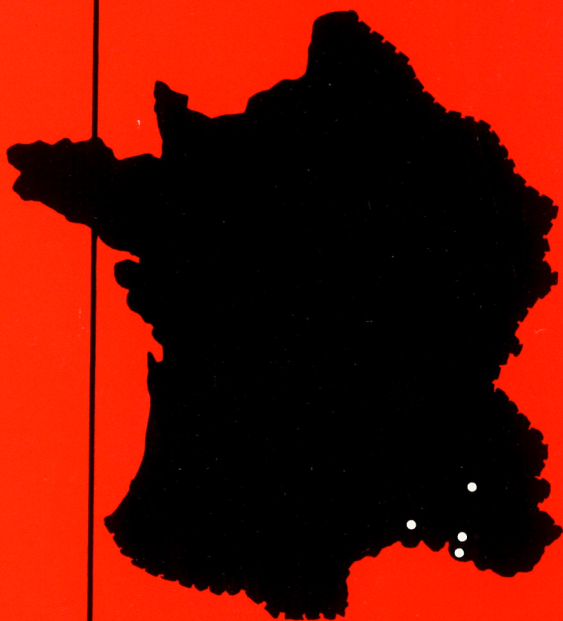


Blessed DE MAZENOD

**LETTERS
TO THE OBLATES
OF FRANCE
1837-1842**



**Letters to the Oblates
of France**

Blessed EUGENE DE MAZENOD
1782-1861

Collection: *Oblate Writings IX*

Letters to the Oblates of France

1837-1842

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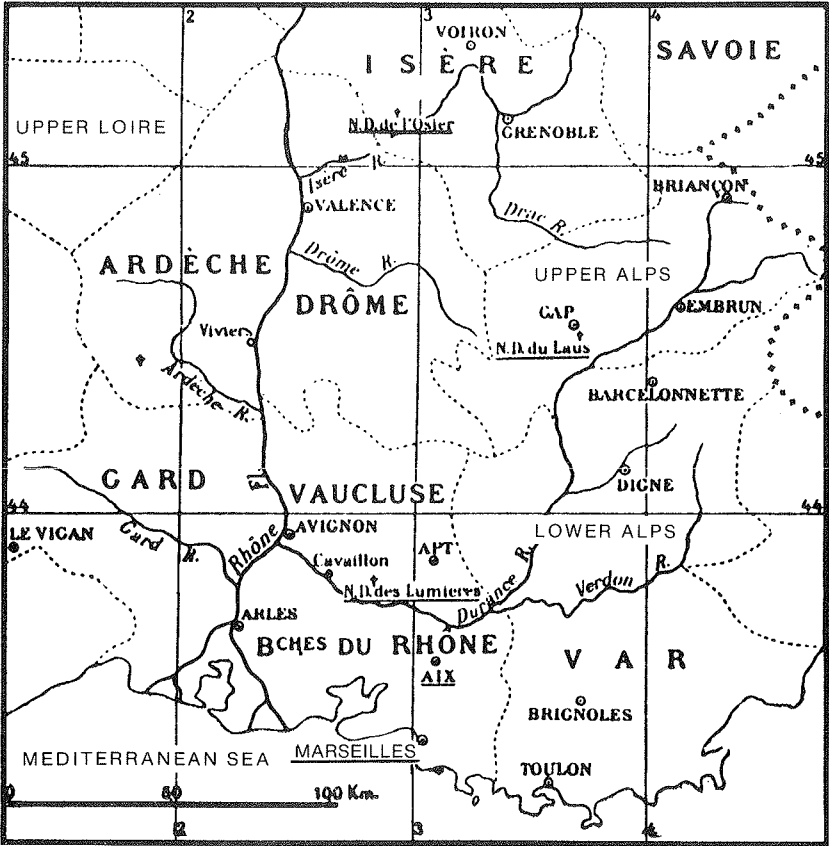
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Bishop Charles Joseph Eugene de Mazenod (1782-1861)
Bishop of Marseilles (1837-1861)



Provence and Dauphiné.
 (Underlined localities indicate places where
 the Congregation had a house)



Father Charles Dominique Albini
(Menton, November 26, 1790 - Vico, May 20, 1838)



Father Charles Barthélemy Bellon
(Marseilles, September 13, 1814 - Bordeaux, June 28, 1861)

Introduction

Here is another group of 185 letters written by Bishop de Mazenod to the Oblates of France¹ between the years 1837 and 1842. For the first time in this second part of the Collection Oblate Writings, the number of complete letters whose original manuscripts have been preserved surpasses that of which only some excerpts survive in Yenveux and in the first biographers of the Founder.

If Yenveux retained only passages of a higher note or texts essential for commentaries on the Rules, the original manuscripts hide nothing of the natural disposition so characteristic of their author. In these lines written in a hurry and under the impulse of news just received, at times good but more often bad, the author of these letters could not avoid betraying his emotions and state of mind. Thus we notice here and there some mistral-like outbursts² and in certain refined and kind letters that are full of affection, teasing and humour, we have days that are altogether lovely.³ Moreover, he could not help coming down to the minute details of everyday life, for example, when in his letters to Father Guigues, he had to reply to as many as 9 or 13 questions.⁴ In such cases, he necessarily had to allude to persons, places and events whom or which his correspondent could easily identify whereas we know less about them today. Many historical notes have been added to make the text more intelligible. This was relatively more easy to do for the years 1837-1839 for which we possess almost integrally the original manuscript of the Founder's Diary, then accurately kept. The task was more difficult for the years 1840-1842, and the result less favourable since for these years, only bits of the Diary

¹ Letters 600 and 617 were sent to Father Martin, in Switzerland, prior to the closing of the house of Billens during the Summer of 1837.

² Cf. for example, June 4, 1837, letters 623, 624, and the Diary of the same date: "Letter to Father (Mille). I had reprimanded him about the disorderly system he follows of always interpreting the superior's intention to suit his own views or needs," etc.

³ Cf. Letters 686, 687, 715, 754, etc.

⁴ Letters 672 and 690.

are available in *Yenveux* and the biographers. Another reason is that the extant letters written by his correspondents are very few. We have made very good use of them, but they do not provide the answers for all the questions the reader will pose. His curiosity will often remain unsatisfied.

No mention has generally been made about the spelling mistakes which abound in *Yenveux's* excerpts. Here, however, since we are working from the original manuscript, it was considered opportune to point out the most important ones, taking into consideration what has been said about the method of publication on page XV of the first volume of *Oblate Writings*. The Founder often writes the names of places and persons incorrectly. We have corrected them in accordance with a surer spelling as found in the Register of the taking of the religious habit when it concerns Oblates,⁵ in the book of A. Ricard⁶ for the Clergy of Marseilles, commonly used biographical and topographical dictionaries⁷ for the other names of persons and places.

The observation has already been made in the preceding volume that the Founder writes especially to superiors. In this fourth volume of letters to the Oblates of France, 49 letters are addressed to Father Courtès at Aix, 33 to Father Mille at N.-D. du Laus, 25 to Father Guigues at N.-D. de l'Osier, 20 to Father Tempier at the Seminary of Marseilles, 9 to Father Casimir Aubert, 10 to Father Vincens, master of novices, 9 to Father Semeria at Vico, and 7 to Father Moreau, superior of the Major Seminary of Ajaccio.⁸ We come across about ten other correspondents to whom the Founder writes for various particular reasons, for example, to Dassy who is interested too much in archeology (7 letters), to Bellon whose too infrequent correspondence was too little for the Founder's affection (4 letters), to Ancel, Gignoux,

⁵ *Registre des prises d'habit 1815-1850*. Original, General Archives.

⁶ A. Ricard, *Souvenir du clergé marseillais*, Marseilles, 1881, 471 pp.

⁷ *Almanach du clergé de France*, published yearly. Bishop Baunard, *L'épiscopat français depuis le concordat jusqu'à la séparation (1802-1805)*, Paris, 1907, 720 pp.; Les-Bouches-du-Rhône, encyclopédie départementale . . . t.XI: *biographies*, Marseilles, 1913, 561 pp.; DUCLOS, *Dictionnaire général des villes, bourgs, villages, hameaux et fermes de la France*, Paris-Limoges, 5th edition, 1851, 640 pp.

⁸ Even here, only two excerpts of the letters to Father Guibert at Ajaccio and just one to Father Honorat, superior of N.-D. de Lumières, have been recovered. Yet, these two Fathers had been faithful letter-writers, especially Father Honorat whom the Founder often quotes as an example on this point, cf. letters 603 and 604.

Kotterer, Martin and Pélissier for matters of infidelity and apostasy (2 letters each), to Hermitte, J.J. Lagier and Rouvière (1 letter to each on the missions, obedience, etc.).

Main events of the years 1837-1842

The period between 1837 and 1843 marks a turning point in the Founder's life and in the history of the Congregation. Bishop de Mazenod was appointed to the See of Marseilles at the Consistory of October 2, 1837, and he took possession of his diocese on December 24 of the same year. The Congregation became in fact a missionary Congregation in 1841 with the departure of Father Daly for England on May 2, and that of Father Honorat along with five fellow-Oblates for Canada on September 29.

And yet, very little trace of these two events is found in the letters to the Oblates of France. In them we find only a few references to these developments, but the importance of the latter may be perceived from the change of tone evident in all these pages. In 1841, it is joy and a greater self-confidence springing from the reality of a family that is increasing in number and consolidating itself.⁹ In 1837, it is an uncomfortable resignation regarding an office accepted against his will,¹⁰ a resignation which manifests itself in a state of great weakness that he has to leave Marseilles from May 29 to August 2, 1837, in order to take a rest and recover from the "terrible shock experienced for 6 or 7 months."¹¹

Various other events also left their deep mark on the Founder and the Congregation, but, like the above two, go almost unnoticed in their correspondence: the death of Bishop Fortuné de Mazenod, Father Guibert's appointment as Bishop of Viviers, the dismissal of the Oblates from N.-D. du Laus and several major journeys.

⁹ Cf. letters 734, 736, 738, 768, 780. The letters to the missionaries of Canada and England-Ireland have been published in the first three volumes of *Oblate Writings*.

¹⁰ Bishop de Mazenod did not want to be appointed Bishop of Marseilles, cf. especially: Mazenod to Courtès, April 16, 1837 and Diary, October 11, 1837. On his appointment, cf. letters 599, 602, 612, 615, 628. The letters he had written officially as Bishop of Marseilles have been preserved in the *Registres des lettres administratives*, 7 vols. mss., Archives of the Archbishop's house of Marseilles.

¹¹ Diary, May 2, 1837. Bishop de Mazenod was appointed Bishop of Marseilles by royal decree of the First of April, but this matter had been negotiated between Marseilles and Paris since several months, cf. J. LEFLON, *Eugene de Mazenod*, vol. II, pp. 511-516.

Fortuné, Bishop of Marseilles from 1823 to 1837, died on February 22, 1840, at the Archbishop's residence, after a few days of illness. He was 91 years old. "The death of this saintly old man had deeply affected the heart"¹² of his nephew. His letters to the Oblates reveal nothing of his sorrow. We can surmise it from the fact that he stopped writing his Diary for 5 months. He made only one entry at the beginning of April to copy the sympathies sent by King Louis-Philippe and to add a few reflections filled with sorrow: ". . . I am in such a disposition of mind and heart that I value nothing and attach minimal importance to whatever happens here below My thoughts ususally dwell in the tomb where I have just laid to rest the precious remains of my venerated uncle"

Father Guibert was appointed Bishop of Viviers by royal edict of July 30. Bishop de Mazenod consecrated him Bishop on March 11, 1842, in the church of Saint-Cannat, at Marseilles. Sometimes he mentions this appointment in the subsequent letters to rejoice with the Oblates over this honour, but also to lament the loss for the Congregation of such a valuable member, at a time when the needs were increasing. "Whatever harm this dear son may inflict on Corsica," he wrote in his Diary on August 15, "whatever void he may leave in the Congregation, I would be acting against my conscience were I to oppose his accepting the burden the Lord is laying on him. This sacrifice I shall make for the Church will draw fresh blessings on the Congregation."¹³

The dismissal of the Oblates from N.-D. du Laus in 1841-1842 caused great suffering to the Founder and his sons. Thereby we lost an important Marian shrine and the second house of the Congregation where several Oblates had lived as novices or missionary priests. Moreover, the ministry done at this place and in the neighbouring dioceses had always been crowned with success.

The Clergy of Gap, now more numerous than in 1819-1820, wished to regain possession of a flourishing shrine and once again take over the work of the missions. A few priests sent out a petition to the Clergy in this sense. Bishop de la Croix d'Azolette, bishop of Gap from 1837-1840, decided in favour of the Oblates saying that they worked

¹² Diary, beginning of April, 1841.

¹³ The Founder speaks of Father Guibert's appointment and episcopal ordination in letters 736, 737, 738, 739, 747, 748, 755, 757, 758.

“efficiently and in a disinterested manner.”¹⁴ He assured them that they had nothing to fear under his administration, but he also tried to satisfy the local Clergy by founding a Society of diocesan missionaries in 1838.

It was Bishop Rossat who, shortly after his arrival at Gap, first requested and then obliged the Oblates to leave in 1841. His objective was to entrust the shrine and the missions to the Society of the diocesan missionaries, and to change the monastery into a home for elderly priests. The Fathers left in the Fall of 1841, and Father Mille, on April 15, 1842.¹⁵ Their departure “was surrounded by unutterable emotion,” wrote Bishop Jeancard. “When the sad moment had arrived, these poor religious were seen prostrating themselves, for the last time, at the foot of Mary’s altar, where everything reminded them of so many favours received; then, when their long prayer was ended, they were seen to kiss the floor of the holy place, wetting it with their tears, and with the staff of the Alpine missionaries in their hands, they sadly withdrew, casting from time to time, a look of regret and love, at those sacred walls, which had been for so many years a witness to their zeal for souls and to their filial devotion to the Mother of God They left, accompanied by the good wishes and blessings of the faithful and a good number of priests who had been moved by their humble and generous resignation.”¹⁶

Bishop de Mazenod made several journeys during the years 1837-1842. The first of these was undertaken from May 29 to August 2, 1837, to take a rest by visiting several Oblate houses and his sister at St. Martin-de-Pallières. He made the second one to Paris from November 14 to December 23, 1837, to take the oath to the King. The third trip took him to Turin, Biandrate, Novara, Milan, Siresa, Billens, N.-D. de l’Osier and N.D. du Laus, from June 9 to the beginning of August, 1839. The main purpose of this journey was to obtain from Archbishop d’Angennes of Vercelli a relic of Saint Serenus, who had

¹⁴ The Founder to Father Mille. September 22, 1838.

¹⁵ Bishop de Mazenod is rather reserved on this matter in his correspondence with the Oblates cf. letters 675, 704, 721, 728, 732 and 749. However there is copious documentation on the departure of the Oblates from N.D. du Laus, cf. J. M. SALGADO, *Les Oblats à N.-D. du Laus, 1818-1842. Étude et documents*, Rome, 1965, typewritten text, 339 pp.

¹⁶ J. JEANCARD, *Mélanges historiques sur la Cong. des Oblats de M.I.*, Tours, 1872, pp. 88 and ff.

been the Bishop of Marseilles in the 6th century and whose body is venerated at Biandrate. His fourth trip also took him to the North of Italy, Switzerland, N.-D. de l'Osier and Viviers, from the end of April to June 28, 1842. The fifth journey was to Algeria from October 22 to November 13, 1842, on the occasion of the translation of a relic of Saint Augustine, which had been kept at Pavia and was taken to Algiers by Bishop Dupuch.

Father Tempier, his normal correspondent under such circumstances, accompanied the Founder in four of these five journeys. This is why we find just a few references in the letters to the Oblates.¹⁷ In the spring of 1842, however, Father Tempier remained in Marseilles. This occasioned 9 of the longest letters in this volume. It is good to bring out their importance here.

The journey in the North of Italy was undertaken on the invitation of the Chevalier de Collegno, to venerate the Holy Shroud of Turin, which was solemnly exposed on the occasion of the marriage of the Duke of Savoy, who would later become King Victor Emmanuel.

The Bishop of Marseilles received many such invitations, but due to lack of time, he could accept them only quite rarely. This time he accepted out of affection for his sister and his niece Césarie. One may be surprised to see him dedicate two months of his precious time to his natural family. But the things at stake were worth the trouble. It helped to revive physically and morally the spirits of his sister and his niece who had been strongly affected by the recent death — at the Jesuit house in Avignon, on Holy Thursday, March 24 — of Louis de Boisgelin. Of her five children, Eugénie had thus lost the third in the full bloom of life.¹⁸ All the same, Bishop de Mazenod was not entirely at ease for having ceded, in this way, to the appeals of his heart. Time and again, he explains his attitude to Father Tempier: "I undertook this journey only out of considerations of charity and due affection for my sister and my niece," he wrote on May 2. "Rather than expecting the least satisfaction from it, I had to force myself to undertake it, in fact the boredom I reap from it was foreseen beforehand, and does not

¹⁷ The Founder normally gives some account of his journeys in his Diary, cf. especially that of Algeria in the fall of 1842, published in *Missions* . . . 1874, pp. 417-458.

¹⁸ Caroline had died in Paris, in 1825, at the age of 13, Natalie at St. Martin-de-Pallières, in 1830, at the age of 19 and Louis (Nov. 21, 1815 - March 24, 1842), at the age of 26.

in the least prove to be a nuisance to me. At best, I can hardly gain some merit from it” Again he writes on May 21: “I assure you I was very tempted to cut my journey short from Turin to Stresa to avoid all the boredom of prolonging this trip, but I realized that the change of direction would embarrass the people whom I wished to entertain.”

One may, nevertheless, ask if Bishop de Mazenod did not make this journey with some unavowed joy, to Turin, Milan, Venice, namely to those places which brought back to him so many memories of his early youth. His description of the churches which he finds more beautiful than those of France, the hospitality and kindness of those whom he meets and of whom some, known to him earlier at the College of nobles at Turin, have become “great men of the Court, generals, great dignitaries of the Crown,”¹⁹ the interest he takes in civic and religious life, in the ceremonies he describes in minute details²⁰ — all these point out to a love for Italy and an affection for the cities that are dear to him because he finds a little of himself in them, of the sufferings of his childhood. His visit of a few days in Venice, in particular, the first one after his sojourn in this city from 1794-1797, moved him to write some impressive pages in his Diary. On May 26, he visited the quarters of Saint-Sylvestre where he and his sister had lived, and the church by the same name where his grand-uncle, Father André de Mazenod was buried and where he used to make his confession to the parish priest Milesi, who introduced Father Bartholomew Zinelli to him. “I leave to books the description of this city’s beauty,” he notes in his Diary on May 26. “Here I give only my impressions in a different order of things. How can I not be thrilled by the sight of places which recall to me the first years of my adolescence, the assistance divine Providence showed on me during that period when my intelligence started to mature. How could my heart not throb at the memory of those wonderful people who dedicated their leisure to my religious training and who formed me in virtue. People were surprised to hear me call each one of them by name, all those who had welcomed me during my childhood, to hear me refer to all the details of their lives, to point out the exact place they occupied in the houses where we lived together, and to enumerate, in some way, all the favours I had received from them. Others

¹⁹ Cf. letter 763.

²⁰ Cf. letters 761-769.

will never grasp the deep mark imprinted in my heart by the favours to which I am indebted for the little good that is in me, which has its source in that first training and guidance these men of God knew how to impart to my spirit and young heart.

Oh Blessed Zinelli! what would I have become without you? What gratitude I owe to God for having brought me to know and love such a saintly person

I said Mass at Saint-Sylvestre on the very same altar where I so often received the Body of Jesus Christ during my childhood; for they had me receive Holy Communion once a week. I cannot express all that I experienced during the Holy Sacrifice, comparing these two periods of my life: my childhood and my present state as a Bishop."

The main topics that unfold

These events form the background of this volume; certain topics, however, often recur and to some extent illustrate its pages: parish missions, obedience, the "apostasies," the deaths of the best Oblates, recruitment and formation of members.

Parochial missions are truly, as from the beginning of the Congregation, the main ministry of the Oblates. There are few letters that do not speak of them.²¹ It is the Founder himself who arranges every year the majority of the mission teams, moving Fathers from one house to another as the need arose. If in a letter to Father Pélissier of May 30, 1839, he recalls that the Oblates are sent "for anything that obedience may prescribe," he forcibly repeats that the principal task of the Oblate, "the great ministry, proper and characteristic"²² of his vocation, is the mission, during which there must be only one dominant concern: to instruct. "Don't we know that a mission is exactly what is needed to instruct the people who have gone astray?" he wrote to Father Courtès on October 11, 1837. "For it is only a mission that can draw the people to church. The parish priest can preach all he likes; no one except a few women will come to hear him. Are we allowed to be ignorant of this?" "Go on instructing. Keep instructing, ignorance is the greatest evil of

²¹ Cf. especially letters 599, 602-606, 611, 641, 648, 652, 657, 674, 683, 684, 702, 708, 710, 719, 720, 722, 724, 725, 727-729, 733, 741, 743, 746-751, 758, 759, 771, 773, 781, 784.

²² Letter 759 to Father Dassy, March 29, 1842.

our day";²³ or again "instruction on matters of doctrine, instruction on the Christian way of life"²⁴ — these are the expressions that flow from his pen.

*He demands that no changes be made in the rituals fixed by the Rules and that he be kept informed of everything.*²⁵ He always marvels at the miraculous fruits of the missions and he thanks God that the Oblates are the instruments of so many graces of conversion.²⁶

*Statistics prove that much work was accomplished. We know exactly what was done during 1837 and 1842. During the campaign of 1836-1837, the Oblates preached 22 missions or retreats, and 65 in 1841-1842.*²⁷ This increase in the number of missions was due to the increase of personnel. From 1837 to 1841, the number of Oblate houses went down by one, that is 7 instead of 8,²⁸ but the number of Oblates went up from 39 to 68, of whom 11 were coadjutor Brothers, 13 scholastic Brothers and 44 Fathers.²⁹ If we leave out the fifteen Fathers and Brothers, engaged in the two Seminaries and the Novitiate, or who had left for America or England, we can appreciate the extraordinary amount of work that the others did. The teams of the six houses of missionaries preached about 10 missions or retreats each, in 1841-1842.

*In the letters contained in this volume, there is enough material for a well-documented article on Oblate obedience, its importance, its nature, the obligation not to presume permissions, to accept the decisions of superiors without contestation, to follow, without modifying them, the articles of the Rules relating to the rituals foreseen for the missions, etc.*³⁰

²³ Letter 683 to Father Courtès, January 19, 1839.

²⁴ Letter 748 to Father Semeria, November 10, 1841.

²⁵ Cf. letters 611, 652, 657, etc.

²⁶ Cf. letters 733, 741, etc.

²⁷ *Diary*, March 21, 1837 and the Minutes of the 1843 Chapter, evening Session of July 11.

²⁸ 1837 marks the closure of Billens and the opening of N.-D. de Lumières; in 1841-1842, the closure of N.-D. du Laus. In July 1842, the Oblates took charge also of the service of N.-D. de Parménie near N.-D. de l'Osier, but it was a priest of l'Osier who served this shrine during the summer.

²⁹ For exact statistics at the time of the General Chapter of 1843, cf. J. PIELORZ, *Les chapitres généraux au temps du Fondateur*, Ottawa, Ed. des *Études Oblates*, 1968, vol. I, p. 166.

³⁰ Cf. especially letters 611, 624, 625, 638, 644, 649, 652, 657, 669, 673, 683, 690, 693, 698, 700, 703, 705, 706, 711, 713, 750, 753, 759, 768, 777, 781.

Few are the Fathers who escape the rebuke of the Superior General who intervenes without mincing his words, not only in the case of those whom lukewarmness and pride led to apostasy, but also in the case of the more fervent like Father Casimir Aubert who had taken the liberty of shortening the period of rest authoritatively prescribed for him. “. . . Knowing that I abhor interpretations, you should not have taken the liberty of going against a positive command which was perfectly well understood by you. The reasons that you allege as an excuse for yourself are not acceptable . . .” To mitigate the pain such words could cause, the Founder concludes this letter of October 14, 1837, with these words: “Farewell, dearly beloved son, I embrace you to show that you need not fear losing what you might call my good graces, even though I reprimand you somewhat, for after all, my good son, you have never sinned except by excess.”

When he learns that Father Dassy was too involved in archeology and was drawing the community of N.-D. de l’Osier along with him, Bishop de Mazenod wrote to him: “Even if you were to place me, my dear friend, among the old-fashioned people, I would not fear to tell you that I am far from sharing your enthusiasm for archeology which you exalt to such a height. I can understand a particular individual keeping himself busy with it during his leisure time, but wanting to make it a point of program and to introduce a whole community to it, seems to me — don’t be offended by this — rather ridiculous. Furthermore, if it has been done, it is without my consent. Your letter has softened the blow somewhat, nevertheless the facts remain and I appeal this case to any court you may choose in whatever Order and Congregation. I challenge you to find a single one which would not highly reprimand and consider as incomprehensible such a contempt for authority which integrity or even simple decency would make it a duty to consult.”

Father J.J. Lagier, moderator of scholastics and later director at the Major Seminary of Ajaccio, incurred the worst of reprimands on two occasions. Very much dissatisfied with a Brother he wanted to dismiss, Father Lagier wrote to the Founder: “If you don’t do what I intend, I will be forced to leave with my other Brothers and surrender my authority to you . . .” In reply to this he received, on December 14, 1841, a sober but forceful letter which began with the following words: “To inform me of what you knew, to disclose your way of thinking to me, is good, it is even your duty. However, my dear Father, you should have allowed me to judge a case regarding which your only

role is to inform. Giving a verdict as you did before knowing what I would decide is such a bad example that I would never have believed that you could possibly venture to do it. What would become of us if each one . . . wanted to impose his way of thinking on the superior . . . ?” In the fall of 1842, Father Lagier received an obedience for the Major Seminary of Ajaccio, when he would have preferred to remain in Marseilles where he was directing several women religious. He complained to Father Tempier about it. The Founder read this letter and commented on it to Father Moreau in these words: “One of his letters that I have just read . . . shows me that he is still more keen on the direction of some pious women, whom he thinks he is leading on the path of sublime perfection and with whom he is wasting precious time, than on the ministry I have assigned to him. He speaks of God’s will as if it could be manifested to him in any other way than through that of his legitimate superiors”

The superiors too are vigorously reproached for the slightest failure. By way of example, we could mention several interesting texts, especially to Fathers Guigues and Mille, who were most prone to be independent, but we will not anticipate them but rather leave the reader the pleasure of discovering these gems.³¹

A third topic recurs as a refrain in this volume — as in the preceding and subsequent volumes — namely, “apostasies.” On January 9, 1837, the Founder explained why he calls apostates all those Oblates who, till then, had obtained dispensation from their vows: “. . . The power of dispensing from vows is a two-edged sword which usually kills the individual in order to save the family. All the members of our Congregation who have been dispensed to date are, in a very true sense, real apostates, because there is not a single one of them who had valid reasons to offer and because they were separated from the Congregation only because they had put themselves into such a situation that they had to be expelled. This is an enormous fault for which they will be responsible as long as they have not taken effective means to atone for it What disastrous illusions there are in this matter,” he continues to write in this letter to Father Martin. “I will protest before all men and before God against these apostasies till my last breath and beyond, for it is before the judgment seat of God that I summon all those who are guilty of it”

³¹ Cf. especially letters 624, 652, 657, etc.

And yet, there were no more than 9 defections (6 Fathers and 3 Brothers) during the years 1837-1843, while they numbered 13 during the period 1831-1836. Encouraged however, by Father Albini who advised him to purge the Congregation "of all bad material it harboured,"³² the Founder is usually severe towards Fathers and Brothers who are unfaithful because he considers them still more culpable than those who had preceded them. In fact, the formation given in the novitiate by Father Casimir Aubert from 1837 to 1841, was more carefully done and demanding. Only 29 of the 67 novices finished the novitiate and made their vows.³³ Furthermore, the Founder's dissatisfaction is due to the fact that he considers 3 of these 9 apostates as real traitors. As a matter of fact, Father Gignoux in 1839, Father Pélissier in 1840 and Father Ancel in 1841, all three natives of the diocese of Gap, left the Congregation at a period when the latter was practically being persecuted in the diocese by certain priests who had a petition signed and launched a campaign against the Fathers of Notre-Dame du Laus. "You are perfectly right, my dear children," he wrote to the Fathers of Vico on January 8, 1841, "in the indignation you express to me at all these horrible apostasies which torment you as well as me. It is high time that the devil sift our grain in vain and on the day of testing not a kernel will pass to be thrown with the chaff into everlasting fire. Today again I have just passed the fatal sentence that hands over to Satan this guilty deserter (Ancel) who first broke the bonds of unity"³⁴

While the less fervent leave or behave in such a manner as to be expelled, the Lord calls the more virtuous to himself. "The more a member is good . . . the more nervous I become, because death chooses its victims from among the élite," the Founder exclaims in a letter to Father Courtès on March 14, 1837.

Between 1837 and 1842, four Fathers and one Brother join "the Oblate community in Heaven,"³⁵ all of them exemplary religious and choice subjects. Father Richaud (1804-1837) who died of an accident in Corsica on January 7, 1837, had been professor at the Major Seminary of Ajaccio. "How could I not grieve over such a good priest," the

³² *Diary*, February 7, 1837.

³³ In 1842, Father Vincens was less demanding. 11 novices out of 15 pronounced their vows.

³⁴ On the apostasies, cf. letters 600, 617, 623, 627, 671, 699, 704, 706, 712, 714, 716, 723, 778.

³⁵ *Diary*, May 29, 1839.

Founder wrote to Father Guibert, "one who had been brought up under my care since his very early childhood, who had quite recently given to our family such a beautiful example of devotedness in volunteering to go along with you and your companions and work for Corsica's reformation, who was gifted with such a gentle and affable character, with whom it was so pleasant to live."³⁶ Brother Morandini (1816-1838) who died on December 27, 1838, at Aix, was considered to be one of "the most perfect Oblates," "a virtuous angel."³⁷ The Founder writes in his Diary on December 28, 1838: ". . . Saintly death of Brother Morandini . . . It is a considerable loss for the Congregation which was expecting a great service from this excellent member who combined outstanding virtues with many talents, the most lovable character and a name which, because of the respect it commanded, would have facilitated the exercise of the ministry he would probably have exercised in his native country, Corsica." On May 20, 1839, it was the death of Father Albini (1790-1839), at Vico. The Founder's letters contain many beautiful pages³⁸ about this Father whom he then considered as "the most useful person in the Congregation, unique for the country that was his lot."³⁹ It was consequent to this death that the Founder strongly requested all the Oblates to write their own recollections when their brother-Oblates die so that an obituary could be composed for each.⁴⁰ Father Mie (1768-1841) passed away on March 10, 1841. A faithful companion of the Founder along with Father Tempier, since the foundation of the Congregation, Assistant General from 1818 till his death, Father Mie had been an indefatigable missionary. Director of the Major Seminary of Marseilles and Canon since Father Suzanne's death in 1829, his presence among the Seminarians was "a perpetual source of edification."⁴¹ Father Barthélemy Paris (1804-1841) died on April 11, 1841, after some years of suffering which he accepted with love. He was a much appreciated professor at the Major Seminary

³⁶ Mazenod to Father Guibert, January 11, 1837.

³⁷ Mazenod to Father Mille, May 25, 1838. On Morandini, cf. letters 680, 681, 682.

³⁸ Cf. letters 679, 680, 682, 691, 692, 694, 696, 748 and J. MORABITO, *Le Fondateur et la cause de canonisation de p. Albini*, in *Études Oblates*, t. 9 (1950), pp. 3-43.

³⁹ Mazenod to Father Courtès, May 27, 1839.

⁴⁰ Cf. letters 691, 694, 696, 698.

⁴¹ Cf. letters 726 and 728.

of Marseilles, a son much attached to the Founder to whom he often wrote. In his last letters, the Founder noted: "good, excellent," "touching sentiments," etc.⁴²

Men are needed to replace the apostates and the deceased, to strengthen the teams of missionaries in France and to be solidly established in England and Canada. The Founder appeals unceasingly to the Fathers, especially those in Corsica and at N.-D. de l'Osier, to take an active interest in recruiting. He does not let any opportunity pass without reminding them of this. He also sees to the improvement of formation which, in 1837-1842, constitutes the topic of a general reform.⁴³ In 1840, a Juniorate⁴⁴ is opened at N.-D. de Lumières to receive young men who pursue their secondary education with the view to entering the novitiate. Nevertheless it is without much enthusiasm, as a last resort, that Bishop de Mazenod authorizes this effort. In his Diary on August 13, 1840, he notes: "I consent to the experiment of taking in a few students because the novitiate has no candidates; but I do not hide the little confidence I have in a means that is so long and so risky for recruiting. I cannot allow myself, at my age, to be flattered by the thought of seeing any results therefrom."

In 1841, the novitiate is definitively moved from Aix and Marseilles and located at N.D. de l'Osier where it will remain till 1903. For the first time the novices were to be formed away from the direct influence of the Founder and of Father Tempier.⁴⁵ Father Vincens, a man

⁴² The Founder's letters to Father Paris have not been found. On January 21, 1841, Father Paris copies two lines of one of these letters: "Dearly beloved Father, I cannot express what great joy I experience when I read in your good letter these truly divine, touching words of your charity: *to what hard trials the Lord wants to put you, my dear child, by depriving you of the happiness of offering the holy Sacrifice. From the moment I came to know of this condition of your sufferings, I have been united with you more intimately in the holy Sacrifice I am privileged to offer.* How good you are! Yes, my dear good Father, I am suffering much since 3 years, stretched out on the cross that has paralysed me. . . . Is it possible that I am so ill so that I may know and feel myself being offered to God through the hands of my Bishop and my Father on the paten of his offerings and hidden in his holy Communion in the depth of his heart? This is too great a consolation!"

⁴³ Cf. letters 717, 718, 728, 733, 734, 740, 741, 744, 745, 747, 751, 752, 753, 756, 770, 775-778.

⁴⁴ Cf. F. LEPAGE, *Aux origines de nos Juniorats*, in *Études Oblates*, t. 12 (1953), pp. 145-165; t. 17 (1958), pp. 87-88.

⁴⁵ This will allow us to read in the next volume of *Oblate Writings*, many letters of the Founder to the novice-masters.

of action and one of the best Oblate preachers of the time, was appointed master of novices. The Oblate theology students also left the Seminary of Marseilles in 1842 to pursue their studies at N.-D. de l'Osier. This latter step, undoubtedly prompted by the desire to reduce somewhat the load of the directors of the Seminary of Marseilles — who were less in number after the deaths of Fathers Mye and Paris and who were very busy with the increasing number of Seminarians — was not successful and did not last more than one year.

When agreeing to let Father Guibert take up the bishopric of Viviers the Founder wrote: "The good Lord (. . .) will bear in mind the sacrifices the Congregation is making for the Church," "let us place our trust in God."⁴⁶ Indeed, the Lord did not allow himself to be outdone in generosity. 17 novices joined the novitiate in 1841 and 15 in 1842, more than half of whom made their vows. Bishop de Mazenod wrote to Father Courtès on August 23, 1842: "The Lord has given us (members) with a generosity for which we will never be grateful enough. Our duty in responding to this great favour is to neglect nothing in trying to form religious who are capable of serving the Church and the Society. During moments of sufferings, we may foresee a rather near future when we will be operating with greater ease. This is sufficient motive to encourage us and help us to be patient."

The final letters of this volume, like last good mouthfuls, leave us with the taste of hope which the future will not dash; the Congregation of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate is increasing in number and already evangelizing the poor in several countries.

Yvon Beaudoin, O.M.I.

⁴⁶ Mazenod to Father Moreau, August 19, 1841; to Father Semeria, August 20, 1841.

1837

599. To Father Guigue[s], superior at Notre-Dame de l'Osier, near Vinay, Isère.¹

The Founder's illness. Father Dassy returns to N.-D. de l'Osier. Numerous missions foreseen for 1837. We must not call on the diocesan Clergy to fill up our mission teams. Send back Father Gignoux to N.-D. du Laus as soon as possible.

L.J.C. and M.I.

Marseilles, January 2, 1837.

My dear Guigue[s], I could not profit by Father Dassy's² departure to pen you a couple of words, but I do it today; I can reassure you on the state of my health which seems to be improving daily.³ There remains only a slight pain in my chest and some weakness in my voice, but I am not out of it yet and it is already two months since I am thus caught; I am fortunate to have got away with this much. You see that I have kept my promise to you in sending Father Dassy⁴ back to you. You know I am not a person who will joke when serious matters are at stake; but I don't want people to impede my transactions which have become very difficult to work out because of the places concerned and especially the eminent persons who need to be managed. You may judge it from the fuss made on the occasion of Father Dassy's momentary absence.

¹ Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation, Letters Mazenod-Guigues.

² Mss.: Dassi. In this letter, it is always written thus.

³ The Founder had been sick since the beginning of November 1836 until the end of December: fever, spitting blood, etc.

⁴ While Father Dassy was preaching at Chelieu (Isère), the Founder called him urgently to help Father Courtès with the mission of Carpentras. He returned to l'Osier just in time to start the mission of St-Lattier together with Father Guigues on January 3, 1837. Cf. Dassy to Mazenod, November 20, 1836.

This year we shall make some feats of strength. We have to put in an appearance everywhere and for this we have requisitioned barons and retainers.⁵ Two priest novices will march in rotation;⁶ to complete the job, we even had to enlist a priest,⁷ one of our friends who will go with one of the bands. This partnership does not have the same inconvenience as the one you had agreed upon with a priest from the diocese of Grenoble. For God's sake, don't do this again. If some zealous priests wish to give missions, let them do so as much as they want, but not amalgamated with us, I beg of you. The least we can expect while reaping the fruit of our labours is that we are not grieved by vexations of this kind. We do not have the same freedom, the same ease, when outsiders come and mingle in our affairs. That is harmful to unity, self-denial and good order. I am dead against this way of acting. You should not have agreed to it without consulting me. This is a mistake that can have certain consequences. If you are not numerous enough to go to the very populated places, be content with smaller villages, but do it by yourselves; that is how all other Congregations act. I do not want to make any exception at all to this wise rule. He whom I have added to our Fathers in these regions is like one of them, he was even called to be an Oblate, he is not an outsider. I have only to mention his name, it is Meyer.⁸ This is all I have to say on this matter.

I repeat the urgent request that Father Gignoux⁹ go to Laus as soon as he finishes the mission he has undertaken. Father Marcellin¹⁰ is only waiting for his arrival before leaving, and the mission in which he is to take part at Fontvieille will have already begun when he arrives: this is an inconvenience, but at least, it will not have advanced too far. This mission will start on the eighth of this month; so you see we must hurry.

⁵ "To requisition barons and retainers" means to get together all one's supporters. The Fathers of l'Osier alone had, for the year 1837, 22 requests for missions in the diocese of Grenoble. Cf. Dassy to Mazenod, March 18, 1837.

⁶ At that time, two priests were making their novitiate: Cyriaque Chauvet who had entered on July 15, 1836 and Jacques Cuynat who had entered on October 31.

⁷ This certainly is Father J. M. Meyer who had been a Seminarian at Marseilles and was ordained priest in 1831. A certain Meyer, native of the diocese of Gap, had been a novice at N.-D. du Laus in 1832-1833. Cf. *Registre des prises d'habit 1815-1850*, no. 144. Father Meyer fell ill during the mission of Entraigues. Cf. *Diary Mazenod*, January 16, 1837.

⁸ Mss.: Mayer.

⁹ Father Gignoux had replaced Father Dassy at the mission of Chelieu in November-December, 1836. Cf. Dassy to Mazenod, November 20, 1836.

¹⁰ Marcellin Grognard.

I leave you, for I cannot manage my pen any more: this is a consequence of my pain. Good-bye.

† Ch. Jos. Eug., Bishop of Icosia.

600. [To Father Joseph Martin at Billens in Switzerland].¹¹

Reflections on religious who are unfaithful to their vocation. Reasons they allege for leaving and the seriousness of their decision.

[Marseilles,] January 9, 1837.

In the midst of the consolations I experience at the sight of the good done by our small group, I have the grief of seeing the devil screening us, and that among the grain shaken in the sieve there are some kernels that are lean and shrivelled enough to pass through and thus be removed from the threshing floor of the common Father.¹² What disastrous illusions there are in this matter! I will protest before all men and before God against these apostasies till my last breath and beyond, for it is before the judgment seat of God that I summon all those who are guilty of it. One should listen to Saint¹³ Liguori on this subject. I have his *Memoirs* before my eyes to console and strengthen me. What is even more sad is that God is offended and even grievously offended, and yet the persons concerned are so blind as to remain calm and without any remorse, in a habitual state of resistance to their essential duties.

Regarding the subject of temptations against one's vocation: if we would take the trouble of consulting theology, we would know how we delude ourselves when we imagine we can live without sin while deliberately entertaining thoughts and plans contrary to the state to which we have committed ourselves by vow. Dwelling deliberately on

¹¹ YENVEUX VIII, 259, 262, 266, 282.

¹² Here the Founder speaks of Father J. Ant. Bernard of the house of Billens, who was going through a crisis at that time. Cf. J. M. January 11, 1837. Several Oblates had been unfaithful to their vocation: Brother Ant. Calmettes had been expelled on June 11, 1836 and Father Jacques Eymar on December 4, 1836; Father Marcellin Grogard will be expelled on March 7, 1837. Cf.: Reg. des expulsions. At Aix, Father Pélissier's behaviour was equally bad. Cf. *Diary Mazenod*, January 11, 1837. Father Albin of Corsica had encouraged the Founder to cleanse the Congregation "of all bad material it harboured." Cf. *Diary Mazenod*, February 7, 1837.

¹³ He was still only Blessed: he was canonized on May 26, 1839.

thoughts and desires against the vows we have made is no more permissible than dwelling on thoughts and desires against the love of God and against the sixth commandment.

Let us convince ourselves, says Blessed Liguori, that temptations against vocation are the most dangerous that the devil can inflict on us; this is because of the ensuing consequences; let everyone, therefore, daily pray for perseverance in his vocation during the visit to the Blessed Sacrament and to the Blessed Virgin.

We are seriously mistaken if we excuse ourselves for these kinds of thoughts under the pretext that a dispensation is possible. We should know that these dispensations can free the individual in conscience only when there are serious reasons which did not exist at the time of profession and which the person concerned did not foresee, which will appear all of a sudden and make it impossible for him to fulfill his commitments. Even in such a case, the person concerned should accept the dispensation only with regret and with the sincere desire of removing the obstacle preventing him from remaining in the Congregation to which he had committed himself. The presumption is that this obstacle is quite independent of his will.

When the Supreme Pontiff dispenses a religious from his vows, he presupposes that such reasons do exist and he leaves it to the conscience of the individual to judge how far they are valid. In these dispensations, Rome is concerned above all with freeing Congregations from members who no longer belong to them at heart; for everything else, it abandons them to their conscience. But if the religious had, through his own fault, placed himself in a situation of dismissal, he remains nonetheless responsible before God for violating obligations from which his culpable behaviour had made the dispensation necessary.

. . . The power of dispensing from vows is a two-edged sword which usually kills the individual in order to save the family. All the members of our Congregation who have been dispensed to date are, in a very true sense, real apostates, because there is not a single one of them who had valid reasons to offer and because they were separated from the Congregation only because they had put themselves into such a situation that they had to be expelled. This is an enormous fault for

which they will be responsible as long as they have not taken effective means to atone for it¹⁴

The Rules are a burden, they say. But today's Rule is the same that the religious knew during the novitiate and which he had undertaken to observe. Is this really a reason to offer? Let the religious ponder whether he would dare to offer this reason before the tribunal of the Sovereign Judge. Simple Christians could say as much regarding the precepts of the Church or even for the ten Commandments. But this has always been the pretext used by all lax religious, by every apostate. If this religious were to be more faithful, he would experience the truth of the Saviour's words: *Jugum meum suave est et onus meum leve!*¹⁵

There are some religious who dare to say that they had made their oblation only with the idea of quitting the Congregation some day. What a horror! Let them study theology. They will learn that it is not allowed to place any condition, any mental restriction in making vows, and the formula of oblation pronounced verbally must be made seriously and from the bottom of the heart. Otherwise, it would only be a lie, hypocrisy, the profanation of a holy and religious act.

Are we allowed to play games with God and with people, to consider an act made in the presence of Jesus Christ at the holy altar as only a vain and laughable ceremony? Would there be anything sacred on this earth if vows, that is, oaths made before Jesus Christ and accepted by the Church in his name, do not express what they signify? I cannot make head or tail out of this

Some say that they could do more good elsewhere. What is culpable in these plans is disguised under this pretext. But how long will we have eyes and not see? Priests who are free are looking for religious

¹⁴ According to YENVEUX (VIII, 262), this paragraph, without an addressee, would have been written on January 14. In his *Diary*, the Founder does not mention any letter written on the 14th. On the 11th he notes however, that he had "written a letter of five pages to Father Martin." This excerpt certainly is a part of the letter of the 9th, continued perhaps on the 11th or even the 14th.

¹⁵ Mt. 11:30.

communities because they realize that all their effort of zeal, done alone and in isolation, bear no results; and those who are fortunate to live in a Congregation would like to get out of it to do more good? We see priests coming to us, who leave the world with the idea of sanctifying themselves by working for the salvation of others; they give up this freedom which others value so much, but which all the saints considered as quite dangerous; and those who are so greatly fortunate to be incorporated into a Congregation, which supplements for their weakness, would entertain the culpable thought of regarding the bonds they have already broken? This is what I cannot understand. The cause of all these criminal thoughts and restlessness cannot be so well hidden that it cannot be perceived. It is because a person thinks he is someone great that he imagines he has the means to success; it is because he has allowed himself to be enticed by exaggerated praise that he relies on himself and wants to be more free to act in his way, to assert his talents, always under the pretext of working for God's glory. Someone who finds himself restricted, vexed by obedience, does everything possible to find a situation where he can develop himself and does not realize that this is a trap of self-love. In such a frame of mind, that person will no more abide by the superior's decision, will no longer listen to his advice, and will want to consult outsiders and go on consulting them until he finds someone who agrees with him, and that is the one who is right; selfishness and the passionate desire to do one's own will drive a person to this extreme.

601. [To Father H. Guibert, at Ajaccio].¹⁶

Grief on learning of Father Richaud's accidental death in Corsica. Submission to God's will.

Marseilles, January 11, 1837.

I have just offered Holy Mass for the good Father about whose death you have informed me in your last letter.¹⁷ I shall weep for him all my life just as for those who have preceded him into eternity, over

¹⁶ YENVEUX III, 211; V, 84; IX, 191.

¹⁷ Father Jos. Laurent Richaud, professor at the Major Seminary of Ajaccio, was killed on the spot in a fall from a horse on January 7, Cf. *Diary Mazenod*, January 10 and 14, 1837. Born at Gap in 1804, Jos. Laurent entered N.-D. du Laus at the age of 16 and continued his studies at Laus, Aix and Marseilles.

whose loss I am inconsolable. How could I not grieve over such a good priest who had been brought up under my care since his very early childhood, who had quite recently given to our family such a beautiful example of devotedness in volunteering to go along with you and your companions and work for Corsica's reformation, who was gifted with such a gentle and affable character, with whom it was so pleasant to live! But what good does it do to keep our sorrow alive when, to suppress it one has only to think of the reward the Lord will have granted him for his fidelity and for all the good he had wished to accomplish. My God! one has to be much more perfect than I am in order not to deplore our loss considering the happiness he must be enjoying, since he has been taken away while he was following the path of the holy vocation that infallibly leads us to Heaven, in accordance with the promise of Truth incarnate. For me, this assurance is an article of faith. I am confident that the Holy Mass I have offered on receiving your letter will have paid in full the debts of our dear deceased.

I share all your sorrow . . . he was so much at home where he was! He was so agreeable to you! It was a relief for me to know that he was there with you! I counted on his wisdom, his kindness, his common sense, his orderly spirit, his devotedness. What an atrocious loss!

I admit my weakness and my failing; such a blow overwhelms me; my soul is overcome with sorrow. I am tempted to complain to God about the fact that he grants too soon a reward which can be enjoyed for a whole eternity while he removes from us the means to do here below what he commands us. I disown whatever human element there is in such a thought; it is an involuntary cry of suffering. May God's will and his will alone be done! Let us be resigned without murmuring to whatever pleases him to do with us, with what belongs to us, the works he has entrusted to us, even our Congregation.

Good-bye. I press all of you to my heart, I embrace you, I bless you, I am with you in thought, with my heart, with all the sentiments of my soul.

† Ch. Jos. [E] de Mazenod, Bishop of Icosia.

602. To Father Courtès, priest, Carmelites' Square at the top of the public Drive, at Aix, Bouch[es-] du-Rhône.¹⁸

Bishop de Mazenod's health is improving. The Faculties which Bishops usually grant to the Fathers on mission. Good news of five missions the Oblates are preaching at the same time. Bishop Dupont invites the Oblates to establish themselves at N.-D. de Lumières as soon as possible.

L.J.C. and M.I.

Marseilles, J[anuar]y 20, 1837.¹⁹

I was quite touched, my dear Father Courtès, by the interest Father Jacquemet²⁰ has expressed to you regarding my health; I beg you to thank him on my part, at your earliest opportunity. I feel much better even though I have not recovered completely.

You ask me for a list of the powers and permissions granted us when on mission. Our Lordships the Archbishops, like all the other Bishops of the dioceses where this h[ol]y ministry was being accomplished have always granted us the most extensive powers.

First of all, all missionaries had the faculty to absolve from all the reserved cases, even those specially reserved, the power to commute vows, that of restoring the *jus petendi*,²¹ of blessing crosses, medals and pictures.

The superior of each mission is specially delegated to rectify marriages, by himself or through the missionary whom he authorizes for this; to dispense from the publication of the banns, not only for those cases of rectification but for those that had taken place before a State official also, and in case of necessity, for example, if it was a question of putting an end immediately to a scandal, concubinage, etc., even for other cases.

The superior has always had a great latitude in regard to all the external ceremonies.

¹⁸ Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L. M.- Courtès.

¹⁹ 1836 in the mss., but according to the context, it is certainly 1837.

²⁰ Ant. M. Alexandre Jacquemet, Vicar General of Aix.

²¹ To restore the *ius petendi debitum coniugale* to one of the partners who had lost this right through adultery, etc.

Our practice is to impart Benediction every morning and evening after the service, to solemnly expose the Blessed Sacrament during the ceremony of the renewing the baptismal vows, and in the morning of the day fixed for the blessing of the children, during the recitation of the breviary before the procession of the Blessed Sacrament.

Several processions take place during the mission

1. The day of the Missionaries' arrival.
2. The day of atonement.
3. The day fixed for the consecration of the girls to the Blessed Virgin.
4. The day set aside to commemorate the dead, at the cemetery.
5. The day solemnizing the Blessed Sacrament, with the Blessed Sacrament.
6. The day of the planting of the cross.

The letters I receive from our various missions — we are preaching five at the same time in different dioceses²² — are most consoling. Marvels are taking place everywhere. One of the Vicars General of Avignon²³ could not help but write to me in mutual congratulations. I am going to copy for you a passage from his letter which you will certainly like.

“The mission of Entraigues is producing the most happy results. It is a foretaste of all that the diocese of Avignon will gain from your missionaries' foundation at Lumières. His Grace the Archbishop²⁴ is very anxiously waiting for the moment when this foundation will be a reality; all good priests share his sentiments so much so that you must consider the place to which you will be sending your sons a friendly one. Your Lordship, it is not necessary to assure you that the most devoted of your servants will be the most sincere friend of your followers, and that my love and my humble services belong to them already.”

I did not expect anything less from the zeal and goodness of His Grace the Archbishop of Avignon and from the lovable good qualities

²² Missions of Entraigues (Honorat, etc.), of St-Lattier (Guigues, etc.), Fontvieille (Mille, etc.) Ile-Rousse en Corse (Albini, etc.) and Berne in Switzerland (Martin, etc.).

²³ M. Barret, Cf. J. M. January 21, 1837.

