the confessional until a quarter to midnight, and at that late hour when we have to go up for something to eat, we are obliged to send people away.

Yet you will hear that the mission is not bearing fruit at Eyguières. This opinion originates it seems from those who are not taking advantage of it because *the noble, high and mighty lords* of Eyguières, that is to say a few dozen bad burghers, do not deign to present themselves to the church to hear us, as long as they are quite indoctrinated by the *Minerve* which they read with avidity and wherein they learn all they are capable of learning because these gentlemen, apparently for good reasons that they whisper about and which they know better than us, are apprehensive of confession and all that it entails. It is nonetheless true that seven⁹ priests will have confessed from half past five in the morning until midnight for five weeks an enormous crowd of sinners who would not have budged without the mission, as they admit themselves and as it is easy to believe from the experience of the past, and these seven priests will leave at their departure a great number of penitents full of good will, whom they will not have been able to confess, to the pastor who will direct them in the ways of salvation. Pray that we can finish a task so difficult for the body, but so consoling for souls who have a spark of love for God, and try to be priestly enough.

I write you during the high mass. It is truly a rest for me, for I am happy when I betake myself in spirit into the midst of a family as interesting as ours. Be persuaded that the greatest sacrifice I can offer to the Lord is to be forcefully separated for so long a time, but it is for his greater glory. This thought must impose silence on all outcries of one's nature, on all affection, on all sentiments, were they still more supernatural still.

Share my letter with my esteemed uncle, whose kindness for you ought to make him, should it be possible, as dear to you as to myself.

⁹ Mazenod, Deblieu, Mye, Touche, Aubert, M. le Curé, etc.? *Missions O.M.I.*, 1955, p. 556; Fortuné to the President, February 24th, 1819.

42. [To Father Tempier at Notre Dame du Laus].¹⁰

Return mission to Barjols, in spite of the opposition of the Mayor.

[Aix, April 26th, 1819].

...Such an act¹¹ could not stop us and we set out. The enthusiasm of the whole grateful population must have been at times quite unpleasant to the small number of ill-wishers who had hatched this plot. M. Guigou had in the meantime written to the Prefect who excused himself on the pretext that he had never given such an order. It is betimes marvellous to see what is happening in this region... If the vast field of the missions give us such great consolation, we have in return a lot of grief to put up with round about us.¹²

43. [To Father Tempier at Notre Dame du Laus].¹³

Sorrow over the death of M. Peix, parish priest of Gap.

[Aix, May 19th, 1819].

I could not restrain my tears at the news of the death of M. Peix, parish priest of Gap, so worthy a friend¹⁴. I loved him as truly as you know I can love... but it did not suffice for me to weep over the death of such a good friend; I immediately had a mass said for him and next Monday we will have a solemn Requiem. I am annoyed that you did not think of having

¹⁰ REY, I, 238.

¹¹ After the mission of Barjols, several citizens and even the Sub-Prefect of Embrun had denounced the missionaries to the Minister of the Interior. The Mayor had thought he should forbid Father de Mazenod the return mission unless he was provided with the authorization of the Prefect (REY, I, 238). Father de Mazenod left on April 15th with Fathers Maunier and Deblieu (Fortuné to the President, April 12th). He returned on the 20th and was replaced at Barjols by Father Moreau (Fortuné to the President, April 12th, 20th and 22nd).

¹² This grief came principally from disappointment with several Sodalists and from the opposition of the parish priests of Aix. Cf.: REY, I, 238; *Journal of the Youth Sodality*, 1818-1821.

¹³ YENVEUX, VI, 174.

¹⁴ M. Peix had bought and restored the buildings of the Sanctuary with money subscribed by 76 priests of Gap. He fell ill in April. Fr. Tempier assisted him until the moment of his death which occurred on May 17th. Cf.: *Missions O.M.I.*, 1897, pp. 94-95.

his portrait done which would have been appropriate to have at Notre Dame du Laus.

44. [To Father Tempier at Notre Dame du Laus].¹⁵

Procession on the Feast of the Sacred Heart.

[Aix, June 25th, 1819].

I went to invite the pastor of...¹⁶ to carry the Blessed Sacrament during the procession of the Sacred Heart. He did not think he could acquiesce to this gesture because as he was in litigation with me and the case being in process, it would be a set-back for the body of the Pastors. I insisted on proving to him that it was not a simple formality on my part but a sincere desire to see him do something which seemed to me fitting. Our conversation lasted more than two hours and embraced all the contested points, not without supernatural moderation on the part of your very humble servant who could cite this interview as proof of the serenity of his mind on such occasions. One can both be lively and in control of himself, thanks to the peace of God, I mean. Monsieur the Grand Vicar Guigou, unafraid of the Pastors' corporation, accepted as an honour and a pleasure to carry the Blessed Sacrament who as usual stayed in control for although for some days an impetuous wind prevailed which lasted until the day after the procession, He who commands the tempest relegated the Mistral to the rooftops and the upper part of the trees of the Court, there raising a frightful disturbance while our candles remained lit in our hands.

The bell is ringing for the vespers of the last day of the Octave of the Sacred Heart so I must go. Adieu.

¹⁵ REY, I, 239.

¹⁶ The chapel of the mission house was under the jurisdiction of the parish of St. John. The Founder had to invite the parish priest, M. Christine, who took part in the procession in 1818. Father de Mazenod was in good relations with M. Honorat, rector of the Cathedral, who sent his nephew to the mission. Cf. J. PIELORZ, *Rapports avec les curés d'Aix* in *Études Oblates*, t. 20 (1961), pp. 46-48.

45. [To Father Tempier at Notre Dame du Laus].¹⁷

Helpfulness of the missionaries of Notre Dame du Laus on the occasion of the fire at St. Étienne.

[Aix, June 29th, 1819].

If only I had been with you on the day of your noble behaviour at Saint-Étienne¹⁸! From here, I behold you in the midst of the flames giving aid everywhere and intelligently which must have saved a great number of persons. I am not surprised that people do not cease to speak of this splendid devotedness. Four missionaries¹⁹ engaged in such an exercise of charity preach better still than in the pulpit, at least they are better understood.

46. [To Marius Aubert].²⁰

Inconstancy of Marius Aubert.

[Aix, October 6th, 1819].

My dear friend, I have already warned you about your inconstancy which consists in finding yourself ill at ease anywhere, in always seeking something better that you will never find, of today having urges to go back

¹⁷ REY, I, 239. In the pages following, 240-241, Father Rey cites two other brief excerpts from letters of the Founder to Father Tempier: "Could I but make a journey to Rome; I would thus get away from the continual annoyances of such a day" (July 2nd, 1819). "Ah! if only I could make a little journey to Rome! Would they could do without me for the missions this winter!" (August 11th, 1819). There is no question elsewhere in 1819 of a journey to Rome.

¹⁸ The village of Saint-Étienne d'Avançon, birth-place of the shepherdess Benoite who played a role in the origins of the Shrine of Laus, was destroyed by fire in the course of the night.

¹⁹ As a rule, at Laus in 1819, there were only Father Tempier, Brother Bourrelrier and Ignace, a former soldier. Father Touche spent the summer there from April 1st to November (Fortuné to the President de Mazenod, April 1st, 1819). To cope with the needs of the pilgrims, Father Mye was also sent there from May 23rd to the end of July (Fortuné to the President, May 23rd; *Missions O.M.I.*, 1897, pp. 104-105).

²⁰ YENVEUX, VII, 24*. Yenveux omits the name of the addressee. Without doubt he is Marius Victor Aubert. The Founder wrote in the Register for applications to the Novitiate, 1815-1850, No. 17: "...his natural inconstancy gaining control of him little by little, he began by being displeased because he was not considered as worthy as he believed... He left us after having lived two years with us..." He had entered in 1818. Fortuné wrote that "Aubert... who is perfectly unique... has a tendency to get the itch to preach" has left and "will spend over a month at Taverne, his home town..." (Letters to the President, July 16th, Sept. 8th. 1819).

to the village while several months ago you had those which made you pine for the house...

47. [To Father Tempier at Rognac].²¹

Exhortation to endure the destitution and poverty found at Rognac.

[Aix] November 16th, 1819.

God be praised, my dear friends and true apostles! My heart is afflicted by your situation but rejoices at the same time to see you sharing the fate of our first fathers, disciples of the Cross.

Oh! how right you seem to me upon your pile of straw and how much your fare, which is more than frugal, excites my appetite! This to my mind is the first time we have had what we should. Finish the work while accepting nothing from anyone without paying for it. For once you will not be disowned by our holy patron, Saint Liguori. I dare to speak to you in this way because I envy your position and, were it only I who had to decide, I would share it²². I beg you nonetheless not to deprive yourselves of what is necessary. Have you brought sugar with you? Father Mye, who has such a strong cold, will not be able to go without it.

21 RAMBERT, I, 304; REY, I, 240. The mission of Rognac, preached by Fathers Tempier and Mye (November 14th to December 5th) was difficult. It had been imposed on the parish by the Archbishop and was badly prepared.

22 The Founder was present at almost all the preceding missions. This time he remained at Aix. On October 14th, Fortuné wrote on this subject to the President de Mazenod: "...All these holy Missionaries will leave towards November 12th to bring the Word of the Gospel to two small parishes. Your son will not go, being reserved for the mission of Marseilles..." In reality, two other serious motives retained the Founder at Aix. He first wished to take in hand once more his Youth Sodality which for several years had been suffering from his absences. It was especially important to be present at the arrival of the new Archbishop who had been expected for the beginning of the month of November. Archbishop de Bausset-Roquefort arrived on the 8th. On the 9th he received Fortuné and Eugene; on the 10th the community and in the afternoon he went to the Mission House (Fortuné to the President, November 11th).

48. [To Father Tempier at Rognac].²³

Sparse attendance of the faithful at the exercises of the mission. Words of encouragement.

[Aix] November 22nd²⁴, 1819.

Why so discouraged, dear friend, why the complaints? You do not realize enough all the advantages of your position. You naturally suffer, so much the better. Besides you are only beginning, you were not expected, you arrived when work is in full swing, people are caught up. Pray, preach, knock on the door, do not be discouraged²⁵. Surely other set-backs have happened to our saintly models. If you read the advice of the Blessed Alphonse you would see that we must expect indifference from people, you would be surprised what could happen to saints of his kind and to those whom he directed when obliged to take such extraordinary means to get Christians to consent to come and listen to them. I have seen people of the region who have told me that practically everybody goes to your instructions; you must therefore appeal to God to make your words penetrate into hearts that are hardened but still accessible to holy truths. I do not disapprove your making your mission last only three weeks if this time seems sufficient to you to finish your task but take care that our good Father Mye does not suffer from the plan to leave him until Christmas. You know his zeal, he will want to continue preaching even with the cold which weakens him. This would be dangerous. I beg you to consider the strength of this dear brother and not his good will.

Adieu, all of you my dears, believe that I am very vexed to see you campaigning and me stagnating in my back-water. I have no time to breathe but my work has not the worth of yours, however fruitless you think it is which is not what I think it is. We shall see, when it comes to putting the grain in the barn who will be right... We pray for you and do not cease to love you with all our heart.

²³ RAMBERT, I, 305; REY, I, 240; YENVEUX, V, 61.

²⁴ Father Yenveux (V, 61) quotes the same text under date of the 16th. According to the context, the date indicated by Rambert and Rey seems preferable.

²⁵ The Founder stimulates the courage of Father Tempier who was in a state of crisis. He suffered from being isolated at Laus. On July 20th, he had requested to come back to Aix (YENVEUX, VII, 216). He was temporarily recalled for the retreat at the end of October and for the mission, one of the first in which he took part, and of little success. In the course of the winter, he took part in the missions of Marseilles and Aix, his father then being ill. He is found back at Notre Dame du Laus in the month of May, 1820. Cf. *Missions O.M.I.*, 1897, pp. 105, 174-175.

At Rougiers²⁶ all goes well. The Sub-Prefect has written to the Mayor not to trouble the missionaries in the exercise of their ministry...

49. [To Father Tempier at Rognac].²⁷

Do not worry over the slight success of the mission.

[Aix] November 27th, 1819.

I am sorry, without doubt, my dear brother, that you have so little consolation at Rognac but as I am certain that your merit in the eyes of God is only the greater for that, I cannot feel too bad about it.

It is not we who chose the place and the time. It was the business of the good God. He views things better than we. So do not be disquieted any more and, when you come back, do not yield too much to your displeasure. Be very prudent in your descriptions.

The demon has not been very powerful at Rougiers according to what they report. There is not a single man left in the region who is not benefitting from the mission. The pastor who is a good priest is astonished over it.

²⁶ While some missionaries were preaching at Rognac, another band conducted the mission of Rougiers (November 14th to December 12th, 1819).

²⁷ RAMBERT, I, 305; REY, I, 240.

1820

50. [To Brother Marius Suzanne at Aix].¹

Words of affection. When will Suzanne receive the subdiaconate? The Mission of Marseilles.

Marseilles, February 2nd, 1820.

I had resolved, my dear friend, not to write to you because your letters and the sentiments they express gave me too much pleasure. My heart is so responsive, so loving, that I need to be careful when it meets in those it loves certain tendernesses which reveal a reciprocity too close to its liking. I love you extremely and my affection is so lively that I am always fearful of taking away from God something of what he ought² to reserve for himself. Whatever may be the case, I wished to punish myself for being too pleased with the reproach you made to me for having addressed you grandiosely as *vous*, etc. However, I am remiss in my resolution and it is almost by way of complaining at having received three letters from the Mission House and none from you. But no, I am writing to you to ask why you say nothing to me about the subdiaconate, about which nevertheless you must be thinking. Is it because you would not be of age? I do not have at hand the time of your birth. I had calculated that you ought to receive it in the first week of Lent; your silence makes me fear I am mistaken.

Adieu, it is midnight. When else could I have written you if I had not taken time from sleep? I am not sorry for this theft. It is a little present that I give you too willingly to complain about it. Adieu, I embrace you with all my heart.

P.S. Have Chapuis tell you about the magnificent ceremony that took place today³. It seemed to me I was seeing with my eyes of flesh Our Lord

¹ JEANCARD, 372; REY, I, 244 footnote, 455-456; YENVEUX, IV, 80, 210. Marius Suzanne was born at Aix on February 2nd, 1799. Member of the Youth Sodality, he began his novitiate on January 21st, 1817.

² Ms. YENVEUX, IV, 210, has *prétend* (claims) instead of *doit* (ought).

³ The mission of Marseilles was preached from January 2nd to February 27th, by twenty missionaries of France and six missionaries of Provence: Mazenod, Maunier, Mye,

Jesus Christ when, from the top of the fort of Notre Dame de la Garde, we presented him to the adoration of the fifty thousand prostrate people covering the mountain. I have never seen a more beautiful scene and have rarely experienced such sweet emotion. I had the happiness to touch the Monstrance at the moment that the Sun of justice eclipsed the daystar. There cannot have been a finer day in the mission from the point of view of the religious effect.

51. [To Brother Marius Suzanne at Aix].⁴

Reproaches Brother Suzanne for his way of writing, his affected style and sentimentality.

At Notre Dame du Laus⁵, July 16th, 1820.

There is no use your picking an insignificant quarrel with me, my dear little brother, over an expression in my letter to M.M., which you have wrongly interpreted on purpose in attempt to ward off the blow which I had warned you about; you will not get away with it. I shall not even waste time objecting to your suppositions and in scorning your pretended generosity which prompts you to make the effort to love me still after this imaginary offence against friendship of which you are tempted to believe me culpable. You know too well what to believe to have ever conceived the slightest anxiety on this subject and you will never push me to the point of forcing me to convince you that a single beat of my heart expresses more love for you than that for me contained in all your sentiments, past and present; and I will add, if you press me further, in future too. This you know and also that your last letter has been badly received.

But now I come to the criticism to be made; I was wrong to warn you in advance about it, because you were capable of believing that I wish to jest when I certainly intended to speak to you seriously. However do not

Deblieu, Tempier and M. Aubert. Father Moreau remained at Aix where he was aided by Fortuné de Mazenod and Marius Suzanne. "Our church has been extremely full during the four days of the Forty Hours... Moreau gave two good meditations. Suzanne took the others and delighted his audience. He is a young man full of talent and virtue who will be of great help to your son..." (Fortuné to the President).

⁴ JEANCARD, 373-376; REY, I, 456; YENVEUX, VI, 57-59.

⁵ Father de Mazenod spent nearly two months at Notre Dame du Laus: from June 19th to mid-August (Fortuné to the President, June 11th, August 3rd, 10th and 17th). The novices and postulants had gone up to Laus with him. His sojourn was prolonged because Father Tempier had to leave towards July 15th to be with his father who died at the beginning of the month of August.

worry regarding the matter which is of little importance in some respects but, as my ambition would be to see you perfect, I cannot overlook anything unseemly, especially when I perceive that the quality which is lacking in you is lacking only through your fault, and because you are not attentive enough to avoid a fault which derives from a detestable vice which hides all its forms but which must be unmasked and pursued. What I am going to tell you will make this enigma clear to you.

The first letter that you wrote gave me, you can well believe, the greatest pleasure. I had been so afflicted at leaving you and found myself so far from you that simply seeing your handwriting was a joy. I should have all the more been consoled by the sentiments which the letter contained. Only I was surprised that in expressing what seemingly ought to flow from the heart quite naturally and unawares, you had used affected expressions and studied repetitions which seemed to be there only to round out the phrase and sound musical to the ear. I did not dwell overmuch on this thought, attributing this slight fault of style to the habit you had contracted with writing of another kind. But soon after, Coulin brought me the letter which you had written to him on the same occasion. Oh! that did upset me, not because its style was ridiculous – I would have been untroubled, knowing that you can do better – but because in each line, so to speak, one saw a pretentiousness of mind, a studied expression, an affected way of being picturesque so badly or so little dissimulated that reading it was disgusting. These numerous faults do not escape the perceptive eyes of certain persons whom I do not name; but as for myself who looked further, who went to the principle and who plainly saw love of self, judge for yourself if I was pleased. Quite the contrary.

He would not have given himself so much trouble, I told myself, if he had written to anyone else and certainly he would have done better. In writing to this particular person, he wanted to show what he could do, being too mindful of being censured by a mind somewhat caustic, and he has well and duly deserved to be criticized by any man of good sense and who knows what a letter ought to be. Let us be patient this time, the next one will be better. Not at all. What arrived was your famous description of your journey to Saint-Cerf, wretched pages in which you seem to accumulate all the faults that I have reproached you with above. It was as bad as it could possibly be in any literary style whatever; but what is really insufferable is this pretention of not wanting to let anyone believe that you are unaware of a term, an expression more suitable for the thing you wish to say. The result of this pitiful pettiness is that your letters are overloaded with erasures which makes them sometimes undecipherable, because after having

erased a word in order to substitute one which pleases you more, and which any reader could easily have substituted as well as you could, you revert to the first one, which obliges you to erase again that which had taken its place; you do the same thing to put your adjectives in accordance with your nouns, and to leave nothing to be desired, you go to work likewise on epithets which you place and displace before deciding if you will have them precede or follow the nouns with which it pleases you to associate them. I have already said quite a lot, have I not? But I have not finished and the reproach that remains for me to make is perhaps still more serious. It is another letter to Coulin which gives me occasion. It is one thing or the other, either the words you send to him in your last letter are sincere, or they are not. If they are your sentiments, they sin by excess. You do not have affection, outpourings, depth of union for him to this degree. It is at the most what you could have said to Courtès or to me. If you do not think this way, although your intentions may be good, for I know you too well to be mistaken, you are wrong to profane somewhat what in a man is most sacred after the supernatural gifts produced by grace. To exaggerate in this manner is to deceive oneself. And is there not a danger of being no longer believed when one would want to persuade others to whom such sentiments are due and for whom you really do nourish the same, that one is sincere in giving them such tribute? Besides you miss the target for each one knows what is due him and when there is a feeling of not deserving what is flung in one's face, one reacts with disbelief or distrust or simply laughs.

Now it remains to know if I shall send you this letter. Yes, I do not hesitate. You are strong enough, you have enough virtue to bear it and I have too much love for you to spare you the unpleasantness of reading it. If I loved you sparingly, I would tear it up. You know my heart and how loath I am to give the slightest pain to those I love, so you have in your hand the greatest proof that I can give you of the temper of my affection for you whom I love as myself.

52. [To Brother Marius Suzanne at Aix].⁶

Fears having caused Brother Suzanne to suffer by his letter of July 16th.

Notre Dame du Laus, July 21st, 1820.

My good friend, my dear son, am I in time to assuage somewhat the wound I inflicted on you in my last letter? If you knew how much I have

⁶ JEANCARD 376; REY, I, 456-457.

suffered from it, the violence that I did to myself, you would perhaps have been inclined to write to console me and for my part, I write to you today only to say that never, no never have I given you a greater proof of my love. You understand a little but you cannot know to what extent that is true. To knowingly cause pain to you who deserves all my affection, to measure in advance, so to speak, the depth of the wound I would give you and to persist in my will not to spare you, this approaches heroism! So much so that several times I was on the point of tearing up my letter but I did not do so: what a victory!

53. [To Brother Marius Suzanne at Aix].⁷

Joy on knowing that Suzanne has well accepted the reproaches made in the letter of July 16th.

[Notre Dame du Laus] July 23th, 1820.

If I had not been prevented, I would have replied immediately to your letter which brought me so much pleasure because it shows you to my eyes such as I wish you to be. I could have wished that you be a witness of my emotion on reading it; you would have heard the sound of my heart in these words that my mouth uttered: Oh! how right I am to love him! Yes, you are worthy of all my affection and I shall love you all my life more than myself. This is all that I am given time to say.

Adieu, I embrace you.

54. [To Father Tempier at Notre Dame du Laus].⁸

Grieves the death of President de Mazenod.

[Aix] October 20, 1820.

You know, my dear friend, the grief which has come to me lately and the circumstances pertaining to it. I will not speak to you thereof so as not to be tempted to expatiate on such a subject, which would be inexhaustible. My sole consolation is to think that it is not possible to have on earth greater assurance of the salvation of a soul. I nurture this thought, while praying from the depths of my heart for this excellent father⁹ who left us an

⁷ JEANCARD, 377.

⁸ RAMBERT, I, 327.

⁹ The President, Charles-Antoine, died at Marseilles on October 10th.

heroic example of faith, patience, humility, resignation, confidence in God, devotion to the Blessed Virgin, fortitude, etc. What a fine end to his life! But what martyrdom for the poor son whom God called to be with him to exhort him to face death! Such suffering is unspeakable and it took nothing less than the sight of so many virtues, and confidence in the recompense and the glory which would follow immediately after this cruel and searing separation to be able to bear it.

55. [To the students and novices at Notre Dame du Laus].¹⁰

Thanks for their letters of condolence on the death of President de Mazenod.

Aix, October 24, 1820.

How touched I have been, my dear friends, by the concern that you have manifested for me in the sorrowful circumstance of the death of my venerable father. I would have wished to reply to each of you in particular but that has been absolutely impossible. I am reduced to this collective letter from which I pray you, my dear children, to draw the sentiments that I have put into it. It would have been soothing to me in such searing grief to be able to seek some consolation in your tenderness, to be surrounded by you all whom I love so much in Our lord, but this too was a sacrifice I had to make. I recommend my dear father to your holy prayers. His was a most edifying death. Please God I can hope to terminate my life in such beautiful sentiments. What consolations religion brings in this supreme moment to the man who lives by faith! It is quite evidently beyond nature. What peace, what holy security, what sweet confidence, but also what avidity to hear words about God, what gratitude for his benefactions, what humility! It was ravishing and rending at one and the same time. He is asleep in the Lord who will take into account his many virtues.

56. [To the students and novices at Notre Dame du Laus].¹¹

Fervour of the community at Laus. Departure of one of them.

[Château-Gombert, November 29], Vigil of St. Andrew, 1820.

It was impossible for me, my dear friends and beloved sons in Jesus Christ, not to shed tears of consolation on reading and rereading your

¹⁰ REY, I, 257-258.

¹¹ YENVEUX, V, 175; REY, I, 258-259; RAMBERT, I, 336.

touching and very edifying letters. I only wish that the work of this mission¹², which gives me no respite, would leave me time to write to each of you to prove particularly the sentiments inspired in me by your piety and your tender attachment. I thank the good God for all that he has inspired in you during this memorable retreat¹³ and on the occasion of the execrable apostasy of the wretch¹⁴ who could not be brought back to his duty by the example of conduct as edifying as yours and you know beforehand what my heart feels in sensing you to be in so intimate a relationship with all its affections. Although I loved you first, I am as grateful also for what you grant me in return as if you owed me nothing in this respect. Yes, my dear children, it is by redoubling my holy love for you that I wish to prove my gratitude; for your part, continue to regard me as your best friend, as truly your father.

I say nothing of the son of perdition. The Spirit of God has spoken to you better than I could do so and you have understood his language too well for me to add anything of mine. Happy community! Holy family! Keep as precious the gifts that the Lord has shared with you so abundantly, walk in the path into which you have been thrust, so to speak, at the sight of the precipice which has claimed the infidel.

The more you are holy, the greater will be my happiness. Ah! I would say it already overflows if I could witness the marvels that the good God works in your midst, if it were given to me to press you to my heart. It takes nothing less than the emphatic will of God to keep me where I am; my spirit is at Laus, it follows you, accompanies you; and what of my heart? It loves you.

May you be filled, my dear children with all the graces and benedictions that I desire for you in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.

Ego Eugenius, scripsi mea manu.

¹² Mission of Château-Gombert (November 12 – December 17, 1820).

¹³ The retreat took place in November after the return of Father Tempier from the mission of Champoléon (October 1-29) in the upper Alps. Father Tempier and the novices had written a request to the Founder to let them make the vow of poverty. The Chapter of 1818 had only imposed the vows of chastity, obedience and perseverance.

¹⁴ He apparently refers to F. M. Dalmas who made his profession on November 1, 1819. His name is no longer found in the letters of Coulin to the Founder at the end of the year 1820. The Founder wrote, under this name, in the Register of entries to the Novitiate: "The first to give us the example of the most shameful apostasy." Father de Mazenod habitually designated as an apostate any Oblate who left, without sufficient motives, after having pronounced his vows.

57. [To the Oblate students at Aix].¹⁵

Read the letters of the novices. Grow in grace and virtue.

[Château Gombert] November 29, 1820.

I am passing on to you, my dear friends, the last letters I have received from Laus so that you can read them all together and be edified as we have ourselves been edified by them. This word does not express the effect that was produced on us and particularly on me by the heroic sentiments which are so well and in such a Christian manner articulated in these letters. How happy we are to have such brothers! I have only one regret, that of not being able to be present with them to enjoy their virtues and to be stimulated by their example to become better and more perfect ourselves. If a certain superior of a certain community¹⁶ could form an idea of what the Lord is thus working amongst us, perhaps he would go to less trouble to steer his students away from a Society of which the majority are as exemplary as this. As for myself, I am abashed and humbled as much as I can be consoled and elated. Since this is so, our work will go forward. You are destined, my dear children, to perfect it, so make yourself more and more worthy of your great destiny. I will never be grateful enough for the grace the good God grants me in giving me children such as you all are; I feel it keenly, quite deeply and I thank him for it every minute of the day. Grow, my dear friends, in grace and virtue, in the love of Jesus Christ, in union, in the most intimate charity. Pray for me and return me a little of the love that I bear for you and which could only increase in Heaven. I embrace you *in osculo sancto*.

¹⁵ YENVEUX, VIII, 78-79.

¹⁶ The major seminary was entrusted to the Sulpicians. The Fathers of the Retreat had to send them some students. Some students of the Mission House also attended and were not viewed favourably by all. Fortuné wrote to the President on June 1, 1820: "The few persons who have read (the brochure of Brother Suzanne on the mission of Aix) were extremely satisfied with it, even at the seminary where the Mission House is the target of jealous individuals and even has enemies amongst the young people who judge everything while often knowing nothing and who think of themselves as Bossuets or Fenelons."

58. [To Father Tempier at Notre Dame du Laus].¹

Names of saints above doors at Aix and Laus.

[Aix] January 9, 1821.

I have done more than simply remain close to you in your pious ceremony on Christmas Eve but justly ashamed of having provided the idea while leaving to you the merit of setting the example, I have drawn up right away the list of our rooms and have chosen the guardian saints that I wish to give to each dweller in them. Our patron saints would be already installed if we had found the pictures of all those whom we want to have as guests. I need not, after that, tell you how much I approve of what you have done, nor even add that it is truly with pleasure that I have followed you in your procession. Nevertheless, I must not omit to say to you that I would have preferred that you had not given to individuals common patrons such as the holy Angels, the Blessed Virgin, the Sacred Heart, the Child Jesus. It is the common rooms which should have such patrons.

59. [To Father Tempier at Notre Dame du Laus].²

The cassock is to be given, without the rabat, on the day of entrance to the novitiate.

[Brignoles]³ January 18, 1821.

They cannot be novices without taking the habit of the missionary. Their sojourn among the guests will have to be prolonged, that is to say,

¹ YENVEUX, IV, 127; VII, 54; REY, I, 281.

² YENVEUX, VIII, 39.

³ From January 14 to February 25, 1821, Fathers de Mazenod, Deblieu, Maunier, Mye and Touche preached the mission of Brignoles in the department of Var.

outside the novitiate, until they have their soutane, which will be given to them the day they enter the novitiate, if they arrived without it. When anyone seeks admission who already has his soutane, he should keep the rabat as long as he is with the guests and then put it aside the day of his entrance into the novitiate, because the habit of the missionary is the soutane without the rabat.

60. [To Brother Suzanne at Aix].⁴

No hope of having a house at Marseilles. Difficulties. Success of the mission at Brignoles.

[Brignoles] January 23, 1821.

You know we cannot count any longer on the prospect of Marseilles. The Archbishop has notified me that the matter is closed. The Missionaries of France are coming under good auspices and through the front door. They will be in Marseilles in several months.⁵

Your affection is a kind consolation amidst the disappointments which it pleases God to bestow on me. I need these trials; the more painful they are, the more meritorious they will be. It is up to me to profit by them.⁶

The mission of Brignoles is going marvellously well. The men are taking up all my time... The good God permits them to be avid for me yet I assure you that never was I less worthy of it. But if such must be so that some good may result, I give my consent.

⁴ REY, I, 263; YENVEUX, V, 68, 142.

⁵ Archbishop de Bausset announced on January 19 to Father de Mazenod that the Missionaries of France would soon be established in Marseilles. As for the Missionaries of Provence, they already had permission to go to that city. In fact negotiations were then in progress for the latter to reside there. According to this letter to Suzanne, the Founder no longer intended to pursue the matter further since the Missionaries of France had got there first.

⁶ It seems that he refers here again to the Missionaries of France being established at Marseilles. When consulted about the appropriateness of this move, Father de Mazenod had clearly stated to Archbishop de Bausset and to Father Rauzan that it would not be a good thing should the Missionaries of Provence go there. Cf.: letter to Archbishop de Bausset, January 12; to M. Rauzan, January, 1821.

61. [To Father Tempier at Notre Dame du Laus].⁷

We would not have had enough members to open a house at Marseilles.

[Brignoles] February 4th, 1821.

The idea of having two professors for two students⁸ is not to my liking especially in a Society where each ought to do the work of four. If the Archbishop had called us to set up the establishment that he has just given to the Missionaries of France, how could we have managed? Apparently the good God saw that we could not properly undertake this new responsibility.

62. [To Father Courtès at Aix].⁹

An amendment in the text of the Rule.

[Brignoles] February 21, 1821.

Father Tempier would wish to suppress the words: 'Although the house of Aix en Provence be the headquarters of the Society'¹⁰, not because he does not recognize this status as justified but because they would be surprised at Rome at seeing no approbation of the Ordinary for this house designated as the cradle of the Society. This remark is correct. We must therefore suppress this phrase for the moment.

⁷ REY, I, 263.

⁸ Father Tempier was asking for an assistant at Notre Dame du Laus. "Judge for yourself", he said, "I am superior over spiritual and temporal matters for a large community, rector of a parish, chaplain of a shrine and alternately professor of theology and philosophy" (*Missions O.M.I.*, 1897, p. 179). Fr. Simonin wrote (*ibid.* p. 183) that the community of Laus had 24 members at the end of the year 1821, amongst whom there were a few fathers (Tempier, Touche, Courtès) and some coadjutor brothers.

⁹ YENVEUX, VII, 55.

¹⁰ This phrase is found in the first French manuscript of the Rules which were ceaselessly modified and improved in view of their approbation by the Pope. It is noteworthy that in the summer of the year 1819, Father de Mazenod was already thinking of going to Rome for this purpose.

63. [To Father Tempier at Notre Dame du Laus].¹¹

Preaching of the mission of St-Chamas. Authority of the superior. The community is not a republic.

[St-Chamas], March 13, 1821.

I cannot confide to...¹² the instructions, given that they ought be truly instructive. So I have begun to give the morning instructions and I will give them in the evening to the extent that circumstances permit (for one must observe the proprieties even on missions, by having my companions preach from time to time) but I will repair, in the announcements which follow the prayers, the omissions of my confrère. And who will give me the strength? The good God, I hope... I am quite tired, my voice is hoarse and only with an effort can I raise it but what else can I do? After all one has to continue. The good God knows our needs, that is what consoles me in our distress.

...But God knows what his people needs. We have to leave matters to him, without however ceasing to ask him earnestly: *ut in messam suam mittat operarios secundum cor suum*.¹³

...You must not put up with and still less authorize practices that are so contrary to good order. Have we become a republic or a representative government¹⁴? Does it pertain to you to establish new usages and has the community of Notre Dame du Laus the right to deliberate, to present the least thing even in a body? Certainly not. So everything that has been done must be regarded as null, as an abuse and diametrically contrary to the spirit of our Constitutions. Each one is individually free in our Society to approach the Superior to communicate his thoughts on everything and even on the changing and improving of whatever is left to his disposition, local

11 YENVEUX, I, 231; IV, 127; V, 83; VII, 159; IX, 211.

12 The Founder was then preaching the mission of St-Chamas (March 4 to April 8). Deblieu was certainly with him (cf.: Roze-Joannis to Madame de Mazenod, March 27, 1821), but it is not known if he had other companions (he writes: "my companions", "my confrère") and of whom he is speaking in this letter.

13 Mt. 9, 38: *Rogate ergo Diminum messis, ut mittat operarios in messam suam*. 1 Sam. 13, 14: *Quaesivit Dominus sibi virum juxta cor suum*. "Pray then the master of the harvest to send workers"... "after his own heart".

14 To what is the Founder alluding? This is not easy to determine, even if Brother Coulin was sending news of Laus several times a month. Father Simonin wrote (*Missions O.M.I.*, 1897, p. 178) that Father Tempier had adopted the practice of exchanging between novices and Oblates objects which were for their personal use, a practice of which Father de Mazenod disapproved. Father Simonin adds that, contrary to the practice elsewhere, Oblate priests were addressed as *Père* (though still called *Messieurs*). The Founder recalled to Father Tempier that he alone and the Chapter had the authority to introduce this innovation.

superiors are still more strictly obliged in this respect, but never will it ever be permitted to take the initiative of changing, improving, if you like, the usages practiced in the whole Society, whatever condition or restriction you may put on it. The time of the Chapter General is approaching, if I am not mistaken, then it will be time to propose all you please. This assembly will have the right to discuss and deliberate and its resolutions will be valid; until that time, only what is ordained by the Superior General will be legitimate.

...I prescribe in virtue of holy obedience that you take every morning, except Holy Friday, either a cup of chocolate or better still a serving of salep.

64. [To Father Courtès at Aix].¹⁵

Rights and duties of the superior of the community.

[St-Chamas] March 14, 1821.

Doubtless being the superior of the house¹⁶, you have the right to obtain an accounting of what the bursar is doing, that is why I did not hesitate to tell you that you ought to watch everything, but your authority does not extend to changing the instructions which have been given him by your own superior. He should do nothing without telling you in advance even in matters in which he has been authorized to proceed. As for those he would propose himself, he owes you obedience and you yourself ought, in your decisions, to make them in conformity with the spirit which guides me in my administration because, as long as I am superior, it is I who must give the guidance which all should follow, whatever they may think. Otherwise there would be friction in the machinery, there would no longer be unity in government and consequently disorder would be the result. This is the case with any government of whatever kind. I will add that in those based on religious virtues, it is necessary to do something more, that is to say, that one should strive to acquire enough humility to believe that one knows less and has less graces than the superior and, in consequence, be not afraid to conform even one's judgement to his.

¹⁵ YENVEUX, III, 115; VII, 50.

¹⁶ Father Courtès was still only the pro-superior of the house of Aix. He was named superior in 1823 after the definitive departure of Father de Mazenod for Marseilles as Vicar General of the diocese.

65. [To Father Courtès at Aix].¹⁷

Lenten fast of the Founder.

Saint Chamas, March 31, 1821.

I reproach myself every day for having forgotten to take a precaution which would have kept my conscience tranquil on the subject of fasting from which I am abstaining during this mission. I have acted by reason and with the authorisation of my confessor while presuming the assent of the doctor; but I tell myself each day that it would have been more in order to provide myself with a formal decision of the doctor. Ask him therefore on my behalf if he judges that after having done the missions of Château Gombert and especially of Brignoles which left me a little fatigued, and having to preach at Saint Chamas twice almost every day with some vehemence, and with only four hours' sleep, I can eat in the evening a soup of rice or semolina with milk of almonds and an orange? If he thinks the soup will suffice, I will do without the orange that I have been inclined to take under the impression that it refreshes my blood which sometimes becomes overheated. Besides, anything else would turn my stomach on top of the soup which I always take with repugnance because of the taste. In the morning I take only two or three spoonfuls of warm sweetened water before going into the pulpit. In the evening, as the instruction is longer and more spirited, I take a little warm wine with the sugar, because I find that this drink, which is a rude penance for me, strengthens notably my chest and my voice.

On Saturday, I fast according to the rule, because I do not preach in the evening and because on the following day I take a cup of chocolate after my mass.

¹⁷ RAMBERT, I, 350. The Founder returned ill from the mission of Saint Chamas, which finished on April 3rd. On the 16th, A. Coulin wrote to him from Notre Dame du Laus: "Ah! my very dear father, do not think that we know nothing. You are ruined by the missions of this year, your chest is in very bad condition... You are always piling on fatigue. So is it unreasonable that the children whom you love so much beg you to spare yourself and not continue to destroy your health and exhaust your strength?... but let us not ask God for miracles by asking him to keep up your strength while you are doing everything to waste it! What of the future? Ah! it will be frightful if your life continues to be a sequel of tasks and fatigues capable of undermining the most robust of men..."

66. [To Father Tempier at Notre Dame du Laus].¹⁸

Confidence and friendship in his regard.

[Saint Chamas] April 1, 1821.

...As for you, I have nothing to add to what you know of my sentiments in your regard; I love you as much as myself and my confidence in you is such that it would be impossible for me to hide the least of my thoughts from you. I would think I was committing a theft, a crime of *lèse-amitié* for which I could not forgive myself.

67. [To Father Tempier at Notre Dame du Laus].¹⁹

Invitation to found a house at Marseilles.

[Aix], April 26, 1821.

I have come from Marseilles to conclude the matter of our establishment there. The gentlemen of Providence²⁰ have sent me the deliberations of their meeting whereby they invite us to go and take possession of a part of the house used for their work. They support their request with the solemn consent given by His Grace the Archbishop, the vote of their directors and the unanimously manifested assent of the parish priests... But how will our community live there? I have no idea.

¹⁸ REY, I, 280.

¹⁹ REY, I, 265.

²⁰ The gentlemen of Providence were members of the Council which managed the Work of Providence, located in the *Place de Lenche*, which existed for the purpose of taking in orphans, giving them a moral, Christian, education and training them to work. These gentlemen sought to have as chaplains of the Work the Missionaries of Provence whose success with the youth of Aix was known to them. At the last moment, Archbishop de Bausset also confided to the Missionaries serving of the chapel of the Holy Sepulchre close to the Calvary. Their ministry at the Calvary began on May 6th and their installation at the Work of Providence took place on the 13th. Father Deblieu was named superior.

68. [To Father Tempier at Notre Dame du Laus].²¹

Advice regarding the formation of novices.

[Aix], June 18, 1821.

...Have him²² make a good novitiate, do not be satisfied with appearances, make him practice every kind of virtue, train him in the love of poverty, obedience and entire abnegation of himself, in the spirit of mortification, in humility. What I say regarding him, I equally recommend for all the others. I am annoyed that the whole time of the novitiate or at least an entire year is not exclusively devoted to the study of perfection. It is a drawback that during this time we are obliged to tolerate profane studies and even theology. At least instruct your novices with more care than you have been able to use until now, because of being greatly occupied. Steep yourself in the lore of a good master of novices. If they do not acquire religious virtues while in novitiate, it is all up for the future. One must also teach them the elements of Christian doctrine, give them what they call a reasoned catechism, continue to have them learn by heart several verses of the New Testament every day, oblige them to give answers at the lesson of catechism which should be done twice a week, or at least once, but twice is not too much.

69. [To the novices and students at Notre Dame du Laus].²³

Regrets not being able to live with his children.

Aix, August 15, 1821.

My dear children,

Never have I parted from you with greater sorrow²⁴; so great it was indeed that I feared to let you see how afflicted I was for I realized that it was very imperfect of me. It seems to me that I ought to wish that you loved me less, although truth to tell I would not be further ahead because I would love you still as much, since my extreme affection for you is

²¹ YENVEUX, VII, 24*; VIII, 65.

²² This reference is doubtless to the Abbé Augustin Viguier who began his novitiate on April 22, 1821. There were then several other novices who were finishing their first year of novitiate (A. M. Sumien, J. L. Saurin, G. Carron).

²³ REY, I, 278; YENVEUX, V, 181.

²⁴ Father de Mazenod spent some time at Notre Dame du Laus in the month of August. He made a canonical visit. The Acts thereof have been preserved, dated August 12th.

principally founded on your virtues and on the fine qualities with which the good God has favoured you.

My dear friends, believe only that I am absent in body; my heart and soul are with you. Shall I tell you? The house seemed deserted to me, I sought you all day without being able to find you and yet I still spoke only of you. Adieu, my good dears, adieu, beloved family! I press you all to my heart and embrace you as tenderly as I love you.

70. [To Father M. Suzanne at Notre Dame du Laus].²⁵

Is anxious about Suzanne's cold. Affection.

Aix, August 21, 1821.

My dear Suzanne, Coulin²⁶ will tell you of my misfortune on this day a great part of which I spent thinking of you. I will not tell you about it again so as not to lose a moment of the little time I have left; I have betaken myself deep within the house so as to be quiet for a few minutes but the candle goes down and I am threatened with soon being in the dark; this is an additional misfortune to heap on the others of today of which I've spoken to Coulin.