²⁴ Bishop J. M. Ant. Célestin Dupont.

of his Vicar General, who is one of the most respectable persons I know; nevertheless it is consoling to receive assurance expressed in such touching terms.

The good Lord always grants some compensation for the vocations which he sends us to test our fidelity or which he permits peoples' malice to furnish us. Let us thank him for everything: *gratias tibi ago, quod ut validius me traheres ad te aliquot mihi corporales aegritudines, angustias animi, et adversitates immisisti; ac mirabili vicissitudine consolationum, et desolationum erudiens me, ne in prosperis extollar, aut in adversis deficiam.*²⁵

Good-bye, I embrace you and I bless you.

† Ch. Jos. Eug., Bishop of Icosia.

603. To Father Mille, priest, at the residence of the Parish Priest of Fontvieille, near Arles, Bouch[es-]du-Rhône.²⁶

Write more frequently, following the example of Father Honorat. Keep the Archdiocese of Aix well informed of the progress of the mission. Advice on regularity, discretion and edification during missions.

L.J.C. and M.I.

Marseilles, J[anuar]y 20, 1837.²⁷

My dear Father Mille, I am still dumbfounded by the blow that has crushed us once again. I refrain from broaching this great subject of sorrow on which I would never finish.²⁸ I come immediately to you instead to thank the Lord for consolations he is granting you in your holy mission. I am impatiently waiting for further details. No reprimand, my dear son, but Father Honorat²⁹ has written his third letter and I have so far received only one from you. To console me I have told myself that this is a sign that you are very busy; however Father Honorat is no less busy because Meyer got sick almost as soon as he arrived. Moreover, his mission could not be going better, and he lauds

²⁵ We have not found this prayer in the liturgical books of the last century.

²⁶ Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L.M.- Mille. The Founder always writes Fonsvieille.

²⁷ Mss.: 1836.

²⁸ Reference to the death of Father Richaud.

²⁹ Father Honorat was at Entraigues.

his parish priest to me: he is in continual rapture of joy at seeing all that the good Lord is doing before his eyes.

I wanted you to know that I find it quite opportune that you give some details of the blessings the Lord is showering on your mission to His Grace the Archbishop.³⁰ I do not doubt that you have done so in a good manner, that is, modestly, rightly attributing to God alone all the good that is being accomplished. It is normal to presume that a chief Pastor should insist much on knowing what is being accomplished by the ones he has sent, the ones to whom he has entrusted a special mission to bring a portion of his sheep to the knowledge of the faith, to the practice of virtue.

I am not surprised at the testimony you give about our Father Cuynat,³¹ but I was consoled to know that my expectations were fulfilled. I was waiting for a few words on Father Marcellin. I recommend you take it upon yourself to see that regularity is observed: oration, examination of conscience, etc. Do not be men totally involved in exterior activities: let people not get the idea that you have no more than the prayer habits normal for a good priest. Such dissipation causes very great harm. The Saturday conference must be strictly observed. Nor must mortification be a virtue so hidden that one may get the impression you do not know it. On the contrary, it must be quite visible during meals where it is not fitting to pounce at all the dishes that are served. On certain missions I have not only sent back certain courses without having touched them but did not even want to have them brought to the table. For example, at Brignoles, at Signes and other places;³² in this, there was a double merit, that of mortification on our part and that of good example for the others. Do not forget that you are missionaries by profession, and consequently you have a Rule to observe during missions which is proper for that period, foreseen beforehand, already lived out, in a word, familiar to each one of you. This applies also to your behaviour which must be serious and reserved. Moreover, there has been too much laughing; I have never tolerated such excessive pleasantry during my time. It is not compatible with the importance and the sort of ministry exercised in God's name

³⁰ Archbishop Joseph Bernet of Aix and Arles.

³¹ Mss.: Quinat, always written in this manner by the Founder.

³² Mss.: Brignolles et Signe. The Brignoles mission was preached in 1821 and that of Signes in 1822.

and endowed with all his power, indeed even with the gift of miracles, for, all that takes place during the mission is a marvel. Never compromise the confessional seal, even indirectly, by reporting particular facts that have happened in other missions. There are enough things with which to edify by just narrating external activities. In a word, act in such manner as not only to do much good but also to leave behind you a true impression of sanctity. Otherwise people will say that you are only doing your job. You must be absolutely men of God, work only for God, walk unceasingly in his presence, edify from morning till night all those who deal with you or who surround you.

Good-bye, dearest Father Mille, I embrace you wholeheartedly and I bless you.

† Ch. Jos. Eug., Bishop of Icosia.

604. To Father Mille, priest, at the residence of the Parish Priest of Fontvieille, near Arles, Bouches-du-Rhône.³³

Reproaches Father Mille who does not give news of his mission. Personnel for subsequent missions.

L.J.C. and M.I.

Marseilles, January 27, 1837.

My dear Father Mille, so far I have received only one letter from you though half of your mission is over. During this period I have received four letters from Father Honorat who is as busy at Entraigues as you are, but he keeps up our old custom. Since you could not be ignorant of it, I do not know to what I must attribute this prolonged silence. I am very much upset and I can explain it only on the supposition that you are sick, but if you are not well, why not entrust one of your confreres to fulfil your duty.

I am writing to you only to make known to you how upset I am, and so are our Fathers. When you reply to me, tell me whether you received the circular informing you of Father Richaud's death. It is strange that no one has received it — would it be the same with your letters — in which case you would be exempt from all reproach. Even

³³ Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L. M.- Mille.

in that case write to me, especially as I will not have the opportunity of seeing you on your return. You will set out straight for Aix where you will pay your respects to His Grace the Archbishop and orally give him an account of the blessings showered on your mission by the Lord. From there, you will promptly leave for Notre-Dame du Laus where you will go with Father Pélissier³⁴ (keep these details to yourself, I do not want Father Marcellin to write to him about it). You will make your arrangements at Laus while waiting to start the mission of Mane which you will preach together with Fathers Gignoux and Chauvet. Father Marcellin will wait at Aix for Father Honorat to take him and Father Hermitte along to the mission of Maussanne.³⁵

I send my greetings to you and to your two brothers, and I also say hello to our former novice to whom I express some regret that he could not have become your brother.³⁶

† Ch. Jos. Eug., Bishop of Icosia,

605. To Father Guigue[s] priest, at the residence of the Parish Priest of Theys, the canton of Goncelin near Grenoble, Isère.³⁷

The young people guilty of mischief at the mission of Theys must be forgiven. Missionaries are sent to sinners to be ministers of mercy.

L.J.C. and M.I.

Marseilles, February 8, 1837.

My dear Father Guigue[s], I did not know where I could find you to write to you. However, it is quite a long time since you have received any of my letters.

February 20.

I have just received your letter of the 15th and I am leaving aside everything to reply to it. May God save you, my dear friend, from

³⁴ Father Pélissier from the house of Aix.

³⁵ Mss.: Maussane.

³⁶ The "two brothers" to whom the Founder sends greetings are Fathers Grognard and Cuyant who were preaching with Father Mille. "The former novice" mentioned must be Father Victor Polidore Courtès, the assistant parish priest at Fontvieille who was a novice in 1827. Cf. Reg. des prises d'habit 1815-1850, no. 75, and J. M. April 22, 1837.

³⁷ Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L. M.- Guigues.

refusing Communion to those, who, being guilty of the mischief which you mention to me, have been repentant. You yourself admit that they were only carried along by their exuberance and not at all by hostile intention. Oh! you are sent by God to forgive greater sins than theirs and even greater scandals than the one they may have given by their thoughtlessness. Once they had been reconciled, it was your duty to admit them to the Holy Table to make them fulfil, at the same time, their Paschal duty and the obligation they had undoubtedly been feeling to receive Communion which they had neglected. I am afraid that the anxiety in which I find you has not permitted you to accord a fairly kind welcome to these young people. The opposite gesture would have won their hearts and would have urged them to draw towards you those who were more guilty than they. And if these latter end up by surrendering themselves, no doubt you must make them also receive Communion at the end of the mission. Remember that you are sent to sinners, and even to hardened sinners. You must expect resistance from the devil; he will not easily let go of his prey. This resistance manifests itself now in one way, and now in another. Jesus Christ is always the victor, "*Christus vincit.*" He demands sacrifices, "*Christus imperat.*" He establishes his reign in souls, "*Christus regnat.*" This is all that we desire, this is the result of and compensation for our labours. We are the ministers of his mercy, and so let us always have the tenderness of a father towards all; let us easily forget the insults that are sometimes committed against us in the exercise of our ministry as the good Lord wishes to forget the offences continually being committed against him. The father of the prodigal son was not content with putting the best robe on him and having a ring put on his finger, he had the fatted calf killed as well. In the same way, we must not only reconcile sinners, but in the view of all the graces granted to them during the mission, of the guarantees their fidelity gives to respond thereto and of the efforts they have had to make for all this, we admit them to the sacred banquet, we give them the bread of life so that they can advance in this new path which they are to follow, and may, at the same time, fulfil an imperative duty that urges them.

I know nothing about the affair of the hymns; I would very much like to be consulted by both sides on such a matter. Thus mistakes could be avoided and things would be more in order.³⁸

³⁸ Father Guigues was gone to get a hymnal printed at Grenoble when Father Mille wanted to get one ready at N.-D. du Laus.

I would like to have a little more time to advise you to come to an agreement with Dupuy so that you are not exposed to the danger of saying the same thing to his Lordship the B[ishop].³⁹ It seems to me that we are lacking somewhat in trust towards him: we owe him too much to show him distrust. Do not forget that he is very well versed in practical matters and he sincerely desires the success of the house. It seems that he does not approve of the way the shop has been arranged. He may be wrong or right, but then someone would have to make a judgment on the matter in question.

Four persons are waiting in my room and they are talking very loud. I take leave of you by embracing you, not forgetting to bless you.

†Ch. Jos. Eug., Bishop of Icosia.

P.S. Since the day-before-yesterday we have one more priest in the person of Father Rolleri. He is a needed addition to Father Semeria whose family is daily increasing.⁴⁰ I have some wonderful news to give you about all our missions.

606. [To Father Honorat, at Maussanne].⁴¹

Reproaches Father Honorat who preaches in Provençal and in French to comply with the desire of "five or six bourgeois people."

[Marseilles,] February 28,⁴² 1837.

I worry little about the infinitely small number of bourgeois people who have not yet shown any sign of good will. The majority of them, if not all, will surrender like the others. In any case, their souls are not worth more or less than those of the least peasants, if we consider them in terms of the price the Lord has paid for them; under other aspects, they may be far less valuable. Thus it is foolish to be

³⁹ Mss.: "to His Lordship the B," stands undoubtedly for His Lordship the Bishop, Philibert de Bruillard.

⁴⁰ Father Semeria had replaced Father Albin in working for the Italians at Marseilles.

⁴¹ YENVEUX II, 77, 81. Letter copied by Father Yenveux himself, who uses suspension marks everywhere.

⁴² The Founder writes in his *Diary*: "February 27, letter to Father Honorat."

more concerned about these gentlemen than about the other good people of the area. It is bad, perhaps even sinful to sacrifice the common good to their caprice or vanity. Hence you have succumbed to weakness in giving in to their requests for instructions in French. You know from experience that such a concession is not expedient. Do you think that in all the missions that I have given in Provence I did not anywhere come across this group of bourgeois people who asked me to preach in French? Everywhere and always I have refused, in conscience,⁴³ except twice for very serious reasons. Only at Brignoles and, immediately afterwards, at Lorgues, did I give one instruction per day in French. I did so because Brignoles is one of the main towns of Var where there are many educated people who do not know Provençal and so it was my duty to provide this food for their understanding. Moreover, I had decided on it only because the rest of the population would not suffer any harm thereof. The mission was as usual for everyone and I gave an extra conference on dogma for the magistrates and the numerous bourgeois people. And this supplementary instruction took place precisely at a moment when the people were busy with their work. I did the same at Lorgues because it was reasonable and convenient, I would say, almost out of justice; for it was only proper to do for Lorgues what we had done at Brignoles. The bourgeois people of Lorgues would not have tolerated a less honourable treatment than the one given to those of Brignoles. But I took the trouble to give one extra instruction per day. If these instructions would have resulted only in the conversion of that famous godless columnist, Mr. de Taradeau, who had preached on Atheism all his life with the fanaticism worthy only of Voltaire whose disciple he was, whom grace was awaiting there, I would not have regretted all my trouble. These are the only two times we have, I do not say, modified our custom, but done something over and above and beyond our custom.

⁴³ February 26, the Founder's *Diary* reads: "Letter of Father Honorat of the mission of Maussanne . . . [With the Parish Priest's consent] and to conform to the desire of five or six bourgeois people who had demanded that the talks be in French, he gave way to preaching in the evening alternatively in the two languages. I cannot complain about this weakness enough . . ."

607. To Father Courtès, superior of the Mission, at Aix, Bouch[es]-du-Rhône.⁴⁴

Encouragement in his difficulties. Father Courtès is one of the Congregation's foundation stones.

L.J.C. and M.I.

Marseilles, March 5, 1837.

Oh! you have been really inspired, my dear friend, to write your little letter to me yesterday; it relieved me of a great burden, for nothing afflicts me more than to see you suffer, especially when it is not in my power to remedy it, at least not as soon as I would like to. I assessed the intensity of your hardship by the condition in which you know that I am, for I said to myself that you must be feeling it keenly to inform me of it right away. I was so disheartened interiorly that in my desire to lessen the grief that you expressed to me in the way you do when you are extremely worried, I said to myself: ah if I were not a Bishop, I would leave everything to go and resume the post I occupied for many years with consolation and sorrow, for what corner of the earth is there where such a mixture does not exist? But since I saw myself powerless to accomplish this desire of my heart, I remained in my grief and I would still be thus had you not thought of healing my wound by your letter of yesterday evening.

Dear friend, convince yourself well that I would like to provide you with everything you could wish for at the cost of my own rest; that I feel your sufferings as if they were my own, that the day you will be satisfied, I will be overcome by joy; but my dear son, why do you consider yourself to be merely an ordinary member of the Congreg[ation]? In my opinion, you are one of its pivotal points, you form part of the structure's foundations, you are identified and united with the Head, and so you must expect to experience all the vicissitudes, to withstand all the shocks, to fight offensively and defensively according

⁴⁴ Original: Rome Archives of the Postulation, L. M.- Courtès. The Founder had received from Father Courtès, on March 4, "three pages of his habitual grievances when he gets excited." He said he was being sacrificed at Aix and was never satisfied with the Fathers of his community. Bishop de Mazenod further writes in his *Diary*, March 5: "Letter of Father Courtès. It was instigated by the desire to mitigate somewhat the painful impression which he knew his last letter may have made on me. I was grateful to him for his consideration, and I replied to him immediately in this vein."

to the Institute's need. This is a kind of solidarity which you and an infinitely small number of others share with me.

I do not have the time to say more to you about this. It is a very busy office-day, I have just come in and must leave once again immediately, but I did not want to let the day pass without telling you these few words to explain things as I understand them. Good-bye, I embrace you.

† Ch. Jos. Eug., Bishop of Icosia.

608. To Father Courtès, superior of the Mission, Carmelites' Square, at the top of the public Drive, at Aix.⁴⁵

The Founder's preoccupation: Father Bermond is late in returning from Switzerland. The best members of the Congregation die young.

L.J.C. and M.I.

Marseilles, March 14, 1837.

So, there is no more pen or ink at Aix, my dear Courtès; I have been patient till today but I am beset by one anxiety after another. My cousin arrived from Fribourg⁴⁶ yesterday. He travelled from Payerne to Geneva with Father Bermond who had a seat only on the outside of the coach. They left each other at Geneva but Bermond, who took the route by way of Lyon should have arrived at Aix at least three days ago,⁴⁷ since my cousin came by slow stages from Valence to Avignon. I am preoccupied with the thought that Bermond could have suffered from the cold weather on the outside seat. Could he have stopped at Lyon due to pneumonia or some other sickness? That is what his delay in arriving and your silence make me fear. Put an end to my anxiety soon. I am reduced to dreading at the slightest threat, death that has ravaged our ranks so cruelly this year.⁴⁸ The more one of our men is of good calibre, and Bermond is certainly so, the more nervous I am, because death chooses its victims among the elite. No doubt it is by

⁴⁵ Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L. M.- Courtès.

⁴⁶ Emile Dedons de Pierrefeu.

⁴⁷ On the following day, March 15, the Founder writes in his *Diary*: "Letter of Father Bermond who has arrived at Aix."

⁴⁸ There were two deaths in 1836-1837: A. M. Pons, September 16, 1836 and Jos. L. Richard, January 7, 1837.

design of God's mercy, who wishes to give them time to do penance, that apostates are spared. Until now not one of these scandalous members has died, for poor Vincent⁴⁹ does not fall into this category.⁵⁰

Father Pierre⁵¹ has not written to anyone. He should have let me know of his safe arrival. I am still thinking of Father Mouchel's influenza. You have been freed from your's and so has Father Magnan, but that was a long time ago.

I greet all of you very affectionately. They have just come to call me to administer Confirmation to a sick person. Good-bye.

†Ch. Jos. Eug., Bish[op] of Ic[osia].

609. [To Father Guigues, at N.-D. de l'Osier].⁵²

Reproaches Father Guigues who, contrary to the Congregation's practice, starts a mission at the beginning of Holy Week. Advice regarding the edition of a hymnal to be used during missions.

[Marseilles,] March 14, 1837.

I am writing to you in haste so that my letter may incite you to reply immediately, presupposing that you have been waiting for news from me to write again; but I must admit that I could never have thought that I would have to go looking for you on a mission being preached during the Holy Week. Had you consulted me, I would have dissuaded you from undertaking a mission at the beginning of this week. This is the first time that such a thing happens to us, and see to it that it is the last also. First of all, because it has been our practice always to celebrate Easter in our communities, and because we must return from everywhere else in order to be together during the days of

⁴⁹ Toussaint Vincent, born at La Chapelle (Gap), joined the Oblates on February 24, 1837, died at Aix. The Founder granted him the suffrages of the Congregation "as if he had died in her bosom." Cf. Reg. des prises d'habit 1815-1850, no. 48.

⁵⁰ Mss.: cathégorie.

⁵¹ Father Pierre Aubert, recently sent to Aix.

⁵² YENVEUX I, 108-109, 177-178. The first excerpt ("I am writing to you . . . only after") is dated by Yenveux as of the month of March. No doubt it forms part of the letter of the 14th. The mission of Theys was to end around March 11 or 12 and that of Voiron began on Palm Sunday, the 19th. The Founder must have sent this letter to N.-D. de l'Osier rather than to Voiron. Cf. J. M., March 9, and Dassy to Mazenod, March 18, written at Voiron.

recollection that precede the great solemnity which crowns them. Secondly, because it is an absurdity to preach penance and lead people into the purgative way, precisely on the day of the great *Alleluia* on the solemnity of all solemnities. It is another absurdity to be treating of the mystery of the Eucharist, as should be done on Holy Thursday, during the first days of the mission which should be used to treat other subjects. In a word, things should be done in such a way that the mission ends with Easter, when you preach one during Lent or else it should begin only afterwards.

Even though it is something new for us to separate concerns which should always be common in our family, I would not object that a hymnal we need be put out at Grenoble, especially if his Lordship the Bishop is keen that it be published under his auspices. Nevertheless, it is good to proceed very carefully in such matters. Do nothing without coming to an agreement with Father Mille. I advise you to make a good choice of hymns for your collection. Give preference to piety rather than to modern taste.

I do not think that you should take everything to Father Gignoux to do the proof-reading of the hymns. He is completely new to this job. If Father Dassy is too busy, you would do well to take charge of this job which demands patience and attention, but stick to what has been agreed upon with Father Mille. Do not take out or add, otherwise there is no possibility of agreement. I am put out that more essential business has prevented me from examining the selection myself.

Have the *Veni Creator*, the *Miserere*, the *Ave Maris Stella*, the *De Profundis*, the *Libera* and the *Te Deum Laudamus* printed in the hymnal. These hymns are sung at various times in all our missions. The rule of Christian living which we propose to the converted Christians to follow must also be included.

Another omission to be remedied is that some hymns in Provençal must also be printed; their omission may cause a void for our missions in the Midi. Hence a certain number of copies must be left in loose-sheets so that some pages can be added before binding them. However do not come to any conclusion before speaking to Father Mille who is preaching a mission at this moment. I am convinced that this hymnal thus printed will be useful to the Society.

610. [To Father Guigues, at Voiron]⁵³

Allow Father Dassy some time to prepare a small booklet on N.-D. de l'Osier. The death of Calixte Kotterer's father. He must not be allowed to become parish priest in order to help his mother.

[Marseilles,] March 29,⁵⁴ 1837.

It would have been better if Father Dassy did not give the last instruction so that he could have had time to work on the little booklet on the shrine which should not have been delayed any longer

Your⁵⁵ last letter has consoled me somewhat, without however, completely putting my mind to rest. Recently I read a letter of Bl. Liguori, this great saint who is so pure, so innocent, who never committed a mortal sin during his life in the world; he expresses himself thus: "the Devil is a demon: favourable occasions are within his reach and even without instigation; I am afraid I myself could fall." Thus, let the one you mention to me avoid the occasions . . .

Kotterer informs me that his father is dead, and he gives me a lengthy argument proving that his mother could not do without his assistance. Is he showing me his needs as a way of asking me to provide for them? No, it is quite simply to infer that there is no other means to take than to authorize him to entreat his Lordship the Bishop of Grenoble for a parish, that he would reap benefit from as long as his mother lived, and when the good Lord has taken her away he would return to our houses. This means that after having been brought up, nourished, maintained, etc., for ten years at the expense of the Congregation, now that he could render her some service by exercising the ministry in his charge, he wants to get out of it by spending his youth in the idleness of a parish, warming himself under his mother's apron, who may live for yet another 25 years. After that, when he would be good for nothing, he would like to honour the Congregation by coming back to be taken care of by her and die in peace in her bosom. At a

⁵³ YENVEUX III, 71,212; V, 255.

⁵⁴ It is only on April 2, that the Founder notes in his *Diary*: "Letter of Father Kotterer. He informs me of his father's death"

⁵⁵ Whereas in the letter of February 8, whose original has been preserved, the Founder uses the form "vous," here he uses the familiar form "tu": at least the copyist writes "tu" everywhere, which Yenveux has changed into "vous."

time⁵⁶ when he is aware of all our troubles, he has the courage to make me such a proposal: this reveals his lack of refinement, his ingratitude and a complete absence of love for his state. Had he disclosed to me his mother's situation, and the suffering he has to endure thereat, so that I could think of some means to alleviate it, I would have found the matter very simple, and immediately I would have replied that I gladly consented to help his mother by allowing him to keep the Mass stipends and something more if necessary. In any case, I cannot agree to anything else. Consequently I beg of you to write immediately to his Lordship the Bishop of Grenoble to explain this fact to him. You will make him understand how dangerous such a precedent would be, and the harm the absence of a man who, though not outstanding, nevertheless performs his duties, would cause to the service of the missions in his diocese; that you hope, therefore, the Bishop will not consent to give him a post in his diocese, as Kotterer expects; that the Congregation is doing more than it should, in being disposed to allow this young priest, who owes his entire priestly education to it and which consequently, has already spent so much on him, to keep on behalf of his mother, all the Mass stipends, to which, if it be true that she does not receive the soldier's widow's pension, something could be added to supplement the 400 francs of pension, etc., etc. I am going to reply to Kotterer in this vein.

You will point out that Kotterer is not asking to leave the Congregation for which, he says, he professes a filial attachment, but he would like to be authorized to live outside the community, and exercise another ministry to derive all the benefit from it, and then to come back thereafter, etc. The means I propose safeguard all the principles and sufficiently provide for the needs. Another path cannot be taken in conscience.

P.S. I come back to what I have told you. You must not speak about the Mass stipends. It involves some disadvantages, especially in your diocese (where there are very few of them).⁵⁷ Let us be content with offering three or four hundred francs, namely three if the soldier's widow receives a pension, which normally is half of her husband's, and four if she is deprived of all assistance.

⁵⁶ Father Yenneux's copyist seems to have written: "est-ce."

⁵⁷ The copyist writes: "où en chante beaucoup."

611. [To Father Mille, at N.-D. du Laus].⁵⁸

Reproaches Father Mille for preaching too much without taking a rest. Our traditions are set aside in the mission. The hymnal and singing on missions.

[Marseilles,] April 6, 1837.

I cannot help reproaching you for wanting to give at any cost this mission at Prébois which I had asked you to give up because of the fatigue of the previous missions [where I knew]⁵⁹ that you had spat blood. This amounts to tempting God and killing oneself without any merit; for the Lord does not reward good that is done outside of obedience, less still the good we attempt to do against the norms of obedience. I include among these latter the reasonable care of one's health. What is the use of wearing oneself out in this manner? This is always bad; but in our situation, I consider it a crime. So be prudent, for God's sake! and for once learn to sacrifice your ideas in favour of a father's remonstrations.

How many things I would have to say about the missions, the way they are done! Gradually, our traditions are turned aside; each one foolishly pretends to do better than those who had gone before them and, generally, this is an error. When someone wants to change something, it would be wise to consult me. I do not say this more to you than to the others; I make this remark incidentally, so that you may know what is the proper thing to do.

. . . In the missions, I recommend you use hymns with a refrain, which the congregation can repeat. I insist that there be refrains which the whole congregation can sing, nothing more. I don't find anything

⁵⁸ YENVEUX I, 139, 174; II, 83; IV, 221; VII, 189. According to YENVEUX (IV, 221) this first paragraph would be from a letter to Father Honorat. It is clearly from the letter to Father Mille. Cf. J. M., April 7: "Letter to Father Mille. I reproach him for having undertaken the two missions of Prébois and of St. Nicolas . . ." Quoting the excerpt reproduced in the third paragraph, YENVEUX (I, 174) gives three dates: April 6 to Father Mille, June 6 and September 6 to Father Guigues. It does not seem that the Founder had written on June 6, since he was on a trip then. He does not note it in his *Diary*. The text we give here certainly forms part of the letter of April 6 to Father Mille. In fact, the Founder writes in his *Diary* on April 7: "Letter to Father Mille . . . I inform him that Father Guigues will have the hymnal printed at Grenoble . . . I don't approve that hymns without a refrain be sung always, much less adorations . . . etc." Hence we find the same reflections once again.

⁵⁹ The passage is not easy to read.

more wearisome than listening to some isolated voices which annoy you by their unison without anyone being able to hear one word of what they utter. It is the very opposite of devotion. In this case, music, far from sending the souls to God, turns them away from him. Instead of praying at such a precious moment, people languish. People prefer to pray fervently without being distracted by the singing. And so I would like to suppress, in our missions, any adoration, any hymn, in which the refrain could not be repeated by the entire congregation. Hence I insist on hymns with a refrain because during the mission all must sing. From our hymnals, certain ridiculous and out-of-place expressions of love must also be removed; verses that are significant and inspiring of piety are what is needed.

612. To Father Courtès, priest, house of the Mission at the extremity of the common Drive at Aix.⁶⁰

The Founder's reflections on his appointment to the See of Marseilles. Father Honorat will accompany Bishop Bernet during his pastoral visit of the diocese of Aix.

Marseilles, April 16, 1837.

My dear Courtès, it is a consolation for me, in my disappointment⁶¹ to see you pleased and satisfied at the trick my Uncle has just played on me.⁶² My plan was quite different, it was more to my taste, to my inclination, I like to believe that it offered less advantages to the Congregation. We must not think of it any more. God seems to have given the verdict, my duty will be to do my best in the new position where his Providence is placing me. I have always feared pastoral responsibility. It weighs very heavily on me. As long as work was only a burden, I carried it willingly; in the future, it will not be so. I shall narrate to you how all this happened, when we meet next. His Grace the Archbishop of Aix has immediately written me a very friendly let-

⁶⁰ Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L. M.- Courtès.

⁶¹ Mss.: désapointement.

⁶² The trick Bishop Fortuné had played on him is narrated in the *Diary*, April 9: "My Uncle visited my room in a state of extraordinary jubilation, carrying in his hand the royal Edict appointing me Bishop of Marseilles consequent to this venerable old man's resignation of his See. My consternation must have been in striking contrast to the sentiments my Uncle was expressing. This appointment was his work . . ."

ter to which I am replying today. Also d'Astros, who is a bosom friend,⁶³ has been very sensitive to your consideration; I shall try to write him using the same opportunity, namely, the departure of Father Honorat whom I am sending to Aix to take orders from his Grace the Archbishop concerning the pastoral visit that has to start on the 22nd. Earlier I had thought of Father Mille for this task, but it is absolutely impossible to keep him away from N.-D. du Laus when Pentecost is approaching. There is no one capable to replace him at this period of great pilgrimages and which, this year, is decisive for finishing the construction of the belfry. I have made all possible recommendations to Honorat, you will add the observations locally necessary which none other than you can do, and we shall entrust the rest to God's custody and to that of our good Angels.⁶⁴

Nothing beats the proposed choice of André,⁶⁵ I would still laugh if I could be humourous after having been decked out with a diocese. Honorat intends to return here before the departure of the holy caravan, he will bring me news about you and he will inform me of the good results expected of the leeches applied on your neck.

I greet the whole community affectionately. Tell Mrs. de Régusse that I have not written to anyone; it suffices that such news be learnt from others. What is needed is that she pray for me more fervently than ever. Good-bye, I embrace you wholeheartedly and I bless all of you.

† Ch. Jos. Eug., Bishop of Icosia.

⁶³ Doctor d'Astros of Aix. Cf. J. M., April 15 and 16, 1837.

⁶⁴ Father Courtès replied that this was asking too much of Father Honorat. The latter met Bishop Bernet and he himself realized that he had to preach too often in place of the Prelate who could not speak in public. So the Founder decided to send Father Honorat to N.-D. du Laus and to call Father Mille to Aix. Cf.: J. M., April 18 and 19, 1837.

⁶⁵ Father Daniel Valentin André. This name had been erased in the mss.

613. [To Father Courtès, at Aix]⁶⁶

Difficulty of reaching Father Mille who is to accompany the Archbishop of Aix on his pastoral visit.

[Marseilles,] April 18, 1837.

Father Mille, to whom I intend to entrust [this] job, has had the foolish idea of undertaking, despite the dislike I had manifested to him regarding it, a mission all by himself. I do not know where to get hold of him since I have every reason to believe that he has been obliged to prolong by one week the mission he had hoped to finish in three weeks, which in my view, is difficult when one is alone; [furthermore I am not sure that he has not] ceded to the temptation of going to visit his confreres who are preaching a mission at the same time.⁶⁷

614. [To Father Mille, at N.-D. de Laus]⁶⁸

Advice to Father Mille who will be accompanying Bishop Bernet on his pastoral visit of the diocese of Aix.

[Marseilles, 21]⁶⁹ April 1837.

Let us not speak anymore, my dear Father Mille, of these last two missions, especially that of Prébois, given against my wish. Even if miracles had been worked there, I would not rejoice over them, because it was contrary to proper order and because one must never force the hand of a superior. This is a principle that must be established, and my claim is valid even after all the good you were able to do. Blessed Alphonse once said with vivacity: "Why did you promise this mission? I prefer one missionary's life to ten missions; let it not take place." Nevertheless, this saint cannot be accused of lacking zeal for the salvation of souls

⁶⁶ YENVEUX I, 100, 1*. These two brief excerpts had to be modified somewhat; in Yenveux's texts, the verbs are sometimes in the present tense and at other times in the past.

⁶⁷ Father Mille gave the mission at Prébois while Fathers Gignoux and Hermitte were preaching that of St-Nicolas and Father Pélissier was taking care of the shrine. Cf. J. M., April 9, 1837.

⁶⁸ RAMBERT I, 736-737; REY I, 718; YENVEUX I, 157, 223-224; II, 59; IV, 221.

⁶⁹ The letter has no date in Rambert, but it was written on April 21. Cf. J. M., April 21, 1837.

I would now like to give you some instructions. First of all, you must remember that you have been called to be the instrument of the chief Pastor during his pastoral visit. Consequently you must be imbued with the importance of this ministry's greatness. You must read in the Pontifical whatever concerns this visit that you may preach precisely what the Church expects to teach people in such circumstances. I don't have to tell you that you must stress the sublimity of the grace and all the blessings the Lord dispenses during the transit of a Bishop visiting his flock to instruct them, correct them, console them and impart the Holy Spirit to those who have not yet received him, to arouse repentance in the hearts of those who have lost it; to recall to the knowledge and practice of God's holy law and the Church's precepts; to inflame the charity of this good Mother even for those who are dead, since the Bishop comes to pray for their souls in every place of his jurisdiction. Finally, you will be careful to underline, before the faithful, the chief Pastor's authority, using all the arguments which faith and the knowledge of the divine hierarchy established by our Lord Jesus Christ provide you with. This is your topic. On the whole, you will take orders and suggestions from his Grace the Archbishop whose place you are taking in the pulpit.

In the morning, prior to the ceremonies, I think you will be asked to give a brief instruction on the Sacrament of Confirmation the children will be receiving. Watch that you are not too long, include many things in a few words. Never come down from the pulpit without having aroused hearts to contrition and love. In the villages, make the Bishop understand the usefulness of speaking the local language.

Be prepared in advance for the two sermons which you may have to give on Ascension Day and Pentecost. Write them out during the interval between your trips. It is essential that they be done well.

I congratulate you on the choice I was able to make of you. What you are about to exercise is a very beautiful ministry and I am grateful to his Grace the Archbishop for having preferred our men. I do not have to recommend that you be filled with solicitude, attention and respect for the Prelate. In everything, act in a great spirit of faith, with simplicity, but neglect nothing in performing your duty worthily.

Good-bye, my good son, I joyfully bless you for this task, during which you will not fail to perform all the exercises prescribed by the Rule, even his Grace the Archbishop should be aware of it.

615. [To Father Kotterer, at N.-D. de l'Osier]⁷⁰

Reproaches Father Kotterer who insists on obtaining the dispensation from his vows. The Founder's decision in this matter.

Marseilles, April 23, 1837.

The state of my health does not allow me to expose myself to another interview like that of the other day during which you were simultaneously lacking in the politeness, submission and respect you owe me. Hence I shall let you know my mind and remind you of your duties in writing.

When your father died and you were moved by your mother's situation, you should have presented to me in all simplicity the state of affairs and then with confidence have waited for my decision instead of writing me a very unbalanced letter in which you intimated your own decision.

Before going to Marseilles you should have asked me for permission, or to put it better, you should not have thought of going there, since you would receive a reply from me that should have settled your doubts and indicated the path you were to follow.

Having come to Marseilles, you should have come to me with the sentiments of gratitude which my generous provisions towards you would have prompted in anyone else, instead of assuming an attitude of insolence which obliged me to impose silence on you.

Nurturing in your mind thoughts contrary to the holiest of your duties, despising the sacred authority I have over you, persisting in sentiments of formal disobedience, pushing the rashness of your revolt to the point of being determined to leave without permission, and being on the verge of carrying out this unheard of act of insubordination that amounts to apostasy, you should have abstained from going up the altar today, because you are in a state of mortal sin, and God

⁷⁰ Copy made by the Founder in his *Diary*, May 20, 1837. Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation. Before copying this letter, the Founder wrote: "[Father Kotterer] again insists on the request that I dispense him from his vows. . . . What an unworthy member! . . . [On April 23] I wrote him a letter which I did not send him because he seemed to be of better sentiments. That letter is still on my desk. Father Tempier is quite at ease that I preserve it; I am going to copy it, however painful and tedious it may be for me." After copying this text, the Founder writes: "Here is the letter, I shall see later what I am to do." Father Tempier sent it to Father Kotterer on July 4, cf. J. M., July 4, 1837.

forbid that you have been in that state now a long time as a result of the serious and repeated violations of which you are guilty against the virtues of poverty and obedience you have vowed.

Now, here are my proposals:

Since your father is dead, you say that your mother needs you; and you take the position of demanding that, agreeing to deflect you from your vocation, I allow you to stay with her, and authorize you to accept a post in the diocese of Grenoble to provide for her needs and yours.

I reply to this by saying that my conscience imposes on me the duty to maintain you within the bounds of your vocation, that you have made the vow (confirmed by oath) of perseverance in the Congregation which has admitted you into her ranks, and which, on this condition, has provided for ten years for your education, your food and maintenance.

I reply, as your superior, who is responsible for you and knows that you possess very few supernatural virtues, that I cannot expose you to all the dangers of an isolation that would place you in the situation of soon forgetting the practice of your duties, which duties you are already observing so imperfectly despite the aid of the good example and regularity in our communities.

You have certainly not forgotten my anxieties and sufferings every time there was question of promoting you to Orders. These fears were shared by all the members of my Council. We have always reproached you on your lack of virtue, independently of the defects of your truly detestable character. Never would I have agreed to overcome the repugnance I had to engage my responsibility and ordain you, had I not the assurance that you were irrevocably linked to a Congregation in whose midst you would find the constant assistance to support you in your weakness.

This is the first reason for my refusal, based on the knowledge of my duties, yours and the needs of your soul. This is a consideration of a higher order of which none other than myself can be the judge, because no one knows you as I do, and because I am responsible for you by the very nature of the relationship existing between us because of the Church's authority.

The second reason derives from the first. I must reject this attitude which makes you want to leave your community to go and live with

your mother: 1) because by binding yourself to the religious state, you have renounced the world and you have consecrated your life to the Church in the family that has adopted you and to the ministries she undertakes; 2) because your mother has other children who will not refuse to take care of her as her situation demands; 3) because far from refusing to make up for what your state of religious poverty prevents you from contributing towards the expenses of your mother's maintenance, on the contrary I volunteer to provide for it abundantly by handing over to you the annual sum of 400 francs. These 400 francs together with the pension to which your mother has a right as a soldier's widow and the assistance your two brothers and your sister are bound to provide her, and which they will certainly not force her to exact through legal means, will procure for her an honest and comfortable living. Of this she should be the more content because her income would thus be more substantial than were their joint revenues when her husband was alive.

I add that, out of consideration for your weakness, if your mother likes to come and live at Notre-Dame de l'Osier or at Vinay to be closer to you, I shall arrange in such a way that you stay in the community of l'Osier for as long a time as I can possibly leave you there to make it easy for you to see your mother daily if needed. Note well that it would be much easier for you to maintain your inner peace by keeping you thus somewhat at a distance than by living under the same roof as your mother whose temperament is not so easy to put up with.

You see that, having met, and even more, what filial piety could demand of you, you are free to fulfil the duties of your vocation, and so there are no excuses to keep you away from them. For my part, I am bound to prescribe to you their faithful observance. Thus, to cut short the disastrous illusions that have worried you until now, I order you, by virtue of holy obedience, to return, within the space of one week, to your community of Notre-Dame de l'Osier, declaring you suspended *ipso facto etiam a sacris* if you do not submit yourself to the obedience which I communicate to you by the present letter, and this as long as your opposition may last. I pray the Lord that his grace may halt you at the edge of the precipice that opens up below your feet, so that, being repentant, you may obtain pardon for your faults and, by your good behaviour, may bring to the Congregation and to me as much consolation as the sorrow you have caused us.

616. [To Father Guigues, at N.-D. de l'Osier].⁷¹

Let Father Guigues not worry if the Bishop of Grenoble founds an establishment of diocesan missionaries. Regularity.

[Marseilles,] April 24, 1837.

I very explicitly urge you not to worry either about how to prevent this project from being carried out, or about showing a good spirit to your rivals. Even when you see them being established, I do not absolutely want you to overexert yourself in more personal work. Far from it, do less than what you have been doing this year, take your time of respite between one mission and the other; give your missions during winter; when your winter ministry is over, return peacefully to your community to be recollected there and to live in accordance with your Rule, which does not mean, like lords.

I urge you to be very vigilant about the regularity of your community and to give the good example yourself. Don't be careless about the Brother during the year of his first oblation. His tasks should not exempt him from his regular exercises and the special instructions he needs. However small it may be, the community should not be deprived, on the day of the conference, of the instruction the superior himself must give on some point of the Rule and on the duties of a religious.

617. To Father Martin, at Billens in Switzerland.⁷²

Reflections on the sin of infidelity to the vows of religion.

Marseilles, St. Joseph,⁷³ May 10, 1837.

My dear child, I would very much like to tell you *viva voce* what I content myself in writing to you. Become more and more worthy of

⁷¹ YENVEUX I, 7*, 11*: VII, 162.

⁷² Text copied by the Founder in his *Diary*, May 10, 1837. Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation.

⁷³ The Founder was not well towards the end of April: "The state of ill-health to which I have succumbed after the heavy shocks experienced these last six or seven months." J. M., May 2. His friends obliged him to go for a rest of 15 days "at château St. Joseph." Again he writes in his *Diary*, May 2: "I shall be living alone in the small house adjoining the big property of the Dames du Sacré-Coeur." This property was located 5 or 6 kms. from the city on the way to Aix. These premises later became the holiday house of the Major Seminary.

your vocation. We can never do enough to be grateful for all the good the good Lord helps us to accomplish through a special privilege. If our number is small, no doubt we must lay the blame partly on the evils of the day, and on the laxity which infests so many mercenaries who wish to serve the Church only for the temporal profit which they derive. We must also admit, however, that we have been reduced by the infidelity and lack of virtue of a great number of those who had been called like you and who by their secret prevarication have deserved to fall into a state of real corruption, which will invariably bring God's malediction upon them. Not all have become apostates, in this sense that they did not cross the threshold abruptly; however, they have all really betrayed their trust by placing themselves in such a state as to be expelled at their own risk and danger. I make an exception for only one whose eccentricity excuses him, in my view. This is Father Pachiaudi. Except for him, I consider all the others to be in a state of damnation. Their unfaithfulness and the scandal they cause to the Church are permanent. I definitely will not absolve them from such a great crime. All should know this. They may want to delude themselves but no one can make fun of God without being punished and even people do not allow themselves to be misled. When I used the word "corruption" above, that is correct because I understand it as corruption of morality for some and for others, the corruption of spirit reached by violating principles, by distorting duties, disregarding authority, gambling with the most sacred commitments here below, trampling under foot the vows. It is a horror, a monstrosity, a villainy, no matter under what mantle one may want to cover it. I appeal to God for the judgment day since my voice is powerless on earth to keep them faithful to their duties. I did not think of writing these things to you, but *Spiritus Dei ubi vult spirat*.⁷⁴

⁷⁴ John 3:8.

618. To Father Tempier, Vicar General, sup[er]ior of the Seminary of Marseilles.⁷⁵

Invitation to visit the château St. Joseph to discuss various matters.

L.J.C. and M.I.

Marseilles, May 10, 1837.⁷⁶

I would be very pleased, dear Tempier, if you could see me tomorrow for a while at my leisure. I have many things to discuss with you calmly. We must not delude ourselves with the idea that we are still far away from the time when we must take our stand on many a thing.⁷⁷ In addition to the fact that the moment may be closer than we think, it is necessary that everything be ready in advance. Moreover, is it really sure that we have no journeys to make, and if it is useful to make some when will we attend to what should be foreseen? All this is not a trifle. On the contrary, everything else must yield and has only a secondary importance. I must also let you know of one letter from among those I receive daily.

When you come tomorrow, bring me a pair of shoes with thick soles, that is, let them not be pumps. Nor should you bring those huge travelling boots which are of no use to me here.

Good-bye, dear friend, until tomorrow.

† Ch. Jos. Eug., Bis[hop] of Icosia.

⁷⁵ Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L. M.- Tempier.

⁷⁶ Father Tempier wrote next to the date: "from the château de St-Joseph."

⁷⁷ He probably has in mind the preparation for the General Chapter which took place at the Major Seminary from August 4 to 8, and also the measures to be taken after his appointment to the diocese of Marseilles.

619. To Father Tempier, Vicar General, sup[er]ior of the Major Seminary, Marseilles.⁷⁸

Request a vehicle for the return to Marseilles.

From the château de St. Joseph.⁷⁹ May 12, 1837.

I would not like my hasty return to be due to some unpleasant happening; that is nevertheless what determines me to come back at your invitation, for I am not suffering from cold in my little room. So send me the vehicle and let me know if I should go to St. Barnabé. In conscience, I feel I am not bound thereto, nevertheless, I have no problem in going there, if that has been arranged.

Good-bye, my most dear friend, I shall go only on my own decision. If the weather is good I will be tempted to return and spend a few days here.⁸⁰

620. To Father Tempier, Vicar General, at Marseilles.⁸¹

Articles to be brought for the Ordination on the 20th to the château St. Joseph. Not to be hasty to share the same views as Father Boué.

L.J.C. and M.I.

St. Joseph, May 19, 1837.

Since Pierre is going to Marseilles, I take the opportunity to tell you that it would be good to inform Father Athanase⁸² that the Ordination will take place at St. Joseph at 7:00 a.m. I advise you not to lose the ring while bringing it to me. For greater safety it would be better to take the one from Rome which is in a small box kept in one of the small drawers on the right in my small writing-table. Do not forget the crozier, we have the key of the case here. I also brought the *Missae Pontificales* and a Pontifical and everything else I need.

⁷⁸ Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L. M.- Tempier.

⁷⁹ "From the château de St-Joseph" was written by Father Tempier.

⁸⁰ It is highly probable that, especially in regard to the Founder's health, Father Tempier exercised his duty of admonitor authoritatively. He had asked the Founder to return to Marseilles because "of the extremely bad weather." Cf. J. M., May 12. The Founder again stayed at St. Joseph from May 18 to 29.

⁸¹ Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L. M.- Tempier.

⁸² Father Athanase was certainly a Capuchin from Marseilles. Brother Léon, a Capuchin deacon, was ordained a priest by the Founder on May 20. Cf. J. M., May 20.

If we are to talk business, I will tell you that there is no need to hurry and share the same views of Father Boué.⁸³ He has brought quite enough from the diocese for his establishment, which is of no interest at all to us. I expect you tomorrow at the latest. Perhaps you will do well to profit this evening from the return of the horse-carriage that will bring back Father Meistre.⁸⁴ However, do as you see best. If there were one to receive the Tonsure, I think we would be having all the Orders. We should have promoted Brother Lagier for this, but we have gone about it too late.

Good-bye, I embrace you.

† Ch. J. Eug., Bishop.

[Back page] I realize that I have not replied to the letter.

621. [To Father Mille, at N.-D. du Laus].⁸⁵

How to help the priests who come for a retreat to N.-D. du Laus.

[St. Joseph,] May 28, 1837.

Since Father Aubert is no more at Laus⁸⁶ and you yourself are absent sometimes, the other Fathers should have the jurisdiction to hear the confessions of the priests who come to the shrine. I had decided that Father Aubert would take charge of this difficult ministry, because, in my opinion, he had adopted a good method to help these priests make a profitable retreat, whereas our other priests were satisfied with hearing confessions without troubling themselves about anything else. I find this deplorable, that is why I wanted to remedy it by putting Father Aubert in charge of these priests. Since he is no more there, our Fathers cannot be dispensed any more from applying themselves to better their facile approach.

⁸³ Reverend Boué, founder of a retreat-house for priests at Castelnaudary (Aude), Cf. J. M., May 18, 1837.

⁸⁴ J. A. M. Louis Meistre, honorary Canon of Marseilles and pro-parish priest of St-Martin.

⁸⁵ YENVEUX I, 63-64.

⁸⁶ The novitiate was transferred from N.-D. du Laus to Marseilles during the fall of 1836. While being superior at Calvaire and master of novices, Father Casimir Aubert taught dogma at the Major Seminary.

622. [To Father Casimir Aubert, at Marseilles].⁸⁷

Let Father Aubert look after the novices as much as possible. Taking possession of N.-D. de Lumières. Description of the church. Celebration of the feast of the Sacred Heart with Fathers Tempier and Honorat.

*Aeterni Luminis mater, ora pro nobis.*⁸⁸

[N.-D. de Lumières,⁸⁹] June 3, 1837.

In the meantime, my dear son, give all your attention to the novitiate. I know that they are not lacking in instructions, but guidance has been defective for one reason or another, and thus the novices generally do not change, do not improve, which is a great misfortune. No doubt, this is due very much to the times in which we are living, but somewhat also to the excess of your occupations which have always divided your attention.⁹⁰

Here we are in an earthly paradise. Nothing is so beautiful as the church that is built on the miraculous shrine of the Blessed Virgin. It is incomparably the best we have. The church has a majestic height, is 114 feet long and 63 feet wide. Two rows of huge and deep chapels replace the side naves, there are four of them on each side. They go only as far as the foot of the stair-case by which one can climb up on both sides of the shrine which is raised thirteen steps above the level of the church. Behind the altar is a beautiful open choir which ends with thirteen stalls arranged from the front to the back. Underneath the shrine is the chapel of the miraculous Virgin which can be approached through the entrance formed like a door by the open space between the

⁸⁷ REY I, 723-724; YENVEUX II, 150; IV, 125; VII, 20*.

⁸⁸ REY (I, 723) says that the letter begins with this invocation, customary at N.-D. de Lumières.

⁸⁹ Bishop de Mazenod went to visit N.-D. de Lumières in the company of Fathers Tempier and Honorat. They left Marseilles on May 29, passed through Aix and remained at Lumières from May 30 to June 6. Afterwards the Founder and Father Tempier stopped at Avignon on June 7, 8 and 9, and from there they went on to Lyon and Switzerland.

⁹⁰ YENVEUX (VII, 20*) at the beginning of this paragraph writes: "June 4." The Founder speaks only of one letter to Father Aubert written on June 3 "to authorize him to receive the vows of Father Chauvet." This excerpt is probably a part of the letter of the 3rd. Yenveux writes: "p. 2, lines 6-13," whereas he mentions at the beginning of the 3rd paragraph: "p. 3, etc."

two stair-cases; you come down fourteen steps and you enter these holy precincts made famous by so many miracles. This chapel is at the ground level; though it is very far below the shrine and much lower than the church, it is quite regular; it is as though of three naves, and one can even walk around behind the altar. I don't have to tell how much devotion it inspires.

It is a wonderful thing that we are thus in charge of the most famous shrines of the Blessed Virgin. It would seem that the good Lord provides us with means to fulfil the plans of his Providence and to acquit ourselves of the task imposed on us by the Head of the Church when he established our Congregation. This is our tenth foundation if we count that of Nîmes which we had to lay aside by force of circumstances. I do not know of any other Society which in our time has been favoured in a similar manner, and it is with a handful of men that these things are done in times that are bad. However I do not hide any of our sufferings, no one feels them more intensely than I do myself, but, while I am troubled in so many ways by the foolishness and malice of people who should be most holy, I may be allowed to point out with gratitude also our good Master's providential designs, benevolence and great mercy. Yesterday⁹¹ we did what we could to render him homage and manifest our gratitude. At the very moment when he was solemnly adored at Marseilles, the three of us were united with you in his holy presence in our big church. We exposed the ciborium where he is present and we made our oraison before our Lord. We sang the *Veni Creator* to place this new establishment under God's special protection, we recited the litany of the Sacred Heart, we made both the act of consecration and the act of reparation just as you did, we sang the whole of *Pange Lingua*. I say we because I did everything exactly as my two assistants. Finally I imparted the solemn benediction applying it to you and to the entire Congregation. We were so pleased with our evening that we did not even omit the grand *Laudate Dominum omnes gentes* and the prayer of thanksgiving. I assure you that you were very much present in my thought during all this pious exercise. Did you do as much?

I need not tell you about the house which is delightful, the spacious gardens, the beautiful streams, etc., etc., and all that I could say

⁹¹ Friday, June 2, feast of the Sacred Heart.

about the condition of this house located at the centre of this notable region which will have much to profit from the stay of the missionaries in its midst . . . God will take care of providing it with members.

623. [To Father Kotterer, at N.-D. de l'Osier].⁹²

Refuses to grant Father Kotterer dispensation from his vows. If he receives this dispensation directly from Rome, he then comes under the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Marseilles.

Notre-Dame de Lumières, June 4, 1837.

I had not written to you because I had intended to give you a decision by word of mouth when passing through l'Osier; since my route has been changed and I will come to that house only on my return from Switzerland, I do not delay anymore to tell you that the reasons you allege in asking me for a dispensation are not valid, in my judgment. Your conduct on the whole, not to specify your intentions, your procedure, your resolutions, your conduct on the whole I say, no doubt, have made you liable to an expulsion that is more than deserving, but I do not want it said anymore that a bad member who wishes to break his ties, has only to behave badly and thus achieve his goal with a semblance of regularity. You are free to apostatise if it seems all right to you; a dispensation granted without sufficient motives and especially after the threats you had the courage to address to me, would amount to complicity⁹³ and there would be two guilty persons instead of one, for even though there are more than enough reasons to expel you, there is none valid to dispense you legitimately.

I consider it my duty to warn you that since my refusal in conscience is motivated by a fair evaluation of your reasons and by the knowledge of the means I had provided for you to fulfil your duty towards your mother without betraying your vocation, I believe that you cannot appeal in conscience to Rome unless you attach my refusal

⁹² Copy made by the Founder in his *Diary*, June 4. Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation.

⁹³ The Founder had written: "would amount to and there would be two guilty persons." In copying, he has certainly omitted a word.

and the reasons on which I base myself, which I myself will undertake to develop should you go to that extreme measure.

And since, in dealing with a mind like your's, a person must foresee everything in advance, it is good for you to know that you cannot take a gamble at the same time between your religious superiors and your ecclesiastical superiors. So, by this present letter, I give you notice of an explicit order to go to your Bishop or his Vicars General within a week of your receiving some decision from Rome which would release or just relax the ties of your vows, and this under pain of suspension incurred *ipso facto* at the end of one week I am willing to grant you.

Since, I presume that you did not deliberately address me as father in your last letter nor have you considered yourself as a son, I too end my letter by expressing to you only regret for having imposed hands on a son who has caused me so much of sorrow and has scandalized his brothers so greatly.

† Ch. Jos. Eug., Bishop of Icosia.

624. [To Father Mille, at N.-D. du Laus].⁹⁴

Reproaches Father Mille who does not obey promptly. As soon as possible he must send to N.-D. de Lumières the two Fathers who were expected there.

[N.-D. de Lumières,] June 4, 1837.

When will there be an end, my dear Father Mille, to this disorderly system which neutralizes at every turn my administration and makes it impossible for me to count on anything or anyone?

It is already three days that I am waiting at Lumières for Father Telmon and the Father who was to have come with him from Laus. I am leaving still awaiting their arrival, and consequently unable to give them my instructions which, it was rather important that they receive for the starting of this new establishment. I cannot believe that Father Telmon has taken upon himself the consequences of the delay at which I am justifiably annoyed. He had to be at N.-D. du Laus on Monday and leave from there on Tuesday. It is likely that you found it con-

⁹⁴ YENVEUX III, 117.

venient to keep him to help you and thus not be deprived of the assistance of the one he was to bring along. This is very bad at any time but especially in the present situation, when, you know, I am at Lumières to found an establishment there and it is for this purpose that I called Father Telmon and one more of your Fathers there. You are all the more at fault because I had written to you on leaving Marseilles and I had specially requested you to use your influence to persuade Father Hermitte to be Father Telmon's companion instead of Father Gignoux who would be less useful in these regions. However I insisted that they be separated. But, whether it be the one or the other, it was essential that I get in touch with the one who arrived.⁹⁵

Nothing will go well with this spirit of narrow-mindedness with which you are imbued. You want to provide for the need which is close to you, and you are not concerned first of all that you are misappropriating a power which no one has given you, and then that you are greatly jeopardizing the general interest of the Congregation.

How is it that you don't understand that you cannot answer for what you may not do? For God's sake, never argue when it is a question of obedience. The best thing would always be to do simply what is prescribed.

Good-bye, I bless you, but this blessing is somewhat like an absolution.

625. To Father Aubert, priest, at Calvaire, Montée des Accoules, Marseilles, France.⁹⁶

Bishop de Mazenod reprimands Father Casimir for not going for a rest at Lumières. Father J. Lagier will replace him as superior of Calvaire and as novice master.

L.J.C. and M.I.

Billens, July 4, 1837.

I am rather disappointed, my good son, that you did not profit from the permission I gave you to go to Notre-Dame de Lumières

⁹⁵ Father Telmon arrived at N.D. de Lumières on June 6, at the time when Bishop de Mazenod and Father Tempier were leaving for Avignon: "I had time only to embrace him . . ." the Founder writes in his *Diary*, June 6.

⁹⁶ Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L. M.- Aubert Cas.

right after the beginning of the Seminary vacation. Being in a hurry as all of us are for all of our activities, you would have lost some precious time in waiting for my reply which, incidently, will reach you rather late. You should have left and waited for my reply at Lumières, where you could have enjoyed a few days of rest in the countryside, and by postponing Father Chauvet's profession by a few days, you would have managed to spend three weeks without any preoccupation and free from all work. In the plan you propose to me, I see only more fatigue in your hasty trip to Lumières and very little benefit in the short stay at Aix. It is not that I disapprove of your remarks with regard either to the novitiate or to Calvaire, but you would have had the same result by starting to pack off. That is what you should have done on the spot. You know well that there is no hurry to give up your job as novice master and the rest. What was urgent is the relief from your excessive tiredness. I am always afraid that you take on too much work. For the rest, plan things with Father Lagier in order to alleviate whatever is always painful in a transition. If it is too difficult for Father Cuyinat to change directors now that he is finishing his novitiate, he may continue to come to you. As for Father Chauvet there is no difficulty. You must take him through to the end but it is advisable that you gradually eclipse yourself with regard to the others. As for the church, it has always been my intention that even in your new job you do not give it up completely. You could go there to hear confessions even once a week; before you take charge, you may, if you think it proper, continue to do as you did before, and this also in case you prefer to be more free to take up domicile in the house to which you have been assigned. Nevertheless, after due consideration, I think that you should stay at Calvaire until I return. Your changing would give out what I reserve to announce myself. It would be a good example if Father Lagier took possession of his superiorship when you are present. It is fitting that we get used to seeing superiors take the last place as it is the practice everywhere else.

Now the whole problem is regarding the time and place of your rest. Had you waited for my letter at Marseilles, I would have almost been tempted to advise you to go to Lumières only after Father Chauvet's profession. You would remain there till the departure of Father Honorat and one other whom I may call,⁹⁷ which will take

⁹⁷ Mss.: appeller. Reference to the Delegates to the General Chapter.

place on August 2, and that would be very brief. Nothing prevents you from making an appearance for a few days at Aix if that can entertain you and make you happy. But one thing only, I don't want your going there on foot.

I would like that you undertake to give the Oblates⁹⁸ something to do, after they have rested for a few days. A complete cessation from work would be too much of a burden for them.

Tell my dear Father Semeria that I am very much edified by his behaviour. There is no doubt that the good Lord takes into consideration his fidelity to the prescriptions of obedience. It is a compensation offered to the Lord for the crime of that other who tramples under foot this sacred duty. I would certainly have consented to his prolonging his stay at the Colla for a few days, but I congratulate him for not having taken upon himself to presume such a permission.

I shall be starting out tomorrow. You should send any further letters to me only to Gap where I shall do the Ordination on the 16th. I do not think I shall get back to Marseilles before the Chapter. I shall arrive there only on the eve of the convocation which I shall fix for Thursday, August 3. It is obvious that not everyone should know all our business, hence advise them not to talk about it. Good-bye, dear and good son, I love you.

Ch. Jos. Eug., Bishop of Icosia.

Father Tempier will take leave of me at Gap and go down straight to M[arsei]lles where he will have certainly arrived between the 15th and the 17th.⁹⁹

⁹⁸ The Oblates, namely, the scholastics. It would seem that the Founder wanted to put Father Aubert in charge of the scholastics, at the Seminary of Marseilles. However, at the General Chapter held in August, Father Aubert was re-appointed superior of Calvaire and novice master.

⁹⁹ These three lines were written on the margin of the first page.

626. To Father Courtès, priest, Carmelites' Square at the top of the public Drive, at Aix, Bouches-du-Rhône, France.¹⁰⁰

Itinerary of his journey from Billens to Marseilles. Plan to sell the Oblate property of Tholonet at Aix and the house of Billens.

L.J.C. and M.I.

Billens, July 6, 1837.

I am about to get into the carriage, my dear Courtès, to return by way of Lausanne, Geneva and Chambéry. I shall stop at Gap to do the Ordination there; from there I plan to go to St. Martin¹⁰¹ and return to Marseilles to hold the Chapter there. This is my planned route unless God wills otherwise. I had much trouble in reading the model text of the power of attorney you had sent me.¹⁰² I have copied it as it was, but there is one passage which seemed somewhat strange to me, namely, where it is said to sell to *such a person*, in any case you will explain by saying that it means such a person of his choosing. The *cultivated country-house* also seemed to be odd. It does not matter, here it is. The thing that baffles me is that the property which was valued at 8000 francs when it was believed to be burdened with a life-interest, was worth only 500 francs more when it was discovered that the beneficiary was dead.

The horse is harnessed, we have to leave. Good-bye.

¹⁰⁰ Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L. M.- Courtès.

¹⁰¹ St-Martin-des-Pallières, the property of the de Boisgelins where Armand de Boisgelin's family spent the summer. The Founder wished to "console" his sister over the decision her son Louis had taken to join the Jesuits, cf.: J. M., July 2, 3 and 13, 1837.

¹⁰² The Founder writes in his *Diary*, June 16: "Letter of Father Courtès. He asks me for another power of attorney for the sale of our small property of Tholonet."

627. [To Father Guigues, at N.-D. de l'Osier].¹⁰³

Father Kotterer behaves in such a way that he should be expelled from the Congregation.

[Grenoble,] July 10, 1837.

As it is, nothing is more certain than that the reasons he presents to me in asking for a dispensation are absolutely trifling. In conscience I cannot yield to his request. But according to Bl. Liguori's teachings, a member who makes a similar request, by that very fact makes himself unworthy to remain in the Congregation, and then he had no scruple at all in expelling him. In our case the member is all the more culpable in that he knew his superior's decision. There is too much to say on this queer fellow for me to list and recall all the reasons there are for him to be expelled. I had made it a point not to provide this kind of suffering which is the finishing stroke for a bad subject and pretty well the equivalent to their reprobation, but if someone other than myself thinks he is obliged to incite such an expulsion, then I would be forced to pass sentence: I would do it with sorrow of course, but not with any scruple. *Ipse videbit.*

628. [To Father Tempier, at Marseilles].¹⁰⁴

The Founder does not act any more through inclination but through the spirit of faith.

[N.-D. du Laus,] July 14, 1837.

You may have been under the impression, my dear Tempier, that I was at the end of my daring enterprises when you placed me under the mantle of our good Mother. I had deeply wished that it were so, for I admit that I have a very great need of rest and furthermore, since I do nothing more in this world through inclination, I can act only through the power of grace and from supernatural motives which do not per-

¹⁰³ YENVEUX VIII, 260. The Founder does not mention this letter in his *Diary*. However he had received one from Father Kotterer on June 27 in which the latter had insisted on being dispensed from his vows. On July 4, the Founder sent him the letter he had prepared on April 23. In the interim, "Father Tempier took the opportunity to say some truths to this queer fellow." Cf. J. M., July 4.

¹⁰⁴ YENVEUX V, 131.

haps have as much influence on my body as on my soul, and which at least move both through effort and despite the opposition coming from the will and nature. These victories are easy in appearance but in reality very painful; they, undoubtedly, can be useful to the spirit even in causing it grief but which certainly wear out the body in subduing it.¹⁰⁵

629. [To Father Tempier, at Marseilles].¹⁰⁶

Confirmation administered in the prison of Gap to a person sentenced to death.

[N.-D. du Laus,] July 18, 1837.

My liturgical function on Sunday was wonderful. I did not only administer Confirmation to the poor condemned man, but to sanction by my example the principles I have upheld,¹⁰⁷ I gave him Communion during the Mass I celebrated in the small prison chapel, in the presence

¹⁰⁵ According to YENVEUX (V, 131), the letter of July 14 begins with this rather mysterious paragraph which Father Tempier understood from the rest of the text which does not exist any more. The Founder and Father Tempier arrived at Gap on July 11 or 12. Father Tempier left immediately for Marseilles while Bishop de Mazenod remained at N.-D. du Laus. He had undertaken to officiate at the Ordinations at Gap on the 16th. But on the very day of Father Tempier's departure, the Secretary General of the Bishop's House at Gap arrived at N.-D. du Laus with a letter from La Croix, the Bishop-elect of Gap, requesting the Founder to come and substitute for one of the consecrating Bishops who had fallen ill. The episcopal Ordination was to take place on July 25, at Bourg. This upset the Founder since this unexpected journey prevented him from going to see his sister at St-Martin. He wrote to his mother on the 15th: "It is a question of nothing less than going to help . . . and that at Bourg, that is to say, beyond Lyon. I did not in the least expect such drudgery. On account of this I will have to make at least 80 leagues each way." The General Chapter was to start at Marseilles on August 13. Fortunately a later letter set the Founder at liberty. The Bishop of St-Dié, the one who had been invited, had consented to go for the episcopal Ordination.

¹⁰⁶ YENVEUX II, 110.

¹⁰⁷ The Founder had not performed the Ordination for which he had been invited. Rome had refused the indult of *extra tempora*. But while passing through Gap, he learned that a person who was sentenced to death, being repentant and having made his confession, was going to the gallows without receiving Holy Communion. This was the custom: "That there is a divine precept to receive Holy Communion before one dies that the sinner who is reconciled with God is bound to the obligation of the annual Communion, has no importance at all to them . . ." the Founder wrote in his *Diary*, July 16. "God be blessed a thousand times! Father Lagier (the Major Seminary director) spoke to me of this man. Immediately I decided on the principles to be followed . . . I took upon myself the task of sanctioning by my example the doctrine I teach. Today I went to say Mass in the prison."

of the prisoners, all of whom wept together with the condemned person and the other attendants, at two sermons I saw fit to give, one before Communion and the other after the Confirmation. Father Lagier promised me that he would follow my example, and that on the day the condemned person is to die he would say Mass in the prison and once again give him Holy Communion. May God be blessed! Had I procured only this favour during my trip, I would have compensation enough for my trouble.

630. To Father Tempier, Vicar General, superior of the Major Seminary, Marseilles.¹⁰⁸

Account of his journey from N.-D. du Laus to St-Martin-des-Pallières. Reply to Father Tempier's letter on various matters concerning Father Delestrade, Father Cas. Aubert and the inhabitants of Balagne in Corsica. Armand de Boisgelin willingly consents to his son entering the Jesuit novitiate.

L.J.C. and M.I.

St-Martin, July 23, 1837.

I have no regrets, my dear Tempier, for not having been able to go and rush to Bourg. I don't know if I would have returned safe and sound. A friendly letter will have substituted for me and they will have to be satisfied with that. I left Laus, as I had informed you, on Friday, early morning and we were rather happy to have the small carriage to ourselves. To abide by your advice, we had put an omelet into a loaf of bread, taken a bottle of wine, a piece of cheese and some oranges. This stop helped us to have dinner after we had passed Sisteron where we avoided freezing in the hotel of the North which you had warned us against; we had taken the precaution to have our lunch at the Seminary before getting into the carriage. Thus we reached Peyrolles very fit, where my travelling companion,¹⁰⁹ who had been sleeping since our little meal, which we had two leagues from Sisteron without any interruption other than a moment to drink a glass of water at Manosque, was quite surprised to find himself when he woke up. Mr. de Boisgelin had arrived on the eve, that is, a few hours earlier for it was not yet

¹⁰⁸ Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L. M.- Tempier.

¹⁰⁹ Father Mille.

two o'clock. We left at 4 o'clock and we stopped at Grians for Mass, at 9:30 a.m. we were on our way through the horrible road that leads to St. Martin. After having been shaken up and bruised for two hours in my brother-in-law's horse carriage, I asked to be excused, and however scorching the heat was at 11 o'clock, I got down from the carriage and plucking up some courage, I made a good league more on foot and reached the Castle at 12:30 p.m. When we got down from the carriage we noticed that the suspension belt was broken and the body of the carriage was resting against the axle. In brief, after a short rest, we sat at table and ate dinner with great appetite since we had taken only a little coffee with the parish priest of Rians. So here you have our exact itinerary. Now I hasten to reply to your letter which I have just received. I shall do it succinctly because they are waiting for me before serving supper and we are surrounded as you know by hungry maws.¹¹⁰ I was not surprised at Father Delestrade's¹¹¹ decision, he intimated it beforehand. It cannot go unpunished, but I don't think it should be done in a hurry. Let us postpone this act of justice to a later period.

If I have to write to the Minister for my pension, I shall still be on time when I return. My Uncle could have mentioned the inadvertence in his letter. Since he has not done it, I will claim it myself.

As a rule, Aubert must vote at Lumières, if he is there at the time of the Chapter, but we must ignore it, and since his new appointment is not yet officially known, it is better that he votes at Calvaire.

Don't forget to reply in the most favourable manner to the inhabitants of Balagne, weighing well your conditions, however, since your letter will receive great publicity.¹¹²

My brother-in-law is wonderful, he has written the loveliest and most reasonable letter to his son. His good-nature has gone so far that he told me this morning he regretted not having had knowledge of the

¹¹⁰ No doubt an allusion to his nephew Eugène and his niece Césarie.

¹¹¹ The Founder often had reason to complain about Father Louis Delestrade, the then parish priest of the church of St-Charles. The latter had had a house built despite the Bishop's opposition.

¹¹² On July 18, the Founder received a letter from Father Tempier. The latter told him that the inhabitants and the Mayors of 5 or 6 townships of the province of Balagne had requested an immediate Oblate establishment in their midst. They offered even a monastery for this purpose. *J. M.*, July 18, 1837.

letters before replying, because he would have consented to Louis going directly where he wants to go. It is admirable, and this latter quality will merit for him, I hope, the grace to become as practising a Catholic as he is an orthodox one. One cannot behave better in church than he does. He had assisted at my Mass this morning, which had not prevented him from being present at the sermon Father Mille preached to us. To be sure, his son's decision does embarrass him, but he has accepted it coolly and with a resignation which people who feign devotion could never get close to achieve, for example, the Roux family, in which case it was only the tenth child whereas in this case it is the eldest child on whom a father could so justly count and of whom the whole family has been so proud.

Thank Father Flayol for the letter he has left for me at St. Martin. The anecdote gave me much consolation.¹¹³ Tell him he would have done well to wait for me, and he had all the time, for I arrived on the 22nd and he wrote to me that he had to be at Marseilles only on the 29th.

Good-bye, my dear friend, I close my letter in a hurry. The luggage had travelled with me up to Peyrolles, you must have received it the same day. It consisted of the crosier, the trunk and the box for the hat. The conductor to whom I had given the key of the trunk promised me he would hand over everything to you the same day. Good-bye.

Everyone is paying you compliments. My love to all at the Bishop's House.

631. [To Father Tempier, at Marseilles].¹¹⁴

The Founder burns a piece of paper containing reproaches uncharitably made to a penitent.

[St-Martin,] July 24, 1837.

I shall not end my letter without telling you that the note inserted in your's meant for the penitent concerned was neither friendly nor

¹¹³ Father Flayol had accompanied Eugène de Boisgelin from Marseilles to St-Martin. The anecdote in question is mentioned in the Founder's *Diary*, July 22: "The child . . . did not want to eat after mid-night, because he wanted to receive Holy Communion at his (Flayol's) Mass at Barjols where they had stopped."

¹¹⁴ YENVEUX VII, 170. The Founder says nothing about his letter in his *Diary*.

charitable. People do not expect such hard expressions. If one knows the human heart, one should not expect to heal wounds with such a remedy. Knowing the individual's sensitivity, I can assure you that he would have been extremely upset by it. That is why I have burnt this little piece of paper which did not at all fit the need.

632. [To Father Tempier, at Marseilles].¹¹⁵

A case of cholera at Marseilles. Bishop de Mazenod is not afraid to return to Marseilles.

[St-Martin,] July 26, 1837.

Your cholera and your epidemic do not frighten me at all. I have always regretted that I did not die in 1814, when I had contacted typhoid in the prisons. I would ask for nothing better than to succumb to another attack especially if it is while fulfilling a duty of charity or of justice.

633. To Father Courtès, priest, Carmelites' Square, at the top of the public Drive at Aix, Bouch[es]-du-Rhône.¹¹⁶

Various details regarding the sale of Tholonet and the return of the Fathers from Billens. Father Mouchel is called to the Chapter, etc.

L.J.C. and M.I.

St-Martin, July 29, 1837.

We are soon going to see each other again, my dear Courtès. This thought gives me the patience to endure being deprived of your letters. Now it is too late for you to write me here. I had learnt through Father Tempier that the buyer of the piece of land of Tholonet has withdrawn and that you were not perturbed about it. However I would like us to sell it well before winter so as not to risk the danger of losing the olive trees. In any case we must know why the tenant had concealed from us the death of the lady who was receiving its revenues. I do not have

¹¹⁵ REY I, 732. The Founder notes in his *Diary*, July 25: "Tempier's letter Regularly there are some cases of cholera in Marseilles. Only by miracle have they escaped an epidemic"

¹¹⁶ Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L. M. - Courtès.

much confidence in this man; we will have to watch him, and perhaps it may be best to send him away.

I have also learnt that Father Bermond had contacted scabies at the hospital. This will hardly encourage our Fathers for this kind of service. Take care lest all of you catch it. There is no other sickness more contagious than this. I have learned that your community has delegated Father Magnan. I am happy to call Father Mouchel from my area. I rely on you to inform him about it. The notice I gave him here is as good as the direct letter of convocation. I am happy to show this Father such a sign of my confidence. He will come with you to the Seminary on the appointed day.

I think that Father Bernard should have arrived at your place a few days ago. I had allowed him to stop at Aix, but I presume he will not prolong his stay there too long. His work at Marseilles is set. All that I know of the rest of the convoy is that they left Billens on the 15th and on the 19th they were still only at Nantua, which is understandable only if they had stopped somewhere on Sunday, and even this does not tally with my calculation, for I counted on six leagues per day. For the rest, since I am out of reach here, I know nothing except indirectly; Tempier has not yet acknowledged reception of the trunk and of the crosier which should have been handed over to him at Marseilles the very day I arrived here, namely last Saturday, exactly a week ago. I hope he is not sick. He has not as yet replied to any of the letters I wrote to him from here. However I had received news from him, but prior to his reception of my letters.

I beg you to ask my mother to come to Marseilles only the second week of August or at least not earlier than Monday. If she arrived earlier than what I thought I could gather from her letters, she could not see me nor discuss with me the matter which brings her there, because I shall not leave the Seminary before the end of the Chapter. I briefly mentioned this to her in my last letter but I did not explain to her why I recommended that she not come the first week; I am afraid she may not notice this, not knowing that it will be impossible for her to see me.

Good-bye, my dear son, I embrace you affectionately.

† Ch. Jos. Eug., Bishop of Icosia.

634. To Father Tempier, Vicar General, superior of the Major Semin[a]ry, Marseilles].¹¹⁷

Details about the date, means and route of the return trip from St. Martin to Marseilles.

L.J.C. and M.I.

St-Martin, July 30, 1837.

I started, my dear friend, to count the days. I have not received any more since your letter of the 24th, and my heart which easily worries about those whom I love when I am far away from them, was already weary through fear of the cholera about which you wrote to me in your two letters. This is so true that I would have been really nervous had I not received something today. Do not trouble yourself about seeking a cure for the little red mark on my nose, when I am in Marseilles we shall see if it is worth worrying about it. I think you received the very day of my arrival here, the crosier, trunk and box and that through an oversight you did not mention it to me. The conductor was entrusted with the task of bringing these objects to you already on Saturday and I had given him the key of the trunk so that he could offer to open it for the custom's men.

My brother-in-law has written to a coachman at St-Maximin. Everything considered, I preferred that the carriage arrive here on Tuesday evening so that we could leave very early on Wednesday. In that way, I shall avoid staying at St-Maximin where bugs eat one up. I am not in a hurry to reach Marseilles, in fact, by taking new horses at St-Maximim I shall have all the time I need. I am thinking of stopping at Roquevaire, and to leave from there only at a time suitable to reach Marseilles by night. I am annoyed that I do not have 24 hours before the Chapter, but it would have been impossible to remain *incognito*. I would like you to look among my papers for the catalogue of all our men: it should be in the drawer of the table which I used last summer in my room, or in my small writing-table. You will place it in the room I am to occupy in the Seminary.

I am ending this in haste. The mail-man is already coming to collect my letter. Good-bye.

¹¹⁷ Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L. M.- Tempier.

635. [To Father Courtès, at Aix].¹¹⁸

Cholera at Marseilles. The Fathers' self-sacrifice.

[Marseilles,] August 25, 1837.

You are well aware of our cruel scourge, I shall not speak of it to you, I only remind you to have prayers offered especially for our Fathers who are conducting themselves admirably as always.

People come to them as to parishes; not a single night passes without their being obliged to get up and assist some sick person. Till now not one of those whose confessions they had heard, has escaped, but they are very much pleased with their good dispositions.

636. [To Father Hermitte, at N.-D. de Lumières].¹¹⁹

Obedience for N.-D. du Laus.

[Marseilles,] August 25, 1837.

I am directing you to leave for N.D. du Laus so that you may give good service in this shrine to which so many needy souls flock to find some relief from their misfortunes. There you will hear the confessions of both the pilgrims and the people of the place who may come to you. There you must be everything to everyone, as was the divine Master whom we serve and the holy Apostles in whose footsteps we follow. Go therefore, my dear son, with the disposition of making up with zeal for the small number of labourers. The Lord, whose work we are doing, will provide for our needs, if we are faithful servants and accomplish well the beautiful mission he has entrusted to us through a grace of predilection.

¹¹⁸ YENVEUX II, 118.

¹¹⁹ YENVEUX II, 156.

637. To Father Mille, missionary priest.¹²⁰

News from Marseilles where there are many cholera victims. After the pastoral visit, Father Mille is to leave for N.-D. du Laus as soon as possible; there he will find Father Guibert.

L.J.C. and M.I.

Marseilles, August 26, 1837.

My dear Father Mille, I understand your concern for us and your family. We are, in fact, under the most terrible onslaught of cholera. It has attacked cruelly this time. A few hours are enough to dispatch even the strongest person struck without any warning. The number who survive are so rare that it may be said that to be struck is the same as dying. Of all those whom our Fathers of Calvaire have assisted, and they get up every night to come to the aid of someone, there is not one who did not die; I think it is no exaggeration to say that out of a hundred more than ninety die. The gazette has given you the figures ascertained by the authorities. I have reason to believe that it is somewhat below the real facts. We had two days of respite, so much so that in the two much-populated parishes of La Major and St-Laurent, which together number more than twenty-five thousand souls, there was not even one case, but two days later the sickness resumed with full force, and in both of these parishes, Holy Viaticum had to be taken five times in one afternoon alone. Even the common people are leaving in great numbers. I shall find out today if your mother has left, but before that I want to ease your anxiety by assuring you that none of the people close to you has been affected.

I was very pleased to learn from you that his Grace the Archbishop of Aix bears the fatigue of his visit in the midst of such terrible heat, without detriment to his health. I imagine you are not sparing yourself to relieve him as much as you can, in the things most difficult for him. Be sure, my dear friend, to present my respectful greetings to this venerable Prelate, and don't forget to greet Mr. Jacquemet on my part.

¹²⁰ Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L. M.- Mille.

Far from allowing you to come to Marseilles¹²¹ after the round you are making with his Grace the Archbishop, I request you on the contrary to go back to Notre-Dame du Laus as soon as you finish. Your house greatly needs your presence. Till now Father Gignoux is all alone there; I have just sent Father Chauvet there and he is quite new to all our customs; Father Bermond is giving up with extreme reluctance the holy initiatives wherein he has done a lot of good at Aix, and I have given him another two weeks more to make sure of his cure than to give in to his zeal. I have just written to Father Hermitte to leave Lumières rather soon so as to be at Laus before the feast of our Lady. There he will still meet Father Gignoux whom I expected to send to l'Osier only after your arrival; Father Guibert whom I sent away in a hurry from here, where, much to my regret, he had dropped in from Corsica, will replace you for the time being and will counteract by his supervision the bad effect which may result from the meeting of these two holy eccentrics. In the meantime, Hermitte's grand-father died the other day of cholera while his son, Father Bouy,¹²² to whom he appealed with a loud cry, was confined to his bed at the other end of the city. Mr. Chancel from your town of Briançon was taken away within a few hours without having had time to make his confession. This capitalist, after having been called regarding the affair of St. Lazare, had refused to lend 200 francs to his Bishop in order not to risk his big amount of money. Had he done this good deed he would not have died without the Sacraments. The advocate Darbon, our tenant, died at Mazargues from the disease he had undoubtedly carried from here. The priests are doing their duty well, none of our priests has had the slightest sickness to date. I hope the good Lord will preserve them as he has done at other times.

Good-bye, dearest son, don't forget the prayer that is recited during the examen for me and for all our men. I embrace you affectionately and I bless you.

† Ch. Jos. Eug., Bishop of Icosia.¹²³

¹²¹ Father Mille, a native of Marseilles, had volunteered to come and help in the service of those infected with cholera, cf. J. M., May 17 - September 13, 1837, p. 165.

¹²² Mss.: Bouis.

¹²³ These last lines were written on the margin of the first two pages.

638. To Father Courtès, superior of the Mission, at Aix, Bouch[es-] du-Rhône.¹²⁴

Let the Fathers take care of themselves so as not to catch cholera. Father Bermond left for N.-D. du Laus without waiting for instructions from the Founder. Arranging of a community hall at Aix. Spiritual formation of the Brothers.

L.J.C. and M.I.

Marseilles, August 27, 1837.

I am not so much concerned over the sickness that is pestering us, my good Courtès, rather I strongly feel the danger that is threatening you. Our fugitives, by stopping at Aix, expose you to the danger of catching the sickness which they may be carrying with them. What you tell me about Father Mouchel disturbs me very much; in this case, diarrhoea is a serious infirmity, it must be stopped immediately, otherwise there is the risk of contacting cholera. For this one has to stop eating, lie down and wash oneself either using some starch or one or two heads of poppies boiled in water. I would have preferred that you had put Father André in charge of hospital service and I would long all my life to see us liberated from this job; all your efforts must tend towards this, not in the present situation, but when the danger is over.

There is nothing more strange than the way Father Bermond acts. He wrote to me and I replied asking him to stay a little longer both to give him time to get cured better, since all the necessary assistance for this was found there, and also to extend somewhat the difficult service he was willingly rendering, but this holy child left before receiving my reply. Not that his presence was not rather necessary at Laus, where Father Gignoux is staying alone till now and where Father Chauvet's inexperience will not be very helpful to him, but still he should have acted reasonably.

I accept that the community hall on the ground-floor is sometimes inconvenient. Hence I approve that you make another one more suitable, but don't you find that the one you hope to make from the first two cells of the novitiate is rather small. That deprives you also of two rooms on the south side. Consider if it would not be more suitable to

¹²⁴ Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L. M.- Courtès.

make your additional hall from the two sections overlooking the courtyard, namely, the passage known as the small parlour and the next room that is before the bell passage-way. It is possible that the small parlour which after all is only a passage-way is already separated from the next room by a wall, in which case we must not think about it; but otherwise it seems to me that the hall would be better situated where I say it should be. Then one can enter the house by the big door which is at the end of the corridor. Meanwhile, think about it without carrying out my plan before again communicating your opinion to me.

Once again I recommend Brother Jean¹²⁵ whom I am sending to you, because it is essential that our Brothers be perfectly about their duties; that they clearly understand that their vocation is supernatural, that they form part of an association which they must honour by their good behaviour and their religious virtues. For this it is necessary to instruct them diligently, make them observe the Rule scrupulously, prove to them that they are not looked upon as domestic servants, that we see them as brothers; but also, that you have the right to require them to observe perfect regularity, to be humble, obedient, etc. They must be present at all the common exercises, at morning and evening oraison, at the examination of conscience; they must come to pray their Breviary when the Fathers gather together for theirs, and withdraw when they have finished it; they must submit themselves to the obedience of every day, wear the cassock even if it does wear out; they respect themselves more and they will be respected better when they are dressed in their habit. A priest must be put in charge especially to be their director to instruct them at least twice a week even if it be for twenty minutes. All these things are compulsory.

Good-bye.¹²⁶

¹²⁵ Undoubtedly Brother Jean-Bernard Ferrand.

¹²⁶ The Founder does not sign here due to lack of space. The last eight lines were written in the margins of three pages of the letter; the fourth one, as usual, was reserved for the address.

639. To Father Guigue[s], superior at N.-D. de l'Osier, township of Vinay, Isère.¹²⁷

Cholera epidemic at Marseilles. The Oblates have not yet been affected. Father Gignoux must remain some more time at Laus. Write more often.

L.J.C and M.I.

Marseilles, August 31, 1837.

I believe, my dear Guigue[s], that you must feel very sorry for us in learning of the permanence of cholera in our city. I am writing to you also to tell you that till now none of our men has been affected, that is, has died, for to be infected and to die within a few hours is the same. It is useless to be reassured by one's strong constitution, by one's state of good health. A person is struck down at any moment without knowing why or how, and then dies without any help. Everyday there are examples of the strongest of men succumbing like the weakest. No one can be sure of the morrow. The good Lord grants us the grace not to be infected at all by this truly imminent danger. I confess to you that we do not even imagine our turn will come because we are where God wants us to be and we are in his hands. Our Fathers of Calvaire are amply fulfilling their duties and are pleased. I hope that those of Aix do not have as much work; till now the sickness has not taken root in this city.

Father Mille is still with his Grace the Archbishop which obliges me to keep Father Gignoux longer at N.-D. du Laus. At Lumières, the pilgrimage is very edifying. I am waiting rather impatiently for news from you. You owe me a lot of detailed accounts on many things. The Bishop of Grenoble has not replied to the letter you had taken to him.¹²⁸ They are coming to take me to the church. Good-bye, I embrace you and I bless all of you. I hope you will redouble your prayers for me.

† Ch. Jos. Eug., Bishop of Icosia.

¹²⁷ Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L. M.- Guigues.

¹²⁸ The Founder had written to the Bishop of Grenoble: "to request him to grant the title of the rectorship of l'Osier to the local superior; if granted to any other person, who cannot be vested with an authority, equal in many things to that of the superior, it could be harmful to good order and discipline." J. M., without date, p. 166 of the note-book: May 17 - September 13, 1837.

640. [To Father Courtès, at Aix].¹²⁹

Cholera at Aix. Call to courage and submission to God's will.

[Marseilles,] September 1, 1837.

Courage, my good Courtès, there is nothing more reassuring than to be where the good Lord places you. You and I, and all of us, are assured of doing the Master's will, to whom eternity as well as time belong. Let us fear nothing; my only concern or rather my greatest concern for you is that I am far from you. The confidence the good Lord gives me will reassure you; those who surround me share it very simply. This condition is necessary for morale; consider that there is not one priest in Marseilles, whatever his constitution may be, who has experienced the least attack, even though several among them are, so to speak, breathing only the air of the cholera patients day and night.

641. To Father Guigue[s], superior, at Notre-Dame de l'Osier, township of Vinay, Isère.¹³⁰

The Fathers at Marseilles and Aix are keeping well in spite of the cholera epidemic. Prayers prescribed in all the houses.

L.J.C. and M.I.

Marseilles, September 2, 1837.

Is it really true that you are not apprehensive, my dear Father Guigue[s]? I cannot believe it. I would rather prefer to think that not receiving letters from you is due to some unforeseen delay. That is so much so my opinion that I write to you again today even though I wrote to you a few days ago. I would reproach myself if I left you in anxiety in regard to our situation. Providence continues to watch over all of us. Even though no one spares himself, all of us are keeping well. Our Fathers at Aix are also in good health. I feel I must tell this to you because the cholera has been brought into this city by our people who

¹²⁹ RAMBERT I, 776; YENVEUX III, 4. The Founder writes in his *Diary* on September 1: "Father Courtès gives me very bad news from Aix. Three Sisters of the Sacred Heart have been struck the same day . . ."

¹³⁰ Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L. M.- Guigues.

left from here, just as they will carry it wherever they will go. This time the Sisters have not been spared either at Marseilles or at Aix.

I thought it opportune to add in all our houses one *Pater* and one *Ave Maria* to night prayer, for the entire Congregation and particularly for those who are in the forefront, and at Mass to say the opening prayer, prayer over the gifts and the prayer after Com[munion] which we said during the Chapter. Good-bye, may the good Lord preserve you.

† Ch. Jos. Eug., Bishop of Icosia.

642. [To Father Guigues, at N.-D. de l'Osier].¹³¹

The Parish Priest of N.-D. de l'Osier. Hymns with a refrain in the hymnal for missions. House treasurer. Care to be given to the Brothers.

[Marseilles,] September 6, 1837.

I am replying by return post, my dear Father Guigues, to your letter which I received yesterday. I was waiting for it rather impatiently. I begin with the most important matter, that of the parish priest. I must confess that I do not understand what you say about it. I had written to the Bishop of Grenoble and I wanted to accept this appointment only if the superior were named the parish priest; you inform me that the Bishop is giving Father Pélissier the powers of parish priest whether the superior is present or absent, in accordance with the will of the latter, except the stole-fee which is everywhere reserved exclusively to the pastor; but who is this pastor? You don't tell me whether it is the superior. Explain this to me a little more

I had, however, made it clear that we do not speak so much of love in the hymns, that I insist on refrains that all the people can repeat, that the good results from community singing to the entire congregation of the faithful should never be sacrificed to the self-love of some privileged choristers.¹³²

¹³¹ YENVEUX I, 174; II, 142; VII, 52*; VIII, 223. The Founder summarizes this letter in his *Diary*, September 6. We have arranged the paragraphs copied in YENVEUX according to the order given in the *Diary*.

¹³² YENVEUX (I, 174) proposes several dates for this second paragraph. According to the *Diary* of September 6, this text must come here.

Father Vincens is at fault in raising objections to be in charge of the bursarship. He did the same job very well in a community much bigger than yours; thus I would not treat here of this little fit of laziness except that I want to give you time to settle matters in the way you tell me. Nevertheless, as there are serious inconveniences for a community having only one degree of jurisdiction in financial matters, I authorize you only for a certain period to combine the job of superior with that of treasurer.

If the Brother who is expected from Switzerland¹³³ comes to your place, you may keep him until further orders, but you will consider it your duty to train him in the religious life by applying a special effort, which you must also not forget to do for the Brother who is with you already¹³⁴ and who is very much exposed to the danger of dissipation by the work you have him do. In this regard, I would like you to look for someone else than a Brother to look after the shop. I can only temporarily allow the use of one of our Brothers for this sort of work.

643. To Father Courtès, superior of the Mission, Carmelites' Square at the public Drive, at Aix, Bouch[es-]du-Rhône.¹³⁵

The cholera does less havoc. Pastoral visit at Allauch. Affection.

L.J.C. and M.I.

Marseilles, September 7, 1837.

This time, dear friend, it will truly be only a couple of words to tell you that we are keeping well, that the sickness is doing less havoc, even though it has not yet been conquered and that I learnt with joy from your letter that you also have been more at ease. Since I am going tomorrow on pastoral visit to Allauch, I could not have written to you and you would perhaps have been apprehensive. This is what has moved me to say a word to you today when I am so busy that I am obliged to end almost before starting.

¹³³ Certainly Pierre Bouquet, born at la Roche, Township of Fribourg, who entered the novitiate at Marseilles on October 31, 1837.

¹³⁴ H. Blanc, who entered the novitiate on October 31, 1835. He was at N.-D. de l'Osier in 1837-1838, cf. January 22-23, 1838.

¹³⁵ Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L. M.- Courtès.

Good-bye, most dear friend, take care of yourself always, and love me as I love you (if that is possible).

† Ch. Jos. Eug., Bishop of Icosia.

644. [To Father Courtès, at Aix].¹³⁶

How to give up the hospital chaplaincy at Aix.

[Marseilles,] September 19, 1837.

I am leaving for a Confirmation service at Saint-André. Before boarding, I hasten to tell you I am very pleased to learn that you are hoping to be finally freed of the hospital. This should be achieved at any cost because there is too great a disadvantage in going against the over-all attitude of a Society. I am more than convinced that our Fathers submit themselves to this need only out of their personal respect for me. No other superior would have managed it. Henceforth we must do everything we can to rid ourselves of any burden that is unbearable to everyone. We cannot pretend that this ministry belongs among the activities of our Congregation. On the contrary, the isolation of the person who is assigned to it makes it formally opposed to the spirit and letter of our Rules. Hence we must apply all our skill to ease our members' spirit even more than their body; it is useless deluding ourselves that we can persuade them.

So much so for the principle. Now will you succeed by the means you wish to use? I doubt it. The hospital authorities will well agree to give the chaplain of the mentally sick only a tiny recompense, but then, not only will they not take any steps to ask his Grace the Archbishop for another chaplain other than you for the hospital, on the contrary, they will do everything possible to keep you. It is directly from his Grace the Archbishop that you must obtain this betterment by making him consider the inconveniences that arise for community men who are obliged to live separated from their community. Such a thing is unheard of in any Order or Congregation. Imagine if a Sulpician would live outside his Seminary!

¹³⁶ YENVEUX II, 35-36.

645. [To Father Courtès, at Aix].¹³⁷

How to behave towards the Archbishop of Aix. As far as possible, the chaplaincy of a boarding school is not to be accepted.

[Marseilles,] September 23, 1837.

Don't you think, my dear Courtès, that it is unwise to always bring me to the fore when it is a question of responding to some proposal of his Grace the Archbishop? Don't you fear that he may be offended when he hears the opinions of another Bishop constantly quoted in matters pertaining to his diocese? I do not approve this way of doing things. It is much more natural that you say very simply that such a thing is against the spirit of our Rules, against the good of the community you are in charge of and of the members who are under your direction. This does not prevent you from consulting with me when necessary, but be convinced that a remark from you, made conscientiously and with respect, will not produce the bad effect that an appeal made to me does. And in this case, it was still more improper since you were already getting on very well with him. You must follow the opposite system which is to leave me in the background and appear to have recourse to me only in extreme cases.

Regarding the question of the boarding school, when his Grace the Archbishop proposed that you take charge of it, you should have told him in all simplicity that it is against our Rules to take on the regular direction of a community of persons of the opposite sex; that we could go there from time to time to give some instructions, if his Grace the Archbishop wished; but that it is preferable not to overburden your small community with new activities which divert its members from the principal end of the Institute, which is preaching missions. We must be logical; we withdrew from the boarding school of Sacré-Coeur because we are supposed to provide this service only for the time being to oblige them as an exception. Now they request a similar service, with no conditions and for less serious reasons. However, I feel that you have gone too far in having refused his Grace the Archbishop everything. If he insists that you take up the direction of this house whose protector he is, then after informing him that it is

¹³⁷ YENVEUX II, 34; VII, 172.

against your Rules and that you could accept it only with a dispensation, as an interim measure until he finds someone suitable, you may give instructions to them, even confess them, but you may not bind yourself to saying Mass for them or to serve their chapel.

646. [To Father Courtès, at Aix].¹³⁸

Continue the formation of a coadjutor Brother novice sent to Aix.

[Marseilles,] September 28, 1837.

You tell me nothing of the Brother whom I sent to you;¹³⁹ I hope you are satisfied with him, for he is a charming young man, and I know that he is very pleased with all of you. Remember he has not finished his novitiate and consequently you must care very much for his religious instruction; that he wear the cassock, follow the community exercises, that everything should convince him he is a Brother belonging to the Congregation which considers him one of its members.

647. [To Father Mille, at N.-D. du Laus].¹⁴⁰

The Founder does not allow Father Bermond to go and visit his family.

[Marseilles,] September 29, 1837.

Did I not reply to Father Bermond that I did not approve his visiting his family? How come you make the same request in his name? Once and for all let us leave these pitiful small desires for the family in the tomb of our oblation. We are supposed to have risen to a totally supernatural life that should not any more include such weaknesses. Hence I simply say no to your request, adding that I would have been more edified if no attempt had been made in this matter.

¹³⁸ YENVEUX VIII, 224.

¹³⁹ At that time there were some novices who wished to become coadjutor Brothers: T. Morgan, F. Robert, J.ertino, J. Brès and Pierre Joubert, who had joined on June 10, 1836. In our opinion, it was the last named who was sent to Aix. He made his vows in June 1838.

¹⁴⁰ YENVEUX VI, 102, 104; J. M., September 29, 1837.

648. [To Father Courtès, at Aix].¹⁴¹

Reproaches Father Courtès who had not given Holy Communion to a person sentenced to death, who was repentant. Importance of missions for the instruction of the people .

[Marseilles,] October 11, 1837.

You¹⁴² have made a very great mistake in refusing Jouve Holy Communion. This situation has taken away from me all the joy that the account of his beautiful death had caused me.

I thought you were more loyal to my teachings which are those of the Church. You could not have forgotten what I have done at the execution of Germaine. Quite recently the *Quotidienne* and so many other newspapers informed you what I did at Gap. Hence you have become a real weakling and I must tell you that you have greatly sinned. I don't want to see you observing practices which the Sovereign Pontiffs describe as barbarian and which they order to be destroyed wherever they are found. These horrible practices, moreover, have been abrogated in your district, either through the precedent I had set by my example, or through the solemn approval his Grace the Archbishop de Bausset, who came to confirm and give Holy Communion to all the accused as well as condemned prisoners who were in the jails at the time of the retreat we preached there. Even if it were otherwise, you should have done your duty without worrying about the consequences. God's commandment must take precedence over any human consideration. Even if you had been interdicted afterwards, because you were in charge of his soul, your duty was to have him fulfil his obligation from which no power could dispense him. If some superior authority, which it was useless to consult in such a situation, was opposed to things being done according to rules, I would intervene with my authority to

¹⁴¹ YENVEUX I, 93-94; II, 111-112. Father Mouchel of the house of Aix stopped at Marseilles on October 11, on his way to Ajaccio. He narrates to the Founder how Father Courtès "had thus left this man (the prisoner Jouve), so clearly repentant, to die without having him fulfil the divine precept of Holy Communion at death." Cf. J. M., October 11, 1837. The "Germaine" mentioned at the beginning of this letter had been guillotined at Aix in 1812 or 1813. Young Father de Mazenod had given her the Sacraments, cf. J. M., July 14, 1837.

¹⁴² Father Yenveux's copyist does write "vous." The Founder rarely used the plural form "vous" for Father Courtès. However in 1837, he certainly uses it in his letter of January 20, cf. Original, Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L. M.- Courtès.

protect you from continuing a ministry that is incomplete, irregular and ineffective, and a compromise to your conscience and mine.

It is really a pity that such a bad stain tarnishes this beautiful picture. Nevertheless I order you to write out all its details, including the fault which must be watered down considerably by explaining it. I am waiting for this report which will certainly make a very great impression if as I would like, we have it printed. Don't forget to confess repentantly the fault of which I accuse you and express the firm purpose of amendemnt. I am speaking to you very seriously.

I am sorry that his Grace the Archbishop allows himself to be influenced by people like the parish priest of N. He cannot have any idea of the people's situation if he does not know how to reduce to silence those presumptuous men who dare to propose that since the people are not instructed, it is not the moment to preach the mission. Then who will come forward to instruct them? Don't we know that a mission is needed precisely to instruct the people gone astray, because only a mission could draw people to the church. The parish priest may well preach, no one except a few women will come to listen to him. Is it possible to be ignorant of these things? I beg pardon of Father Jacquemet,¹⁴³ I thought he had more experience and especially better knowledge of people.

649. To Father Casimir Aubert, priest at the Mission, Carmelites' Square at the top of the public Drive, at Aix, Bouch[es]-du-Rhône.¹⁴⁴

Reproaches Father Aubert who had disobeyed by not remaining longer at St-Martin-des-Pallières for a rest. Let him take a rest for a few days at Aix.

L.J.C. and M.I.

Marseilles, October 14, 1837.

It is at St-Martin, my dear Aubert, that you should have remained 1) because I had asked you to stay there three weeks and I have consented to such a short period only because we were hard-pressed by the

¹⁴³ Bishop Bernet's Vicar General.

¹⁴⁴ Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L. M.- Aubert Cas.

retreat. I had expressed my wish too well for there to be any possibility of misunderstanding. What good can be accomplished by an absence of two weeks? 2) because I had explicitly written to my sister, who will not have failed to communicate it to you, that you should stay with her until I gave further orders. I relied so much on this order that I was going to write to you the very day I received my sister's letter informing me that your departure was to take place on the day I received her letter. You knew quite well that I was on a visitation tour, so you should not have been surprised at not receiving a prompt reply to your letter, and above all, knowing how I abhor interpretations, you should not have made use of them against an explicit order perfectly known to you.

The reasons you allege to excuse yourself are not acceptable; I knew beforehand about the usefulness of your presence at the house of Calvaire and all the service you could render in the church. Thus you did not have to trouble yourself about it anymore. I had sent you out to the country precisely to take your mind away from these concerns. You cannot defend yourself by claiming a lack of simplicity in your obedience for you knew my intention too well. If you fall back into your usual state of weakness and you are obliged to apply the brakes in the midst of your year's work, you will have to blame yourself before God for being its cause. If your health continues to get worse, you will be responsible for it before God, before the Church, the Congregation and myself. When one is sent to teach solid virtues to others, one must behave in a way that would hardly be permissible to the inconsiderate fervour of a novice. I intend that the week you are going to spend at Aix be a supplement to your stay at St-Martin. For a moment I debated whether I should make you go back there, I rejected this solution because I feared that the fatigue of the journey may neutralize the good I expected from your prolonged stay in the country. At Aix, you will not offer yourself for any religious service whatsoever, you will go out with your companion into the country on either side of the city, as long as the weather is good. However you will avoid the suburb where cholera was brought in this year. All I can do is authorize you to come on Saturday instead of Monday as I had previously arranged.

Courtès is constantly praising your brother in obviously exaggerated terms. On your return, give me an exact account of him. The prejudices of this Father against M[agnan]¹⁴⁵ are very clear. I was very

¹⁴⁵ Reference to Father Magnan, who belonged to the house of Aix at that time. Father Mouchel had just been sent to the Major Seminary at Ajaccio. Cf. J. M., October 9, 11 and 19, 1837.

pleased with M[agnan] during his visit here. He spoke sense to me on all points, but C[ourtès] does not forgive him for seeing differently than he in matters that are very dear to him, and which I had not covered with my assent. I have nevertheless cautioned M[agnan] to be very reserved and especially never to give in to criticizing even when he does not approve.

Good-bye, dear and loving son, I embrace you to prove to you that you need not fear losing what you like to call my good graces, even though I somewhat reproach you; for after all, my good son, you have never sinned except by excess.

† Ch. Jos. Eug., Bishop of Marseilles.

650. To Father Courtès, superior of the Mission, Carmelites' Square at the top of the public Drive, at Aix, Bouch[es-]du-Rhône.¹⁴⁶

The scholastic Brothers returned fascinated by their stay at Aix. Putting order into administration of the house and the correspondence with the Superior General. Casimir Aubert is to return to Marseilles.

L.J.C. and M.I.

Marseilles, October 19, 1837.

Our Oblates,¹⁴⁷ my dear son, have returned from Aix fascinated by the welcome you had given them. They were really pleased to spend those days of recreation at your place, and they did not fail to tell me that they liked very much the talk in honour of St. Therese which they heard on her feast-day, that they were very much edified. From that I have decided that I must request you (you know that for us the request of the superior is equivalent to an order), to put it in writing immediately, if you had preached only from some notes, or to make a more complete copy if it was from a more developed composition. I would like you to do this every time you treat a subject well.

I was waiting for an opportunity to write and tell you that it was really my intention that Father Magnan should be spiritual director of the house at Aix. I am authorizing you to go to confession to Father

¹⁴⁶ Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation. L. M.- Courtès.

¹⁴⁷ The scholastics.