You tell me your cold is over, but that is not enough to reassure me. You will tell me this, I hope, once more again in the next post by way of confirmation. Know full well, kind friend, that it is impossible for me to stand the idea of seeing you suffer; my nerves constrict and I feel more ill than you certainly do; it is always like this when I have reason to think you are suffering, so intimately united am I to you whom I love more than you could ever think. I should not tell you this any more but it always seems to me that you do not know this sufficiently or you do not understand it as much as you should. For the rest, if you were not virtuous, I would not say so much about it; this is for me an excuse for the excess of tenderness towards you for which I sometimes reproach myself but which I cannot bring myself to repent.²⁷

²⁵ JEANCARD, 377-378; REY, I, 457.

²⁶ Jeancard's text indicates only "C" but this could only be Coulin who corresponded regularly with the Founder. This letter of Father de Mazenod to Coulin has not been found. In his reply, Coulin does not speak of this misadventure.

²⁷ REY (I, 457) has made a footnote to this letter: "For those who have not known closely the great heart which epitomized Bishop de Mazenod, these expressions may exceed the bounds of moderation. But those who knew him will recognize from this trait that which rendered him so lovable and so reliable in his dealings."

71. [To Father H. Bourrelier at Notre Dame du Laus].²⁸

Urges him to be sorry for even thinking of leaving the Society.

Aix, August 27, 1821.

You could not please me more, my dear Bourrelier, than by writing to me and laying before me the troubles that disturb you and which you have fashioned for yourself in such a bad way. What good is there in tormenting yourself as you do over trifles? Had I not sufficiently reassured you in the interview we had at Notre Dame du Laus and how is it that, after these explanations, you have allowed thoughts to enter your heart as criminal as those which you reveal to me? I will not dwell on the expressions in your letter, I have shed tears of sorrow over them. My friend, have you thought whereof you speak? Can a priest speak in this manner? You have not a remote idea then of what you have become through the priesthood? I still tremble because of what I have read, of what you can say in cold blood. Would it be possible that in wishing to do you good I might be a lost man? So you have no virtue left? When I proposed you to His Grace the Archbishop for ordination, *I forewarned him that you were profoundly ignorant, that it would not be possible to have you undergo the least examination*, that you could not, in a word, be a priest or even a simple student outside a community, but I made myself the guarantor of your virtue, I would answer to him for your good will and I advised him that being irrevocably bound to our Society, you would always find therein the help that was indispensable to the feebleness of your learning, to the nullity of your knowledge. These reasons decided him to ordain you. In effect, you could not, without exposing yourself to sinning mortally, do the least priestly function outside the community. I thought you were convinced of that, I thought you also were imbued with the nature of your engagements in your Society, engagements so essential that you could not entertain in your mind thoughts which are contrary to them without sinning most gravely. However, you speak to me of separating, you speak to me of aversion for the Rule, that is to say, the obedience which you have vowed as well as stability.

My friend, my dear friend, how have you let yourself be seduced to this extent by the demon? Ah! I hasten to address to you the same words which were addressed in the Apocalypse to a bishop who was not fulfilling his duty, see how heavily you have fallen and do penance.²⁹ Yes, my dear,

²⁸ YENVEUX, VIII, 287.

²⁹ Apoc. 2, 4-5.

do penance because you have sinned greatly. Renew yourself without delay in the spirit of your vocation. Remind yourself that we no longer belong to ourselves, we all belong to the Society to which we have pledged ourselves, we belong to the Rule which must control us, we can only belong to God through it, outside everything is a sin for us. Surely if anyone ought to congratulate himself on belonging to her, it is clearly you, my dear friend, who more than anyone needs the help of your brothers. How then did you not perceive at first sight the trap which the demon was laying for you by persuading yourself that you could lead a much more regular life without being subject to a Rule and without submission to the will of a superior? This idea would be the most absurd folly if it came into anyone's mind. But for you, bound by vows to our Institute, it is not only a folly, an absurdity, but also, if you have consented thereto, were it only for an instant, it is a very great sin, truly a crime. I cannot believe that you are as perverse as that; I exhort you then, I abjure you, I fall at your feet in the name of Jesus Christ whose minister you are and whom you betray, do penance and learn what it is to be a priest, what a religious man ought to be. Remind yourself what has been said to you on this subject and which you have no doubt forgotten. Your salvation is at stake and my responsibility is compromised before God, before the Church and before men. Write me quickly to let me know about your position, to let me know of your return to the sentiments which ought constantly to animate you.

All that I have just said to you is drawn from the love that I have for you, you know that I have always regarded you as my cherished son, ever since the Lord confided you to my care, since I engendered you in Jesus Christ. You are the first fruits of my ministry³⁰, it is most likely you who were the first to be converted by virtue of the words of life that the good God put in my mouth, on the first day of my first mission. Judge for yourself how concerned I am to see you succeed, but also how grieved I am in seeing you stray from the right path after so many graces, so many favours on the part of God, so much care, so much affection on my part. But it will only be a momentary error. It is with such confidence that I embrace you with all my heart.

³⁰ Bourrelier was born at Grans where the Founder preached his first mission in 1816 (February 11 to March 17).

72. [To Father Bourrelier at Notre Dame du Laus].³¹

Be of good heart. Grandeur of obedience.

[Aix] September 19, 1821.

Steep yourself more and more, my dear friend, in the grandeur and sublimity of your holy state; but never lose sight of the obligations which it imposes upon you. Read and reread our holy Rules, fully convince yourself that you are quite happy to belong entirely to Jesus Christ. No, my dear brother, you are no longer your own man in any way and you ought assuredly to congratulate yourself much about this. You know only too well the use, or rather say, abuse that you made of your freedom when you had no other master but yourself. Now it is Jesus Christ, our divine Saviour, who is your Master and he manifests his will to you through the Rule that you have embraced with love and through the voice of the superiors who stand in his place. Open the lives of the saints, you will see how they understood this truth and especially how they put it into practice. It is them you ought to take as your models; with such examples one cannot go astray. Oh holy obedience! Sure road which leads to heaven, may I never deviate from the way you mark out for me, may I ever be docile to the least of your counsels! Yes, my dear brother, outside this path there is no salvation for us. But, thanks be to the goodness of God, you have already understood this and your letter allays the concern that was rightly aroused in me.

How much I could tell you about the grief you manifest about not being useful. What an error! Were obedience to put me at a door to open and close to those who come and go, I would consider myself very happy and I would believe, not without reason, that my salvation was more assured by this situation in which I was forced to be against my liking. One always does enough when one does only what obedience prescribes. It is only a matter of doing it well, not only exteriorly, but with heart and soul, and then one cannot be other than saved. So, my dear friend, cease to be grieved in the slightest on this subject...

³¹ YENVEUX, III, 111-112; VIII, 190. Father Bourrelier and Fathers Tempier, Touche and Viguier made their annual retreat at Aix at the end of October, 1821. Cf. *Missions O.M.I.*, 1897, p. 185. Bourrelier left the Congregation in May, 1824. The Founder wrote, under his name, in the Register of admissions to the Novitiate, No. 12: "Bourrelier is an apostate."

73. [To Father Tempier].³²

Sorrow at the death of Amédée and Victor de Saboulin, sodalists.

[Aix, October, 1821].³³

Who would not wither away with grief on learning within the same hour of the illness and death of a sodalist such as Amédée de Saboulin, then on seeing the family arrive two days after, upset because I had not had the heart to visit them as if I had judged their affliction to be utterly beyond consolation! It was still little enough. Victor took to his bed that very evening, having caught the same malady, and during thirteen days, I could scarcely stir from his bedside, count his sighs, quieten his cries, sooth the cruel pains which racked him beyond all that I can express, see this child deteriorate under my eyes, fully conscious and sentient, in frightful torment, without uttering a complaint or a word of rebellion, and finally succumb and leave me with all the concerns that Christian charity never begrudges to grant to our dead, thus helping to make my sorrow as keen as ever. Today once more I said the office for him. But do not believe that I have said everything. You expect me perhaps to dwell on the lamentations and grief of a mother, whose soul was pierced with a sharp sword. No, my dear; if I had the time, I should rather make known to you in this case the heroism of virtue, the triumph of grace over nature in direst straits; it is uplifting and depressing at the same time. But listen and judge if I ought not myself to be in a state of agony. I have just heard the sister's confession, herself condemned to perish like her two brothers, without hope of coming through in spite of the care lavished on her by the best doctors of the city. But enough said on this subject. If I did not turn my thoughts away, I think I would go mad.

³² RAMBERT, I, 133-134. Father Tempier could either have been at La Chapelle (mission which he did from September 16th to October 14th) or at Chabottes where he preached a retreat in the course of the month of October. Cf. *Missions O.M.I.*, 1955, pp. 645-646.

³³ This letter, which Rambert has cited without giving the date, has hitherto been considered as written in 1817 because the Youth Sodality's Journal mentions, for March 16, 1817, the death of Alphonse de Saboulin. But Rambert speaks of Amédée. According to the findings of Father J. Pielorz, there were four Saboulin brothers, members of the Youth Sodality. Léon, who became an Oblate, Alphonse, who died in March, 1817, Amédée, who died on September 19th, 1821, and Victor, who died on October 7th of the same year. This letter is obviously written shortly after the death of Victor and before the arrival of Fr. Tempier for the retreat and the Chapter (October 21st to November 1st).

74. [To Father H. Courtès at Aix].³⁴

Thanks for the prayers of Fr. Courtès on the occasion of the Feast of St. Charles. Fraternal charity.

[La Ciotat³⁵] November 8th, 1821.

I thank you, dear friend, for all that your heart inspired you to do for me on the occasion of my Feast Day, but permit me to say you did too much. It was not a *Te Deum* that was called for but a goodly *Miserere* to ask pardon of God for all the sins that appal me. So do not cease for your part to ask mercy for me who have so much reason to fear divine justice which does not go by appearances.

Get together often and live in the most perfect unity. When I say unity, it is not that I fear that you quarrel, this thought does not cross my mind, but I wish to speak of that cordiality, that fusion, if I use that expression, which ought to exist amongst all the members of our Society which ought to have but one heart and one soul.

75. [To Brother Honorat and the Fathers at Aix].³⁶

His joy on learning that the Fathers of Aix are working with zeal.

[La Ciotat] November 17, 1821.

When we are so busy, far from complaining, let us bless the Lord for deigning to employ us thus in his service, we who are only useless servants.

Oh! my dear children, what joy can be compared to mine on seeing you entering into the fray with such dispositions. I cannot prevent myself from shedding tears of consolation. You know that all you are doing for souls has a repercussion on my heart. So I bless God for what he is doing before my eyes by the ministry of those who surround me.

³⁴ YENVEUX, V, 142, 210.

³⁵ The Founder was then preaching the mission of La Ciotat (November 4th to December 23rd, 1821).

³⁶ YENVEUX, V, 47, 165. As the Founder says "My dear children", he is therefore speaking not only to Brother Honorat, but also to the Fathers who were at Aix: Courtès, ordained on July 30, 1820; Suzanne, ordained on September 22, 1821, and Honorat who will be ordained on December 22, 1821. The work at the house of the Mission was always made abundant by the services at the Chapel and the care of the Sodalists and Novices.

76. [To Father H. Courtès at Aix].³⁷

Father de Mazenod is no longer concerned with the choice of the future bishop of Marseilles.

La Ciotat, November 21, 1821.

I regard with pity the stupidities and fooleries of all those of whom you speak to me.³⁸ But what I am told of the disagreement between the uncle and the nephew is a fairy tale. I scorn all those braggarts who give me a reputation that is so ill-founded. The knowledge and conviction of what I am, coupled with the esteem and the love of a small number of friends, is all that I need; I disregard all the rest and all the others. For a long time now, I regard the affair of my uncle as lost. All they may do at Marseilles means nothing. I let my heart beat rest over that and over many other things and, if I must say this to you, men in general and especially those who act and cause themselves to be spoken of inspire me with such disgust that nothing matters more than the very supernatural views needed to prompt me to be concerned about the good of some of them.

77. [To Father Courtès at Aix].³⁹

The mission at La Ciotat. Details.

La Ciotat, November 28, 1821.

According to the last census, there are 398 widows and 97 widowers only. Youths are almost in the same proportion... The fishermen are delighted with the proposal I made to them to go and plant a cross expressly for them on a neighbouring island where they hang their nets to dry. If the weather continues to be as fine as it has not ceased to be since our arrival here, this excursion on the sea will be splendid.

³⁷ REY, I, 275-276.

³⁸ They were saying that the episcopal see of Marseilles was finally going to be re-established but there were very heated discussions at Marseilles and Aix for and against the nomination of Fortuné de Mazenod.

³⁹ REY, I, 283.

78. [To J. J. Marcou at Aix].⁴⁰

Encourages him to respond to God's call to religious life.

La Ciotat [November-December]⁴¹ 1821.

I have never lost sight of you and have inwardly regarded with satisfaction the direction that the Spirit of God inspired you to take; nevertheless, whatever consolation I might have permitted myself to feel in directing your first steps towards the sanctuary, just as I had directed you as a youth in the paths of virtue, I purposely wished to stand aside so as not to risk being an obstacle to divine inspirations in the choice you had to make by revealing to you my desires which might have influenced in perhaps too human a manner the decision that you ought to take. Now, just as much as I took precautions to let the Spirit of God act within you, under the direction of the infinitely estimable men in whom you put your confidence, just as much I will make haste to second your vocation since it leads you to a state still more perfect and which ought to assure you a greater recompense.

79. [To Father Tempier at Notre Dame du Laus].⁴²

End of the mission of La Ciotat.

Aix, December 28, 1821.

We have finished the mission of La Ciotat, one of the most tiring we have done. I am giving you no details: the blessings have been abundant but we were four confessors less than were needed, which is a very great misfortune. His Grace the Archbishop came to give Confirmation and took part in the erecting of the cross which was magnificent. The weather only ceased to be fine when we no longer needed its help.

⁴⁰ YENVEUX, VIII, 22. Jacques Joseph Marcou, born at Aix, began his novitiate at Notre Dame du Laus on December 21, 1821.

⁴¹ Yenveux says that the Founder was present at the mission of La Ciotat (November-December) but does not indicate the date of this letter. In the register from which he took his excerpts, it is found on page 65 before the letter of November 8 to Courtès. It seems that Marcou had not yet arrived at Notre Dame du Laus.

⁴² REY, I, 283.

80. [To Father Courtès at Aix].¹

Flight from the world. Charity amongst the members of the Institute makes them oblivious of the persecutions that come from without.

[Lorgues] March 3, 1822.

I feel fortunate amongst my brothers, amongst my children, because in the absence of virtues which are proper and personal to me, I am proud of their works and their holiness.

We are not of this world, no, we no longer wish to belong to it, any more than our head, our divine and lovable Master, and that is why it persecutes us. I laugh at its hatred, I despise its conflicts and I pity those who let themselves be taken in by its perfidious suggestions, judge us by its views and according to its false maxims.

Dear Courtès, let us be united in the love of Jesus Christ, in our common perfection, let us love each other as we have done up to now, let us, in a word, be at one while they die of vexation and rage.

81. [To Father Courtès at Aix].²

As regards the possibility of Fortuné being named for the See of Marseilles, we must henceforth leave the matter to divine Providence.

Lorgues, March 8, 1822.

It is not because of indifference or false virtue that I do not write to Paris. I continue to believe that we have done all that human prudence

¹ YENVEUX, V, 180.

² REY, I, 277.

demands in order to ward off malevolent plotting... We must leave ourselves in the hands of divine Providence and pray God to direct events according to his good pleasure and not according to the pretentious claims of men³. There is no doubt in my mind that the article in *France Chrétienne* is the outcome of the malignity and perhaps the pretensions of intriguers. What proves this is that the reflections it applies only to Marseilles might have equally applied to Montauban for which the one newly named finds himself absolutely in the same position as my uncle.

82. [To Father Tempier at Notre Dame du Laus].⁴

Fatigue. The Founder is being careful.

[Barcelonnette] April 29, 1822.

I am well but I repeat that it is a miracle for which I give credit to obedience for it is certain that when I left, I was not in condition to take to the road... I rise only at six o'clock and I will continue to give myself this care recognized as necessary in order to make up for the loss of sleep during the preceding missions.⁵

83. [To Father Courtès at Aix].⁶

Representations of the priests of Aix to the Archbishop against the Missionaries of Provence.

[Barcelonnette] May 5, 1822.

Are we falling into presbyterianism? What is this body of priests? What character can their assembly have? Since when have they the right to speak collectively, to make in common arrogant demands to their Bishop

³ There was more and more talk of the nomination of Forbin-Janson to Marseilles. Objectors to the nomination of Fortuné wrote to Paris to say that he had fallen into a state of near decrepitude. Cf. REY, I, 276.

⁴ REY, I, 284, note.

⁵ The Founder took part in the mission of Signes (beginning of January – mid February), of Lorgues (February 17 to March 31) and of Barcelonnette (April 20 – May 20). Before this mission he had gone to spend several days at Notre Dame du Laus. Cf. Coulin to Mazenod, April 22. He came back at the end of the month of May, cf.: Coulin to Mazenod, May 30.

⁶ REY, I, 279-280.

with the pretension of showing him his duty?⁷ If the priests of Aix can arrogate to themselves the right to act as a body, all the other parish priests of the diocese can do as much, they can meet together in the present case and in any other circumstances and then what power would be necessary to repress their audacity?

Always treat with honour the reputation of these gentlemen, be considerate to them personally in deference to the priesthood with which they are invested, cover up if possible and hide their schemes from the eyes of the public. In no way provoke them but put on a good countenance everywhere.⁸

84. [To Father Tempier at Notre Dame du Laus].⁹

Importance of the mission of Barcelonnette.

Barcelonnette, May 20, 1822.

No one will ever be able to exaggerate the importance and effect of this mission: it is in my eyes and in those of our colleagues the most essential of those we have done. We will be able to finish it only next year when, as we have announced, we will complete the entire valley; if the Bishop of Digne favours this idea, the good will be incalculable.

85. [To Brother Marcou at Notre Dame du Laus].¹⁰

Advice and encouragement.

Aix, July 24 [1822].¹¹

Aix, July 24, for it is half past midnight. I have started rather too late, my dear Marcou, to write you today so I will content myself with giving

⁷ These priests, ever unhappy of the great popularity of the Mission church, were now accusing Father de Mazenod of being responsible for the re-establishment of the diocese of Marseilles and, in consequence, for the dismembering of that of Aix.

⁸ This second paragraph is quoted, without date, by REY, I, 279-289. It seems to be in continuation with the preceding paragraph.

⁹ REY, I, 284.

¹⁰ YENVEUX, VIII, 193.

¹¹ The year is not indicated by Yenveux but this letter was certainly written in 1822. Marcou entered the novitiate on December 21, 1821. He was therefore at Laus with the novices in July, 1822. In July, 1823, he was priest and the Founder was at Paris.

you this mark of my remembrance. I know that you are well and I do not doubt that you are also conducting yourself quite well. Work hard to advance yourself and to perfect yourself in all virtues. You know what is needed to do good; I see that in a short while you will be going into the fray. So prepare your weapons. Adieu, my dear child, I recommend also that you work at your studies, without letting the difficulties that you meet impede your progress along this fine road. Live in the most perfect unity and in the exact observance of our holy Rules. Adieu, I embrace you with all my heart. Pray for me.

86. [To Father Tempier at Notre Dame du Laus].¹²

New statue of Mary in the Church of the Mission. Presentiment regarding the future of the Congregation. Fr. Tempier must remain superior of Notre Dame du Laus. Commentary of an article of the Rules about Assistants, the Procurator and the Visitor.

[Aix] August 15, 1822.

The ceremony has just finished, very dear and most good brother, silence reigns in the house. It is broken only by the sound of a distant bell which announces the departure of the great procession. Satiated with the sincere tributes that we have just rendered to our good Mother, at the feet of the beautiful statue that we have installed as a souvenir of her in our church¹³, I am letting the others take care of honouring her with the external pomp of a parade which would add nothing further to my perhaps over-demanding piety. Let this interlude be used to converse with you, dear friend, in sweet outpouring of the heart. Would that I could share with you all that I experienced in the way of consolation on this beautiful day devoted to Mary our Queen!

I had not felt for a long time as much joy in speaking of her grandeur and in encouraging our Christians to put all their confidence in her, as during my instruction to the Sodality this morning. I can safely hope I was understood and I can well believe that all the faithful who came to our church this evening shared the fervour with which I was inspired at the sight of the statue of the Holy Virgin and greater still by the graces which she

¹² YENVEUX, IV, 113-114; VII, 77-78, 61*; IX, 209; RAMBERT, I, 352-353; REY, I, 280-281.

¹³ It is on this day that the blessing took place of the statue of the Immaculate Conception which now stands in the chapel of the General House. Cf.: Boniface L. Wittenbrink, *The Oblate Madonna* in *Études Oblates*, t. I (1942), pp. 221-234.

obtained from her divine Son, I dare say, while we were invoking her with so much affection, because she is our Mother. I believe I owe to her also a special experience that I felt today, I will not go so far as to say more than ever, but certainly more than usual. I cannot describe it too well because it comprised several things but all related, however, to a single object, our dear Society. It seemed to me that what I saw, what I could put my finger on, was that within her lies hidden the germ of very great virtues, and that she can achieve infinite good; I found her worthy, everything pleased me about her, I cherished her rules, her statutes; her ministry seemed sublime to me, as it is indeed. I found in her bosom sure means of salvation, even infallible, such is how they looked to me. Only one reason for regret came to diminish and almost entirely efface the joy by which I would fain have let myself be carried away: it was myself. I saw myself as the sole and real obstacle to the great good which could be done, but only vaguely could I see what I must do in order to be more useful to the Society and to the Church. The conclusion was that with more virtues I would have more wisdom and ability to surmount such obstacles; the way they presented themselves to view, I saw them as in battle array and all the more formidable in that the persons on whom we depend are placed in the forefront, not so much like other enemies to fight us openly and seek like them to destroy us, but to neutralize all the efforts inspired by our zeal and to prevent, in the name of God whom they represent, all that God demands of us and that we might have done under the aegis of a Saint Charles, a Saint Francis of Sales or of many others. We have a new proof of this in the disagreements...

I revert to my insufficiency, to the little virtue I have; it is undoubtedly this lack, this poverty, this misery which prevents me from perceiving the means to overcome this obstacle which seems invincible. We would do miracles which in their eyes would seem to come from the power of Beelzebub. Ah! if once and for all God granted us in some of the dioceses where we are a bishop such as César de Bus¹⁴ had the happiness to find at Aix and at Avignon, one the disciple of St. Charles, the other companion of St Philip Neri, who can say what prodigies would be achieved by our little Society? I have a feeling about this, something of an instinct within me. But it seems that the Lord contents himself with showing us the possibility while men take away from us almost any hope. I stop here because when I took

¹⁴ César de Bus (Cavillon 1544 – Avignon 1607). In 1592 he founded the Congregation of the Priests of Christian Doctrine. Paul VI beatified him on April 27, 1975. The bishop of Avignon, companion of St. Philip Neri, was Tarugi, Oratorian, Archbishop of Avignon (1593-1597). Father Romillon, first companion of César de Bus, made a foundation at Aix under the episcopate of Bishop Hurault l'Hôpital (1599-1624).

up my pen I had no thought of saying a word of all that I have just brought up with you.

What I wished in beginning this letter was to tell you, my dear friend, how touched I was by the sentiments you expressed to me in such an edifying manner in your last letter. I recognized from the first page the true religious, the honest man, the good heart, my dear Tempier through and through. I thank the good God unceasingly for having brought us together and I pray him to fill you more and more with his spirit for our greater common good.

You ought to feel yourself that I cannot possibly yield to your wishes¹⁵. No one has a greater right than you to my confidence. First companion of mine, you have from the first day we came together grasped the spirit which must animate us and which we must communicate to others; you have not deviated in the slightest from the path we resolved to follow; everyone knows this in the Society and they count on you as they count on myself. Is it surprising, after that, that having a house somewhat remote, very essential for us because of the circumstances and the locality, you should be in charge of its management? It could not have been otherwise up to now, and although the Lord has caused to grow under our aegis members of whom I am proud, who deserve my esteem as much as they have captivated my heart, they are still too young, whatever the consideration they already enjoy amongst us, to be placed at the head of a house in which our novices dwell. You know besides that the superior of Notre Dame du Laus is obliged to keep up a steady correspondence with the administration of the diocese of Digne; who better than you can say if that is easy?... Now, they are used to your style; I do not fear to maintain that the Grand Vicar in charge of the High Alps has conceived a certain esteem for you, that he even has enough confidence in you to rely on many things that you tell him; for your part, you have acquired with him and even with the Bishop a certain ease of relationship which is the result of your experience and of assessments that you have been able to make on their characters, and also of the perfect knowledge that you have of these localities. One must not forget also to note the ascendancy over the priests of the region which the late M. Peix, parish priest of Gap, has given you, the confidence of the Society which has confided to you the superiorship of its second house, the fact of seeing you constantly and of knowing the regularity of your conduct causing

¹⁵ Father Tempier did not want any longer to be superior of Notre Dame du Laus. The community of postulants, novices and scholastics was not progressing very well (cf.: letters of Coulin). Father de Mazenod sent Fathers Moreau and Suzanne to the aid of the superior.

a rather striking contrast with that of most of those who exercise the ministry in the rest of the diocese. All these things together make you realize well enough that it is not possible, for the moment, that I recall you definitively to my side...

...¹⁶ The Assistants of the Superior General and the Procurator General are of the community of the house where the Superior General resides and stay always under his immediate jurisdiction. It is in a way a community within a community; but because of their dignity, this community is superior to the other which lives in the same house. They are in their proper place, and likewise at their posts. They rank everywhere over the local superior of this house, in the choir, in the common meetings, at table, etc. If the community were numerous, this demarcation would be easy to make because one would set up two tables, one for the Superior General and his Council and the Procurator General, the other for the rest of the community which would be presided over by the local superior. These great dignitaries have no dependance on the local superior; their particular superior is the Superior General but they have no jurisdiction over the local superior or over the community. However, as they are in the place of their residence, of their particular community, they have precedence, are higher in rank, than him, and as they are not dispensed from the Office, always on the same principle, they preside according to their rank.

It is not the same when occasionally they find themselves in a house other than their own; then the local superior has priority over them and doubtless, in the absence of the local superior, the first assessor has it also, since he represents the local superior (I do not speak of the time of the Visitation, which is foreseen and exceptional); nevertheless, it is not with them as with simple missionaries who are placed under the jurisdiction of the local superior of the house where they find themselves, even while en route, from the moment that they set foot on the threshold of the door. The great dignitaries are exempt from this jurisdiction but as this privilege is not granted *ad destructionem*, they are obliged very strictly to follow the Rule like the others. There is need of no other guarantee of their fidelity in observing it than the choice that the Society has made of them to fulfil such eminent positions but if, *per impossible*, in passing through, they dispensed themselves of common observances, it would be the duty of the local

¹⁶ The text which follows seems to belong to the letter of the 15th of August. Yenveux copied it from the register from which he usually took his excerpts: pp. 69-73 for the first part and 74-76 for what follows. It is known that the text of the Rules was constantly in the process of being improved and completed.

superior, because of the scandal that would result therefrom for the community, to warn them charitably, though this should not prevent him from writing immediately to the Superior General. For the rest, nothing should prevent them, in the exercise of the Chapter of Faults, from accusing themselves, although it ought to be prohibited to others to reveal such matters publicly. This should not take away from each the power or, to put it better this should not dispense from the duty of indicating to them their faults in particular. Such is how the Rule must be understood on this point but there has been good reason up to now not to make this difference in the Chapters of Faults, circumstances and our small number not having yet permitted that the Assistants and the Procurator General reside habitually in community together with the Superior General.

The word *Visitor* is not misplaced in the parenthesis of Article 6 from those which precede. His rank is assigned higher up in the parenthesis. He is not only named, like the others, just to complete the picture¹⁷ Just as the Assistants of the Superior General and the Procurator General ought to pass before the assessors of the local superior, so the Visitor, who is only a Visitor during the course of the Visitation, ought likewise to have priority over them or, better to say, since this article concerns the assessors especially, the assessors ought only to take precedence after those whose status is pointed out.

87. [To Father Suzanne at Notre Dame du Laus].¹⁸

Should write more often. Words of friendship.

Aix, August 24, 1822.

Would not one say, my dear friend, that we are at the Antipodes? Not a single little word, not a sign of life! Would it be that you were waiting for me to write? Never calculate in this manner, my dear Marius, for it would be to punish me precisely in the manner that hurts me most. You well know that I am not the master of my time, at Aix less than anywhere else. Were you to have forgotten how enslaved I am in this regard, I could show you how I spent yesterday and today. If I write to you at this moment, I know what I have had to do. There are times when, having sat down at my desk to write to you, it was too late when I had finished the letters that duty

¹⁷ "To complete the picture": this meaning is presumed as the translation of a word (*fi'gur'er* or *fixer*) which is illegible in the original text.

¹⁸ JEANCARD, 378-379; REY, I, 457.

imposes and which indirectly bring you news in your solitude. Well then, I would wish that you reply to these letters that I cannot write to you. That is a pleasantry, is it not? But it expresses better than one would think at first sight a truth that is very real. Dear child, how much it costs to live so far from you! It is fine indeed to keep you at Laus while I am obliged to be at Aix! Duty, love of what is good, what is useful, the *maorem Dei gloriam* which overcome one's tastes, one's inclinations – I can almost say one's need – such is worthy of men who would wish to die to their nature, who fight against it or at least neglect nothing to subjugate it, however it may try to revolt.

Shall I speak to you of your two letters? No. I content myself with thanking you for the satisfaction they have brought me. My sensibility would be too aroused if I dwelt on the touching sentiments that they express. You know what I am for you. That says everything in one word. I cannot add anything.

Adieu, I press you against my heart and I embrace you with all the tenderness that you deserve on many counts.

I advise you not to overstrain as you work. You are obliged to seek some rest, in order to be more capable when you will have to take the field in the name of the Lord. Obey me for the love of God.

August 25th. This is to say good night to you and to embrace you again once more and twice and three times, as long as there is paper left.

Adieu.

88. [To the deacon Alphonse Coulin at Cassis].¹⁹

Coulin would have difficulty saving his soul in the diocesan clergy. He had been allowed to advance in Holy Orders on condition that he remained in a regular community.

Rians, November 23, 1822.

I have just received, my dear Coulin, the tardy letter that you send me from Cassis. I am afflicted but little surprised at the resolve you have

¹⁹ Copy made by Father Tempier in consequence of the letter of Coulin to the Founder, November 16, 1822. Rome, Postulation archives: L. M. Coulin. Member of the Youth Sodality, Coulin had been a very great friend of the Founder. He entered the Society and taught rhetoric to the postulants and novices at Notre Dame du Laus. He was too demanding in regard to his students and was at the origin of the complaints and departures from the novitiate in the course of the year 1822. This discouraged him. His ill-controlled sensibility and his outbursts made him a member with whom it was difficult to live.

reached not to trouble yourself to seek asylum in some regular community of which the observances could preserve you from the dangers that you will meet in the world and to which it is only too likely that you will succumb. It must have taken courage to oppose the advice that I had given you, I who, I believe, have also been your director for several years; (as for) the decision of another director, an honest and enlightened man, such I wish to believe, but who on this occasion has not given proof of great ability in pronouncing so strongly the contrary of what had been decided by the one who certainly knew you better than he. It takes time, my dear, to know seriously the ins and outs of your self-love and the twists of your pride – Alas! I simply must say it – the falseness of your heart. Please God I had not acquired this conviction... You know that, independently of the advice that I gave you when sending you away, I had only consented upon your pressing and reiterated demands to present you for promotion to the subdiaconate on condition that you would live in a regular community, I even tell you that without that I would counsel you to quit the soutane and it is to me, after that, you have the courage to cite the recent decision of your new director! If you were to say that you are not worthy of the religious state, we would be in agreement, your conduct has proved that to us so much that we have been obliged to expel you from our Society; we should have done it sooner, I know, but I was dissuaded by the attachment for you that I have kept in the hope of correcting you. The words you pronounced one day in your despair: *if you chase me away, you will throw me into hell* had made such an impression on me who would have wished to save you at the price of my blood. May God's will be that this frightful omen be warded off. But can we conclude that you cannot do penance elsewhere for the scandal that you caused amongst us and that you ought not to make efforts to fortify yourself against your own weakness? So I repeat, and I have the right since I had the misfortune to consenting that you present yourself for Holy Orders, you ought to seek admission in some community that is very regular where you can live unknown in the exercise of hidden virtues and in the practice of penance. As a secular priest, if you reach the priesthood, and living in the world, I tremble for your salvation.

Such, my dear Coulin, is what my conscience and the remaining affection that I keep for you force me to tell you. I pray God that you will profit therefrom. Adieu, I embrace you.

89. [To Fathers Courtès and Suzanne at Aix].²⁰

Return of a letter.

Rians, November 24, 1822.

You did not suspect when sending me a certain scrawled letter from whom it came and what it contained. It is not excellent of its kind but it is good. I return it to you so that you can judge for yourselves but ask you to keep it secret.²¹

90. [To Father Courtès at Aix].²²

News of the mission of Rians. Father de Mazenod has qualities but little in the way of virtue.

Rians, December 9, 1822.

All is going well, not only has the mission produced its ordinary effects but dispositions are excellent. Several missions had been preached but that has not prevented us from seeing a great number of persons who had been unmoved: 25, 30 and 40 years is the daily menu. Since you have prayed for me, I have doubled my energy and I have been able without undue strain to do all our great exhausting exercises.

I am not surprised that you may not have been pleased with a certain instruction of which you speak. The subject being entirely from imagination, you have been able to make it up and it was quite simple. Good God! What confusion for me! You wished to speak of my virtues! Have I a single one which counts? Some good qualities given by God and which are to be found in me I know not how, that is all, but virtues, none, because it would have been a matter of acquiring them and apparently I am badly off in that respect for I do not know of any. I have not the time to explain to you how these good qualities that I have received from God, as I have received from him my eyes and hands, delude those who love me as you do and persuade them that I have virtues. The truth is that I have not acquired a single one, I cannot repeat that too often in the secret of our intimacy.

²⁰ REY, I, 277.

²¹ Father Rey seems to say that this reference is to a letter which came from Paris on the subject of the nomination of Fortuné to the See of Marseilles.

²² REY, I, 284; YENVEUX, V, 143.

91. [To Monsieur J. H. Guibert at Aix].¹

Guibert should write to his father who is opposed to his entry into novitiate.

Tallard², January 20, 1823.

I cannot persuade myself, my dear Guibert, that Monsieur your father is seriously threatening to go to revolting extremes that a Christian father would never permit. It is more likely a trial which he wishes you to undergo so as to be assured of your vocation. Otherwise it would have to be thought that he has an incorrect idea of paternal authority for it cannot proceed against God, he being your first father who without doubt can judge for himself how to dispose of us at will, especially when it is a question of calling us to a more perfect state and which brings us closer to the virtues of which his divine Son has wished to give us an example as well as counsel us. So write him respectfully that he cut short this trial that is unbearable for your heart and enable you, without anxiety and trouble, to follow the call of grace and fulfil the vocation which it has pleased the Master in his goodness to give you.

¹ PAGUELLE DE FOLLENAY, I, 73-74. Joseph Hippolyte Guibert was a postulant. He began his novitiate on January 25, 1823, and made his profession on November 4th of the same year.

² The Founder was on the mission of Tallard in the High Alps (January 5 to February 2, 1823). During this mission which he began when he was unwell and anxious about the nomination of his uncle, he wrote to Father Courtès on the 6th, 8th and 17th of January. REY (I, 295) quotes, between inverted commas, but in the third person, several lines of these letters. On January 6, the Founder complained of the indifference, of the inconceivable lack of concern of the people, but he hopes that the exercises of the mission will produce their normal fruits. He was "obliged to condemn himself to silence and to limit his work of preaching to the examination of conscience for a quarter of an hour, half aloud, and to the notices which are given in the evening after the Benediction." However, in a new letter of January 8, he added "that he is better than at his departure from Aix and that this mission will cure him like the others, while the treatment at the house produced no good effect." The news of the nomination of Fortuné was followed with no confirmation, so Father de Mazenod, still continued to leave the matter to Providence and "did not wish to be perfectly sure until the day of the official letter" (Letter of January 17 to Courtès).

I say no more to you on this point because you are well enough initiated into the ways of God and you have before you enough lives of saints to know what to decide.

I much appreciate your having thought of writing to me; I did not expect such consideration in the very first days of your stay amongst us; it is that you had already understood that we form a family, of which all who compose it wish only to have one heart and one soul.

You know for your part what sentiments I have for you, and I assure you of them anew.

Eugene, priest, missionary.

92. [To Father Courtès at Aix].³

Journey to Paris. Hospitality at the seminary of the Foreign Missions.

[Paris]⁴ February 19, 1823.

We arrived at Paris Saturday morning⁵ at eight o'clock. Our guardian angel who guided our progress had procured for me the means of saying holy Mass at Châlons on Thursday and at Auxerre on Friday. I note this circumstance because hitherto the persuasion has been that one could not say mass while travelling by post-chaise or diligence. Our travelling companions were very honest souls who fasted as carefully as we did, and who were most obliging to us during the whole of the journey.

...[At dinner, I placed myself] beside that [most] obstinate of mortals⁶ and behold, we became the best friends in the world, so much so that he lent his hat to my uncle and procured one for me from his store, which I will use proudly on all grand occasions while I am at Paris.

³ REY, I, 297.

⁴ Fortuné was named bishop of Marseilles on January 13, by ordonnance of the King. Eugène and his uncle left for Paris on February 9th. While passing through Lyon on the 11th, Father de Mazenod wrote to Father Tempier. REY (I, 297) quotes two lines of this letter: "My uncle bears up on this journey, as in all things he undertakes, truly like a young man. He has slept perfectly these past two nights."

⁵ February 15th.

⁶ At Paris, the two travellers sought hospitality at the seminary of the Foreign Missions. They had much difficulty in finding rooms there as the house was full and the Bursar, that most "obstinate of mortals", did not wish to receive visitors.

93. [To Father Courtès and the community at Aix].⁷

Desires to live amongst his family. May the novices give aid by their virtues to the Church in distress.

[Paris] February 22, 1823.

Let our novices be happy to live in their peaceful refuge. I am envious of their lot and it is with sorrow that I resign myself to what is in store for me. Indeed I offer to God my situation as the direst penance. My whole happiness after the work of our missions is to come and taste a little repose in the bosom of the family wherein everything edifies me, everything charms me. Love one another. Let all agree in maintaining good order and discipline by fidelity to the Rule, obedience, abnegation and humility. The Church expects you all to be a powerful aid in her distress; but be well persuaded that you will only be good enough to achieve something inasmuch as you advance in the practice of religious virtues.

Write me in detail... Remote from all of you as I am, consider me as an exile who longs unceasingly to be at the centre of his affections and who can only assuage his boredom for a few moments by transporting himself (in spirit) into your midst.

94. [To Father Tempier at Lauzet].⁸

The priests Maurel and Caire could be named superiors of the seminaries of Marseilles.

[Paris] March 4, 1823.

We are thinking of calling Monsieur Maurel⁹ to be superior of the major seminary. As for the minor seminary, we would wish it to be put on a better footing; for that, professors must be chosen who would establish themselves there. We have here a good man who is quite disposed to leave a lucrative post in order to devote himself to the education of young clerics. He has talent and appears to have also much piety; he is M. l'abbé Caire.¹⁰

⁷ YENVEUX, V, 160; VIII, 68.

⁸ REY, I, 300. This letter was probably sent to the Commune of Lauzet, Low Alps, where Fathers Tempier, Suzanne and Moreau preached a mission from February 9 to March 9.

⁹ Abbé Claude Maurel was named superior of the major seminary, re-established in December 1823.

¹⁰ Abbé André Caire of Marseilles was professor at the College Louis-le-Grand at Paris.

95. [To Father Courtès at Aix].¹¹

Joy at learning that Brother Guibert has returned to the novitiate.

[Paris] March 6, 1823.

Let Guibert¹² know what pleasure I felt on learning of his return to the house. His conduct will be remembered in our Society and he can be assured that it has gained for him in advance, so to speak, the affection that one ordinarily obtains only after much time and long trials. It will be appropriate to take this into account when he will desire that the time of his novitiate be shortened which I am quite disposed not to prolong more than a year because in time of war campaigns count double.

96. [To Father Sumien and to the Oblates at Aix].¹³

Joy on receiving news from Aix. May the scholastics follow in the footsteps and emulate the spirit of their elders.

Paris, March 18, 1823.

The tender sentiments of our dear Oblates, so well and keenly expressed, have produced in my heart the effect that you certainly must have expected, a renewal of love and of that affection which is, I believe, only too well known in our family.

As you know, you are the hope of our Society; so you can gauge my happiness when I contemplate you going forward in the ways of the Lord, full of ardour for good, burning with holy zeal for the salvation of souls, devoted to the Church, scorning and trampling on all that detracts from perfection and compromises salvation. Then it is that I exult with joy and congratulate myself at having you as children. Oh! I have no doubt that you will follow the footsteps of your elder brothers – see the prodigies that it has already pleased the Lord to work through their ministry! This is because, young though they be, they are filled with the spirit which vivifies everything. That is why we try to perpetuate it amongst us and it is through

¹¹ REY, I, 305.

¹² The Father of J. H. Guibert continued to be opposed to the vocation of his son. The latter had to return to him in February. He finally obtained the consent of his father and returned to the novitiate at the beginning of the month of March. He made his profession on November 4, 1823, after nine months of novitiate.

¹³ YENVEUX, V, 169, 205; VIII, 191-192.

you, my dear friends, that this living and fruitful tradition will be transmitted to that other class of our Society, the novices, who follow along immediately after you. Continue to give them the example of all the virtues, of regularity, of fidelity to the Rules; live always in this intimate union which makes of our house a true paradise on earth and whenever you are enjoying your family life and speaking amongst yourselves of your happiness, the greatest that one can taste here below, think of your father who languishes far from you in a land which he could almost call foreign, for it will always be a real exile for him as long as he is far from you and all his other brothers.

97. [To my dear son, Father Guibert, acolyte, novice, missionary at Aix].¹⁴

Presentiment of the good that Guibert will do in the Church.

Paris, March 19, 1823.

I have not waited until today, my dear friend, to felicitate you; too much have I shared in your happiness and too much do I value it not to thank the good God first and then to rejoice with the family to which you have so suddenly betaken yourself as a result of the protection of God over you and over us. You see, my dear friend, that I do not hide from you this thought and that my heart yields. But did you not already know how much I loved you and hoped in you? It was a kind of presentiment¹⁵ I had from the first day I saw you; it seemed to me to have found again something of myself which quite naturally had just fallen into place and what was most remarkable was that from then on you were considered by all the rest of the family as one who had belonged to it for a long time and had returned to it after an absence. All that augurs well for the good there will be for us to do together in the fold of the Church ravaged by so many beasts. So let us ever be united in the same spirit. Pray for me who loved you first. For my part, I

¹⁴ PAGUELLE DE FOLLENAY, I, 77-78; REY, I, 305; YENVEUX, IV, 132.

¹⁵ Father de Mazenod had had, from his first interviews with Guibert, "the presentiment" of the value of this young man and of the grand responsibilities that he would have in the Church: "All that augurs well for the good there will be for us to do together in the fold of the Church". Guibert became, when still young, superior of the major seminary of Ajaccio, then bishop of Viviers, archbishop of Tours, archbishop of Paris and cardinal.

think of you often before the Lord. Where rules his amiable heart, there let us meet.

Adieu, I embrace you with all my heart,

Eugene, priest, missionary.

98. [To Father Courtès at Aix].¹⁶

Ceremony of Holy Thursday at the Tuileries. Desires to return as quickly as possible in his community. Fast of Holy Friday.

Paris, March 27, 1823, Holy Thursday.

My heart was sad, my dear Courtès, as I came back from the church where I had just offered the holy sacrifice with people I did not know, in a somewhat alien land, so to speak, far from you from whom I have never been separated on this memorable day. Yes, it is the first time since our coming together that I have not celebrated Easter with my brothers. I am inconsolable over this immense privation. To soften my grief, I said Mass quite close to the time that I knew you would be assembled, *Dominicam Coenam manducare*¹⁷.

But, although in the presence of the same Lord, my heart felt all the weight of the distance which separates us and while, thanks to the arrangement I had made, we were celebrating at the same time the same mysteries, we nevertheless did not celebrate together and my isolation in such a circumstance wrenched sighs from me even at the altar, seeing that I was not surrounded by my excellent and beloved family.

I have just returned from accompanying my uncle to the Last Supper at the Tuileries. After a very remarkable sermon preached by the Bishop of Troyes¹⁸ in which, as he commented on the saying of Charlemagne "God and my sword", he gave the august assembly some forthright lessons of government to which they listened intently, we then saw, with astonishment beyond description, human grandeur lower itself, in imitation of the Word who humbled himself, at the feet of the poor and of the indigent. It was beautiful, impressive; one can utter on this subject fine phrases and moralize

¹⁶ RAMBERT, I, 360-363; REY, I, 302; YENVEUX, IV, 209; V, 176; VIII, 76.

¹⁷ I Co 11, 20.

¹⁸ Bishop Étienne Antoine de Boulogne, bishop of Troyes (1809-1825).

to the skies but what shall I say, my dear Courtès? This remarkable spectacle was in no way comparable to our touching ceremony. Nothing brought it to mind, save the routine action of the washing of feet, and there again with quite a difference. Nothing reminded us of the imposing lesson which the Saviour of men gave to the world. Neither the place or the persons or the spectators or even those who were the immediate object of the ceremony, nor the manner of doing it, nothing in a word spoke to the heart; mine at least felt not the least emotion: I only felt the regret that this spectacle naturally caused to spring in my soul by making me remember what we do.

Ah! hours later you could have said the same when, for consolation, I betook myself in spirit to that room that truly resembles the Cenacle where the disciples, prepared by the lessons they constantly receive in the Society, imbued with the spirit of the Saviour who lives in them, gather in the name of their Master to represent the apostles of whom Jesus Christ could say *vos mundi estis*¹⁹ and wait silently and devoutly for the representative of the Master amongst them, at the word of commandment of the Lord, *mandatum*, to kneel at their feet, washing and touching these feet blessed and mandated several thousand years previously by the prophet so as to be feet of evangelizers of good, of preachers of peace, touching, I say, respectfully his lips to these feet whereupon flames dart from his heart and envelope it as from a fount of living water which refreshes and spurts forth wherever eyes are turned. What emotion! What sentiments! What fervour! Here, led into the palace of an earthly king, I saw a vast gallery defiled everywhere by obscene statues, by tableaux representing the unseemly divinities of paganism, surrounded by all the vanities of the age, by all the pomp of the world, in order to gaze on the truly pious prince who was about to give a great example of humility, I had to turn my eyes from a thousand objects that normally should have been modestly veiled for the circumstance. What reverence could be expected from such people?

Dissipation and curiosity were depicted in all faces. It was in such a setting that the prince approached a troupe of children ranged on a dais high enough so that he could pour water on their feet without stooping. These children, very well dressed and as little in keeping with the mystery as the undevout spectators, ill represented, it seemed to me, the apostles of the living God; they were not even members of the suffering God. So, I repeat,

¹⁹ John 13, 10.

my heart remained unmoved; my indifferent mind presented to me no image, recalled no souvenir; it had to go elsewhere to dwell on the mysteries of the day and it is to Aix that it went to join your gathering; would that I had been able to be there entirely!

I come from the tomb where I have spent several hours to compensate myself for all I am losing and for so many privations that I experience in this precious week.

Adieu. This letter will be common to you all. If Fr. Tempier and Fr. Suzanne are at Marseilles, send it on to them. I want you all to know that Paris gives me no illusions, nothing within its walls impresses me; in a word, away from you there is no happiness for me. I embrace you, adieu.

March 28.

My uncle greets you. I could not prevent him today, Holy Friday, from following our usual customs which I always observe in all places; in consequence he ate during the whole day only bread and a little soup. I thought you would be edified to learn this.

99. [To Father Jourdan at Aix].²⁰

Advice to Father Jourdan regarding his scruples.

[Paris] March 30, 1823.

My dear, good Jourdan, may the peace of Our Lord Jesus Christ be with you! What's this? Could you be without this precious peace that the divine Master came to bring to the world? Ah! if that were so, my good friend, it would indeed be your fault. Why do you allow your soul to be troubled by scruples which torment you and cause such great detriment? Dear friend, trust in my experience. I know this kind of trial, pay no heed to it. Remember that our Lord wishes that his children be led by the way of authority and obedience; it is thus that he manifests his very holy will: *qui vos audit me audit*²¹. Now, I declare to you in the name of God that you are in his friendship. It is not the thoughts and all the other miseries which

²⁰ YENVEUX, VI, 17; REY, I, 307-308. Jacques Antoine Jourdan, entered as a young priest into the Society and made his profession on February 9, 1823. He was suddenly stricken and died on April 20, 1823.

²¹ Luke 10, 16: "He who heeds you, heeds me".

obsess you which will make you offend God; you sadden his paternal heart only by lacking confidence in his goodness, in thinking too little of him as a good father who cherishes you and wishes to save you. Rely in this matter on the decision given to you by our dear brothers who love you so much and whom you sadden, as you do me, by the obstinacy you show in not relying on their decision about the situation which it pleases God to let you undergo. Courage, my dear friend. Very great saints have been tried like you, but they became saints in spite of these circumstances because they did not cease to obey; courage, once more, my dear friend, we are all down on the floor praying for you so that you will bear this hard trial like a valiant soldier of Jesus Christ. This so amiable Master, our model, did not yield to despair in the garden of Olives²²; into what an agony he was plunged nevertheless! Hold on to him and fear nothing, drink the cup of his bitterness since he deigns to let you share in his passion, but do not doubt that he will soon fill you with his sweetest joys. Until then you must keep your peace and obey.

Beware of staying a single day away from the holy altar; it is there you must replenish your strength. At the moment of communion, tell him lovingly about all your sorrows: *vim patior, responde pro me*²³. Embrace his feet in spirit, protest that you will never separate yourself from him, that you wish to love him for ever, then take him into your heart and be not troubled about anything. That is what the Lord orders me to say to you. Adieu, I embrace you very tenderly while commending you to our good mother Mary.

100. [To Father, Courtès at Aix].²⁴

Father de Mazenod has not developed his talents, only his qualities of heart. Books should always remain in the same house. Calm, not noisy, jymaking of the novices.

[Paris] April 2, 1823.

I will begin by telling you that you rarely acknowledge receipt of my letters... I will then beg you not to mock me any more. I am wholly

²² Ms. Yenveux: Olives.

²³ Is. 38, 14: "O Lord I am oppressed; be thou my security!"

²⁴ YENVEUX V, 149; VII, 41*; VIII, 73; REY I, 303. The Founder addresses Courtès in this letter with the second person singular *tu* but in the text of Yenveux, VII, 41*, this has been changed to *vous*. That of VIII, 73, has no indication of to whom it is addressed but the letter was certainly addressed to Courtès who then was at Aix with Deblieu.

incapable and far from being the giant that your imagination, prompted by your heart, represents to you, I am really nothing but a pygmy. If God placed in me the germ of certain talents, which circumstances have not permitted me to cultivate, it has remained undeveloped and has never produced anything worthwhile; all that I have derived from it is an affinity for good yet without the ability to produce it. If that is the case, it is not entirely my fault. The little that I have, is what I have made and even then I have not gone to great trouble, wherein I have been in the wrong. As for the heart, that is another matter, I would argue that to all and sundry, now and in future. Also when I say to you that I love you, you can be assured that you could not be as much (loved) by anyone else...

I have written to Father Tempier that I approved your conduct in refusing to turn over to him the books he asked for the house of Marseilles. I would have blamed you very severely if you had yielded to his request. It is very expressly forbidden for us to transport from one house to another, not only a work like Bourdaloue and Massillon, but a single volume however little it may be. It makes no difference if these works might have belonged or not to the individuals who change houses... This is all the more rigorous at a time when the house of Aix has no local superior.

Far from being troubled by what you tell me about the wildness of our novices, I am quite at ease. Be firm and do not let anyone dissipate them with talk which whirls them off into the world or which brings the world closer to them. It is not worth anyone's trouble, in fact, to be concerned with it, wretched and hateful that it is. Advise Fr. Deblieu also to take care not to be dissipated with them. We must have joyfulness amongst us, but let it be joyfulness that is mild, not noisy, at least not uproarious; it is essential that our novices acquire at an early stage the habit of maintaining a certain reserve and exterior modesty which is very edifying and which helps to keep one in the presence of God and control one's actions...

101. [To Father Tempier at Marseilles].²⁵

Advice regarding the canonical visitation.

[Paris] April 3, 1823.

It is urgent to establish the Rule as having to be observed everywhere and by all. Besides other things, do not neglect the prescribed registers, in

²⁵ YENVEUX, VII, 261. Father Tempier made the canonical visitation of the house at Marseilles, composed of Fathers Maunier, superior, Dupuy and Suzanne. During this time he furnished all the information which the two de Mazenods needed at Paris about the diocese of Marseilles.

one of which you will trace the history of our establishment at Marseilles going back therein as far as the mission²⁶.

102. [To Father Suzanne at Marseilles].²⁷

Affection. Reproaches him for exceeding his strength. He is to remain at Marseilles.

Paris, April 13, 1823.

When I have to write to you, my dear, good son, I am obliged to hold in check at the outset the affections of my heart in order to remain master of my expression, more perhaps than I am of my sentiments which I am inclined to believe are too tender and too lively if, for that matter, I can reproach myself for loving too much someone whom I have so many reasons to love and who ought to be, indeed, incomparably more loved by me than by any other. *Satis est* on that subject, for fear that my letter will contain nothing else but that, when I have something else to say to you.

Before all else, whatever the precautions you may have taken to ward off the blow, I must scold you and very seriously. Do you want then to be the misfortune of my life? Destined to precede you to the tomb, what would I become if you condemned me to survive you? What sorrow would be comparable to mine? Who could console me? You know full well, I would have no more happiness on this earth. Eh bien! why do you behave in a such manner as to shorten your days? How is it that after the hard exertions you made at the mission of Tallard, after the fatigues and sufferings of the mission of Lauzet, where you had to struggle against hell and all the elements as well, the inclemency of weather being so rigorous that the people of that region could scarcely bear it, you go back to Tallard and rest yourself by preaching again twice a day and forget the care of your health to the point of confessing thirty hours without stopping! And you would wish me, my child, not to be appalled by such behaviour! You may very well say you are not tired at all, that you eat and sleep well, that does not suffice to appease me, such excess is destroying your existence. I do not wish you to expose yourself to the consequences that can result. That is to be understood in the future once and for all.

²⁶ Mission of 1820, preached together with the Missionaries of France.

²⁷ JEANCARD, 379-381; REY, I, 458.

You see from what I have just told you that you have not interpreted my mind badly by staying several days more at Aix; only I would have wished you to be moderate in undertaking to hear confessions, so as to be able to take the rest that I had prescribed to you very authoritatively. No matter if you feel no more fatigue, you have nonetheless used up your health in the remarkable missions and retreats which have been accomplished. At Marseilles it is I who will take care of you; yes, you must have some intimation of my secret, I am placing you there because I must make it my own habitual place of dwelling. I would have to be convinced that the greater glory of God and the good of our Society demanded your presence elsewhere in order to have the strength to impose the sacrifice on myself of living in separation from you...

103. [To Father Sumien at Aix].²⁸

Death of Father Jourdan. Persecution and suffering are a pledge of the good being done by the Society.

[Paris] May 2, 1823.

What shall I say to you, my dear child, about the misfortune which has brought consternation to us all²⁹? I am dumbfounded and can scarcely believe it but I do not share your fears about the salvation of his soul. I finished yesterday in a most confident mood the five masses that our Rules prescribe and, as our other Fathers will have done as much, I hope that the good God will have delivered him from purgatory and that he is enjoying at this moment the glory of heaven. His was a very beautiful soul. Who knows? Perhaps this poor brother had never sinned mortally. Oh! I repeat, I have the greatest confidence that he is saved.

You speak to me, my dear friend, of all the crosses and persecutions that I have experienced since the beginning of the Society. I would have been quite annoyed if such had not been the case. Do you not know that it is the seal of the hand of God upon us? And how could it be otherwise? How can you expect the demon not to make every possible effort to shake us and arouse at the same time all the tempests from without when he sees his kingdom attacked and so many spoils snatched from his ferocity? It

²⁸ YENVEUX, V, 29, 68, 235; IX, 141, 215.

²⁹ The sudden death of Father Jourdan, which happened April 20, 1823. He was 25 years of age.

could not be otherwise. It is ever thus that he has acted from Abel down to us. One must read on this subject the admirable epistles of Saint Paul, one finds therein many subjects of consolation for he passed by all the trials, as other saints have. Let us be firm in goodness, walk ever in the paths of the Lord by practicing exactly what our vocation prescribes for us. Let us encourage each other, be united and all will go well because we will accomplish the will of God.

104. [To Father Tempier at Marseilles].³⁰

Bishop Fortuné de Mazenod wishes to name Father Tempier as Vicar General of Marseilles. Motives for this choice.

[Paris] May 21, 1823.

I had thought of the project which you proposed to me. M. [Ricaud]³¹ is certainly well apt to inspire confidence, but I will not hide from you that my uncle has eyes on another, and this other is you. I understand all you would reply to this but such is his idea. After all, no one would have had anything to say had he brought with him a Grand Vicar from here; besides one must get accustomed to seeing him do what he judges to be suitable. Bishop Cicé must have made this doctrine clear to those who no longer know what a bishop ought to be... My uncle will give enough proof of his good will for the clergy of Marseilles by forming his whole chapter from members chosen amongst them. He has resisted to that end all the solicitations of most notable persons, of his friends, of a number of Bishops...

The strongest reasons for opposing would be those we would decide or, after reflection, would be in the interests of the Society; but I do not hesitate to believe that after we have got together, we will all fall into agreement that the circumstances and our situation demand that we consent to make this breakthrough, if indeed it is one; for, properly speaking, one cannot so name something foreseen by the Rule and that the Superior General can authorize by his assent. As a general thesis, I would not willingly approve such a measure; in this particular case, I can only agree that it is wise and very appropriate.

³⁰ RAMBERT, I, 363-364; REY, I, 300.

³¹ M. Ricaud, rector of the parish of St. Vincent de Paul.

105. [To Father Courtès at Aix].³²

Do not be discouraged by failures and be careful of his health.

[Paris] May 27, 1823.

Coupled to all that in itself is bitter in the lacerating thought of this new betrayal³³, is the fear of evil that you feel in consequence, you who are so keenly sensitive and the suffering of whose soul can overwhelm a body so frail. Suppress, in the name of God, all that can enfeeble you, all that can be hurtful to health, to a life which is so dear to me, so precious, so indispensable. Oh! yes, if I wish to experience the anguish and sorrow of death, I have only to think of that which I ought to avert with all my will each day and how many times a day! Adieu, good and tender child, I press you against my heart.

106. [To Father Courtès at Aix].³⁴

Sufferings caused by the death of Father Jourdan and by the defection of a member of the Society.

[Paris] June 1, 1823.

The announcement of this apostasy³⁵ has sensibly affected me more than the death of Father Jourdan... To be obliged to turn over as it were to Satan the one whom I set and directed on his way to heaven, how frightful that is! One is struck by blows like this as by lightning and one finds oneself in the state of mind of these princes of our days who, after a new defection, look once more about them to see who will be the next to leave.

It would perhaps be as well if we were to compare ourselves, in this circumstance, with our divine Master who asked the disciples who still remained beside him, after the shameful defection of the Capharnaïtes: "and you also, would you wish to abandon me?"³⁶ However sorrowful our

³² YENVEUX, IX, 66.

³³ The reference, it seems, is to Deblieu who was already thinking of leaving the Society. He did so in the month of October. In May or June, only the lay brother Claude Ignace Voitôt left the house of Aix before making his profession. He had entered the novitiate on May 30, 1822.

³⁴ YENVEUX, VIII, 258.

³⁵ From the details at the end of this letter and because of the effect produced on the Founder by the announcement of this "apostasy" we believe that he refers to Father Deblieu who would leave in the month of October.

³⁶ John 6, 67.

position, I pity infinitely more the traitors who, not having been stopped by the infallible word of him who said that anyone who turned back after having put his hand to the plough, is not worthy of the kingdom of heaven³⁷, secretly meditate, consent interiorly and finally commit an execrable perjury. Civil laws used to punish very severely similar behaviour. Today divine justice delays applying the penalty. A crime like this is so alien to my mind that I truly do not know how to prevent its execution. I could only implore the Lord during the whole course of the procession today to avert this calamity from us and still more from him who thinks of doing it and by the fact itself is not innocent of it.

107. [To Father Tempier at Marseilles].³⁸

Father de Mazenod has had his uncle named to Marseilles for the good of the Society of the Missionaries of Provence. The latter ought in return to seek the good of the diocese.

[Paris, beginning of June 1823].³⁹

You can surely think, my dear friend, that all the reflections that you communicate to me on the subject of the project of my uncle had been present in my mind (I speak of those which have to do with the Society); and you understand that they are of a nature as to have made a great impression; so I have pondered and reviewed them and have not hidden from myself all the disadvantages of such an undertaking. It would be too long to enter here into all the details of the motives which determined me not to oppose the resolution that my uncle took *by himself*, as if he had read my thoughts. There are matters that one can only explain in conversation but it is as well for you to know that it is I who made my uncle a bishop, not only the first time on coming to Paris in order to make them think of him for they ignored his existence; but a second time, by pressing letters and reasons which I could urge opportunely on the one whom it concerned, at the moment when they had really put him aside and had thought they

³⁷ Luke 9, 62.

³⁸ RAMBERT, I, 365-367; REY, I, 300-301.

³⁹ The Founder had announced to Father Tempier on May 21st that Fortuné would name him Vicar General of Marseilles. Father Tempier replied on May 31st that he would obey but would first permit himself to present motives for refusing: his incapacity and the good of the Society of the Missionaries of Provence. This letter, which is in response to that of May 31st, is cited without date by by Rey and Rambert but it was written at the beginning of the month of June.

would gain from the change by putting me in his place, not on the see that had been destined to him, but in the episcopate⁴⁰.

Without doubt, I had to be inspired, in the steps which I took, by the spirit of justice and equity which was revolted at the thought alone that they could inflict an outrage as unjust as it was dishonorable on an estimable man who, far from not being worthy, had on the contrary still increased his claims by his exemplary life and his excess of zeal, of which we have all been the witnesses. But it also must be said that the good of the Society has motivated a great deal the steps that I believed I had to take. One must also give credit to my uncle in that this same motive has always weighed much with him and, if he has been able to feel happy over his promotion, it was only in great part in the hope of bringing benefit to us. It is certain for that matter that he would never have accepted the burden, really too heavy for him, if he had not really counted on my devotedness and on that of the whole of our Society.

You will understand that for my part I would not have been able, in conscience, to make the slightest move in his favour, if I had not been resolved to devote myself to him, together with all of us and all the resources that our Society can furnish.

To sum up: I have made my uncle a bishop in order to provide our Society with the means to do good in the Church, to consolidate its existence, etc. I cannot, in conscience, after having contributed so powerfully to its rise, not provide it with the indispensable means to fulfil its task worthily. It cannot succeed therein without my help; I ought therefore to devote myself to it. But this obligation weighs on me only for having wished to achieve the good of the Society; therefore the Society owes to me the assistance which is necessary to fulfil my duty as best I can.

I hope there is no one amongst us who does not understand the rightness of these reflections. In regard to yourself, I will prove to you in a *tête-à-tête* that it was indispensable that you be associated with me. I do not claim that you have been invited to weddings and feasts; but you will share my solicitude and you will concur with me in the accomplishment of the plans of God on the diocese and on us.

⁴⁰ Prince de Croÿ, Grand Almoner, proposed to the Founder the bishopric of Châlons-sur-Marne. Cf.: J. PIELORZ, *Le Fondateur et la nomination de son oncle à l'évêché de Marseille* in *Études Oblates*, t. 17 (1958), p. 68.

108. [To Father Courtès at Aix].⁴¹

Consultation with Father Richardot, S.J., concerning the vocation of Brother J. H. Guibert.

[Paris] June 15, 1823.

However much I felt sure that the demon was laying a trap for him,⁴² I was pleased to know the opinion of a man experienced in the ways of God, absolutely independent and consequently in no way influenced by any particular consideration or attachment⁴³. Having listened attentively to the very exact account I gave him and to the reading of his letter, he repeated to me perhaps twenty times: *There is no doubt that he is called, no doubt that he is called; let him refrain from leaving, it is a trap of the enemy.* He told me on this subject the wisest, the most reasonable things in the world. *Tell him clearly that there is nothing more common than such doubts, that he chase them away as he would chase thoughts against the Faith or against purity.*

109. [To Brother Guibert at Aix].⁴⁴

Encourages the novice Guibert not to hesitate in pursuing his vocation. Temptations of the demon.

Paris, June 26, 1823.

I admit, my dear good Guibert, your letter had palpably affected me. This was to the point that I did not have fortitude enough to write to you and that I needed to pour my heart into the bosom of our mutual Friend, the only confidant I could choose in this anguish that I might describe by calling it excessive. How could you wish, my dear friend, that it be otherwise, persuaded as I am that the good God has given you to us in answer to our prayers, that he has called you like the apostles with the most evident signs of a truly divine vocation to follow him and to serve him in the ministry which resembles most that which he prescribed for his apostles, with whose work he willed to associate you. Could I have seen you yield to the perfidious promptings of the spirit of temptation, the eternal enemy of

⁴¹ REY, I, 305-306.

⁴² Brother Guibert.

⁴³ The Father Richardot whom he consulted was provincial of the Jesuits (REY, I, 305).

⁴⁴ YENVEUX, IX, 101; PAGUELLE DE FOLLENAY, I, 78-82; REY, I, 306.

all good, without my heart being rent? Apart from the sincere affection that I have for you and which made me dread even more the danger to which you were going to expose yourself by not responding to your vocation, and the malediction which is attached to him who turns away after having put his hands to the plough, I was distressed to see that the demon was still powerful enough to penetrate into the granaries of the Father of the family and that, not content with burning and consuming the straw which by God's just judgement has been ceded to him, he insists on taking even the good grain, seizing the sifter and violently shaking it to shake out again the seed of the elect and cruelly devour what was reserved for eternal life. I repeat, this thought rends my heart. The cunning and malice of the enemy revealed themselves to me with greater evidence than any other because I saw his rage unmasked and all the more visible because of the circumstances. The spread of our Society is unacceptable to the hatred which he has vowed against the souls that we strive to save and of whom we are snatching so great a number from his tyranny. He saw two and even three bishops make overtures to call us to their sides⁴⁵; the war was going to be more deadly for him than ever. Already guardians of a shrine of the holy Virgin, there was question of confiding to us another. There was serious thought of our founding an establishment on the tomb of a holy missionary who had been all his life and after his death the terror of hell. What is to be done to ward off so many blows? The demon is never at a loss; he will foul the sources; he will exert every effort to render sterile the bosom which gives birth to the giants who ravage his empire; he will strive to stifle the seeds which promise to develop more promptly and vigorously. It is thus that he has beset you with so many assaults and that he has used most seductive auxiliaries to draw you astray. It sufficed to him for the moment to turn you away from the path which the Lord had traced for you; you would have thereby, without knowing, perfectly complied with his plans; he would reserve for you after that the consequences of an infidelity of which he alone could calculate the depth. Would not the sight of such abysses make my soul shudder? I am not so impervious as that! Overwhelmed, I put my trust in God, I invoked his holy name and, although I could not doubt what policy I should follow, I was inspired to have recourse to the principal superior of an Order to whom the ways of God are not unknown. You know the result of this initiative. The conclusion permits not the least

⁴⁵ There were negotiations to open a house for missionaries at Digne (*Missions O.M.I.*, 1897, pp. 205-207) and to accept the care of the shrine of Notre Dame de Rochefort at Nîmes (REY, I, 284). They were even thinking for a while of buying the isle of Lerins, then on sale at a low price, as a place for the novitiate (REY, I, 284; Coulin to Tempier, June 11, 1822 and letters of Father Dupuy, end of 1822, beginning of 1823).

doubt, leaves not the least anxiety. Your conduct is entirely mapped out and it is not I who speak; but I must say, what is said is just as I thought.

Oh! if you refer to my decision, dear friend, it is known to you, I could not speak otherwise without betraying my conscience, the interests of the Church and those of the salvation of your soul. If it is costly to your nature, count yourself happy to have something to offer in exchange of all that God is granting us, in thanksgiving for all that he wills to effect through you.

The letter which you have had the courtesy to write to me and which Fr. Courtès inserted in his has consoled me somewhat because I discover amongst the expressions and good sentiments that you utter clearly marked signs of the prevenient grace which is yours and to which you do not wish to be unfaithful. Courage, my very dear child, do not be surprised that the demon overwhelms you with the clouds of his fury, that he disturbs your soul as during a storm. This power would not have been given him had you repulsed him with greater energy at the first onslaught that he made on you. He has made great gains when he has succeeded in blocking the light; one is then certain to be shipwrecked; but the good God has granted you a new grace, that is of understanding that in such a state (to which, for that matter, saints have very often been subjected) you ought to rely on the decision of those who are there to direct you. What advice can you expect of him who wishes your ruin and that of those you are called to save? Courage once again! The enemy would aim fewer blows at you, he would be less relentless in seducing you, if he did not fear your ministry. Although, properly speaking, he does not know the future with scientific certainty, his natural perspicacity reveals events to him which depend from secondary causes in a way as not to be mistaken. He has concluded from the calibre of soul with which the good God has endowed you, the particular and prevenient graces which his goodness has willed you to have, of the vocation to which he has called you and which places you, so to speak, fully armed in the enemy's camp with the warriors of the faith who gain in the name of Jesus Christ as many victories as the battles in which they engage; he has concluded, I say, that you also would be formidable to his empire; and stalking around you, as the Apostle says⁴⁶, he has perceived the weak point and has taken hold on it in order to try and penetrate your soul with the most subtle poison, that which all sensitive souls should dread most and which alone would be sufficient to neutralize all the good which could be done in the Church. Happily this strategy is not new and we have the

⁴⁶ 1 Peter 5, 8.

example of the saints who teach us what we must do. Hold on therefore to their precepts; do as they have done, and we will obtain the same results. Saving your modesty, would that you obtain the same kind and as complete as those which they have obtained. However it will not be otherwise if you do what they knew how to do. That depends on you since the grace which is offered to you is the same.

Adieu, my good and dear friend, I pray God that after having felt the sorrows of giving birth, I may rejoice at the birth of a man and of a saint in this cherished family of God, and of which the father loves you to the same extent that you are costly to his heart.

Eugene, priest, missionary.

110. [To Father Tempier at Marseilles].⁴⁷

Consecration of Fortuné de Mazenod at Issy.

[Paris] July 5, 1823.

This time I will use a right of which I scarcely remember the name, having lost to such an extent the ability to use it, (that is) I opt for my freedom. With a place in the gallery, I will enjoy at my ease a spectacle so touching for me⁴⁸ and I will abandon my soul to the spirit of God so that he may direct its sentiments according as he pleases in the hope to derive therefrom as much profit as consolation.

111. [To Father Tempier at Marseilles].⁴⁹

Religious ceremonies of the new Bishop at Paris.

[Paris] July 15, 1823.

Since the consecration, we no longer have a moment for ourselves; there is no way to do anything, we are always starting over again. To all the previous interruptions are added the solicitations that are ceaselessly being

⁴⁷ REY, I, 309.

⁴⁸ Fortuné de Mazenod was consecrated bishop on July 6th in the chapel of Lorette at Issy by Bishop de Latil of Chartres, Bishop Devie of Belley and Bishop de Frayssinous of Hermopolis *in partibus*.

⁴⁹ REY, I, 309-310.

made for different ceremonies, consecrations, solemn masses, benedictions, confirmations; of all that, nothing can be refused. Again this morning, July 15th, the sacrament of confirmation had to be administered at the other end of the city, for the good Brothers of the Christian Schools whence we returned only at two o'clock. There is no end to it, in any event we were extremely edified by this valuable community composed of nearly one hundred brothers. The Superior General, a fine man, has spent twenty years in the houses of his Order at Marseilles. So we talked much of the relations that they have with this diocese which is so well served by this worthy Congregation.

112. [To Father Courtès at Aix].⁵⁰

Annoyance caused by the Missionaries of France and their supporters at Marseilles.

[Marseilles] August 13, 1823.

I will not launch into a chapter of regrets and sorrows, it would be unending. Marseilles might have been too much to bear for me if they had seen me coming with a favourable eye and if they had rendered me the justice I know is mine; you can imagine what it must be when I consider that Lucifer would not have been more damnable, if he had come to take away their souls... But do not believe that his hullabaloo intimidates me nor everything with which they threaten me. It is to the Princes, to the King, to the Pope that they should write; the liberals have undertaken this last step. All this noise is made in support of three priests, I almost say three rebellious ones.⁵¹

⁵⁰ REY, I, 314-315, footnote.

⁵¹ M. Rodet and the Missionaries of France established at Marseilles had campaigned against the nomination of Bishop Fortuné de Mazenod. He, after having consulted M. l'abbé Jean Marie de la Mennais, Vicar General of the Grand Almoner, asked M. Rauzan to recall his missionaries. On the entry of the new Bishop in his diocese, Sunday, August 10th, the Missionaries of France were still there and some of their supporters engaged in public demonstrations against him. Their resentment was especially against Father de Mazenod whom they held responsible for the measures taken by Bishop Fortuné, even if in reality it was the personal decision of the latter to proceed thus.

113. [To Brother Guibert at Aix].⁵²

Joy on learning that Guibert is more serene and resolved to persevere in the Society.

Bishop's House, Marseilles, September 30, 1823.

I cannot, my good and dear friend, hide from you the effect your letters have had upon my heart when you speak as you have done in that to which I reply⁵³. It is something delightful. The fact is you cannot form an idea of the affection that the good God has given me for you and of the price that I attach to seeing your future inseparably united to ours. It gives me pleasure to say this to you, dear friend: you are worthy of this family that the Lord has provided in advance with so many blessings; and, were there need to associate you with it this very day, I would press you against my heart and give you the sweet name of son and all it implies.

This is all I have time to tell you today. Adieu, I embrace and I love you.

Eugene, priest, missionary.

114. [To Father Courtès at Aix].⁵⁴

Sorrow and first reactions on learning of the imminent defection of Father Deblieu.

Marseilles, October 9, 1823, at midnight.

Although I was expecting for a long time, my dear friend, the apostasy whereof you announce the imminent explosion, this infamy is so monstrous that I can scarcely persuade myself that it be possible. This is the end result of so much patience and support given to a member more imperfect than it

⁵² PAGUELLE DE FOLLENAY, I, 82-83.

⁵³ Brother Guibert had written: "It seems to me you have concluded or at least suspected that I had taken the resolution to leave the community. I must have explained myself badly. Pardon, I beg you, this slight inadvertance. I only wished to reveal to you my interior affliction and it was quite necessary at the same time to describe their causes. My whole intention was to receive from your wisdom some advice to guide me well in the important matter of my vocation. But, for the rest, I had taken no definitive decision and I declare that I will never take any without your advice. I have sought to know the will of God, ready to make all the sacrifices that it will demand of me..." *Ibid.*, p. 83.

⁵⁴ RAMBERT, I, 375-376.

is possible to conceive⁵⁵. The circumstance that this man chooses is a refinement of perfidy. God will finish by making (him) an example for I do not know of a greater outrage to divinity, to fidelity to an oath, to religion which is treated as a plaything. The doctors of [Fréjus] will decide what they wish; the Bishop will do what pleases him; I, if God does not give me other insights, will not unbind this guilty one... Vows made at the foot of the altar and in the presence of Jesus Christ whom one takes as witness, vows renewed in circumstances that not one of us is able to forget, after considerations and protestations which have never been made by anyone, vows ratified a third time in the greatest joy and peace which is shared with everyone, such vows are not pronounced by surprise and without reflection. I repeat, let whoever dispense from them who wishes; as for me, unless the good God gives me other insights, I will do nothing.

Adieu, my dear beloved, your sentiments are for my heart truly a consolation; but, in this painful circumstance, it costs me much not to be surrounded by all my true children so that we may help each other mutually to bear a misfortune which is common to us, since it weighs on the Society.

115. [To Father Courtès at Aix].⁵⁶

Vows made in the Society are valid.

[Marseilles] October 10, 1823.

It is a great crisis of which the consequences can be terrible...; but His Grace the Archbishop⁵⁷ was not unaware that we were making vows. Was

⁵⁵ Fathers Deblieu and Maunier, first companions of the Founder, left the Society in October, 1823. They accused Fathers de Mazenod and Tempier of having accepted the position of Vicars General of Marseilles and thus compromising the future of the Society and sacrificing it to the interests of a diocese and perhaps being motivated even by personal ambition (RAMBERT, I, 374). This, however, was only a pretext. They came from the diocese of Fréjus which, like Marseilles, had just been re-established. The new bishop, Bishop C. A. de Richery recalled priests originating in his territory and declared null any engagements taken in prejudice of a third party, by priests who had previously promised obedience to a bishop. Already little inclined to the exigences of religious life and henceforth disengaged from their vows and attracted by promises of important functions, the two Fathers profited from the circumstances to return to Fréjus. Cf.: COSENTINO: *Un inconstant: Fr. Deblieu in Études Oblates*, t. 17 (1958), pp. 152-179. *Un formateur, le p. Maunier, ibid.*, pp. 219-269.

⁵⁶ RAMBERT, I, 379-380.

⁵⁷ The Archbishop of Aix, like the Bishop of Fréjus, thought of withdrawing subjects of his diocese from the Mission (REV, I, 316).

he not presumed to approve them when he continued to employ us as he did? I would be curious to know if our Frejusian casuists consider the vows that St. Ignatius made at Montmartre with his companions to be null!

How many religious bodies have begun by thus engaging themselves before the formal approbation of the Church! The whole archiepiscopal administration knew of our engagements and made no complaint. I had spoken thereof to M. Duclaux who saw nothing other than what was quite edifying in that. All that proves there was no precipitation. The Society of M. Coudrin⁵⁸, spread over several dioceses of France and of which the headquarters is at Picpus, at Paris, makes vows as we do; never have the bishops complained about them; apparently the demon is more hostile to us than others. Do not worry much. I fear lest this may do you harm. It is a new worry for me for, at present more than ever, I ask God that he will keep you as the apple of his eye.

116. [To Father Courtès at Aix].⁵⁹

Accusations of the Archbishop of Aix against the Founder who does not defend himself lest doing so might hurt the Society of the Missionaries of Provence.

[Marseilles] October [23-25]⁶⁰ 1823.

I have found it quite easy in my heart to pardon the Prelate for the calumnies of which I am willing to believe he is only the echo, one would say one has to do only with an imaginary person. Oh! thank God, it is an imaginary personage whom the Archbishop portrays as me! But this is a trial hitherto lacking to me: hypocrite, wretch, whitened sepulchre, etc. My God! what graces I would owe you if you had permitted them to add that I am possessed by the demon; this trait of resemblance with my Master would give me still more hope of recompense!... I am not cast down. If I only had to defend my person it would be easy for me to do it with all the advantages which my position gives me, but I would suffer much more so as not to give the slightest pretext for renewed persecution against the Society.

⁵⁸ Pierre Marie Joseph Coudrin (1768-1837). He had founded in 1793 the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary. Coudrin left for Rome in the summer of 1825 and obtained approbation of his Constitutions which he promulgated in 1826.

⁵⁹ REY, I, 318.

⁶⁰ Rey writes: October. This letter is in reply to that of Father Courtès, probably written on the 22nd, immediately after the visit of two hours and a half which he made to Archbishop de Bausset.

She is strongly assailed by the tempest but let us not lose courage... It is not difficult to perceive in all this a kind of aversion for the evangelical counsels and that makes me hope that He who, the first, made them honourable will take in hand the defence of his work.

117. [To Father Courtès at Aix].⁶¹

The Founder is grieved but not cast down. The vows pronounced by him and his associates cannot be annulled by the bishops.

[Marseilles] October 29, 1823.

Let us not lose courage, we can only be destroyed if we allow it and that we will *never* do. I groan to be far from you. I grieve that you are alone in moments when we would need to share mutually our sentiments and our energy. It is too true that we are afflicted, profoundly afflicted, but we will not let ourselves be beaten... Even were we to be dispersed, we would not be less united.

A bishop has not the right to prevent us from making vows especially when those who make them do not seek to revolt against the orders that he can give them, and while waiting for the Holy See to pronounce itself. He cannot dispense those who do not have recourse to him for that, still less can he declare them null. I regard all that they threaten us with as an abuse of power. What reason have we given to the complaints of His Grace the Archbishop? There are no priests in the diocese who have lived in a greater spirit of submission and in a more absolute state of dependance. Can anyone accuse us of a single act of insubordination or revolt? What? Because, in order to live more saintly lives and render ourselves more worthy of our ministry, we wish to follow and practice the evangelical counsels, we become criminals? We would have jeopardized the prerogatives of the episcopate? We would deserve to be anathematized and proscribed? That would be giving too much scope to the *Promitto*. What does it matter to me if they regard my vows as null? They are not so, notwithstanding; now, if they are not so, who will prevent me from renewing them a thousand times a day? Yes, until the Holy See decides to the contrary, I believe myself to have the right to deprive myself voluntarily of the ability to have recourse to the authority of the bishop to dispense me of the vows that I wished to

61 RAMBERT, I, 380-381.

contract in perpetuity, I believe that the bishop cannot annul my engagement; that if he claims to dispense me and I am convinced that there are no legitimate reasons, I shall regard his dispensation as without effect. I will faithfully keep my vows while trying to conform my exterior conduct to what the bishop prescribes in order not to disturb the public order.

118. [To Father Mye at Notre Dame du Laus].⁶²

Gratitude for his letter. Sorrow over the levity concomitant with infidelity to vows. Judgement of the Archbishop of Aix regarding the Founder.

Marseilles, October 31, 1823.

I thank you, dear Mye, for the consideration you have had in writing to me concerning the affliction in which you could only suppose I find myself. So many blows were struck from without, I simply was not paying attention. But today now that Satan has succeeded in putting us through the sieve and, shaking his sifter with violence, has made to pass with the straw some of the grain which ought, it seems, to remain in the granaries of the Father of the family, I am affected to the point of saying like Our Lord: *tristis est anima mea usque ad mortem*⁶³. I cannot reconcile myself to the

⁶² RAMBERT, I, 376-377.

⁶³ Matthew 26, 38; Mark 14, 34: "My soul is sorrowful even unto death". Besides the fear which came from the threat to have members taken away by the dioceses of Aix and Fréjus, and the sorrow caused by the departure of Fathers Deblieu and Maunier, the Founder had several other defections to sadden him. In November, Father Moreau, superior of Notre Dame du Laus, entered the Trappists (Dupuy to the Founder, October 1823; REY, I, 317 says that he entered the Chartreuse; Simonin, in *Missions O.M.I.*, 1897, pp. 202-203, 208, says the Franciscans or Capuchins). He changed his mind and returned however to Laus in the month of October. Brother Jeancard, Oblate since May 30, 1822, left the Mission also. Guibert himself, who gave so much promise and seemed decided to make his vows, wrote towards the middle of October a long letter in which he said: "I am therefore quite resolved not to proceed any further until the circumstances change..." (PAGUELLE DE FOLLENAY, I, 86). He completely changed his mind and made his temporary vows on November 4th.

The Founder spent the first Friday of the month of November with the community of Aix before going on the 8th to see the Archbishop. After a day of prayer and fasting on bread and water, he gave a touching address to the community on the dangers which threatened the Society; then, after putting out the lamps, he inflicted on himself a bloody flagellation while his children wept. At the entrance to the refectory, he lay on the floor and all had to tread on him with their feet (*Mémoires du P. Martin*, REY, I, 319). This extraordinary scene produced on Brother Guibert a profound impression. "All his hesitations ceased for ever" writes PAGUELLE DE FOLLENAY (I, 89). It was likewise the end of the internal and external crisis of the Society, for the Archbishop of Aix (at his visit of November 8th) and the Bishop of Fréjus (Letters of November 12th and 25th) promised to leave at the Mission all the members who desired to persevere therein.

idea that one can trifle with what is most holy under frivolous pretexts and perhaps for reasons less than edifying. And while I see Turks die rather than not live up to their word, when in doing so they invoke the name of God, priests will falsify promises of quite another kind, made knowingly and willingly to Jesus Christ, taking him as witness and under his own eyes! It is frightful... but I await these infidels at the hour of their death. Jeancard⁶⁴ has not waited for this moment to be eaten with remorse. He has written two letters to me which are pitiful and inspire in me the greatest compassion. He begins with these words: "I can no longer bear the sentiments with which my heart is oppressed; it is a sadness, and interior desolation which, I must admit, I did not expect in the brief moments when my fault was still only a project." In the meantime the scandal is at its height and the persecution very evident. I do not know what infernal game has prompted X...⁶⁵, on whom, as on the archangel, I will not do other than invoke the judgement of God. But he succeeded in irritating His Grace the Archbishop against me in an unbelievable manner, to the extent that the Prelate went beyond all limits, calling me a hypocrite, a whitened sepulchre, a wretch, a monster. I assure you that nothing at all concerning my person is cause for alarm. I know quite well that I am neither a monster, or a wretch or a hypocrite or even a whitened sepulchre, although I offend the good God daily; but I have too much confidence in the mercy of my Saviour to believe that his powerful grace produces no other effect than to whiten a sepulchre; I believe firmly, on the contrary, that it entirely erases my sins, which I try, in any case, to render as less numerous and as less grievous as I can.

If I were tempted to complain of such unjust treatment, I would be held back by the consideration that it is a great favour to experience what the saints experienced. May God will that I draw from them the same profit that they have drawn.

⁶⁴ RAMBERT wrote: "X". He refers to Jeancard. REY writes (I, 320) that Brother Jeancard did not delay in expressing keen repentance but the Founder did not permit him to re-enter until several months afterwards.