Aubert when you consider it opportune. I request you to put in order, as soon as possible, the administration of the house in accordance with the norms of the Rule in regard to the Council of assistants for the superior, and the correspondence with the Superior General and the General Treasurer in this matter. Letters dealing with these matters must not contain anything else; they have to be read out at the Superior General's Council and then have to be deposited in the filing-boxes with those of the other houses, whose superiors are instructed to do the same. You know that once a month an account should be given about the transactions of the local Councils which must make known all the business of their houses. It is high time that everything be put in order during my lifetime. It would be a disgrace to my memory if I should happen to die and my successor had to reform things which I had neglected to do because of my excessive confidence, I who am obliged, more than anyone else, to an exact fulfilment of whatever the Rule prescribes.

I did not send Cuynat¹⁴⁸ to you because he is in his fits of eccentricities. Now that the priest from the diocese of Grenoble about whom I was informed has arrived,¹⁴⁹ I have no difficulty in allowing Cuynat to leave: he can go and verify for himself if he has been appointed Archbishop of Arles or of some other diocese equally well established.

I have written to Father Aubert that he may return on Saturday. Since I am going to lock myself up on Sunday in the Seminary where I continue staying since the Chapter, I shall be very glad to settle many things with this Father before beginning my retreat. So tell him on my behalf that he can come tomorrow, Friday, after dinner. Thus we shall have the whole of Saturday to deal with our business. Let him prepare among other things, to answer some questions about Rouvière, who will have to make his profession on November 1, and about whom I have many things to say.

A ticket must have been sent for Josephine;¹⁵⁰ if she has paid you the 200 francs, you will hand the wad to Father Aubert and his com-

¹⁴⁸ Mss.: Quinat.

¹⁴⁹ Jean Fleury M. Baudrand who began the novitiate on October 31, 1837.

¹⁵⁰ Josephine, already house-keeper at the Bishop's house in 1825, cf. L. M.- to his mother, January 29 and September 29, 1825; she is there still in 1855, cf. L. M.- Eug. de Boisgelin, September 20, 1855.

panions, asking them to make sure that there are no holes in their pockets. I don't trust people who are distracted.

Good-bye, dear son, I bless you.

† Ch. Jos. Eug., Bish. of M[arsei]lles.

651. To Father Mille, superior at Notre-Dame du Laus, near Gap, Upper Alps.¹⁵¹

Retreat at the Seminary of Marseilles. Arrival of several novices. Not to preach outside the diocese in order not to displease Bishop La Croix d' Azolette.

L.J.C. and M.I.

Marseilles, October 22, 1837.

My dear son, I am starting my retreat this evening with the Seminary which has anticipated it by one day, because of the priests who will come to make it with the Seminarians. I am hastily writing a couple of lines to you to acknowledge the arrival of your letters and those whom you sent: Father A[llard] and the other young man have arrived.¹⁵² Father A[llard] will tell you what we did this morning before the Mass. I preferred, and he also, that he make his retreat at your place. You are his immediate superior, it is with you that he must regularly relate to, he must, among other things, render an account to you monthly and receive your guidance and orders. His program must coincide as much as possible with the house schedule, you will make him copy out the special prayers which we use at certain hours of the day, etc.

¹⁵¹ Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L. M.- Mille.

¹⁵² The person in question would seem to be Father A[llard]. For a long time he wanted to join the Oblates. Bishop Arbaud of Gap always opposed it. La Croix, the new Bishop promised to let him go at the end of the academic year. He officially began his novitiate at Marseilles on October 23, 1837 and made his vows on November 1, 1838 but spent the academic year at the Minor Seminary of Embrun where he was professor. Cf. J. M., May 6, 1838 and *Missions O.M.L.*, t. 40 (1902), p. 81. His companion could be the Swiss, Pierre Bouquet, who had stopped at Laus before joining the novitiate at Marseilles.

I will not begin reflecting on the person we have in mind, that would lead me too far afield, but it appears that the lack of delicateness is traditional in certain milieux.¹⁵³

As for the young man from Briançon, I am quite satisfied with him. I hope he will do well with us, he is the fifth novice who is entering for this retreat; we are expecting a Carthusian; he is already a priest as is also one other of the five; as for the others, we will have a long time to wait.¹⁵⁴

I feel that because of the Lord Bishop's attitudes you have noticed, it would not be opportune to give him scope for criticism by going out of the diocese to preach some missions. This is unfortunate, I deplore it, but it is necessary. Hence do not undertake any engagement outside the diocese. Dupuy writes me giving me some anxiety about the one you are planning to do at St. Bonnet; he fears that the bad will of the parish priest may make it fail, and it would be unfortunate if the Bishop were to witness this setback. I warn you of this, leaving you as final judge of the expediency of the matter. I feel that it will be difficult to give the mission of Banon without you, but what is to be done? We must attend to what is more urgent.

Father Guigue[s] is not reasonable in the request he is making to you. I am leaving him Dupuy who will help him very much.

Good-bye, this suffices for today. We shall be together before the Lord this week. I bless all of you.

† Ch. Jos. Eug., Bishop of Marseilles.

¹⁵³ According to the context of the letter, the Founder is speaking here of the new Bishop and the religious authorities of Gap. On his arrival, Bishop La Croix showed little liking for the Oblates. In September 1837, he refused Father Guibert permission to loan a professor to the Major Seminary of Ajaccio; likewise, he refused to give dimissorial letters for Lucien Lagier and did not allow Father Allard to leave immediately. Then Father Mille wrote to Bishop de Mazenod: "Could we perhaps say that the deceased Bishop Arbaud has left his successor some secret document in which he outlines for the new Bishop his manner of behaving towards our Congregation." Cf. *Missions O.M.I.*, *ibid.*, pp. 81-82.

¹⁵⁴ "The young man from Briançon": undoubtedly Jean-Fr. Allard, born at La Roche, in the electorate of Briançon, ordained priest in 1830. The other 4 novices who entered for the retreat were: Adolphe Boissieu, Etienne Laurençon, Pierre Bouquet and Father Jean Fleury Baudrand. The Carthusian priest could be F. Agniel of the diocese of Avignon who joined the novitiate on December 7.

652. [To Father Guigues, at N.-D. de l'Osier].¹⁵⁵

Obligatory ceremonies during missions. They can be omitted only with explicit authorization.

Marseilles, November 5, 1837.

On all sides we are launching our campaign under very good auspices, for the news I receive from our communities on the annual retreat are all very satisfactory. I thank especially the good Lord for the graces he has showered on your community during the retreat.¹⁵⁶

I urge you not to deceive yourself to the point of believing that the Fathers of l'Osier are wiser than their predecessors in the work of the holy mission. Don't make any change in your customs without having obtained my consent. All the local and temporary superiors of missions must know quite well that I have never intended to nor was ever able to give full power to anyone and that they cannot suppress as they like what has been hallowed by our tradition.

Among these practices are some that are considered as essential and others that can be taken as contingent. What is prescribed in the Rule as for example the entry of missionaries into a place they are going to evangelize, cannot be suppressed, even temporarily, except by an explicit authorization from me. The consecration to the Blessed Virgin, the renewal of baptismal promises, the promulgation of the law, the procession of the Blessed Sacrament, the funeral service and the instruction after the Gospel of the *Requiem* High Mass as well as the procession and absolution at the cemetery, the first procession known as the penitential procession, the exercise preparatory to the act of contrition and the separate act of contrition for both sexes, the general Communion, are obligatory in all the missions.

¹⁵⁵ YENVEUX I, 139-141, 144, 193-195, 198, 199-200, 201-202, 207-208; VI, 153. This is a difficult letter to piece together. Yenveux takes up the same ideas but modifies them in the different excerpts as required by his commentary on the articles of the Rule concerning the missions.

¹⁵⁶ YENVEUX (I, 144) writes: September 5, before this paragraph. It should definitely be read as: November 5, after the annual retreat. Likewise, the paragraph on the renewal of baptismal vows pertains to this letter and not to that of November 5, 1839. YENVEUX (I, 199-200) has three references where he writes 1839 for 1837, cf. J. M., January 19, 1837.

When some modifications are to be made for good reasons, and if they could be foreseen and there is the time to consult with me, you should not fail to do so. If it was impossible to consult with me, you must inform me that you felt obliged to go ahead regardless, giving me the reasons that determined you to take this position. I always reserve to myself the right to judge if they were sufficient, if they should obtain my approval or disapproval, since my decision has to serve as the rule for other similar cases.

By modification, I do not mean omitting a given ceremony, but doing it in a different way. Thus, for the penitential procession, it is not obligatory, on the contrary, it is purely contingent that the superior who must carry the cross be bare-footed and wear a cord around his neck, but with us it is customary and obligatory that the penitential procession is made carrying the cross, and that it be the superior who does it. The ignorant among our men who would be surprised at this will learn from me that during the Jubilee in Rome it is always a Prelate who carries the cross during the processions to the Basilicas, and that during Lent it is a Cardinal who carries the cross when the Stations of the *via crucis* are made in the Coliseum. Cardinal Mattei, the Dean of the Sacred College, and Cardinal Fesch, Emperor Napoleon's uncle, considered it an honour to give this example of humility and penance. No doubt, in Rome as elsewhere, one meets presumptuous witty people who blame this practice which is so much in conformity with the Gospel spirit; but real Christians are edified by it. No more need be said: *omnia propter electos*.¹⁵⁷

I repeat, it is the norm that the superior carry the cross during the penitential procession, after he has given a short exhortation from the pulpit to prepare the people for this public act of reparation. This is no entertainment, but an act very much in conformity with the spirit of the Church and perfectly suited to the occasion. The superior has just preached to a people that has gone astray. He gives them the hope of pardon. Reparation, however, is necessary. He takes on himself the sins of the people, in imitation of J.C. whom he represents in their midst, and following the example of a Saint Leo for Rome, a Saint Charles for Milan, a Belzunce for Marseilles, etc., he offers himself to God as a victim. Are these the grandiose thoughts? Come on! let us not

¹⁵⁷ II Tim. 2:10: Ideo omnia sustineo propter electos.

waste our time and let us send back to the bush anyone who does not understand them or remains insensitive to them. What is not the norm and should be done only with permission is to carry the cross bare-footed and with the cord around the neck. I have done it very often, but not always.

The consecration to the Blessed Virgin is made when the procession held in honour of the Mother of God comes back; it is quite obligatory. It is made from the pulpit, before the Blessed Virgin's statue, placed on a throne, as beautiful as the locality can provide. What is not indispensable is girls publicly renouncing dances and other dangerous recreations. These things can be more or less explicitly included in the act of consecration that is made in their name from the pulpit.

The renewal of the baptismal promises is obligatory. Great prominence should be given to this ritual. Our custom is to expose solemnly the Blessed Sacrament on this occasion. The new promulgation of the law amidst a people who had, in some way, given up God's commandments and who again want to be under the loving yoke of the Lord must be done in a way that leaves a deep impression. That is why it is very important to lead everyone in solemnly affirming one's fidelity, in a loud voice, at the missionary's invitation, who repeats from the pulpit, with the people, each commandment promulgated by the officiating priest at the altar, in a clear and intelligible voice, and then explains it. However, if due to some situation, you feared you were not in a position to involve the people in this manifestation, strictly speaking, you could be satisfied with having the commandment repeated by the missionary from the pulpit, in the people's name. This would be a rather bad sign, which would show that, even towards the end of the mission, the missionaries have no influence on the people; I do not want to think that we would ever be reduced to such a sorry state; never have I been in such a situation during my mission; to repeat, that would be a great misfortune; hence we should not easily imagine that we have been reduced to that.

The service for the dead, the homily after [the Gospel of] the *Requiem* High Mass, the procession and the absolution at the cemetery with some pious words suitable for the occasion, if the weather is good for going outside, are obligatory. What is not obligatory, but nonetheless very much apropos, is to have a grave dug around which the absolution is done. This grave is meant for the first person who will pay death its due. The catafalque in the church must be properly set up and

the notice given the evening before to invite all the people for the following day's service must be strongly motivated and captivating for anyone of good will.

On the day of the men's general Communion, you must not fail to inform them that after the *Agnus Dei* of the Mass, the kiss of peace will come from the altar to be given to the entire community. How it should be done must be explained well in order to avoid any confusion and, at the right moment, two missionaries will go to receive the kiss of peace from the celebrant and then take it to the first person in each row, who will turn towards his neighbour to pass on the kiss of peace; this one to the next and so on. If they know how to say: *pax tecum, et cum spiritu tuo*, well and good, if not, it does not matter, what is essential is that the entire congregation gives the kiss of peace. If the missionary, seeing the people spiritually renewed, embracing one another through the impulse of divine love and giving one another the kiss of peace before receiving Holy Communion, can contain his tears, let him place his hand on his chest to find out if he may not have a stone there instead of the heart.

This, my dear child, is what the good Lord inspires me to tell you today upon coming out of the service we have just offered for our good brothers who have gone before us. If, as I hope, our suffrages have not found them any more in purgatory, our prayer would have reached them in glory, where, according to my way of thinking, God in his infinite goodness will have raised them higher and make them comprehend more his immense greatness.

Good-bye, I bless all of you, do not fail to write me during the mission.

653. To Father Mille, superior of N.-D. du Laus, at present on mission in La Plaine parish (in Champsaur), Upper Alps.¹⁵⁸

The Founder's departure for Paris. Missions of Banon and La Plaine. Vocations from Gap.

L.J.C. and M.I.

Marseilles, November 13, 1837.

I am about to leave for Paris,¹⁵⁹ dear Father Mille, and I am writing only to approve your plan for I have absolutely no time to write you anything else. If you think that the Bishop of Gap does not object to your mission of Banon, go ahead. Whatever need we may have had of you for the missions at La Plaine, we had to go on without your assistance precisely because of your delicate position. Who on earth comes forward to start all these beautiful foundations dreamed of by the ardent zeal and fresh fervour of the new Bishop?¹⁶⁰ I wish they produce more good than their known nature promises.

If Father Baron¹⁶¹ can obtain what he desires, I would willingly accept him despite his infirmity which can be cured with some applied remedies. But you must be careful that his Lordship the Bishop does not give him to us in exchange for Father Allard. The latter must come before anyone else. I esteem him infinitely. Good-bye, my address in Paris for urgent matters is: Missions Étrangères, rue du Bac.

†Ch. Jos. Eug., Bishop of Marseilles.

¹⁵⁸ Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L. M.- Mille.

¹⁵⁹ Bishop de Mazenod, accompanied by Father Tempier, was away from Marseilles from November 14 to December 23. On November 23, he took the oath to Louis-Philippe. The travellers returned to Marseilles by way of Châlons, Verdun, Metz, Nancy and Dijon.

¹⁶⁰ Bishop de la Croix d'Azolette had just founded a Society of diocesan Missionaries.

¹⁶¹ This Father Baron did not join the novitiate.

654. To Father Aubert, director of Calvaire, Montée des Accoules, Marseilles, Bouch[es-]du-Rhône.¹⁶²

Thanks for the news about the novitiate. Father Aubert may read the letters of superiors and reply. Planned date of departure from Paris. Candidates for the novitiate.

L.J.C. and M.I.

Paris, December 7, 1837.

A couple of words, yes, just a couple of words to my dear son Aubert, because it is late and I must recite the Breviary during the only moment of rest in the day. I received with great pleasure your letter of November 28. I am very pleased with the details you give me about the novitiate, especially the excellent dispositions in which our two Oblates made their oblation. You did well in allowing the companions of the one and the other to proceed with their novitiate since you will be strong enough not to need their good example in the novitiate.¹⁶³ I was surprised that you did not speak about Father Agniel, the priest from the diocese of Avignon, whom his Grace the Archbishop had given to me and to whom I had written from Avignon itself. It is true that Tempier in his abstract way did not perceive that it was not to the Bishop's Secretary that the letter should have been sent. Did it reach the addressee? Has Father Agniel changed his mind? I know nothing. In any case, it seems he has not yet come.

I am informed from M[arsei]lles that several letters have been received from our houses. I am going to write by this same post that only those whose writing you can recognize be given to you, or to put it better, only those of local superiors whose writing you know very well: Courtès, Honorat, Mille, Guigue[s], Guibert and Albini. If there is anything you can handle, do it; if you have to consult me, you will have at most just the time to write me, for I shall be very much put out if I do not leave here in time to be able to celebrate the great feast of Christmas at Marseilles, and I would like to stop at least 24 hours at Aix so as not to give the impression of spiting his Grace the Archbishop. Thus everything depends on knowing whether I shall travel by

¹⁶² Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L. M.- Aubert Cas.

¹⁶³ Louis Morandini and Dominique Luigi made their vows on November 27, 1837. Father François Agniel, mentioned after the new Oblates (the Founder always writes Agnel), began his novitiate on December 7.

the mail-coach, then I could delay till Monday, the 18th; but if I must leave by stage-coach, I have to take the coach on the 11th or the 12th. While just now writing to you and according to the calculation I have to make, I give up this latter means, but according to the business there is, I shall either go directly by the mail-coach from here to Aix, passing through St-Étienne in which case I shall leave on the 18th, or else I shall take first the mail-coach from here to Lyon in which case I must leave on the 13th or the 14th at the latest, so as not to be travelling on Sunday. Plan in any case so that I receive your letter before the 14th. I would risk not receiving it if it reached me later.

When Rolando¹⁶⁴ arrives there, let us leave it at that as far as the Italians are concerned unless we find exactly what we are looking for.¹⁶⁵ Nevertheless let us allow the Corsicans who would be well prepared for the Seminary to come.

Good-bye, dear and good son, I embrace you very affectionately and I bless you as well as the entire community and the others at the Seminary.

† Ch. Jos. Eug., Bishop of Marseilles.

¹⁶⁴ Mss.: Rolandi. Philippe Rolando, native of Ventimiglia, joined the novitiate on December 31, 1837.

¹⁶⁵ *Trouver la pie au nid*: literally to find a magpie on its nest, is an expression meaning: find exactly what one is looking for.

1838

655. To Father Mille, superior of Notre-Dame du Laus, with the parish priest of Saint-Eusèbe, in Champsaur, Upper Alps.¹

New Year greetings. Transit at Marseilles of Bishop La Croix d'Azolette who is not against Oblate vocations. Father Mille's illness.

L.J.C. and M.I.

Marseilles, J[anuar]y 6, 1838.

Happy New Year, my son, and all God's blessings on you, on your brothers and all your undertakings. I am well, I cannot keep pace with the public attention; I still cannot do anything other than receive people. Among the big number was your good mother whom I received with the affection you know I have for her. Her health is good and I had taken it upon myself to communicate to you her New Year greetings. When you will write to me entrust me with the duty of greeting her on your part. She gladly comes to see me, I always give her news about you.

We have met his Lordship the Bishop of Gap on his return from his trip. He has positively assured me in general that he would be guilty of crime if he placed the least obstacle to the vocation of his priests, that he is only too glad to see some of them join us. However he has his own methods. It seems that his intention is to be acquainted with all his men so that he could suggest to those whom he thinks suitable for the religious life to go to Lyon to join the Congregation to which he belongs.² Make yourself heard on this point when our Allard has finished the year. The Bishop has assessed Father Martel³ well. I don't

¹ Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L. M.- Mille.

² Bishop La Croix was from the community of the diocesan missionaries of Lyon.

³ Father Auguste Martel, Vicar General of Gap. He was the main adversary of the Oblates at Laus.

know if he has been deceived by Lesbros,⁴ he did not speak to me of him nor did I to him, but an article published in the *Gazette du Midi*, couched in this priest's own way, would make me think that he is expecting something from this Prelate whom he exalts so highly.

I don't know where to send my letter to you,⁵ I close it by embracing and blessing you.

† C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

J[anuar]y 13.

My letter stayed on my desk since I did not know where to reach you. I received yours from St-Eusèbe and I want to reply immediately. Don't think that I am not concerned about the accident that you have met with.⁶ I am very worried about it and that is a case where you should have interrupted all activity. What you are doing is forcing nature too much. It is wanting to risk the danger of stopping suddenly in the middle of your course. Take a rest in this mission, it does not matter if it goes less well because you restrain yourself, the essential thing is that you do not kill yourself.

I shall hand over your letter to your mother. I was too moved by the account of your accident that I could not pay serious attention to what follows concerning Father Carillan.⁷ I shall come back to it when I am less in a hurry. Good-bye, I press you to my heart. Write to me again soon to calm me, and I repeat it, work very little at this mission. I affectionately greet your dear companions.

† C. J. Eugene, Bishop.

⁴ Father Lesbros. Concerning this priest, the Founder wrote the following year: One of those "professional preachers who end up by scandalizing all the areas they pass through." Cf.: J. M., February 15, 1839.

⁵ The Founder had first addressed the letter to "Mister Chamsaur, goldsmith at Gap," and then he wrote: "to Father Mille . . . with the parish priest of Saint-Eusèbe . . ."

⁶ Father Mille's accident: the first signs of his illness: "faintings," "vomiting" (cf. letter M.- Mille, February 3), "spitting blood" (cf.: letter M.- Mille, May 16).

⁷ Father Carillan. We do not come across this name any more in the Founder's letters. Since often he went by the sound, maybe he wanted to speak of "Callandre," the superior of the diocesan missionaries of Gap or of "Garagnon," Canon, who was very much against the Oblates of Laus.

656. [To Father Courtès, at Aix].⁸

Visits received at the beginning of the year. Coat of arms and motto of the Bishop of Marseilles

[Marseilles,] January 7, 1838.

I cannot yet get to business. I will need the whole week to be again my normal self. The crowd has been extraordinary, it has not stopped coming. I have to respond to so much attention and to thank God for these good sentiments. It is only after fulfilling all these duties that I can get away from here to come and see you. I had to be content with writing to the Archbishop of Aix.

My Pastoral Letter will not have reached you yet because my seals had not arrived from Paris.⁹ You will notice that I have not disowned my position as Founder and superior of our beloved Congregation. While prudence required that for the peace of its future I do not openly take a title that would have caused embarrassment, I did combine its coat of arms with that of my family, and you will notice the missionary cross shining brighter than my own coat of arms, and the motto so precious which is distinctive of this Society on the top of everything. You will explain it to whomever wishes to listen, no beating around the bush in this matter. This is a coat of arms that speaks.

Good-bye, dear son, a thousand good wishes at the beginning of this year, and my most abundant blessings.

⁸ YENVEUX III, 48; REY II, 4.

⁹ Pastoral Letter of December 25, 1837 on the occasion of Bishop de Mazenod's installation as the Bishop of Marseilles.

657. [To Father Guigues, at N.-D. de l'Osier].¹⁰

Gift to a seminarian. Nothing is to be changed in the customs of the Congregation during missions without the Founder's formal authorization.

[Marseilles,] January 26, 1838.

I agree to advance for the deacon whose letter you have sent me, the 150 francs which he needs to pay for his seminary course.¹¹ It is clear that if he does not persevere, he will restitute this sum. Time is running out, the needs are urgent. Vocations should not be delayed in the least through our fault.

I will never agree in any case whatever when my authorization must be asked for, that my silence may be taken for consent. This method is inadmissible. Only what I approve formally is authorized. I act in such a manner that I give a prompt reply, but if I happen to delay, one has to wait patiently and, if in a hurry, send me a reminding letter, to which it may happen that I deem myself not yet bound to reply for reasons which I am not obliged to reveal, in which case the issue remains pending. This is a lesser evil than to risk acting against the superior's will, or at least without his authorization. Remember this rule well so as never to deviate from it.

With regard to the ceremonies you would like to have suppressed,¹² I would have much to say, if I could do it verbally; but the pen is not as supple as the word; it could hurt and that is what I don't want to do, when I have some remark to make. I shall limit myself to telling you that if you held a little less to your views, if you had more respect for those of your superiors, which have at least the Church's approval, you would precisely act in that spirit of faith which you admit you don't possess, and the good Lord will take the trouble of proving to you that he blesses, at Grenoble as elsewhere, fidelity to the Rules and simplicity.

¹⁰ YENVEUX I, 141-143; III, 73; VIII, 26.

¹¹ On February 22-23, the Founder writes in his *Diary*: "I agree to supply 150 francs to the deacon who wants to come to the novitiate."

¹² Father Guigues wanted "the entrance ceremony and the penitential procession to be suppressed." Cf. J. M., January 22-23, 1838.

If it were a question of modifying some customs, that would be understandable, but to change according to each one's caprice now one thing, again something else, that will never be as long as there is order and a sense of religion, and some religious who wish to preserve our traditions in the Congregation. Bishops and Cardinals carry the processional cross during Jubilees and times of disasters, and a missionary would blush if he were to carry this precious burden when it is a question of drawing God's mercy on a people gone astray! Would he not realize that it is so much in conformity with the spirit of Jesus Christ to make public reparation in the name of the sinners he has come to save? I am not speaking about going bare-footed, this has never been prescribed, but the ceremony itself, the sermon on this subject, we do these things without a spirit of faith? What an acknowledgment!

Good-bye, my dear son, a quarter of an hour of meditation will put you back on the right track.

I embrace you.

J.E. de Mazenod.

658. To Father Mille, at Banon, near Forcalquier, Lower Alps.¹³
Very urgent.

Anxiety over Father Mille's health. It is not possible to send him assistance.

L.J.C. and M.I.

Marseilles, February 3, 1838.

Dear friend, I could not be more anxious than I am regarding you. Here is a second fainting which I do not understand: abstracting from the vomitings, which I know are caused by migraines, I don't know what causes the faintings. You ask me for the assistance of two missionaries, but how can you think I have them in reserve at the present period? The only thing to be done is to cancel the mission of la Roche or to postpone it until after Easter, and to delay that of Banon

¹³ Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L. M.- Mille. The Founder had at first written the following address: "To Mister Champsaur, goldsmith, for Father Mille, at Gap, Upper Alps."

so as to give you time to recover your strength and to me the possibility of altering some arrangement and thus come to your aid.

The retreat at Aix has been announced in all the churches for tomorrow, it is not in my power to postpone it, it has to last two weeks. Father Bernard who is preaching it has to come back to Marseilles, to begin at carnival time the retreat for men that is to last the whole of Lent. This is the only good that paid missionaries can accomplish in my diocese where they never do anything for my flock. I would give it up to relieve you, but on your part you must know how to give up even what you have promised when such an urgent need demands it. The means I on my part propose are extreme: they can be justified only by a great concern, judged as such by all those who are involved and who must suffer its consequences. Already so as not to touch a plan conscientiously settled for Marseilles. I had to refuse mercilessly to Father Courtès three missions which were requested too late. Even in his case I must be able to justify such a measure.

I don't know where to send my letter. You make me fear that it may not find you at Laus any more since you don't tell me when this mission of Banon should start, in regard to which I would like to be in time so as to delay it. As for you, reply to me immediately, you realize my situation, it is very difficult. Take care of yourself a little more. We have eight Oblates five of whom will be available by the end of the year. I reserve one for Laus whom you will train yourself. In a few months, I can, if you need him, give you a Brother who will by then have made half of his novitiate;¹⁴ but my God, it takes time to train our members!

I shall inform Father Tempier about what you want for Masses; he did not answer me yesterday, I don't have it at hand just now and I am in a hurry to get my letter to the post.

Good-bye, dear friend, I bless you wholeheartedly.

† C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

¹⁴ Brother Joubert was already in Laus in May, cf. L. M.- Mille, May 25, 1838. During the summer, two young priests helped the community when there were big crowds of pilgrims: Father Rouvière, ordained on June 28 and Father Ancel who will join the novitiate on October 31, 1838. Cf. *Missions O.M.I.*, t. 40 (1902), p. 93. The other 4 future priests were: A. Gibelli, J. J. De Veronico and Jérôme Pont, ordained on June 24, J. C. N. Bise, ordained on September 22.

659. For Father Courtès, at the Mission, Aix.¹⁵

Suffrages of the Oblates for the repose of the soul of Madam de Bausset, a distinguished benefactress of the Congregation.

Marseilles, February 8, 1838.

My dear Courtès, I thought that the Circular I had prepared for all our houses had been sent to Aix, but it seems that this task had been left to me, and I am, however, hindered more than ever. I had directed all the priests of the Congregation to say one Mass for the repose of the soul of our distinguished benefactress, Madame de Bausset, every Oblate novice or Brother to offer five Holy Communions for the same intention, to apply for a week all the indulgences, etc., for the deceased person. For you in particular, I add that I would have authorized the service you requested of me had I not feared that a claim would be made that the legacy¹⁶ had been left to me for the mission, whereas I am free to do with it whatever I like. This at least is what I can say *tuta conscientia*. So let us be satisfied with private suffrages.

I have met the parish priest of Istria, I have made arrangements for Lent 1839.

Good-bye, my mother is about to leave, I embrace you.

† C. J. E., Bp.

¹⁵ Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L. M.- Courtès.

¹⁶ In the Founder's *Diary* of February 7, we read: "Letter of Father Courtès, who informs me of the sudden death of the respected Madame Bausset, friend and distinguished benefactress of the Mission A second letter of Father Courtès tells me that the excellent Madame de Bausset's will provides that the sum of 20,000 francs will be paid to me during the course of the year. We do not forget that this charitable Christian lady and good friend has provided 600 francs yearly for ten years towards the education and maintenance of our Fathers"

660. [To Father Dassy, at N.-D. de l'Osier].¹⁷

Booklet on N.-D. de l'Osier. Father Dassy's letter to the General of the Carmelites.

L.J.C. and M.I.

Marseilles, April 5, 1838.

I am replying, my good Father Dassy, to your letter of March 19. I had every good intention to do it earlier but as usual I have been impeded by being daily interrupted. We have received your small booklet.¹⁸ I have distributed those you sent me to the different persons, however I did not deliver that of Father Lagier in order not to arouse his jealousy. Your letter to the General of the Carmelites has been dispatched along with my recommendation.¹⁹ As soon as I receive a reply I shall pass it on to you. I would have preferred that you wrote on the booklet's frontispiece: "By a priest from N.-D. de l'Osier" without printing your name in block letters at the bottom of the dedicatory letter. It seems that at l'Osier they were surprised that you did not show the manuscript. Dupuy was astonished at your handing the property of the Cistercian nuns to the missionaries without any intermediary: he fears this may produce a bad effect in the mind of the Bishop and of others also. It is the centre of the corpus of the Christ that has rotted, thus your prophecy has not come true,²⁰ at least it is not the fault of either the arms or the legs. A collection is being made to build another one. If enough money is collected it will be made in metal, or else in wood: in this latter case we will have to renew it in 15 or 20 years. I am very much touched by all that you express to me from your heart on the occasion of my feast-day. I thank you for it without waiting till your own to do the same.

¹⁷ Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L. M.- [Dassy]. This is certainly a letter to Father Dassy even though the address written on page four is the following: "To Father Guigue[s], superior at Notre-Dame de l'Osier, Township of Vinay, Isère."

¹⁸ [Dassy, L. T.], *Pèlerinage à N.-D. de l'Osier*. Grenoble, Baratier, 1837, 144 pp.

¹⁹ Father Dassy asked for some information on the scapular of Mount Carmel. The Founder's letter of recommendation is dated March 25.

²⁰ On March 19, Father Dassy wrote to the Founder: "I was quite grieved to learn about the fall of Christ's statue from Calvaire. People say that I had foreseen this accident. It is true that I had spoken about it to Father Honorat several times requesting him to brace up the arms and especially the legs of Christ's statue more solidly." This statue of Christ was outside, exposed to all the changes of weather.

To save postage, I beg you to inform Father Guigue[s] that I received his letter of March 26. I am surprised that he still speaks to me of Brother B[lanc] as if I had forgotten to answer him about this man. On the contrary, I remember very well that I had communicated my amazement at the fact that, after asking me for the faculty to receive his vows and requesting me to send him a cross, he thereafter informs me that this man is not meant for us. If he has the virtues and a good character as is stated in the last letter, why not decide to admit him to his final profession?

Father Guibert is urging Dupuy very much to undertake his round-the-world trip to obtain funds for Corsica. I don't know why Dupuy is asking for my authorization for this. I think that in his position he does not need anyone's authorization. If it is to produce as great an advantage as Father Guibert boasts, I give permission very willingly *in quantum possum*.

I requested you to remember me specially to Father Vincens. I should have written to him, but the impossible is increasing to the point of crushing me.

My greetings to all and I bless you.

† C. J. Eugene, Bish[op] of M[arseil]les.

661. [To Father Mille, at N.-D. du Laus].²¹

Father Mille must take a rest and limit his zeal. It is not possible to send him some priests.

[Marseilles.] May 7, 1838.

If I still have any authority in the Congregation, I use it to forbid you to undertake any work whatsoever, be it a retreat, mission, accompanying Bishops, etc.

I think you are joking in wanting to convince me that I would not be basically wanting in my duty if I were weak enough to concede to your zealous requests. After a job like the one you have done this winter, it would be an unheard of imprudence to require anything else

²¹ YENVEUX I, 8*.

from you than the rest you need. And you, don't you think that I find it odd that you ask me to break up a house that has only three members to give you one of them, that I remove a superior from his house and have him rush to you, that without any consideration for the increasing labours of Father Bernard who today is still at Cuges where he is all alone preaching the retreat which follows the missions, I should make him come running to the Upper Alps²² without granting him a day of rest. Really all this annoys me because we always seem to start over again and zeal gets the better of reason.

662. [To Father Guigues, at N.-D. de l'Osier].²³

Father Dupuy will be appointed Rector of the Cistercians' church at Marseilles.

L.J.C. and M.I.

Marseilles, May 15, 1838.

D[upuy]²⁴ is quite wrong in being angry, my dear child, he should not doubt either my affection or my gratitude. I think I have sufficiently proved on every occasion that I will not deviate from those sentiments to which he has a right such that no one in the Congregation can refuse to recognize. But then we do have to wait for the opportune moment in dealing with the things of this world; and must proprieties be neglected? It should have sufficed for D[upuy] to know beyond a doubt that I was in the most definite disposition to do for him what my situation allows me to do. Any anxiety in this matter was a hidden offence about which he should reproach himself. It was however proper to let me be the judge both of what was possible and of the opportune moment. I would be annoyed if he were convinced that I had the power to make him a Canon. This was a moral impossibility which is not in my power to surmount. Every one of his friends could have told him this if they saw the need not to hide the truth from him.

²² The Bishop of Gap wanted missionaries to precede him for the pastoral visit of some cities in his diocese. On this score, Father Mille asked for the assistance of Fathers Courtès, Martin, Bernard and Gignoux as soon as possible, cf. J. M., May 7, 1838.

²³ Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L. M.- Guigues. Only the first page of the original is preserved, without any indication of the addressee. It is, in fact, Father Guigues, cf. J. M., May 17, 1838.

²⁴ Father Dupuy, an ex-Oblate, who remained a faithful friend and close collaborator, had been involved from the beginning in establishing the Oblates at N.-D. de l'Osier. He was anxious to return to Marseilles.

When I speak of friends, I mean those who could be judges in this affair, and not certain lay people who have recourse only to their good heart when it concerns those to whom they are attached. After having well weighed and pondered everything, I reserved for him the parish at Ayalades, a very pleasant place because of its proximity to the city and its small population, but the incumbent does not want to hear of any change; so we must forget that for the time being. I did not have anything else in view at the time. But here is an arrangement that is possible and helps me to reconcile everything. Father Court's death leaves the parish of St-Martin vacant. I have appointed the Rector of St. Vincent de Paul to it. The Rector of the Carthusians will replace the latter, and I shall give his place to D[upuy]. The Rector of this parish is considered to be a parish priest of the city and draws the corresponding salary, his income is more than 2000 francs. Some good can certainly be done with that. The parish has few people and is pleasant to live in. This is the best I can find for D[upuy]. Now it is a matter of promptly coming to a suitable agreement. The only one that seems practical to me is that D[upuy] writes me an urgent letter requesting me to find a place for him in my diocese, stating all the reasons which seem strongest to him, without leaving out or better by laying emphasis especially on his health. This allows me to write to the Bishop of Grenoble that I could not resist giving in to the entreaties of this good priest who always has a right to my friendship and respect, and so, availing myself of an opportunity which would not likely occur again but rarely, I take advantage of the vacancy of this post which suits him very much and grant it to him. Arrange this matter quickly because I cannot delay settling everything here: I have at hand the royal edict for St. Martin, everyone knows it and I have to go ahead.

Now let us come to the matters that pertain to the house. Nothing surprises me more than the question the Bishop of Grenoble asked you about Father Cuynat. How is it that you did not prepare him for this?

I have received the replies of the General of the Carmelites. They are very much in conformity with the sentiments expressed by Father Dassy. When he will publish a new edition, he will do well to have it printed according to the text.²⁵

²⁵ Father Dassy wanted to have another edition of his book on the *Gloire du scapulaire de N.-D. du Mont Carmel*, Grenoble, Baratier, without date. Cf. Letter of Father Dassy to Bishop de Mazenod, March - June and June 22, 1838.

663. To Father Mille, superior at Notre-Dame du Laus, near Gap, Upper Alps.²⁶

Let Father Mille take a complete rest. Father Martin will go to do his work.

L.J.C. and M.I.

Marseilles, May 16, 1838.

My dear Father Mille, far from having the least scruples about the regulations I gave you in my last letter, I reprimand myself for not having demanded enough. A visit one of our friends who is in a position to assess your condition has just paid me, makes me come back to this matter in order to satisfy my conscience. Yours is compromised by things you withheld in giving me an account of your health. But I know exactly what the situation is and I am going to act accordingly. Not only do I confirm my forbidding you to preach until further very explicit orders from me, but I also forbid you to hear confessions after the community evening prayers and before the end of the morning oraison. I make an exception only for the confessions of priests who may want to come to you. I have no choice but to consider your case as of the highest importance and so I do not hesitate to completely break up one of our houses in order to send you someone as a substitute for what I forbid you to do. I am going to write to Father Martin to go up to N.-D. du Laus, thus the house of Lumières will be reduced to two members. I leave you to ponder whether I would take such an extreme measure if I did not attach the greatest importance to your finally taking a rest which reason and properly understood obedience should have made you take on your own and that, much earlier. I am responsible before the Cong[regatio]n and the Church for your welfare. I thought I had made my mind sufficiently clear so that you could not possibly interpret it otherwise. I had told you very clearly that it made no difference to me if a mission did not take place when I did not have the means to give it, that the health of a missionary like you is not to be jeopardized at any cost. If you had behaved with more simplicity before God, we would now not be in the trouble we are in and I would not have to take the extreme measure of limiting your powers in order to force you to look after yourself, something to which obedience

²⁶ Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L. M.- Mille.

obliged you in advance. You understand me well: I forbid you to preach and this includes lectures and all sorts of instructions or talks. What I mean is that you do not use your voice, and so, no singing or hymns, vespers or litanies, etc. I demand a complete rest for your chest that has been affected much more than you told me. According to you, you were spitting blood only occasionally and because of a temporary over-exertion. This is what I was to conclude from what you say. Ask yourself if you did not hide the truth from me. This is an unpardonable fault and I don't know how to excuse those who know more than what you told me and did not warn me of your condition.

Once again I tell you that I am making the big sacrifice of breaking up the community of N.-D. de Lumières only so that you do not do anything that could tire you prior to the arrival of big crowds to Laus and for the feast of Pentecost as well as the period thereafter. See that the announcements, the collection notices, etc., are given to this Father, and you, think of sleeping, of refreshment, in a word, of having a complete rest. If an immediate improvement does not follow the precautions I prescribe for you, I shall not hesitate to remove you from Laus for the reason that the little I still allow you to do is harmful to your health, which I must safeguard at any cost, even though you, for your part, have done everything to ruin it.

Good-bye, give me detailed news about yourself; I love you and I bless you.

† C. J. Eug., Bish[op] of Marseilles.

664. To our dear Father Mille, superior at N.-D. du Laus, near Gap, Upper Alps.²⁷

Father Mille must continue his complete rest. Sending Brother Morandini. Brother Joubert's vows.

L.J.C. and M.I.

Marseilles, May 25, 1838.

Dear and good son, your last letter has consoled me, but I am not yet convinced that you are as well as you say you are. One does not go

²⁷ Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L. M.- Mille.

thus from a state such as you had fallen into to perfect health. So, my dear man, do not take it amiss that I let this precious interdict continue to weigh heavily on your zeal. Its value lies in that you have not become useless for the rest of your life, which would have infallibly happened had I allowed you to go to Veynes or anywhere else where you would have had to preach. Remember well that you are always forbidden to give any interpretation different from what I mean. For your sake I have sacrificed Father Martin, only so that he may be your instrument. Tell him what you would like him to know, he will preach in your name.

I am sending you one of our most perfect Oblates. He is an angel of virtue that the good Lord has furthermore endowed with many other talents; unfortunately his health has been impaired by excessive attention to supernatural things.²⁸ We believe that the air of N.-D. du Laus will do him good. I entrust him to you as a precious treasure. Take care of him and give him every facility to recuperate his health which he will put to such good use.

I dispense the good Brother Joubert from the *quinquennium*, you may admit him to his perpetual vows when his first vows come to an end.²⁹

I affectionately greet all our Fathers and yourself, as well as the good Brother Joubert.

† C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

665. To Father Mille, superior at Notre-Dame du Laus, Upper Alps.³⁰

We must obtain the miraculous cure of Brother Morandini from the Blessed Virgin.

L.J.C. and M.I.

Marseilles, June 5, 1838.

Dear son, I received your letter just now and I reply to it immediately. I want to communicate to you an idea the good Lord gives me

²⁸ Brother Morandini died at Aix on December 27, 1838.

²⁹ Pierre-Paul N.-Marie Joubert made his first vows in June 1837 and his perpetual vows on June 21, 1838. Father Mille had written that this Brother was "always very holy and very pleasant." Cf. J. M., May 19, 1838.

³⁰ Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L. M.- Mille.

certainly to relieve my heart, oppressed by the heart-rending news you give me.³¹ Perhaps you may have had the same thought, I hope the Lord would have inspired it in you. If the merit of obedience must be added to confidence, I prescribe it willingly. Our good Brother Morandini, whom Providence has brought to the Blessed Virgin's shrine, must pray to her with filial submission, ask her for the miracle of his cure and promise her what his heart will suggest to him after having submitted it to obedience and to his local superior's approval. Here all of us are going to pray along with him, right from this evening itself; I have not yet seen anyone because it is late and I wanted to reply to you as soon as I received your letter, but I am going to inform everyone in a moment.

With regard to consulting the physician d'Astros, he is quite far away for you to wait for him. What should have been done was not to have postponed to the following day the physician's visit because blood-letting was urgent in the situation you refer to me, and also diet and rest. My God, what a painful trial! Urge everyone to pray to the Blessed Virgin to perform a miracle for us who are her children and who are very keen on making her loved and honoured.

Good-bye, bless our beloved sick person on my part. I greet you with a grieving heart.

† C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

666. [To Father Tempier, at the Major Seminary of Marseilles].³²

Father Tempier to make the canonical visit of the Oblate missions in Corsica.

Marseilles, June 26, [1838].³³

I have been hoping for a long time to go and visit personally our missions of Corsica. Now I realize that it is impossible for me to carry

³¹ While passing through Gap, before arriving at N.-D. du Laus, Brother Morandini "vomited blood through his mouth and nose." Cf. J. M., June 5, 1838.

³² Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L. M.- Tempier.

³³ Through distraction the Founder writes: 1836 but he signs: "Bishop of Marseilles." Father Tempier had already returned on July 19. In addition to the Major Seminary of Ajaccio and the house of the missionaries of Vico, he had visited several monasteries, among others that of Balagne, with the view to "starting a second foundation of missionaries." Cf. J. M., July 19, 1838.

out this plan. Hence I commission our Father Tempier to visit our missions in my name, investing him with all the powers necessary for this.

† C.J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.
S[uperior] G[eneral].

667. To Father Guigue[s], superior at N.-D. de l'Osier.³⁴

Father Jérôme Pont receives his obedience for N.-D. de l'Osier.

L.J.C. and M.I.

Marseilles, June 27, 1838.

I am making you a gift, my dear Father Guigue[s], of our new Father Pont. He is just fresh from the ordination³⁵ and I give him his obedience for your house which he will edify by his constant regularity as he always edified his companions and the entire Seminary here. I recommend him to you in a special manner and I warn you that he is extremely humble. You must therefore encourage him while respecting his conscience which is somewhat meticulous.

I received your letter of the 11th, but I did not have the time to offer you some comments. To authorize the repairs of which you speak, you must give me an estimate of the sum to which they will amount, I mean about the clock. You may go ahead with those of the roof and the rectory.

With all my heart I thank the Blessed Virgin for the protection she deigns to bestow on us by working miracles at her shrine. She is doing as much at N.-D. du Laus.

We shall have to come to some agreement on how you make use of your Masses. I cannot remain uninformed about it.

It is late, my dear son, and Father Pont would like to go and sleep so as to be able to leave very early tomorrow.

I embrace you and I bless you.

† C. J. Eugene, Bish[op] of M[arsei]lles.

³⁴ Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L. M.- Guignes.

³⁵ Father J. Pont, priest since June 24, 1838.

I am sending you through Father Pont all the documents Father Guibert has brought from Rome.³⁶ You should have informed me of the request you had to make so that things would be in order.

668. To Father Dassy, priest of the community of N.-D. de l'Osier, at l'Osier.³⁷

Father Pont's departure for l'Osier. Advice to Father Dassy regarding his plan of composing several books.

L.J.C. and M.I.

Marseilles, June 27, 1838.

It is so late that I can reply to you only with monosyllables. At the Seminary, everyone must be in bed and Father Pont is waiting for my letter.

First of all I have entrusted this good Father with the reply of the Carmelites' Father General. In your second edition,³⁸ you will see that the questions and answers are printed.

In this new edition, as in everything you will get printed, you must not put your initials on the frontispiece, but simply "by a priest of the community of N.-D. de l'Osier"; and at the bottom of the dedicatory letter, write the name in full along with the title, namely: "priest of the Congregation of"

I approve that you draw up a novena to N.-D. l'Osier, but from here I cannot tell you how you can send me the manuscript. You must make use of some opportunity. I do not dare to delude myself about going to see you this year, I am overloaded with work here.

Father Lagier acknowledges having received a certain number of the *Gloire*, etc. You don't agree with the number.

I had charged someone to ask the Parish Priest of the Carmelites if he wanted any for sale on their feast-day, but this person has forgotten to give the message.

³⁶ Perhaps the letter from the Carmelite General to Father Dassy on the scapular of our Lady of Mount Carmel, and other documents whose nature is not known.

³⁷ Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L. M.- Dassy.

³⁸ The *Gloire du scapulaire de Notre-Dame du Mont-Carmel*, 2nd edition, 1838.

I don't dare to encourage you to compose a new *Mois de Marie*. There are many of them already.

Good-bye. Good-bye. I am afraid Father Pont will find the Seminary door closed, I embrace you also as hurriedly as I am writing to you.

† C. J. Eugene, Bish[op] of M[arsei]lles.

669. [To Father Vincens, at N.-D. de l'Osier].³⁹

Father Vincens must not make his retreat outside of an Oblate house. Moderate his zeal.

L.J.C. and M.I.

Marseilles, July 6, 1838.

I drop everything else, my dear Father Vincens, to reply to your letter, as I know that you will be pleased to get my advice without the least delay. I am glad, it is true, that our Fathers may profit from the transit of good preachers to train themselves in preaching, but it has never been my idea that we go looking for them outside the place where we live, much less that we go outside the Kingdom for that. If an exception had to be made, it certainly should not be to have the possibility of listening to Father C[ombalot].⁴⁰ He is a model about whom I would be very much embarrassed were our men to imitate him. This fiery orator lacks logic, his bombastic style poorly disguises his usual exaggerations and frequent inaccuracies. He may be able to move the uneducated crowd, but he is not very suitable to train men who are called to teach others especially in what is called an ecclesiastical retreat. Briefly, I do not approve that you go elsewhere for such trifles. Furthermore I see a great disadvantage in allowing a mis[siona]ry to make a retreat outside our houses. I have never permitted it. It would be a real disadvantage, I appeal to other Congreg[ation]s, they would reject such a proposal scornfully.

I do not have time to search among your letters for the one in which you ask me for permission about which you remind me this time

³⁹ Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L. M.- Vincens.

⁴⁰ Father Combalot, cf. J. M., July 6, 1838.

without specifying the kind of mortification. Hence I cannot answer you on this point.

Preaching retreats of three weeks' duration after so many missions is too much. You are not acting with sufficient prudence and discretion in your house. No doubt you are doing it for God but a little too much for purely human motives also.

Tell Father Guigue[s] that I was extremely dissatisfied with his remarks about the missi[ona]ry.⁴¹

670. [To Father Mille, at N.-D. du Laus].⁴²

Superiors must take good care of the sick.

[Marseilles,] July 24, 1838.

Take care of your sick⁴³ more than you actually do. The superior has a great responsibility in this matter. He must look after them unceasingly. It is not enough to put an infirmarian in charge of them. This remark is valid for all times, the more so when you have sick persons like Brother Morandini. I have been given to understand that he is left to his indifference to life around him. Is this how you should handle a fragile vessel? It is good, even very good to have him take some milk, but along with it he must not eat all that is given to a community of people who are in good health.

⁴¹ The second page of this letter has disappeared. The Founder must have reprimanded Father Guigues severely. He writes in his *Diary* July 6: "Letter of Father Guigues full of bias against the good man I sent him (Pont). The gist and the manner of his phrases have hurt me properly. I immediately replied to him as I should have . . ."

⁴² YENVEUX VI, 114.

⁴³ Besides Brother Morandini, Father Casimir Aubert, master of novices, was at Laus having a rest (cf. J. M., July 20, 1838); similarly the scholastic Brothers Lucien-A. Lagier and F. Marchi, cf. J. M., July 31, 1838.

671. [To Father Dassy, at N.-D. de l'Osier].⁴⁴

Joy at learning that Father Kotterer wishes to return to the community. Father Dassy's books.

[Marseilles,] August 9, 1838.

My dear Father Dassy, you could not have given me more pleasing news than in what you tell me about our dear Kott[er]er's⁴⁵ intentions. Alas! I was bemoaning his estrangement and I was all the more lamenting the state of illusion in which I saw him because I had lost every hope of drawing him out of it. Any title I had for his confidence was neutralized by the unjust prejudices he fostered in his soul. How could one hope to see him come back out of the abyss he had dug for himself under his own feet when the rays of the heavenly light were blocked out and could no more enlighten his soul? But let us think no more of the past. One must be blind not to recognize that I did not cease even for a moment to be a father. As Superior and Bishop, I should have been inspired only by my conscience, and I had the right and the duty to judge what he called the inspirations of his knowledge. In revolting against this legitimate authority he fell so greatly that we can compare it to a real apostasy; for is it anything else when one puts oneself knowingly in the situation of having to be expelled from a Congregation which accepts you only on the vows and the oath to persevere in her ranks until death? In this state of affairs, what purpose could the dispensation requested *post factum* have served? To deceive such a member who still remained no less obliged to come back to the state he had abandoned through his fault, and to burden the conscience of the superior who must, I don't say grant but deliver with trembling, this dispensation only in very rare and obviously just cases foreseen by the Constitutions? Here the invalidity of the dispensation was too clear for me to have compromised my responsibility before God. The person would have remained as guilty with my alleged dispensation as before,

⁴⁴ YENVEUX II, 44, 45; VIII, 314.

⁴⁵ At his father's death in 1837, Kotterer had asked for dispensation from his vows in order to live with his mother. He went despite the Founder's refusal. Mrs. Kotterer died a few months after her husband. With a brother's charity, Father Dassy tried to bring the young priest back into the Congregation. "He had pity on Kotterer and seeing him so unhappy, offered to mediate and help him return to his duties" (J. M. August 8). Moved by this, the Founder writes this compassionate letter of August 9. Kotterer returned to l'Osier, but he left the Congregation for good in 1840.

and I would have been implicated in the perjury. God forbid. And so all my efforts, though it is true that I am a father, had been to dissuade the Council from decreeing an expulsion. Was it the good Lord who gave me the presentiment of a return of which there was no sign? I know nothing of that. God is good, so merciful that we can never fathom the depths of his plans for his creatures.