⁶⁵ Father de Mazenod probably alludes to Deblieu who, before leaving, made a visit to the Archbishop (REY, I, 317).

119. [To Father Suzanne at Gap].⁶⁶

He must take care of his health.

[Marseilles] November 11, 1823.

But in the meantime, you have to admit that you are inexcusable for having kept silent about a swelling that is so troubling, for having said nothing to me about what you were going through during the strenuous octaves that followed one after another and that you got into a situation miserable both for yourself and for those who would have to continue them after you.

120. [To Father Suzanne at Entreveux].⁶⁷

He must protect himself against the cold at Entreveux and send news immediately upon his arrival.

Marseilles, November 19, 1823.

Although you have not yet left for Entreveux, dearest and beloved, I am writing you a letter; one must take precautions well in advance for a locality so difficult of access. Please God that the very day of your arrival you will think of sending me news of yourself and quieten the anxiety in which I am going to be until the moment when I will have the certitude that you are safely arrived in port. If I were in the group, that would seem nothing to me; but when I think of the accident with the horse on your journey to the Great Chartreuse, I shudder. I am speaking to your good angel, given the impossibility of making myself understood to yourself, so that he will keep and stay with you and bring you back. The first thing to do on arriving at Entreveux, is to buy cloth or, better still perhaps the material necessary to make yourself the kind of shawl which will protect you from the cold in the confessional. If the knitted waistcoat that you have is not warm enough, you must procure another immediately. Also buy some canvas footwear so as not to risk slipping on the ice. Remember your fall at Tallard which still irks me. In a word, take all precautions not to suffer from the piercing cold of those mountains⁶⁸ to which we are not accustomed.

⁶⁶ YENVEUX, IV, 220.

⁶⁷ JENCARD, 381-382; REY, I, 458.

⁶⁸ Entreveux is situated on the border of the departments of the Lower Alps and the Maritime Alps.

Watch over our good Father Mye also lest he be in want of something. As for Dupuy, I think it is needless for me to recommend him to you, he is prudent enough to provide for his needs.

It is indispensable that you take something with cream every day to fatten your chest...

121. [To Father Suzanne at Entrevaux].⁶⁹

Affectionate interest for Father Suzanne. Opinions of Bishop Arbaud and Father Thomas, S.J., regarding Suzanne's way of preaching, etc.

Marseilles, November 29, 1823.

I hope, my very dear, my good one, that on arriving at Entrevaux you will have given me credit and will have recognized that I have neglected nothing to reach you with my news. Alas! I am so grieved to know you so far from me and not be able to relieve you in the hard work that you are doing, that I have no need of being moved to sooth my anxiety by the sole means that is in my power.

If you have not found a letter at Digne, it is because I had calculated that it would be necessary to write to you the same day that I addressed a letter to you at Gap; but I took steps so that you might not be in the situation of pining at Entrevaux where one of my letters must have arrived as soon as you did. As for you, you are above all praise and you give me each day the occasion to make acts of love for you, by which I mean that I say to you in my heart and often even with my lips all that I could tell you if were present. It is truly an enjoyment for me for, in thinking of you, my imagination rests on the object of my most tender affections, worthy in every way of my love because of his virtues and all the good and fine qualities. I am perhaps wrong in speaking in this manner but you give me daily so many proofs of your tender attachment for me, that you wrest from me after a fashion the avowal of all that has never been a secret for you. I speak from fullness. If your modesty may suffer thereby, tell yourself, if you wish, that my excessive affection makes me exaggerate to myself your good qualities and that this consideration prompts you to work efficaciously to acquire new claims, in the eyes of God especially, whose will it is to crown in us his own gifts.

⁶⁹ JEANCARD, 382-384; REY, I, 458.

The Bishop of Gap has written to my uncle; Father Thomas⁷⁰ has written to me. The Bishop of Gap wrote to my uncle on another matter; it is in passing that he remarks that you are not doing badly but that the tone of your discourses is too monotonous. As for Father Thomas, he thanks me and acknowledges that you have responded kindly to all that has been asked of you; but he tells me nothing about the results of your obedience, he only says that having been forewarned that Father Mye and Father Touche would not be popular, being accustomed only to preach in Provençal, he had not made them preach; that they had the goodness to give catechetical instructions, which are much more useful to the ignorant than beautiful discourses. As for you, he relates to me the counsels he has given you concerning your manner of preaching. I am somewhat of his opinion; I am quite pleased that he has made these remarks to you, and desire that you profit from them; but I admit that I would have wished that after all you have done, they would give me more complete details and that they would tell me something more than simply: "They listen to you with pleasure..."

Buy as soon as possible what you need at Entrevaux, no matter if it is dearer there than here. Do not suffer from cold, and count a little more, in regard to the good that you must do, on the help of grace rather than on excessive efforts which you are making. Be more moderate then, you see that this is the counsel that everyone gives, and preach in a manner as not to be exhausted and breathless when you finish. This is important for you and for us...

122. [To Father Suzanne].⁷¹

Work of Fathers de Mazenod and Tempier at Marseilles.

[Marseilles] December 16, 1823.

The time for renewing jurisdictions overworks us unbelievably; we usually work until midnight with Father Tempier; it has happened to us to be kept at it separately until two o'clock in the morning. The budget of the Prefect, the business of the bishop's house and of the seminary, the town councils that have to be attended, all these things come all at once and crush us.

⁷⁰ Father Thomas was superior of the Jesuits who were preaching the mission of Gap with the Missionaries of Provence, in October-November, 1823.

⁷¹ REY, I, 332. YENVEUX (II, 100) copies a couple of lines from another letter to Father Suzanne, written on December 6th: "I recommend to you not to dally with persons given to dissipation and vanity. One must take one's precautions."

1824

123. [To Brother J. H. Guibert at Aix].¹

News of his brother Fortuné, student at the minor seminary of Marseilles.

[Marseilles, 1823-1824²].

I have finally discovered Fortuné, my dear good friend. He has been since Thursday at the minor seminary where he seems to be already settled. He came to see me this morning. I have had him promise to write you a little letter which he will send through me. You can thus engage in a correspondence whereby you can encourage him in the accomplishment of his duties. I shall see him from time to time and, between us, we will put him on the right road.

124. [To Father Tempier at Marseilles].³

Mission of Ventabren.

[Aix] January 10, 1824.

The proposal that I take on at Ventabren anything else but the mission is an idle thought. Have you forgotten what a mission is?

¹ PAGUELLE DE FOLLENAY, I, 124.

² Paguelle de Follenay does not give the date of this excerpt. He says that Fortuné is fourteen years of age and has entered the seminary of Marseilles recently. Fortuné was born in 1810. The letter could have thus been written in 1824, probably at the beginning of the school year 1823-1824. According to PAGUELLE DE FOLLENAY (I, 126) Joseph H. might have helped his brother in his studies during the summer vacations following this year at the seminary. Now Guibert was at Aix in the summer of 1824. In 1825 he was at Nîmes.

³ YENVEUX, I, 171. The mission of Ventabren (January 11 to February 8) was preached by Fathers Honorat and Marcou, Brother Bernard and by the Founder who spent about ten days there. Father Suzanne was sent at the end of the month (REY, I, 332). Father de Mazenod was probably still at Aix when he wrote this letter.

125. [To J. H. Guibert at Aix].⁴

Is sending books. Father de Mazenod would willingly remain at Aix. Brother Guibert is just as the Founder wishes him to be.

[Marseilles⁵] January 19, 1824.

I am sending you, my very dear Guibert, the two volumes of Cardinal Gerdil that I had promised you. I would have wished to bring them to you myself, so happy do I feel when in your holy house where everything pleases and edifies me, also I always think of myself as in a state of duress when taken away from it and it needs nothing less than being persuaded that the good God demands this enormous sacrifice of me in view of a greater good, to resolve myself to submit thereto without murmuring though that is a word I do not use for the frequent complaints which escape from me and which are quite justified being the kind which Our Lord uttered on the cross or in the garden of Olives.

I do not know if you shared my happiness but I must tell you that you afforded me, you particularly, great gladness in the moments that we spent together; I found you just as I wish you to be and my heart was at ease and nothing impeded the tender affection that the good God has given me for yourself, because it seemed to me that this sentiment was shared. It is thus that the Lord disposes those of his creatures whom he brings together to procure his glory in oneness of will.

126. [To Father Honorat at Ventabren].⁶

Usefulness of the mission. Advice on the manner of preaching. He is to send news about his health.

[Marseilles] January 24, 1824.

The man who brought me your letter says that when you are in the pulpit, you put yourself in a mood of despair, that's the word for it; but why utter such cries? If it is a natural failing which makes you shout all the time..., I have nothing to say except to deplore it but if you can do

⁴ PAGUELLE DE FOLLENAY, I, 100, 103; REY, I, 336; YENVEUX, VII, 35*; VIII, 146.

⁵ It seems that the Founder had already returned from Ventabren by the 19th and that he sent these books from Marseilles.

⁶ YENVEUX, II, 72; REY, I, 332-333.

otherwise and yet shout, thinking you obtain better results thereby, you are greatly in error and quite at fault, for you are missing your aim and rendering yourself useless; in that case, it is a disorder. Get it firmly into your head that they lose half of what you say when you shout in that manner, and this is very annoying when it is an instruction that everybody should grasp. That is not the way to act, on the contrary, one should indulge somewhat rarely in outcries. That is the way to give them some effect. The man added that you have spit blood; I did not believe it because you have said nothing to me about this, nor have our two other brothers, but if so, I order you to cease immediately to preach and very expressly to let me know so that I may leave everything here and go to finish the instructions that remain to be made.

Adieu, I embrace you all with the best of my heart.

127. [To Father Honorat at Ventabren].⁷

Father Suzanne will go and help the missionaries. Do not demand a participation impossible for country people.

[Marseilles] January 27, 1824.

As things are at present, it is imperatively necessary that I or Father Suzanne go to your help. It is not enough to assemble a lot of people in the church, one must instruct them, one must move them in a manner that they will be converted. You are far from the objective if you only have half the men and I am worried as the final result.

How could you think of having Brother Bernard give catechism three times a day? That is impossible; besides it must not be presumed that country people may leave their work in order to be there; we have always been considerate of the daily welfare of these poor people and it would not be right to force them to die of hunger or not be admitted to the sacrament of confirmation if they have not received it. All things considered and given the state of your health, I will decide to send Fr. Suzanne to Ventabren. The mission that I give him is to instruct the inhabitants of this region.

...I cannot insist too much in counselling mildness, graciousness, to your neighbour.

⁷ YENVEUX, I, 102, 167; V, 216.

128. [To Father Marcou at Ventabren].⁸

Joy at learning of the zeal of Father Marcou. Enjoins humility.

[Marseilles] January 27, 1824.

My good Marchetto⁹, I embrace you very tenderly and rejoice to see you performing so zealously your holy ministry. It seems to me, in telling you that, that you are present and that I press you against my heart. Be humble and you will do much good; you know that it is to the humble that Lord *dat gratiam*¹⁰. The cleverest amongst us and amongst all men is nothing by himself but a sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal, it is the good God who does all and to whom alone all should be attributed; of that we must all be persuaded.

129. [To Father Courtès at Aix].¹¹

Permission to prepare sermons for elite audiences.

[Marseilles] January 28, 1824.

As I usually decide on the basis of some good reason, this is a case which pains me because you deviate from what our Rules prescribe regarding how we instruct the people. If I have authorized you to preach in the style that you have adopted, and prepare sermons for elite audiences, it is because I do not wish to put obstacles in the way of your genius and that I count on your leaving some records of what it produces, so that after you others can use your compositions. That means you must write and correct with care your sermons before or after giving them. If you deceive my expectations and do not write your sermons, I will no longer have sufficient reason to permit an exception which involves disadvantages which ought necessarily to be compensated. It is in fact a great inconvenience not to be understood by half or three quarters of your listeners.

⁸ YENVEUX, V, 134; REY, I, 333.

⁹ Marchetto: the name of Marcou italianized.

¹⁰ James, 4, 6: God resists the proud and grants grace to the humble. *Id.* Prov. 3, 34; 1 Pet. 5, 5.

¹¹ YENVEUX, II, 68.

I ask you to busy yourself with the work I have confided to you. It is a composition which ought to be printed. It suffices that there be enough for a good quarter of an hour of reading.

130. [To Father Honorat at Aix].¹²

One must, between two missions, spend several days in a regular community.

[Marseilles] February 9, 1824.

I have just embraced Father Marcou... Father Courtès has not observed the need to wait for word from me before letting him leave. After a mission, it is good to spend several days in a regular community. I did not expect to call him to Marseilles for another eight or ten days. But since he is here, he will be welcome.

On the first safe occasion, send me my new shoes; here I am walking on my uppers. Long live poverty!

131. [To Father Courtès at Aix].¹³

Fathers Courtès and Sumien can eat their fill during Lent.

[Marseilles] March 1, 1824.

Adieu, I order you very expressly to ask permission to eat your fill this Lent and to consult Mr. d'Astros so that he can decide that you cannot fast. If there is anyone else in the house, as for example Father Sumien, who also can no longer fast, you will have them eat at a different table. Adieu.

The elections prevent me from being at Aix for the first Friday of the month¹⁴.

¹² YENVEUX, I, 10*; III, 5; REY, I, 341.

¹³ YENVEUX, IV, 122; VI, 112.

¹⁴ General elections took place on February 26th and March 6th. Father de Mazenod spent the first Friday of each month at Aix. He had first hoped to be present since on February 25th he had written to Father Courtès: "Dear Father Honorat must not come to Marseilles, it would be contrary to the spirit of poverty. I shall go and see him as soon as it will be possible" (YENVEUX, VI, 90). On March 10th, he excused himself: "I am writing a word to show my regret that I have not been able this month to keep the rendez-vous of the first Friday" (Letter to Father Courtès, YENVEUX, IV, 122).

132. [To Brother Guibert at Aix].¹⁵

The visit of the Founder to Aix is put off until after Easter.

[Marseilles] April¹⁶ 1824.

Worry no more about my arm, my good dear friend, it is completely cured; my journey will therefore be put off until after Easter for only necessity could have forced me to leave my chains at this moment. I thank you very much for the concern you have had for my temporary indisposition. I would have been consoled even if not delivered from it by the pleasure that I would have experienced in being obliged to spend several days in a row with you.

133. [To Brother Bernard at Aix].¹⁷

Congratulations and advice after have received the diaconate.

[Marseilles] April 8, 1824.

With all my heart, I congratulate you, my dear child, for the great grace which the good God has just granted you and I am consoled to see that you know how to appreciate it. I need not recall to you the virtues that you ought to strive to practice more; they must all become familiar to you, you have been raised to a great dignity in the Church, you can only bear the honour by working to become more like a saint every day. You have entered the hierarchy and your august functions call you every day to the door of the tabernacle, bring you closer to the Lamb without stain, on whom you can lovingly gaze, whom it is your privilege to bear in your hands, almost to touch. Let your heart respond in these happy moments, let it be ardent, let it be purified. Zeal is the distinctive characteristic of the deacon for he has received the spirit of strength, for himself first, his own sanctification and perfection of soul, then to combat the enemies of God and to repulse the demon with that supernatural strength that comes from on high.

¹⁵ REY, I, 333.

¹⁶ This letter left undated when copied by Rey. It is in response to that of April 5 wherein Guibert invites the Founder, who was suffering from pain in his left arm, to come for treatment in the thermal waters at Aix.

¹⁷ YENVEUX, VIII, 204. Barthélemy Bernard made his profession on November 4, 1823.

Reread sometimes the admonitions of the Pontifical, both in regard to the Order that you have just received and for that you have previously received. Invoke every day the great saints who sanctified themselves in the diaconate and ask God through their intercession all that you still need to resemble them. Pray also for me. I never forget you before God and especially on the day of ordination I accomplished this duty during the holy sacrifice that I offered for my dear ordinands. Adieu, I embrace you with all my heart.

Eugene, p[riest], m[issionary].

134. [To Brother Vachon at Aix].¹⁸

Good wishes on the occasion of his ordination to the subdiaconate; for coming ordination also.

[Marseilles] April 9, 1824.

Although you did not announce to me, my dear friend, your nuptials with the Church, I shall not neglect to compliment you. Now you are a subdeacon, consecrated to God henceforth in a special manner; it is a great step that you have made: *ad majora* still; I am quite vexed at not being able to attend the ceremony of this first consecration, I would have embraced you heartily but I have nonetheless not forgotten you for I did not fail to offer the holy sacrifice for our ordinands and you have had a good share for alas! there were only two of you. I hope to call you to the Trinity for the diaconate and in September for the priesthood; arrange matters in consequence with the good God; become more and more virtuous and holy and do not forget me in your prayers to which I commend myself while embracing you with all my heart. Adieu.

Eugene, p[riest] m[issionary].

¹⁸ YENVEUX, VIII, 205. In this excerpt, not written by Yenveux, the recipient is throughout addressed as *vous*. Bernard Véron Vachon, of the diocese of Digne, made his vows on November 1, 1824. He left the Society in 1825. The Founder wrote, under his name, in the register of entrants into the novitiate: "He has apostasized in a manner so unworthy as to allow one to suppose that he perjured himself on the day of his profession; that is to say, he only entered the Congregation in order to receive Holy Orders, resolved to quit in spite of his vows and his oath as soon as he became priest."

135. [To Father Marcou at Aix].¹⁹

Let him be recollected at Aix and give a good example.

[Marseilles] April 12, 1824.

You must not remain long in that place and must say in advance, very mildly but in a manner as to be understood, that on coming from a mission as tiring as the one that you have just preached, you need rest and recollection... After one and especially two missions, you must feel the need to be recollected and to think a little of yourself.

Adieu, my dear Father Marcou, I embrace you tenderly and recommend that you give the example of all the virtues to all those who have the happiness to dwell in that house (for which my heart longs, towards which my desires never cease to draw me). Do not forget me in your prayers during this beautiful week.

Eugene, p[riest] m[issionary].

136. [To Father Courtès at Aix].²⁰

What to do about Father Bourrelier who wishes to come and work in the diocese of Aix.

[Marseilles] May 14, 1824.

All that was told to the Archbishop. It is not surprising that he has forgotten it but what is greatly (surprising) is that on receiving a letter from this man, he did not send for me to ask me for enlightenment and concert with us the action to be taken. That is what should have been done by a bishop who understands such things.

We must avoid nonetheless that this imbecile become likely to damn himself and ravage whatever the part²¹ that would be confided to him. So go and see the Archbishop on my behalf and ask him if truly Bourrelier²²

¹⁹ YENVEUX, I, 1*, 10*; VII, 136; REY, I, 333. It would seem, according to the end of this letter that Father Marcou is at Aix, even if the first paragraph permits one to think he is still on mission.

²⁰ YENVEUX, VIII, 253.

²¹ The copyist of Yenveux probably misread this line. The probable meaning is "whatever part of the flock confided to him".

²² Bourrelier left the Congregation during the month of May.

has written to him and if he has replied in the manner reported to me; thereupon give him the appropriate explanations, while at the same time letting him understand clearly that we are not taking this step for our own interests; for it would suit us infinitely more to be rid of such a type, but by duty and for the good of souls. This man can only be a member of a group. Please God he would go to the Chartreuse, but he pretends otherwise. When we will have forewarned the authorities and have recalled to him his own commitments, we will be at peace. Adieu.

137. [To Father Courtès at Aix].²³

Rejoice in spite of humiliations and trials.

Marseilles, May 22, 1824.

I rejoice with you, my very dear friend, in that you have been judged worthy to be despised for the love of God and be hated for all the good that you and yours accomplish in the Church of God. The shameless, the usurers, the men who have entered the ecclesiastical state only to assist their families plunged in debt or lured by some fat benefice, the men who have introduced themselves into the sanctuary without a vocation from on high, who have never offered the Lord anything but soiled gifts, who have always ignored even the name of the fine zeal which should inspire all priests for the salvation of souls, the men who by an execrable profanation of their sacred character have ravaged the heritage of the father of the family, have scandalized and lost those they were bound to sanctify and save, such are the ones who are welcomed; they will praise them, admire their works, be considerate of their susceptibilities, they will recompense them. A monstrosity blatant enough to make stones revolt, but the observant angels will not forget on the day of recompense and chastisement. My only cause for anxiety is lest the violence that you had to do to yourself may adversely affect your health, apart from that I would only see reason for consolation and joy in this horrible abuse of power; let us never overlook that in wishing to become true disciples of Jesus Christ we have embraced the cross to be carried each day and that we have had to renounce the esteem and

²³ YENVEUX, V, 55-56. It would seem, according to this letter, that some parish priests of Aix were continuing their opposition to the house of the Mission, but the documentation so far discovered does not permit us to determine the event to which the Founder alludes.

love of men. *Si hominibus placerem, servus Dei non essem*²⁴, that in being consecrated to the life of our divine Master in order to please him, in the exercise of Christian piety, it is necessary that we be persecuted: *Qui pie volunt vivere in Christo Jesus persecutionem patientur*²⁵; finally, that we ought not to be treated otherwise than our leader and our model: *Si me persecuti sunt et vos persequentur*²⁶ and that we ought to expect persecutions as numerous as the rewards which the Lord has promised to his own here below: *cum persecutionibus et vitam æternam*²⁷.

I cannot tell you more, this is enough to console you should it be that you are affected by the ill treatment that you have so unjustly received.

138. [To Father Courtès at Aix].²⁸

Departure of Father Tempier for Notre Dame du Laus. The post of Vicar General of Marseilles is a burden.

[Marseilles] May 28, 1824.

Father Tempier will leave you this letter, dear friend, as he passes through Aix. He is going up to Notre Dame du Laus, both in order to have some respite from his *slavery*, and to put order in our little affairs. He will take fifteen days for this journey, which is hardly pleasant for me, for I bear the burden with excessive boredom and disgust. So much so that I need all my reason and also a little help from God, not to say: *satis est* and: good evening to you, Sirs! You understand that in this state I need someone of the family at my side to sooth my heart.

As soon as Father Suzanne returns, send him to Marseilles.

²⁴ Gal. 1, 10: *Si adhuc hominibus placerem, Christi servus non essem*: If I were still pleasing men, I should not be a servant of Christ.

²⁵ 2 Tim. 3, 12: Indeed all who desire to live a godly life in Jesus Christ will be persecuted.

²⁶ John 15, 20: If they persecuted me, they will persecute you.

²⁷ Mark 10, 30: ...with persecutions, and in the age to come, eternal life.

²⁸ RAMBERT, I, 393; REY, I, 335.

139. [To Father Honorat at Vitrolles].²⁹

Prudence in the ministry. Watch over his health. Endure vexations as the Founder does by remaining Vicar General of Marseilles.

[Marseilles] May 28, 1824.

I recommend that you conduct yourself with great prudence in order to make more desirable to the people the powerful help of a mission. But one must do nothing directly in order to achieve this end, leaving to divine Providence the task of arranging things to turn out for the greatest good.

There is something on my mind. I fear that you lack everything. Dear friend, watch over your health. Who is there to take care of you? Does anyone provide you with good and sufficient nourishment. To whom have you recourse? Write me about that, for it is a matter of concern for me. For the rest, if you are hindered, as you must be in fact, unite your thoughts to mine and let us sustain each other mutually, for the task I perform is arid and, what is worse, I fear I do not obtain the merit that your obedience procures for you. At least I bear this burden with less resignation than is required. It is difficult not to be continually vexed by all the contradictions that malice, stupidity and injustice place in my path. All that would not weigh me down a bit were I not a subordinate position and unable in consequence to deploy all the means and the energy which are indispensable to govern and achieve good. Patience! The good God will not demand an account from us of the good it has not been possible to do; all that I ask is that he deigns to take into account the daily sacrifices that my position imposes.

Adieu, very dear friend, pray for me and sympathize with my cares and be mindful of my exile.

140. [To Father Honorat at Vitrolles].³⁰

Take care of his cold.

[Marseilles] June 2, 1824.

I see by the letter that I have received today that, in spite of the obduracy of this poor people, some individuals will profit from your visit;

²⁹ YENVEUX, V, 88, 161; REY, I, 335-336; RAMBERT, I, 393.

³⁰ YENVEUX, I, 168, 236-237. YENVEUX (I, 236) has headed the text: January 2, to Father Honorat at Vitrolles. He certainly should have put June 2 because Honorat was at Vitrolles in June, not in January.

let this thought console you for it is certain that your presence will have prevented some crimes and that is enough to satisfy your fully Christian heart.

What I demand is that you do not tire yourself too much; this cold which you mention to me is an inflammation of the chest; it must necessarily be remedied.

141. [To Father Tempier at Notre Dame du Laus].³¹

Do not prolong his visit at Laus in consideration for Father Mye, superior.

[Marseilles] June 2, 1824.

You can prolong your visit if you judge this opportune but I think that it would be edifying and have a good effect if you did not do so. Such would be a mark of deference that it seems to me Father Mye deserves. You will think about that before the good God and make up your mind according to the insights that the Lord will give you.

142. [To Father Courtès at Aix].³²

Regularity at the novitiate. Ordination of Brother Vachon. Nomination of assessors for the house of Aix.

[Marseilles] June 8, 1824.

What consoles me is that the life which our novices lead in the Society is a life so regular, so fully in God that one could regard it as a continual retreat. If you send him to us³³, you will examine him (to ascertain) that on arrival he will have no other concerns than that of preparing himself for his coming ordination.

If I had been able to remain several days at Aix, I would have completed what is relative to the administration of the house. It should have been my duty to do this sooner; because of continual interruptions, I have

31 YENVEUX, VII, 76. Father Tempier made the canonical visit to Notre Dame du Laus in the course of the first two weeks of June. One June 7, the Founder wrote him another letter of which only two lines have been preserved: "We have bought a field for the seminary; it is that which belonged to the Jesuits; His Grace has concluded the transaction lately." (REY, I, 324)

32 YENVEUX, VII, 197, 203; VIII, 79.

33 This refers to Brother Vachon who was to receive the diaconate.

always put it off. I write today to ask you to remind me to do it without fail on my next visit. I am undecided as to whether I should name Moreau; I would be strongly tempted to do no such thing; he is so little down to earth that in truth it is not worth the trouble. There would only be the matter of having to fear his weakness, I will think again about this. You can give me your advice; it would never be for admonitor, for that he should have more love for the Rule, more zeal for the good of the Society and of the members which comprise it, but it would be to name him as one of the assessors with Father Honorat whom I name assessor and admonitor of the superior of the house of Aix. From then on you must proceed in a regular manner, month by month, so as to stop this improvised sort of life which is unsupportable.

143. [To Brother B. Bernard at Aix].³⁴

Avoid eccentricity in his piety. How to deal with temptations.

[Marseilles] June 16, 1824.

...I make this remark, my dear friend, because I have just been thinking of it in my meditation and I am writing to a deacon who is no doubt imbued with the grandeur of his dignity and full of good desires to perfect himself more and more in the virtues which ought to be the attributes of a holy levite...

I am quite pleased, my dear friend, that you have written to reassure me about your state which had me quite worried. I remained far too short a time at Aix to speak to you about it and it was the same reason which prevented you from making the verbal advance that you have just done by writing. I cannot conceive how you forgot at the time that you were not alone. If there had been no one in the church, I would have seen nothing untoward in your presenting yourself lovingly before the tabernacle of Our Lord to show him your needs and ask for his help but it is no longer reasonable when done in a loud voice before everybody. Be watchful then over the ardour of your zeal and know how to control yourself when you have witnesses of your actions.

There is nothing simpler, more common, my dear friend, than to have temptations, to be wearied, even agitated, by detestable thoughts; the

³⁴ YENVEUX, V, 138; VI, 15-16; VIII, 203.

greatest saints have gone through these trials and all good men who still live on earth are exposed to this cruel persecution that the enemy of salvation wages even against the children of light. Should one therefore be surprised? Should it cause one to sink into sadness? Certainly not since it is not a right of Satan and all his lackeys to trouble our soul and cause it to lose the peace which the Holy Spirit who dwells in us has come to establish. Even if the body should feel the annoying impression or vehemence of these thoughts, or perhaps only the effect of the blood and its tempers, one must take care not to indulge in an examination which is ever dangerous. Your habitual disposition to love God, your constant will not to willingly offend him ought to suffice to reassure you fully. It is not so easy to turn away from him whom one loves above all, when one lives by the life of grace, when from morning to evening, one tries to accomplish not only his commandments but his counsels, when one tries to make progress every day in perfection. Oh! no. It would be quite another thing if we were concerned with those men who live in forgetfulness of their duties, who lead a soft, useless life, who walk without fear of God, who have no love for him, who trouble themselves little about offending him; that would be different, but I repeat, he who like all of you lives only for God and does everything to please him, such a one, I will say it a thousand times, does not pass from this state to that of sin by surprise. No, my dear child, the Master whom we serve, who is the omnipotent God, does not permit that. He is there, with his grace, and as long as we do not expose ourselves voluntarily to the danger of losing it, he undertakes to preserve it in us...

144. [To Father Mye at Notre Dame du Laus].³⁵

Father Tempier has returned to Marseilles. Fathers de Mazenod and Tempier would prefer to live in community.

[Marseilles] June 16, 1824.

Father Tempier has returned much better than when he left; that shows that we are better at home, with our own people than in slavery. Men can take things as they wish, value things as they please; as for us, we long only for the happiness of caring for our family, living according to the letter and not just according to the spirit of our Rules, as we are obliged to

³⁵ REY, I, 336.

do in the position wherein God has placed us, where however we do our best.

145. [To Father Tempier at Marseilles].³⁶

Description of the Abbey of Saint Pons. Prospect of settling in the diocese of Nice.

Saint Pons, near Nice, July 7, 1824.

I wrote, my dear friend, to my uncle by the least post and asked him to kindly pass on my letter in which I gave him an account of our journey. Today, I am sending my letter to you, although I have still nothing positive to tell you because it can be said that we have not yet directly dealt with our business; it is tomorrow that we will get down to discussion. Up to now, concerned solely with the retreat, we have only groped in a way and felt our way forward as regards our thoughts.

We are, in the meantime, in this house of Saint Pons which is seemingly destined to become the dwelling of the missionaries in these regions. It is a delightful spot that I would have trouble in describing to you because the beauty of the edifice is only part of its worth and as its admittedly ravishing site is so charming, one would have to be a painter to do justice to its loveliness.

Saint Pons is a little less than half a league from Nice on the banks of the Païon, a river which winds through surrounding hills capped with olive groves and laps the walls of the city before issuing into the sea. The house, a former Benedictine monastery, built with comely dimensions crowns, together with a charming church close by, a little mound from where one gazes on smiling fields which serve as garden to the city rising in front without blocking the view of an immense stretch of ocean on which vessels ply to and fro unceasingly, some of which no doubt are bearing to you their goods.

The only inconvenience is that there is not an inch of ground around the house. In truth, the corridors and cloisters suffice for walking and exercising oneself, and I doubt that one can become too hot, even on the dog days. I will not say more about it today; by the first post you will learn the result of our conference. I will limit myself to asking that this house,

³⁶ YENVEUX, IV, 128; VII, 74-75; REY, I, 336-337.

which has been yielded by the Government for retreatants, be assigned to the missionaries, that the Bishop³⁷ recognize us as being the missionaries in his diocese, that he cede to us those who are destined for this ministry so that they can go through our [novitiate and] depend on us and, while belonging to our Society, come back if necessary to work in conformity with our Rules for the salvation of the souls which are confided to them. I have already a priest³⁸ who is willing to join but perhaps they will give him grudgingly as he is the director of the seminary; he is an angel of virtue and a charming man.

...I hope that M. Caire³⁹ will not insist that there be no addition to the Office of the Sacred Heart of the commemoration of the Sacred Heart of Mary at Vespers and Lauds. They should be taken from the Office of Fréjus.

146. [To Father Tempier at Marseilles].⁴⁰

Advantages of an establishment at Saint Pons. Personnel.

Saint Pons, near Nice, July 14, 1824.

I am fundamentally pleased with the good will of these missionaries⁴¹; they are serious in seeking what is best and I believe we will achieve it. Their present financial resources are not much but I foresee the possibility of increasing them; besides, the establishment will be infallibly of use to the glory of God, so one must not calculate. You will find it very advantageous for the Society, I also believe. I am therefore going forward with it, although we are meeting some slight difficulty that I wish would disappear. I do not dwell on this because I think it is a question of circumstances and of the

³⁷ Bishop J. B. Colonna d'Istria.

³⁸ Charles Dominique Albini.

³⁹ A name difficult to decipher in the Yenveux Ms. It refers probably to V. Caire, canon and superior of the minor seminary.

⁴⁰ YENVEUX, VII, 73.

⁴¹ The copyist has written *missionnaires*. Probably the word was *messieurs*, since the diocese did not yet have missionaries. Fathers de Mazenod and Suzanne had been invited to Nice by Maurice Doneudi, rector of the cathedral and, adds REY (I, 336), by a distinguished priest, Abbé Daurenson. It was probably with them that the Founder discussed the possibility of a foundation of the Missionaries of Provence at Saint Pons. In July, Doneudi was named by his bishop as superior and principal director of the house of Saint Pons which it was wished, however, to confide to the Missionaries of Provence, cf.: J. B. Colonna d'Istria to the Minister of the Interior of Piedmont, July 17, 1824. (Turin, arch. di Stato: Vescovadi: Nizza)

state of things; all that will be explained to you when I render an account to you of my negotiations.

As to the resolution we must take concerning the personnel with which to found this house, it will be very important; the clergy is non-existent in this region; there are only two persons able to preach and everything is in need of reform. One of the directors of the seminary has recently come to me and revealed dismal things; I see before us an ample harvest, the glory of God is evidently implicated in this great work we are going to undertake; everyone, apart from certain priests whose views we put aside, is delighted, enchanted, but we must place someone here who will fulfil their hopes, especially in regard to preaching. We cannot give up Suzanne. So there is only Father Mye who could be superior and have Honorat with him, as well as one other Oblate if possible.

147. [To Father Courtès at Aix].⁴²

Counsels for directing the community of Aix. Novena to Blessed Alphonse de Liguori. Constitutions. Richaud, Albini, Bernard, etc.

[Marseilles] July 24, 1824.

It is through an oversight, my dear friend, that I have not replied about your novena to Blessed Alphonse Marie, but you would have done well to send me the text so that I⁴³ could look at it; Send it to me as soon as possible, I will return it immediately...

I well understand that as one cannot count much on Richaud⁴⁴, it was to be feared that he would make up his own mind if you refused him permission to travel; it is nonetheless true that this is a pernicious example, especially as there is no plausible motive to excuse it; you must therefore take precautions lest a similar notion strikes someone else.

Remind Father Honorat that he ought to send me some notes on certain articles of our Constitutions which seem only to concern one house. I already have them now but he could add quite a few things to them. Let me have, from you yourself, the remarks you can make.

⁴² YENVEUX, IV, 13, 161; VI, 79; VII, 31, 58*; IX, 5; REY, I, 338.

⁴³ Ms. Yenveux: j'y.

⁴⁴ Ms. Yenveux: Richard. The reference is to Joseph Richaud, who entered the novitiate on October 17, 1821. He made his profession at Aix on March 10, 1826.

To come back to the novena, it seems to me that it is very long and will be quite costly. I doubt if you will succeed in several years to cover the costs; besides I do not believe that there is time to print it between now and the Feast of the Saint. Be mindful also that it is necessary to obtain the approbation of the Ordinary and print it below.

Albini⁴⁵ has the failing of never knowing when to decide or else, when he does decide, he keeps hesitating to put his resolve into execution. One must, without seeming to be abrupt with him, bring him to decide what it is fitting that he should do...

Do not neglect to apply the remedies indicated for Bernard and ask his aunt for the expenses that you will be obliged to incur. Bill Mme Pimarche what she owes us and have done with M. Laval by demanding payment of his board which it is imprudent to let accumulate any longer...

Have prayers said every day that the good God bring to nought the opposition that the demon must have aroused against the proposed foundation, which ought to be so advantageous to our Society and so detrimental to hell, for you cannot believe how much this region needs us.

148. [To Father Courtès at Aix].⁴⁶

Should Father Bourrelrier be dispensed from his vows? Writings of Blessed Alphonse de Liguori for Father Albini.

[Marseilles] July 27, 1824.

I have just received, my dear Courtès, a letter from B[ourrelrier] which I did not understand on reading it the first time but I think I have grasped the meaning on re-reading it. I am sending it to you and ask that you keep the letters I pass on to you. The "eternal adieu", the "for ever" and the "for life" suggest to my mind that he is asking to be dispensed. As he has given unmistakable signs of madness, I would be inclined to acquiesce to his desire. I will consult our brothers, if you agree with me that this is what he wishes to say, but I would wish to counsel him to go to the Trappists. The journey would not be long as these good Fathers are established at Ste-Baume. I do not grant the interview that B[ourrelrier] requests; one must

⁴⁵ Charles Dominique Albini entered novitiate on July 17 and made his profession on November 1, 1824.

⁴⁶ YENVEUX, II, 91; VIII, 288; REY, I, 338.

forbid on the contrary and very expressly that G[uigues]⁴⁷ listen to him under any pretext whatever, still less write to him or receive any of his letters.

I had not sent to Albini the work of Liguori for him to translate, it is I who have begun to translate it but I would be pleased to have him read the excellent advice that this great saint gives to those who are in the position of our Albini.

149. [To Father Courtès at Aix].⁴⁸

How to behave with the postulants.

[Marseilles] July 30, 1824.

I do not need to ask you to give a good welcome to those who present themselves but I ought to tell you that this one⁴⁹ has no idea of what goes on in our house. He was disposed to devote himself to the missions of Nice. M. Daurenson had spoken of us to him without knowing all that we demand in the way of perfection from those who wish to be enrolled in our militia which can only fight the demon and vanquish him with the arms of Faith in the manner of the Apostles. So you must, as soon as you will have perceived that this person can be suitable for us, put the question so as not to lose time and money of which we have none to spare.

150. [To Father Marcou].⁵⁰

Advice on the subject of preaching.

[Marseilles] August 11, 1824.

I do not wish you to preach sermons which have not been written out and approved. I counsel you to have the utmost reserve and not seem to have a mania for speaking in public, at the risk of being scorned; keep yourself to what is strictly necessary. Be doubly prudent and circumspect when the Bishop is on the premises. If you are invited, refuse absolutely to

⁴⁷ The reference is probably to Guigues, still a scholastic at Aix, who had known Bourrellier quite well at Notre Dame du Laus.

⁴⁸ YENVEUX, VIII, 37.

⁴⁹ Yenveux says that he was a subdeacon of the diocese of Nice. He did not begin his novitiate.

⁵⁰ YENVEUX, I, 154; II, 64. Father Marcou was helping a parish priest to prepare children for confirmation.

preach, giving as pretext your hurried departure from Aix which did not permit you to bring your notebooks and your youth and inexperience which oblige you expressly not to risk compromising the word of God. Appeal to our Rule which forbids it. Be polite and guard yourself from speaking very much; one risks nothing in following this policy, but one has everything to lose if one does otherwise.

I say nothing in regard to Monsieur le Curé; tell yourself beforehand that it is very important to endure everything from him and from those who are beside him; the good of all demands that you make on this point strong resolutions and that you do not fall away from them.

Adieu, may the good God go with you and bless your steps.

151. [To Father Courtès at Aix].⁵¹

Brother Bremond can come and spend a week with him in order to see his ailing mother.

[Marseilles] August 13, 1824.

I feel as you do, my dear friend, all the danger of the journey of Bremond⁵² but how can one refuse with any apparent reason a father who asks insistently for his son to calm the anguish of a mother who ardently desires to see him, especially when the mother is ill and the doctor is hopeful that by consenting to this desire, it will reduce her ailment and when the father employs such ingenuity in his insistence that one can scarcely suspect any ulterior motives.

He would have wished that the absence would be for a month but I have made him understand that that would be too prejudicial to the studies of his son. Eight days seem to me time enough to console his parents. I insist that the stay of the child with them be of no longer duration; one must impress that on Bremond, whose good faith, virtue and fidelity we must believe and rely upon. You will give him all the advice that you will think suitable. The father has assured me that he is unaware of his initiative; that it has only been prompted by the desires of his wife and a kind of need that her imagination weakened by her illness induces her to have. It is a

⁵¹ YENVEUX, VIII, 122.

⁵² No doubt this refers to Alexis J. B. Bremond, born July 17, 1805, who entered novitiate on October 17, 1821. He did not take vows.

misfortune, no doubt, but I do not know how to avoid it, without risking greater problems.

I recommended to the father not to leave his son at Brignoles, it would not be any use. You will give to one or the other the advice that you deem appropriate. I put the child under the protection of the Holy Virgin and of his holy patron.

Adieu, I embrace you.

152. [To Father Courtès at Aix].⁵³

Advice on his role as master of novices. In difficult cases, act with prudence and trust in Providence.

[Marseilles] August 16, 1824.

I did not hide from myself, my very dear friend, the risks that we were taking in regard to our poor B.⁵⁴ but it was impossible to make a decision other than the one we took. The one you proposed in the first moment of surprise and indignation presented major disadvantages; one must leave something to divine Providence. I have only one regret, that is, following the last interview I had with this novice, I did not reach then the conclusion that we postponed until the ordination for your greater convenience because of the retreat that he would have to make, but once again, when one has acted prudently and with good reason, one must never have regrets; it is the procedure that God seems to wish in the course of events which he directs by his Providence.

153. [To Father Courtès at Aix].⁵⁵

Have the young priests study between missions.

[Marseilles] August 25, 1824.

I feel that Honorat must need to prepare something for the missions; in general, I fear that they do not know well enough how to employ their

⁵³ YENVEUX, VIII, 104.

⁵⁴ This probably relates to Brother Bernard, a singular and scrupulous person, who was ordained priest in March, 1825. Bernard was sent to the house of Calvary at Marseilles.

⁵⁵ YENVEUX, IV, 229.

time; you will do well to be watchful about this important aspect in regard to everybody; give particular attention to Marcou. Bernard is working here without flagging and every one is pleased with him.

154. [To Father Courtès at Aix].⁵⁶

Trials of a master of novices.

[Marseilles] October 11, 1824.

We must expect, my very dear friend, all manner of trials. I know how susceptible you must be to the attitude of most of those to whom you give your services with such assiduity and trouble. Console yourself by realizing that it is a new trick of the enemy of all good from whom it would not be reasonable to expect the least respite.

155. [To Father Courtès at Aix].⁵⁷

The news from Aix is rarely good. Father Albini.

[Marseilles] October 15, 1824.

I have often said to you that I always tremble to open your letters. Few of them contain something that is not disagreeable or disquieting. The idea that Albini⁵⁸ has had is hopeless considering the infirmity of his Prelate who remembers nothing. He has permitted him on several occasions to come to us, giving him to this effect an *exeat* in due form, but he forgets what he said or did the evening before, and even more what happened three months ago. What to do about it? These are days of misfortune; it seems that the demon has received powers as extensive over us as over Job. May the Lord grant us his resignation!

⁵⁶ YENVEUX, V, 56.

⁵⁷ YENVEUX, V, 230.