If Kott[erer] truly repents his fault, if he realizes the need to make amends for it, if instead of maintaining his pride by thinking that wrong was done in his regard, he humbly acknowledges that all the wrongs come from his part, his return and rehabilitation will be easy. Since a sentence properly so called has never been pronounced against him, even though the Devil had instigated him to ask for it as a favour which was granted to others, he will not have to redo his novitiate, he will not have lost his position. But he has lost grace and will have to regain it. For that I shall give him every facility by calling him to my side. He will come and make a retreat of 10, 12 or 15 days, as I will deem it necessary. Therein he will strengthen himself in tears of repentance and the fire of love and once he is renewed in the spirit of his vocation, he will come forth full of fervour and be an example and model for his brothers, such are the marvels divine grace will have worked in his soul. Regarding the fear that dominates him, oh! let it vanish, for who can arrogate the right to reprimand him ever so slightly when God has forgiven him and the Congregation has given him the kiss of peace through the blessing of the Superior who represents her. This is, my dear Father Dassy, what the Lord inspires me to write to you. May you be rewarded for the steps your fraternal love urged you to take in response to the sincerity of the dispositions of our brother who had gone astray and to his complete return to the duties of his vocation.

Examining the manuscript⁴⁶ you have sent me is a work requiring time and labour. It cannot be done in a short time. In any case, it could not have been printed for the feast of our Lady in September.

⁴⁶ *Neuvaine à N.-D. de l'Osier.*

I am impatiently waiting for the new edition of the *Gloire du scapulaire*. Explain well who are the missionaries who can commute.⁴⁷ I have no document before me, but if I remember well, the questions are posed by you; it is there first of all that you must put your precious titles: "Priest of the Congregation of the M[issiona]ry Oblates of the Virgin Mary," and in answer, in the section of the right to commute where it is said: "to you and to your missionaries," you must put: "To the M[issiona]ries of our Congregation."

The book cannot be printed under the same conditions as the hymnal, because the houses, except that of Laus, would not know how to retail them. At the most, you could sound out the Parish Priest of the Carmelites, establishing a definite price for which you can allow to him to handle it.

Place me at the feet of our good Mother. I cannot go personally⁴⁸ to render homage to her.

I embrace you and I bless you.

672. [To Father Guigues, at N.-D. de l'Osier].⁴⁹

The Oblates must not join other priests for missions. Answers to several questions.

[Marseilles,] September 1, 1838.

If his Lordship the Bishop of Grenoble is keen that as many missions as he has promised must be given, let him see to them; but those

⁴⁷ Reference to the letter of the Carmelite General, cf. L. Dassy- M., August 4, 1838: "The answers of the Carmelite General have, at Grenoble and in those places in the diocese that have already received them, produced a favourable reform and a wonderful enthusiasm towards O.L. of Mount Carmel. From all sides people are asking us for the favour of using the commutation in regard to the indulgence granted by the Bull concerning the Sabbath."

The Sabbath Bull of John XXII, in 1322, concerns a kind of commitment the Blessed Virgin is alleged to have made, during a private revelation to St. Simon Stock (13th century) to deliver the souls of his fellow-religious (Carmelites) from Purgatory on the Saturday after their death. One of the conditions for enjoying this privilege was wearing the scapular of O.L. of Mount Carmel, etc. Imposing the scapular of Mount Carmel was reserved to the Carmelites.

⁴⁸ The Founder wanted to make the canonical visit of the houses. He sent Father Tempier instead, cf. L. M.- Tempier, September 26, 1838.

⁴⁹ YENVEUX I, 105; III, 59; VI, 42; VII, 36. Yenveux copies 4 excerpts from this letter in which the Founder replied to 13 questions of Father Guigues: "My answers will serve as norms" the Founder writes in his *Diary*, September 5.

who undertake them will work in their area while you will work in yours. I do not agree that you team up with priests who are outside our Congregation. Let them say what they want, let them get angry if they like, but let them not come to interfere in our way of doing things. There is room for everyone.

For this year, you will still keep him at l'Osier,⁵⁰ I can exchange him only with someone who will not fulfil all the conditions you require. But tell him from me that his principles on choosing the ministries we must do are wrong and that he is committing a sin by not fulfilling as he should all that obedience prescribes to him.

Since you are short of fruit for dessert, you may substitute with salad, even though this may be costly because of the oil. Once you can get some fruit or once your garden provides them, you will return to the normal practice.

Permission to remove books from the library must always be obtained from the superior. However, if before going to the library, the superior is not in, Father Vincens may give the authorization, but one should always have gone to the superior.

673. [To Father Mille, at N.-D. du Laus].⁵¹

Reproaches Fathers Mille and Martin for having made their retreat with the diocesan priests.

[Marseilles,] September 18, 1838.

You needed my permission because it was a question of staying several days outside your house. Father Martin also needed my permission to leave Laus during that week.

I shall never permit any of our missionaries and still much less the superior of one of our houses to make their retreat anywhere else except in our houses.⁵² A person has to be really inconsiderate to

⁵⁰ No doubt, the reference is to Father Pélissier who did not like to take care of the parish.

⁵¹ YENVEUX IV, 182, 189; VI, 78.

⁵² The Founder specifies his thought in his *Diary*, September 18: "Letter of Father Mille. I wrote to him immediately to make him understand that I could not agree to his or any of our Father's making the retreat with the priests of Gap, that if he had accepted to be the retreatants' confessor, I would consent on condition that he could say Mass daily. I reminded him of our principles and customs and I insisted that he does not deviate from the same." Cf. also L. M.- Mille, September 22.

oblige me to remind you of what should in any case be well known to you. Am I to resign myself to seeing a given spirit replace the spirit proper to our Congregation, which, in this regard, has no other than that of any regular Order?

What an idea that is of going and closing yourself up in the Seminary with the retreatants. Don't you know our norm is that the priests do not abstain from saying Mass during retreats? If at all, it is for one day at the most, and that with special permission which is not given easily. I have explained the spirit of this system and it must have been communicated throughout the whole corps of the Society. On receiving my letter, you will leave the retreat and offer the Holy Sacrifice daily as the Rule, and still more the spirit of the Rule prescribes. I cannot in any way tolerate you giving the impression of making a retreat with the diocesan clergy.

674. To Father Courtès, superior at the Mission, Carmelites' Square, at the top of the public Drive, at Aix, Bouch[es-]du-Rhône.⁵³

List of preachers and of missions for the Winter season 1838-1839.

L.J.C. and M.I.

Marseilles, September 19, 1838.

I had to let Father De Veronico go without sending you a letter through him. As you request, I shall send you Father Reinaud to preach in the church of the Magdeleine on the feastday of the Holy Rosary, but it is altogether impossible for any of our men to preach for Advent either at the church of the Magdalene or elsewhere. That is the most busy mission period, no one is available at that time. It is easy to give this reply.

I hope you have spoken to the Vicar General of the mission of Roves.⁵⁴ It will take place in January and according to what has been agreed, it will be Fathers Telmon and Aubert who will preach it. Fathers Magnan, Bernard and André will preach that of St. Mitre at the same time. You, Father Magnan and Father Bollard,⁵⁵ in the

⁵³ Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L. M.- Courtès.

⁵⁴ This refers probably to the parish of Le-Rove in the diocese of Aix.

⁵⁵ Mss.: Bolard. Father Fabien Bollard, who joined the novitiate on February 16, 1838.

absence of Father André, will preach that of Rogne[s] in November. In December, it will be Fathers Bernard, Magnan and Aubert who will preach that of La Rocque, and while in February and March Father Bernard and a priest novice will preach that of St-André, you, Father Telmon, Father Magnan and Father De Veronico will preach that of Istres.

I remind you of the list we drew up during your transit through Marseilles so that you can arrange everything accordingly.

Good-bye, I am being called to the hospital, I embrace you.

† C.J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

675. To Father Mille, superior of Miss[iona]ries, at the Major Seminary, at Gap. Upper Alps.⁵⁶

The Founder will accept Father Chabrier in the Congregation. Father Pont's obedience for N.-D. du Laus. Forthcoming canonical visit by Father Tempier.

L.J.C. and M.I.

Marseilles, September 22, 1838.

Maybe I shall still be on time, my dear Mille, to meet you at Gap. I received your three letters. Today's consoled me because I assure you I was saddened thinking that I may be forced to get it back. As things are, everything is going well, but I advise you to note down your observations in order to compare and determine on what is best for Father Dufêtre and Father Deplace.⁵⁷

I hasten to tell you how surprised I am at what you told me concerning Father C[habrier].⁵⁸ Not a single hair on my head had entertained any thought of that kind. On the contrary, from what has been

⁵⁶ Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L. M.- Mille.

⁵⁷ Two famous preachers: Father Dominique-Aug. Dufêtre, from the house of the Carthusian missionaries of Lyon, later Bishop of Nevers, and Father Deplace, S.J. They were probably preaching the annual retreats of the clergy of Gap and Father Mille took part in them, no doubt as confessor; he was at least saying Mass there every day: "Your letter of today has consoled me!" Cf. letter no. 673.

⁵⁸ Mss.: "C." It refers to Father Chabrier, superior of the Minor Seminary of Embrun, who wanted to be an Oblate, cf. J. M., September 20, 1838.

told me about this good priest, I rejoiced at his vocation and I thanked the good Lord for it. I promised myself already that if God was clearing the way for his entry into the Congregation, I would make use of him and benefit from his experience. I still think the same way and if I had to dispense him from age if he is more than 40 years old, I would consider myself more fortunate that the good Lord had inspired him to choose the better part in joining our family.

I have written to Father Guigue[s] to send the excellent Father Pont to Laus. He will soon have arrived at your shrine. I hope this virtuous brother Oblate will be appreciated and his worth will be recognized in his humility: it gives him ideas about himself that are much below his true worth.

I am sending Father Tempier to make the visit in my place. He will start with N.-D. de Lumières, then go to N.-D. de l'Osier and will come later to N.-D. du Laus.

Good-bye, my dearest Father Mille, I embrace you with my whole heart.

† C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

P.S. I am too much in a hurry to speak to his Lordship your Bishop. I am quite impressed by what you say regarding him.⁵⁹

676. [To Father Tempier, at Marseilles].⁶⁰

Paper of obedience to make the canonical visit of four Oblate houses.

Marseilles, September 26, 1838.

Since the very numerous duties that weigh heavily on us make it impossible for us to make the visit of the houses of the Congregation this year, we entrust Reverend Father Tempier, our First Assistant, to

⁵⁹ Bishop de la Croix was sympathetic towards the Oblates. In the course of the year he went to preside at the closing of two missions, he allowed Father Allard to leave and promised to let the Oblates stay at Laus. "My successor may do what he wants; for myself, I am very happy to have in the persons of the Oblates, men who work both actively and disinterestedly in my diocese." Cf. *Missions O.M.I.*, t. 40 (1902), p. 101.

⁶⁰ Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L. M.- Tempier.

make this visit of the houses of Aix, N.-D. de Lumières, N.-D. de l'Osier and N.-D. du Laus in our name; we inform all the local superiors and other members of the above houses to accept the aforementioned Father Tempier in this capacity and we impart our blessings to all of them.

Given at Marseilles, September 26, 1838.

† C.J. Eugene, Sup[er]ior Gen[er]al].

677. To Mister Champsaur, goldsmith, for Father Mille, Gap, Upper Alps.⁶¹

Novena to N.-D. du Laus for the intentions of the Payen family. Missions in the diocese of Valence. Retreat at the shrine.

L.J.C. and M.I.

Marseilles, November 9, 1838.

My dear Father Mille, the Payen family is so Christian that I cannot refuse their request that I write you again to recommend Mister and especially Mrs. Payen to our Good Mother's intercession. You have already prayed for this intention, but you must have the charity to continue, and so on Tuesday or Wednesday, if my letter is late in arriving, you will first of all offer a Mass for the intention of this good family, for nine days you will have the com[muni]ty or the people during the evening prayers, recite one *pater* and one *ave*, and on the last day of the novena, you will offer another Mass. Mister Payen will have given the stipend for these two Masses to Father Tempier. Don't forget my request.

I wonder if Father Tempier told you we consider it important for the Congregation that we give a mission in the diocese of Valence. For this, Father Martin would have to free himself for this one mission and team up with some Fathers of l'Osier. To compensate you somewhat for this exchange, I shall send you a priest novice⁶² from here, whom I would very much like to try out at least in a mission. I am keen that he does it with you so that you could observe and test him at

⁶¹ Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L. M.- Mille.

⁶² This refers to Father F. Bollard, a novice since February 16, cf. L. M.- Mille, November 15. 1838.

work, and give me a conscientious report on his *savoir-faire*. I don't think he preaches badly but it is on a mission that I would like to see him preach because he is an accomplished person and we need to know if he can adapt himself to our ways.

I am impatiently waiting for some details on your attempt at a retreat.⁶³ This is a sacrifice made at the expense of the missions, so its result has to be evidently very profitable to souls so that we may decide to give preference to this practice. Weigh the matter carefully before God. By its very location, N.-D. de l'Osier has a very much better chance. In my opinion, you could obtain the same results with less expenses, because of the condition of those who come regularly or of those who frequent your shrine who are normally simple people without education.

May the Lord fill you with his graces. As for you, take good care of yourself. Good-bye.

† C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

678. To Mister Champsaur, goldsmith, for Father Mille, at Gap, Upper Alps.⁶⁴

Success of the retreat given at N.-D. du Laus. Improvement of Father Mille's health. Mission of Tallard. Fathers Pont and Ancel. List of subsequent missions.

L.J.C. and M.I.

Marseilles, November 15, 1838.

A thousand thanks to God for all the blessings he has bestowed on your retreat. I would have been pleased with a few more detailed particulars about the number and the quality of the retreatants.

⁶³ Regarding this retreat, Father Gustave Simonin writes in *Chronique de la maison du Laus* (1818-1841): "In order to guarantee the movement of devotion which brought the faithful to Notre-Dame du Laus, a general retreat for the pilgrims was started this year Even though it was late in the season, it was already the month of October, the pious exercises were attended by a great number of people and with much profit, so much so that it was decided that it would take place every year." Cf. *Missions O.M.I.*, t. 40 (1902), p. 97. The same thing was done at N.-D. de l'Osier with very much success, cf. L. Dassy - Mazenod, September 17, 1838.

⁶⁴ Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L. M.- Mille.

You deserve to have the period of your interdict prolonged for having worked so much during this retreat. But, from what you say, since the good Lord has healed you, you must not be considered a sick person any more but rather as one who is convalescing. Therefore I agree that you do a little more than what the Father Visitor⁶⁵ has allowed you; to find out how far you can go, you will heed Father Martin's decision: I shall tell him he is bound to allow you only what his conscience dictates, taking into account only your health which is so precious for the Congregation, and not at all the extra need that the good of the mission may require.

You will have to overcome many an obstacle in your mission of Tallard since the Parish Priest did not want it. This is one more reason for recommending the work to the Lord very much. Act with prudence and circumspection, but don't be discouraged, and make up by your zeal all the imperfections our ministry suffered during the time we gave the mission in this same town.⁶⁶

I authorize you to ask the Bishop of Gap for faculties for Father Pont, but note that, since he has never heard confessions before, it would not be prudent to let him begin this apprenticeship when none of you are at Laus to guide him.

I request you to thank Father Ancel⁶⁷ for the good news which he was kind enough to convey to me himself. It is too late to write to him directly, so be the spokesman of all my sentiments.

His Lordship the Bishop of Gap had the tact to ask me for Mass stipends for his charities. I am at a great loss to find them in this town where there are so many priests and so few stipends. I note his tact because I suppose he has not asked any from you. If it is otherwise, let me know before I reply to him. Inform me exactly about all the missions you have to preach, and the dates when they are to take place, and where you will need help if Father Martin were to be taken from you temporarily, for it is only in the case of his absence that we will

⁶⁵ Some excerpts of the Act of Visitation written on October 14 by Father Tempier are preserved in YENVEUX (I, 58-59, 157-158).

⁶⁶ Reference to the mission of Tallard preached from January 5 to February 2, 1823. The Founder fell ill there, cf.: *Oblate Writings*, VI, p. 101, note 2.

⁶⁷ Joseph Ancel, rector of St-André, former Secretary General of Bishop Arbaud, honorary Canon of Gap, joined the novitiate on October 31, 1838, cf. J. M., November 15, 1838 and Registre des entrées au noviciat.

have to see to the expenses and inconvenience of a temporary transfer of members. I have told you that in case of need I will have only [Father] Bollard to give you and that only for one mission, since his condition as a novice does not permit him to be kept for a longer period outside his novitiate.

I bless all of you and I embrace you with all my heart.

† C.J. Eugene, Bish[op] of Marseilles.

679. To Father Aubert, superior of the Miss[iona]ries, at Calvaire.⁶⁸

Invitation to come to the Bishop's House. Father Albini's illness.

Tuesday [November 20, 1838].⁶⁹

Here I am grieving for four days and you are not unaware of it. What am I to think of seeing you so little eager to come and console me, were it only by your presence which has always been so pleasant for me. Judge for yourself. Let not these complaints decide you to leave your duties and hasten to make up for your mistake. It will suffice that I see you during some of your free moments. You know I am always available at a particular time, that is during my dinner at 2 or even at three if you were to come only after the meal I eat alone.

Good-bye, my good son, what news at present of our Father Albini? My faith in the power of prayers foreseen in God's goodness and foreknowledge leaves me some hope still, for not only have I ordered prayers in all our houses, but I have immediately mobilized all our monasteries which are my resource in all my troubles. These earthly angels are especially commissioned by the Church to pray to the Lord and appeal to his mercy for all Christians. I bless you but I shall embrace you only after I have told you that I forgive you.

† C.J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

⁶⁸ Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation. L. M.- Aubert Cas.

⁶⁹ Undated letter. Bishop de Mazenod learnt about Father Albini's illness through a letter of Father Guibert received on Saturday, November 17, cf. J. M., November 17. The present letter was written on the following "Tuesday," November 20.

680. To Father Courtès, superior of the Missi[ona]ries, Carmelites' Square, at Aix. B. d. R.⁷⁰

Not possible to see Brother Morandini who was seriously ill. Prepare his grave.

L.J.C. and M.I.

Marseilles, December 16, 1838.

My dear Courtès, on my return I find your letter of yesterday, and looking at my watch I notice I am still on time to write you a word. If I did not have a sick mare I would have gone to Aix from St-Henri where I spent the day in very consoling exercises of piety. At the end of a 15 days' retreat for men, I crowned the event by going in the midst of these good people giving Holy Communion to more than 400 men and administering the Sacrament of Confirmation to about thirty of them. My plan was to go to Aix instead of returning to Marseilles, I would have arrived around eight or nine, I would have embraced our dear sick man, and blessed him; I would have recommended myself to his prayers and his intercession in heaven and I would have left at five o'clock without anyone at Aix suspecting that I had passed through. The condition of my mare's suffering has upset my plans. If my good will is a source of some pleasure to our sick man, make it known to him, recommend to him what I myself would have recommended.

I agree very willingly to what you propose to me. I did not speak about it because I feared that our good young people might not easily cope with the formalities they have to observe. I prefer that you bury his holy body in the earth hallowed by our other predestined men, but you know that the spot is not becoming, you must visit it beforehand to remove all the weeds, the rocks and reeds. You must get there without any fuss and in a small bunch.⁷¹ Study the locale well so as not to touch the graves already there. Mark the new grave clearly so that we make no mistake when we may want to dig up the old ones. Finally take care of my mother so that she does not get excited.

Good-bye, I don't have time to reply to the other points of your letter, however I will tell you that Father Albini remains in the slightly

⁷⁰ Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L. M.- Courtès.

⁷¹ Mss.: *comitiva*, an Italian word meaning party, group, bunch.

improved condition the prayers have achieved. After 15 days' loss of consciousness and speech, he came to himself and was able to take some broth. He still has fever however. May God hear us.

Good-bye.

† C. J. Eug., Bishop of Marseilles.

681. To Father Courtès, superior of the Missions, Carmelites' Square, at Aix. B. d. R.⁷²

Resignation to God's will on learning of Brother Morandini's death. Burial at l'Enclos. Mission of Istres.

L.J.C. and M.I.

Marseilles, December 29, 1838.

My dear Courtès, every day I was awaiting the sad news you gave me yesterday.⁷³ By these blows the good Lord awakens our faith and our trust in his divine Providence. By taking away from us those on whom we counted to accomplish his work he wants to remind us that our Father is in Heaven and from there he rules with wisdom for the greater good of his chosen ones. I request to bring together our deceased man's most edifying examples of patience and resignation so that we can add them to the memory we wish to preserve of the virtues he practised during his short stay on earth and the time, so precious for him, that he lived amidst our men. Not knowing if you were able to send a circular letter to all our houses, I have given that responsibility to Calvaire. I hope you did not meet with any obstacles in burying his remains at l'Enclos.⁷⁴ The latter choice was undoubtedly the better one, since you were on the spot.

⁷² Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L. M.- Courtès.

⁷³ The Founder wrote in his *Diary*, December 28: "Letter of Father Courtès who informs me of our dear Brother Morandini's saintly death . . . It is a considerable loss for the Congreg[atio]n which was expecting a great service from this excellent member who combined outstanding virtues with many talents, the most lovable character and a name which, because of the respect it commanded, would have facilitated the exercise of the ministry he would probably have exercised in his native country, Corsica."

⁷⁴ L'Enclos: property and country-house of the de Mazenod family and later of the community of Aix, situated near the shrine of N.-D. de la Seds, on the way to Avignon, cf. BERNAD, *Mgr. C. J. E. de Mazenod*, 1913, pp. 49-51. In his *Diary*, December 29, the Founder writes that Morandini is kept at l'Enclos while waiting for his place in the chapel to be built for the Oblates in the cemetery of Aix.

You will consult Tavernier to find out what is to be done about his will. I presume that it contains other than the legacy which his kindness had prompted him to make in favour of the Congregation. Every legal precaution must be taken because of his heirs.

I agree with you regarding the physician's fees, but I would like him to know that it is from the small legacy of our dear deceased man, so that he does not break the good custom of treating, out of love for God, those who serve the Church and the neighbour free of charge.

The arrangement I have made for the house of Istres is such that you will be content. For this, I am going as far as N.-D. de Lumières, I am sacrificing my diocese for the conveniences of others; fortunately Dupuy will come to help my mission of Aygalades which will start on Sunday.

Good-bye, I send you the greetings of the season and I wish you and all your brothers a Happy New Year.

† C. J. Eugene, Bish. of M[arsei]lles.

682. To Father Aubert, superior at Calvaire, Marseilles.⁷⁵

Notification of Father Albini's cure and of Brother Morandini's death.

Sunday, [December 30, 1838].⁷⁶

I hasten to inform you that Father Albini is out of danger and is fully recovering, he is now suffering only from hunger. The physician himself, who would be very much pleased to attribute this unexpected healing to himself, loudly proclaims that it could not but be the effect of a miracle. So I was right in ringing the alarm bell and arraying in battle all of God's friends to fight with this good Master for the predestined person whom he wanted to take away from us, with the arms he has deigned to give us to use against himself. A thousand blessings for his mercy. The joy I experienced has been purchased at the cost of severe agony till the last moment. Imagine that the postman brought me two letters from Ajaccio, one from Guibert and the other from

⁷⁵ Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L. M.- Aubert Cas.

⁷⁶ Undated letter. It is on Sunday, December 30, that Bishop de Mazenod received the letters of Fathers Guibert and Gibelli, cf. *Diary*. He wrote to Father Aubert the same day.

Gibelli⁷⁷ who I knew did not leave the bedside of the sick man. To write me from Ajaccio, was it not the sign that the sick man was dead and that the good Gibelli had come to bring the news to Father Gilbert? It is in the dread and anxiety which you understand that trembling I opened these blessed letters. Let us not think any more of the pain since God has consoled us. Good-bye. But our dear Morandini, oh Lord! what a loss! Come to see me this evening, I need to unburden myself in your good company.

Blessings on you, whom I love.

† C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

⁷⁷ Gibelli: written twice in the mss.

1839

683. To Father Courtès, priest, superior of the Mission, at the residence of the Parish Priest at Istres. Bouch[es]-du-Rhône.¹

Advice to the missionaries: instruct the people, zeal moderated by prudence. It is impossible to comply with the requests for missions.

L.J.C. and M.I.

Marseilles, J[anuar]y 19, 1839.

It is not the fault of the mail, my dear Courtès, if you have not yet received a reply to your first letter from Istres. It is just that I had a little possibility of writing to you as if I were absent. Even today I am taking up the pen only to acknowledge receipt of your two letters and to express to you my anxiety over Father Telmon's bleeding. He had a cold; but since when does one bleed during a bad cold? Tell me, could it be that he is ill? Let him then stop every activity, work short-handed for a week, I shall have him replaced after the mission at Aygalades which is coming to a close and is proceeding wonderfully well. I recommend you to aim very much at instructing. Be not satisfied with devoting the morning to this great duty of the mission, but always use a quick quarter of an hour in the evening before the main instruction to summarize what had been said in the morning to a smaller audience. This quarter of an hour instruction is to be given in the form of a reflection or catechism, without any oratorical gesture. Instruct, instruct, ignorance is the plague of our times.

23rd.

The mission at St-Mitre definitely cannot take place this year. When the good Lord would want us to accept all the work that pre-

¹ Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L. M.-Courtès.

sents itself, he will send us the members. Just now we are doing more than what is possible for human strength.

I have received news of the mission of Tallard through Father Ancel who arrived at the novitiate today. The good they accomplish there is wonderful. Already 400 men have made their confession.

I received Telmon's letter. I thank him for the particulars he gives me about the mission, but he does not inform me about his health! for God's sake, do not exhaust yourself. How can you do the mission in Rognes if you kill yourself at Istres? You must look after one another. I got the impression that you are doing nothing of the sort. You are taking a great responsibility upon yourself. From here, I can only remind you of your duty. Zeal has merit only when it is moderated by prudence.

I embrace all of you and I bless you.

† C. J. Eugene, Bish[op] of Marseilles.

684. [To Father Courtès, superior at Aix].²

Regrets that Archbishop Bernet of Aix did not go to confirm the men at the mission of Istres. Father Telmon is having a rest.

[Marseilles,] February 14, 1839.

You must do your best to make up for the silly mistake that was made in not coming to confirm these people who were so well disposed. Don't we know that by postponing it to the time of the children's Confirmation, all these men are being exposed to the danger of giving in to human respect and then people will tell you that these men had not persevered? Supposing his Grace the Archbishop was hindered, did you not have his Lordship the Bishop of Digne,³ who would have done this favour willingly? I don't even mention myself; but in God's judgment who does not accept excuses or wrong reasons, it will be said that when other means are not available even that one could have been used to fulfil a great duty towards three hundred converted souls for whom we are bound *sub gravi* to provide the assistance to

² YENVEUX I, 217; IV, 223.

³ Bishop Miollis, former Bishop of Digne, retired at Aix since 1838.

which they have a right in order to fulfil a precept. I don't excuse the Parish Priest⁴ of a very grave sin for having, in some way, turned his Grace the Archbishop away from the idea of exercising his ministry by describing to him the condition of the place with an exaggeration capable of scaring the Prelate, who, if better informed, would not have bothered about that.

I have just visited our Fathers Telmon and Ricard. Father Telmon is in a pitiful condition. God forbid that you have to reprimand yourself for having incapacitated him for the rest of his life. And in this condition, he had the persistence to propose to me that I send him to the mission of St. Mitre. I am going to see to it that he be treated with very great care; he will be cured if his sickness has not become chronic. I don't swear by it. When one is sick, one must not force nature, that is tempting God.

685. [To Father Courtès, superior at Aix].⁵

Authorizes Father Bise to hear confessions.

[Marseilles,] February 23, 1839.

Even though I had wished, my dear Courtès, that Father Bise were more proficient before entrusting him with the ministry of the Confession, if you think it is absolutely necessary that I authorize him for this; I shall do it, even though I do it quite reluctantly. I request you to be very careful with him about this kind of work for which he may not be quite ready.

⁴ Father Coustet, appointed Parish Priest of Istres in 1836.

⁵ YENVEUX II, 88. Yenveux writes: February 23, 1832. But it is 1839. Father Bise was ordained priest on September 22, 1838.

686. To Father Semeria, priest of the Mission, at Calvaire, Marseilles.⁶

Request to send him a Breviary, borrowed by Father Telmon.

L.J.C. and M.I.

Marseilles, March First, 1839.

My dear Father Semeria, you may say that I have recourse to you for making up for all the thefts of your brothers. This shows you how much trust I have in your sense of justice. Yesterday I have made a claim for my Uncle's purificators and mine and I have forgotten to ask you to verify if some corporals with our mark did not also remain on the battle-field; today I ask you for another restitution, and I do so in haste because I am afraid that an objection based on prescription may be raised against me as in so many other things; it is the part of the Frejus Breviary which Father Telmon, that famous hoarder and dangerous borrower, has recently taken from me in order to help the good Parish Priest of Istres,⁷ who had misplaced his Breviary en route, recite the office.

My dear son, you understand that I have reason to be apprehensive when I remember that without taking the trouble of coming to look for it so far, he could have found, in the library of Calvaire, not one but even two Frejus Breviaries. My dear little Father, do you remember the ampollina⁸ or ampolletta of the holy Chrism? Taking the holy Chrism from a Bishop is a peccadillo for Calvaire! What would happen to my Breviary if I do not address myself to you promptly, you who are so just, so equitable, who would never enrich your house to the detriment of your neighbour? Don't trust this professor of theology⁹ who holds that what is good enough to take is good enough to keep. Use a bit of stealth to remove my property from his clutches, for woe to us if you attempt to prove to him that his axiom is pernicious, capable of disturbing the peace of families and of overturning the

⁶ Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L. M.-Semeria.

⁷ Father Coustet, the parish priest of Istres where the Oblates had just preached a mission, came to thank Bishop de Mazenod on February 22: "He was in admiration of everything he saw during the mission," the Founder writes in his *Diary*, February 22, 1839.

⁸ An Italian word meaning a phial.

⁹ Father Telmon, who had been a professor at the Major Seminaries of Ajaccio and Marseilles.

State. He will sufficiently remember his old profession to hold out against you with seductive arguments that he is right in his conduct and that it is only thus his monastery can be enriched. Don't we pray to God for all the benefactors, and that is making restitution a hundredfold! I would not know myself how to reply, and so my good Semeria, let us do our part without saying anything. Sniff it out, search for it everywhere and carry off this poor Breviary which its three companions claim with loud cries, place it under your cloak and, bring it to me in a hurry without the knowledge of the terrible Telmon. I shall embrace you, thanking you for the service you will have rendered me. Good-bye.

† C.J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

687. To Father Bellon, priest of the Mission, at Vico, Corsica.¹⁰

Reproaches Father Bellon for not writing often enough. Affection.

L.J.C. and M.I.

Marseilles, March 8, 1839.

I have an old debt to pay, my dear Father Bellon, which I shall be very much tempted to keep owing at least till your heart inspires you to claim it. It is not that I am a bad payer, but I have the unfortunate habit of insisting that the real title of credit be produced in such a way that I cannot doubt its legality, and in my view, this title is not a letter mailed at random to fulfil a formality, but the attitude that prompts one not to live overseas and separated from his father without preserving remembrance and affection for him. A good son, who knows what to expect when he knows his father's love, shares his concerns, his troubles, and is very careful not to demand, as an indifferent person might do, that every letter be answered exactly to the point and no more. He writes when his heart prompts him up to do so, and, pleased with the happiness it brings to his father, he writes whenever the occasion presents itself, knowing fully well that even before receiving a letter from him, his father has already replied to him in the depth of his heart by a redoubled affection which he will express to him later.

¹⁰ Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L. M.-Bellon.

This is what I am doing today, my dear son, while complaining about your too prolonged silence. You may have thought that I did not reply to you through forgetfulness or indifference. If you did so, you have wronged me, for my very delay in replying to you has called you unceasingly to mind in such a way that my heart always expressed a feeling of affection for you. It seems to me that despite the distance your spirit should have heard it. My God, I often said to myself, I have not written to my good Bellon! This dear child will perhaps be disappointed thereby! Oh! he knows how much I love him, he will excuse my delay . . . I am going to write . . . but something else happened, I was disturbed unexpectedly, and my letter remained on the shelf. But let us not blame each other, and so, my dear son, accept this letter as an expression of my fatherly affection and a proof that I would never forget you however far you may be from me.

I bless you and I embrace you.

† C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

688. To Father Courtès, superior of the Mission, at Aix B. d. R.¹¹

Plan for a retreat at Istres. Send a chair that serves as a prie-dieu.

Marseilles, March 8, 1839.

Father Telmon should have written about what I think of the planned retreat at Istres. There is no doubt that your presence there will be useful. It is only the question of your health that must restrain you, and on this point you alone are the competent judge.

Father Fissiaux¹² is going to spend two hours at Aix. He has a special vehicle, I would like to profit by his kindness to make him bring me a certain chair made out of walnut wood which serves also as a prie-dieu. I beg of you to have it brought to the spot which he will

¹¹ Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L. M.-Courtès.

¹² Father Charles J. M. Fissiaux, from the diocese of Marseilles, born at Aix in 1806. He founded, in 1835, the Society of the poor Daughters and Orphans of the cholera and, on March 4, 1839, the Society of Saint Peter-in-chains to take care of young children sentenced by the courts. Bishop de Mazenod loved this priest affectionately and encouraged him in all his undertakings.

indicate to you. I think that this chair is found near the music-lectern in the choir of your church.

Good-bye, I have time only to embrace you.

† C.J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

689. [To Father Mille, at N.-D. du Laus].¹³

Reproaches Father Mille, who was too eager to take up a collection with the view to buying a bell.

[Marseilles,] April 11, 1839.

There is no way, my dear Father Mille, of dealing with you. I must reply or expose myself to the danger of seeing you find very strong reasons to go your own way. Nothing is more edifying than the beginning of your letter. You have worked stupendously. You long for the tranquillity of your shrine for which you feel an extreme need. One would believe that knowing the need to work a little for oneself after having done so much for others, you are going to enter into seclusion, etc. Not at all. The conclusion of all these beautiful expressions is to ask me to let you go running around to collect money. You need it to get the bell. But why do you want to do everything all at once? Before dreaming of getting the bell, you must think of paying for a belfry.

For once you should get out of your little local interests, remind yourself that before anything else you should be interested in the welfare of the Congregation and fulfil your obligation of restitution for what you have received from her to attain your goals.

It is difficult to pay interests to another party when one's funds are tied up in a total loss. If you can come across some indiscreet persons who, for the twenty francs they have given, pretend to demand that you must spend five or six thousand francs, don't listen to them; or if their happiness consists in hearing the belfry sound, quite frankly mount the small bell that is being used now. This is what common sense prompts, independently of reasons of a still higher order which

¹³ YENVEUX VII, 188, 243-250.

should divert you from dissipating yourself for purely worldly interests. All this is very fine, but in your usual style, you are drawing a magic circle.

You will wait till the end of next week to give my letter time to arrive, since you wish to be at Embrun the second Sunday after Pentecost. I thought I had already made you understand all that is awkward in this way of procedure. Who has given you the right to impose on me an obligation to reply on this or that date? How can you conclude from the delay of my letter that I agree to what you request of me? On the point in question my ideas are so different from yours that you should reason quite differently. In any case, since I insist on a principle of order more than all the wealth of this world, whatever might have been my idea to concede, had you acted with more moderation and as obedience required of you, I see myself obliged to ask you to turn back and return to your community as soon as you receive my letter, both you and anyone else who may have gone along with you or on your orders before receiving my explicit permission. This will be a lesson you will remember and which you could recall as needed in the case of all those who would be tempted to act in a similar way. Should reflection have intervened to help you and you did not venture to undertake this journey before knowing my intentions and receiving my letter,¹⁴ then, though with great repugnance and with an aversion capable of making me take further severe measures to save me from vexation and from further compromising the regularity and the spirit proper to the Congregation, I authorize you to make this unfortunate journey with one of our Fathers, as quickly as you can. You would have done better to keep yourself busy training Father Pont for the ministry he has to exercise in the Congregation. You have not known how to make the best of him till now. You will be the first to suffer therefrom for your community will not receive any more members for a long time. There are no Brothers available at the novitiate.

Good-bye, I pray God that my letter finds you still at Laus.

¹⁴ The Founder in his *Diary*, April 18: "Letter of Father Mille. He had been awaiting my reply before starting his collection."

690. To Father Guigue[s], superior of the Miss[iona]ries, at Notre-Dame de l'Osier, near Vinay, Isère.¹⁵

Reply to nine questions. Various writings of the Fathers of N.-D. de l'Osier.

L.J.C. and M.I.

Marseilles, May 9, 1839.

Before leaving for Digne, my dear Father Guigue[s], where I am going for the Ordination, I reply to your questions.

1 — If the collaboration in the Catholic newspaper¹⁶ does not divert you from your obligatory duties, you may contribute for your part, but with discretion so as not to commit yourself in a way that may be embarrassing. I don't understand why it was so difficult to submit your article to me, and if I am to judge it by what you have done till now, my advice could be useful to you. Nevertheless, I agree to you handing in your first article without showing it to me on condition that, whoever it may be among you who does it, you read it to your companions so that they may freely make their remarks. Be good enough to send me a copy of the published page.

2 — Rather than suggest to Father Vincens the topic he should undertake, I prefer that he let me know the subject he would like and the plan he intends to follow. It is then that I should obtain for him the merit of obedience either by choosing from several plans or by ordering him to go ahead.¹⁷

3 — I have written, I don't know to whom, that I was surprised Father Dassy wanted to set to work and redo a month of Mary. There are already several by different authors, what is the use of risking not doing better or maybe of doing worse? I do not approve this project.¹⁸

¹⁵ Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L. M.-Guignes.

¹⁶ There was a plan to publish a newspaper "to bring back the numerous Protestants of the diocese." Cf. J. M., April 18, 1839.

¹⁷ The Founder writes in his *Diary*, April 18: "Father Vincens is going to revise his booklet [*Le missionnaire aux populations qu'il a évangélisées*, Grenoble, Baratier, 1840, 162 pp]; he wants to know if I would agree to him composing a retreat for his own use to be preached later in religious houses, or else that I suggest to him another book he could write . . ."

¹⁸ It is to Father Dassy himself that the Founder had written not to compose a new *Mois de Marie* since several of them were already extant. Cf. L. M.—Dassy, June 27, 1838.

4 — I am far from being disposed to agree that you assign Father Baudrand exclusively to take care of the parish. If a missionary had to be appointed for this ministry, Father Baudrand should not have been chosen for it. To encourage vocations, would you like it said in the diocese that people join us to become parish priests? It is the superior of the house who is really the parish priest, he gets all the members of the community to help him as he deems fit to use them; the best thing would be to get this service done by taking turns. Still the fact remains that I do not want it said Father Baudrand is functioning as parish priest at l'Osier.

5 — Come to an agreement with Father Tempier, who functions as the General Treasurer, regarding the hymns.¹⁹

6 — I did not have the time to read Father Pison's²⁰ program; I shall not refuse to support his work once I have been able to assess it.

7 — I grant Father Baudrand the permission he asks me to give the Brigittine²¹ blessing to 2000 rosaries.

8 — You acted very wisely in not imitating the extravagance of the Gentlemen, your neighbours. One must do what is fitting and nothing further.

9 — Your opinion regarding the Brothers cannot be accepted in a Congregation. Certainly you must try them out and choose them well, but you must not do without them. On the contrary it is an abuse to get the service done by lay people, worse still by women. It could be tolerated only temporarily and the dispensation in this matter has lasted already too long.

¹⁹ "They need to make a new edition of their hymns. Must we give the copyright to Mr. Baratier? . . ." Cf. J. M., April 18.

²⁰ "A good Father Pison submitted to me a petition for approval to a work he has planned." Cf. J. M., April 18.

²¹ Mss.: brigitier. In his *Diary* of April 18, 1839, the Founder speaks of "blessing 2000 rosaries." There is a rosary named after Saint Brigitte, initiated and propagated by S. Brigitte of Sweden (†1373). It consists of 6 decades (each of 1 *Pater*, 10 *ave* and 1 *credo*) and has special indulgences. After the cessation of the Order of St. Brigitte, the blessing of these rosaries was reserved to the Regular Clerics of the Holy Redeemer. This faculty was granted to other priests also. Cf. PALAZZINI, *Dictionarium Morale et Canonicum*.

I wish you all the blessings of God.

C.J.E., Bi[shop] of M[arsei]lles.

P.S. Father Tempier will write to Father Vincens regarding his trip.²²

691. To Father Courtès, superior of the Miss[iona]ries, Carmelites' Square, at Aix, B. d. R.²³

Father Tempier will go to preach at Aix. Father Albini is again seriously ill. Let all the Fathers write their own recollections about the deceased brethren.

L.J.C. and M.I.

Marseilles, May 27, 1839.

My dear Courtès, I am informing Father Telmon about your wish. He was somewhat reluctant to respond to it, but I requested him to go and he has accepted it with good grace. So you can count on him both for the feast of St. Mary Magdalene and for that of St. Louis. However he would like to know if these feasts are celebrated on the very day they occur or on the following Sunday; be good enough to inform him about them.

The day before yesterday I ordained two priests for our Congregation, but neither of them is as yet available. One of them is Father Lagier, the brother of the Father with the same name, the other has not finished his novitiate.²⁴ But even if they were already fit to serve, they will not be able to make up for the loss we will in all likelihood have incurred by now of our blessed Father Albini.²⁵ The last bit of news informed me that he was anointed once again on Ascension day but this time we are not to count on the possibility of his recovery. It is thus the man most useful to our Congregation, the one and only per-

²² The Founder writes in his *Diary* on May 5: "Letter of our Father Vincens' brother. He requests me as a favour to allow his brother to go and see him, he supports his request with many plausible reasons."

²³ Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L. M.-Courtès.

²⁴ Father Lucien Antoine Lagier, ordained priest on May 25, 1839, brother of Jean Joseph Lagier, and Jean Jos. Frédéric Perron.

²⁵ On May 29, Bishop de Mazenod received from Father Guibert the news that Father Albini had died on May 20.

son for the country that fell to his lot, will be taken away from us. God is demanding a huge sacrifice from us. We have only to humble ourselves and adore him.

This premature death reminds me that you have not sent me Morandini's portrait. I had so urgently requested that it be drawn before his death that it is impossible it was not done. Then why delay so long in sending it on to me?

There is another duty that is being too much neglected despite my repeated requests, namely, writing down everything that is known on the life and virtue of our brothers who have lived in our midst and are now in Heaven. We don't possess complete information on so many predestined men who have honoured and edified our family. This is intolerable. This is why I am determined to order all the members of the Congregation that, within the period of three months, they send me detailed statements on each one of our deceased Fathers. They will write little or much according to the more or less knowledge they have of the individual, but they will say what they know, what they have heard narrated to others and what they themselves think. I am making you responsible to notify the Fathers of your house of this order and I request you to consider this as now told to you without further notice. Once I have collected all the information, I shall put one Father or other in charge of editing the biographical sketch which will constitute the most edifying part of our history. The Chapter had already settled something on this matter; I am elaborating it a bit and that, so as not to return to this anymore, I make this a precept from which I dispense no one.

Good-bye, my dear Father Courtès, I embrace you paternally.

† C.J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

P.S. Send me Father Magnan one of these days.

692. To Father Mille, superior of the Missionaries of N.-D. du Laus, near Gap, Upper Alps.²⁶

Notification of Father Albini's death.

L.J.C. and M.I.

Marseilles, May 29, 1839.

The Lord whose hidden ways are unfathomable has just taken away our dear and venerable Father Dominique Albini from the Church and from the Congregation. He surrendered his beautiful soul to God on the 20th of this month, Monday after Pentecost.

Whatever may be the merits of his saintly life and of his precious death, which gives us reason to consider this beloved brother as already in glory, you will have to offer for him the suffrages the Congregation reserves to all her children when they leave the world.

I wish you God's blessing.

† C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles,
Sup[er]ior] Gen[eral].²⁷

693. [To Father Pélissier, at N.-D. de l'Osier].²⁸

Father Pélissier's neglect in serving the parish. The Founder's principles on the obedience of Oblates.

[Marseilles,] May 30, 1839.

My good Father Pélissier, you will not take it amiss that I acquit myself of a duty by reproaching you in all simplicity for having been careless in serving the parish of l'Osier. It would have been a fatal illusion to think that you were not bound to do what depended on you to instruct the children well, to care for your parish the way a good pastor must do, under the pretext that you are a missionary. Note well,

²⁶ Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L. M.-Mille, signed only by the Founder. A similar letter was addressed to all the superiors, cf. J. M., May 29, 1839.

²⁷ Subsequently the Founder copies out the letter of Father Guibert who had communicated the news.

²⁸ YENVEUX II, 140, 143; REY II, 64.

my dear son, and repeat it very loudly to all those who may be tempted to avail themselves of this pretext not to carry out their duties with zeal, whatever they may be, that are prescribed to them. Only offending God is adverse to the Congregation. Everything else falls under obedience. It will never be the business of any member of the Congregation to question the ministries that superiors distribute to them according to the needs of the Congregation or of the Church. This principle is indisputable, and I will always react very strongly against any grumbling which offends it. Whoever indulges in it is in error as long as he is in ignorance; he is guilty when his duty has been made known to him. I am not committed to this or that, some say. Blasphemy! You have committed yourself to everything that obedience can prescribe, and everything that is not sin comes under its domain. This is not understood otherwise in God's Church, and never has it occurred to any religious of whatever Order, even the Orders that are far removed from external contact with the world, to think of having the least difficulty when they are entrusted with a ministry that is little in conformity with the principle ends of their Institutes. In fact, even in Rome we see parishes run by Dominicans, Franciscans, even Bernardines, and I don't know in how many countries, for example, along the coasts of the Black Sea, the Jesuits are or have been in charge of serving small parishes of these regions before they were expelled from Russia. It belongs to the wisdom of Superiors General to judge about the expediency of things. For the members the chapter is closed when they have received their obedience, and they are bound to fulfil their mission with all the zeal of which they are capable from the very moment it is entrusted to them.

694. To Mister Champsaur, gold-smith, for Father Mille, priest, at Gap. Upper Alps.²⁹

Father Magnan will replace Father Martin at N.-D. du Laus. Father Pont remains at Laus and must be trained by Father Mille. Father Albini's death. Let everyone write his recollections of deceased Oblates.

L.J.C. and M.I.

Marseilles, May 31, 1839.

I am constrained, my dear Father Mille, to make a few changes in the personnel of our houses. I am taking Father Martin away from you: he will be replaced at Laus by dear Father Magnan. Father Martin will go to Aix in his place. I would very much like to see him at Marseilles before he goes to that city. For this he must leave as soon as you receive my letter, since I have to sail next Sunday, I mean Sunday, June 9.³⁰ Father Magnan will come to Laus as soon as Father Martin arrives.

I agree to leaving Father Pont in your community, but it is on condition that you do not neglect him. You must take the initiative with him, he is too timid to volunteer to do anything. It is a question of training this man for the various ministries he will have to exercise; don't forget this, and give priority to this among your duties.

I shall reply to Father Bermond, in the meantime inform him and Father Pont that I am granting each of them the permission to give the indulgences for 2000 rosaries for the course of this year.

I saw your mother after my return from Digne.³¹ I found her in good health and expecting to see your brother arrive soon.

Good-bye, dear Father Mille, you will have received the Circular which informs you of the fatal news of our venerable Father Albini's

²⁹ Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L. M.-Mille.

³⁰ Bishop de Mazenod and Father Tempier made a trip from June 9 to the beginning of August, to Biandrate, near Vercelli in Italy, in order to obtain a relic of St. Serenus, Bishop of Marseilles in the 6th century. They visited Genoa, Turin, Vercelli, Milan, Billens, N.-D. de l'Osier and N.-D. du Laus. Bishop de Mazenod narrates this trip in his *Diary*, note book February 17-June 6, 1839, pp. 69-73.

³¹ Bishop de Mazenod had gone to do the general Ordination of May 12 at Digne, accompanied by Father Casimir Aubert. Bishop Miollis, very old and retired, had no successor as yet.

death. I avail myself of this opportunity to let you know the decision I have taken communicating to all the members of the Congregation the obligation of sending me within three months detailed information of all they know and all they have learnt about the life of every member of the Congrega[tion] whom the Lord has called to himself. I am notifying you of this obligation and make you responsible for making it known to all the members of your community so that they may conform to it. You will see to its fulfilment.

Good-bye, dear son, I embrace you and I bless you.

† C.J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

695. To Father Aubert, superior of the Priests of Calvaire, Montée des Accoules, Marseilles, France.³²

Let Father Reinaud go with the scholastics to N.-D. de Lumières. Plan of the new altar of Calvaire. Portrait of Father Albini. His man-servant's loyalty.

L.J.C. and M.I.

Turin, June 24, 1839.

My dear son, your letter of the 18th has given me the most pleasant surprise. I did not think I could reply to it from here because I find it very difficult to withdraw myself from the assiduous attentions of friends with whom I am lodging³³ and because I find I have to leave today without having realized it. I shall limit myself therefore, to acknowledging receipt of your letter, the more so because I have just realized that I have written on the reverse side of the sheet, which makes me lose one page.

I say nothing about the first part of your letter; whatever may be the friendly reproaches that I sometimes have to address to you, I know what to expect; moreover reflection and supernatural thoughts which faith suggests to us in showing us what we are before God, marvellously help us to be less demanding than what our ever too human heart would be.

³² Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L. M.-Aubert Cas.

³³ Bishop de Mazenod, Father Tempier and a man-servant spent a few days with the Chevalier de Collegno, near Turin.

It seems that Father Reinaud had manifested to Father Tempier some reluctance to going to spend the holidays at N.-D. de Lumières; nonetheless I think that a stay at this rural residence can only be useful for his health. The classes he will have to give the Oblates will serve as a distraction for him, hence I think that it would be good for him to go with them to this vacation house. You will assign someone at Calvaire to replace him in the prisons.

I must not hide from you that I don't very much like the plan Father Telmon made for the altar. I don't think it should be carried out. See that several are made so that we can choose from among them. I am adverse to doing things in a hurry. I am not particular that it should be finished at such or such a date. The important thing is not to risk later regrets. To make myself more explicit I formally ask you not to decide on anything till I am there [on the] spot. Prepare some plans. That is all I approve.

You have nothing to tell Mr. Benesse either about the time or any other circumstances regarding the matter I have left to your charge. The restitution is due to his business establishment, that is all.

It was not Father Semeria's idea to have our venerable Father Albin's portrait made. It was mine. I do not yield to anyone the honours in this matter. Much less do I want this project to be carried out in my absence. Would you like to do the second volume of Father Suzanne's lithograph?³⁴ My plan is to have this portrait done by Reynaud or someone else as capable as he.

The request by S[emeri]a's³⁵ brother is an indiscretion that has no equal. Before I spoke of it to his Excellency he mentioned it to me, apparently to avoid my asking him something he could not grant. I am surprised that [Father Semeria] has made a new attempt after I had pointed out the inexpediency of this matter to him.

Good-bye, my dear son, I have no more space than to embrace you.

† C. J. Eugene, Bish[op] of M[arsei]lles.

³⁴ Mss.: Litographic.

³⁵ The word is erased in the manuscript.

P.S. Though I had thought I had lost a page by beginning my letter on the reverse side of the sheet, I profit from this blank space which may seem like a trick to say a word about your illustrious penitent.³⁶ I am satisfied with him in this sense that he does well the little service I require of him, and he listens to my little remarks which are truly always gentle and kind, but I cannot say that he profits from them, since he is satisfied with listening to me without ever replying. I don't know why I am so little convincing. In fact, on arriving at Turin, because a few days afterwards I had to go to say Mass at the *Consolata* on the occasion of the big feast of this church, I had advised him to go and meet the theologian³⁷ Gualla, his Grace the Archbishop's confessor, a saintly priest who is known to me and who speaks French. I had told him that on that day 6 or 7 thousand Communion were distributed in that shrine in order to entice him and foster in him the desire to unite himself with so many good Christians. I spoke in vain. Yet, he has not left me any more than a young girl would separate herself from her mother. I insist that he accompany me everywhere and that he does not go anywhere alone. God will do the rest.

Good-bye, my dear son, I embrace you once again for this is the *post scriptum* of my letter. Tempier is keeping well.

After due reflection, it will be Father Reinaud who will go with the Oblates of N.-D. de Lumières. He will be the director both for studies and for spiritual matters; it is evident that the local superior can hear the confessions of those who go to him. You will send from Calvaire the miss[ionar]y who has to replace Father Reinaud in the prisons.