⁵⁸ C. D. Albini had permission to enter the Missionaries of Provence because they were to establish themselves at Saint Pons to which Albini would normally return as missionary. This foundation could not be achieved because of impossible conditions posed by the Sardinian government. Through delicacy of conscience, before making his profession, Albini had the "idea" to write to his Bishop to explain to him the new situation in which he found himself. After having found out the misgivings of the Founder on this subject, he hastened to reassure him (letter of October 16) and tell him that he left the matter to the decision of the Superior General. The latter was then corresponding regularly with M. Doneudi, rector of the Cathedral of Nice.

156. [To Father Tempier at Marseilles].⁵⁹

Proposes the suitability of spending the Feast of Holy Souls at Aix.

[Aix⁶⁰] October 29, 1824.

If it is not absolutely necessary that I be at Marseilles on the day of All Saints, I will spend the Feast here. You understand it would be difficult for me to reach Marseilles in time for the Office that I perhaps would miss in spite of hurrying all I can; so prevail on my dear uncle to grant me this permission. It is all the more necessary because, having stayed very strictly on retreat, I have not been able to see anyone and yet everybody knows I am here and, as they scarcely have any idea of a retreat that is strictly kept, certain persons would be tempted to be upset if I had spent eight days at Aix without seeing them. God knows I would willingly avoid them. The delight that is mine when I am with our people is worth more than all else and then the reflections that one makes in a retreat which goes well makes us so disgusted with many things and many people that one has to persuade oneself to be approachable to men, and comply with the code of civility and what they call manners.

157. [To Father Courtès at Aix].⁶¹

Mission of Allauch. Brother Martin resting at Marseilles. Vocations.

[Marseilles] November 9, 1824.

Can one allow oneself to be so thoughtless as to commit oneself to a mission at a week's notice? Do you think you can go on mission as one goes to say mass? Ought one not to have taken a little time, both to prepare oneself and to put order in the affairs that one leaves behind? So it is impossible to have the mission begin on Sunday⁶².

⁵⁹ YENVEUX, IV, 186.

⁶⁰ Father de Mazenod stayed at Aix at the end of the month of September and the beginning of the month of October for the General Chapter (September 30 to October 2). He returned for the annual retreat, the last week of October.

⁶¹ YENVEUX, I, 102, 114; VI, 134; VII, 29*.

⁶² It seems that the Founder speaks of the mission of Allauch, market town in the vicinity of Marseilles. It was preached from November 21 to mid-December by Fathers Suzanne, superior of the Calvary at Marseilles, Jeancard, Marcou and Albini.

Now it remains to know exactly what the population is so that I may make the number of missionaries proportionate to the need. In a mixed country, I cannot risk a second version of Ventabren! If three missionaries suffice, I will send Fathers Suzanne, Jeancard and Marcou. If there must be four, Father Albin could join them, if only to help with confessions.

Trussy⁶³ has observed that there was more imagination than malady in the weakness of Brother Martin, so I am tempted to believe that he was more intent on sojourning a while under the haven of the maternal roof than taking medicine. It is annoying to have men prone to such whims; nothing gets done in that way. When we think he will be rested or bored enough here, you can recall him. He really is quite a good and balanced child.

I am happy to have sent the two of whom you speak and am pleased that you like them⁶⁴. A fair wind suffices to make sail; one must have patience, confidence in God and in prayer. Do not forget this last item. Each Oblate should offer for this intention a communion per week, asking Our Lord earnestly, immediately after communion, that he send us men apt for his work.

158. [To Father Vachon at Aix].⁶⁵

The last mass of Sunday. Father Vachon will be called upon to take part in one of the next missions.

[Allauch⁶⁶] November 22, 1824.

I do not fear to recommend to you, my dear friend something which no doubt will already have occurred to your kind heart, that is, not to let Father Courtès say the last mass. Though it be somewhat costly to you this is a sacrifice that should be made so as to save your dear superior whose feeble health would be prone to considerable detriment were he to wait so long before taking anything. It is possible that he may have refused what you will

⁶³ Doctor at Aix.

⁶⁴ This probably refers to two postulants sent to Aix by Father de Mazenod, perhaps Toussaint Vincent who began novitiate on November 20, 1824, and Jean Hermitte, of Marseilles, who began novitiate on March 8, 1825.

⁶⁵ YENVEUX, III, 97; V, 210. Father Vachon became priest on September 18, 1824.

⁶⁶ The mission of Allauch opened on November 21 in the presence of Bishop Fortuné de Mazenod and the Founder. The latter remained for several days. On the 24th, he attended the instruction of Jeancard (REY, I, 339).

have perhaps already proposed about this, but while I praise his consideration, I cannot approve it because of the great detriment which would result therefrom for his puny constitution. You must insist and prevail and what I tell you here, he can and ought to consider as an order in his regard...

Be not anxious, what is postponed will not be lost and as soon as I can arrange a mission in which you can take part, I will not forget you. In the meantime, our Fathers work for your benefit and on your behalf as for their own, for solidarity is the rule with us, as you know.

159. [To Father Courtès at Aix].⁶⁷

Brother Telmon is not ready to receive the tonsure. Mission of Allauch. Last mass of Sunday.

[Marseilles] November 24, 1824.

Do you really mean, my dear friend, to ask from me the dimissorials of Telmon for his tonsure? For a child who has given us grief up until a day or so ago, who was decided to leave us, who on departing would most likely have unfrocked himself, this smacks of too much courage. For me, this request is premature and I shall not risk proceeding until after a long trial. I see little disadvantage in postponement but much in hurrying. I had promised, it is true, to apply for this privilege at Christmas, when I refused to make the application sooner but that was on the supposition that the child would behave well, yet never has he committed more stupidities. I admire your clemency but shall not follow your inclination, for this would be to risk the same blunder twice. When Telmon will have given us, thanks to prolonged good behaviour, sufficient guarantee, we can go as far as soliciting his admission into the ecclesiastical state; until then I will not take it upon myself.

The mission of Allauch is going marvellously and I felicitate myself more and more for having insisted that it be undertaken; if I had listened to the *buts*, the *ifs*, the *however*s, it would not have taken place and I would have been annoyed. The church, although big enough, is too small to contain the crowds which flock there. All is going very well and everyone does his part well. I attended this morning the instruction that Fr. Jeancard

⁶⁷ YENVEUX, I, 14*; IV, 221; VIII, 199; REY, I, 339.

gave and I was very pleased with it. Fr. Albini prays unceasingly and will confess when his turn comes. I must not forget to tell you that the Bishop attended the opening of the mission on Sunday and that he brought three missionaries in his carriage; the other two went on foot to their destination but they were so eager, that is to say, Honorat and Marcou, that they arrived almost as soon as we did.

I have sent word to Fr. Vachon that I do not wish you to say the last mass. Evening prayers must not last more than twenty minutes and you ought to preach very rarely, not at all, if possible.

160. [To Brother Guibert at Aix].⁶⁸

Felicitations on his forthcoming promotion to the diaconate.

Marseilles, December 15, 1824.

I take this occasion several days in advance, my dear and good friend, to congratulate you and rejoice in your future promotion to the order of diaconate⁶⁹. I wish you, my dear son, all the heroic virtues of the saints who are soon to become your patrons. Although we do not live at the centre of judaism or amongst pagans, we are nonetheless subjected to a kind of persecution which renders this *robur*, which the Holy Spirit grants to deacons, very necessary and of which I promise myself you will make good use on every occasion. It will be heart-breaking for me to be far from you on this precious day of your promotion. What resources of reason I needed not to summon you to this place at which I cannot dispense myself from residing! It seems to me that you would have received a double share; but there are sacrifices that one must know how to make. When we come to the priesthood, we will arrange matters so that all will be well. This bishop, whom they call derisively the Bishop of the Mission⁷⁰, must have something to do with the celestial gifts that the Lord wishes to confer on missionaries; all of us, if possible, must derive something from him.

⁶⁸ YENVEUX, VIII, 203; PAGUELLE DE FOLLENAY, I, 118; REY, I, 340. YENVEUX, I, 10*, quotes a line from a letter of December 3 to Father Mye at Notre Dame du Laus: "I insist that each one takes a rest of fifteen days between one mission and another".

⁶⁹ Guibert received the diaconate on December 18 at Aix.

⁷⁰ Bishop Fortuné de Mazenod.

161. [To Father Marcou at Allauch].⁷¹

Jurisdiction. Instructions concerning Christian life.

[Marseilles] December 18, 1824.

One never presumes, my dear friend, in the matter of jurisdiction. So, supposing that you might not have received the reply that you sought from the Bishop, you should have concluded, not that he was granting what you requested, but that he was refusing; it is to recall a principle that I tell you that. Your absolution would be null in spite of your letter. For the rest, I grant you the power to absolve in the case you explain in your letter.

Tell Father Suzanne it is important that he spend several days to instruct the people concerning what is called Christian life. One must greatly insist on and make them feel the necessity of practicing virtue, giving them a great esteem for this, first for the state of being Christian, for which they have had little care until now; go over the practical aspect of the Law of God, the commandments of God and of the Church; bring out all that pertains to religion, that they must be taught to respect in the least details, fulminate against the stupid pleasantries that they sometimes make about religion for the sake of making conversation, a liberty that is quite common amongst the peasants. In a word, you must go over everything from morning to evening prayer, from the first day of the year to the last. It has several times happened with me to explain to that end, either the résumé of the faith, or the rule of life, which are found in the hymn book.

Adieu, my dear child, keep up your strength; do not tempt God.

⁷¹ YENVEUX, I, 167, 232-233; II, 99; JEANCARD, 211.

162. [To Father Courtès at Aix].¹

A case of particular friendship at the novitiate.

[Marseilles, 1824-1825²].

Do not neglect the moral flaw of B³, the matter is important, he could be drawn into very great faults. Be bent on curing him, it is a very dangerous passion which becomes as violent as what they call love, or rather let us say it is really love that is not less to be feared when it has as object a person of the same sex. By fear of God and piety one can moderate its ardour but it ends by stopping at nothing. So while being mindful of his weakness in the use of remedies, watch very attentively this disorder which springs, alas! from excess of sensibility of our heart and from the corruption of our nature.

Send me word if you put off the feast of the First Friday to the second day of the month and I shall arrange my time accordingly.

163. [To Brother J. A. M. Martin at Aix].⁴

It is difficult for the Society of Missionaries to help his parents.

[Marseilles] January 11, 1825.

I do not know, my dear friend, where it would lead if each member of the Society were to seek its support for the extravagances of [his]⁵ parents.

¹ YENVEUX, IV, 122; VIII, 68.

² YENVEUX (VIII, 68) gives as date of the first paragraph: 1825. For the two lines of the second, he notes: January or February, 1825 (YENVEUX IV, 122). The first of January fell on a Friday. These two lines would then be situated at the end of the year 1824. We group these two excerpts under the notation 1824-1825.

³ The reference could be to Bernard. We know, from the letters of 1824, that his conduct was a matter of concern to Fathers de Mazenod and Courtès. They even gave him a change of house by sending him to the Calvary at Marseilles (Letters to Courtès, August 25 and November 9, 1824, February 21, 1825).

⁴ YENVEUX, III, 36. Brother Martin was then subdeacon. According to the following letter, Yenveux might have misunderstood the name of the one to whom this letter was destined.

⁵ Ms. Yenveux: their.

This is not the practice of other Societies certainly richer than ours which could not take care of the needs of its own members were it not helped by outside aid. There is no more reason for you to pay the cost of the stupidities of your father than there is for your brother to do it. It is up to him, who would profit from the (family) goods, to find the means to arrange matters. It is quite enough to renounce everything and not demand anything from our families. We are dead as far as they are concerned, if they counted less on us, they would make their way without us...

164. [To Father Honorat at Aix].⁶

Loan of 1 000 francs to the father of an Oblate.

[Marseilles] January 15, 1825.

We take nothing from anyone, my dear friend, and yet we have to provide for everybody. God will help us no doubt for we act in quite a Christian manner. Here is Father M⁷ whose family needs help. I am decided to give him an advance of one thousand francs for which M. will sign a note in favour of my mother. I consent that this sum, lent without interest, be reimbursed only with daily provisions that Mr. M will make to the house, which will be deducted from the capital.

165. [To Father Courtès at Aix].⁸

Give the members of the Society numbers in sequence which will serve to mark their linen. Father Honorat is asked to prepare a list of the members of the Society.

[Marseilles] January 17, 1825.

I approve for marking linen the proposal of giving each a number; but perhaps it would be better to distinguish the different houses by a letter rather than a number so as not to multiply excessively the marks. I suggest this reflection to Father Honorat who is very experienced in these matters as

⁶ YENVEUX, VII, 95.

⁷ The name is difficult to read in Yenveux: Martin or Marcou. We believe that it is Marcou who was priest (Yenveux writes "p. M.") and whose family lived in Aix, while Martin was a Scholastic brother who came from Gap.

⁸ YENVEUX, VII, 60*, 270.

in many others besides. As for the number, it should be in relation to the whole of the members of the Society and not houses because nothing can be clearly indicated in that way. So, I would be given the number 1 and Father Tempier would have number 2, and so on, We would proceed in this sequence to the last. If you find this all right, propose it.

As to designating each one, it would not be necessary to make mention of the particular house where he is to be found at present. This mark would serve only for the linen and common effects.

I had asked Honorat to send me the excerpt from the will of...⁹ which ought to be found in the black portfolio.

I ask Father Honorat to set forth and send me on a paper well arranged in columns, the number, name, first name, day of birth, entrance to novitiate, date of profession, day of priesthood, place of birth (the place of birth after the date of birth) of each individual in the Society. In this tableau, only the Oblates must be included. In a second (list), he will put those who are only novices. As for me, I was born at Aix, August 1, 1782, I am called Charles Joseph Eugene, I became priest December 21, 1811. Tempier is called François de Paule Henri, he was born April 1, 1788, and became priest [March 26, 1814]. Dupuy is called Jean Alexandre he was born at Aix November 29, 1798, he became priest on [June 16, 1831].

166. [To Father Courtès at Aix].¹⁰

Latin translation of the Rules.

[Marseilles] January 18, 1825.

I wrote to you yesterday, my very dear friend, but we always have so many things to say to one another that there inevitably remains something more to deal with. You had offered to translate our Rules and I had accepted your offer but we had not arranged anything, as I was thinking of improving the beginning in order to correct certain expressions that were too severe or oratorical. I have so little free time that I have not yet been able to touch it. However it should be a matter of urgency to have this translation done. That was on my mind this morning during my thanksgiving which is not exempt, as you see, from distractions, unless you

⁹ He perhaps refers to Jourdan, the only Oblate then deceased.

¹⁰ YENVEUX, IV, 12.

take as a good inspiration the thought that it would be well that you begin to translate bits here and there and that you be helped, if necessary, in this work, by those of our Oblates whom you know as able to do it and who would be good enough Latinists for this.

167. [To Father Marcou at Notre Dame du Laus].¹¹

Conduct as well as possible the business of the house. Poverty at the novitiate.

[Marseilles] January 29, 1825.

The account that you render to me of the state of affairs at Notre Dame du Laus does not surprise me but I am not very pleased for it proves that there has been much neglect of the finances. You should have remembered that we have a novitiate filled with very fine people but who do not have a penny and yet it is necessary to feed and clothe them. I therefore urge you to be most economical and to be very orderly.

It would be better to buy the ledgers required by the Rules at Gap; they must be simple and without embellishment.

168. [To Father Courtès at Aix].¹²

Father de Mazenod has no time to go to Aix for the first Friday of the month.

[Marseilles] February 2, 1825.

I did not go to see you today because on Sunday I have to accompany the Bishop to Aubagne, Cassis and Gémenos¹³. This journey will take nearly all next week. If I were to leave today for Aix and (be away) until Saturday evening, when would I do the pastoral letter which nonetheless always has to be done?

¹¹ YENVEUX, VII, 55.

¹² YENVEUX, IV, 122.

¹³ The copyist employed by Yenveux has written these three words in an illegible or faulty manner. It is known from the letter of February 4th to Mme de Mazenod that he refers to Aubagne, Cassis and Gemenos.

169. [To Father Courtès at Aix].¹⁴

Manner in which the Office is to be recited.

[Marseilles] February 10, 1825.

The Office must be said in a very recollected manner, without being sung or intoned, but composedly and with care to observe the mediant.

170. [To Father Courtès at Aix].¹⁵

The Latin translation of the Rules should be entrusted to only one Father.

[Marseilles] February 21, 1825.

Father Tempier would be inclined to think that Father Albini should be exclusively engaged in the translation that has been begun and that he should not go on missions. He made the same remark that we did about the muddle of a translation made by several individuals who each have their own style. This deficiency will be very visible. He would therefore prefer that only one person assume the task; and as you are too busy to take it on¹⁶, it would seem that Father Albini should be chosen. It is not an easy matter to decide. As our good Father Albini has been counting on the missions, would it not cause him too keen a disappointment to turn him away from them¹⁷? There would be another way, and that would be that you make your contribution to the whole work by retouching even what Father Albini has done well.

I am sending you what Father Bernard has done, without having had the time to read it. You will correct it, if there is occasion to do so, together with what I had previously sent to you.

¹⁴ YENVEUX, II, 135.

¹⁵ YENVEUX, IV, 11.

¹⁶ The Yenveux text has *t'en donner*.

¹⁷ Father Albini was to leave in several days for the mission of Puyloubier which he preached with Fathers Mye and Honorat (February 29 – March 25). Cf.: *Missions O.M.I.*, 1897, pp. 222-228. However he had the time to translate almost everything before his departure. He wrote to the Founder on February 26th: "I have worked day and night to translate a large part of our Constitutions. The work has been done somewhat hastily; I would have wished to go over it but not having had the time, our good Father Courtès will be able, I hope, to look after this..." Orig., archives of the Postulation.

171. [To Father Courtès at Aix].¹⁸

Articles of the Rule to be corrected and translated.

[Marseilles] February 22, 1825.

If you can do some more work, you can undertake chapter III. I still remain perplexed about article 9 of Paragraph 2. I ask you to look at it, reflect and propose to me what you think¹⁹.

In each house of the Society, in order to provide the members who live therein some good thoughts about death, there will always be kept in reserve a crucifix which will be hung in some visible place of a common room of the house. It is this crucifix which will be placed in the hands of the deceased and enclosed in the coffin with him²⁰.

172. [To Father Vachon at Aix].²¹

Fraternal correction. Advice concerning confessions.

[Marseilles] February 28, 1825.

It would be a great imperfection, my dear friend, to take it amiss that someone has warned you about mistakes you might have made at the start of your ministry, and a real injustice to be resentful to those who would have informed me about them. On both sides, we have performed an indispensable duty and it seems to me that far from complaining, you ought to be happy about this quite fraternal supervision which ensures your progress and preserves you from the error of illusion.

You know our Rules; they are in this respect eminently wise; let us never stray from them. The first one I reproved in this matter was your superior himself who had thrown you too soon into a ministry which is not

¹⁸ YENVEUX, IV, 13; VI, 143.

¹⁹ In the first part of the Rules, Art. 9, par. 2, ch. 3, deals with confessions heard late in the evening during missions. In the second part of Manuscript IV, it deals with direction to be given to the superior.

²⁰ This concerns art. 6, par. II, ch. 4 in the first part of Manuscript IV (Definitive French text) of the Rules.

²¹ RAMBERT, II, 662; YENVEUX, II, 81, 94; IV, 228. Father Vachon had accompanied Fathers Mye, Touche and Suzanne on the mission of St-Bonnet (January, February 1825). Cf. *Missions O.M.I.*, 1897, p. 226.

learnt by inspiration. He should know that a new confessor is liable to deceive himself and to be deceived. So he should have, after having given you verbally some counsels that are not to be found in the manuals, to insist that you consult him quite often about the cases that you meet and on the method that you have to follow. We have all gone through that, my dear friend. It seems that you believed you knew enough to proceed without guidance, and that is where you deceived yourself: so much for what seems certain. But it is not a crime of which you are accused, so why be troubled? Why do you complain? I did not intend to write you about this but proposed on coming the next time to converse with you, frankly and in quite a friendly manner, to rectify what I might have found defective in your ideas and approve what might have been good. So put your mind at ease and be well convinced that we never have any purpose, either in praising or blaming someone amongst us, other than the greater good of the member, the honour of the holy ministry and the glory of God.

...I would willingly approve that you wait for more assurance of his perseverance in view of his receiving communion at a mass with many people but you can immediately admit him for reconciliation and even have him receive communion at a mass attended by few people. You will then judge to what extent you can let his communions be more frequent by the fervour of his compunction, his modesty, his horror for occasions; for it is especially at the removal of occasions that you ought to aim²².

173. [To Father Courtès at Aix].²³

Translation and correction of the Constitutions.

[Marseilles] March 12, 1825.

You did wrong to translate the particular regulations for the missions, for I had not yet reread them. You can work on chapter III entitled: Other principal observances. I will entrust Father Bernard with the part about the vows...²⁴

Why has he entrusted to us this ministry of peace? Why has he placed in us this word of reconciliation, if it is not in order that it be applied

²² This text is without a date in YENVEUX, II, 94.

²³ YENVEUX, II, 87; IV, 13.

²⁴ The particular regulations for the missions forms paragraph 2 of Chapter II of the first part. Chapter III of the second part has as its subject: Other principal observances.

efficaciously to sinners so that their sins will no longer be imputed to them, so that they will receive pardon and be effectively reconciled with God...

*Uberemque regenerationis fontem...*²⁵ The fruitfulness that regenerates souls which had been placed in him by J[esus] C[hrist]...

The ministry of the Word cannot be substituted for the sacrament of penance instituted by J. C. in order to reconcile man with God...

It seems to me that one can suppress this, whatever Tempier says about it...²⁶

174. [To Father Mye at Puylobier].²⁷

Closing of the mission of Puylobier during Holy Week.

[Marseilles] March 16, 1825.

It would be better to have communion on Holy Thursday and plant the cross on Holy Friday, then leave on Holy Saturday so as to be with your brothers on the holy day of Easter.

175. [To Father Courtès at Aix].²⁸

Take care of the books of the library.

[Marseilles] April 5, 1825.

I would wish to send the *Memorial catholique* for binding but you have kept the month of November at Aix, so I believe. Do some searching to find it. In general, not enough care is taken of books. Father Suzanne took two away which he seemed to need but I would not wish them to be given to him without letting me know and without permission.

²⁵ First Latin text of the Rules: Pars 1, cap. 3, par. 2, art. 1.

²⁶ YENVEUX, (II, 87) quotes these excerpts as coming from the letter of March 12th.

²⁷ YENVEUX, I, 108. The mission of Puylobier in the diocese of Aix was preached by Fathers Mye, Honorat and Albin. Cf.: *Missions O.M.I.*, 1897, pp. 227-228.

²⁸ YENVEUX, VII, 36*, 39*.

176. [To Father Tempier at Marseilles].²⁹

The proposal to establish at Alès is unsuitable but Bishop de Chaffoy will place the Fathers in the city of Nîmes.

[Nîmes³⁰] April 7, 1825.

...Meanwhile, they offer to rent you lodging in a small house at the expense of the parochial administration, to serve as assistant to the parish priest and on Sunday to go two or three leagues from Alais³¹ and say mass in different vacant parishes. I do not see how this can be the vocation of our missionaries. That is why I am very determined not to accept the offers which will be made to us. However, we are going to set out for Alais in order not to appear to act inconsiderately and without knowing the situation.

Thus we see, my dear friend, our hopes fade a second time. I seem to hear you say that we are meeting with misfortune in the diocese of Nîmes since, in spite of our good will to serve it and work efficaciously for the glory of God and the salvation of souls, we are unable to achieve anything. All however is not lost and the good God, who knows our good desires and the purity of our intentions, will no doubt provide for his work. I believe I am even able to say that his last will is already manifesting itself in a positive manner. This is where we are. As soon as I had talked with M. Laresche³², I went to see the Bishop to share my ideas with him. He entered perfectly into my views and showed me he has the best of intentions. He agrees that the establishment, such as had been planned for Alais, was not feasible and you would have been surprised to see how he seized at first sight what we are and what we will to do. I did not hide from him that, having no greater desire than to work in conformity with our vocation, our

²⁹ YENVEUX, II, 10, 146; III, 138; REY, I, 341; RAMBERT, I, 401.

³⁰ As the project of the establishment at Pons near Nice had fallen through, the Founder wish to make sure he could meet the desires of the parish priest of Alès in the diocese of Nîmes. He left on April 5th with Father Suzanne. He reveals the situation in this letter of April 7th. On the 11th, he again saw Bishop de Chaffoy who wanted to have missionaries as soon as possible and to provide a house close to the major seminary. The paragraphs of this letter were possibly written at an interval of several days. By the middle of May, Fathers Mye, Honorat and Guibert were already at Nîmes.

³¹ In the 19th century, it was the custom to write Alais in stead of Alès. This first paragraph (YENVEUX, II, 146) is dated in 1826 but according to the context, the letter must have been that of April 7, 1825.

³² The copyist of Yenveux has written: "M. Ayect". In the Almanach of the Clergy of France, 1825, this name does not exist amongst the canons and rectors of the diocese of Nîmes. According to the context, the reference is to M. Laresche, canon, secretary at the bishop's house.

ambition was to extend and propagate the work which the Lord had confided to us, I thus did not fear to admit to him that I would be very pleased to be able to establish a community close to him, in his episcopal city, and that this was the place which was suitable to us because, being the *aides de camp* of the bishops, it was necessary that we be habitually within reach to receive their orders, etc. I entered into some details about our spirit and our manner of life, etc. He found all that I said to his liking and assured me in the most sincere manner that he must take up this project³³.

... You appreciate the advantage of being lodged in the seminary while waiting to find a suitable place. Who knows if God will not find for us some vocation or other amongst so many young students who may be able to conceive some esteem for us in seeing so close to them those whom we would place beside them. But who shall we put there? The choice will not be easy. We cannot conceal from ourselves that our good Father M[ye] is not presentable; we must impress by means of great regularity, great exactitude. Honorat, Albini and Vachon, or who then? I would willingly add Arnoux. Albini is quite fresh and new, Vachon quite new also et quite cold³⁴.

177. [To Father Courtès at Aix].³⁵

Novena to the Blessed Alphonse de Liguori to ask for the cure of Caroline de Boisgelin.

[Paris] 21st [of May] 1825.³⁶

... While nonetheless resigned to the will of God, we could try and invoke the Saint whom we have called upon so often on behalf of others. I beg you then to begin a novena to Blessed Alphonse Marie de Liguori on Trinity Sunday. You must display in the house the relic of the Saint and cause to be said with fervour and confidence by all our Fathers and Brothers the litanies of the Blessed with the oraison. Propose a communion at the

³³ RAMBERT (I, 341) quotes an excerpt from this paragraph which he dates as of January 7, 1825.

³⁴ In YENVEUX (II, 10) this third paragraph bears the date of April 2. It is a continuation of the letter of April 7.

³⁵ YENVEUX, IV, 166.

³⁶ Bishop Fortuné de Mazenod and Eugène left for Paris on May 9th to assist at the enthronement of Charles X on the 29th. Yenveux omits mention of the month. It certainly was May 21, before the Sunday of the Trinity, May 29.

beginning and one at the end of the novena. We here will unite ourselves to these prayers and if it be part of the designs of God that his Servant be canonized, our little one will be cured³⁷.

178. [To Father Courtès at Aix].³⁸

Awaiting the arrival of the king. Scorn for the world and its honours.

Rheims, May 26, 1825.

When shall I ever manage, very dear friend, to hie myself far from the world, yes, so far that I shall not be able to see or hear it. The more I regard it close at hand, the more it looks despicable and horrible to me. This time I can say that I find myself at the centre of its magnificence, on an occasion when vanity unfurls all its opulence. Impossible to see anything more sumptuous; one's eyes are dazzled. Yet these are only preliminaries for the most splendid ceremony that ever shall be seen during the reign of a powerful monarch. Prior to his arrival, all the grantees of the kingdom are coming in crowds and jostling one another in this little corner of the earth. Everybody is steeped in conceit; admiration and ecstasy abound. They think themselves remarkable merely from the fact of being just now at the focal point of the whole of Europe. They applaud any favours which elevate certain personages of whom they are jealous at heart but whom they flatter as long as they are not without hope of seeing themselves become their protégés. It would be endless if I tried to describe all I see at close quarters but I would also never be able to say to what extent I disdain all that is made the object of the admiration and cupidity, I dare say, of all of them. I am perhaps the only one placed high enough to tread under foot such grandeur, such honour, so much wealth. I do so in my thoughts, I mean, and with a heart so disposed that it finds here below only a few individuals like yourself and a few others who are worth its attention and merit its affection. So I give it to you entirely and undivided. If I dared to confide to paper certain reflections which concern only those of our rank, I would tell you a thing or two! You would know what merit is, what it takes to be esteemed, honoured, praised, commended; what is called good, what is

³⁷ The Mazenods lodged at Paris with the Ladies of the Sacred Heart, rue de Varennes, where their niece, Marie Caroline de Boisgelin, was boarding. Stricken with consumption of the lungs, the doctors gave no hope of cure.

³⁸ YENVEUX, V, 264-265; RAMBERT, I, 406-407.

called evil, who they are who do good and how, in effect, it must be done. How many other things would you not learn! In truth, it would not be anything other than what you know, but no matter. It is thus that one must think, speak, act in order to gain a fortune and advance. I wish these people happiness but reserve the right, by taking the opposite direction, to protest by my conduct against all this lying, illusion and deplorable deception; my sole consolation will always be to see my companions walk with me in paths which from day to day become more unfamiliar but where we still find footsteps left by the saints to mark their passage and encourage those who wish to get to where they are.

I am finishing my letter today with quite some haste in order not to miss the post which leaves at midday. Here no one does or has time for anything. That is all right for those whose lives are futile and go up in smoke; as for us, it must be otherwise. I hope, dear friend, that you are well. In a month's time I will have, it seems, the pleasure of embracing you. I have talked so much about what is going on here that I have forgotten to tell you that the King will make his entrance tomorrow at two o'clock, that we will be waiting for him from noon with our bishops at the cathedral where he will come to attend first vespers and the sermon preached by His Eminence the Cardinal de la Fare, that he will present his gift to the church of Rheims consisting of vestments of great beauty, sacred vessels, etc., that tomorrow, Sunday, we will have to be at the church before six o'clock and, in consequence, will have to say mass during the night, that on Monday will take place the procession of the nobility, Tuesday the grand review, from assisting at which we will dispense ourselves, having chosen precisely that day to steal away...

179. [To Father Tempier at Marseilles].³⁹

Scorn for worldliness. Regards with pity so much vanity.

[Rheims] May 27, 1825.

It is a good thing for you, my dear Tempier, that I write you only after having discharged my melancholy humour into the two letters that I have just penned for Aix and Paris. If that is all the world can offer in the way of beauty, however much its brilliance and ravishing phantasies may be

³⁹ YENVEUX, V, 265; RAMBERT, I, 407.

seductive to others. I am only more confirmed than ever in the scorn that all of it deserves and has always inspired in me. In passing through these splendid chambers, these superb porticoes, the church itself which seems to have changed its purpose for the occasion, no longer being the house of God but the sumptuous temple of vanity, I had a secret whim to defy the world, to do something still more magnificent, more striking. Well now, I said, you are exhausted; it is impossible for you to do more. Know that you have nonetheless not been able to satisfy the least of my affections, fill the tiniest corner of my heart.

My reflections continued further when I considered those who flock here; without looking beyond people of my own rank, what a pity to see such vanity. Their eager gaze is fixed on ribbons and sashes; blue, red and violet make all eyes open wide. They praise, admire, go into raptures. As for me – say not a word of this – mentally stripping these people of their liveries, I mock, I pity them or am indignant. Do not think, however, that my stoicism renders me unjust; no! I give homage as I go to virtue when I meet it, but rarely is it such as I expect, such as I love.

180. [To Fathers Mye and Honorat, to Brother Guibert, at Nîmes].⁴⁰

Joy on learning of their arrival at Nîmes. Write to Bishop de Chaffoy. Behaviour in regard to the priests and seminarists.

Paris, June 2, 1825.

I would wish, my very dear friends, to reply to each of you in particular but the spirit of poverty opposes this. You will all receive therefore from the same sheet of paper the expression of the sentiments I nourish in my heart for brothers such as yourselves.

I have learnt with great consolation of your arrival at Nîmes. Your beginnings cause me to predict that this newborn establishment will go well. Fortified with good intentions, you must before all else win the esteem and affection of those who can support or protect your zeal. Without demeaning ourselves one can be considerate of certain interests that it would be dangerous to offend. So be courteous to priests who are too often susceptible beyond measure.

⁴⁰ YENVEUX, II, 11-13; VI, 63; RAMBERT, I, 402.

It would be as well to send a joint letter as soon as possible to the Bishop, that Father Mye should write in the name of all to tell him that having been summoned on his orders to his diocese, your first care is to place yourselves under his protection and to ask his benediction; you will formulate some well turned phrases to let him know your devotedness and obedience, and you will send me this letter unsealed, I shall read it before sending it to him.

I recommend to our excellent Father Honorat much moderation. He must make every day, towards the end of the oraison, some reflections on this subject. The least imprudence would cause much harm in this time of beginning, and all the more so because the Bishop fears nothing so much as that. Without seeming to make a point of it, adopt a very amiable manner with the seminarists. Father Mye must take care not to bring up the subject openly, but my whole desire and my hope is that some of these young people, touched by your good example, your regularity and the sublimity of the ministry to which you are devoted, may become attracted and desirous of joining our ranks. Say then with the best will in the world: *ut in messem tuam mittas operarios secundum cor tuum*⁴¹. I wanted you so much to arrive at Nîmes before the departure of the seminarists; it was important that they see and regard you closely. You must not however be with them insatiably. Be careful never to enter into any theological discussion. It is not yet time for that. Speak sometimes of the charm of our life, of the happiness we enjoy, of the marvels which the Lord works through our ministry, but without seeming too much to say that one speaks in this manner in order to attract them. Though indeed we only want those whom the good God sends us but *fides ex auditu*.⁴²

...Well fancy our dear Brother Guibert wishing to find books while there is still not a bed or a cooking pot! I recognize him well on that score.

P.S. It was agreed that you would do all your exercises separately from the seminarists, even particular examen which you ought to have preceding the recitation of Sext and Nones. It is good however that they know what you are doing.

⁴¹ Matt. 9, 38; Luke 10, 2.

⁴² Romans 10, 17.

181. [To Father Tempier at Marseilles].⁴³

Advantages and improbability of the nomination of Father de Mazenod as coadjutor of his uncle at Marseilles.

[Paris] June 4, 1825.

Dear friend, what counsel do you give me in your number 44⁴? It will be impossible for me to do other than try to enter into dispositions of submission to the orders of Providence, were its manifest will to be that I shoulder the burden of which you speak. For the rest I shall not be put to this trial because the people meekly waiting in line are so numerous that one can scarcely please all, let alone those who remain out of sight so as not to be noticed. The idea of consolidating the good already achieved at Marseilles, executing the things that are planned, dashing the hopes of conspirators and schismatics, coupled with the prospect of having for a long time a title without a function, would make me envisage without extreme repugnance⁴⁵ what you desire above all, but I do not think that it can be brought about. As for *anything else*, that would require great subservience to the regime and we must not close our eyes to that aspect; if they could bring about this other thing, it would rather be for a purpose quite different from that which would suit us.

182. [To Father Tempier at Marseilles].⁴⁶

Father de Mazenod would not accept to be named coadjutor to his uncle at Marseilles.

[Paris] June 13, 1825.

Here they are beginning to let the rumour run that the Bishop is asking that I be his coadjutor, which no doubt ought to disedify those who know that I do not resemble several of their acquaintances. However, my uncle has certainly not spoken to anyone of a project so disastrous for the Church.

⁴³ YENVEUX, III, 235.

⁴⁴ Fourth letter written by Father Tempier while the Founder was at Paris. In this letter, no longer extant, Father Tempier counselled Father de Mazenod to become coadjutor of his uncle, if this position was proposed to him, or again to accept "anything else" (subject of last sentence), that is to say, no doubt, another see. The meaning of this letter, especially of the last sentence, must have been understandable to Father Tempier but for others, including ourselves, it seems obscure. This was perhaps intentional, so as to avoid any indiscretion.

⁴⁵ That is to say: without too much repugnance.

⁴⁶ REV, I, 324, 345.

But what will fear not cause to be said? As for me, I tell you frankly that the more I see certain personages close up, the less do I feel any inclination to imitate them. And certainly, if it was necessary to do as they do, and that must be so since they praise them, I would be more than ever resolved to keep myself humbly in subordination and at the last place or, better to say, I would wish not to have any situation in this world where all is corruption, lying, vanity, horror...

M. Caire has only come to see us once. He no doubt has good reasons; his conscience perhaps reproaches him with something. As for me, I left a card yesterday at his door.⁴⁷

183. [To Father Mye at Nîmes].⁴⁸

Let Father Honorat be prudent and patient. Invite Father Suzanne to the retreat for the prisoners. Do not collaborate with the pastoral retreat.

[Paris] June 19, 1825.

I took your letter yesterday to the Bishop, very dear Father Mye; he read it before me and appeared to be touched by the sentiments that it expresses. This very commendable Prelate, so filled with desire for good, asks nothing better than to employ you, according as your zeal seems to wish. In the meantime I see with some sorrow that our very dear Father Honorat is putting himself in front, both at the retreat of Saint-Baudile, and at that of the men at the cathedral. He has not worked sufficiently on his instructions for him to risk himself in a great city especially at the beginning of our establishment. That must be prevented. You know the solidity of the principles of this dear Father, one can say anything to him without fear; acting only for the sake of God, he refers himself with simplicity to all that is prescribed by obedience.

I find that this retreat in the prisons has been accepted somewhat lightly. One would need to be in a position to make it succeed. Did you not see that you are risking that those who will come after will take it upon themselves to redo your work if, having undertaken it without sufficient means to succeed, grace only cooperated sparingly. In my opinion, in order

⁴⁷ Following the scholastic year of 1823-1824, M. Caire had renounced the role of superior of the minor seminary at Marseilles.

⁴⁸ YENVEUX, I, 68, 102-103; II, 57; V, 210, 223; RAMBERT, I, 402.

to undertake this work with prudence, you should have joined to yourself, who instruct well and have the art of touching souls, someone from amongst us who has the gift of carrying people along. I would have therefore called on our Father Suzanne; with you and him, our Father Honorat would have done well. Alone with you, he leaves something to desire; and, supposing even that good is done, he will not do what is fitting to be done on the first important occasion in a diocese where we appear for the first time. If you have still time, write to Marseilles, to find out if they would be in a position to help you. For the rest, arrange everything for the best; but in this, as in all decisions that you will be called to make, weigh in the scale not only the good which is apt to be done, but the manner in which it is possible to do it and our situation.

According to the principles which it is essential that we must hold, precisely in order to assure a good that will last, I do not hesitate to think that you would do badly by consenting to collaborate with the pastoral retreat which has been mentioned to you. We do not yet have experience of such retreats and it would not be fitting that you, head of the missionaries, older than those who will proceed to give them, help as a subordinate, while it should be expected that were you to go so far as engage yourself you should do so on your own. You should therefore undertake something else at that time and take as excuse, to refuse, that we have not yet begun this kind of ministry and that we can collaborate and be engaged in such only after a general policy has been adopted for the whole of our Society.

On rereading the last letter of Father Honorat, in which he shows his impatience to get down to work, I see that some priests whom he calls our friends cannot understand our inaction. That makes me fear that you may have allowed yourself to say something confidential and, I beg you to insist that no one says any such thing to anyone. Everything is repeated and usually very badly.

See everything in a good light, speak openly only amongst yourselves. I need not observe to you that Brother Guibert, although he is not a priest, being an Oblate and in consequence belonging wholly to the Society, ought to enter into your discussions and take part in all your decisions.

I pray you to say a thousand tender assurances to this good Brother Guibert, who is very dear to me, as well as to our good Father Honorat who also knows the extent of my affection for him.

I do not say to you: love each other well, this recommendation would be ridiculous. But I do say to you: take care of each other and let each look after the health of all.

184. [To Father Tempier at Marseilles].⁴⁹

Cases of infidelity.

[Paris] June 22, 1825.

When shall we eradicate the seed of Ischariotism amongst us, dear friend, what horror to see repeated unceasingly the most revolting betrayals! It would seem that such monsters should be more rare⁵⁰.

185. [To Brother Guibert at Nîmes].⁵¹

Novena to Blessed Alphonse de Liguori to ask for the cure of Caroline de Boisgelin.

[Paris] June 23, 1825.

My niece is very ill. We invoke all the saints but especially we address ourselves to our blessed patron; do likewise for your part, at least for nine days.

186. [To Father Honorat at Nîmes].⁵²

Needs more work on his instructions. Edify the seminarists. Pray for the Society.

[Paris] June 23, 1825.

I said to Father Mye that I would not have wished you to give sermons in the retreat which Brother Guibert was had accepted. This was not suitable for several reasons. I was not keen on your being heard at Nîmes before having done more work on your instructions and before having them corrected in the light of remarks that others of the family would have made to you. It was also very important to do the retreat for the prison inmates properly. You should have called in Father Suzanne. The Bishop has spoken to me of another retreat for the Ladies of Providence. I told him that I believed that it would be as well to postpone it until his return. I would not

⁴⁹ YENVEUX, VIII, 259.

⁵⁰ Some novices left in 1825 but Father de Mazenod probably refers to Father Vachon who left in November.

⁵¹ YENVEUX, IV, 169.

⁵² YENVEUX, I, 155; II, 10, 57; V, 38, 225, 230.

be unhappy if you did this but you should take great care because these are persons connected with all the good being done and who, besides, are the better element of the city. It would not be a bad thing for you to meet with them before the Jubilee. But it is important to come before them in a manner favourable enough to survive the comparison they will not fail to make.

...It remains to be seen how to manage the Jubilee of these missionaries. When I return, we will arrange a lot of matters, keeping in view principally and solely the greater glory of God and the salvation of souls. The moment that these two elements are brought together, one must put aside immediately any particular thought or interest.

Continue to edify the seminary of Nîmes by your regularity. Your sojourn will perhaps be more useful than you think. Would it be possible that among so many seminarists there would not be any whom grace might not touch? I need not recommend to you to be always very prudent and reserved with the priests, to speak little, and to the point.

We must pray much for the Society which is always tried by some domestic grief. We would be too happy otherwise. The good God subjects us to this very keen trial; he will give us the grace to endure it. Let us accept it, I in expiation of my sins and you to acquire more merit before God.

Adieu, very dear and good friend. I love and embrace you very tenderly.

187. [To Father Courtès at Aix].⁵³

Procession of the Sacred Heart at Aix.

[Paris] June 24, 1825.

I understand, dear friend, that with all the worry of the affair which we have just been speaking of, you have not had time to give me details of our beautiful feast of the Sacred Heart. On that day, I was with you in spirit and twenty times, I would even say a hundred times, I uttered some pious exclamation in your direction, which comforted me for the horrible strain to which I subjected my poor body. I remained seated that day twelve hours,

⁵³ YENVEUX, IV, 136-137.

twelve long hours in a row, so as to compose, write and copy an enormous memoir which had to be presented to those in charge in order to defend the Sisters of the hospices of Marseilles and the Bishop⁵⁴.