³⁶ The reference is to the servant who accompanied the Founder. His name is never mentioned. He is simply mentioned in a *pro-memoria* of the account of Bishop de Mazonod's visit, preserved in the parish archives of Biandrate.

³⁷ Mss.: theologo. In Italian it is written teologo, meaning theologian.

696. To our dear Father Bellon, Ajaccio, Corsica.³⁸

Notes on Father Albini. How to replace him in Corsica? Few vocations for the Congregation from the seminarians at Ajaccio.

L.J.C. and M.I.

Marseilles, August 30, 1839.

I thank you, my dear Father Bellon, for the notes you have sent me on the saintly life and the precious death of our ever regretted Father Albini. I hope we will be able to compose, from these notes and those that other Fathers will supply me, some memoirs fit to edify all the members of the Congregation and all who know how to appreciate virtue. Every day I feel more intensely his loss, and the impossibility of replacing him would torment me if I did not tell myself that it is God who has done it. This good Master knew our powerlessness. By taking away the labourer from us he wanted if not the termination at least the incomplete state of his work. I may not wish differently from God. Thus whatever I may be able to arrange, we can expect that things will go badly, and it will cost me excruciating sacrifices, for the Society of the Italians at Marseilles will experience such a great blow that we can fear it will not recover.

But then what are you doing in your Seminary? Out of a 130 students not one is to some extent fit for us? Has the clan of Morandini been exhausted? Oh! holy child! The Lord gave him to us only to arouse our regrets. It is rather painful when we consider the good that perfect man accomplished in his country. The good Lord wants to lead us through the path of tribulation. May his holy will be done.

Since you are at Ajaccio, don't forget to remember me to our dear Father Mouchel. I embrace you and I bless both of you from the depth of my heart.

† C.J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles, S.G.

³⁸ Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L. M.-Bellon.

697. To Father Courtès, superior of the Mission, at Aix. B. d. R.³⁹

Fathers Lucien Lagier and Cyriaque Chauvet go to Aix to replace Fathers De Veronico and Magnan.

L.J.C. and M.I.

Marseilles, Sept[ember] 1, 1839.

I do not know if Father Tempier replied to your last letter, my dear Courtès, I am using the time of the procession to write you myself and tell you that in the embarrassing situation in which I am: finding men for our houses of Corsica on the one hand, and the need to take Father Magnan from you on the other, it will be rather difficult for me to give you what I would like to. In place of Father De Veronico who is not very helpful to you, I shall give you Father Perron, but since he has not finished his novitiate, Father Lucien Lagier will substitute for him in the meantime. The latter must have reached your place already. De Veronico could remain to follow the doctor's orders, I had only sent him to Lumières to take a rest. If he does nothing at Aix, it comes to the same thing; he can be dispensed from going to Lumières. It will be Father Chauvet who will replace Father Magnan. The latter will go to Lumières to replace Father Chauvet. If you wish to make the pilgrimage to Lumières you can wait till you return from Aix so that you can send Father Magnan there.

My brother-in-law is coming to talk business, I shall hand him my letter which I cannot finish. Good-bye.

Before receiving your letter of this evening, I would have replied that you should not make any commitments for Advent since it is the time of the missions. You tell me that there are no requests. If you foresee that no request will be made, then do as you please.

³⁹ Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L. M.-Courtès.

698. [To Father Guigues, at N.-D. de l'Osier].⁴⁰

Personnel of the house of N.-D. de l'Osier. Father Vincens' book. Information about deceased Oblates.

[Marseilles,] September 4, 1839.

In the painful situation of need in which our different houses are placed, N.-D. de l'Osier has given me its share of suffering. I have produced for this community Father Guigues, as superior, Father Vincens, the first assistant and admonitor, Father Dassy, the second assistant, Father Kotterer, Father Pélissier, Father Pont and Father Baudrand.

I warn you that this arrangement which fits in with all that has been fixed for the other houses is irrevocable. Making the least observation would uselessly displease me. The grace of state will help the superior to shape, direct and use, according to the need and capacity of each, all the members of the community. This task is inherent in his position, and he cannot neglect it without failing in his duty. Father Guigues possesses all that one needs to succeed if he applies himself to it as an essential duty which he must perform with a supernatural outlook and with means taken from this perspective.

I am very pleased that our Father Vincens' book has been approved by the Vicar General of Grenoble.⁴¹ If it is absolutely necessary to declare the proprietor, to avoid any counterfeit, I prefer Father Vincens' second edition to the first, namely, "property of the priests of N.-D. de l'Osier," signed by the superior. Perhaps this may not be sufficient in which case you will abide by the printer's advice. If all that could be avoided, so much the better. But I insist that the frontispiece carry: "by a priest from N.-D. de l'Osier."

See to the obligation I have laid down of sending, before the period of the missions, everything one knows or has heard from others about each one of our deceased Fathers. I am binding you *sub gravi*; for there will be no more order or discipline in the Congregation if

⁴⁰ YENVEUX III, 71; VI, 165; VII, 150.

⁴¹ *Le missionnaire aux populations qu'il a évangélisées*, Grenoble, Baratier, 1840, 160 pp.

people continue to pay so little heed to the Superior General's orders, and it is my duty to curb this tendency.

699. [To Father Gignoux, at N.-D. de l'Osier].⁴²

Father Gignoux is asked to reflect seriously before leaving the Congregation.

[Marseilles.] September 14, 1839.

God is my witness that I would willingly have given my life to calm your exasperation. I am calling on you to exonerate me before God's tribunal; I did everything I could to remove this misfortune from you. I pray God that he remove from you the chastisement I fear for those who are unfaithful to their vocation. I would offer him my life if I knew that the sacrifice could save you from this ruin.

700. [To Father Guigues, at N.-D. de l'Osier].⁴³

Works done without permission. Father Gignoux. Information on deceased Oblates.

[Marseilles.] September 21, 1839.

I had expressed very clearly my intention that the room which is above the choir remain as it is so that it may serve, when needed, as the community hall or for a particular purpose which will be fixed when we consider it opportune. I was formally opposed to the plan that wanted this room, the only one of some size in the house, to be turned into rooms. Today I learn indirectly⁴⁴ that someone feels obliged to do precisely what I had rejected. I find it difficult to convince myself that people can forget themselves to this degree. Nevertheless, I must not fail to write you immediately, and spare you the trouble of destroying what you may have built and the double expenses of demolition after building.

⁴² YENVEUX VIII, 262. According to the letter that follows, addressed to Father Guigues, September 21, Gignoux is still at l'Osier. The Founder wrote to him this "fatherly letter . . . on first hearing of his aberration." Cf. L. M.-Gignoux, November 24, 1839.

⁴³ YENVEUX VI, 163; VII, 152, 251.

⁴⁴ Father Dassy explicitly wrote to the Founder to announce the starting of these constructions, cf. L. Dassy-Mazenod, September 19, 1839, Rome, A. G.

I make no comment on the fact of building. You will have to examine your conscience as to whether you can order a job of this nature without consulting me. Whatever it may be, on receiving my letter you will have to demolish all that has been done and to restore this space to its original state. It is to be arranged only to be the community hall, the conference hall, etc. I request you not to delay in doing this work; expenses matter little to me when good order is at stake.

I had written you in haste the other day that you should keep Father Gignoux; but I implore you to see that this man is looked after by Father Vincens. I also recommend Father Pont very much to you.⁴⁵

You have not forgotten that I have ordered detailed information be supplied to me on the life and death of each one of our Fathers. I want absolutely to end this matter. I insist that every other work cede to this. I am not asking for any vague information. It must be something well thought out and suitable for the end I propose. You at l'Osier are late.

I greet all of you and embrace you with all my heart.

701. [To Father Courtès, at Aix],⁴⁶

Exercise of the coulpe.

[Marseilles,] October 3, 1839.

I had made it a rule that the exercises of the coulpe should never exceed one hour. The superior does not question each and every one. He chooses between self-accusation and remarks by others; and he always reserves a certain space of time for himself to speak, either on the topic provided for him by the exercise itself or on another theme taken from the Rules or from virtues of religion.

⁴⁵ In his letter of September 19, Father Dassy writes: "I tell you in the simplicity of a child that hides nothing from its father that, should Father Gignoux leave l'Osier, our house will not function so badly, and especially if you send us Father Pont, the charitable Father Pont, who will render us many a minute service in the shrine . . ."

⁴⁶ YENVEUX IV, 227. It is difficult to ascertain if this very short excerpt is from 1839. It is doubtful. The Founder presupposes a big community, but the community of Aix then comprised only four or five Fathers and Brothers.

702. To Father Courtès, superior of the Mission, at Aix. B. d. R.⁴⁷

Schedule of the missions in the diocese of Aix during the Winter of 1839-1840.

Marseilles, October 23, 1839.

That is fine for the Parish Priests to ask for missions during Lent, but the miss[iona]ries cannot be everywhere all at once. Hence you must go from one parish to the other beginning with the month of November until Easter. They have to take it or leave it. Since you can back out of the Holy Spirit parish, withdraw without hesitation. Then you could go on mission during the month of December and it would be to Alleins you will go then. You must make the Parish Priest understand this. According to your remark in place of Mallemort we shall accept Stes-Maries where we shall go the second week of November: you take the responsibility of writing to the Parish Priest. La Fare will remain for January and Lamanon is uncertain since this mission cannot take place unless the house of Lumières can furnish a priest: the latter is not likely because we are committed in this diocese for villages with four thousand souls.

If Alleins remains obstinate in not wanting the mission in December rather than in November, then we shall go to Lamanon instead.

It is up to you to write to all these Parish Priests. But for God's sake, let us be firm and not go back on what has been settled.

During your retreat⁴⁸ insist on holy detachment which is the royal road to accomplish God's will.

Good-bye, I embrace you. You will send back De Veronico after the retreat so that here I can assign him to look after the Italians.

⁴⁷ Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L. M.-Courtès.

⁴⁸ The annual retreat of the Fathers and Brothers during the last week of October.

703. [To Father Guigues, at N.-D. de l'Osier].⁴⁹

The Founder condemns undertakings done without permission. Father Pont at N.-D. de l'Osier. Annual retreat.

[Marseilles,] October 23, 1839.

I persist in condemning the building you have done without my authorization and against my wishes. Even if you had succeeded in building a palace, I hold order a greater value than comfort, beauty or wealth. I will never consent to the local superior considering himself the master of the house over which he presides and acting against the spirit and letter of our Rules independently of the Superior General. I allow so many things to run their course which my successors will certainly not tolerate, and they will be right. You understand that it is my duty at least to protest when things are pushed too far.

I had insisted on having Father Pont sent to you; he should have arrived for the retreat. Don't disregard this good Father. Know how to appreciate his excellent qualities, he possesses what many others lack. For the rest, he will shape up, give him time and the assistance he may need.

I authorize all the Fathers of your community to hear the confessions of one another during the retreat. I don't do this too willingly because you have some missionaries whom I consider incapable of giving good direction to those of their brother-priests who may need advice.

The two deacons have started their retreat.⁵⁰ One of them came to see me before starting it to tell me of the pain his family's regret was causing him. I think I gave him good reasons, encouraging him to overcome the cry of nature that is fairly normal and which all of us have overcome and so have the Saints who give us the example.

Certain personages are the heaviest cross the good Lord could lay on me; I try to carry it as best as I can. I would ask only for common

⁴⁹ YENVEUX III, 27; IV, 187; VI, 14; VII, 151, 259; VIII, 28.

⁵⁰ Only Jean Viala was ordained on November 3, 1839, cf. *Registre des Insinuations de l'Évêché de Marseille*.

sense for these people who see only themselves in this world and that is precisely what they lack, besides a heart.

I wish all of God's blessings during your retreat. I recommend you to treat therein the crucial points of religious life so that each may be imbued with his duties.

704. [To Father Guigues, at N.-D. de l'Osier].⁵¹

The Congregation is caught in the midst of a storm.

[Marseilles,] November 4, 1839.

Pray to the Blessed Virgin that she comes to our assistance, never before has the Congregation experienced a similar storm. Death,⁵² apostasy,⁵³ dreadful persecution⁵⁴ from those whose duty it is to protect her. Are these sufficient reasons to cry out to God?

705. [To Father Dassy, at N.-D. de l'Osier].⁵⁵

Fathers Guigues and Vincens may examine the novena to N.-D. de l'Osier. The building done by Father Guigues without permission must be demolished.

[Marseilles,] November 24, 1839.

I think you will do well to send me the novena⁵⁶ composed by good Meyer; I shall send it back to you by coach unless some other

⁵¹ YENVEUX V, 237.

⁵² Brother Morandini's death, on December 27, 1838 and that of Father Albini, on May 20, 1839.

⁵³ Father J. A. Jérôme Gignoux from the diocese of Gap had joined some priests of Gap to oppose the presence of the Oblates at N.-D. du Laus. "This wretched man has burnt his boats. He had to go to the Bishop of Gap to sell the Congreg[atio]n the way Judas sold his Master . . . a traitor presents himself to betray his mother with all the calumnies his empty head and hateful heart had helped him invent . . ." cf. J. M., November 24, 1839.

⁵⁴ During the annual retreats, the priests were asked to sign a petition asking for the foundation of a home for elderly priests at N.-D. du Laus and thus indirectly asking that the Oblates be sent away.

⁵⁵ YENVEUX II, 45-46; III, 118.

⁵⁶ The Founder had not approved the first text prepared by Father Dassy. The latter "completely" re-did the novena, cf. Dassy to Mazenod, November 2, 1838. Original: A. G.

occasion is handy. Father General of the Carmelites has sent me the replies to your different questions. I think you should abide by them, for there will be no end to this if you go on listening to all the critics in France.

After due consideration, I agree to your having your novena examined by Father Guigues and Father Vincens who will be in charge of this minute examination. You did not even send me one copy of Father Vincens' booklet.

Far from giving approval to the building plan, I have blamed him very much, but everything was over. I did not at all accept the reasons they had given me and I was determined to have these constructions demolished at my first visit. It is already a lot that I did not order it immediately, for things were, according to what they claim, favourable to the mission. For the very fact that it was done without apprising me beforehand, it must be destroyed. They suspected that I knew of this disorder from you even though I did not divulge anything and, far from hiding it, you must maintain that not only did you make use of your right but that you have done your duty. As a matter of fact it has even been claimed that you were enchanted by it after it was finished; this still does not exempt those who had indulged in such a breach of the Rules from reprimand.

706. [To Father Gignoux, at N.-D. de l'Osier].⁵⁷

Let Father Gignoux stop saying Mass.

[Marseilles,] November 24, 1839.

Your apostasy places you in a state of mortal sin. Your disobedience to the order I gave to present yourself before me is an act of culpable insubordination which aggravates your crime still more. If there is still the least ray of heavenly light in you, you will understand the gravity of your fault and you yourself will abstain from going up the altar until you have made reparation, but since it is to be feared that a person who has surpassed all limits will be so blind as to take this step also, it is my duty in the double capacity as your superior and

⁵⁷ YENVEUX VIII, 276. Father Gignoux was still staying at l'Osier, cf. J. M., November 22, 1839.

your bishop (for I believe that you have not forgotten that I am really your bishop by virtue of the act of excardination given by Bishop Arbaud on March 6, 1833, which constitutes you a subject of the Bishop of Marseilles), to halt you on this sacrilegious path; that is why I notify you by this present order to abstain from celebrating the holy mysteries until I decide that your repentance is sincere and that the great scandal you have just caused has been sufficiently repaired. In the meantime you can go back to your family to weep for your sin.

Since so fatherly a letter as the one I wrote you on first hearing the news of your estrangement did not produce any effect in you, I shall not attempt to add any other feeling than that of deep sorrow which your behaviour causes me.

1840

707. To Father Mille, superior, parish priest at Notre-Dame du Laus, near Gap. Upper Alps.¹

Father Martin's departure for the mission of Cotignac.

L.J.C. and M.I.

Marseilles, Feb[ruary] 29, 1840.

You have preached enough missions for the diocese of Gap this year, so have no regrets if I take Father Martin away from you for the mission of Cotignac. In case he has promised to go somewhere else, let him back out of it, I cannot do without his assistance at Cotignac. The extreme fatigue to which the Lower Alps mission has subjected Father Telmon strictly forces me to take this measure; Father Telmon's throat is so affected that he would be in imminent danger if he were not given a little rest. So let Father Martin leave at the beginning of the first week of Lent and come here. The mission at Cotignac starts the second Sunday. Don't give me any argument, the matter is decided. If the situation did not require the presence of the parish priest at N.-D. du Laus on the spot, I would perhaps have called Father Mille, but he must remain at his post. Hence it is Father Martin who must come and I give him his obedience through the present letter.

I do not broach the subject of my sufferings.² I know you share them and you ask God for the strength that I may bear them. On the other hand, I am filled with joy on learning of what the Lord has done in our missions. Don't reserve anything for yourself except the consolation of having fulfilled your duty in a holy manner.

¹ Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L. M.-Mille.

² "Sufferings": the behaviour of Fr. Gignoux, the Bishop and a section of the Clergy of Gap towards the Oblates of Laus, cf., J.M., January 10, 1840. Nevertheless, many priests of the diocese remained friends of the Oblates, cf. L. Martin-Mazenod, undated, end of 1939.

Good-bye, lots of love to all. I embrace and bless you.

† C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

708. To Father Courtès, at Aix].³

Illness of Fathers Telmon and Courtès. Impossibility of doing all the missions that have been promised.

L.J.C. and M.I.

Marseilles, March 14, 1840.

In conscience I have made up my mind, my dear Father Courtès, nothing in the world can make me change my decision because I would be sinning by acting differently. Father Telmon will not go to the mission of Cotignac or any other. I had to judge that you could do this mission because even after having spoken about what you call influenza, another name for a cold, you decided to go ahead provided Father Telmon was there with you. Then I retained the competence to judge that things would go equally well with Father Martin whom I had explicitly called, thereby sacrificing two missions which should have taken place in the Upper and Lower Alps. Now you say you have fever. Then there is no more question of undertaking this mission; but what baffles me is that you have allowed the two missionaries to start out: they will not suffice to undertake and bring such an important work to a good end. You should have written to the Parish Priest of Cotignac that since you were ill, the service he was expecting from you would have to be postponed. And since you are really ill, you had no responsibility before God. I needed nothing less than a reflection of this nature to calm myself when I see three missions fall through despite all the effort and changes I made to have this most important one succeed. You are sick. That says it all. If I could have foreseen this setback, I would have had Father Hermitte come down in time and Father Chauvet would not have left for Caderousse; with these two Fathers, Father Martin and Father Françon,⁴ the mission of Cotignac would still have been on a good basis.

³ Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L. M.-Courtès.

⁴ Mss.: Françon.

I don't say anything more; no one is bound to do the impossible. The good Lord will take our good will into consideration.⁵

709. To Father Courtès, super[io]r of the Miss[iona]ries, with the Parish Priest of Cotignac, at Cotignac, Var.⁶

Let Father Courtès take care of his health during the mission of Cotignac. Father Telmon is to stay at Aix.

L.J.C. and M.I.

Marseilles, March 19, 1840.

I am very grateful to you, my dear Courtès, for having given me news about yourself so soon. Having learnt about your decision from your penultimate letter, I would have been anxious. I thank God for the assistance he has given you, but I cannot refrain from recommending that you do not abuse it.⁷ You tell me that the church is far away from the rectory: hence you must take some precautions after you have preached lest you expose yourself, all perspiring, to the wind.

I am very happy to tell you for your peace of mind that I am leaving Father P[ier]re⁸ at Aix. It was enough for me that he reassured me about the reason that required calling him to me. Without that I would never have thought of withdrawing him from Aix where he was doing well and to your satisfaction. I hope that the improvement in the good Parish Priest's health will continue. Tell him how much I sympathize with him on account of his being indisposed, a circumstance so

⁵ The second page of this letter has been lost. It may have contained some reproaches to Father Courtès who did not want to go to Cotignac in accordance with the order he had received from Father Tempier. On this subject Father Martin writes: "Courtès had been deeply affected by Father Tem[pier]'s letter. I believe that the influenza was not the only reason that made him want a rest. There must have been others, for his dislike for going to Cotignac seems to be very great," cf. L. Martin-Mazenod, March 12, 1840.

⁶ Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L. M.-Courtès.

⁷ Only Fathers Martin and Françon left for Cotignac, but were soon joined by Father Courtès, who was sufficiently cured. Father Martin wrote to the Founder on March 31: "Father C[ourtès] is really a strange person . . . just looking at him and listening to him you would say he is going to give up the ghost, but in the pulpit he makes more noise than all of us. For his welfare, I wish him this kind of influenza . . . thus your Lordship can be reassured you did not send him off to martyrdom . . ."

⁸ Pierre Telmon.

awkward that one can't but help see therein a blow, as it were, from the evil spirit.

With all my heart I greet and I embrace all our Fathers as well as yourself.

† C.J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

710. To Father Courtès, sup[erio]r of the Miss[iona]ries, Rectory, at Cotignac, Var.⁹

Extend the mission of Cotignac by one week to leave enough time for the men to be converted.

Marseilles, April 6, 1840.

My dear Father Courtès, you must not hesitate to extend the mission by another week if this period is necessary to complete the work you have begun. The matter seems to me more essential than you tell me in your letter, for the reason that the men who did not say no have however held back till the last minute. Your mission will be incomplete and will have failed to some extent if you do not make this last effort to defeat the armed fortress which is tenaciously defending its prey. If all of you remain there, you have a greater chance of success and then you can leave without any regret. The plan of leaving Father Martin alone when you go away has several disadvantages. I have already urgent requests from Upper Alps where he was expected. They will have nothing to say if the mission is extended. On the other hand, to have chosen him to remain would be inexcusable in the eyes of this region which is so ill-disposed through the enemies' instigations.

The poor Parish Priest's illness has deprived you of a good worker who would have helped you much. I am not surprised that you could not take care of the earnest need of all the women, but those 300 women will still keep you busy during the week specially dedicated for men, which is one more reason for prolonging your stay at Cotignac and ending the mission a week later. These are needs from which you cannot turn aside. The good Lord will provide for what may not get

⁹ Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L. M.-Courtès.

done elsewhere. The essential thing is to do well what one does, *age quod agis*.

I beg of you to communicate my letter to Father Martin, it will serve as a reply to his which, as well as yours, has given me the greatest pleasure because of the interesting details you give. I am enchanted by what you tell me about Father Françon but I cannot understand Father De Veronico's timidity: he should do a little more violence to himself.

I greet all of you affectionately.

† C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

P.S. Father Bernard has just finished the retreat at Allauch, he has left to preach those of St-Mitre and Stes-Maries. Thus you can see that the diocese of Aix is not neglected. We can't do everything everywhere.

711. [To Father Guigues, at N.-D. de l'Osier].¹⁰

Father Pélissier will go to N.-D. du Laus, Father Pont to the Major Seminary of Marseilles, Fathers Magnan and Martin will receive their obedience probably for N.-D. de l'Osier.

L.J.C. and M.I.

Marseilles, June 7, 1840.

My dear Father Guigue[s], I approve Father Pélissier going to give a helping hand to our Fathers at N.-D. du Laus during the time of the great crowds; I am inclined to agree to this act of charity all the more so because I intended to send this Father to that community as part of the transfers which the needs of our different houses require. I would very much like that he be not too adverse to coming to Marseilles and replace good Father Semeria whom I am obliged to send to Corsica along with another Father who, together with Father Gibelli, will constitute the house of Vico which we cannot leave vacant any more.

¹⁰ Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L. M.-Guigues.

I would insist very much on the arrangement planned with Mrs. Gallois, it is undoubtedly the best for us. Do everything possible to accomplish it.¹¹

Brother Antoine¹² requests me to authorize him to make his final vows. Before deciding in Council about his request, I ask you for your opinion.

I think I can inform you that I shall give you Father Magnan. I would like to give you Father Martin also. I do not wholly commit myself to this. I shall definitely withdraw Father Pont, who will be sent to the Major Seminary of Marseilles.¹³ He will go down at the same time that the vacations begin, that is at the end of this month. I shall send you one more man who will remain in place.¹⁴

712. [To Father Pélissier, at Embrun].¹⁵

Reproaches Father Pélissier who had left N.-D. du Laus without permission and who was asking for dispensation from his vows.

Marseilles, July 29, 1840.

You are quite guilty, my dear Father Pél[issier], in behaving the way you do. It is really quite inconceivable that, under the false pre-

¹¹ A home had been opened to receive the pilgrims at N.-D. de l'Osier. While waiting to find some women religious, they were planning to entrust it to some Ladies. This Mrs. Gallois was evidently one of them. On this subject, Father Dassy writes to the Founder on March 21, 1840: "Our home is functioning . . . but what an embarrassment for us when it comes to choosing the ladies who are to take charge of it . . ."

¹² Probably Brother Antoine-Dominique Jouvett who had begun his novitiate on June 15, 1838. He made his perpetual vows on February 17, 1842.

¹³ The Founder's plans were not to be disturbed. Nevertheless, in his letter of July 8, 1840, Father Dassy dared to write: "How sorry we are to see Father Pont leave; he is so edifying, so zealous, so humble, so ready to do anything. No doubt, Father Magnan will do very well, but three changes, one after another! Gignoux, Pélissier, and Father Pont also. Allow me, my dearly beloved Father, to request you to leave him a little longer . . . but my dearly beloved Father, I forgot that I did not have the grace of state to give you the slightest advice and you will forgive me these five lines which only the good of the Congregation and regret at seeing good Father Pont leave could induce me to write."

¹⁴ The second page of this letter has been lost.

¹⁵ Copy made by Father Cas. Aubert in the *Registre des Expulsions et des dispenses*, Rome, A.G., p. 57. Father Mille had gone down to Marseilles at the end of July to give notice of his defection. He took along a letter of Father Martin to Bishop de Mazenod dated July 26 in which we read: "How heart-broken you must be, my dear Father, by this new disloyalty. I sympathize with you as much as I can and ask God that if he must test you some more, he send you crosses that are less painful and heavy."

texts your imagination conjures up, you should take the liberty of exempting yourself from the duties of obedience and that it be from Embrun that I receive your letter. I groan all the more before God for this disorder which establishes you in a permanent state of sin because I had called you to come and see me only to share your point of view. I had intended to explain myself to you in a friendly way and if I could not have rid your mind of the prejudices you have unfortunately entertained therein, which, as far as I am concerned, are obviously exaggerated, I would have come to an agreement with you in looking for a canonical means to end this state of affairs. You were already sufficiently to be pitied for nurturing in your heart blameworthy thoughts which had perverted your judgment to the point of making you approve Father Gig[noux]'s wretched behaviour.¹⁶ Thereby you had made yourself, to some extent, an accomplice in his apostasy. You wanted to do more, you wanted to imitate him. It was precisely to turn you away from going to that extreme, that in an attitude of sincere charity, I had called you to my side. I was hoping, in communicating with you freely, to find a remedy for your ailment and put your mind at peace; or, if against my expectation I did not succeed in getting you back on the right path, I was intending as I have said above to provide you with a canonical means to end the matter. You preferred to take the law into your hands by disobeying a formal command of your legitimate superior, you have abandoned your post, and it is from the place you have chosen that you write me to justify your defection, doubly expressed both by the date and the signature in your letter.¹⁷ Take, then, the full responsibility for your damnable behaviour. I shall take counsel without delay about what is to be done. I greet you.

† Ch. J. Eugene, Bishop of M[arseilles].

¹⁶ Father Pélissier, a native of Embrun in the diocese of Gap, had written two letters to Father Allard in which he justified Father Gignoux's behaviour and laid the cause of his disloyalty upon his brothers and the Congregation.

¹⁷ This letter is dated July 22, the day, no doubt, on which the Founder had requested Father Gignoux to present himself at Marseilles; it came not from N.-D. du Laus, but from Embrun and it was signed: Father Pélissier. He had retired to his family. We have two other letters of the ex-Oblate Pélissier to the Founder, one of September 20, 1840, in which he thanks him for the dispensation from his vows, the other of January 9, 1858, in which he expresses his friendship and best wishes for the Congregation's welfare.

713. To Father Semeria, superior of the Miss[iona]ries, at Vico, Corsica.¹⁸

Even if he is rather young, Father Semeria is the superior and must behave as such. Gibelli will be his first assistant and admonitor. Father De Veronico has still to be trained in religious life.

L.J.C. and M.I.

Marseilles, July 30, 1840.

My dear Father Semeria, I am still waiting for a few words from you. My dear child, you must keep in touch with me. It is true that it was too much for your nascent superiorship to find yourself all of a sudden in charge of two combined communities.¹⁹ You may well be young, you may well be new, you are nevertheless the head who is responsible for all those who live under the roof of our house of Vico. It is useless to abase yourself: despite your humility such is the case, and I think that order is established according to the Rule. You are the superior of the community of Vico, Father Gibelli is your first assistant, your admonitor and the spiritual director of the house. I have not yet appointed your second assistant. I believe that Father De Veronico will do himself sufficient justice so as not to be surprised that I expect him to be more steady, that he become more regular and acquire a more correct conscience before he can be entrusted with any confidential position. You may read this section of my letter to him in all simplicity. You are his superior, so I must inform you of things that concern your men. You will note with regard to him that he needs to watch himself so as not to behave childishly and that his conscience is far too lax in the interpretation he gives to some of his duties or to the Rules. I shall quote to you but one very recent example which I would be happy if you were to recall to him so that he would come to know my disapproval and the reproach I would certainly have made to him, had I known the matter before his departure. It was the eve of the S[acred] Heart, a day of fasting. After having worked with one of his companions to adorn the church, they went down to the refectory where they found only breakfast leftovers. His confrere was wrong in showing his temper. De Veronico, in line with his character, gave the

¹⁸ Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L. M.-Semeria.

¹⁹ The Seminarrians of Ajaccio had gone to spend their vacation at Vico.

matter another turn, which was just as reprehensible. In the kitchen no one could have foreseen that they were so tired as to need a little more food. The confrere sulked because of his empty stomach but was satisfied with eating a piece of cheese. De Veronico, without being at all shy about it and in a very unbecoming tone, had some eggs prepared for him, deciding, with his normal sneer, that he felt his hunger sufficiently to declare that he was dispensed from fasting. Thus, a double fault with the aggravating circumstance of scandal and flightiness. He should certainly not have done these things even if he felt the need to eat something other than the breakfast food. His duty was to take the trouble of going to see the superior and ask for dispensation from the fast and permission to give orders to the cook, then everything would have been in order and he would have avoided talking like a fool. If he is still like this after so many years of vows, you understand that he cannot be put in charge of directing others. Since my remarks have been prompted only by the duty of seeing to his welfare, I am not afraid to have him know them. It will make him reflect on his need for self-reform and everything will proceed well. Good-bye, my dear Father Semeria. I bless you and all our Fathers. I embrace you.

† C.J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

The position of Father Guibert in the diocese of Ajaccio requires that he be continually considered in the house of Vico as a visitor, since we have no provincials among us.²⁰

²⁰ The letters of Father Semeria are preserved in a bound note-book. The last line of this letter is written in the margin and is covered by the threads of the binding. They cannot be read. The copy that was made in 1926 carried the following text: "as a visitor who had still to remain with us." We have preferred the text written by the Founder in his *Diary*, July 31: "In the letter to Father Semeria . . . I tell him that the position of Father Guibert in the diocese of Ajaccio requires that he be continually considered in the house of Vico as a visitor, since we have no provincials among us."

714. [To Father Ancel, at Montgenèvre].²¹

Invitation to return to the Congregation. Father Mille will receive him and help him. His accepting a position outside the Congregation renders him liable to expulsion.

Marseilles, October 17, 1840.

Sincerely, my dear friend, how can you expect that I in conscience can grant you the dispensation you request, if it rests on such futile reasons as you set before me. I thought I was dreaming when I received your letters.²² Could it not be said that you are ignorant of the primary principles of theology and that you consider as a joke the most sacred commitments that exist on earth? Though bound by the vows and an oath, you act independently of these formidable obligations. You look after your interests not only outside of but in formal opposition to the obedience you have vowed and which binds you to your lawful superiors, and it is after having settled on an illegitimate, illegal, anti-canonical measure that you inform me without embarrassment that you have accepted a post on your own authority outside of this Congregation which you call mine²³ as if it were not as much yours as it is mine, as if you had not solemnly sworn in the presence of O.L. Jesus Christ to live and die in her bosom. I will not dwell on this, my dear friend, I would not know how to make sense of such aberration; I appeal instead to your reason, to your common sense, your heart, your religious conscience. No, in conscience I cannot without any legitimate reason grant you the dispensation you request.

²¹ Copy made by the Founder. Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L. M.-Ancel.

²² We still have some of Father Ancel's letters to the Founder: November 11, 1838, September 13, November 2 and December 10, 1840, February 12, 1841. Due to some injustice done to him at Gap where he had been a priest for some years (cf. note 67 of letter no. 678), he joined our Congregation and made his vows on the First of November 1839. Having been sent to Ajaccio, he soon complained that Father Guibert and the Fathers treated him as an "old idle talker," as "fat Jean." In the Act of dismissal, where the reasons for his expulsion are stated, we find the following: "At the end of the academic year, during which he had given enough trouble to the superior and the Fathers of the Major Seminary of Ajaccio, due to his difficult character and certain ridiculous and erroneous opinions . . ." Yet in one of his letters to the Founder, Ancel writes that he had not thought that such a father could have such sons, sons who were ashamed to call themselves Oblates and to wear the cross, who do not live poorly, etc. While beseeching the Founder to grant him dispensation from vows because he had been appointed the director of the hospice royal du Montgenèvre, he begs him to forgive him and to maintain his friendship.

²³ "mine", that is Bishop de Mazenod's Congregation.

Unfortunately you have placed yourself in a situation wherein you are liable to dismissal because, according to canonical principles, what the devil has induced you to do, that is, living outside the Congregation against obedience and accepting a post without your superior's authorization, etc., are things equivalent to apostasy. Who would have expected this? I who was thinking of you in view of soon entrusting you with the superiorship of one of the Congregation's houses,²⁴ I who esteemed you, who loved you, that I should be reduced to the extreme misfortune of seeing the Council impose on you the extreme penalty you have deserved, a penalty which S[ain]t Thomas compares with excommunication: *expulsio juxta D. Thomam comparatur excommunicationi*. What would I do to divert you from this misfortune? I have not laid your case before the Council. I shall submit it to the Council only when it will be clear that I cannot count on your return. I have only to have recourse to my affection for you to act with such kindness, but in case I need to, the decretals of Popes authorize me to act thus: *Superiores . . . nihil intentatum relinquunt ut lucrentur animas fratrum suorum fere in profundum malorum delapsas, antequam gravissimum atque extremum expulsionis remedium experiantur*.²⁵ The evil has undoubtedly reached its highest point, for you are in a state of mortal sin and you disregard this in an attitude of dreadful confidence. For God's sake, my dear friend, look within yourself and heed my voice, which is that of a father and a friend. Go to Notre-Dame du Laus, get in touch with the superior whom you trust. I shall give him all the powers he needs to re-instate you. Thereafter, if it is deemed opportune to grant you some special permissions temporarily, we shall try to arrange everything as best as we can, but once again, for God's sake, for the sake of your soul, don't continue to take the path which leads to perdition and thereby also afflict my heart and those who love you. Good-bye, I pray to God that he may make you docile to my voice and I affectionately greet you.

† C.J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

²⁴ "I, who was thinking of you . . . of the Congregation's houses" was erased by the Founder.

²⁵ Decree of the S. Congregation of the Council, September 21, 1624.

715. [To Father Tempier, superior of the Major Seminary of Marseilles].²⁶

Though it is late, let Father Tempier come to hear his confession.

Marseilles, October 31, 1840.

One may sometimes be distracted, dearest Tempier, but to forget that today is Saturday, the usual day for confession; furthermore, that it is the eve of our great ceremony²⁷ that should naturally be preceded by confession; *tertio*, that last evening, realizing that it was too late, I told you that we would meet again this morning at 7 o'clock, and it is already 8 p.m.

All these combined complaints force me to compel you mercilessly to make the pilgrimage to the bishop's house this very evening. And so I pray God that he have you in his holy and worthy keeping and especially that he grant you a little more memory.

716. [To Father Ancel, at Montgenèvre].²⁸

Call to repentance. Refusal to grant the dispensation from his vows. Decision made in his regard.

L.J.C. and M.I.

Marseilles, November 12, 1840.

My dear friend, why are you obstinate in disavowing a title which you still hold and which you cannot give up without a great betrayal of trust?²⁹ Believe me you who are still my dear friend, that your behaviour in this matter has both grieved and laid me low. I cannot, in the space of one letter bring you back to those principles which you have strangely disregarded. Moreover, what could I tell you that you do not know as well as I do? And yet it is despite this knowledge that you have blinded yourself to the point of becoming so guilty. What should have been done to keep you in the line of your duty? You could have

²⁶ Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L. M.-Tempier.

²⁷ November First marked the end of the annual retreat and renewal of vows.

²⁸ Copy: Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L. M.-Ancel.

²⁹ Father Ancel used to sign his letters: "Ancel, Canon."

been open with me during your transit to Marseilles, instead of³⁰ However, I don't want to say anything which, by reminding you of your mistakes, may sadden you. I would have gone to great lengths in a frank and conscience-filled conversation to bring peace to your heart, regarding the things that most disturbed you. Even now I would be in a position to broach all these things verbally, in a private conversation with you, but there was nothing that I did not do to avoid an extreme position which, after all, would not calm your conscience because, as I have already written you, I cannot dispense you for the reasons you allege, and because you are obliged under pain of mortal sin to avoid all that could make you liable to being expelled. *Peccat mortaliter si non adhibet diligentiam in cavendis defectibus ob quas se dimittendum vel ejiciendum praevidet.*³¹ But I shall not prolong this reasoning any further because I have decided not to invoke principles which obviously put you in such a deplorable situation.

While waiting for you to come and talk with me, here is what the Holy Spirit inspires me for your welfare. I think you will recognize therein the true charity I have for you and the sentiments of an affection which you will certainly blame yourself for not having sufficiently appreciated. Leaving aside a condemnation for all that is contrary to the sacred canons in your behaviour and wanting to provide you with the means to return to favour with God whom you have offended grievously by your unfaithfulness to the vows and the oath you have made, I shall give the necessary faculties for your reconciliation to the confessor of your choice, on condition that you, being repentant of the fault you have far too long maintained, be sincerely disposed to submit yourself, as it is your essential duty to do, to the decision which I will be in a position to take in your regard. Compliance of your will must be in some way prior to and independent of what I am going to inform you, for it is a strict obligation that cannot be conditional, and also because in matters of conscience we must act in good faith with God and those who represent him here below. Here, then, is the decision I am taking and God knows, only for your good, without cutting you off from the corps to which you belong and to which you are

³⁰ He had stopped at Marseilles during his trip from Ajaccio to Gap, to which place he had permission to go for some family matter. However he did not breathe a word about his plans. cf. *Registre des Expulsions et dispenses*, p. 61.

³¹ We do not know the source from which the Founder quotes this passage.

attached by bonds that are more indissoluble than you have seen fit to think. I would authorize you until further orders to remain in the post you now occupy. Such authorization will safeguard the vow of obedience and the oath of perseverance. To honour the vow of poverty, you will use with great moderation, the income from your position and any other income you may have, and you will give what is over and above your simple necessities to the poor or to the Church.

Finally, you will write me at least twice a year and give me a full account of your behaviour. And, in the meantime should you have a favourable occasion to come and talk with me, I would advise you to take it; surely in the view of the concession I have just made, independently of the sentiments you certainly know that I have for you, I don't think you have any grounds to fear me very much.

I end this letter here. It should tell how much good I wish for you, but it cannot possibly make you understand the suffering you cause me.

In the name of the good Lord, take hold of the plank I hold out to you in your terrible ship-wreck. Your salvation is at stake.

Good-bye, my dear friend, I pray the Lord to enlighten you and to lead you by his grace into the arms of him who is reaching out to you and who embraces you.

717. [To Father Vincens, at N.-D. de l'Osier].³²

Those from the diocese of Grenoble could make their novitiate at N.-D. de l'Osier. Mrs. Val's legacy.

[Marseilles,] November 12, 1840.

You know, my dear Father Vincens, that all we ask God is to send us priests after his heart, who, filled with the holy desire for the joy of living in conformity with the divine Master's counsels, wish to travel the same path the Apostles and the favoured disciples who followed them had trod. The person you mention in your letter to Father Tempier seems to be of this calibre. The way you praise him places him

³² Copy: Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L. M.-Vincens.

totally in this category. Hence, I can only bless the Lord for inspiring him to associate himself to a Society of evangelical labourers whose number is not sufficient to reap the great harvest entrusted to it by the Father of the family. Since M[elchior] B[urfin]³³ has the qualities fit to fulfill this great ministry, and his good character will make him appreciated in our communities where we love one another as brothers, I have no hesitation to agreeing that you give him a room where he can make a fire since this arrangement is necessary for his health: the latter is precious to us from the first moment he is a member of the family.

I maintain my decision of allowing those whom the diocese of Grenoble will send you to make their novitiate at Notre-Dame de l'Osier. When the good Lord will send you some, you may let me know of it so that I can advise you on what must be done in their regard.

I don't know if Father Tempier has replied to you about the conditions proposed by Mrs. Val. They seem to me rather onerous. I wish that this lady had a little more trust in God's mercy and that she would at least be satisfied that the Mass she asks for cease at the death of the priests who are now at l'Osier, and as long as one of them is at the shrine. Let me explain: I would not want this obligation to be transferable to those who may in the future replace³⁴ those who are there at present; those actually there have no more obligation once they leave the shrine. Try to settle the matter as best as you can.

Good-bye, my dearest Father Vincens, the time I spent with you and your confreres was too short. I embrace you affectionately.

† C.J.E., Bi[shop] of M[arseilles].

³³ Melchior Burfin, a priest, began his novitiate at l'Osier on February 17, cf. L. Dassy-Mazenod, July 1841.

³⁴ The one who copied this letter had read: "et tant qu'il y en aura qu'un d'eux au sanctuaire. Je m'explique: je ne voudrais pas que cette obligation fût transmissible à ceux qui pourraient être dans le cas de remplir les présents . . . etc."

718. To Father Semeria, superior of the Miss[iona]ries, at Vico, Corsica.³⁵

Joy at learning that Father De Veronico is behaving well. Thanks Father Semeria and Gibelli who have never saddened their father's heart. Obedience. Faculty to bless rosaries. Brother Luigi's forthcoming ordination. Vocations.

L.J.C. and M.I.

Marseilles, November 19, 1840.

My dear Father Semeria, you could not have given me more interesting details than those contained in your letter of the Second. So you have prefaced with a good retreat the exercises of the holy missions which were to follow immediately afterwards. I have no doubt the good Lord will bless your labours now that you have been so invigorated by the holy fire that enlightens and purifies. In particular, you have been very satisfied with Father De Veronico's dispositions, what pleasure you give me! So it is true that the evil was not without remedy and it sufficed for this dear Father to get out of the atmosphere of Aix and then get back on his feet and to walk in step with the most fervent of his brothers. Tell him how happy I am. Now he will realize that he has regained the right place. I also congratulate Father Gibelli for the graces he received during your retreat and I rejoice over the satisfaction he experiences at now being in the midst of a community, which, though very small, provides nonetheless, all that is needed to live happily. I join all of you in spirit to enjoy a few moments of consolation in compensation for the immense sorrows I experience on the other hand. May you be blessed, my dearest Father Semeria, and you, my dearest Father Gibelli. Neither of you have ever saddened your father's heart. May this witness be a first reward for your good behaviour and an additional title for what you are expecting from the supreme distributor of graces, the just judge who will reward each according to his deeds.

I cannot but approve what you did during the retreat. I think, however, that you could have exposed the Blessed Sacrament even though you were such a small number; why should you be deprived of

³⁵ Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation. L. M.-Semeria.

a favour which the rest of your brothers enjoy? The prescription of the Chapter regarding the day's obedience must be followed to the letter. It is always an impressive act of regularity to present oneself before the superior, disposed to receive an obedience. We must present ourselves before him with the biretta in hand, and if he has nothing to prescribe, he removes his own and then greets the community which respectfully retires in silence.

I don't remember if I had granted you the faculty to bless rosaries, crosses and medals; it seems to me that you had asked for it. I grant it to you and your two confreres: two thousand for the rest of the year and 3000 for next year. I think you need this because of your missions. Brother Luigi, your future collaborator is indeed a real gem. I shall make him a deacon at the Christmas ordination. Don't you find more of this calibre in the areas you evangelize? Pray to our saintly Morandini that from Heaven he choose someone for us. And so make our blessed Albini also work some miracle. What is the good of the pictures we have sent you? Don't sleep on them. Good-bye, dear children, I press you to my heart, embrace and bless you.

† C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

719. To Father Courtès, superior of the Miss[iona]ries, Carmelites' Square, at Aix, B.d.R.³⁶

List of preachers for the forthcoming missions and retreats.

Marseilles, December 2, 1840.

It is never easy, my dear Courtès, that a person manages to make some arrangement in the midst of so many difficulties that arise everywhere from the moment one gets to work. The mission of St-Marcel is about to end. Sunday I am going for its closing. The two that are being preached at Digne are also ending, but a third one will immediately begin at Malijai: it will be followed by one more promised at St-André in the diocese of Gap. Father Telmon will go to give a retreat at Revest-du-Bion along with Father Chauvet. A few days later, Father Bernard will preach the mission of Vernègues, together with Father

³⁶ Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L. M.-Courtès.

Perron, if possible. Due to certain local circumstances, the retreat of Revest will start on the 15th of this month. The mission of Vernègues has been arranged with the Parish Priest for the 28th. In the meantime you have sent Father Bise to Rognes and it seems that you yourself had been at La Fare. No other mission can be preached in the diocese of Fréjus except the one of Aups because we cannot exempt ourselves from giving the retreats of Cotignac and Istres.

The mission[ar]ies who are to give the mission of Aups are Fathers Courtès, Aubert, Telmon and Chauvet. You are the only one who can give the retreat at Cotignac.

Father Bernard is engaged for a major retreat at Allauch. Father Telmon will go to Istres.

After this campaign, I shall do what I can to form a house at Aix. In this I find some difficulties that are hard to overcome.

I end my letter here, otherwise it will not get off. Good-bye.

† C.J. Eug[ene], Bish[op] of M[arsei]lles.

720. To Father Mille, miss[ion]ary, with the Parish Priest at Malijai, via . . . Lower Alps.³⁷

Indifference of the Christians at Malijai. Founder's encouragement.

L.J.C. and M.I.

Marseilles, December 13, 1840.

My dear friends, I share the pain brought to you by the indifference of the people whom you are evangelizing. I do not, however, approve the discouragement into which I understand you have fallen, you who are accustomed to be the instruments of God's mercy.³⁸ You have lost sight of the fact that you can at times be, like the Master who has sent you, witnesses to his justice. Thanks to the Lord such cases are rare, but they do come into the line of your ministry. Hence this should not surprise you. Thus, far from dwelling on the thought of withdraw-

³⁷ Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L. M.-Mille.

³⁸ The Founder writes in his *Diary*, December 12: "Letter of Father Mille. In the mission of Malijai things are not going as well as in that of Brusquet. His confreres are discouraged. People didn't come to listen to their instructions . . ."

ing as though you had been conquered, it is necessary that you stay there to accomplish your work. It is perhaps in this case a sentence of rejection which can be promulgated only after the normal course of your exercises; even in such a case you will have been God's ambassadors who have fulfilled their mission faithfully. Discouragement is a weakness. If you analyze it well, you will find it is caused by self-love. The Lord, in giving you the lofty mission of sowing, planting and watering, has reserved to himself the granting of the growth and maturity when it pleases and as it pleases him. Do then, what you have been commissioned to do and leave to God that which belongs to him alone. At most, bring down his merciful action by your urgent prayers and turn him away from executing his justice.

The two positions you propose to me are good and acceptable if the case should arise, but I beg you to maintain the dignity of your ministry and not make any complaint. Be moderate especially with regard to what you say in the presence of the Parish Priest. I cannot recommend sufficient discretion always and everywhere with regard to these Gentlemen. Elsewhere we have made great and irreparable mistakes in this matter.

Good-bye, my dear friends, I unite my poor prayers to yours and I greet all of you affectionately.

† C.J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.



Father Noël François Moreau
(Tarascon, August 24, 1794 - Ajaccio, February 2, 1846)

1841

721. [To Father Mille, at N.-D. du Laus].¹

Use a moderate approach with the new Bishop of Gap.

[Marseilles,] January 6, 1841.

There is no doubt that our enemies must have maintained a continuous correspondence with his Lordship.² Be prepared to see him arrive full of prejudice against you. What is to be done? For your part, you will behave with dignity, sincerity and moderation. The good Lord will do the rest. But what are we to think of the clergy's behaviour during this meeting? Those who do not ask for assistance of your ministry are appealing to others without experience³ who are trying to mimic you. This is disgusting.

722. To Father Courtès, superior of the Miss[iona]ries, Carmelites' Square, at Aix. B.d.R.⁴

Not to accept preaching special occasion sermons in the churches of the city as the Jesuits do. Our vocation consists in preaching parish missions in villages, towns and country-side.

L.J.C. and M.I.

Marseilles, J[anuar]y 8, 1841.

There is no doubt, my dear Father Courtès, that in sending you the excellent Father Allard, I thought I was making you a gift. I

¹ YENVEUX III, 150.

² Bishop N.A. de la Croix d'Azolette was appointed Archbishop of Auch on December 4, 1839, and replaced at Gap by Bishop Louis Rossat who was appointed on June 25, ordained at Lyon on February 14, 1841 and took possession of Gap on March 10.

³ Bishop de la Croix had founded a Society of diocesan Missionaries.

⁴ Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L. M.-Courtès.

remained firm in this resolution despite all the requests addressed to me from the various houses where they wanted him. He is a precious person, I recommend him to you. However do not demand anything beyond his strength. He will do anything out of obedience but you must be careful not to jeopardize men by burdening them with what they cannot do. So don't have the idea of making him preach at St-Sauveur, reserve him for the house and church of the Mission. Also don't count on any other man for these sermons at St-Sauveur. I can't imagine how you could have been taken in after experiencing the difficulties you met with at St-Jean and the Magdalene. We had to proceed authoritatively with Father T[elmon] and I am quite determined not to use this means any more. The other Fathers are right in not being anxious that others make commitments for them. All these occasion sermons mean nothing. That is not your ministry. You are instituted for missions and retreats. You must aim only at converting souls and not at pleasing the public, not even the Parish Priests who, besides, are not at all more grateful to you. I have replied to the Parish Priest of St-Esprit that I do not agree to your preaching at the Sunday service in his church during this Lent, that it is all the more impossible since you will be preaching a mission during that time. It has to be so because it was your insisting that we submit to the demands of the Parish Priest of Aups. At least arrange the opening of this mission in such a way that you can finish it before Holy Week. I have written so that we can have Father Martin for the retreat of Cotignac which you cannot preach, since you want to be back at Aix before Easter.

If we had four centuries of existence behind us, we could, I hope, compete with the Jesuits, not only in zeal but in moral power and successful means. That is too much of an ambition for the time of our infancy. I bless God for the good they are doing, and I am resigned to the fact that we do much less than they in the big cities where they have plenty of distinguished men. Let us learn to appreciate the part the Lord has allotted to us. In a mission, don't we do a hundred thousand times more good than they? Each has his task to do. Let them preach in the cities, we shall continue to convert entire populations in the villages, towns and country-side.

I received a letter from Father Bernard. The mission⁵ is filled with the greatest hopes, I am sure of the most complete success. This is our

⁵ Mission of Vernègues preached by Fathers Bernard and Perron.

real compensation. We have to count only on God, and then he will deal with us as in the manner of a generous master.

Good-bye, my dear Father Courtès, I wish you as well as your two companions a Happy New Year.

† C.J. Eugene, Bish[op].

P.S. Father Tempier begs me to ask you for your accounts; he is in urgent need for money. We had to spend a lot at Lumières and l'Osier.

723. To Father Semeria, superior of the Missions, at Vico. Corsica.⁶

Apostasies. A fourth Father sent to Vico. Father De Veronico's good behaviour. Greetings to Father Gibelli and the two Brothers.

L.J.C. and M.I.

Marseilles, January 8, 1841.

You will excuse me, my dear children, if I reply to your three letters in such a small format. You know my sentiments in your regard, I don't need to take much space to express them to you, and besides, there is little time in the midst of all the bother of my big city.

You are perfectly right, my dear children, in the indignation you express to me at all these horrible apostasies which torment you as well as me. It is high time that the devil sift our grain in vain and that on the day of testing not a kernel pass through to be thrown with the chaff into everlasting fire. Today again I have just passed the fatal sentence handing over this guilty deserter who first broke the bonds of unity under the pretext that a person of his age and standing could not tolerate younger men surpassing him. I used the approach of superabundant mercy, but he obliged me by his extravagant and culpable obstinacy to use the severity he incessantly provoked. I am speaking of Ancel who, without my knowledge, became the hospital chaplain of Montgenèvre. Isn't that a fine dignity compared to the privilege of his sublime vocation? What horror! What monstrosity!

My mind finds rest and joy in you and everything you tell me makes me bless the Lord for the graces he is showering upon your little

⁶ Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L. M.-Semeria.

community. I can provide you with a fourth brother who is worthy of sharing your labours and holy rejoicing. If I come to Corsica this summer I shall present him myself, in the meantime, he is perfecting himself in knowledge and holiness. I was happy to make him a deacon at the last ordination. He will be ordained priest on the feast of the Trinity.⁷

Let De Veronico not mention any more the grief he caused me. His good behaviour and sentiments make me forget past sorrows which, moreover, have better proved my attachment to him. I no longer have any doubt that my hopes, apprehensive for a moment, will be realized and, since he is headed in the right direction, as his letter proves to me, he will become more and more worthy of his vocation and the affection I have always had for him.

And our good Gibelli who no longer wishes to speak or write in French is no less understood by me, whatever language he may use to send me his greetings. I bless and love all of you with all my heart. I also greet and bless the two coadjutor Brothers,⁸ and urge them to the holy observance of the Rules in obedience and humility.

† C.J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

**724. To Father Courtès, superior of the Miss[iona]ries, at Aix.
B.d.R.⁹**

Father Chauvet will replace Father Bise at Aix. Missions and retreats.

L.J.C. and M.I.

Marseilles, J[anuar]y 15, 1841.

Father Chauvet is going to reinforce the house of Aix. There he will replace Father Bise who will go to Marseilles immediately. I think Father Viala will not delay in coming, at least such is the notice he has given. In the reduced situation we are in, I could not make any other arrangement. Father Perron will return soon and wait at Aix for his

⁷ Father Dominique Luigi, ordained priest on June 27, 1841.

⁸ According to the Personnel of 1840, they are Brothers J.B. Ferrand and Louis Roux. Cf. *Etudes Oblates*, t. 17 (1958), pp. 72-75.

⁹ Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L. M.-Courtès.

posting; through study he will prepare himself for the ministry to which he is assigned.

You misunderstood me when I defended you against the claim that you preach for the sake of pleasing; without going into any other explanation, I limit myself to gainsaying the intention you attribute to me.

The Parish Priest of Cotignac writes me for two missionaries for two or three weeks during Lent. It is a retreat but the equivalent to a mission. I cannot refrain from replying to him but what a problem it is to find these two missionaries! I have written to Laus to find out if Father Martin would be available. In any case we will have to manage it. You see that with such problems we cannot commit ourselves to isolated sermons, which may be styled luxury items, so to speak.

I am in very much of a hurry, however I think I have said everything. Good-bye.

725. [To Father Mille, at N.-D. du Laus].¹⁰

Reflections on the failure of the mission of Malijai.

[Marseilles,] January 20, 1841.

My dear Father Mille, everything is said and done regarding the mission of Malijai: let us lament over it before God, but we certainly could have done better. That is the impression at the Seminary of Digne which Father T[elmon] gathered while passing through.¹¹ We sympathize with your difficulties, but people have blamed the reading of the letter from the pulpit and the reprimands that followed. They thought you should have profitted from the fact of the big crowd on Christmas day and attract with kindness these people who had gone

¹⁰ YENVEUX I, 213-214.

¹¹ Malijai belonged to the diocese of Digne. The mission was preached by Fathers Mille, Martin and Hermitte. From a letter of Father Mille, in December 1840, we know why the Priests of the Seminary took an interest in this mission: "Malijai is a place that up to now had shown resistance to all that the zeal of her pastors would undertake. Fourteen years ago some Priests of Digne, under the leadership of the superior of the Seminary, attempted to preach a Jubilee, but they had to abandon their effort. Hence we had to clear from one end to the other what has been a waste-land since the great Revolution." Cf. *Missions O.M.I.*, t. 40 (1920), p. 115.

astray. We get too easily discouraged when the wind is not in our favour.

726. To Father Mille, parish priest of N.-Dame du Laus, near Gap. Upper Alps.¹²

Notification of Father Mie's death.

L.J.C. and M.I.

Marseilles, March 11, 1841.

With deepest sorrow I inform you of the death of our good and saintly Father Mie.¹³ The good Lord took him away from us yesterday at 7:00 p.m. when he suffered an attack of an instantaneously fatal apoplexy, thus sparing him all the horrors of death which he had always feared.

Like myself, you too will feel the great loss we incur in the person of this blessed man whose presence among us here on the earth was a constant source of edification.

You will not delay to acquit yourself of the duties the Rule imposes on us either with regard to the Masses you have to offer or to the indulgences you are to apply for this holy soul.

Pray also for me. I bless you.

† C.J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

727. [To Father Courtès, at Aix].¹⁴

A team of missionaries is not to be established at the last minute. Success of the mission of Aups.

Marseilles, April 1, 1841.

It is not to Father Françon, my dear Courtès, that you should have turned for the retreat arrangement you thought was possible, but

¹² Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L. M.-Mille.

¹³ Father Mie died on March 10.

¹⁴ Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L. M.-Courtès.

to the local superior of Lumières who alone is able to judge at the late season we are in as to how his men are to be employed. Once and for all you must resolve not to wait till the eve of a retreat or mission to try and determine the work personnel you would like to assign thereto. You see how many times this system has put us into situations of great embarrassment. Nothing is so easy as preparing one's campaign plan in due time, in accordance with the prescriptions of the Rule. Once this work has been done, we must stick to it; this method saves us a lot of trouble. Regarding the present case, I must not go against the commitment made by the superior of Lumières; settle it with him. If he can make the exchange you want without compromising his work, he will grant your request. From here I foresee some difficulty therein; if I remember well, the Parish Priest of the place where you would like to send Father Viala had complained about him; I think he had accused him of having revealed that he probably would not recite his office. If that is so, how can you send him the same person about whom he feels he has grounds for complaint?

God alone knows how the retreat of Cotignac will go. They were expecting to see you there, as at Aups. Aups was a miraculous success. The account of the blessings God showered on those people makes even men like ourselves, who are accustomed to the marvels of grace, shed tears.¹⁵ At Cotignac, Father Martin would have needed a good worker because he is extremely tired. The need of Calvaire, where we are reduced to Father Rolleri . . .¹⁶

¹⁵ Five letters of Father Martin on the mission of Aups are available. L. Martin-M., March 9, 12, 18, 29 and April 1. The mission was preached by Fathers Martin, Telmon, Chauvet and Perron.

¹⁶ The second page of this letter has been lost.

**728. To Father Mille, superior of Notre-Dame du Laus, near Gap.
Lower Alps.¹⁷**

Sickness and death. Written report on the missions. Hope of the Juniorate of N.-D. de Lumières. Circumspection with regard to the religious authorities of Gap.

L.J.C. and M.I.

Marseilles, April 16, 1841.

Holy Week and the feasts, care of our sick, concern for their danger, sorrow at their loss,¹⁸ all these have contributed, my dear Father Mille, to delay my writing you as well as your confreres, and especially Father Bise to whom I owe a reply and who may perhaps be displeased that I have sent him none.

We must always start by thanking God for the blessings he showers on your ministry. I rejoice at Tallard's success, it could not have come at a better time, but the report at what had happened at St-André suffers from omissions. We must never be satisfied with the verbal reports that may be given. Besides being often neglected, nothing written remains, and that is unfortunate in the view of the work that has to be done one day.

I am afraid the men at Calvaire failed to inform you of the blessed death of our saintly Father Paris. He severed his ties on the night of the Resurrection after very prolonged cruel sufferings.

April 21.

This letter which I thought was on the road to you, has remained buried among my papers. I am digging it up today. Old and out-dated though it is, I am sending it to you if only to show that every delay should not be attributed to me. I had written to you in the interim, but now I notice in time that I informed you herein of what I feared had

¹⁷ Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L. M.-Mille.

¹⁸ Father Paris died on April 11, 1841; Father Cas. Aubert was seriously ill at the same time. On this point, Father Martin wrote: "Father Courtès has written to Father Perron informing him that Father Aubert has been dangerously ill these last few days, that he is even on the verge of dying. My God, what a misfortune! We are going to pray the Lord that he keep this virtuous and valuable confrere for us . . ."

not been told you as yet. Heaven is filling up with our men. If it is consoling to see all those who have been taken from us die as men predestined, it is impossible not to be saddened at seeing our ranks thin out, without anyone coming forward to replace those who have gone to take possession of glory, since it is the reward promised those who persevere to the end.

The little colony of Lumières is a source of hope,¹⁹ but it will have to live longer than I can count on to enjoy results of a good initiative that is so strong in its seedling state. You are still young enough to see the ear of corn forming, coming to maturity and you will gather it in jubilation; as for me it seems that I am destined only to sow in tears. If that be God's will, I accept it.

Continue keeping an attitude of circumspection and being totally involved in your ministry while waiting for openings which you must not yourselves elicit. I would even have preferred that you had not shown you wanted to know from Father B[lanc] whether the former Vicar General would be called to the Council. The Parish Priest would have told you this a little later.²⁰

Good-bye, my good dear man. Take advantage during your rest to correct some of your compositions or to prepare some new ones.²¹ I embrace you and bless all of you.

† C.J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

P.S. J[ea]ncard accepts your ideas as they are, but he wants you to hurry up with your work and send him something other than minutes of meetings.

¹⁹ Beginning of the Juniorate of N.-D. de Lumières, cf. J. M., May 12, 1841.

²⁰ This Father B. is probably Father Blanc, who had been Vicar Capitular before the arrival of Bishop Rossat on March 10. He was a friend of the Oblates. The former Vicars General and Vicars Capitular were not appointed to the new Bishop's Council, cf. *Missions O.M.I.*, t. 40 (1902), pp. 206-210.

²¹ Writings defending the position of the Oblates at N.-D. du Laus. From 1830 on, Jeancard was entrusted with officially representing the Founder in this matter which was drawing to a close.

729. [To Father Guigues, at N.-D. de l'Osier].²²

Rest and regularity after missions. Advice to Father Dassy and to Father Vincens, the master of novices.

[Marseilles,] May 22, 1841.

You would have done well to send me the newspaper that gives an account of your missions. Even though you did give me some details on this subject, one is always pleased to know that justice is paid to the zeal and devotedness of our men. The blessings the Lord liberally showers on the Congregation's ministry, wherever she goes, are a very great consolation. It is real compensation for the grief caused us by the defection of unworthy members who rend our unity.

I don't have to urge you to require the greatest regularity now that you have returned to your community. This will not be difficult to do for men who are as well disposed as our confreres are. The good things you tell me about them has given me the greatest pleasure. Tell them this on my behalf. Especially urge Father Dassy to profit by his stay at the shrine and give rest to the mind and body from the fatigue and distractions of the missions; his position, I perceive it from here, exposes him to bestir himself more than anyone else during a mission, whence it is inevitable that he has sustained some loss which he must make up if he himself wishes to profit from the good he does for others.

Far from deterring him from composing the small books he is thinking of, Father Vincens's responsibility will give him the opportunity to compose them as well as finish composing his sermons.

²² YENVEUX I, 12*; III, 71; VII, 266.

730. To Father Mille, superior at Notre-Dame du Laus, near Gap. Upper Alps.²³

Mrs. de Mazenod, Eugène and Césarie de Boisgelin make the pilgrimage to N.D. du Laus. Father Rouvière replaces Father Bermond at Laus. Father Mille's sister-in-law's death. Father Depéry's transit through Marseilles.

L.J.C. and M.I.

Marseilles, May 23, 1841.

My dear Father Mille, before leaving my place to go and confirm the Italians at Calvary I wish to inform you that my mother, my sister and niece will definitely be coming to N.-D. du Laus for the feast of Pentecost. They left from Lumières for N.-D. de l'Osier where they should have arrived yesterday evening. I think that after spending three days at this shrine, they will leave to arrive at yours in time. I am writing to them today to tell them that they will find with Father Aubert your instructions on the route they are to follow. I think it would be less tiring for my mother if she had herself driven by carriage up to the bottom of the ascent on the side of Avançon where you would have three horses available, since my mother is accompanied by my sister and niece. Ask the horseman to be careful especially with my mother, because at her advanced age of 80 years, she is no longer agile; my sister, I believe, is not too good a rider, and my niece has not yet made a trial ride.

I am writing Father Honorat to send you Father Rouvière. In accord with what you tell me, I shall decide to exchange him with Father Bermond after your big feast. I don't think it is as yet opportune to have Father Ricard travel, such expenses are good to do without. You will have enough with the assistance of Father Rouvière.

I leave the financial matters to Father Tempier and close by embracing you with all my heart. I must not forget to reply to the item concerning your brother. I was not aware that he was now a widower and I sympathize with him in his grief. I strongly approve that he prolonged his stay with you.

²³ Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L. M.-Mille.

Since you must, cut down those wretched poplar trees. I did everything possible to spare them, so much do I value the greenery of these beautiful trees, but since they are so bothersome, get rid of them. However, suppose you try to transplant them elsewhere! It is a sturdy tree that takes root easily.

Guess who had dinner with me on Ascension day, I give you odds of a thousand to one. Father Depéry.²⁴ He is more embarrassed than I. He came along with Father Boyer of St-Sulpice. I did not think I should insult him by not inviting him, but I had to remain aloof with him whereas I was open-hearted with the other guest and with Father Barret, my Canon, for whom I had arranged the Jubilee meal. We had installed him that day. The Vic[ar] Gen[eral] of Belley is going to Rome. Will he be more pleased to get the hat rather than the mitre? Jokes apart, he seemed to be repentant, and asked for my blessing on his knees; I was tempted to give him absolution. Your new neighbour does not deserve it, I consider him humiliated but not contrite.

Good-bye, though I was in quite a hurry, I have done my duty and that very willingly.

† C.J. Eugene, Bish[op] of Marseilles.

731. To Father Guibert, Vicar General and superior of the Major Seminary, at Ajaccio. Corsica.²⁵

Jurisdiction and direction for the house of Vico during the Ajaccio Fathers' and Seminarians' vacation.

Marseilles, May 30, 1841.²⁶

P.S. It is I who unsealed my letter to add a word in reply to a letter Father Temp[er] has just received from Father Semeiria. Tell him that

²⁴ Jean-Irénée Depéry, Vicar General of Belley and friend of Bishop de la Croix d'Azolette, had accompanied the latter during his pastoral visits of the diocese of Gap in 1838-1839 and shared his views on the destination of the shrine of N.-D. du Laus. Hence his embarrassment when passing through Marseilles. There was talk of him as Bishop de la Croix's successor in 1840-1841, but it was Bishop Louis Rossat who was then appointed at Gap. This explains the Founder's jest: "Will he be more pleased to get the Cardinal's hat rather than the mitre?" In any case Depéry became the Bishop of Gap in 1844 and he remained such till 1861.

²⁵ Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation. L. M.-Guibert, with Father Semeiria's letter of January 8, 1841.

²⁶ Father Guibert's letter has been lost. Only the address and this undated *Post Scriptum* are available, but with the postal mark: Marseilles, May 30, 1841.

in regard to the house of Vico, since it is canonically formed, there is no doubt that all our Fathers who go and live there come under the jurisdiction of the local superiors and directors. Nevertheless to put each one at ease and perhaps the Fathers of Vico more so than those of Ajaccio, independently of what has been arranged with you, I authorize the spiritual direction Father of Ajaccio to continue hearing the confessions of people from the house of Ajaccio who may like to go to him; it is understood that the Fathers of one house or the other may always approach you if they deem it good to do so; this does not deprive the local superior and local director of Vico from having the necessary faculties of hearing the confessions of those who live in their house.

732. To Father Rouvière, miss[iona]ry priest, at Notre-Dame du Laus, near Gap. Upper Alps.²⁷

Gratitude to Father Mille for having taken care of Mrs. de Mazenod and her companions. Bishop Rossat's visit to Laus.

Marseilles, June 13, 1841.²⁸

P.S. I beg of you to inform Father Mille that I have just received his letter of the 7th. I thank him for all the care he took of my mother and her companions on pilgrimage.

I was not aware of the resignation he speaks of and I am very pleased that it did not take place. I am waiting to reply to him that an account of the Bishop's visit be sent to me. It would be good that he sees at Laus a sufficient crowd that would give him an idea of the peoples' devotion to this shrine; I am vexed, however, that my letter will not arrive in time to request Father Mille not to indulge in extravagance in regard to the meals he will offer the Prelate.

²⁷ Original: Rome. Archives of the Postulation. L. M.-Rouvière.

²⁸ Only the second page of this letter is available. The date is that of the postal mark.

733. To Father Dassy, miss[ionary] priest, at Notre-Dame de l'Osier, near Vinay. Isère.²⁹

Gratitude to Father Dassy for his numerous letters. Requests humility in success. How to get vocations. Training of Brother Augier. New edition of Father Dassy's book on N.-D. de l'Osier.

L.J.C. and M.I.

Marseilles, July 17, 1841.

I cannot thank you too much, my dearest Father Dassy, for the care you have taken to seize the opportunity and write to me. I am all the more sensitive to this because many of your confreres, far from following your example, are inclined to let years go by without giving me any news about themselves and apparently without taking the trouble to receive any about me. I have made it a point not to complain any more about a system that did cause me some hurt at one time, but which, as a matter of fact, brings on its own remedy.

I never cease thanking God for the good accomplished through your ministry. As for you, my child, and your companions, ever keep in your heart and on your lips these beautiful words of the Apostle: *Servi inutiles sumus: quod debuimus facere fecimus*.³⁰ Who are we, in fact, to perform miracles? What should surprise us is that we do not spoil the mission God has entrusted to us, by our infidelities and what we substitute from ourselves. Let us humble ourselves in our own eyes, and be careful not to ask anything from the people. We do not want their praises, admiration, etc., any more than their money. Especially you, my good son, you need to be on your guard because the public spoils you on account of your good qualities, zeal and everything else that strikes them about you.

May God grant the hope you give me of seeing some students from Romans³¹ come to us. Let not what happened in the diocese of Grenoble where several had manifested their good will but not one kept his promise, happen to this house. When will the major Seminary

²⁹ Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L. M.-Dassy.

³⁰ Lk. 17:10.

³¹ Father Dassy had just finished a retreat at the Minor Seminary of Romans where some students had expressed to him their desire of joining the Juniorate of N.-D. de Lumières, cf. L. Dassy-M., July 1841.

get under way? Don't they see what your holy ministry is accomplishing? Something more is needed. They must become convinced that among us they will find not clever men, political aims, etc., but men of God and whatever is needed to lead a life of perfection. For my part, I would like to see some change in the relationships we have with people in the world outside, that we aim more at edifying than at being popular, that our external comportment coincides with what we are internally. This is easy for men like you, imbued as you are with such a good spirit and basically seeking only the glory of God, the welfare of souls and the service of the Church.

Do not be afraid of judging Brother Augier³² somewhat too severely. I am not told as many bad things about him as you may think. Could he not correct himself of these defects? Let him not get away with them. He should be humbled, especially when he ventures to murmur, and let him be laughed at when he gives so much attention to his little person. That is the novice master's job; read him this paragraph of my letter which can be communicated even to Brother Augier himself, if you think it apropos.

Ask Father superior if he would see any inconvenience in enriching your new edition of *Pèlerinage*³³ with a drawing of the hostel as it is planned to be one day, and of the convent as it is going to be with the new building I have authorized.

Good-bye, my dear son, I hold you to my heart and bless you.

† C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

³² Father Dassy had written that to him Brother Augier seemed: "totally unsuitable to become a good religious, and yet we keep him . . . I am quite frank in saying here that if ever he is allowed to make his oblation, one year will not go by before he will subject you, I cut short the word here, before he will bring you painful regrets . . ." Father Dassy was right. Brother Alexandre André Augier made his vows on October 2, 1841 and he left on July 1, 1842.

³³ *Pèlerinage à Notre-Dame de l'Osier*. According to Bernard, the second edition came out in 1845.

734. To Father Vincens, priest, at Notre-Dame de l'Osier, near Vinay, Isère.³⁴

Encourages Father Vincens in his new task as master of novices. Joy in knowing that the novice Burfin is persevering and is very promising. Bishop Bourget requests Oblates for Canada. Uniformity of dress.

L.J.C. and M.I.

Marseilles, July 17, 1841.

I was obliged, in spite of myself, my dear Father Vincens, to let Father Guigue[s] leave without handing him my reply to the letter he brought from you. Even though I had commissioned him orally, I do not wish to deprive myself of the pleasure of talking with you for a moment, were it only to tell you that in the new job entrusted to you, you must place all your confidence in God and to convince you that with his help you will succeed as well as or even better than anyone else. Oraison will be your rich mine and the daily examens will serve you as beacon, mirror, compass and as spur too, if necessary. Proceed, therefore, with confidence and like S[ain]t Ignatius tell yourself: Vincens alone can do nothing. Vincens and God can do everything.

What you tell me of Father Burfin gives me the greatest pleasure. I set the highest value on his perseverance not only because of his personal merit which I certainly appreciate, but because of the good effect his vocation will produce in the diocese for men who are still too timid, whom his good example can draw to what is good. So I think that he would be burdened with great responsibility had he been unfaithful. How can we not see that it is the devil who hinders the maturing of so many vocations that were lost. The blows the Congregation lands him are too powerful not to be acknowledged. He would like to sap her work in its foundations by depriving her of members.

Here is a vast field that is opening up to her zeal. Canada is calling for her ministry, how do we respond to this appeal when there are no members. Nevertheless I have consulted the whole Congregation to find out as to what I should reply to his Lordship the Bishop of Montreal who is asking me for four miss[iona]ries to evangelize his vast

³⁴ Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L. M.-Vincens.

diocese and work for the conversion of the savages who have established contact with him.³⁵

I have decided that you will make outsiders eat in a separate refectory. Thus you will be able to observe our customs regarding penance without any difficulty.

I always insist on uniformity in dress. Father Lagier has had some very good cinctures made at Lyon. You can get information from him: I cannot give it to you now, for this Father has already arrived at Lumières where he is to stay.

Good-bye, my dear Father Vincens, I greet you affectionately and bless you with all my heart.

† C.J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

735. To Father Bellon, miss[iona]ry priest. Registered to the Parish Priest of Manosque, at Manosque. Lower Alps³⁶

Death of Father Bellon's sister.

L.J.C. and M.I.

Marseilles, July 26, 1841.

My dear good son, I authorize you to prolong your stay with your family as long as your zeal allows you, knowing very well that discretion will moderate even this virtue.

I approve the use you felt you had to make of the 20 francs which were at your disposal. If anything is needed for your journey for which they were meant, we shall provide it.

³⁵ The same day, the Founder wrote to Father Mille to ask him what the community of N.-D. du Laus thought of Bishop Bourget's request. This letter has already been published as well as those to Father Courtès of August 11 and to Father Bermond of August 19, etc. Cf. *Oblate Writings*, t. 1, pp. 1-7. Bishop de Mazenod wrote also to Father Guigues at l'Osier. We still possess an enthusiastic reply of Father Dassy who was ready to leave with Father Vincens: "I don't see . . . that we have to make great sacrifices for this mission: the trip, the climate, change of country, separation from the family, all these things are not great things in my view. Say one word and for me France will be Canada, my parents, brothers and friends will be in Canada; my heart will fly to Canada and this country which makes our hearts throb at this moment, this country, if necessary, will even be my only country until death . . ." L. Dassy-M., July 1841.

³⁶ Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L. M.-Bellon.

I have nothing to add to the very Christian remarks you make on the occasion of the blessed passing of your saintly sister. Like you I think that the good Lord wanted to grant her here below the only consolation she had asked of him, namely prolonging her life until your arrival. Your priestly blessing given from a brotherly heart must have filled her saintly soul with sweetness and happiness.

Good-bye, my son, I embrace you and bless you.

† C.J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

736. To Father Moreau, director of the Major Semin[a]ry at Ajaccio, Corsica.³⁷

Father Moreau's opinion about Father Guibert's appointment to the episcopacy encourages the Founder. Bishop Casanelli d'Istria wanted to keep Father Guibert for two more years. Father Luigi's journey in Corsica.

L.J.C. and M.I.

Marseilles, August 19, 1841.

I would not have delayed so long, my dear Father Moreau, in answering your first letter had you not disclosed that you may very well come to the continent before you could receive my letter. Now that you have proceeded to Vico, I profit by the departure of our excellent Father Bellon to assure you of my good sentiments that you already know for a long time.

In the state of perplexity into which I was cast by the thought of the huge void the elevation to the episcopate of our dear Father Guibert³⁸ is going to cause in the Congregation, your opinion so strongly expressed strengthened me on the resolution everything indicated I had to take, but which it nevertheless cost me to express due to the loss it will be to us. Imagine our embarrassment. I had just agreed to establish a foundation in Canada. Such was the very strong desire of the Congregation. I had to designate four good members for this important

³⁷ Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L. M.-Moreau.

³⁸ Father Guibert was appointed Bishop of Viviers by royal edict of July 30, 1841. This appointment was canonically sanctioned on January 24, 1842 and he was ordained Bishop at Marseilles on March 11.

mission. In view of our small family's state, it was a very considerable breach, but such a sacrifice was deemed necessary, and now as an added blow we have even to lose one of our chief pillars. Truly we have reason to be stunned. The two years his Lordship the Bishop of Ajaccio had asked would have given me a breathing space to see some vocations that were just blossoming, come to maturity; but no, we have to deprive ourselves immediately, and you, who feel that you are going to lose much more than others, are the first to encourage me, and present no objection to me, so much do you see this matter fitting. Then let it be so, let us place our trust in God.

I wrote a very friendly letter to his Lordship the Bishop of Ajaccio informing him that I am choosing him as the first assisting Bishop for the episcopal ordination which I am planning to do. I hope he will continue to have the same trust in you as he did in the past. After all, the great work of the Seminary and the missions will continue. He will always have men devoted to the welfare of his diocese, who are exemplary and fit to support his zeal and share his concern. What afflicts me is to see a Seminary with such a great number of students not furnishing even one member for the Congregation. We should have at least two from such a crowd every year. Soon you will meet our Father Luigi whom I have authorized to make a short trip to his family to bring about a settlement between his brother and sister. He is an angel of kindness, goodness and regularity, he may perhaps not have as much talent as others, but I assure you that he is my consolation. He will be passing through Vico and Ajaccio.

Good-bye, my dear friend, I embrace you wholeheartedly and I bless you, as well as our Fathers.

† C.J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

During Father Guibert's absence, our correspondence must be more regular: at least one letter a month.

737. To Father Semeria, superior of the Miss[iona]ries, at Vico.
Corsica.³⁹

Greetings. Father Guibert's appointment as Bishop.

L.J.C and M.I.

Marseilles, August 20, 1841.

I am completely caught off guard, my dear Father Semeria, in getting started too late in writing to you. Here is Father Bellon all ready to leave and I am not ready. I wanted to start with the Bishop of Ajaccio, then with Father Moreau and when your turn had come, my nephew stepped into my office, coming from Vals, still convalescing from a very dangerous sickness. It does not matter, you will always see the proof of my good will in these few lines I am writing to you. I beg you to express also to our dear Father Gibelli and De Veronico all the affection I have for them as well as for you, my dearest Father Semeria, of whom I speak often and gladly. I embrace all three of you, blessing you with all my heart.

† C.J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

P.S. I don't have the time to tell you how much pleasure the items in your letter gave me. The good Lord will keep an account of the sacrifice the Cong[regatio]n is making for the Church; how could we oppose his Lordship, the Inter-nuncio's⁴⁰ letter without risking going against God's will?

³⁹ Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L. M.-Semeria.

⁴⁰ Archbishop Garibaldi.

738. To Father Moreau, director of the Seminary of Ajaccio. Corsica.⁴¹

Father Moreau is appointed superior of the Major Seminary of Ajaccio. Professors of theology and Holy Scripture.

L.J.C. and M.I.

Marseilles, August 28, 1841.

My dear Father Moreau, you have applauded the appointment of our dear Father Guibert and your approval has helped in encouraging me to make a sacrifice for the good of the Church, which, when we consider our establishment in Canada, is really too much for our little family. I made it in response to the duty of conscience, but also in the hope that everyone will cope as he can to sustain the void which the lose of such a collaborator is going to create. You are going to be the first, my dear friend, to feel the effects. I have no hesitation in appointing you the superior of the Major Seminary in place of the prelate we are giving to the diocese of Viviers. However it is altogether impossible for me to give you any assistance this year. You must get along by yourselves, while extending to those entitled the hope that we shall provide for your needs a little later. Now it is up to you to choose. I was thinking that since you have finished your course of theology, it would not cost you much to give it again this year, banking on your richly furnished notes; Father Guibert thinks that it would be easier and less tiring for you to teach Holy Scripture. I leave the choice to you. You will arrange what is more suitable. On the supposition that you prefer to take care of Holy Scripture, Father Guibert is sure that Father Bellon will manage moral theology well and then Father Gaffori will teach dogma. I dare say nothing in this matter. It is up to you to weigh everything, suitability, health, etc.

I am going to write to his Lordship the Bishop of Ajaccio informing him of your appointment: I presume his consent which will certainly be forthcoming.

Good-bye, my dear Father Moreau. This is all for today when I am just setting out for my pastoral visits. The Bishop of Viviers will stay here a few more days to recover from a sudden fever that has kept him in bed for several days. He is well now.

⁴¹ Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L. M.-Moreau.

739. [To Father Courtès, at Aix].⁴²

Plots to prevent Father Guibert from becoming a bishop.

[Marseilles.] October 6, 1841.

My dear Courtès, I shall not dwell again on the impertinence of the investigations of which you tell me.⁴³ I have simply no idea where this initiative comes from. I cannot believe that it is from the Government. How would it profit by knowing the irregularity that has been reported to it? Further, on your supposition, how can we accept that the authorities of V[iviers] have the power to request such investigations from the persons responsible in Marseilles? All this is beyond me! What do they hope to achieve by this discovery? Revoke the royal edict? That is impossible; especially now that the dossiers have been sent to Rome. This is what may perhaps have happened. Some jealous, evil-minded persons may have written to Viviers about this matter. The authorities of Viviers then may have informed the Government, and the latter perhaps to obtain a reply that would reduce to silence these evil-mongers, ordered an inquiry. It would be painful to speak of this to G[uibert]: however, he must come to know of this plot later on.

⁴² YENVEUX IX, 110.

⁴³ According to the text of this letter, after Father Guibert's appointment to Viviers on July 30, the Government is alleged to have asked for information about him from Marseilles. We have not found any documents which indicate the origin of the accusations against him. Paguette de Follenay writes that at Aix the "Christian people felt proud". The *Mémorial* of February 27, 1842 took pleasure in recalling that Bishop Guibert was the twelfth native of Aix to be appointed bishop since the Concordat of 1801 (*Mgr. Guibert* I, 546). It speaks of the division of the Viviers Clergy into two factions, but this division was not caused by the new Bishop's appointment: the latter was well accepted by all (*ibid.* I, 549-550). The nature of the accusations is not more precise. Perhaps they wanted to alert the Government that Father Guibert belonged to a non-authorized Congregation. This would hurt the Congregation more than Father Guibert. The latter however had foreseen this blow. When sending the canonical information on Father Guibert to the Secretary of State on October 6, 1841, Archbishop Garibaldi, the Nuncio in Paris, had asked that in the Bull of appointment no mention be made of this belonging: "These missionaries are doing a lot of good, but are not recognized by the French Government. Father Guibert thinks it opportune to refrain from mentioning this situation in the Bull which will be sent . . . and this because such a reference may perhaps cause some difficulties in the Council of the State for registering these Bulls, precisely because it concerns a Congregation that is not authorized by the Government. I agree with him"

740. To Father Moreau, superior of the Major Seminary of Ajaccio, at Ajaccio. Corsica.⁴⁴

The Seminaries of Ajaccio are joined under the same direction. The Founder's opposition. Father Pont's obedience for Ajaccio. No vocations from the Major Seminary of Ajaccio.

L.J.C. and M.I.

Marseilles, October 16, 1841.

My dear Father Moreau, I consider it unfortunate that the Bishop of Ajaccio has decided to unite the two Seminaries and I am most upset that you are obliged to take charge of this double work.

I felt sure that you would manage quite well at being at the head of your Major Seminary. I cannot help being much afraid that you will not succeed in satisfying his Lordship the Bishop in the double task with which he is overloading you. The Sulpicians who are experienced in Seminaries are very careful not to make such an amalgamation. Moreover, we are dealing with two completely different kinds of work here. What preoccupations will be yours with regard to both the teachers and the students! What a concern and how much supervision! If at least the house of the Minor Seminary were going well, but no, it is in disorder, and so much has to be done to put it on a good footing! A superior of a Major Seminary should be entirely at the service of his community. He has enough to do with that. The Italians don't understand this because their Seminarians are not at all like ours. For the time being the evil has been done, and that without my knowledge and against my principles. It is too late to back out of it, but consider that you have been cast into a very bothersome situation.⁴⁵

I begin by taking on one of its consequences, and that is the sacrifice of Father Pont that I had to make for you. I have detached him from my Seminary to give him to you whereas it had been agreed upon that you would do without him — which would have been possible if

⁴⁴ Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L. M.-Moreau.

⁴⁵ The Founder seems to make Father Moreau in some way responsible, if not for the Bishop's decision, at least for the acceptance of this situation. It had been imposed on Father Moreau, however, who was thus superior of two Seminaries, professor of Holy Scripture and of the pastoral formation program. Cf. L. Moreau-Tempier, September 14 and 22, 1841.

you had only the M[ajo]r Semin[a]ry. With the two, I understand that you cannot do without him. At least, if your Corsica supplied me with some members! But it is a barren land for the Congr[e]g[atio]n even though eight of her members are irrigating it with their sweat and one of our men has died there. The only one we have received from it is Father Luigi, and even he did not come from the Semin[a]ry. It was the s[ain]tly Father Albini who sent him from his village directly to us.

I cannot help telling you how surprised I am that, after all we have done and are doing for his diocese, the Bish[op] of Ajaccio has the audacity to be dissatisfied and even very dissatisfied — as you tell me — at not being promised a professor to replace you. I am killing myself in trying to be more fair; it is hard to meet with so little goodwill in return. Besides, he will have nothing more to say, for here is the director and professor he requests: he will be bringing you my letter and also a very polite and friendly one for the Bishop. Good-bye.

† C.J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

741. To Father Semeria, superior of Missionaries, comm[uni]ty of Vico, Corsica.⁴⁶

Success of the missions. Fathers Luigi and Pont in Corsica. Vocations.

L.J.C. and M.I.

Marseilles, October 16, 1841.

My dear Father Semeria, every time I receive your letter, I must begin with fervent thanks to God for all that he deigns to do through your ministry. This time I admit that we must even redouble our gratitude for the marvels of this beautiful mission of Zicavo: we have to shed tears of joy. From here, I see you surrounded by all these blood-thirsty men who become like lambs at your call, the daggers falling from their hands: they forgive and embrace each other. Oh how beautiful this is! And this moving response: now that their arms, loaded as they were to kill their enemies, now that these latter no longer existed, it was only right that they be shot off in your honour. Yes, that is superb!

⁴⁶ Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L. M.-Semeria.

You can hardly know — I am sure — the sacrifice I am making of Father Luigi. I don't know how we will manage at Calvaire. I hope God will come to our aid. Your Corsica, however, is quite barren as regards members for ourselves. With all that they see you doing, some generous soul, it would seem, should come forward and offer himself to help you.⁴⁷

I thought I had replied to you that I authorized you to admit the Capuchin Father in whose praise you spoke to me. It is on your guarantee that I agreed to overlook the normal rules. But do you think it necessary to have him make the entire novitiate in Corsica? It would seem good to me that he spend some time at l'Osier to become familiar with the Congregation. Has he already been secularized? If not, he could ask the Pope to make him pass over from his Order to our Congregation which he must very clearly specify. That was how a certain Cistercian whom we could not keep, proceeded. You must remember the case.

Do whatever you can for the period of your retreat. I have really exhausted myself for the sake of Corsica. Here, I am sending Father Pont to Ajaccio, thereby depriving my own seminary of him.

Good-bye. I am in such a hurry that I cannot answer our good Father Luigi: tell him that his letter has pleased me very much. I embrace him as well as you and our dear Gibelli.

It is today that our Fathers are embarking for Canada.

† C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

742. [To Father Courtès, at Aix].⁴⁸

Plan to buy a house at Aix.

[Marseilles,] October 18, 1841.

The notary is offering me the purchase of a house adjoining ours at Aix, and which overlooks the rue d'Italie. We must look ahead and

⁴⁷ Two Corsican novices, Brothers J. Santoni and C. L. Pianelli, began their novitiate on November 1, 1841, and two others on August 14, 1842: J. Zirio and C. A. Depetro. The Capuchin mentioned in this letter did not join the Congregation.

⁴⁸ YENVEUX VII, 92.

provide some capital for the Congregation. I have never lost sight of this, for I have begun my sixtieth year, and when I die, the funds will go down. Since the Couteron house has been taken from us, it has to be replaced by other capital. The rue d'Italie is well situated, this quarter can always be rented out. Hence I am decided to make this purchase if the price is reasonable.

743. To Father Courtès, superior of the Miss[iona]ries, Carmelites' Square at Aix, B. d. R.⁴⁹

Various arrangements for the forthcoming missions.

L.J.C. and M.I.

Marseilles, October 19, 1841.

My dear Courtès, I saw the Parish Priest of Septèmes the other day, I informed him that he will certainly have his mission in November. He will confer with you when you go for the retreat.

Here are the arrangements we had to make if we are to give the two missions between our two houses of Aix and Marseilles. Father Bernard will give the mission of la Penne in my diocese, and Father Martin will give that of Septèmes with Father Perron. But by sending off Martin and Bernard from Marseilles, no one else is left for me at Calvaire and it is precisely at this time that the great Octave of the Presentation takes place. So Father Allard or Father Viala must come and spend these days at the house of Calvaire.

The missions of la Penne and Septèmes are to begin on Sunday, November 7.

I would not at all like to lose the month of December. I will try to schedule the mission of St-Savournin in my diocese then. After that we shall give that of Eguilles which you have marked for January. You did not say when that of St-Andiol is to take place. Reply to me promptly for time is of the essence.

⁴⁹ Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L. M.-Courtès.

October 22.

I am sending you this letter the way I had written it in order to show you that I have not neglected the important business of our missions. But you will realize that all these beautiful arrangements are as if they had not been made. Father Martin just tells me that he does not feel up to giving a mission as his bowels are so irregular. In that case we have to give up the mission I have marked for Septèmes since we have no director for it. This miscalculation upsets me all the more in that, had I been able to foresee it, I would have arranged for one of the missi[ona]ries of Aix to help out in the diocese of Avignon. I don't know if we will be in time to employ them in November.

The mission of la Penne that starts on November 7 will end only on December 5. That of Mazargues can take place only in January. How can we keep that of Eguilles in the same month? That of St-Andiol can start only in mid-December unless you decide to do it with your own resources only. There is still the possibility that Father Martin, should he recover, could help you in December.

October 26.

I end my letter here so I can deliver it to Father Tudès who wants the pleasure of seeing Father Ginoulhiac,⁵⁰ his former school-mate, before leaving for Lumières and l'Osier, where he is going to begin his novitiate. Good-bye.

I beg you to deliver the enclosed letter to my mother immediately.

⁵⁰ Mss.: Genouillac. J. M. A. Ginoulhiac was the Vicar General of Aix. Pierre Tudès began his novitiate on November 20, 1841.

744. [To Father Guigues, at N.-D. de l'Osier].⁵¹

Father Tempier accompanies several novices to l'Osier.

[Marseilles.] October 28, 1841.

Father Tempier is bringing you a whole colony⁵² this time. Father Vincens will no more be complaining about his isolation. But, for God's sake, let nothing divert him from his main task. It so essential to train our men well that we should not regret the trouble we have taken for this.

745. [To Father Vincens, at N.-D. de l'Osier].⁵³

Recommends the seminarian Pianelli for the novitiate.

L.J.C. and M.I.

Marseilles, November 6, 1841.

My dear Father Vincens, I am about to get into the carriage for La Ciotat, where a crowd of people who have been led to God through the ministry of Father Guion who has been proclaiming the holy word there for six weeks, is waiting for me.

However, I wish to recommend personally to you the postulant whom Father Moreau is sending to me. You will admit him to the novitiate as soon as possible; he merits admittance because of the constancy and generosity of his vocation. He has struggled against his father and entire family for more than a year and has ended by freeing himself through flight from their demands. You will be enchanted by his firm character. He had to take a decision which demanded strength and character. Father Moreau sends him to me as a bouquet for my feast. He offers him to me as a very good member. This young man,

⁵¹ YENVEUX VII, 6*.

⁵² Father Vincens does not specify the date of entries to the novitiate during the fall of 1841, but several took the habit in November: C. J. Ramel, H. H. Lavigne, Jules Piot, André Garin, Francis McDonagh, John Noble, Thomas Meehan, P. Tudès, J. P. Santoni, Ch. Pianelli, C. F. Michaud. Cf. *Registre des prises d'habit*. Not all accompanied Father Tempier, however: Santoni began his novitiate at Ajaccio, Tudès had gone earlier, Pianelli and the two Irishmen went a little later, cf. Letters no. 743, 745, 747 and 751.

⁵³ Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L. M.-Vincens.

whose name is Pianelli, has spent a year at the Major Seminary where he has done his philosophy. He has distinguished himself there by application to study, piety and even by his fervour. He has talents above the ordinary, a zealous character and good health. Father Moreau has no doubt that the Congregation is making an excellent acquisition in the person of this young and pious seminarian. These are the terms of Father Moreau's letter.

746. To Father Courtès, superior of the Miss[iona]ries, Carmelites' Square, at Aix. B. d. R.⁵⁴

Personnel for the forthcoming missions. In future, Bishop de Mazenod will get more missions preached in his own diocese.

Marseilles, November 10, 1841.

My dear Courtès, Father Rouvière will bring you this letter. You will arrange with him as to what he could do. I remind you that he was ill and suffering at the mission of la Penne; hence he needs some care and attention.

I alert you to the fact that the mission of Mazargues must start on January 1st. For this mission, I shall call upon Father Perron and another Father from the house of Aix. It will be Father Allard or Father Viala, according to your choice. Any other arrangement must give in to this scheme; that is why I am warning you in advance. Up to now I have neglected my diocese too much by giving preference to others before myself. I am quite determined to repair this injustice, the more so that my diocese provides for the maintenance of 4 mission[a]ries. Good-bye.

† C. J. Eug[ene], Bish[op].
If Father Viala has to come to Mazargues, he could finish that of St-Andiol, and come afterwards.

⁵⁴ Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L. M.-Courtès.

747. To Father Moreau, superior of the Major Semin[a]ry, at Ajaccio.
Corsica.⁵⁵

Thanks for sending Brother Pianelli. Santoni can make his novitiate at Ajaccio. Reflections on the amalgamation of the two Seminaries. The Bishop of Ajaccio must not be in a hurry to come to Marseilles for the consecration of Bishop Guibert. Regularity.

L.J.C. and M.I.

Marseilles, November 10, 1841.

My dear Father Moreau, with real pleasure I received the young man whom you sent to me. Your recommendation adds to the good impressions which his frankness and generosity inspire⁵⁶ in his favour. I share the hope you give me of seeing him succeed and being useful for the Congregation.

I hasten to reiterate to you the authorization I already gave to Father Guibert to have Santoni begin his novitiate at Ajaccio, but there must be one especially in charge of him, to initiate him to the duties and practices of the religious state; in a word, he must be a novice and not a seminarian. If you are too busy to take care of him, put Father Bellon in charge of him, but let him be a real master of novices in this regard. You know how important it is to make a good beginning. Hopefully things will be taken care of in such a way that this young man will spend at least a few months in the novitiate house before making his vows. However, if this is not possible, he will do it after his oblation.

The remarks I made to you regarding the amalgamation of the two Seminaries were not meant as a reprimand, but as an expression of dismay at seeing you undertake something that will not easily succeed. With regard to the approval you think I had given Father Guibert, you are mistaken. On principle I am against this sort of amalgamation. When I don't have the power to prevent them, I tolerate them of course, and this is so in your case, since the local Bish[op] has forced your hand. But I would very much have liked him to realize that we cooperated in it only through obedience, that we foresaw all the disad-

⁵⁵ Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L. M.-Moreau.

⁵⁶ Mss.: fait éprouver instead of font éprouver.

vantages that may result from this amalgamation, independently of the increase of work that is beyond your strength. Father G[uibert] informs me that he was totally against this new project; he calls it a very dangerous plan which was not called for by any urgent need. He is of the opinion that things could have gone on very well for another two or three years on the established footing until the completion of the Minor Seminary. He is convinced that it is impossible for the Minor Seminary to maintain itself under these conditions. But since people absolutely wanted a change and something new was needed, he would not have wanted you to agree to take any classes other than the three highest grades and that the students be obliged to take the cassock and have everything together with the philosophers and the theologians, except classes. These are his very words. After all, as you say, you must put a good face on a bad situation and get the best you can out of it without compromising your health.

I have written twice to the Bishop of Ajaccio inviting him to be the first assisting Bish[op] at the consecration of our Father Guibert. This seemed to me to be most appropriate. The Prelate does not have to come in haste. You know that the Consistory has not yet taken place and the bishop-elect will leave Paris only after his oath which he can take only when his appointment is sanctioned. It will suffice that the Bishop of Ajaccio start out when bishop Guibert will leave Paris. The presence of your Prelate at Ajaccio seems to me rather necessary at the beginning of the new establishment, because of the difficulties that may arise.

Good-bye, my most dear Father Moreau, I greet you affectionately as well as all our dear Fathers of your Seminary. I strongly recommend to you to maintain the comm[uni]ty on the basis of one of our religious houses, and don't lose sight of the fact that you are not to be like isolated priests who are together because they are directing a Seminary. The Rule cannot be put aside, the modifications should be rare and approved. Good-bye.

For next year and the end of this year I grant you the faculty to give the Brigittine indulgences for all the rosaries the people bring you.

748. To Father Semeria, superior of the Miss[iona]ries, at Vico. Corsica.⁵⁷

Advice regarding arbitration during the mission. It is difficult for Father Semeria to come for Bishop Guibert's consecration. Let Father Luigi start to preach. Need for instructions during the mission. Collect testimonies on Father Albini's reputation of holiness; he must be declared venerable.

L.J.C. and M.I.

Marseilles, November 10, 1841.

My very dear Father Semeria, I won't tell you much today, because I don't have the time. However how can I not let you know at least the happiness your letters cause me. I read them with unutterable pleasure and I bless God, so to say, for every line of these so interesting accounts. Continue this career with trust and courage, you see how the good Lord guides your steps and helps you. I certainly approve that you agree to be the arbitrators of the disputes that maintain discord between families. To this end, however, you need to acquire some knowledge of the laws that govern the subject, you will have to read the civil code because you have to be careful not to risk taking decisions that may be in conflict with the law. Equity does not always suffice. You must act with much prudence in all the cases and persuade the parties as far as possible to accept willingly the decisions you give as motivated by a spirit of the most perfect impartiality.

I would very much wish to give you the satisfaction of assisting at our Father Guibert's consecration, but I am afraid that it will coincide with the activities of your missions and so how can we sacrifice so many souls who are awaiting their salvation from your holy ministry? In any case, we shall see if this can be arranged.

I would like to encourage our good Father Luigi a little so that he takes the risk of getting on the pulpit during missions. Give him time to prepare some sermons or other instructions. On the subject of instructions, I urge you very much to insist on instructions during your missions: instructions on dogma and on the practice of Christian living.

⁵⁷ Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L. M.-Semeria.

I also request you to collect everything that relates to the blessed life of our Father Albini. When you meet people who have experienced the effects of his charity or who attribute the healing of their evils to his intercession, draw up a written statement on all these; I intend to introduce his cause, were it only to have him declared venerable. I think it will be easy to achieve this; at least that is the opinion of the advocate who is promoting Father de la Salle's cause. Speak often of this saintly mission[ar]y, arouse the confidence of people who have experienced the effects of his zeal; in a word, let us do everything to have him honoured as much as he himself wanted to be humble.

At La Ciotat I met Father De Veronico's brother. He is well.

Good-bye, my dear Father Semeria, I affectionately greet you as well as your dear brothers.

† C.J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

749. [To Father Courtès, at Aix].⁵⁸

List of preachers for the forthcoming missions. Father Martin's sickness.

L.J.C. and M.I.

Marseilles, November 15, 1841.

I never win, my dear Father Courtès, for I am always countered in one way or another. This time, independently of my indisposition and the duties I had to fulfil, I remained undecided due to what I consider Father Martin's excessive foresight. He is afraid that the irregularity of his bowels may start anew because of the fatigue of a mission. To me this seemed to be a sufficient reason for the mission that was to have taken place at Septèmes in November, but I confess that I would hardly have accepted it for the one which had to be given later at St. Andiol during Advent. So I had asked him to be ready and direct this mission wherein he would do what he could. I must point out, however, that it cannot start on the 1st Sunday . . .⁵⁹ second Sunday. Now

⁵⁸ Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L. M.-Courtès.

⁵⁹ The last lines of this letter's first page have been cut; the second page has disappeared.

you must tell me what the population of this village is and how many mission[ar]ies are to be sent there. From here I can release only Father Martin, the house of Aix will provide the rest. Father Mille has undertaken to give a mission in the chief town of the canton which had given him asylum during his unjust interdict.⁶⁰ He will need a companion and this at the same period of time. If two miss[ion]aries were enough at St-Andiol, you could perhaps give him this assistance. Otherwise he will be obliged to look for a priest outside the Congregation. Give me your reply on this.

I was particularly consoled by the report you gave me about your retreat. The good Lord does not tire of blessing the members of our family. Let them be faithful to their Rule and to the spirit of their vocation, and the Lord will fill them with his graces.

750. [To Father Dassy, at N.-D. de l'Osier].⁶¹

Father Dassy is involved too much in archeological studies.

L.J.C. and M.I.

Marseilles, November 17, 1841.

My dear Father Dassy, while rummaging through a heap of some hundred letters that are on my desk, I discovered the one you wrote me last August. I have just re-read it and though you had asked for a reply I did explain why I did not do so, and I am still reflecting as to whether it would not be better not to return to this subject. How can we speak of it without occasioning complaints, and it is so painful for me to make reproaches, that truly I would rather prefer to be accused of being negligent.

⁶⁰ Bishop Rossat had appointed a diocesan priest as parish priest of Notre-Dame du Laus. The latter arrived on September 27. He had to live at the presbytery since the convent belonged to the Oblates. During the installation ceremony of the new parish priest, Father Mille refused to hand over the register of Mass stipends to the Vicar General. The Bishop was so displeased that, on September 30, he issued an order which levied an interdict *a sacris* against the Fathers of the community, considering these latter to be henceforth "useless" in the diocese. This was a forcible way of obliging them to leave the convent. Cf. *Missions O.M.I.*, t. 40 (1902), pp. 217-218.

⁶¹ Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L. M.-Dassy.

I don't always read the newspapers. I have never come across the one which divulged your secret.⁶² I thank the good Lord for it certainly would have grieved me very much to find you so grievously at fault, you, your superior and your entire community. In my mind, I have sometimes accused it of having made itself into an independent abbey. The news I would have learnt from the newspapers would have confirmed me in this view, and I confess I could have refrained from regretting it. Your letter has softened the blow somewhat, nevertheless the facts remain and I appeal this case to any court you may choose in whatever Order or Congregation. I challenge you to find a single one which would not highly reprimand and consider as incomprehensible such a contempt for authority which integrity or even simple decency would make it a duty to consult.