Would it not have been better to be with you, even if I had to undergo the usual anxiety, prompted by the uncertainty of the times. But show me by what means you succeeded in tripling the rows in the rotunda? I was worrying that you were short of masters of ceremonies to put order into the procession. I see on the contrary that they were more resourceful than ever. One could predict the behaviour of M. Boulard, the Vicar General. It was, one should believe, by delicacy of conscience that he came and disturbed the faithful over a procession they have been making for ten years in a row. The good God, no doubt, is more glorified when people pray less!

These are acts of a wise administration? These *coups d'état*? What a pity! You are right not to worry about it. You will make the most of prescription, the advantages that piety has derived therefrom up to now, then you will make your submission, but make it well understood that we have only in view the edification and good of souls, for we always get our money's worth every time we light the candles.

188. [To Father Suzanne at Marseilles].⁵⁵

Illness and death of Marie Caroline de Boisgelin.

Paris, June 25, 1825.

I thank you, my good Suzanne, for taking advantage of all opportunities which occur to write me. In the absence of your person, from which you know I would never wish to be separated, your letters are a comfort to me, they do me good. In them I see you as in a mirror and my soul is nourished by the sentiments and that tender affection that you express therein. Oh! I would wish you to be beside me in the sadness in which I find myself! It grows every day since my arrival; although I never had any illusion about the state of this poor child, I nevertheless could not prevent myself hoping in the saints who were being invoked with so much fervour on her behalf. God, to whom alone it belongs to know what is useful to his creatures, has judged otherwise than our wishes would have desired. The

⁵⁴ This memoir of seventeen pages was addressed to the Minister of Ecclesiastical Affairs.

⁵⁵ JEANCARD, 384-385; REY, I, 458.

fate of the child is only too obvious; but it is distressing and beyond my strength to see her die by inches. Her patience and sweetness are admirable and would render her endearing even to wild beasts; but she suffers much, scarcely able to breathe; her nervous system continually throws her into spasms that are unbearable to see and in consequence very painful to endure. Heavy with sleep for the last three days, she cannot sleep precisely because of the lack of respiration which shows a nearly total congestion of the lungs, which thirteen hot poultices and one cauterization have not been able to relieve. That is where we are now. As for me, I cannot stand it. I go, I come, I want to be beside her; when I am with her, I cannot remain. The child and her mother, who has prodigious strength and courage, pierce my heart each in turn through and through. Yet I do not heed myself. I had baptized this lovable child, it is I who have administered her; I have given her holy viaticum and extreme unction. Who could have told me that on the day of her baptism? It is against nature, this poor nature that is laid low. I have kept on telling you: in the name of God, take care of yourself. You whom I love more than myself, do nothing to shorten your days, spare yourself so as to assist me in my last hour. I will only die once if I die first...

26th. Our angel flew off to heaven, last night at three o'clock⁵⁶.

189. [To Father Tempier at Marseilles].⁵⁷

Burial of Marie Caroline. The division head must have approved by now the specifications for the bishop's house.

[Paris] June 28, 1825.

...God knows with what consolation I baptized this child, so judge what must have been my sorrow to bury her. However, that was what the Lord gave me courage to do yesterday. My uncle wished to accompany her also to the place of burial. The Bishop of Nancy, Bishop de Forbin-Janson, took him in his carriage. I was myself in the mourning carriage which preceded the hearse on which was born the remains of this dear one, this innocent and pure creature. It was at the Calvary of Mont Valerien that I went to depose her in the shadow of the cross, in a truly Christian cemetery that one can rightly call the Holy Field, for it is only inhabited by Christians who have died at peace with the Lord. There is no limit to sorrow when

⁵⁶ She was thirteen years old.

⁵⁷ REY, I, 344-345.

one loses the object of so much hope, a child destined by grace to an extraordinary degree. God willed it, that's all one can say.

The final specifications for the bishop's house must have been sent to you with the approbation of the Minister, that is to say, of the Head of the Division, for such is what Ministers are in France. They centralize everything at Paris in order to give work and importance to these gentlemen. Is it not evident that one could do in the province what these fellows arrogate to themselves to do at great expense. Such is the case; one must go through their claws so as to slow down and confuse all transactions.

190. [To Father Tempier at Marseilles].⁵⁸

Purchase of soutanes.

Paris, July 1, 1825.

...In regard to expenses, I believe my uncle will be kind enough to pay for the linen soutane that I have been obliged to have made. I do not have a pressing need of a soutane of wool cloth because I have one. I will not be able to put off, nevertheless, having another of these made in order to spare this one somewhat. It would perhaps be suitable to take advantage of my stay here, but I believe I should ask your opinion so as not to deviate from poverty. This would be something the Minister should see to⁵⁹. It annoys me to be obliged to rule for myself whenever there is occasion to buy something for my wretched person. My uncle insists that I decide; he will pay for it as well.

191. [To Father Marcou at Notre Dame du Laus].⁶⁰

Feast of Blessed Alphonse de Liguori at Le Calvaire. Ordination of Brother Guibert will take place on August 14.

[Marseilles] August 2, 1825.

The Bishop of Marseilles wished to celebrate in a very solemn manner the feast of our blessed patron. He has postponed it to Sunday and will

⁵⁸ YENVEUX, VI, 31; RAMBERT, I, 408; REY, I, 341, footnote.

⁵⁹ This would seem to be a touch of humour. Faced with this expenditure which seems exorbitant, the Founder wants to jest: "This would be something the Minister (of Worship) should see to!" In his letter of June 28, he had already both complained and made fun of the Ministers who were centralizing the slightest issue in Paris!

⁶⁰ YENVEUX, IV, 163. The Founder returned to Marseilles on July 31.

officiate himself pontifically. In the evening, Father Suzanne will give the panegyric of the saint and litanies will be distributed to all in the church in order to stimulate the devotion of the faithful. This decision of the Bishop will delay the ordination of Father Guibert to the following Sunday, August 14. The glory of the Saint has won out over particular advantage. Happily the dwellers of the heavenly Jerusalem reward a hundredfold like their Master, so Blessed Alphonse will compensate our Guibert...

192. [To Brother Guibert at Nîmes],⁶¹

Brother Guibert will make his retreat at Aix and will be ordained priest at the bishop's house of Marseilles.

[Marseilles] August 3, 1825.

I will explain to you *viva voce*, my dear friend, how, though wishing to write you every day for a week before my departure from Paris, I have not been able to do so until today.

I come now to what is most pressing, which is to let you know that our Holy Father the Pope having granted the dispensation of age that I had requested for you and the Archbishop of Aix having sent the dimissorials so that you can be ordained priest by the Bishop of Marseilles, there remains nothing more than to prepare yourself for the Order of priesthood which you will receive, with the fullness of the gifts of God, on Sunday, August 14, in the chapel of the bishop's house. I leave to you the choice of place for the retreat. I would prefer however that you do it at Aix; your presence in such circumstances can only be very helpful to the community and you yourself will be more at ease to satisfy your piety. I make a sacrifice by not designating the house of Marseilles but it is my duty to procure the greater good of all. It is we who are responsible for examining you. We know what to expect in your regard. So, let this examination not prompt you to open a single book; you will go through it without difficulty. Concern yourself exclusively with the spiritual side. There is no disadvantage in planning your retreat at Aix other than a sort of propriety which will incline you to present yourself at the archbishop's house; I think you can dispense with it. They know you are at Nîmes, they permit you to be ordained at Marseilles and you have to return to Nîmes.

⁶¹ YENVEUX, IX, 129; PAGUELLE DE FOLLENAY, I, 137-138; RAMBERT, I, 408; REY, I, 345; *Missions O.M.I.*, 1886, 284.

Adieu, my dear. Ah! how impatient I am to present you to the Church to become a priest. With what delight shall I respond with the *scio et testifcor!* I weep for joy.

Adieu, adieu, dear child. I press you against my heart as I ask you to pray God to rekindle therein a spark of his love.

193. [To Father Courtès at Aix].⁶²

Know the postulants before admitting them to the novitiate.

[Marseilles] August 7, 1825.

What was your idea then, my dear friend, in thinking of giving the soutane to the young man who has just arrived⁶³?

None of us know him. His entrance is equivocal. You admit yourself that certain rumours have reached your ears. It is therefore not justifiable to give the soutane to this person now. A month's trial will be too little; when the month is up, we will confer in order to know what steps we have take.

194. [To Father Honorat at Nîmes].⁶⁴

Father Guibert, after his ordination, returns to his community. The Society needs such holy priests.

[Marseilles] August 18, 1825.

I am taken at a disadvantage, my dear Honorat, and see myself reduced to ask our very dear Father Guibert to tell you what I would have wished to write to you. He is well and truly a priest, I give you witness, it is I who presented him to the Pontiff.

God knows with what joy and with what unspeakable consolation I pronounced the *scio et testifcor*. You were represented at this ordination that one can say was *en famille* since all the priests who composed the

⁶² YENVEUX, VIII, 38.

⁶³ Three applicants began novitiate in the month of September, 1825: Jean Pierre Lagier, François Cailas and Gustave Reynier.

⁶⁴ YENVEUX, IX, 122; PAGUELLE DE FOLLENAY, I, 138-139; RAMBERT, I, 409; REY, I, 346.

presbytery and who imposed their hands on the chosen one belonged to the Society. May God bless our family? It seems to me that in asking him to grant us men such as the one who has just been promoted to the priesthood, we have asked for all that we need. Holy priests, this is our wealth!

195. [To Father Guibert at Nîmes].⁶⁵

Is it true that Father Guibert has disparaged Father Honorat?

[Marseilles] August 22, 1825.

Is it true, my dear Father Guibert, that you have had the inconceivable imprudence, that you have been lacking in charity to the point of disparaging Father Honorat in the eyes of Father Jeancard by saying to him: 1° that Father Honorat is not esteemed in the seminary of Nîmes; 2° that they regard him as a hot-head without judgement or knowledge; 3° that Father Mye, who fortunately knows him well, is forewarned about him and keeps him in check; 4° that Father Mye has been obliged to impose silence on him, having reproached him with being an obstinate man who maintains stubbornly a false position on the sacraments?

If you are not to be blamed for this fault or if you can attenuate it, send word to me, posthaste, for you cannot believe how distressed I am by this.⁶⁶ I have not come to any judgment; on the contrary, my first word has been to say that it was not true that you could have made statements so outrageous as to tend to put the one about whom you made them in an unjust light but as by excusing you in my thoughts I impute wrong to the one who has repeated them as coming from you, I need to be enlightened in order not to be unjust to anyone and to give each his share of the blame with which it is right that he reproach himself.

I add not other reflection so as not to expose myself to beating the air. I embrace you and await your reply with as much impatience as anxiety. Adieu.

⁶⁵ YENVEUX, V, 220; PAGUELLE DE FOLLENAY, I, 145-146.

⁶⁶ Father Guibert replied with humility: "I have just received your letter to which you ask me to hurry my reply. I do so immediately so as not to add a second fault to the first. Father Jeancard has done nothing but repeat my statements in stronger terms... I ask God's pardon for the sin I have committed and your's, my very dear Father, for the grief I have caused you and I am disposed to ask pardon from Father Honorat whom I have offended and to receive any other penance that you will wish to impose on me" (PAGUELLE DE FOLLENAY, I, 146-147).

We must name Father Guibert as superior of Notre Dame du Laus.

[Marseilles] August 22, 1825.

Very dear Father Mye,

It is somewhat with regret that at the moment we rejoice in the promotion of our dear Father Guibert to the sublime priesthood of Jesus Christ, and when you may be looking forward to putting his zeal and goodwill to good account, I see myself obliged to announce to you that, as matters seem to stand, I will be obliged to take him away from you. You will be very upset and he will no doubt be even more sorry; for if I take him away from Nîmes, it will be in order to name him superior at Notre Dame du Laus. Since your departure from this shrine, there has no longer been any order there and, in consequence, any regularity. Father M[arcou] has allowed himself to become persuaded that he is very ill; he has been to Veynes to have his health cared for; they have succeeded for he has sent word to one of our Fathers that he is perfectly restored but, too preoccupied with the prescriptions that the good women gave him on his departure, he spends his time and that of others in making remedies. Father T[ouche] being no longer held back by anyone, spends his time on the high road, giving forth in all directions sermons which interest no one. He continually goes to Gap and returns, having forgotten only the matter which he had to deal with there. No management, no interest in the welfare of the house. He has allowed to go sour in barrels the produce of two years and has not even obtained a penny of what is owing to us for services as auxiliary priests, money urgently needed for twenty hearty appetites which devour at Aix everything in sight.

In short, it is indispensable and very pressing to put order in the whole affair. It would be useless to make the slightest reproach to the good Father T[ouche]; he thinks he is doing good and does not know any better. I even ask you not to write anything to him on this subject. The man we need to put Laus on a good footing would be easy to find, namely Father Honorat; but it is impossible to take him from you, I see he is necessary to you at Nîmes. He is already well known and has begun to confess great numbers of people; he is made for the missions; he is not to be thought of. There

67 YENVEUX, IX, 121; PAGUELLE DE FOLLENAY, I, 162-164.

remains Father Guibert who, in spite of his youth, is well balanced and imposing thanks to his firm countenance. He loves order, he knows (good) management, he will without fail be pleasing to the Bishop of Gap. I realize the void he will leave at Nîmes where I was glad to show him forth, either at the seminary or elsewhere; but necessity knows no law. So as not to add to the regrets, do not commit him to hearing confessions. I await your reply and your observations but I abjure you to consider only the good of all independently of any personal consideration.

197. [To Father Touche at Notre Dame du Laus].⁶⁸

Accept fraternal correction without making a fuss.

[Marseilles] September 11, 1825.

It greatly disturbs me, my very dear Father Touche, that you take so badly what I believe in my soul and conscience I ought to say for the greater good of the Society in general and for individuals in particular. Every time that I have needed to make an observation to you, you have been upset; however, I could cite twenty letters from you in which you beg me always to say frankly what I think without fear of displeasing you, you asked me this as a mark of friendship, as a proof of my personal appreciation of you, etc. So what ought I to do? On the one hand, there is the duty to do which I am encouraged by your own words; on the other, the fear of displeasing you and of troubling your soul. Holy simplicity, ever be our lot!

198. [To Father Mye at St-André de Majencoules].⁶⁹

Preach with simplicity in order to convert, not please.

Nîmes, September 19, 1825.

I have noted with exquisite consolation that all good people and especially those who walk with simplicity before God are very attached to

⁶⁸ YENVEUX, III, 64.

⁶⁹ YENVEUX, II, 70; REY, I, 346. Father de Mazenod went to spend several days at Nîmes while the Fathers were on mission at St-André de Majencoules. He had brought with him Father Marcou who replaced Father Honorat, named superior of Notre Dame du Laus.

their missionaries. It matters little that certain conceited persons wish their ears to be charmed with profane sounds; that is what I call those discourses which please but do not convert. Hold fast to our method which is drawn from truth and which the good God deigns to sanction with his grace.

199. [To Father Vachon at Aix].⁷⁰

Devotions of the first Friday of the month at Aix.

[Marseilles] October 3, 1825.

Do not count on me for the first Friday of the month. However let the usual devotions take place; a short instruction of twenty minutes will suffice.

200. [To Father Tempier at Notre Dame du Laus].⁷¹

Precautions to take when making changes of personnel.

[Marseilles] October 12, 1825.

You will admit that it is a painful matter to have to take so many precautions in placing or displacing our members. By the will of God may solid and precise principles on this point, as on others, be inculcated in our novitiate.

201. [To Father Mye at Nîmes].⁷²

Accept no more missions before the Jubilee.

[Marseilles] October 19, 1825.

Do not commit yourself, very dear Father, for any mission from now on until the Jubilee in the diocese of Nîmes. Father Marcou and Father

⁷⁰ YENVEUX, IV, 122.

⁷¹ YENVEUX, III, 91. Father Tempier made a canonical visitation at Notre Dame du Laus in October, 1825. Cf.: *Missions O.M.I.*, 1897, pp. 220, 326. He stopped at Gap and at Digne where he obtained from Bishop Arbaud and Bishop Miollis their approbation of the Society in these dioceses. After the foundation at Nîmes, outside Provence, the Missionaries of Provence were called *Oblates of Saint Charles*.

⁷² YENVEUX, II, 64.

Guibert have the utmost need to work (at it). One must leave them the little time which remains for that while urging them not to do anything else but study and composition.

As for yourself, your friend Ducros, parish priest of Ginasservis, is crying at the top of his voice for you to give a mission.

I pray Father Guibert to make Father Marcou work, that is to say, to direct him in his studies. This child lacks method; with a little help he would do well.

202. [To Father Mye at Nîmes].⁷³

Departure for Rome.

Marseilles, October 25, 1825.

I leave tomorrow for Rome⁷⁴. I shall not forget you at the tomb of the holy apostles. I implore you not to forget me in your prayers during this journey which I am undertaking out of love for the Society, but reluctantly.

203. [To Father Tempier at Marseilles].⁷⁵

Cordial welcome of the clergy of Fréjus. Bishop de Richery approves our Rules.

L.J.C.

Fréjus, November 1, 1825.

I am profiting, my dear Father Tempier, from a half-hour interval between dinner and vespers to give you my news. I arrived yesterday at four o'clock in the morning at Fréjus in quite good health and in rather good company. Of three Englishmen in the carriage, I was able to converse reasonably well with one who spoke good French and to rid him of several false ideas that he, like so many of his coreligionaries, had about points of Catholic doctrine which one would never believe could be unknown to

⁷³ RAMBERT, I, 413.

⁷⁴ Father de Mazenod left for Aix on October 26. He spent some days in prayer with the community which was assembled for the annual retreat. On October 30, he left Aix for Rome where he wished to obtain from the Holy Father the approbation of the Rules.

⁷⁵ *Missions O.M.I.*, 1872, 153-156; RAMBERT, I, 415-416.

anyone. I waited at the inn until daylight before going to the church where I found the estimable M. Saurin who embraced me with the greatest cordiality. I said holy Mass after him. I then returned to the inn where M. the Justice of the Peace sent to suggest that I come and lodge with him, which I did so as not to embroil myself with the law. I attended to my appearance somewhat, that is to say, I shaved and then wended my way to the dwelling of the Bishop who received me with open arms. After the customary exchange of compliments, I explained in two words to the Prelate the purpose of my journey and, without losing any time, I showed him my original copy which I had taken care to carry with me in my cloak. Before opening it, he replied graciously that it would be a pleasure for him to join with the other Prelates who had approved our Rules. He then read attentively the approbations of our Lord Bishops. I laid the volume on his desk and we spoke of other matters. After dinner, I noticed that he went up to his study with M. Saurin; I presumed that it was to instruct him to formulate his approbation and I was not mistaken. I had begged the Bishop to kindly note in whatever he would be good enough to write, that we had been working in his diocese for several years, and to cap his kindness by writing it in his own hand, as the Archbishop of Aix and our Lord Bishops of Marseilles and Nîmes had done, without my having asked them to do so. The Bishop overwhelmed me with politeness, wishing that I dine with him; he accompanied me himself to the work site of the bishop's house that they have begun to build and prolonged his considerateness to the point of coming to me in the house of my host in the short interval that I thought I ought to leave him alone so as not to tire him. In the evening, I said my office in his study while he wrote a letter of recommendation for me to His Eminence Cardinal Della Somaglia. In truth I am acquainted myself with this Eminence but I was not sorry to have a letter which recalled me to his memory.

This morning, after having said holy Mass, I thought it would be as well to make a little visit to M. Saurin, thinking that I would be in time to share my reflections with him. In fact, I caught him in. He was reading attentively our Constitutions by which he seemed to me to be very edified. The Bishop had handed over to him the manuscript. He was half way through; I believe that he had passed half the night at it and I found him disposed to finish the reading of it. I was delighted at that, for I ask nothing better than to make known the spirit which directs us. M. Saurin proved to me how much the Bishop was willing to enter into our views, since he told me he had recommended that he mention that we had been working, under blessings from God, in his diocese for several years. For the rest, it is a

question of who will honour me most. The Grand Vicars, the Canons, the Priests, right down to the Sexton, pour it on. They gave me this morning the first place in the choir; the Bishop lent me one of his surplices, a Canon adorned me with his cape. It is I who brought up the end of the procession in the cortege of the whole Chapter which came to fetch the Bishop from his dwelling. He wished me to be his first assistant priest at the pontifical office. So, when he directed me to proclaim the customary indulgence, I did so in the terms usual to us, and in gratitude for so much politeness and so many honours and considering I was in office *de gremio*, I said: "His Excellency our bishop..."

I then betook myself in spirit to the place that I would have occupied, if I had been at Marseilles, and I united myself anew to our beloved Pastor, to you, as I had done since the beginning of the office, and just as this morning I had united myself to the family in the holy ceremony which had taken place in all our houses.

After the office, we went up to the study of the Bishop and he said to me: "I am going to read to you *en étole* what I have done for you" and indeed he read to me his approbation, with which I hope you will be pleased, but which I cannot copy out for you, because the volume is still on his desk. I would have wished to tell you several things which relate to the affairs of the diocese, but we are going to leave for vespers...

I write this last line, without seeing it, on coming out from the office. I am hastening to the coach in the hope of having the place which has been promised me. Adieu. I kiss the Bishop's hand and embrace you all with all my heart.

204. [To Father Tempier at Marseilles].⁷⁶

Journey from Fréjus to Nice. Loss of his hat. Visits. Disappointment over not having news from Marseilles.

L.J.C.

Nice, November 3, 1825.

I go farther and farther away, my dear friend and yet I am very far from the end of my journey. I continue to give you an account thereof, as

⁷⁶ Missions O.M.I., 1872, 156-160.

much in order to soften the pain that I feel while I go, so to speak, in a direction opposite to my affections, as to fulfil my promise and give you satisfaction. I left Fréjus on the evening of All Saints at eight o'clock. It was a good thing I had flattered the vanity of monsieur the innkeeper by commending myself to his powerful protection, which had been obtained for me by a letter of recommendation of Mme de Régusse; without it I would not have left for not only was the coach for Grasse full but it was followed by a light carriage full of travellers. The innkeeper, who had engaged his word as postmaster that I would leave, gave me his gig which was driven by M. the conductor of the diligence, whom I took in at my side, and thus we arrived at Cannes where I had to look, before daybreak, for another coach to take me to Antibes. That was yesterday, the day of the dead; you realize that I did not wish to deprive these holy souls of the suffrage which they expected from the sacrifice that I was to offer. I no sooner arrived than I went up to the parish, where I was received politely by M. du Rouvet, parish priest, who assailed me with questions, but took care to disappear while I said mass, seemingly because it was too early in the morning to start the fire at his dwelling and offer me a cup of coffee, which I went to take at the inn.

Even were my uncle to dub me with the title of witless, I ought not to pass over in silence a rather annoying little mishap which happened to me at this place. In a hurry to get to the church, I asked a travelling companion, who was to find a coach to take us to Nice, to remove my things from the vehicle which we had taken at Cannes. He put into custody, in fact, my trunk, my night bag and my umbrella; but, not having noticed the hat box, in which there was also my famous velvet headgear and some clerical collars, he let the coach depart laden with my booty. When I came back from the church, there was no longer time. We had to leave for Nice where I arrived hatless. I had almost been obliged to leave it behind at Aix: that makes two incidents which prove that hats are made to be placed on the head. All hope however is not lost: the innkeeper at Antibes promised to claim it that very day and to send it to me today at Nice. It is now five o'clock and I have not seen it arrive. You see, my dear, that my journey, although not heroic, is not without its moments.

I arrived at last at Nice with the fifth coach, counting that which took me from Marseilles to Aix, and on entering the inn, I took care to let the canon rector know that I was confined to the inn until he might send me a hat. I prayed God while waiting, more or less well, and the hat having been sent to me, in the absence of the rector, by his servant, I went out to make a dutiful visit to the Bishop, who received me marvellously. The canon rector

did not wish me to sleep at the inn and I am with him, whence I am writing to you. The rest is for tomorrow.

I am beginning by transcribing for you the approbation of the Bishop of Fréjus⁷⁷.

You no doubt were not expecting what they have said to be so long and I am sure that you will pardon the Latin being somewhat too French, considering the sentiments expressed. It is still November 3. Tomorrow, I will give you the results at Nice. I am going now to say the first vespers of my holy patrons.

November 4.

It is now November 4. No news of my hat; I am somewhat resigned to do without it until Turin where I will buy one in the Italian style. But my headpiece! Where can one find anything like it? This fine ancestral heritage leaves me rather regretful over its loss.

I have seen His Excellency the Governor here, who received me quite well and the first President, in whom I have much to praise. I had known them on the occasion of my other journey, as well as General Recanati. As for M. the Consul of France, he smells greasy⁷⁸; he was unmannerly enough not to invite me to the national banquet he gave on the occasion of the King's feast-day. His politeness would not have cost him much for I had already been invited by the Bishop who deserved preference on all counts.

I leave tonight for Turin. Unfortunately it is pouring rain which will be snow in the pass at Tende where there has not been any until now. I will write you from Turin while I myself am condemned not to have any news from you until Rome. That was a bad arrangement for, in travelling slowly as I do, you could have written me "to be held till called for" at Turin; no use now because you will no longer have time...

So as not to multiply postal charges, I am only writing to you but my letters are in common for my dear uncle of whom it costs me dearly not to have any news until Rome, since I left him suffering from a cold. See also that you give news of me to our Fathers at Marseilles, Gap and Nîmes. My mother will speak about me to those of Aix. I feel ever more each day the

⁷⁷ The Founder here copied the Latin text of the approbation of Bishop C. A. de Richery, text published by P. É. Duval: *Écrits du Fondateur, première approbation pontificale des Constitutions et Règles*, in *Missions O.M.I.*, 1952, doc. n. 6.

⁷⁸ Fr. *sentir le graillon*, which literally means "to smell of burning fat."

good effect of their prayers which, joined to the indignation which a whole lot of priests arouse in me by saying mass in a manner that sickens the heart, will succeed in giving me a little fervour. Adieu.

205. [To Father Tempier at Marseilles].⁷⁹

Journey from Nice to Turin. Visits to Guala the theologian and the Jesuits at the College of Nobles.

L.J.C.

Turin, November 8, 1825.

By dint of keeping onwards, one arrives; this time it is still not, my dear Tempier, at the place of my destination. I am still far from it, for I am yet only at Turin. I left Nice on Saturday⁸⁰ at six o'clock in the morning, instead of two o'clock, because of the torrential rain which was falling. I spent nonetheless a sleepless night, to my great regret. The weather improved when we arrived at Scavena, where we breakfasted enough to take us to Gondola, an inn situated in the midst of the mountains, but infinitely better than that at which I arrived in this capital. The following day, Sunday, we stopped at Tende, at the foot of the famous pass of this name, of which the summit was already quite covered with snow. I said holy Mass at the parish. In all my life, I have never seen anything filthier than the amice, alb and the altar linen; it was beyond all expression. The parish priest is a good man who was courteous to me; I left him quickly so as to continue on our way.

The weather was superb. We climbed for five hours; we did nothing but that all the way from Nice but we had to ascend as far as the clouds. There were only two feet of snow at the summit of the mountain. Sometimes there are twenty or thirty but that will not surprise you, who are familiar with the antediluvian ice of the Queiras and of the highest Alps. We supped at Limon and I just escaped paying five francs duty for my only pair of new shoes. I slept peacefully during the stretch from Limon to Coni, where we waited until half-past four in the morning to leave⁸¹.

From Coni to Turin, it is an earthly paradise; picture to yourself an immense plain, as far as the eye can see, watered by a thousand streams,

⁷⁹ *Missions O.M.I.*, 1872, 161-164.

⁸⁰ Saturday the 5th.

⁸¹ Monday the 7th.

dotted with trees of every species. One meets all along the way, habitations, farms, villages where one sees no sign of indigence: Racconi, magnificent castle of the prince of Carignan, surrounded by the most beautiful park of Piémont; Carignan, pretty little town; and finally, a short distance from the road, Moncalieri, royal habitation situated on the ridge which borders the Po as far as Turin, and which is rather a curtain of greenery with charming fields at intervals, quite different from the sad looking country places, in the neighbourhood of Marseilles which its citizens boast so much about. I arrived at Turin, delighted by this scene, which one of the most beautiful days of autumn enhanced. After having left my things at the inn of the Three Crowns, indicated to me as one of the best of the ones rated second, I went to say my prayers and receive benediction in the neighbouring church of Saint Thomas. I thanked God for my safe journey, I prayed a little for you and your companions and returned to my inn for a frugal and very meagre supper. I went to bed before nine o'clock and let my frame subside until seven o'clock in bed. Early in the morning⁸², I set about delivering a letter of recommendation that they had given me at Nice for the theologian Gualia. I found him a most respectable man, who received me with a fraternal cordiality. Everything was mine, at his place, from the first moment. It is at his place that I am writing to you. I conversed with him for a long time on matters most interesting. He is at the head of an establishment of which I will speak to you more at length.⁸³ I said holy Mass in his church; chocolate was ready for me in his room; he left me his study in which to write to you. When the time for dinner came around, he prayed me to stop, and presented his excuses for the fare which he was going to offer me. I found, in the salon before the refectory, some fifteen priests, of excellent bearing. For the occasion, they read during only part of the meal, which went by most cordially... We spoke a great deal about the missions and especially about the blessed Alphonse, of whom the theologian is the most devoted disciple. His portrait is in a place of honour in his church and he never ceases to praise his virtues and propagate his doctrine. The latter has some detractors here, even close to the Archbishop, but the Prelate, whose confessor is the theologian, is not amongst their number.

⁸² Tuesday the 8th.

⁸³ Luigi Maria Fortunato Guala (1775-1848) had founded in 1818 the "convitto ecclesiastico" of Turin. United with him then was the entire community of the Oblates of the Virgin Mary.

I felt very much at ease in this community. One of the principal members, who is head of the missions (which, in parenthesis, last only eight or ten days in these parts), took it upon himself after dinner to have me visit all over the city, with a pleasantness, a charm that I could not describe to you. He devoted himself until evening in this exercise of charity and finished by leaving me with the Jesuits, where we spent several hours going through, from cellar to attic, their beautiful college of the Nobles, while waiting for Father Rector, confessor to the King, to return. The whole community was around me, they vied to show me the most courtesy, to render to me, I must say, the highest respect. On Father Grassi's arrival, there was no longer any question of leaving. He vowed with all his might that I would lodge with them. Immediately the porter of the house went to fetch my things at the inn and now you see me installed with the Jesuits, who are doing their utmost for me, as if I were their Father General. I have come, to finish my letter, to the theologian Guala's house and I am going to return to the college. Paper and time are lacking although I write to you in fine letters; I shall continue by another post. I embrace you, in the meantime, as well as our brothers, with all my heart.

206. [To Father Tempier at Marseilles].⁸⁴

Visit to the Archbishop of Turin. Regrets not having received news from Marseilles. Life of the Blessed Alphonse de Liguori. Departure for Genoa. Health of Father Suzanne.

L.J.C.

Turin, November 12, 1825.

I came to regret, my dear Father Tempier, only having allotted a half sheet the last time that I wrote to you; so I will not fall today into the same predicament; it was in vain that I narrowed my lines and wrote as small as I could, I was unable by far to tell you all that I had to narrate. My itinerary, I believe was finished; I had reached my entrance into the house of the Jesuits, where they continue to treat me with a cordial attention and much more distinction than I would wish. Father Rector who is, as I have told you, confessor of the King, shows himself extremely amiable towards me. It is he who arranged for me to visit the city. We went together yesterday to

⁸⁴ *Missions O.M.I.*, 1872, 164-167.

the Archbishop, a venerable prelate of the Order of the Camaldolese⁸⁵ who received me with kindness. In this country, they certainly respect bishops somewhat more than at Marseilles. All who approach them bend the knee to the ground and kiss their hands. Father Rector, who is certainly one of the greater personages, both because of his status and because of his personal merit, and somewhat also in his capacity as confessor to the King and the Queen, made his genuflection like the others, while doffing his skull cap. You will realize I needed no persuasion to kiss the hand of the holy Prelate and, if I did not make a genuflection, it was solely in order not to renounce the privileges of the provostship; for the rest, I would have kissed his feet without qualm. The servants opened the door of the first antichamber but it was a priest who introduced us into the Archbishop's salon. I assure you that all that inspires a great respect; it is impressive. When we left, the first salon where the chaplain was had filled with distinguished persons who awaited their turn to enter.

I have reserved my seat for Genoa in the mail coach. I shall leave on Monday⁸⁶ at three o'clock in the afternoon; I will only be at Genoa on Wednesday because we will have to stop at Alexandria for the whole of Tuesday. I do not foresee exactly what day I will leave from Genoa for Rome. It seems that I will make this journey with Father Pizzi, Jesuit. I dare not tell you to write me there because it is improbable that I will make as long a stay in that city as at Turin. Several reasons have kept me here. Ah! how agreeable it would have been to me to receive your news and those of my uncle and of all the house. I cannot conceive how we failed to make so easy an arrangement. If I was not afraid that Father Pizzi, who leaves here two days sooner than I, might urge me to leave Genoa where he will have got through his business, I would tell you to risk a letter for me at the address of the Rev. Father Rector of the Jesuits; but I am too fearful that my letters may go astray. Let us be patient until Rome.

I would wish to say a thousand things about us; but from so far away, how can I? First, it would be about this time that Jeancard will be putting the last touch to the life of Blessed Liguori so that I may find his work finished and ready to be printed when I return to Marseilles. You cannot imagine the joy that all the best priests of these regions and all the good faithful will have in consequence. I feel that in order to ensure that, we should not assign Jeancard for the missions of November and December;

⁸⁵ Archbishop C. Chiaverotti, O.S.B., of Turin.

⁸⁶ Monday the 14th.

yet there is the rub; the Jubilee will be on you then. I hope that you will have saved Father Suzanne for that occasion since he needs rest; but you will have to keep tight hold on him to ensure that during his stay at Marseilles. See that he eats, in the name of God, let there be no shortage of food; nevertheless you must stipulate that they ask permission when they take more in the morning than the Rules prescribes...

The theologian Guala has entered his study, where I am writing to you; I shall therefore finish my letter here, so as not to miss the post. I counted on it not leaving until tomorrow, that is why I have dated it the 12th, although it is today the feast of Saint Martin. Adieu then, I embrace you with all my heart. Tender regards to my good uncle. I pray you to give my news to all our Fathers because I am writing to you alone for economy's sake, for letters coming from Italy are extremely dear... Quick, quick, noon will soon ring and I have a long way to go to reach my college where I wish to be punctual for the assembly of the community. Adieu.

207. [To Father Tempier at Marseilles].⁸⁷

Bull Auctorem fidei on the missions. Visit to the theologian Lanteri. Hospitality of the Jesuits of Turin and Genoa. Courtesy of the Bishop of Alessandria.

L.J.C.

Genoa, November 16, 1825.

In my travels I have come across this text⁸⁸ taken from a dogmatic bull which can furnish to certain detractors a subject of meditation. Take note again that it is concerned with Italian missions, otherwise called exercises, which usually last only eight or ten days, never more than fifteen. I did not have time to finish my letter at Turin because the great theologian Lanteri, having arrived, asked me for the favour of granting all the free time that I would have before my departure. There was altogether so much to gain

⁸⁷ *Missions O.M.I.*, 1872, 167-171.

⁸⁸ Bull *Auctorem fidei* of Pius VI, August 28, 1794, condemning the Synod of Pistoia. *De pœnit.*, par. 10, n. LXV: "Propositio enuntians irregularem strepitum novarum institutionum, quæ dictæ sunt exercitia, vel missiones... forte numquam, aut saltem perraro eo pertingere, ut absolutam conversionem operentur, et exteriores illos commotionis actus, qui apparere, nil aliud fuisse quam transeuntia naturalis concussionis fulgura. Temeraria, male sonans, perniciosa, mori pie, salutariter per Ecclesiam frequentato, et in Verbo Dei fundato injuriosa".

from his conversation that I had no trouble in granting him a favour from which I ought to derive more benefit than he. This holy, good and wise person is the master, friend and superior of the other theologian, Guala, of whom I have spoken to you in my other letters. From the first moment of our first interview, I prompted in him as much affection and confidence as I experienced veneration for him. It was so to speak a repetition of what took place with Dom Guala, with the difference that being head and master, he put no limit to the marks of confidence that he gave me. Had I come to Turin only to see these two men, my time and the money of my uncle would have been well employed. I cannot tell you in writing what was the subject of the ten or twelve hours of these conferences; the subject was worth the trouble⁸⁹. I needs must keep something to tell you *viva voce*. The opinion that the theologian Lanteri kindly conceived of me confirmed the friends already made in the cordiality that they already had for me and I have reason to believe that they made it a duty to give proof of it. As for the Jesuits, they themselves were not remiss a single moment and I found this morning on arriving at Genoa, at four o'clock in the morning, a servant of theirs sent to guide me to the religious house of Saint Ambrose where they wish me to lodge and where I have already said holy Mass before daybreak. In a word, I cannot tell you all the consolations I have experienced during my sojourn at Turin; I am not making an issue of the marks of deference, the courtesies of every kind from all sorts of persons; I only note them to afford you a little moment of pleasure. I wish nevertheless that certain comparisons arouse in you no indignation and do not increase, as has almost happened with me, the scorn and disgust for the people and the country which passion apparently blinds.

I left from Turin with the mail coach which stops for a day at Alexandria. I had to be patient from five in the morning until four o'clock in the evening. Kind Providence came, here as elsewhere, to my help. After going to the cathedral before daybreak to say holy Mass and after prolonging my thanksgiving in that church, I inquired if the priests went to the coffee shop; they proved to me undoubtedly that this was their custom, by showing me several who were coming out. It was the canon sacristan who had the kindness, after having let me celebrate simply on face value, to accompany me to the door of the coffee shop, where he would have entered with me if he had not had to say mass later. So I introduced myself without ado into a reserved salon where I found a good fire of which I had great

⁸⁹ This conference with Lanteri, founder of the Oblates of the Virgin Mary, was on the subject of the union of the two Societies.

need and a priest, a goodly young man, who kept me company. I took a cup of chocolate and waited near the fire, reading the newspapers, until the time to present myself to the Bishop⁹⁰ had arrived. All doors opened before me. The Prelate, who is only a year older than I, and who is a saint to boot, embraced me cordially and after the first exchange of courtesies, he pressed me to say my office beside his fire while he looked after some business. He invited me to dinner and, for fear I might be bored, gave me a priest with whom to go about the city and visit the superb citadel. When I came back to his house, he was untiring in his courtesies, to the point of adjusting himself the skull cap of my head and to be endearing. The dinner went off in a very edifying and joyous manner. After dinner, he dismissed two canons, his table companions, and proposed to me a charitable act. Guess, it was a marriage which he would have done himself in his chapel. It was the affair about which he had been busy during the morning with admirable charity, doing by hand everything himself, as far as the ceremony. It seems that it was a difficult matter; it had taken nothing less than the intervention of the Queen. The spouses were a gendarme and a young girl. I resisted in vain, proposed to be a witness, etc. Nothing doing. I had to accede to the will of the Bishop who himself adorned me with his embroidered surplice, his violet cape, his ceremonial stole and there I was officiating between the prelate and his chaplain. The thing was thus decreed, all that remained to me was to rise to the occasion and, without blushing, I launched into a fine discourse in Italian to my spouses, in order to do honour to the insignia with which I was vested. The prelate was delighted and thanked me a great deal. A little later and I would have been found in the act by the Bishop of Acqui⁹¹ and the grand chancellor of the Kingdom, who swept in afterwards. They would no doubt have asked who was this newly arrived prelate and I would have replied that I was my honour to be the Superior of my dear Missionaries of Provence. I tell you all that to make you laugh a little; I would have more important things to tell you, but I am faithful to my promise and I give you exactly the details of my journey, saving the rest to tell you *viva voce*, of which a great part indeed cannot be confided to paper. The Bishop of Alexandria did all he could to detain me with him for several days; but I left again by my mail coach and, after a bad night, shaken to pieces, I arrived at Genoa where I have not yet seen anything except the beautiful church of the Jesuits where I have just offered the holy sacrifice; and while awaiting a mirror which is not in use in the house of these good

⁹⁰ Alexander of Angennes, bishop of Alessandria.

⁹¹ C. J. Sappa Milanese, bishop of Acqui.

Fathers, I write to you to bring myself up to date and in case I can send my letter by today's post, if it is the day for the mail coach.

Adieu, my dear Tempier, my regards and my usual compliments to our dear lord and uncle and to all our scattered Fathers. I embrace you all with great tenderness.

November 17 – I hasten because I fear to miss the post. I have come from seeing the King, who graciously accorded me an audience, as well as the Queen⁹². They were very amiable towards me, one as much as the other. I thought I ought not to neglect to pay them court because sovereigns have good memories and it is well that they remember at a fit and proper time that they have seen me. I offered to the Queen one of our litanies of the Blessed Liguori of whom I was told, she is a great devotee. One must admit that she has the look of holiness in her countenance being in respect a faithful image of her soul. I will write you no more until at Rome. I leave tomorrow and I am going straight on. The coachman has undertaken to drive us there in eight days. My travelling companion, Fr. Pizzi, Jesuit, is much in a hurry to see his General; this somewhat accelerates my progress; otherwise I would not have left from here until Monday. The Archbishop⁹³, who is an excellent and amiable prelate, has welcomed me with the greatest consideration. I dine with him today. Adieu. I am pressed for time. I embrace all of you once more with all my heart. Adieu, until Rome.

208. [To Father Tempier at Marseilles].⁹⁴

The pleasant journey from Genoa to Rome. Grief over the bad news received from Aix. The novices must be better trained. Hospitality at the novitiate of the Lazarists.

L.J.C.

Rome, November 26, 1825.

My very dear friend, I arrived this morning at Rome too late to have the happiness of saying holy Mass, although I had remained fasting until two o'clock, after having spent the night stretched out in the carriage hired from the inn of Monterosi, in order to have our coachman leave a little earlier. This is the first day since my departure from Genoa that I have been deprived of this consolation. This inconvenience, which I felt very keenly,

⁹² King Carlo Felice et Queen Cristina.

⁹³ Louis Lambruschini, archbishop of Genoa.

⁹⁴ *Missions O.M.I.*, 1872, 171-173; YENVEUX, IV, 18; VI, 86; VIII, 58-59, 313; RAMBERT, I, 418.

was a sort of presage of the disasters⁹⁵ which I was to learn from your letter of November 10, (no. 1) which pierced me with the most acute sorrow. I had been so happy during my journey! The Lord had made me experience so much happiness at the altar to which I ascended every day, in spite of the beautiful discourses, the reasonings to the skies of the Jesuit Father who travelled with me, and to whom coffee at three o'clock in the morning was as indispensable as the fresh air he had to breathe. Our exercises, our conversations in a coach where we were all four invested with the priesthood, the pleasure of meeting twice a day at the inns with four others, Carmelite discalced religious, who travelled along with us and yet again, besides such company, the habit of interior recollection which gave me the facility of transporting myself in spirit either to be with you or at the bishop's house, either in our houses and on the missions, all that was different from the sorrowful effect that the sinister news had on my soul. It is a very severe trial, I must admit in the isolation in which I find myself; I have already uttered my sighs to the Lord as lovingly as I possibly could at the benediction that I have been to receive in the church of the Gesu, a few hours after my arrival in this capital of the Christian world. I know we are not the only ones subject to such misfortunes; there is no society which does not have several of them; but our little number renders these blows most painful and the dispositions of minds most ominous. We must nevertheless not fail to submit ourselves to the decrees of Divine Providence; the humiliation which results therefrom for the whole Society is perhaps a way more useful than prosperity, and we ought to profit from it to become more perfect and more faithful to the observance of our Rules and the spirit of our Institute. Such is the conclusion I draw from all these woes which overwhelm us. Let them pay more attention than ever to the strict observance of the Rules. Keep a tight watch over that at Marseilles: things have never been as I have wanted. Cut out all that can be an obstacle in the way of regularity. Never mind if a little less is done exteriorly; there is much to gain from perfecting oneself. It is only by the exact observance of the Rules that one renders them familiar to oneself and that one becomes invariably attached to them.

I fear greatly that the wretch who has just apostasized may be an accomplished scoundrel. After the short retreat that I made him make at Marseilles, he renewed his vows and gave me in writing the expression of

⁹⁵ This refers to the misconduct of Father Vachon, who quit in November, and of some novices. There were then several who did not make their vows: Bouthour, J. L. Collomb, F. C. Marin, J. Martin, G. J. Mazoudier.

his repentance. You must not hesitate to expel him. I give you the power to dispense him when you will have consulted the Assistants supposing, as I do, that no doubt they are of the same mind. Expel M. Vachon, he has deserved it a thousand times.

Give me your opinion and that of the other Assistants on this matter. The Jesuits do not beat about the bush. They have expelled men of prime merit for the sole reason that on occasion they happened to disapprove the conduct of superiors; others because they stuck too much to their own opinion. They have just expelled one of their oldest professed members in the Company for the first of these faults. He is a man most distinguished in every way.

Reflect on what I have told you in one of my letters about our novitiate. It is not set up to my liking. It is a great misfortune that this be so. We must absolutely reach the point of having as novices only those who truly wish to be such, who solicit this favour as a grace, on whose determination we can rely. What are these children who come without at all knowing what it is about, who have no taste for recollection, who are flighty in spirit, in a word, in a very poor frame of mind. All that I see since I have been in these parts has no resemblance at all to our situation. What modesty, what submission, what piety! As I have passed through Turin, Genoa, Viterbo, what sins of envy have I not committed or at least, how much I have longed for the happiness of seeing a similar spirit take root amongst us. Therein lies the whole trouble. It is urgent that we see to this in future.

A novitiate which is truly a novitiate, where the subjects are fashioned with a master's hand, where care is taken to inculcate in them all that goes to form a true missionary, whence they will emerge full of virtue, inured to obedience and imbued with attachment and respect for the Rules and all they prescribe. I shall keep on saying it endlessly that we have only an imperfect mixture which gives us scarcely any hope and whereof the results cannot be favourable.

Father Courtès is too busy in any case; we must have a man who is wholly and entirely for this or who can give more of himself to it. We must give these young people all possible means of perfection and after a short trial, if they do not take to it, send them away without pity. What is the good of having subjects who eat away and who in return for our care give us nothing but grief.

But, once more, we must look after them closely, almost exclusively, be continually with them, in a word, train them both by instruction and

direction and even by conversation. The novices must truly be novices, let them be kept continually up to form whether within the novitiate by study which is permitted in our Rules, by instructions, by practices of most excellent piety, that is to say, self-renunciation, humility, poverty, obedience, whether outside by some works of zeal such as catechism for the poor, for the sick and for prisoners, visits to hospitals, etc. If we are not decisive in this matter, we will do nothing worthwhile. Reflect deeply on all that I have just said.

I must finish my letter here this evening. It is late and although I do not feel it much, I realize I must need some rest. I wished to write you this very evening because it is Sunday tomorrow and I will not perhaps be able to rise very early in the morning. I will have Matins and Lauds to recite before Mass and I must be with Mgr d'Isoard before ten o'clock, who is to take me with him to St. Peter's to assist at the great exposition of the Forty Hours. I am lodged at Saint Sylvester, close to the Quirinal palace. It is the novitiate and house of studies of the gentlemen of Saint Vincent de Paul. I have found it more convenient to be placed in a convent where I find altar and table within reach. Giustiniani left from here ten days ago; I am told that he went through Loretto. Adieu for this evening. The post leaves tomorrow, I will not be able to add anything to my letter. Do not leave blank space in yours; write with your lines close together. I embrace you as well as our Fathers. I rejoice that my uncle is in good health and I kiss his hands. I have you all present to me always in every place. Adieu.

209. [To Father Tempier at Marseilles].⁹⁶

Life and tribulations of Saint Joseph of Calasanz. Description of journey from Genoa to Rome.

L.J.C.

Rome, December 3, 1825.

Your number 1, my dear friend, that I found on my arrival at Rome, bore such depressing news, that it took away my eagerness entertain you with the progress of my itinerary. I waited each day for another letter from you, but now I have been a week at Rome without a line, a word about our dear family, having reached me. It could not be more present to my

⁹⁶ *Missions O.M.I.*, 1872, 174-177; RAMBERT, I, 417.

thoughts and is never severed from them for a single instant, but I would wish to have something, I do not say more real, but more concrete. Letters are, at this moment, all you can provide in the way of consolation, although to tell the truth, they sometimes contain things that are very hard and very difficult to digest.

I read yesterday at one sitting the whole life of Saint Joseph of Calasanz. Here is to be found much to comfort us in the kind of sorrows to which we are too often subjected. Several times he saw himself abandoned by all his people; once only one of them remained with him. He was obliged, in order to continue the schools, to take in mercenaries and another time, this salaried personnel, after having learnt his method well, left him together with a great number of those who belonged to his Order. Fourteen of his more competent members said goodbye to him on another occasion. After his Congregation had been joined to another, his new affiliates soon became bored with this union and wished to separate from him again. How many of his members, tired with regularity, attacked the validity of their vows and got themselves dispensed! Others abandoned him in order to enter other religious communities. Finally he had the sorrow of seeing an infamous scoundrel of his Order weave such a frightful plot against him as to get him destituted, take his place and, in league with a great personage, work before his eyes with the aim of destroying his Order and succeed to a large extent. The saint died before matters could again take a turn for the better. If the saints have been treated in this manner, how can we be surprised that we too are afflicted?

I have nothing to tell you about our affair because, thanks to the dawdling of the excellent Monseigneur to whom you address my letters, I have not yet seen anyone. Perceiving however that his preoccupations made him always put off to the following day his accompanying me or preceding me to the Cardinals whom I wanted to visit, I presented myself at the door of Cardinal Pacca to announce my impending visit. I have also been to the address of Mgr. Mazio but did not find him in. I assure you that one gets weary at Rome more than at Paris.

So as not to leave my itinerary unfinished, I will tell you in a few words that I left Genoa on Friday, November 18, urged on by my travelling companion, the Jesuit, Fr. Pizzi, who thought it a crime to delay responding to the call of his General for a single day. The third companion was a religious of the Order of Citeaux and the fourth a Sardinian priest. Our coach being so composed, we carried on in community style. Towards morning, from three or four o'clock, the Jesuit and I made our oraison; the

other two slept; but, before we let them slumber, we made them say the litanies of the Holy Virgin, a *Pater, Ave* and *Gloria* in honour of Saint John Nepomucene, another for Saint Venance and a third for the good thief, the *Angele Dei* and the *De profundis*. These exercises were invented by the Jesuit Father but when it was my turn, I had them swallow ours which went on and on because the Riviera of Genoa is a succession of little hamlets. After our hour of oraison, which I sometimes prolonged a bit, I tried to sleep. When there was enough daylight to read, we said together the *itinerarium* of the clergy, a little later Prime and Terce and then Sext and Nones. On arrival at the place for refreshment, I first betook myself to the church where I had the happiness to say holy Mass which my companions heard. Afterwards we breakfasted on the fare of our halting place and left again. Following the afternoon meal, we said Vespers and Compline and the rosary towards evening. In the course of the day, I read to them some parts of the Imitation and the conversation was always very edifying. The Jesuit willingly related what he and his people have done. In the evening, after arriving at the inn, we said Matins and Lauds while supper was being prepared. That was by way of obliging my companion who would have had difficulty reading in the coach. Our group dined by itself. Our good Cistercian went thankfully to bed afterwards between two sheets; the Jesuit Father and myself laid down sometimes on the same bed without undressing; sometimes he had a mattress laid on the floor and left me the bed, where I slept always fully clothed. At three o'clock it was time to depart. Each day it was the same story with my Jesuit who wished most insistently that I take coffee with him and the Cistercian, who never failed to boast at having taken it; four decalced Carmelite religious who travelled in our company sided with them. As for me, I considered myself fortunate to buy with so minor a mortification the inappreciable advantage of offering the holy sacrifice and I admit that I would have been more edified if the others had followed my example. On the feast of Saint John of the Cross⁹⁷, I said Mass in a little church of a minutely small convent of Capuchins perched on the summit of a high mountain called Radicofani, in quite rough weather. I took the precaution of warning the others and assumed the lead in the ascent. My poor Carmelites could not follow me and, the day of their holy Founder, they did not hear Mass. I thanked God for the grace he granted me of giving me a stronger will and I had no reason to regret having been faithful to the inspiration of his spirit. Thus we went through Rotta, Sestri, Borghetto, la Spezia, Sarzana, Pietra Santa, Luca, Scala Prima,

⁹⁷ Thursday, November 24.

Poggibonsi, Sienna, Buon Convento, Scala Secunda, Acquapendente, Bolsena, Viterbo, Monterosi, la Storta and we arrived at Rome, as I told you in my first letter dated from the capital of the Christian world, all in good health, without the least incident, the least misfortune, having happened on the way.

I have returned from the Trinity of the Pilgrims where I attended the washing of the feet and the supper of more than a thousand poor people who have come from very far to gain in three days their jubilee at Rome. They gave me your letter of November 22-23; I have read it with the usual pleasure but I am putting off until tomorrow to reply. So adieu until tomorrow.

December 4 – I have left this until too late; it is Sunday and that is the reason; but I am fearful of not being in time for the post. I would be annoyed because my news would be late in reaching you. Your letter arrived the tenth day. I reckon that after tomorrow you will receive mine on the day of my arrival...

They are hurrying me saying that I will no longer be in time for the post. I finish by embracing you all. Adieu. You do not speak to me of Suzanne; he knows how much I love him.

210. [To Father Courtès at Aix].⁹⁸

Beauty of the churches at Rome. Ruins of paganism. Remains of Blessed Zinelli and many other saints. Difficulties of Father Courtès at the novitiate. Fewness of religious vocations at Rome.

L.J.C.

Rome, December 6, 1825.

Down with avarice, my dear Courtès, although the postal fee on my letter must ruin you, I am not resisting the desire to write to you and to date my epistle from the capital of the Christian world. This title is due to this beautiful city of Rome, not only because she is the seat of the Vicar of Jesus Christ, visible head of the Church, but also because she is, as it were, a *Compendium* of Christianity. It is only here, I believe, that they have understood how a dwelling should be built for God on earth. One has no

⁹⁸ *Missions O.M.I.*, 1872, 178-181; YENVEUX, IV, 66; VII, 6*; VIII, 42, 57, 69, 309; RAMBERT, I, 418-420; REY, I, 356.

idea of the magnificence of the temples found at every step. There are as many as five or six in the same place, each more beautiful, more rich, more imposing than the others. One truly conceives how in heaven one shall never tire of praising God and of loving him while contemplating his infinite perfections, when one feels, at the sight of this beauty, work of feeble creatures, the sentiment of admiration grow without ceasing instead of becoming exhausted, when one would think one has reached one's limit.

And what food for devotion is provided at the sight of so many monuments which attest the victory of the martyrs who have drowned idolatry in their blood. Their bodies still exist and their memory, so to say, is still fresh after eighteen and nineteen centuries which have destroyed both their persecutors and their works which seemed established for all eternity; the ruins which are trod underfoot still stagger the imagination, so vast they are in conception and in their details. The baths, for instance, as vast as a great city, were the work under Diocletian of forty thousand Christians who received as salary martyrdom in frightful torments. These baths were adorned with statues, porticoes, colonnades; there were fountains, shady groves, and even lakes which had been artistically designed within their enclosure. The works of architecture of the best masters, the priceless tableaux, the marbles that are only to be seen here, porphyry, alabaster and even exquisite libraries; nothing was spared. There no longer exists anything but the site and the broken masonry, while the poor slaves, the vile Christians as they were looked upon by their sacrilegious tyrants, are still the object of veneration of peoples, and their remains are precious kept in the neighbouring catacombs where one kisses the ground and tears flow.

All is holy here for him who comes as a true Christian pilgrim. As for me, I only see the apostles, the martyrs, the holy confessors of all ages. There is not a corner of Rome which is not a monument of faith or piety. The house in which I dwell, for example, where I came by chance, has been the shrine where for twenty-five or thirty years the blessed Cardinal Tommasi practiced so many virtues which have raised him to the rank of the blessed. He has sanctified it by his presence; his room still exists. And have I not found the memory, the bust and even the body interred in the church of this holy priest, of whom you have heard me speak so often, of this great servant of God, Father Bartholemy Zinelli, who was my teacher at Venice, who died in the odour of sanctity under this very roof which shelters me? The cause of his beatification would have been launched long ago if the Society of which he was a member had not been dissolved, because of the misconduct of its head, the famous Paccanari, who finished so badly after having made a good beginning. But my dear teacher, this

good friend who could only console himself at my departure, so he wrote me, by going up to the altar to pray for me, he only had virtues, and the Bishop of the place where he preached his last mission wished to proceed to authenticate by act a prophecy which he made in his diocese and which came true. I saw the other day one of his former confreres, since become Jesuit, but cold as ice and insensitive, who yet told me that when his brother was in his last agony, he made him swallow a small spoonful of water in which he had put a hair of the Servant of God, and that immediately a crisis came on which delivered the patient from all danger. God has not willed apparently to glorify his servant here below. If he had been entirely a Jesuit, these good Fathers would have given themselves a little more trouble. It is not less of a consolation for me to breathe the same air, to offer the holy sacrifice on the same altars, to be able to pray at his tomb. It is the same everywhere. Here are found all the saints since Saint Peter down to the blessed Benoît Labre and others still more modern. Here I must cease or be carried away too much. I wish only to tell you once more that I bear within me our whole family in all these holy places that I visit every day. Poor family that the demon has again shaken! It would not be a misfortune if there had been no scandal. And we would have avoided it if we had done justice to this wretch when his villainy was discovered. But, Lord, shall I ever be cured of leaning always towards mercy, when I hope for the repentance of the culprit! For the rest, emphasize to your community that these scandals happen in all Societies, and that has always been so. I have just read this again in the life of Saint Joseph Calasanz, as many as eighteen at the same time who rushed out as they bid him goodbye, without counting those who had themselves secularized and those who abandoned him to enter other Orders. He found himself once alone with another, having on his hands a great part of the schools of Rome. I know that does not console us for the defection of a single one of our members but this example and a thousand others ought to help us to bear this trial. The person is besides little to be missed in himself, but it is the uproar and its nuisance that I deplore. We ought to have prevented it.

...I see here novitiates which make me envious. There is one in the house where I live which seems, I assure you, to operate by itself, so essential it is to get off to a good start! I have given my ideas to Fr. Tempier in my last but one letter, I will not repeat them here. But it is more than essential to get at this problem. Properly speaking we do not have a novitiate. Admit that the wretch who has just left went through no such thing in the full sense of the word. Things can no longer go on that way. I insist on this matter. Send my letter to Father Tempier so that he may understand the importance I attach to a reform in this respect...

Let the principal concern of the novices be that they work with assiduity to acquire religious virtues and the spirit of a true missionary in accord with our Rules... It would be necessary also that you get rid of several occupations so as to be more concerned with the novitiate. If we could replace Guibert in the exercise of the ministry, I would willingly have him take on this role under your direction.

You must not be discouraged at having so few novices. All the Congregations, except the Jesuits, are in the same boat. Here I am in the house of studies which is also the novitiate of the Lazarists. Well, they only have six novices and as many professed students. These are two communities entirely separate; they cannot so much as speak to one another, they only see each other at table or, rather, in the refectory for they are at different tables. Everything goes well however and there are only four priests, including the professors. The students do their philosophy, which lasts two years here. I ought to say that these young people are charming and that they edify me a great deal. I pray God he may give us the consolation of having some like them. Adieu, my dear son, I bid you say a thousand tender things to all our Fathers and dear Brothers. You are all ever present in my thoughts and still more in my heart. Do not forget to send my letter to Father Tempier at Marseilles. I embrace him as well as Suzanne and all of you, my dear children, whom I love with all my heart.

211. [To Father Tempier at Marseilles].⁹⁹

Jubilee. Slowness of transactions at Rome. Little hope of obtaining in a short time the approbation of the Rules. Visits to cardinals. Let each Father write his memoirs so as to provide material for the history of the Society.

L.J.C.

Rome, December 9, 1825.

I have gained, please God, my jubilee today, very dear Tempier, since the Pope thought it well to reduce the conditions enjoined to fasting on the eve of the Feast of the Conception and a visit to the church of Saint Lawrence in *Damaso* once during the octave. Were I to heed myself, I now have had my fill of Rome; I cannot accustom myself to live in separation

⁹⁹ *Missions O.M.I.*, 1872, 181-186; YENVEUX, IV, 42; V, 131, 192; VII, 265; RAMBERT, I, 420-422.

from those I love, I have no pleasure away from them. Oh! how happy we will be in heaven when we are all there together! Then there will be no more journeys, no more separation and although absorbed in God we will love our friends more than ever. His intuitive vision of God did not prevent Jesus Christ from loving men, and amongst them, some more than others. That is how it is, however it pleases refined mystics to wish to give us, for the sake of perfection, another nature which assuredly would not be worth that which we have from God. So much so that there is no happiness for me, separated from those who are mine! Judge from that how saddened I must be at seeing how matters proceed here. It is a world in which there are nine months of vacation in the year. Business in consequence is done very slowly.

I have not yet seen the Holy Father and I am not annoyed at that because I am not yet prepared. Only yesterday did I finish the petition which I propose to present to him; I filled four pages of large paper. Before composing it, I had to work on the language. Shall I tell you? They give me little hope. Cardinal de Gregorio, to whom I had been warmly recommended from Turin and who has treated me with much friendship, who has already given me a dinner and a thousand courtesies, has told me positively that he does not believe that the Pope would give his formal approbation; that he could however, by graces and indulgences, recognize and be presumed to approve indirectly. Incidentally, this is a Cardinal who therefore thinks that graces, etc., are an indirect recognition; we have also believed that and we were right; add the approbation of the Bishops, seven in number; how could one apostasize after that? I have begged the Cardinal to speak to the Pope beforehand in my favour; he will not fail. I had previously seen the Cardinal Vicar¹⁰⁰ who, it seems, will have spoken to him of me. If the audience is delayed a little, other Cardinals will be able to render me the same service. In the meantime, I have not wasted my time and since graces ought, in the absence of all else, to signify something, I have asked some which will carry weight. For this I have gone to see the prelate who is Secretary of the Propaganda¹⁰¹, who is disposed not to refuse me anything. He will present my requests immediately to the Pope. I have not forgotten, as you well know, to ask for the plenary indulgence for the day of profession. This grace is evidently equivalent to a formal approbation. It remains to be seen if it will be granted. But in the supposition that the Pope will not reject my request, in what a predicament am I not going to find

¹⁰⁰ Zurla, Cardinal Vicar, who will give Father de Mazenod his *celebret*.

¹⁰¹ Archbishop Caprano, secretary of Propaganda.

myself? It is impossible to present the enormous volume of our Rules. Archbishop Caprano has told me that never will they intervene in matters of mere regulation. How can I extract from the work what is precisely constitutive? I have glanced through it rapidly and oh! how difficult it is and how long it will be! I cannot possibly pare off everything to the point of rendering it insipid. Besides all that is *de fide* must enter in, vows also, and a great part of that which deals with the government of the Society. It is hard to show nothing of our way of life but that cannot be thought of. The remainder is already too long; it is almost three quarters. Is this not enough to dismay a poor devil who is all alone and who will necessarily have to do this work with disgust, stripping away the work as a whole which, in its context, presents some interest? And again this will be much too long, and if I am in a position to do it, which I wish with all my heart, I am sure that they will decry it and tell me that it will take a year to examine it. For how long a time will I be stuck here? I have no idea. I am going tomorrow to see the Cardinal Secretary of State¹⁰² but it is the audience with the Pope which will decide the matter. If he refuses to give the brief, I will leave immediately after Christmas; if he dithers or if he yields to my wishes, then we shall see. We will know where we stand seemingly in the course of next week. This letter will leave in advance for I am preparing it for Sunday, that is to say, for after tomorrow. I shall finish it tomorrow. Goodnight for now, I am going to say Matins and then to bed... I do not know if I have told you that I could not be better off than in the house of the Lazarists. I am quite close to the Quirinal where Pope Pius VII lived; it is the most elevated part of the city; from my window, I look upon all the beautiful edifices which it contains, I distinguish the churches, the houses and even the streets. The air is excellent. My hosts take care of me in every detail. All the Brothers are at my service. The young people are ceaselessly coming around to know if I need anything...

December 10. – I have just come in at half past noon; I take food because I am fasting, given that at Rome the Fridays and Saturdays of Advent are prescribed days of fasting and immediately after dinner, I take up my pen to give you an account of my morning. The Cardinal Secretary of State having said he would receive me at nine o'clock, I was at the stroke of this hour in his salon where he did not delay in receiving me with his customary politeness. He does not remember ever having seen me but was nonetheless very amiable towards me... Before leaving the Vatican, I went

¹⁰² Cardinal Della Somaglia, Secretary of State.

up to the apartments of the Pope to learn if Bishop Barberini had asked for an audience for me; he had indeed forgotten. The occasion would have been splendid if I had only wished to see the Pope and kiss his feet; there was no one waiting to go in; I could have had myself presented, but I took care not to because, other than not foreseeing that I might go up to the papal apartments, I had not brought my petition, I did not presume that Cardinal de Gregorio would have seen him since he had promised to speak to him of me. So I preferred to wait, knowing how first impressions influence matters. For the rest, I do my best to leave it to God.

I have resolved to say holy Mass every day of the octave of the Holy Virgin for the obtention of the grace that we seek. I do not neglect on the other hand the human means that must be used. If after that I do not succeed, I will have nothing to reproach myself with. You must inform Courtès that I will not have acquitted these eight masses on his behalf.

Make an exact record of the names of the places where we have had missions and have litanies put together accurately. Let it then be ruled precisely that never shall a missionary dispense himself from saying them each day. There are practices which ought to characterize Societies. I was imprudent enough to forget the copy that I had. It was imperfect. When you will have gathered them strictly together, you will transcribe them in one of your letters but not on a separate piece of paper because they weigh letters and the slightest additional paper increases the charges by a third.

Carry out the idea that you have had to write memoirs of the Society. We are the only ones who have neglected such an important matter. The damage is irremediable, whatever one does. It is good to keep even the details of the apostasies. While that of V[achon] is fresh, let it be noted, all the more because the letter of his Bishop is remarkable. Courtès should assume the task of making these notes. We should furnish him with the letters. But how can we retain the marvels of so many fine missions? It is an irreparable loss which we must try and remedy the best we can by demanding that each one write down what he can recall about it as about everything else. In order that the same thing may not happen which has happened until now, we must oblige each Priest to take three or four hours a week, at a time you will fix, to write all he remembers of things related to the Society, but to avoid anyone saying airily that he remembers nothing, you must prescribe this exercise as one prescribes *oraison* for example; that is to say, that one enters one's room, and that one examines the matter until something is recalled. If one is intent on obedience, one will not engage in this exercise without profit, because one will do it conscientiously. I am

persuaded that we will do something interesting by comparing and editing the various memoirs. If we do not adopt this method, we will have a void precisely for those years that are the most interesting. The work will be less complete, no doubt, than if it had been done as time went on, but something will still be found. Adieu. My greetings, compliments and usual regards.

212. [To Father Tempier at Marseilles].¹⁰³

The fast. Letters of Father Tempier and Bishop Fortuné. Practice economy at the bishop's house. Coming audience with the Pope who has granted an indulgence for the day of profession. Beatification of Angelo d'Acri, Capuchin.

L.J.C.

Rome, December 18, 1825

(posted the 20th, eve of my anniversary of priesthood)

It is a pleasure! Here at least, my dear Tempier, the days of fasting are days of penance, especially for Provençals who cannot, whatever effort they make, swallow the detestable oil they eat at Rome. On rogation days, they observe what is called the strict minimum, that is to say, eggs and dairy products are forbidden. I thank God for my invincible repugnance for the foul oil and have contented myself these days solely with a piece of boiled fish on which I have squeezed half a lemon. Mgr. d'Isoard had wished that I dine with him; I took care not to accept his pressing offer because I admit that I felt nothing would have replaced the happiness that I experienced in doing three days of penance in the true sense and the real spirit of the Church.

Do you find it amusing, Mgr. the Grand Vicar, to spin such nonsensical yarns for me? Upon my word, can you believe that at the distance we are from each other, I can put up with the banal pretexts you are too often accused of making in your letters, blaming sleep or lack of time for cutting short what you have to say. Tell others that, dear friend. I do not doubt that you have many things to do but writing to me is also one of them; so I warn you that when your letters are cut short, like that which I have just received from you the seventh of this month, I will throw them

¹⁰³ *Missions O.M.I.*, 1872, 186-190; YENVEUX, III, 6, 188; IV, 205; V, 261; RAMBERT, I, 422-423.

in the fire without reading them. Happily my dear uncle has made up for it by his amiable, his very amiable letter; I laughed out loud on reading and rereading it. Upon my word, how he soldiers on! And if that is not enough, he will give them still more. What vigour! One would say this charming letter is written by a man of thirty years, who has beak and claws. Thank this good uncle for his kindly consideration; I do not write him directly so as not to multiply the postal charges.

If I had not been holding the world for quite a long time in contempt, so much so that I cared nothing about its judgements, I could have remarked that we are, I believe, the only diocese where the first Grand Vicar is not the president of the capitular council. In your place, I would have found it less unsuitable to put myself in a secondary position than to eliminate totally the first Grand Vicar. I will tell you with all the frankness I owe you that in this circumstance you have paid too much attention to your prestige and not enough to other proprieties. In the name of God, dear friend, be less susceptible on this little point of honour of appearing to be subordinate, of being regarded, as you have said sometimes, as a simple secretary. What does it matter? Were you to be regarded as the most insignificant of men, what would you have to complain about? Do all the good that is incumbent upon you, but do it only for God and, far from desiring that men know that you are the one who is posing the acts, ask nothing better than to be ignored. Otherwise, there is no recompense to hope for. For I do not mean by this word the vain applause of men and their sorry praise. I know not if I am wrong but I have often told myself that if my reputation did not belong to our Society and that in its beginnings it should serve as a sort of shield, I would be inclined to let it be attacked without going to the trouble of defending it. As for the reflections I have just made, I permit myself to make them in this circumstance and in general for, at bottom, I find it good not to be named to the board of this council.

I ought not to hide from you that I intended to recommend that you be very economical in managing the monies particular to my uncle. It is necessary to economize in order to pay certain debts likely to be overlooked but which are well known to me and on my mind.

So plan wisely and avoid feeling secure in the thought that you have 31 000 francs to spend during the year. I beg you in this regard to keep your accounts in good order. If you perceive that expenses are excessive, reduce them somewhat. Let the Bishop want for nothing but let there be an allotment for the rest of the house. I content myself here with two portions, of which one often is unexpended. You will have to keep an eye particularly

on the stable. I have always found the expenditure on that account exorbitant. Insist that the horses are given the amount that everyone agrees on. Three pecks of oats is the *nec plus ultra*. You know that it took a long time to persuade the coachman of this; he claimed that five were necessary. Take care lest, for love of his horses, he may have reverted back to this ration... These are, I know, fastidious details but the results are important enough to reckon with.

When will my return be possible? I shall soon know for the Pope is expecting me; everyone has announced my visit to him and still I do not appear before him. It is on purpose that I did not wish to present myself before some Cardinals and other principal Prelates would have spoken to him about me. Now I can delay no longer and all the more so because when Mgr. Mazio asked for an audience for me, he had the kindness to say to this prelate: "But I am waiting for him; the Cardinal Secretary has already informed me." If you only knew how apprehensive I am on seeing the moment come when I shall explain to him the principal purpose of my journey! Another person would perhaps be satisfied with having obtained what has already been granted very willingly and, I assure you, would know full well that so he should be.

Amongst the graces I asked for and obtained, one is worth a formal approbation and, if needs be, we could certainly be satisfied with it. It is the plenary indulgence for the day of profession and for the anniversary of profession and let it be noted that that term is explained in an unambiguous manner. Now when the Pope confers such a favour in view of this act, he approves that it be made. Cardinal de Gregorio told me before I obtained this noteworthy grace that he believed they would be satisfied to approve by granting indulgences; but he did not take into account one which bears so directly on the principal object. In any event, I have armed myself with all natural and supernatural aids by praying, asking for prayers, offering the holy sacrifice, invoking all the saints with all the fervour I could call upon. God will now guide his Vicar's heart. I shall neglect nothing in explaining my request, nothing whatever that is apt to make the most impression on his mind; I have put down in writing the principal points and shall leave them in his hands. But if there is a general policy that opposes us, we must be resigned and consider ourselves fortunate to have what we have already obtained. One of my motives for wishing to delay in presenting myself was to have already in hand what I have mentioned above, just in case.

I must go to bed for it is midnight. But I must tell you that I missed the post this morning for I had not written much of this letter before I had to

leave for Saint Peter's where I wished to attend the beatification of the blessed Angelo d'Acari, Capuchin missionary. Here is another of these missionaries beatified; they all have the same method and in ten or twelve days put on a mission for you with all that belongs or goes with it. That gives us courage and hope. I had been assured that the Pope would come down to pray before the newly Blessed and indeed that is what happened. So I had the consolation of being present for the inaugural ceremony for this saint, to whom I commended myself strongly, placing all of you under his protection, as well as the happiness of seeing and contemplating at leisure the Head of the Church. I cannot describe to you the impression made on my soul by the Vicar of Jesus Christ. I looked at him, it is true, with eyes of a lively faith; so I experienced feelings that were certainly not shared by most of the people close to me who only looked out of curiosity. He prayed with great fervour and I quietly united myself to him. They came to wrench me away from this kind of ecstasy: Mgr. d'Isoard had been waiting for me an hour in his carriage. I returned that evening to the same basilica in the procession. The dean of the Rota carried the cross robed as a prelate; I was beside him in soutane and long cloak. We sang the litanies of the Saints. At the station of St Peter's, they solemnly exposed to us above in a tribune the venerable relics and, please God, we gained another jubilee. It is the third; I will obtain yet another two, at least I will do what is prescribed to that end. I wished to finish my letter, that you would not get into six pages of yours, fearing to miss again the post of Tuesday, because tomorrow I shall have interruptions and the day after, at the latest, I shall present myself to see the Pope and will perhaps have a long wait in the antechamber. In that case, I will not be able to take my letter to the post and there will be much delay before you receive my news. As soon as I shall have seen the Pope, I will write to you again but will trim my quill to write more boldly so as to spare your eyes. In the meantime you all gain a hundred days' indulgence for each confession that you hear and a hundred years for each general confession. In addition, plenary indulgence on the day and anniversary of profession and some other things as well which the Holy Father granted us most kindly after hearing read to him, article by article, each request presented to him in our name; so, it is with full knowledge and very willingly that he has favoured us.

Adieu for tonight, dear friend. Embrace on my behalf all the family. Pray for me; for my part, I make no station, not a step, without you beside me. I fear that Suzanne may have been over tired by that retreat at Allauch; he does not know how to be moderate, and I am always anxious about him. Affectionate regards for my dear uncle. Adieu.

213. [To Father Tempier at Marseilles].¹⁰⁴

Audience with the Pope. Mass on the tomb of Saint Peter. Visits to M. Adinolfi, pro-secretary of the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars. Leo XII's will is to approve and not merely praise the Rules. He will have to prolong his stay at Rome. Regret over being far from the family. Exhortation to practice regularity and devotion to Mary Immaculate. Oblates of Mary.

L.J.C.

Rome, December 22, 1825.

(posted the 25th, most holy day of Christmas)

You must indeed feel very impatient, my very dear friend, to receive this letter which, to all appearances, should inform you that I have had the happiness of seeing our Holy Father the Pope and should contain, in consequence, the details of this memorable audience. *Eh bien!* my dear friend, yes! I have seen the Pope, not at a great distance, as the other day at St Peter's, nor for a few moments, but close enough to touch and for more than a good half hour; that says little, for when I recapitulate all that was said on both sides, I am tempted to believe that it took nearly an hour to cover everything.

It is impossible for me to render you a detailed account of what happened; you will have to be satisfied with the substance.

You know that the Holy Father had been informed by the Cardinal Secretary of State and by several others that I desired to have the honour of presenting myself to him. Those who had been good enough to speak to him about me had been so conscientious in doing so that the Pope had replied that he would see me with the greatest pleasure. If the dean of the Rota¹⁰⁵ had not requested Mgr. Barberini, the Master Chamberlain, to have him arrange the day for me to present myself for the audience, I would have gone the next day; but, waiting for the convenience of this *Monsignorino* obliged me to put it off from one day to another. However, such delay was insupportable to me for I feared that the Pope, whose attention had been drawn to me by all that people had kindly said to him, might find it strange and out of place that I showed so little hurry to present myself before him, after he had given his permission with such goodwill.

¹⁰⁴ *Missions O.M.I.*, 1872, 190-202; YENVEUX, I, 30, 45*; III, 185-186; RAMBERT, I, 429-435; REY, I, 362-365.

¹⁰⁵ Mgr. d'Isoard.

So one fine morning I made my decision. It was the 20th, vigil of Saint Thomas, and having obtained the loan of the carriage of Mgr. the Dean, I arrived in full dress at the Vatican. The first person I met at the papal apartments was a certain prelate, one of those they call here *de mantellone*, that is to say, of inferior rank but always near the Pope to serve him as private secretary. This good man, a little awkward at his trade, advised me to retrace my steps because it would not be possible to see His Holiness that day; that I could not have chosen a worse day, that it was the last of the audiences of the year, that the Cardinals were coming in crowds, the Ministers and goodness knows who else, hence I must put off my visit until the first days of the new year. I mollified him a little and to be accommodating, he told me to come back the second day of Christmastide, then on the Eve, and finally the day following that at which we were. That did not suit me at all. I have since concluded that, thinking I wished to get in to see the Pope by his intermediary, he saw no way of introducing me that day. He was wrong, I had not the slightest wish to enter by the back door. The moment this good man disappeared, Mgr. Barberini arrived; I went up to him and explained my position, reproaching him somewhat for having grieved me by his forgetfulness. A little embarrassed by my gentle reprimand, of which he acknowledged the justice, he prayed me to enter the salon and, in my quality of prelate or gentleman, I went without ado into the apartment which is next to the study of the Pope, where Cardinals, Bishops and other Prelates, as well as Ministers, wait their turn to enter the presence of the Holy Father. As soon as the audience begins, those designated to work that day with the Pope enter in succession. Neither Cardinals or Ambassadors came. Those who entered one after the other were the ones whom the Holy Father summoned through the Master Chamberlain. I had been forewarned I must be armed with patience because the matters which are brought to him are sometimes so numerous that there is no end to them.

I was in good heart that day, although I was fasting, and the large violet pouch of Mgr. the Secretary of Briefs who went in first did not dismay me; nor was I likewise by that also just as full of Cardinal Pacca, prefect of the Congregation of Bishops and Religious. Alas! I thought that perhaps one day our turn would come to be laid full length in his portfolio. They both spent an hour with the Pope. The Bishop Almoner, that is to say, distributor of the alms of the Pope, and the Father Master of the Sacred Palace also had their regular audiences that day; they were not long. Who will they call next? The General of the Dominicans¹⁰⁶, whose stomach

¹⁰⁶ Joachim Briz, general of the Dominicans.

noised its hunger, would have wagered that it would be he; not at all, it was I. I arrived at the door with the dignity you know me to have, but I left it there to pick up again on coming out.

The Pope receives in his small private room. He was seated on a settee, with a desk before him on which he leaned. I made as I entered the first customary genuflection but there was not enough room between the door and the place where he sat to make a second; I found myself promptly at his feet that I did not try to kiss either because when bowing profoundly I did not see them or, too struck by the appearance of the Pontiff, whom my faith showed immediately as the Vicar of Jesus Christ, I became attentive only to the charm and the goodness of his physiomy. I handed him with respect the letter from my uncle which he placed before him on his desk. Then began our interview, which ran on several subjects, and lasted nearly three quarters of an hour.

It would be impossible for me to relate to you all that was said, still less to describe to you the goodness, the pleasant manner and courtesy of the sovereign Pontiff. I was kneeling beside him. Several times he motioned for me to rise; I did not wish to, I was comfortable at his feet, besides I leaned against the desk. I could have remained longer in this position without discomfort. I explained the principal purpose of my journey, but many were the episodes that entered into this narration; even the miracles of Blessed Alphonse Marie de Liguori entered into it. You should have seen with what interest he listened to the succinct narration which I made to him of the good operated by our missionaries. I took care not to forget to tell him what you had just written to me: "At this moment the two youngest missionaries of the Society are working marvels, etc. One of them, Most Holy Father, is not yet old enough to become priest¹⁰⁷; he was ordained in August with the dispensation of sixteen months that your Holiness deigned to grant to us; and yet the good God has used them to convert Protestants, etc." You would have been touched, my dear friend, to see, while I spoke, how this holy Pontiff raised his eyes towards heaven, then joined his hands and bowed his head on them clasped together, glowing with gratitude and thanking God with all his heart. It seemed to me that this invocation alone would draw new graces on our ministry.

When I had finished speaking, he took up the discourse and spoke for quite a long time himself on this same subject. One would have said that he

107 Father Guibert.

wished to make excuses for not doing with a stroke of his pen what I well knew is not granted except after long formalities. "You know," he said to me, speaking all the time to me in the third person, "what is customary for the Holy See to do. They still do today what they did a hundred years ago." And then he entered into all the details so that I should know how matters would proceed. "The Secretary of the Congregation will give me a report on the matter, I will choose a Cardinal to examine it, he, in turn, will make a report on the matter for the Congregation, each Cardinal will give his vote, etc. The great number of these requests, which are coming to us especially from France, has made the Congregation adopt a particular mode of approbation, which consists of praising, of encouraging, without formally approving." I was not afraid to manifest to the Holy Father that this mode would not satisfy me, and I dared to hope they would do something more for us.

Lest I did not retain the name of the secretary whom he designated to me, he extended his kindness to the point of looking in his desk for a half sheet of paper, he moved the pen and ink stand towards me and handed me the pen so that I might write at his dictation. "Go to M. the Archpriest (that was the secretary) on my behalf and tell him to make his report to me on Friday, which is the day of his audience."

I had written a brief memoir but seeing that my audience had become so prolonged, I did not dare commit the indiscretion of reading it to him, I simply laid it on his desk, but the Pope handed it back to me so that I could carry it to the Archpriest whose dwelling he went to such trouble to indicate to me.

As you will understand, I kept nothing from the Holy Father. When I told him what we were doing: "Quite right," he said, nodding his head, "the dispensation is reserved to the Superior General and to the sovereign Pontiff." He approved again with a nod of the head and did as much when I gave the motive of this reservation: "That is so," I said, "in the rule of Saint Vincent de Paul". The Pope added, "And in that of the Blessed Liguori." In spite of my emotion, I did not lose my head. Having foreseen in advance how long the procedure could drag on that I knew we had to follow, I had written four questions on which I wished that the Head of the Church reply to me categorically. I did not fail to put them to him: "Does your Holiness approve that the members, etc., continue to live according to the Rules previously approved by such and such Bishops?" – Reply in the affirmative. "Does your Holiness approve that the dispensation of this and that (I named each thing by its proper name) be reserved to the Superior General and to the sovereign Pontiff, and that the members of the Society can only ask the

dispensation from them?" – Reply in the affirmative. "Does your Holiness approve that he who has been Superior General be such and does your Holiness deign to recognize him in this capacity?" – Reply in the affirmative. "Does your Holiness approve that the Society take the name of *Oblates of the Most Holy and Immaculate Virgin Mary* instead of that of *Oblates of Saint Charles* which it had previously taken?" – The Pope said neither yes or no; I think I understood that he said it should be put in the report. I did not insist on explaining the matter further because it was the least important thing and we could wait without inconvenience. This change has seemed necessary to me in order not to be confused with an infinite number of communities which bear the same name.

When the Pope took trouble to explain at length to me the formalities which necessarily require much time, he said to me: "You will not leave so soon, will you? And we shall see one another again?" I replied as I should on this matter. Before withdrawing, when I saw that he had glanced at the clock, which is the sign of dismissal, and note well that he considerably did so only when I had finished saying all I had to say to him, I asked him for certain faculties; and as on this subject he made some very wise reflections and especially certain applications which prove his humility as much as his knowledge, touched by what I was hearing and somewhat moved by fear of overstepping the bounds, I forgot to ask for the extension of these faculties as I had meant to do. I will return to that at my farewell audience. I had him bless my crucifix and, again bowing deeply, though once more unable to kiss his feet, I asked him for his apostolic benediction and withdrew profoundly consoled by my long session, while thanking God, the holy Virgin, the angels and the saints and even the holy souls in purgatory for whom I had said mass that day. *A propos* of masses, do not forget to tell Father Courtès that since the 8th I no longer acquit (stipends) for him. I continue to apply them for the great affair which concerns us, for although I have neglected nothing in regard to men, I put my confidence in God. It was half past two o'clock when I arrived at the house of Mgr. d'Isoard to take some food, but I could well have waited until evening, so full of joy I was which up to a certain point can well replace the grosser nourishment that one must give to the body.

As you can understand, our affairs were going forward too well for me to neglect to go the very next day to M. the Archpriest whom the Holy Father had bidden me to see on his behalf. It was December 21, a memorable day for me, as you know, for it is the anniversary of my ordination. I went early in the morning to offer the holy sacrifice in the grotto of the basilica of the Vatican, on the bodies of the holy Apostles. I

was with a holy priest who has been called to the missions amongst the infidels. He served my mass. I took my time and afforded myself the consolation of naming explicitly all those whose salvation interests me most on this precious tomb. I served the mass of the future martyr for my thanksgiving; then, going up into the church of St. Peter, I took part in Matins and Lauds of the Chapter and went on my way, commending myself the while to all the saints in paradise, to the dwelling of the Archpriest Adinolfi. I forgot to tell you that I had brought with me our precious volume and that I laid it on the confession of Saint Peter while my saintly companion offered the holy sacrifice, as I implored the head of the apostles and Saint Paul and the other holy Popes who are buried in the same place, to accept and bless them.

The Archpriest was not at home; I waited for him resolutely for more than two hours. He arrived at last and received me, much as my good angel disposes everybody to receive me here. It was dinner time for him but he did not wish me to be concerned about that; he listened to my account with the utmost pleasantness, had my little memoir read to him and grasped its meaning perfectly. He is a man of experience in these affairs and quite alert; I saw that I could press my case with him and went so far as to say that I had to present him with a volume which would daunt any man of fortitude and showed it to him there and then. He told me he would consume many such others in time to come and that by evening it would be read and his report would be ready to be presented to the Holy Father on Friday. "I do not promise you," said he, "not to make a criticism here and there, that is to say (correcting himself) some observations, but I see in leafing it through that it is good." He continued to speak to me with much frankness and did not hide from me that we should expect at the most a *laudanda* after each Cardinal had given his vote and after the Cardinal whom we will have chosen for *ponent* had made his report; that such was the practice adopted and that such would be his own conclusion. I admit to you that his words perplexed me very much; I was for a moment undecided, even to the point of taking back my book and of renouncing what seemed too difficult to obtain. However I did not let this idea linger in me out of respect for the Pope, who had himself given me this directive and, abandoning myself confidently to divine Providence who had protected me in a very tangible manner hitherto, I said to M. the Archpriest: "I leave this matter in your hands; I ask nothing but the fulfilment of the plans of God." We parted company quite pleased with each other and he gave me an appointment for Saturday morning, the day after his audience, which took place Friday evening. I had spent more than an hour and a half with him, perhaps

delaying as much his dinner and this man, very forthright in his manner, accustomed to keep waiting Generals of Orders and Bishops who all come under his jurisdiction, was not tired by my long interview, showed not the least sign of boredom and was charming right up to the end. I regarded that as a kind of miracle which made me think it augured well for our enterprise.

I continued to recommend it to God through the intercession of the holy Virgin, of the Angels and Saints and it is in this state of holy abandon that I waited to go and learn today what was decided in this audience with the Pope, so vital to our interests. Nevertheless, preoccupied for the whole of that day with this matter, I composed a letter for M. the Archpriest, urging him to make prevail the reasons that I gave him, so that the Holy Father might manifest the intention that the Congregation be not satisfied with *praising* but that it *approve*, something it no longer does and (has not done) for a long time. I was perturbed, it rained the whole afternoon; something in a word, I know not what, prevented me from delivering it, for twice I had taken up my hat, determined to brave the bad weather, and I turned back for a reason quite other than the bad weather. I chose the recourse of going to pray to God in the (chapel) balcony, the while I supposed the audience was taking place, not that I had the foolish idea my prayers could produce the good effect that I desired, but because it seemed to me appropriate to recollect myself in the presence of Our Lord, somehow or other, while grace should work and the Holy Spirit should inspire the Head of the Church as to how he should decide our fate and the salvation of an infinity of souls.

This morning, at the time appointed, I betook myself to the Archpriest's house who, in parenthesis, lives at the other extremity of the city. He received me immediately with good grace, dealt with some affairs in my presence with one of his secretaries, and then commenced to speak of our affair. He first read to me the succinct report that he had made to the Holy Father which, it must be said, basically contained my memoir and the essential points which ought to stand out but, as he had given me to understand the day before yesterday, he concluded in favour of the *laudanda* after the text had been examined to see if there was anything to change. But, give praise to the goodness of God and unite yourselves, all of you, to me to thank him! Such was not the mind of the Holy Father: "No," said the Pontiff, "This society pleases me; I know the good it does, etc., etc." And he entered into multiple details which surprised the Archpriest to the uttermost. "I wish to favour it. Choose a Cardinal, one of the mildest of the Congregation, to be the *ponent* of this cause; go to him on my behalf and tell him my intention is not merely that these Rules be praised but that

they be approved." O Leo XII! Even were the Congregation to reject our Rules, you would nonetheless be considered for ever amongst us as the benefactor and the father of our Society.

Have you understood, dear friend, and may all of our dear Brothers grasp, the worth of this word uttered by the mouth of the Head of the Church of Jesus Christ! After I had submitted to his judgement the fundamental points of our Rules, after he had reflected two days on all my words, contrary to the conclusions of the one who made the report on this affair, it is then that he said: "No, I like this Institute, I wish to approve its Rules." Favourable as doctor and judge, he wishes also to be a father: "Choose the mildest of the Cardinals of the Congregation...!" I could not hold back my tears, so touched was my heart by this goodness. It is something extraordinary and we can only be dumbfounded before God at this protection so little deserved (considering my part in it) that all of you, my dear children, who serve the good God with right good will, have brought about for my consolation and the happiness of the whole Society.

On leaving the house of the Archpriest Adinolfi, I said a heartfelt *Te Deum laudamus* and entered the church where lies the body of Saint Joseph Calasanz, there to thank our Lord and pray him to finish his work.

Thus our cause is on its way, but if it has taken a great step initially, this is not to say that it is finished. Before God and as far as we are concerned, it is quite as if the Head of the Church has spoken, his will is known to us, but for it to have effect we have a procedure to follow and many formalities to perform which will take much time. Here I am then kept far from you and from our whole dear family. Believe me, this is a great sacrifice I make; but if ever it had to be, it is certainly at this time; yet if I make such a remark, it is not to complain about it, nor, God forbid, to murmur; but it is to let you know that I am only happy beside those whom the good God has given me. Let all of you redouble your fervour and exactitude for the observance of the Rules. You know that today they have taken on a more imperative character. Try to respond to the expectations of the supreme Head of the Church, this is the means to draw down upon us and upon our holy ministry new blessings.

Let us renew ourselves especially in devotion to the most holy Virgin and render ourselves worthy to be Oblates of the Immaculate Mary. But this is a passport to heaven! How have we not thought of it sooner? Avow that it will be as glorious as it will be consoling for us to be consecrated to her in a special manner and to bear her name. The Oblates of Mary! This name satisfies the heart and the ear. I must admit to you that I was quite surprised,

when it was decided to take the name I had thought should be left aside, at being so impervious, at feeling so little pleasure, I would almost say a kind of repugnance, at bearing the name of a saint who is my particular protector, for whom I have so much devotion. And now I see the reason; we were remiss in regard to our Mother, our Queen, she who protects us and who must obtain for us all graces whereof her divine Son has made her the dispenser. So let us rejoice to bear her name and her livery.

December 25 – I finished my letter yesterday evening and I was writing to you while you were all singing God's praises. I took pleasure in directing from here your intention of thanksgiving for the special protection that the Lord has deigned to grant us. I add these two lines before leaving for Saint Peter's where I propose to assist at the high mass in the Sixtine Chapel. The Holy Father feels he has not the strength to perform the rite; it is much to be thankful for that he was able to perform the ceremony of the closing of the holy door. Although it is always as beautiful as it is interesting to see the Head of our religion preside, it would have to go beyond all I have seen to be comparable to this pontifical office done by the Pope, three times only in the year. They all say that nothing more beautiful can be seen in this world, and I can well imagine that.

Adieu, dear friends, I have wished you *bonne fête* by saying mass for you; I embrace you all now with all my heart. I embrace also very tenderly my good uncle and I think rather anxiously of the fatigue he is enduring today. When shall we see each other again? Adieu.

214. [To Father Tempier at Marseilles.].¹⁰⁸

Reproaches Father Tempier for writing so little. Visits to cardinals. Cardinal Pedicini has been named ponent of the cause. The manuscript of the Rules will have to be read by some ten Cardinals. Letters from France against the approbation of the Rules. Good wishes for the New Year.

L.J.C.

Rome, December 29, 1825.

Here we go, given that your letters have to be waited for; I should have received one, dear friend, yesterday at the latest, and that is with an

¹⁰⁸ *Missions O.M.I.*, 1872, 202-208; YENVEUX, II, 105.

extra two days of grace, for I have received nothing more after the one you wrote on the 7th and that was not worth half a letter. Happily my good uncle has had the kindness to make up for it and the beloved X¹⁰⁹, coming likewise to your aid, has helped to hide the poverty of your offering. I thank them doubly each of them both for the pleasure they gave me and for the service they rendered to you in filling up the immense space you had left blank in your letter. I have made my sentiments clear to you on this subject in one of my letters and will not dwell again on this matter. I think you ought to be pleased with the last account I rendered and there is much to be pleased with indeed. I am at present quietly getting ready for further operations; for one must remember the saying of St Ignatius that in affairs one must act as if success depended on our skill and to put in God all our confidence as if all our efforts could produce nothing. I admit nonetheless that after all that has happened up to now, I count only on the help of God and if I do my part, it is to observe formalities and not seem to tempt God. I have nothing more to tell you. I will have to leave you time to meditate a little on the ways of Providence and to thank God. When I think of it, I find everything in the responses made to me by the sovereign Pontiff. Is it not what they call the *vivæ vocis oraculum*? Laws here can be abrogated by this kind of decision. Strictly speaking, we need nothing more; we must hope that the remainder will also come. In the meanwhile, I am calling on the Cardinals who are summoned to give their opinion. Making an approach to one in particular seemed to me a very thorny matter¹¹⁰; human prudence might perhaps have required that I make an exception in his regard but not to see him and make him inimical to the cause which depends on me would amount to the same thing. So I have been to see him without revealing to him my inmost thoughts – that would not have made my visit agreeable to him. What I foresaw happened, he was very appreciative of my gesture and *subito* invited me to dinner. That was the embarrassing part of the affair but you know I have a certain *noblesse* of soul which makes me defy opinion: I would have thought it cowardly to refuse, so I accepted. I am not any less a good royalist for that and an infinitely better royalist than those who could blame and denounce me if they knew.

109 It is not known whom the Founder designated by this X, mentioned two more times at the letter. YENVEUX (II, 105) quotes some lines of this letter of December 28: "Pay scrupulous attention to this dear little child. I abhor the colleges because of the fear they instil in me in the matter of morals. In the name of God, take all the precautions you can..."

110 According to the context, he refers to a visit to Card. Fesch, uncle of Napoleon, who had retired to Rome upon the fall of the Emperor.

I was not able to see Cardinal Pacca today, although I went to his house to speak to him of our affair. He is Prefect of the Congregation of which the one of whom I have just spoken is a member with several others. Tomorrow I will dine at the house of my Dean with another whom I would have willingly taken as *ponent* if they had not forewarned me that, in a similar case, he upset everything by putting his own ideas into it. The risk to run was too great. We have turned our eyes to another, whom I do not know, but who is said to be more amenable. The Archpriest Adinolfi was to see him today on behalf of the Pope; I shall know tomorrow if he has undertaken to make the report for the Cardinal *ponent* is the one we would call the *rapporteur*.

December 29 – I have been once more to see Cardinal Pacca to brief him and to ask him at the same time for a letter of recommendation to Cardinal Pedicini whom we have chosen as *ponent* for our cause. The Cardinal seems to have entered quite well into our views and he has promised the letter I requested for Cardinal Pedicini who is his friend, his compatriot and his relative. I have also seen Archbishop Marchetti of Ancyra, who has just been named secretary of the Congregation, and have apprised him of the affair as well. It was not the first time we had seen each other. He confirmed what had been told to me by the Archpriest Adinolfi, who performed until the time of his nomination the functions of secretary, but he told me more, that is, that the Holy Father had spoken of me in the most satisfying manner, not to say flattering. So much the better if that may contribute to the success of the affair.

I ought to say however that on leaving the Archbishop, I met the Archpriest at his door; I do not know if he was indisposed to see me with the one who has become his chief but he told me that matters had worsened a little, that he had been told he was not necessary, etc. "Who said that?" I queried, "Is it one of the Cardinals of the Congregation?" "No, they are agents of France¹¹¹." Eh! Why should anyone consult the agents, otherwise known as the *commissionnaires*? Why speak to them of an affair which does not concern them? It would be funny if the opinion of an agent prevailed over my reasons and the recommendation of the Head of the Church who has said: *I will it – voglio*. As we were at the threshold of the

¹¹¹ Bishops Arbaud, de Bausset and Miollis wrote to Cardinal Castiglioni (future Pius VIII) and to the Pope on December 8 saying that, on reflection, the statutes of the Oblates appeared to them as unacceptable. They contained several dispositions contrary to the rights of Bishops and the civil laws of France. It was probably the contents of these letters which came to be known and divulged by the "agents of France".

door and there was reason to believe that he had a cold since yesterday he was in bed at midday, we separated because of that.

I reflected as I walked along and took the firm resolution not to sleep on the matter but to go back and see the Archbishop who henceforth will be our representative in audience with the Pope and to go and inform Cardinal Pedicini as soon as I had the letter of Cardinal Pacca. This letter has been handed to me this evening and tomorrow I shall not fail to proceed to the address of His Eminence who must have been alerted today by M. the Archpriest for he by now should have carried out the orders he had received from the Pope. This man's remark gives me some anxiety. I shall leave nothing undone to attenuate the impression it can make on the mind of the Archbishop Secretary and on the Cardinal *ponent*. I perceive also that he had put some scraps of paper here and there in the book. I propose to beg the Cardinal *ponent* to be good enough to consult me on the articles that the Archpriest might have noted, in order to be enlightened by the explanations that I will hurry to translate the memoir that I have presented into French so that it may make more of an impression on those who know this language, but Cardinal Pedicini does not know it.

Unfortunately it happens that tomorrow is precisely the day of our great feast. They plan to have the Forty Hours in our church. Before exposing the holy sacrament, they will have a procession outside and I will not be able to dispense myself from taking part in it. There is a formal invitation to the refectory and for eight days they have prayed me not to make any other engagement elsewhere. These two things will retain me exactly at the times which would be the most opportune to go and make acquaintance with my Cardinal. I shall see, however, if it is possible to reconcile everything. Be assured that I spare nothing to arrange matters so that they will go well but it takes many steps and much worrying. I cannot conceive how it happens that there are people in the world who, when able to do good without giving themselves much trouble, or at least support it and render service at the same time, nevertheless prefer to disoblige us by impeding the work of God. Nonetheless we have to be polite to these people because they could hurt us still more and we would incur the reproach of having given occasion for even a little opposition when such great interests are at stake...

*December 30*¹¹² – Here I am, back from my visit to Cardinal Pedicini. I found him busy reading the book; the translation of my petition which I

¹¹² According to the *Journal* of the Founder, this visit to Cardinal Pedicini took place on December 31.

read to him had the effect only of adding to the good opinion that he was beginning to form on the question. The Cardinal is an upright man; he has promised to expedite matters as much as he can on his side and to put it through before others that he has on hand. But what a procedure to follow! When he will have read (the dossier) and made his report, he has to send it on to Cardinal Fesch who will pass it to Cardinal Haefelin, he on to Cardinal Bertazzoli, Cardinal Bertazzoli to Cardinal Pallotta, Cardinal Pallotta to Cardinal Turiozzi, Cardinal Turiozzi to Cardinal Pacca, who will return it to Cardinal Pedicini. Cardinal Pedicini will speak of it to the Pope, then the Congregation will assemble and decide. What do you say to this business? They could take a shorter way but so it goes. Now calculate fifteen days per head; until then I stay here. It is enough to make me succumb to a depression. I shall overlook nothing to push ahead but it will not be an easy matter. I ought to say in defense of the Archpriest that I do not believe that he has given an unfortunate impression; I have not even seen any more little bits of paper in the book. I shall not fail to return after tomorrow to see my Cardinal to press him hard; but, Lord, when shall I get away from here?

I am wholly in spirit with you. When going to gain my last jubilee at Saint Mary Major, I conversed with you the whole time I was on my way and united myself to what you were doing at that very time at Aix and at Marseilles. It was at the beginning of nightfall. Adieu.

December 31 – I content myself today with wishing you a happy New Year. I was much taken up with you all and very consolingly during this night, before the Blessed Sacrament, which remains exposed two nights during the Forty Hours; again this morning at holy Mass and afterwards during my hour of adoration. I have an advantage that you do not have for I always know approximately what you are doing, knowing your ways and customs. This is a small delight, an enjoyment which consoles me a little in my forced and overly prolonged exile. Present to my good uncle my good wishes and my obedience. X... knows that he is always included in my embracing words. I recommend to him the principal guest of the episcopal palace. I adore him from here in the place which he occupies in the palace and do so very often, but I would wish to encounter there my faithful and beloved X... in whose keeping I have left him. Let him always make his oraison and adoration in the chapel and let him be found there at other times during the day. Adieu.

Index of Names

— A —

Abel, Jean-Pierre, 113.
 Acquapendente, 205.
 Adinolfi, Mgr., 216, 219, 221-224, 227, 228.
 Aix, Blessed Sacrament nuns, 9, 10.
 Aix, Carmelite convent, 6, 8-10, 26.
 Aix, City and Oblates, *passim*.
 Aix, Clergy, XXV, 14, 15, 17, 20-21, 23-25, 29-30, 39-40, 46-47, 60, 90-91.
 Aix, Enclos (country house), 3, 29, 33.
 Aix, Fathers of the Oratory, 10.
 Aix, Fathers of the Retreat, 45.
 Aix, Major seminary, 72.
 Aix, Minimes, 9.
 Aix, Mission church, XXV, 5, 8-11, 14, 17, 26, 92-93, 127, 143.
 Aix, Vicars General, 8, 10-12, 14-15, 20-22, 26-27, 30.
 Aix, Youth Sodality, XXVIII, XXIX, 2, 18, 41, 42, 47, 56-57, 59, 63, 65, 85-86, 92-93, 97.
 Alais, 167-168.
 Albini, C. D., O.M.I., 146-149, 152-156, 163, 166, 168, 218.
 Alexandria (Italy), 197.
 Allauch (mission), 153-155, 215.
 Alphonsus de Liguori, Blessed, XXV, 6, 20, 27, 62-63, 147-149, 168, 176, 178, 180-181, 194-195, 199, 218, 219.
 Angelo d'Acri, blessed, 215.
 Angennes, A., bishop of Alessandria, 198.
 Antibes, 190.
 Arbaud, F. A., bishop of Gap, 94, 129-130, 185-188, 226-238.
 Arles, 7, 30.
 Arnoux, J.-F., O.M.I., 168.
 Astros, doctor, 135.
 Aubagne, 162.
 Aubert, Hilaire, 5, 23-24.
 Auxerre, 102.

— B —

Barberini, Mgr., 211, 216-217.
 Barcelonnette (mission), 90, 91.
 Barjols (mission), 59.
 Bausset, J. B., 45.
 Bausset Roquefort, F., archbishop of Aix, XXVI, 17, 22, 28, 30-31, 37-41, 63, 74-75, 79, 82, 88, 90, 124-126, 138, 149, 181, 188-189, 226-228.
 Benoît Labre, saint, 207.
 Benoîte Rencurel, ven., 61.
 Bernard, B., O.M.I., 131-132, 136-137, 143-144, 147-148, 151-152, 159, 163, 165.
 Bertazzoli, cardinal, 228.
 Boisgelin, Caroline de, 168-169, 176, 178-179.
 Boisgelin, Eugénie, 179.
 Bolsena, 205.
 Bonneveine, 19.
 Borghetto, 204.
 Bossuet, 72.
 Boulard, J. B., vic. gen. of Aix, 178.
 Boulogne, E. A., bishop of Troyes, 106.
 Bourdaloue, 110.
 Bourrelrier, H., O.M.I., 45, 57, 61, 83, 84, 138-139, 148-149.
 Bouteuil, I., 57.
 Bouthour, novice O.M.I., 200.
 Bremond, A. J. B., O.M.I., 150.
 Brignoles (mission), 73-74, 78, 151.
 Briz, Joachim, O.P., 217.
 Buon Convento, 205.

— C —

Cailas, E., 182.
 Caire, priest, 103, 146, 174.
 Canada, XXIX.
 Cannes, 190.
 Caprano, Mgr., secretary of Propaganda, 209.
 Carignan, 193.

Carlo Felice, King, 199.
 Carron, G., 80.
 Cassis, 162.
 Castiglioni, cardinal, 226.
 César de Bus, blessed, 93.
 Chabottes (mission), 85.
 Chaffoy, bishop of Nîmes, 167-168, 171-174, 176.
 Châlons, 102, 116.
 Chambéry, 1, 8, 23.
 Champoléon (mission), 71.
 Chapuis, Adrien, 66.
 Charlemagne, 106.
 Charles X, 169-170.
 Charles, Father of the Retreat, 45.
 Charles, saint, 6, 86, 93.
 Château-Gombert (mission), 70-72, 78.
 Chiaverotti, C., archbishop of Turin, 194-195.
 Christ-Savior, 20.
 Christine, A. E., priest, 60.
 Collomb, J. L., 200.
 Colonna d'Istria, J. B., bishop of Nice, 146, 152.
 Comte d'Artois, 36.
 Coni, 192.
 Corsica, 27.
 Cosentino, G., O.M.I., 16, 123.
 Coudrin, P. M. J., 124.
 Coulin, priest, XXX, 71, 76, 81, 90, 94, 97-98, 118.
 Courtès, H., O.M.I., XXV-XXIX, 42-43, 45, 75, 78, 86-90, 99, 102-104, 106-110, 114-115, 117, 121-126, 134-135, 138-140, 142, 147-153, 155, 159-166, 168-169, 177, 182, 201, 207-208, 211, 220.
 Cristina, Queen, 199.
 Croÿ, Prince, 116.

— D —

Dalmas, F. M. F., O.M.I., 71.
 Daurenson, priest, 146, 149.
 Deblieu, missionary of Provence, XXVI, 7, 10, 15-16, 18, 25, 58, 66, 73, 76, 79, 109, 114, 122-126.
 Dedons, Émile, 19.
 De Gregorio, cardinal, 209, 211, 214.
 Della Somaglia, cardinal, 188, 210, 214, 216.
 Deluy, priest, 9, 10.

Dessales-Decazes, ministry, 56.
 Devie, bishop of Belley, 120.
 Digne, 30, 94, 118, 129, 186.
 Dioclétien, 206.
 Doneudi, priest, 146, 152.
 Duclaux, A., priest, 41, 124.
 Ducros, priest, 187.
 Dupuy, J. A., O.M.I., 45, 110, 118, 126, 129, 161.

— E —

Embrun, 30.
 Entrevaux (mission), 128.
 Europe, 169.
 Eyguières, 56-58.

— F —

Fénelon, 72.
 Fesch, cardinal, 225, 228.
 Florens, J. F., priest, 16.
 Forbin-Janson, Charles de, XXIII, XXVI, 1-4, 8-11, 14-16, 17, 20-25, 28, 90, 179.
 Foresta, Mr., 56.
 France, 6.
 Francis of Sales, saint, 93.
 Frayssinous, bishop of Hermopolis, 120.
 Fréjus, 30, 146, 187-189.
 Fuveau, 21-22.

— G —

Gaetan de Thiène, saint, 9.
 Gap, 30, 129-130, 162, 185, 186.
 Gémenos, 162.
 Genoa, XXIV, 194-199, 204.
 Gerdil, cardinal, 132.
 Ginasservis (mission), 187.
 Giustiniani, priest, 202.
 Gondola, 192.
 Gontier, Mrs, 6.
 Grans (mission), 18.
 Grasse, 190.
 Grassi, S.J., 194.
 Guala, L. M., priest, 192-194.
 Guibert, Fortuné, 131.
 Guibert, H., O.M.I., XXVI-XXIX, 101-102, 104-106, 122, 126-127, 131-132, 136, 156, 167, 171-172, 175-177, 181-184, 208, 218.

Guigou, J. J., vicar general of Aix, 8, 10, 12, 14-18, 26, 59-60.
Guigues, Bruno, O.M.I., 149.

— H —

Haefelin, cardinal, 228.
Hermitte, Jean, O.M.I., 154.
Holy See, 125.
Holy Spirit, 45, 144, 156, 222.
Honorat, F., priest, 60.
Honorat, J. B., O.M.I., XXV, XXVIII, XXIX, 86, 131-133, 141-143, 147, 151, 156, 160-161, 163, 166, 168, 171-172, 174-177, 182-184.
Hurault L'Hôpital, archbishop of Aix, 93.
Huveaune, 19.

— I —

Icard, missionary of Provence, 7, 10, 15, 16, 18, 23-24.
Ignace, brother, 61.
Ignatius, saint, 6, 124.
Isoard, Mgr., 202, 212, 215-216, 220.
Issy, 38, 120-121.
Italy, 196.

— J —

Jeancard, J., O.M.I., XXVIII, XXIX, 81, 126-128, 153-154, 183, 195.
Jerusalem, 9.
Jesus Christ, XXVI, XXVII, XXIX, 55, 83, 84, 89, 107, 108, 118, 127, 140.
Joannis, Family, 3.
Job, 152.
John Nepomucene, saint, 204.
John of the Cross, 204.
Joseph of Calasanz, saint, 203, 207.
Jourdan, J. A., O.M.I., XXX, 108-109, 112, 114, 161.

— L —

La Chapelle (mission), 85.
La Ciotat (mission), 86-88.
La Fare, cardinal, 170.
Lagier, J. P., 182.
Lainé, Minister of the Interior, 27-30.
La Luzerne, cardinal, 30.

Lambruschini, L., archbishop of Genoa, 199.
La Mennais, J. M. R., 121.
Lanteri, Bruno, 196-197.
Laresche, canon, 167.
La Spezia, 204.
La Storta, 205.
Latil, Bishop, 36, 40, 41, 120.
Lauzet (mission), 103, 111.
Laval, Mr., 148.
Leflon, J., XXV, 17, 27, 35, 39.
Leo X, 30.
Leo XII, XXVI, 181, 187, 208-210, 214-224.
Lérins, isle, 118.
Liautard, Mr., 29.
Limoges, seminary, 5.
Limon, 192.
Lorette, 202.
Lorgues (mission), 89-90.
Louis XVIII, 27, 30, 36, 102.
Luca, 204.
Lucifer, 121.
Lyon, 27, 102.

— M —

Marchetti, Mgr., 226-227.
Marcou, J. J., O.M.I., 88, 91-92, 131, 134, 135, 138, 149-150, 153, 157, 160, 162, 180-181, 185-187.
Marignane (mission), 25.
Marin, F. C., 200.
Marseilles, XXV, XXXI, 113, 115 *et passim*.
Marseilles (mission) 14, 16, 21, 22, 62, 65-66, 111.
Marseilles, bishop's house, 179.
Marseilles, Calvaire, XXIII, XXVI, XXIX, 74, 75, 79, 110, 111, 159, 180.
Marseilles, diocese, 30, 37-38, 111, 115-116.
Marseilles, œuvre de la Providence, 79.
Marseilles, seminaries, 103, 131.
Martigues (mission), 21, 22.
Martin, J. A. M., O.M.I., 153, 159-160, 200.
Mary, 92-94, 109, 151.
Mary Immaculate, 216, 220, 224.
Massillon, 110.
Maunier, missionary of Provence, XXVI, 20, 25, 37, 41, 43-44, 56, 59, 66, 73, 110, 123-127.
Maur, brother, 3.
Maurel, C., priest, 103.

Mazenod, F., bishop of Marseilles, XXVI, 1, 10, 17, 25, 35, 37, 56, 57, 59, 61-62, 66, 72, 87, 89-90, 99, 101, 106-107, 113, 115, 120-121, 156, 162, 168-180, 191, 196, 212, 224.
 Mazenod, C. A., father of the F., 1, 10, 17, 37, 57, 59, 61-62, 66, 69-70, 72.
 Mazenod, L. E., uncle of the F., 1, 10, 17, 37.
 Mazenod, Mrs, mother of the F., 3, 76, 162, 190.
 Mazio, Mgr., 203, 214.
 Mazoudier, G. J., 200.
 Miollis, bishop of Digne, 186, 226.
 Moncalieri, 193.
 Montauban, 90.
 Monterosi, 199, 205.
 Moreau, F. N., O.M.I., 57, 59, 66, 94, 103, 126, 143.
 Mye, P. N., O.M.I., XXVI, XXVIII, 7, 10, 15, 18, 25, 56, 58, 61-62, 65, 73, 126-127, 142, 144-145, 147, 156, 163, 164, 166-168, 171-175, 184-185.

— N —

Nantes (mission), 23.
 Napoléon, XXV, 16.
 Nice, 145-147, 149, 189-191.
 Nîmes, XXIII, XXVIII, XXIX, 118, 131, 167-168, 171-172, 174-175, 181, 184, 186, 187.
 Nîmes, major seminary, 171-172, 176-177.
 Nîmes, Sisters of the Providence, 176-177.
 Noailles, P. B., XXV.
 Notre Dame de Lumières, XXIX.
 Notre Dame de Rochefort, 118.
 Notre Dame du Laus, XXIII, XXVI-XXIX, 25, 55-56, 60, 66, 69-71, 73, 77, 78-84, 90-92, 96, 126, 140, 142, 144, 156, 180, 184-186.

— P —

Pacca, cardinal, 203, 217, 226-228.
 Paccanari, 206.
 Paguella de Follenay, XXIX *et passim*.
 Palerme, 1.
 Pallotta, cardinal, 228.
 Paris, XXVII, 3, 5, 7, 8, 10, 14, 23-24, 27-46, 90, 99, 102-120, 124, 168-180, 203.

Paris, calvary of Mont-Valérien, 23, 28, 179.
 Paris, church of Assomption, 34.
 Paris, Ladies of Sacred Heart, 169-180.
 Paris, seminary for foreign mission, 102-103.
 Paris, tuileries, 106-107.
 Paul, saint, 41, 43-44, 113, 221.
 Paul of the Cross, saint, 32.
 Pedicini, cardinal, 227-228.
 Peix, priest, 59, 94.
 Périgord, cardinal, 30.
 Peter, saint, 119, 207, 221.
 Philip Neri, saint, 6, 7, 26, 93.
 Piedmont, 146, 192-193.
 Pielorz, J., O.M.I., XXIV, XXV, 15-16, 26, 60, 85, 116.
 Pietra Santa, 204.
 Pignans (mission), 14-16.
 Pimarche, Mrs., 148.
 Pius VI, 196.
 Pius VII, 6, 31, 210.
 Pizzi, J. J., 195, 199, 203.
 Pô, 193.
 Poggibonsi, 205.
 Provence, 3, 22.
 Puyloubier (mission), 163, 166.

— R —

Radicofani, 204.
 Rambert, T., O.M.I., XXIX, XXX *et passim*.
 Rauzan, missionary of France, 9, 74, 121.
 Recanati, general, 191.
 Receveur, A. S., 45.
 Régusse, Mrs., 190.
 Rey, A., O.M.I., XXIX, XXX *et passim*.
 Rey, C., canon of Aix, 16.
 Reynier, Gustave, 182.
 Rheims, 170-171.
 Rians (mission), 97-99.
 Ricaud, priest, 113.
 Richard, priest, XXV.
 Richardot, S.J., 117.
 Richaud, J., O.M.I., 147.
 Richery, C. A., bishop of Fréjus, XXVI, 123-126, 187-191.
 Rodet, missionary of France, 121.
 Rognac (mission), 62-64.
 Rome, XXIV, XXX, XXXI, 1-2, 75, 187, 191, 195, 199-228.

Rome, churches, 205-206.

Rome, church of St Lawrence in Damaso, 208.

Rome, church of St Sylvester, 200, 206, 208.

Rome, church of the Gesù, 200.

Rome, Lazarist, 200, 202, 206-207, 208.

Rome, Quirinal, 202, 210.

Rome, St Mary major's basilica, 228.

Rome, St. Peters' basilica, 202, 215, 216, 221, 225.

Rome, Trinity of the Pilgrims, 205.

Romillon, priest, 93.

Rotta, 204.

Rougiers (mission), 64.

Rouvet, priest, 190.

Roze-Joannis, 76.

— S —

Saboulin, family, 85.

Sacred Heart, 60, 146, 177.

Saint-André de Majencoules, 185.

Saint-Baudile, 174.

Saint-Bonnet (mission), 164.

Saint-Cerf, 67.

Saint-Chamas (mission), 76.

Saint-Étienne d'Avançon, 61.

Saint-Just, seminary, 142.

Saint-Pons, abbey, 145-146, 152, 167.

Sainte-Baume, 148.

Sappa Milanese, bishop of Acqui, 198.

Sarzana, 204.

Satan, XXVI.

Saurin, J. L., O.M.I., 80.

Saurin, priest, 188.

Scala prima, 204.

Scala secunda, 205.

Sestri, 204.

Sienna, 205.

Signes (mission), 90.

Simonin, G. M., O.M.I., 56, 76, 126.

Sumien, A. M., O.M.I., 80, 104-105, 112-113, 135.

Suzanne, M., O.M.I., XXVI, XXVIII, XXIX, 45, 65-67, 74, 81, 94, 96-97, 103, 108, 111-112, 128-130, 133, 140, 147, 153, 157, 164, 167, 174-179, 196, 205, 208, 215.

— T —

Tallard (mission), 101, 111, 128.

Tarugi, bishop of Avignon, 93.

Taverne, 61.

Telmon, A., O.M.I., 155.

Tempier, F. de Paule Henri, O.M.I., XXIV-XXIX, 6-8, 11-14 *et passim*.

Tempier, Mr., 63.

Tende, 192.

Thomas, S.J., 129-130.

Thomas, saint, 33, 217.

Tommasi, cardinal, 206.

Touche, O.M.I., XXVIII, 56, 58, 61, 73, 75, 84, 130, 164, 185.

Toulon (mission), 21-22.

Tours, XXVII.

Trussy, doctor, 154.

Turin, XXIV, 192-196, 201.

Turin, college of Nobles, 192-193.

Turiozzi, cardinal, 228.

— V —

Vachon, B. V., O.M.I., XXX, 137, 142-143, 154-155, 164-165, 168, 176, 186, 201, 211.

Venance, saint, 204.

Venise, 206.

Ventabren (mission), 131-133, 154.

Veynes, 184.

Viguier, J. A., O.M.I., 55-66, 80, 84.

Villeneuve Bargemont, Mr., 39.

Vincens, T., O.M.I., 154.

Vincent de Paul, saint, 6, 27, 219.

Vincent Marie Strambi, blessed, 32.

Viterbo, XXIV, 201, 205.

Vitrolles (mission), 141.

Viviers, XXVII.

Voitôt, C. I., O.M.I., 114.

— Y —

Yenveux, A., O.M.I., XXIX, XXX *et passim*.

— Z —

Zinelli, B., priest, 205-206.

Zurla, cardinal Vicar, 209.

Index of Subject Matter

— A —

Affection of the F. for the Oblates, XXVIII, XXIX, 65-66, 70-72, 81, 96-97, 103, 111-112, 122-123, 129-130, 189-190, 208-209.
 Anonymous memorandum, 29-30.
 Apostates, XXVI, 71, 82-83, 114-115, 122-123, 138-139, 176.
 Apostles, 7, 55, 62, 106-107, 149.
 Approbation of the Congregation, 22, 28-29, 187-228.
 Archivist, XXIX.
 Auctorem fidei, bull, 196.
 Austrian prisoners, 3.

— B —

Bishops, XXIV-XXV, 194-195.
 Blasphemy, 19.
 Brothers of Christian Schools, 121.
 Bursar general, XXIX.

— C —

Calumnies, 124-125.
 Canonical visit, 95, 110-111, 140, 142.
 Catechism, 130, 133.
 Chapter general 1821, 77.
 Chapter general 1824, 153.
 Chartreuse, 128, 139.
 Church, XXVII, 6, 7, 14, 32, 83, 103, 105-106, 116, 119, 182.
 Coadjutor of the bishops of Marseilles, 173.
 Codex historicus, 110-111.
 Communion, 57.
 Community life, XXVII, 6, 13-14, 19-20, 31-32, 58, 86, 144-145, 153-154, 182-183.
 Concordat of 1817, 29, 31.
 Confession, 18, 24, 57, 164-165.
 Congregation, future of the, 92-93.
 Congregation, spirit of the, 34, 36.

Congregation of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, 124.
 Conversion of souls, cf. Glory of God.
 Correspondence, 10, 96, 103, 177, 191, 194-195, 202, 212, 225-226.
 Country, 5, 6, 13, 15-16, 21, 133.
 Courage, 123-125.
 Cross, 23-24.
 Crucifix, 164.

— D —

Death, 70, 85, 112, 178-179.
 Devil, XXIV-XXVI, 6, 43, 44, 64, 82, 112, 114, 117-118, 124, 126-127, 136, 144, 148-149, 152, 206-207.
 Diaconate, 136, 156.
 Difficulties, 74, 139-140, 151.
 Disgust with the world, 87.

— E —

Episcopate, 40, 87, 104.
 Eucharist, 29, 61, 66.
 Evangelical counsels, 55.

— F —

Fasting, 78, 108, 135, 210, 212.
 Fatigue, 57-58, 130.
 Feast of Holy Souls, 153.
 Forty Hours, 202, 227, 228.
 France Chrétienne (journal), 90.
 Fraternal charity, 5, 7, 18, 86, 89, 92, 102-103, 132, 182-183.
 Fraternal correction, 67-68, 164-165, 183-185, 213.
 French government, 20-21, 28-29.
 Friends, 2.

— G —

Gallicanism, XXVI.
 Glory of God, salvation of souls, etc, 4, 7, 31,
 35, 177.
 Good Thief, 204.
 Gospel, 55.
 Gratefulness, 11-12, 34-35, 72.
 Great Chartreuse, 128.

— H —

Health of Oblates, 28-29, 33-34, 111-112,
 114, 128-129, 132-133, 138, 141, 196.
 Heart, 65-66, 69-70, 81, 86, 104-105, 117-118,
 120, 159.
 Hell, 5, 12.
 History of the Congregation, XXIX-XXX,
 211.
 Holy Scriptures, 80.
 Holy Week, 106-107, 166.
 Honour, 47.
 Humiliation, 39, 42, 43, 134-140, 200.
 Humility, 77, 93, 99, 109-110, 134.

— I —

“Impulse from without”, XXIII, 8.
 Indulgences of the Congrégation, 209-210,
 214.
 Infallibility of the Pope, 30.
 Instructions, 133, 157, 176.
 Ischariotism, 176.
 Israelites, 9.

— J —

Jansenism, XXV.
 Jealously, 21.
 Jesuits, 5, 42, 192, 194, 196-200, 203, 206.
 Joyfulness, 110.
 Jubilee of 1825-1826, 177, 186, 205, 208,
 228.
 Jurisdiction, 157.

— L —

Lazarists, 199, 201, 206, 210, 219.
 Ledgers, 162.

Libraries, 109-110, 166-167.
 Linen (number in sequence), 160.

— M —

Martyrs, 206.
 Mass, 18, 56, 102, 192, 197, 198, 204,
 211, 221.
 Memorial catholique (journal), 166.
 Minerve (journal), 58.
 Missionaries of France, 1-5, 9, 20-23, 26, 28,
 43, 65, 74-75, 90, 121.
 Missionaries of Provence, XXIII, XXV, 2-4,
 5-11, 20-22, 25-32, 36-37, 74, 90-91,
 115-116, 121-125, 198.
Missions O.M.I., XXVIII, XXIX, XXXI.
 Missions, parochial, XXV, 3-6, 8, 12, 14
et passim.
 Moniteur (journal), 23.
 Moon, 3.
 Mortification, 25.

— N —

Novice master, XXIX, 80, 151, 201, 207.
 Novitiate, novices, XXIV, XXVII, XXVIII,
 XXX, XXXI, 28-29, 31-34, 36, 40, 44-45,
 66, 70-71, 80, 92, 101-105, 110, 118, 142,
 159, 162, 184, 186, 199-201, 207-208.

— O —

Obedience, 76, 80, 84, 90, 108-109, 186, 211.
 Oblate cross, 56.
 Oblate habit, 73.
 Oblate litanies, 20.
 Oblate tradition, 105.
 Oblate virtues, 23-24, 29, 31-32, 34-35,
 44-45, 103-105, 201, 207.
 Oblate vocation, 55, 72, 80, 149.
 Oblates of Mary Immaculate, XXIII, XXXI,
 216, 220, 223.
 Oblates of St. Charles, XXXI, 186, 223-224.
 Oblates of St. Charles of Milan, 6.
 Oblates of Virgin Mary, 193, 196-197.
 Occupations, 3, 9, 18-19, 23.
 Office, 56-57, 163.
 Opposition, 17, 31-33, 148.

— P —

Parents, 101-102, 147, 150-151, 154, 159-160.
Particular friendship, 159.
Patience, 11, 46-47, 141.
Persecution, 89-91, 112-113.
Petition to the Vicars general, 26.
Postulants O.M.I., 149, 182.
Poverty, 3, 10-12, 25, 62, 71, 180, 184, 212.
Prayers, 18, 31, 34-35, 56, 176, 192, 221, 222.
Predication, 129-130, 132, 149, 173-176, 185.
Presbyterianism, 90.
Priesthood, XXV, 82, 91, 181-182.
Priests (bad), 7-8, 17, 20-21, 32, 134-140, 192.
Proprieties, XXVI, 36.
Provençal, language, 4, 9, 16, 130.
Providence, 6, 9, 21, 37, 89-90, 101, 149, 151, 225.
Prudence, 141, 149-150, 180, 186.

— R —

Recruiting, XXIV, 8, 18, 33, 146, 153-154, 168, 171-172.
Regularity, 7, 11, 11-14, 31-32, 45-46, 57, 110, 142, 233.
Religious life, 5-7, 82-84, 88, 97-98.
Religious orders, 2-4, 11, 32, 45.
Rest between missions, 111-112, 138.
Retreat, 153, 176.
Rules, XXIV, 3, 5-9, 13-14, 25, 45, 75, 77, 83-84, 92, 94-96, 104-105, 113, 143-144, 146-147, 150, 161-166, 186, 200, 208-228.

— S —

Saints, 5-8, 12-13, 72, 84, 109, 119-120, 222.
Saints, names above doors, 73.
Sanctity, 5-8, 12-13, 55-56, 89, 136-137, 182-183.

Scholastics, scholasticate, XXIV-XXVI, 31, 71-72, 104-105, 184.
Scorn for the world, 169.
Scruples, 108-109.
Seminarists, 44-46, 171-172, 176-177.
Sermons, 134-135.
Sickness, 3, 19-20, 57-58, 76, 78, 90, 101.
Solitude, 1-4, 21, 81.
Statue of Immaculate Conception, 92-93.
Study, 92, 151, 187.
Sufferings, XXVI, XXXI, 39-41, 43-44, 123-127.
Superior General, 95, 113.
Superiors, 44-45, 77-78, 94-96.

— T —

Temptations, 143.
Trappist monastery, 3, 148.
Travel, 147-148, 150.

— V —

Vanity, 169-170.
Vexations, 141.
Vicar general of Aix and Marseilles, XXVI, 17, 36, 39-40, 113, 122-123, 130-131, 140-141, 144-145, 212-213.
Vocation, 36, 82-84, 94, 101-102, 104, 117-118, 122, 156.
Vows, 123-124.

— W —

Will of God, 1-3, 168.

— Z —

Zeal, 2, 86, 104-105, 136.