Even if you were to place me, my dear friend, among the old-fashioned people, I would not fear to tell you that I am far from sharing your enthusiasm for archeology which you exalt to such a degree. I can understand a particular individual keeping himself busy with it during his leisure time, but wanting to make it a point of program and to introduce a whole community to it, seems to me — don't be offended by this — rather ridiculous. Furthermore, if it has been done, it is without my consent.

⁶² This letter of the Founder would appear rather enigmatic if that of Father Dassy, dated August 28, were not available. The newspaper *L'Univers* had just published an article on the *Mouvement archéologique en France*. In this article there appeared a letter of Father Dassy to Mr. Didron, the secretary of the historical committee of arts and monuments. Among other things, Father Dassy states that "twice or thrice a week" his community met to discuss "the religious history of our monuments." Then he declared his plan of writing a monograph on the abbey and church of St-Antoine. Finally he ended by saying: "I have become like the missionary of archeological studies." All these things could only annoy the Founder who was left in ignorance of these facts. When the above article appeared, Father Dassy was anxious to give an explanation. First of all, he said, his letter to Mr. Didron was a personal one and should not have been published. Secondly, it is during recreation that the Fathers spoke about archeology. Furthermore, the monograph on the abbey of St-Antoine was as yet only a wish rather than a project which Father Dassy was certainly planning to submit to his superior before starting any work on it at all. Finally, the time he dedicated to archeology was very limited: "I never thought that too much time should be dedicated to it, lest it be to the detriment to the study of Holy Scripture, the Fathers of the Church, theology and of our great Catholic authors as Reverend Tempier very aptly reminded me . . ." He ended by speaking of the usefulness of archeology and history in defending religion and by praising the Founder as "one of those very distinguished prelates" who insist with their priests that "the clergy must excel in all knowledge that is relevant to the Church's good." Dassy asked for an early reply, but it never came.

I don't quite understand your reasoning about the monograph on the abbey and church of St-Antoine. The conclusion I could draw therefrom⁶³

751. To Father Vincens, miss[iona]ry priest, at Notre-Dame de l'Osier, near Vinay. Isère.⁶⁴

Departure of two Irish novices for l'Osier. Reply to various questions concerning the novitiate. Postulants' retreat. The Congregation's dignity.

L.J.C. and M.I.

Marseilles, November 23, 1841.

My dear Father Vincens, I shall not let the two young Irishmen⁶⁵ go without writing you a few lines. First of all I congratulate you on the interesting family the good Lord gives you to guide. The two who are coming to join those you already have seem to be charming. I am told a lot of good about their elders, let us therefore rejoice over these happy beginnings of your management. I hope your letters will often give me the opportunity to thank God for success in your work and care, and the hope that we can entertain for the future of our Congregation. I request you to be exact in giving me every month an account of your novitiate's situation.

I am going to answer some of the questions Father Tempier has been given during his tour.

1. When we have found a woman religious to direct the com[uni]ty which we want to establish at l'Osier, we shall deal more precisely with the question of their habit. I would rather go for black than the colours indicated. Giving them the name of Conceptionists is out of the question; let it rather be that of Immaculate Conception.⁶⁶

⁶³ This letter was neither completed nor sent, cf. L. M. —Dassy, March 29, 1842.

⁶⁴ Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L. M.-Vincens.

⁶⁵ Three Irishmen began their novitiate in November 1841: Francis McDonagh, John Noble and Th. Meehan.

⁶⁶ Allusion to the foundation, by Fathers Guigues and Vincens, of the Congregation of the Oblate Sisters of Mary Immaculate whose aim was to provide hospitality to the pilgrims and retreatants of N.-D. de l'Osier. This Congregation joined the Sisters of the Holy Family of Bordeaux in 1868.

2. I willingly agree that instead of the explanation on Holy Scripture, you substitute some other exercise that directly helps in training the novices.

3. It is not proper that the report on the state of the novitiate that the master of novices is to make to the Superior General be the result of his view arrived at in conjunction with the local superior. On the contrary, the local superior and the master of novices must each write on their own without consulting each other and according to their own personal points of view.

4. The local superior, after having consulted the master of novices, can accept into the house the men who come for admission to the novitiate, but they can accept them as novices only on the explicit authorization of the Sup[erior] Gen[eral] whom they will petition and at the same time send him the information they have obtained on these individuals and the judgment they have made on them according to what they were able to observe during the few days they had them under their supervision.

I recommend that you organize a good retreat in preparation for the novitiate, eight days of exercises according to Saint Ignatius. It is important that we admit only men who are devoted, generous, detached so as to do everything that is required by obedience, especially detached from relatives whom they must love in God and for God, without the affection we continue to have for them ever influencing our course, activities, will, not even our thoughts.

Stress very much the importance of the obligation undertaken by oblation. They are free not to advance that far, but this consecration cannot be revoked. It is perpetual. It is not without reason that this social commitment is made in the presence of Jesus Christ, the divine Master, who approves it by his holy Body and his precious Blood. Woe to him, a thousand times woe to him who might break ties that should never be broken by the will of him who has taken them upon himself.

Those who do not attach themselves wholeheartedly to the Congregation are not made for it. We must show them the Congregation as it is in the Church. It is the youngest of the religious families, but it enjoys the same dignity as all its older sisters, and it enjoys all their privileges and advantages. Thanks be to God again it is faithful to its vocation, and no one can question that it works more in the common Father's field than can be expected of it. It is up to you to elaborate on

all these points and on others in the explanations that you are greatly obliged to give. Good-bye.

† C.J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

I thought Father Tempier would have brought me a letter from Father P[ier]re Aubert and from Father Magnan. I expected one from you at the same time. You have made up for it in the questions you have entrusted Father Tempier to ask me, but as for those other two Fathers, I was not told that they had even sent a greeting. All this is fine for detachment from the world — but good customs remain and I do not bargain on that.

752. [To Father Vincens, at N.-D. de l'Osier].⁶⁷

Consideration for older novices who nevertheless are to observe the Rules faithfully. Visits to the Blessed Sacrament.

[Marseilles,] December 3, 1841.

If Father Tudès⁶⁸ is as decent a chap as you say he is, he will yield cheerfully to the indispensable observances of the Rule. He must make it a point to delve deeply into the spirit of the Institute he wishes to join and be convinced that he can attain it only by his fidelity and exact observance of all the prescriptions of the Rule.

He must renounce his own self and show that in all things he comes up to the standard. I don't see anything wrong in your dispensing him from walks. And in regard to walks, I must tell you that I never was in favour of these long walks which become a tiring exercise and often rather unpleasant. With regard to the lesser chores, since it is an exercise in humility, I would not like him to be dispensed as a rule, but you must have some consideration for his age and obesity.

⁶⁷ YENVEUX VIII, 79-80, 86. The third paragraph was copied by YENVEUX without its date (VIII, 79-80). Nothing about it gives a clue as to what precise letter it belongs. We place it here, for Father Vincens is just starting to function as master of novices and the rooms of the house are not yet arranged to suit the needs of the novitiate which was established at l'Osier a short time before.

⁶⁸ We do not know if this Tudès was already a priest. Born in 1801, he had, however, been a schoolmate of Father Ginoulhiac, the Vicar General of Aix, cf. Letter no. 743.

I don't need to recommend that you insist chiefly on piety. I cannot conceive vocation without it. All our young men should be moulded according to this way. If fervour is lacking in a novitiate, we are not forming men of God. I see a great disadvantage in not having the Blessed Sacrament within easy access of the novices. It is to Jesus Christ that they should go to be filled with fervour. It is not enough to drink from this fountain during the time of the common exercise; each should be able to go often according to his inspiration and present himself before the Saviour and converse with him for a few moments in silent meditation. I am aware that in the present situation, there are serious difficulties, and even inconveniences, to go to the Blessed Sacrament where it is kept. Consider yourself deprived of a powerful means of making your novices fervent. Substitute for it at least by a quiet chapel of the Blessed Virgin, where a person can go and recollect himself. Have no fear in setting aside a room for this purpose. Instil into them the spirit of mortification also. You should be in a situation where often you have to refuse or modify what they ask for in this area. But especially let all of them live in a great spirit of detachment in regard to what obedience asks of them.

753. [To Father J.J. Lagier, at N.-D. de Lumières].⁶⁹

Reproaches Father Lagier who wanted to impose his will on the Superior General.

[Marseilles,] December 14, 1841.

To inform me of what you knew, to disclose your way of thinking to me, is good, it is even your duty. However my dear Father, you should have allowed me to judge a case regarding which your only role is to inform. Giving a verdict as you did before knowing what I would decide is such a bad example that I would never have believed that you could possibly venture to do it.⁷⁰ What would become of us if each one in turn wanted to impose his way of thinking on the superior? In what

⁶⁹ YENVEUX III, 121.

⁷⁰ The Founder copies this letter in his *Diary*, December 14. He writes that Father Lagier, the director of some scholastics who were at the Juniorate of N.-D. de Lumières, was not satisfied with Brother J.J. Denis Rey (who became an Oblate on December 1840 and died on January 16, 1869).

Society is a person allowed to address one's superior in these words: if you do not do what I maintain, I shall be forced to go away with my other brothers and return my powers to you, etc.?

My dear Father, I recall your own words to you so that you could judge them for yourself. You would have vacated the post assigned to you by obedience! and you would have allowed yourself to be accompanied by those whom you are to instruct in the duties of this obedience, which has been shattered, trampled underfoot, annihilated by this wicked phrase which expresses thinking that is destructive of all order! May God save me from believing that you could have carried out such a threat. It escaped you in your anxiety and you will have undoubtedly retracted it, especially if it was heard by those who expect from you good guidance and example in all that makes up a religious person.

754. To Father Moreau, superior of the Major Semin[a]ry, at Ajaccio, Corsica.⁷¹

Personnel of the Major Seminary. Bishop Casanelli d'Istria has to bring his mitre when he comes to Marseilles. Fathers Bellon and Mouchel should write more often.

L.J.C. and M.I.

Marseilles, December 27, 1841.

My dear Father Moreau, I begin with what is most essential. As a result of your appointment as superior of the community of Ajaccio, your house remains without a director, you need an assistant and an admonitor. Here now is my solution. Father Bellon will be your first assistant, your admonitor and director, Father Mouchel will be your second assistant. Thus your house will be established. I congratulate you on being associated with such good rel[igiou]s. Fathers Bellon, Mouchel and Pont are excellent men, you are not so bad yourself. From this you can judge if I am happy to be with you in spirit. But I do not give up the idea of being present in person. Wouldn't it be nice to see me show up with the Bishop of Viviers? Nothing is more probable than this.

⁷¹ Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L. M.-Moreau.

By the same mail I am writing to his Lordship the Bishop of Ajaccio who had recommended a certain priest Olivieri⁷² to me and who asked me if he should bring his cope and mitre for the consecration. I told him that it was sufficient to bring the mitre, we shall find here as many copes as are necessary. At the same time I informed him that I am on the watch for the Consistory and as soon as I receive news that it has taken place, I shall write to him and fix the date of the consecration. Should the Bishop wish to come earlier and spend some time with the d'Isoards,⁷³ it would not take him much further from Marseilles.

I am very pleased to learn that you have admitted Santoni. Now the sooner he can free himself from his family ties, the better it will be. I recommend him to Father Bellon so that he makes of him another himself, I shall be pleased with that. Tell this good Father and also Father Mouchel that I keep them in my heart even though I do not write to them, and that if I don't write to them, it is because I owe them nothing in this line. These naughty men don't even furnish me *the at least once a year*. As for Father Pont, it is quite different, I acknowledge my debt and I shall pay it immediately.

I have carried out your commission for Father Tempier. I think he will have answered you. I have also just received news of Father Guibert. He is well though somewhat annoyed at being obliged to prolong his stay in Paris so long.

I hope the Bishop of Ajaccio will not forget that he had agreed to give the parish of Nesa to a miss[ion]ary in order to keep the pot boiling.⁷⁴

Good-bye, my dear Father Moreau. I embrace you with all my heart.

† C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

⁷² After "Olivieri" the Founder ends the page with "Je lui," but continues on the other side with "et qui . . ."

⁷³ Bishop Casanelli d'Istria had been the private secretary of Cardinal d'Isoard (+Lyon 1839) with whose family, resident at Aix, he was acquainted.

⁷⁴ "To keep the pot boiling" means to keep the house going.

755. To Father Semeria, superior of the Mission[a]ries, at Vico. Corsica.⁷⁵

Father Semeria may come for Bishop Guibert's consecration. Rectorship of Nesa. Unity among the Fathers of Vico.

L.J.C. and M.I.

Marseilles, December 27, 1841.

Where am I in your regard, my dear little Father? I see two letters of yours on my desk. Did I reply to the former or do I owe a reply for both? Whatever may be the case I shall tell you in a couple of words that all your letters always give me the greatest pleasure, that I relish the details they contain and that you could never send me too many of them.

After that have I told you that I willingly agreed to call you here to my side for our Father Guibert's consecration? It seems to me that I told you at least its equivalent. It is true that I feared it might coincide with one of your missions, but we shall know about it well in time to inform you. When the news has reached us that the Consistory has taken place, we shall have plenty of time to wait. The Bulls will not be sent before three or four weeks and then the Bishop will have to take the oath and get to Marseilles. All this will give you time to finish a mission you may have started.

I always counted on the Bishop giving you the rectorship of Nesa. This source of revenue is needed to sustain your convent of Vico. I am surprised that Father Guibert left before finalizing this deal.

Father M[oreau] does not have the same reasons for looking after the comm[uni]ty of Vico as Father Guibert. The two houses must evidently help each other, but they are independent one of the other. As for the financial interests I am waiting for the Bishop of Viviers to be here and will then decide this matter.

Live happily, my dear children, in your precious community. You would not imagine the happiness I experience when I hear about the unity and cordiality that reigns among you. Ah! how I am in spirit in the midst of this dear portion of the family! You are my consolation and my joy. May the Lord fill you with his blessings. I press all of you to my heart.

† C.J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

⁷⁵ Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L. M.-Semeria.

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756. [To Father Guigues, at N.-D. de l'Osier].¹

The superior of the novitiate and the master of novices independently of each other, must give a judgment on the novices to be admitted for vows. Father Burfin.

[Marseilles,] January 12, 1842.

You have not told me enough of Father Burfin. I know he is a good priest and that he has his talents, but what I was expecting is your opinion on his admission. Father Vincens has acquainted me about his character and his dispositions. He also spoke of the sentiments you expressed, all in favour of his admission. Father Vincens is also inclined to be favourable, but in writing me you must give me all the information you know for or against the person, independently of what the master of novices has to write me for his part, so that I may be in a position to make the Council deliberate with sufficient knowledge of cause. I agree that there may be serious disadvantages in sending this person away after he has spent such a long time in the house, but the harm may be a hundred times worse if he left us after his profession; and from the picture you give me of this man, don't you have reason to fear this new scandal? If he is never satisfied with anything that is done, if he cannot get along with anyone of the Society's members, can we flatter ourselves and say that he will change his exaggerated and unjust view on so many points? This is what I would have liked you to tell me, you who know him and live with him since one year. Regarding this overly complete knowledge he has of our members, I will tell you that it is very important that among us, as in novitiates everywhere, the novices live separated from the community at all times but especially during recreation when we indulge in the bad

¹ YENVEUX VIII, 43, 106.

habit of observing no moderation, of talking about everything and everyone with an indiscretion and imprudence that are exceptional.

Father Vincens has also informed me of your opinion on this other person who is so badly compromised himself. That does not suffice for me. You must get into the habit of each one writing me separately and without influencing each other. It is only thus that I shall possess the conscientious opinion of two people who must provide the material for my judgment and the properly motivated vote of the Council.

757. To Father Courtès, superior of the Missionaries, Carmelites' Square, at Aix, B. d. R.²

The mission of Fontvieille has to be preached as early as possible, before Father Guibert's consecration. Loan needed for the repairs at N.-D. de Lumières and N.-D. de l'Osier.

L.J.C. and M.I.

Marseilles, February 18, 1842.

How did you not foresee, my dear Courtès, what is happening to you? Did you think that the consecration of the Bish[op] of Viviers could be postponed until after Easter? Why then delay this retreat of Fontvieille as you have done? Had you given it when I sent you Father Rouvière, it would be over and you would be free. Now it is impossible to entrust it to Fathers Allard and Rouvière. The latter shies away from such a plan.

There is still one way for you to settle everything: to leave immediately and to start next Sunday or Monday. You would still arrive here in time for the consecration which will certainly not take place before March 11, the feast of St. Lazarus' resurrection. If you adopt this *mezzo termine*, you will not wait for Father Rouvière before setting out and be in time at Fontvieille already on Sunday and, on receiving your letter, I shall send this Father who will join you immediately. The Parish Priest will understand that you had been obliged to precipitate matters somewhat for reasons which you will explain to him. I don't

² Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L. M.-Courtès.

see any other alternative in settling everything. Again I tell you that the consecration will not take place on the Sunday announced in the newspapers. Had I been consulted before this news was released, they would have known that I do not want to do it on that Sunday. It will rather take place on Friday 11 at the earliest, if I receive the reply from Rome in time.

Tempier must have written you that we have given up the plan of acquiring the Dufour house. The construction projects of Lumières and l'Osier have obliged us to borrow a rather considerable sum of money. We could have made this capital only from the surplus. We are more than broke since we have had to borrow.

I would have been quite pleased if the drawing of Father Brisson's plan had been submitted to me before proceeding to put it into effect. I don't believe anything better can be done than what already exists. Perhaps it may have been more costly, but I am really afraid that the perron may not be nice. We must also be careful not to waste space. With regard to the wall that Brisson prefers to the railing, there is the risk that it may be too big. If we are concerned that things will not be proper, could we not avoid this disadvantage by putting up a small wall that reaches up to a certain height? In any case, since I do not have the present plan, I can say nothing with any real knowledge.

In your place I would not have accepted to give the insignificant retreat of Salon, knowing beforehand that it would have tired you. We must not put forth great effort uselessly.

I embrace you as well as the Fathers who are now with you.

† C.J. Eugene, Bish[op] of M[arsei]lles.

758. To Father Courtès, superior of the Mission[a]ries, Carmelites' Square, at Aix. B. d. R.³

Retreat of Fontvieille and Father Guibert's consecration.

L.J.C. and M.I.

M[arsei]lles, Feb[ruary] 24, 1842.

My dear Courtès, I would like what is happening to you to serve as a lesson for the future and that it not be said that we never know

³ Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L. M.-Courtès.

what is what whenever something is to be done in the diocese of Aix. Had you given the retreat of Fontvieille as it had been agreed, it would be over, Father Rouvière would be free to go for the retreat of Aups, and you would not have the worries caused you by the inevitable anxiety into which the uncertain success of a retreat given without you must bring you or the unpleasantness of finding yourself absent from the consecration of the Bishop of Viviers. I feel very well the unpleasantness of this situation. Moreover I do not want to aggravate it by a decision which may be too painful for you. You call Fontvieille a hole, I thought it was a rather large village. Then I am badly informed and consequently hardly in a position to judge the suitability of sending these or other members on this mission. I am still sending you Father Rouvière who is coming filled with courage and good will. It is up to you to judge if he will be able to handle the situation together with Father Allard. If you decide to put them in charge of this retreat, you will be free to come and assist at the consecration of the Bishop of Viviers. It will not take place before March 11, and may perhaps be postponed till Passion Sunday if I don't receive the reply from Rome in time. The Bishop's intentions, expressed to me in his last letter, is not to stop at Aix on his way from Paris. I don't know what he will do on coming into his diocese; he will tell us that here.

I find it quite natural that your father backed out of a business venture he thought was burdensome to him. I little regret this purchase.

As for the stair-case the plan seems good to me. I will never cease to marvel, however, that the town people thought they could not grant a subsidy for a repair that could only be a benefit to its inhabitants. We have to pay for everything ourselves to the very end. This is wearisome indeed.

I thought I told you that Mr. d'Anjou had assured me that his company would provide a tuner for the organ for 25 francs.

Good-bye, my dear Courtès, I embrace you with all my heart.

† C. J. Eugene, Bish[op] of M[arsei]lles.

759. To Father Dassy, priest, Oblate of Mary Immaculate at Notre-Dame de l'Osier. Isère.⁴

Gratitude for Father Dassy's show of affection. Resumé of a previous letter that had not been sent. Conditions under which he may concern himself with archeology.

L.J.C. and M.I.

Marseilles, March 29, 1842.

I am always very sensitive, my dear Father Dassy, to the expression of affection you give me from time to time; therein I recognize your kind heart, and you know me well enough to realize how I respond to your sentiments. You may perhaps be astonished that your last letter did not receive a reply. I did write, however, but I did not send it because, on re-reading it, I feared you might find it hurtful. I had just learned from the newspapers what I should have come to know from you, my dear friend, and I made you some remarks about that. I added some reflections on the excessive zeal I observed you entertain for sciences, to which I am far from attributing the same value as you. All this would have worked on you and since I am very keen on not hurting you, even though I could not approve what you are doing without my consent, I preferred to withdraw the letter and let you believe I had forgotten.

I see that I have to return to the same point again. This time, it is about something that is already a fact. You have already been appointed correspondent, etc.⁵ Do not think, my dear child, that I am happy about this honour or that I consider this could bring the least glory or advantage to the Congregation. I say even more: if I did not know as I do your activities and your capacity for work, I would consider this incident as something unfortunate, for you would have turned away from your principal ministry, from that which is essentially proper to your vocation and which you could not neglect without

⁴ Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L. M.-Dassy.

⁵ On March 19, Father Dassy had written to offer his feast-day wishes. He also mentioned that the Arts' committee of Paris had appointed him the correspondent of its department for historical works and that his Lordship the Bishop of Grenoble was going to suggest that he be part of a commission "to draw up a statistical account of the monuments, of the finest buildings in the diocese and of all archeological matters that could be of interest to religion: Church history, Christian literature and the Arts."

lacking in your duties and offending God. So I have to come to the conclusion that if you feel you could combine the duties of your new job with those of your vocation, that the research, which you may be able to make, serves rather as relaxation than as activity incompatible with the missions, retreats and studies required by this ministry, then I authorize you to respond to the trust that has been placed in you. But note well, my dear child, that it is your duty first of all to sanctify yourself by advancing in perfection.⁶ You will be devoting yourself ardently to archeological studies which demand lectures, meetings and plenty of time. Weigh all these on the scales of the priesthood and reflect on the *quid prodest*, etc.

Your being a correspondent, etc., was already quite much, as far as I am concerned, and now you mention a commission of which you are a member. To this you must apply the remarks I have just addressed to you. After all, I am not absolutely opposed to your accepting to be part of this commission, for the reasons I have alleged, but I request you very explicitly not to establish yourself as the mainspring of this commission and not to be more concerned than the rest about it functioning well. Indeed, to the contrary, due to the duties you have to fulfil and from which I cannot dispense you, I insist that you take a back seat and be on it for giving advice rather than being active. If you depart from this rule of wisdom, it is I who say that you will soon be like insipid salt, *quod si sal evanuerit*;⁷ I say no more, it is up to you to meditate seriously on this text, so that you may be preserved from terrible consequences which all of us must dread. Thus, even while remaining within the limits I have indicated to you, if you realize that your piety suffers therefrom, your zeal for the salvation of souls is lessening, that you experience some distaste for the great ministry that is proper and characteristic of your vocation, leave aside all the books of science and bury yourself more than ever in the only study that is strictly necessary wherein we are assured of not meeting with disappointment or deception.

Good-bye, my dear child, I am speaking to you as a father, as a superior, as a bishop. I have nothing further except to embrace you and bless you.

† C.J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

⁶ Three lines have been erased and are illegible.

⁷ Mt.5:13; Mk.9:49.

760. To Father Moreau, superior of the M[ajo]r Seminary, at Ajaccio, Corsica.⁸

Father De Veronico appointed assistant to Father Semeria at Vico. He is to be welcome at Ajaccio from time to time where he will take organ lessons. The visit of their Lordships Guibert and Mazenod to Corsica is postponed by one year.

L.J.C. and M.I.

Marseilles, April 2, 1842.

My dear friend, I do not want to let our good Father Semeria leave without sending you a little greeting.

I have asked Father Tempier to let you know of my decision on the financial matter. You can firmly rely on it with full certitude of conscience.

You have quite correctly understood that Father Bellon replaced you as confessor, assistant, admonitor and spiritual father.

Since I am quite satisfied with Father De Veronico's behaviour, I have appointed him assistant to Father Semeria. Thus the house of Vico is fully constituted. This Father has some talent for music. It would be fitting for him to take some organ lessons during the different stop-overs he makes at Ajaccio. Father Semeria tells me that this may cause you some trouble. Be more accommodating, my dear friend, I don't see the slightest difficulty in this. Since our houses willingly give hospitality to outside priests, it would be odd for you to find it problematical to welcome in your house one of our own men who would like to stay for a short time and become fit to serve a public church of the diocese and to contribute towards giving more pomp to religious solemnities. Don't hesitate any more on this.

You know that my plan to come and see you this year has come to nothing. The Bishop of Viviers arrived so late in his diocese that he cannot decently absent himself from it so soon. The matter has therefore been postponed to next year. It will be with great pleasure that I will see you again and that I will embrace you after a separation that is already overly prolonged.

⁸ Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L. M.-Moreau.

In the meantime, accept the expression of my affectionate sentiments.

† C.J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

P.S. I beg you to tell good Father Pont that I am very sorry not to have replied to his letter: it is now too old for me to deal with it. I greet him as well as our other Fathers.

761. Father Tempier, Vicar General, at Marseilles. France.⁹

Account of the crossing from Marseilles to Genoa. Bishop de Mazenod's act of charity on the ship. Visiting the city of Genoa.

L.J.C. and M.I.

Genoa,¹⁰ April 27, 1842.

We arrived quite safely, my dear Father Tempier, yesterday at 4 o'clock, after one of the most pleasant and calm crossings, fortunately for our ladies who otherwise would have forfeited a great deal to the sea which they were crossing for the first time. So as not to remain idle, we went out after dinner, though it was almost dark; the glow of the street lamps was sufficient to give us a first idea of the splendour of this city's palaces. This morning I went to say Mass at St-Ambroise while my sister went to attend Mass at St-Cyr. Mr. Migone, Father Borelli's¹¹ brother-in-law came to take me there. I met good Father Jourdan who wanted at all cost that I as usual lodge in his house; and, since he is a resourceful person, he would have found an apartment for my sister with a good French lady in the neighbourhood of St-Ambroise. I thanked this very good Father and returned to la Croix de Malte where we are lodged very well, tomorrow we shall know what it will

⁹ Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L. M.-Tempier.

¹⁰ Bishop de Mazenod made this trip to the North of Italy on the invitation of his friend, the Chevalier de Collegno, to venerate the holy Shroud of Turin: it was exposed on the occasion of the Duke of Savoy's, later King Victor Emmanuel, marriage. He was accompanied by Canon Jeancard, the valet de Philippe Marbacher, and especially his sister and his niece Césarie, both of whom had been afflicted very much by the recent death of Louis de Boisgelin, a Jesuit scholastic, cf. REY II, 136.

¹¹ There were many Borelli at Marseilles. The Founder is perhaps referring to T. J. Borély, the procurator general of Aix, with whom he had to deal regarding the Vèze affair.

all cost. While my travelling companions are having breakfast, I am writing to you so as to be in time and not miss the mail. Jeancard is already admiring the beauty of the churches we have seen on the way and the number of wonderful palaces we come across at every step. He said his Mass at St-Ambroise while I celebrated it in the inner chapel. I am afraid that, prone to distractions as he is, he did not open his eyes much at the *Dominus vobiscum*. I shall go to see the Cardinal Archbishop¹² only after his dinner, so as to avoid being invited; the latter would inconvenience too much our small itinerant colony: it is already short of time for seeing everything in such a short time.

Should I narrate to you the adventure of poor Riffredo?¹³ The affair almost ended in tragedy. We had not yet left Marseilles when a great dispute arose. Two individuals took him to task with extreme violence, wanting to be paid what he owed them. They hurled abuses at him and poor Riffredo had to bear them, not without shame because he was really at fault. Everyone in the ship was shocked, they were going to seize his trunk and hand him over to the police. He had left without paying for his lodging, had bought, I don't know what, on credit. In a word, it was a very nasty affair. I heard him called an adventurer. The poor devil did not intend to steal from them, but since he had no more money, he was leaving in order to go and ask for it personally from his family which would not have listened to him had he approached them by letter. I was pained by this scene, but did not dare to get involved in it because I feared that it might concern an amount that was too considerable to be guaranteed with prudence. Having listened more attentively, I realized that it was a matter of only one hundred francs. Then I came forward and after having scolded the two creditors for the uncalled-for language they had used, I asked them what was owing to them. Eighty francs they replied to me. Here are a hundred I told Mr. Riffredo, putting five gold coins into his hands; send these gentlemen away. Everyone was stunned and in groups admired what was called a noble initiative. Father Athanase spoke to me about the effect this act had produced on all the travellers and the people of Marseilles who were still on board. I am very pleased if this creates a good impression of priestly character because for me person-

¹² Cardinal M. Tadini, the Archbishop of Genoa.

¹³ Bishop de Mazonod probably did not know this Riffredo. This is the only time he mentions him in his writings.

ally, it was not very meritorious. It must indeed have made some impression, because when these two men went away without thanking me, a merchant of M[arsei]lles whom I do not know brought them back to thank me.

Be kind enough to read my letter to my good mother. I am not writing her because they are waiting to leave. The little key to the table where all the keys of the country estate are kept is hanging at the fireplace of my sister's room.

Good-bye, I embrace you and all who are with you.

† C.J.Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.¹⁴

762. To Father Tempier, provost, Vicar General, Bishop's palace, Marseilles. France.¹⁵

Fatigue from the trip from Genoa to Turin. Visit to Father Bernard concerning the foundation of the Minims at Marseilles. News. Plan regarding his stay at the departure from Turin.

L.J.C. and M.I.

Turin, April 30, 1842.

I let these ladies go out, my dear Tempier, in order to write you a few lines. Having arrived at Turin yesterday evening, I have already paid a visit to their Graces the Archbishop and the Nuncio;¹⁶ his Excellency the Ambassador had already left for Paris; I left a card with the chargé d'affaires who replaces him — I think he is Marshal Ney's son. This is not bad for the day after a trip as tiring as the one we have just made from Genoa to here. It was well worth the trouble that we went well in advance to book our places in the stage-coach. Would you believe that, since we had to choose because no one was there when we went to the office to claim our places, the gentleman who is Mr. Migone's agent¹⁷ secured the boot for us, convinced that we would feel better there. It was at the time of boarding the vehicle that we recog-

¹⁴ Jeancard added the following words: "I am enraptured by this country's marble and, not being as cold as it is, I embrace you."

¹⁵ Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L. M.-Tempier.

¹⁶ Archbishop L. Franzoni of Turin and Archbishop T. P. Gizzi, the Nuncio.

¹⁷ Mss.: Mingone.

nized our misfortune, and none of us had enough sense to be content with our lot: in advance we calculated all the torture that was in store for us, and we were still raving at midnight when, tired from the shaking, we had not as yet had a wink of sleep. The next day brought us another kind of suffering: dust suffocated us, the roads were bad, the horses, tired out, did not walk, in a word, everything combined to crush us. And so we were exhausted when we arrived. The carriage at Chevalier de Collegno was waiting for us at the entrance of the stage-coach office, we were soon at his house where this good friend, his wife and all his children came to receive us at the bottom of the stair-case. Césarie delivered your letter and your gifts to Madame de Collegno who was very grateful and so was the entire little family which received us with the cordiality you know is theirs.

May 1. While our ladies, despite the rain but in the coach with Madame de Collegno, have gone to see the royal family passing through the hall that precedes the tribune where it attends Mass, I once again resume conversing with you for a few moments. Today I want to talk to you about Father Bernard, the Minim religious who is a simple person but of great sanctity, whom the King has called to Turin and who is pursued by the crowds here as everywhere else. This good religious came to see me this morning after the Mass. I wanted to speak to him about the beginnings of our foundation. He already knew something about it and it is not excluded that he may one day come to Marseilles and see the matter at first hand. I asked him if he thought that the religious of his Order were originally discalced; he told me that it was optional, and that at Todi and in another place whose name I don't remember, the religious who there observed the primitive rule wear the material used by Capuchins and use only sandals on their bare feet. So this is what you can tell Father Boeuf regarding his regime.

Since today is Sunday and the post-offices are closed, I did not send anyone to get the letters I am expecting from you; I shall know if they have arrived before mailing my letter tomorrow.

May 2. It is still pouring rain. I haven't the courage to go out for the mail, so I shall send you this one without waiting any longer. What annoys me about this so unpleasant weather is not that I cannot see the beautiful fire-works that have been prepared beyond the Po opposite Valentin — I am put out for Césarie's sake because I would not have gone there — but the fear that all the rivers are flooding over and that the heavy season is here. How to travel in the rain? Our excellent hosts

here rejoice at this, for they quickly availed themselves of the opportunity and wish to keep us. It is clear that if we leave on Friday as I have planned, my travelling companions will not have had the time to see anything. They have to go to Stupinigi, however, and to Montcalieri¹⁸ and Superga and our ladies must visit the city a little. So I shall write you again from Turin; in all probability, we shall not leave here before Monday. I am not amused by the delay, but it is the least of my worries. I undertook this trip only for reasons of charity and due affection for my sister and nieces; far from anticipating the least pleasure therefrom, I had to force myself to undertake it. And so the vexations I would experience were foreseen beforehand and do not bother me in the least. It would be quite an achievement if I could gain some merit out of it. Nothing is more normal than the sacrifice I have made. The hope of restoring the health of such a charming child who is always so thin and feeble, as well as the desire to distract my sister from her profound sorrow are more than sufficient reasons to impose on a brother and uncle such as I greater sacrifices than the one I am gladly making, though it does cost me. I received a letter from provost Scavini¹⁹ who was answering me from Stresa itself where he was staying with Mrs. Bolongaro. This good person is overjoyed at the suggestion I made to Father Scavini; she would like us to stop at her place not only for two days but for three weeks. That suits me very well because I am afraid it will be too cold to go to Switzerland so soon. The weather will guide us. If the weather is good, the big exposition of the holy Shroud will take place on the 4th. Besides the five Bishops already assigned to show the relic to the people assembled in the castle's Square, other Bishops are to show it inside the chapel located in the Madame palace to the clergy and the various Associations coming to venerate it. His Grace the Archbishop has invited me to be one of these Bishops; I think he has extended the same invitation to the Bishop of Léon who has taken refuge in the neighbourhood of Turin. But for this the rain has to stop. The Queen has no more doubt on it than she had on the day of the solemn entry. On that day, Father Bernard had prayed to this effect. It seems that she has had him pray for this occasion also. People say that on the day of the entry some clouds appeared on the horizon and Father Bernard chased them away with his hand thus tell-

¹⁸ Mss.: Stupinis, Montcalier.

¹⁹ Father Scavini (1791-1869), then Vicar General of Novara. He had written several books on the moral theology of St. Alphonsus.

ing the devil that it was not to rain on that day. This saintly reli[giou]s is so simple and confident in God that he has no hesitation in these things. Furthermore, the fact is certain. Good-bye.

C.J.E. Bish.

A discalced Carmelite, the parish priest of St. Therese has just left my room. He came to beg me to have the small sum of 54 francs credited to his sister's husband whose name is Durand. I told him to write to him that he present himself to you and that you would give him the money which I have recieved here. That is all that this good Father could obtain to provide for their need which seems urgent. That is also what determined me not to put off sending them this help till my return.

I end my letter in order not to miss the post. I am well, and so is Jeancard and my sister, but I am not satisfied with Césarie's health, she [is] still in the same condition as before her departure. In all probability this is what causes her heart ailments from time to time. I confess that all this worries me. When one has to be put through the mill as we have been, it is permissible to worry about the least things. Good-bye.

Be kind enough to write a couple of words to my mother on our behalf: this will give us the time to write her directly in a few days' time.

763. To Father Tempier, provost, Vicar General, Bishop's palace, Marseilles, France.²⁰

Reason for the prolonged stay at Turin. Desire to return to Marseilles as soon as possible. Details about his doings at Turin and the celebrations in honour of the holy Shroud. Plans for the forthcoming stages of the trip.

L.J.C. and M.I.

Turin, May 10, 1842.

My dear Tempier, how then did you calculate? The fact is that we received no letter from you at Turin. For the time being I give up all

²⁰ Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L. M.-Tempier.

hope of receiving any here because the period foreseen for our stay is more than over; but until Ascension! what could have deprived us of this favour which we always long for when we are away from our friends? The matter seems so inexplicable that I sometimes think that you are sick and though I reject this thought, it just leaves me worried.

You can see from the date of my letter that we have prolonged our stay at Turin. It was difficult to go against the entreaties of our amiable hosts, especially when we had no reason to hurry, first of all because of the inclemency of the weather and then because of the state of my niece's health: without being exactly ill, she nevertheless experiences a habitual indisposition which seems to require a little rest. Since, however, we cannot forever stay at Turin, we shall leave on Friday and spend the feast of Pentecost in Milan. This is a disappointment for Mr. and Mrs. de Collegno who thought it more appropriate for us to celebrate this feast here. My plan would be to leave Milan on Tuesday. It remains to be seen if we shall go to Venice by stage-coach or small carriage. That will depend on how easily we will settle our affairs in Milan where we know no one, because I have forgotten the name and address of Count Mela's business man. That is the kind of man I would like to meet. The great Lords whom we could approach are not capable of helping us in these household details. In any case, be sure that this trip is a source of merit for me because I am making it only for a charitable motive. I would like to return home from here. Especially I wish I would not be obliged to get wrapped up in Switzerland, once again covering a route which I have made a thousand times — the very thought bores and wearies me. Moreover, trips in themselves tire me. I feel sick on a carriage, I suffer especially during the night in bed.

It is high time that I give you an account of what we did in Turin since we are here. First of all, the first days were so rainy that we had to stay indoors. But all of a sudden the good weather picked up as if by a charm, I think it was rather through good Father Bernard's prayers, and that precisely for the feast of the holy Shroud. It did not rain any more that day; the sun continued to be cloud covered as if to spare the heads of one hundred and fifty thousand Christians, brought by their piety to the castle Square and to the adjoining streets. In the morning I had gone to the King's²¹ chateau to await the time for the ceremony.

²¹ Charles-Albert (1796-1849), King of Sardinia.

There I found myself on a well-known turf. I was approached by several Lords who had become great men of the Court, generals, great dignitaries of the Crown since we had seen one another at the College. The King, the Queen and the entire royal family soon went to the chapel of the holy Shroud, followed by the whole retinue. For my part, I went to the Madame palace followed by Jeancard and de Philippe. We crossed the castle Square where there was a huge crowd, but the garrisoned troops had lined a path leaving a large space through which the procession was to pass. I was in choir dress and so was my assistant. At first we had a place on the big balcony facing the beautiful street of Doragrossa which was filled with people up to the *HI. Martyrs*. On the balcony adjoining the one from which the holy Shroud was to be shown to the people, was the diplomatic Corps and in particular Archbishop Gizzi, the Apostolic Nuncio, in spite of his gout, and the excellent Chevalier d'Holry who is soon going to quit the diplomatic service and spend his last days at Strasbourg. After a short wait, the procession started from the castle. Its course was truly majestic. It would be too long to name all those who took part in it. I am bringing a sketch that was made of it. The canopy under which the holy relic was carried by four dignitaries of the Chapter, had at first been carried by the King, his two sons and the Prince of Lucca, who were subsequently relieved by the Prince de Carignan, the chevaliers of the Order of the Annunciata and the great Knights of the Order of Sts. Maurice and Lazarus. The Archbishop immediately preceded the relic, in front of him within a short distance walked the four bishops who together with him were designated to show the holy Shroud to the people from the four facades of the Madame palace; all five of them were in cope and mitre, only the Archbishop carried his crozier. The King and the Prince followed immediately behind the canopy carrying torch-lights. All the great lords, senators, the Chamber of the Counts and the university walked next, all in grand costume. Band, bells and canons joined their sound to the singing of the royal chapel choristers. It was a deeply moving event and profound religious feeling was touchingly evident in the huge crowd which filled the Square, the streets and windows of all the houses from which rich tapestry was hanging. Not only the people but all of us were equally moved; who could have remained insensitive to this magnificent homage to the Saviour of the world by so many souls redeemed by him. A whole kingdom was here, represented by its King and the entire State corps, united with a huge crowd of the city's people joined by a notable part from the provinces. When the procession reached the great palace hall, the reliquary was placed

on a table prepared for it and the Archbishop, assisted by four bishops, broke the seal and removed the holy Shroud from the box in which it was enclosed. The Shroud which is fastened to some black material which serves as a lining to it was rolled up and tied with red ribbons, which were also sealed. I took a piece of this ribbon which I am bringing for you. When the holy Shroud was displayed on the table, the King, the Queen and the Princes came to venerate it on their knees and, after a few moments of recollection, kissed it with respect. The Archbishops, the Bishops and I did the same, then the entire Court and the diplomatic Corps, with few exceptions. After this adoration, the five prelates carried the relic first to the balcony in front of the palace and in turn to the other three balconies, always accompanied by the King, the Princes and the Court. Each showing lasted ten minutes during which the troops and the people kneeling on the ground adored the Lord's image while the bands played and the bells pealed. Then the King retired with his entire retinue with the same ceremonies and the holy Shroud was left in the custody of two bishops wearing cope and mitre who were to be replaced by two other prelates, and so on until the return of the procession which was to come back with the King and take the holy relic back after it had been shown to the people a second time, as in the morning. I was one of the Bishops chosen to keep watch over the holy deposit, the Bishop of Alexandria kept watch with me. While we were fulfilling this duty the dowager Queen and her retinue came to adore the relic, [then] the city councillors, following which the procession of the different Associations and the religious Orders started, and when we had retired to be replaced by their Lordships the Bishops of Aosta and Pignerol, the secular clergy and finally a great number of the faithful also came to adore the holy relic. I had time enough to view it during the two hours I kept watch over it. The shroud is a cloth that is woven as our towels are; except for some burns which have been mended with pieces that are quite badly placed, it is very well preserved thanks no doubt to the measure taken of fastening it to a lining. One sees imprinted on the cloth the marks of a human body, but these are not drawn lines as the pictures that have been made represent it. It is a little more than a shadow. One can perfectly distinguish the form of the head both from the front side where blood marks of some cavities are noticeable, and from the back which appears more uniform. The rest of the body is thus lightly marked by the remains of a more or less noticeable bloody impression. The sight of this image inspires a vivid and powerful impression: that is easily understood when we consider that, after the divine Eucharist, there is nothing more

precious on earth than these traces of the Saviour's adorable body, marked by his own blood shed for mankind's salvation. Good-bye.

[On the margin, on the first page].

I would like to give you a sure address so that you can write me. We shall leave Milan on the 17th or 18th; we will need two days to reach Venice; we shall remain there three days at the most; let us give three more days of travelling to reach Stresa where we will possibly, according to Césarie's need, stay for a week. Thus we shall be at Venice on the 20th, the latest on the 25th or 26th at Stresa with Mrs. Bolongaro until the first days of June. So you can definitely write to me at Stresa.

764. To Father Tempier, provost, Vicar General, Bishop's palace, Marseilles. B. d. R. France.²²

Account of the feast of Pentecost at Turin. Various details about his servants. The de Collegno family's kindness.

L.J.C. and M.I.

Turin, May 16, 1842.

My dear Tempier, tomorrow we shall definitely leave Turin. The unstable weather, the urgent entreaties of our hosts, but especially my niece's state of health, have obliged us to prolong our stay here. We had consulted the physician who gave her a prescription: it was only right to stay and witness the result. And then there was the feast of Pentecost, celebrated so worthily by masters and servant alike; that would not have been so had we arrived elsewhere on the eve of this great feast. In addition to this we were strongly warned that the Simplon pass may not yet be free. Here we have more than reason to bear with patience a delay we did not expect. My only suffering is that I am bereft of all news of you, for since we left we have had no word at all about any of you. I presume you are well, I pray the Lord that you are. As for myself, I am keeping marvellously well, so also are my sister and Jeancard; as for Philippe, it goes without saying. Césarie is always suffering, the cause, as you know, is patent.

²² Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L. M.-Tempier.

Here is another item. In a conversation Philippe told me that on the eve of our departure he had learnt that Pierre was to marry a girl from the Association of Mary. This explains Pierre's going out so frequently; for some time, he was always out, in spite of what we would tell him. I will not make any comment than that of St. Paul, namely, he who marries does well; since, however, he who does not marry does better and since in my household I insist on the better, I beg you to quietly get some information on this. You may contact Henriette, who, I believe, is the one who told it to Philippe, to lady Ravesou and to Marie Alézard. The latter will speak more frankly because she does not have to be cautious. If the fact is established as true, it would be practical if, without deciding anything, you were to keep in suspense the young man you met on the road to the Island, so that we are ready for any emergency, for you know very well that if we already have so much trouble making Pierre do his work when he was a servant, we will not get anything out of him when he is married. And after that he will only have to inspire Philippe to do the same thing, and we will find ourselves with Noah's arc in our house, which does not suit me at all. I thought I should warn you lest we be taken unaware. We are going to leave Collegno which obliges me to end my letter here. You cannot imagine the politeness we receive here from everyone. It is a city that suits me very much and also pleases my whole group. The day before yesterday we assisted at the pontifical ceremony in the Cathedral, in the tribune that is above that of the King. I assure you that I was very satisfied. I confess to our shame that the Seminarians and all who served at the altar perform these ceremonies with much more dignity than ours do. There is never the slightest delay, everyone seems to move as though by magic, with solemnity, precision, etc. His Grace the Archbishop came to see me twice, I dined at his place at a formal meal. He took me in his vehicle to see the fireworks which were set off at the Valentin for the Court and the whole city, he brought me back home while our ladies and Jeancard went elsewhere. In a word, he was very polite. The poor Nuncio whom we had seen in Switzerland is tormented with gout. The Princess San Cataldo is here with her daughter, the Princess Palazzolo, the wife of the Prime Minister of Naples to this Court. They gave us a big dinner and showed us much courtesy also. As for the Collegnos, it is beyond all description. Mrs. de Collegno still loves you very much and speaks of you often. Her children are ever more charming, we are really but one family. You should have seen these children's joy when we decided to prolong our stay here. Abel who had finished his supper said that he was so happy he was tempted

to start all over again. It will be truly painful for both sides tomorrow when we will have to leave.

Good-bye. I greet all our Gentlemen and I embrace you with all my heart.

† C.J.Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

765. To Father Tempier, provost, Vicar Gen[era]l, Bishop's palace, at Marseilles. B. d. R. France.²³

Reproaches Father Tempier who does not write. Account of the last days spent in Turin and the arrival at Milan. Visit to the Carthusian monastery of Pavia and the plan to go to Monza. Suggestions for replacing St. Jerome's Parish Priest. Milan's Cardinal Archbishop's visit.

L.J.C. and M.I.

Milan, May 21, 1842.

My dear Tempier, I thought I would find a big packet of your letters at Milan, since I did not receive any at Turin for the simple reason that you had not written to me. I had to be satisfied with the only one you sent me here, which even arrived after we did, and we were much surprised at not finding anything for us when we went to the post-office. Moreover you are right in thinking that the pleasure brought me by the only one that has crossed the Alps will make me forget the disappointment resulting from having to wait too long.

I did not have space to narrate all that we did at Turin. However I think I did finish telling you all that concerns the holy Shroud. It would be too late to tell you now that I had asked for an audience with the King to pay him my respects and to ask him to support an Italian priest for the service of his subjects at Marseilles. H[is] M[ajesty] invited me to dinner and granted me the audience half an hour before the meal. The King received me with his usual kindness and considered my request as the most normal thing, and he seemed to grant it quite willingly. I think I told you that I was very pleased with the Archbish[op] who came to see me twice. Furthermore, many have shown

²³ Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L. M.-Tempier.

the greatest kindness in this city. We landed up by going to Collegno and did not fail to visit the Cistercian monastery. How surprised I was to find D. Sallier²⁴ there, who I thought was at the Grand Chartreuse. Regretfully Father General had allowed him to go, but since the King had asked if there wasn't a saint in the Order, he pointed out D. Sallier to him and the King demanded that he be sent to him. This good relig[iou]s was delighted to see me. He felt quite at home with me and did not fear to tell me that the good Lord did not bless what was not done well in regard to Pachiaudi.²⁵ This relig[iou]s is good for absolutely nothing in the Order, whereas he could have been useful there where the Lord had called him. Finally we left Turin on Wednesday though it was a day of fasting and we arrived here on Thursday. I used the rest of the day and the whole of yesterday to help our travellers see whatever is most remarkable in Milan. Today we went to the Cistercian monastery of Pavia. For once we had to prostrate ourselves in awe. It is not possible to see anything comparable to this wonderful building for its wealth of marble, its overflow of what is so precious in rare stones, statues, bas-reliefs, paintings, frescos, etc. One needs a week to admire the real worth of all that dazzles and fascinates one's view in a mere visit of a couple of hours. I very much regret that you have not seen this marvel. All that I can say about it will be far short of the truth. Here I met the excellent Count Melerio once again and all of us will have dinner with him tomorrow. It was indeed he who presented himself to me when he was in M[arsei]lles. He could not succeed at all in getting our stupid janitor to bring me his visiting card. You know how upset I was when I accidentally saw his name, in the visitors' book, which no one had mentioned to me. Since we could leave only Monday evening, we shall use this time to visit Monza. We shall make this journey by train, hoping that the accident that took place at Versailles does not repeat itself here; our ladies are not frightened by it. We shall return rather early to do our packing and finally leave for Venice at 10 p.m., thus arriving at Venice only on Wednesday, at more or less the same time. You can see how convenient this will be for the eve of Corpus Christi. The following day we must be all ready before ten o'clock, if we want to see the procession, that is, we will have to have found a church, said Mass and had breakfast. I am already smothered

²⁴ D. Sallier, prior, former Congregationalist of Aix.

²⁵ Mss.: Pachaudi.

in advance. I assure you I was very much tempted to cut short the trip from Turin to Stresa in order to avoid all the worries of this prolonged journey, but I understood that this change of plan would upset the people for whom I wished to procure some relaxation.

I always find it difficult to send away a poor parish priest because he is too sick to serve his parish. I have always felt that in such a case, in order to spare him the heart-break of such a separation, it is more fitting to appoint a pro-parish priest who does all the parish duties and awaits his death and then succeeds him. Only in a situation where illness has become a chronic state presaging a long period of incapacity to fulfil one's pastoral duties, the sick person may be removed to the house of the disabled. I therefore believe we must take this stance for the parish of St-Jérôme. If Baubet has fallen into the state of childishness which you fear he has, there is no need to hesitate; but if he is only dangerously ill, we must appoint as pro-parish priest the one whom we would choose to succeed him. Now, is the choice you made the best one? I really don't know for we are rather destitute. Vernis has been very successful at St-Menet; we need someone hundred times better than the one he must succeed, but by putting Favier at St-Menet you reduce him from a life that is certainly much too active to one almost of inactivity; I am afraid that this transition is too great. Nevertheless I insist on removing this young man from St-Martin. Gondran could replace him on condition that he does not claim to lay down conditions to us, and that he puts himself simply under the authority and in the house of the Parish Priest with the firm determination to behave there as he should, I don't see why you should shift Bodoul to fill the vacancy of la Trinité. There is an assistant priest who works at the Cathedral; if you have to touch this parish at all, there you have an assistant priest who does not have much to do there who would thus be available.

The Cardinal Archbishop^[op]²⁶ has come, thus interrupting my letter, to return the visit I made to him the day-before-yesterday. He had invited me for dinner today Sunday, but I was already invited by the Count Melerio. I had very much urged this prelate to get himself a Suffragan Bish^[op] to supplement him in the functions of his ministry. He wants to do everything, but he does not get out of Milan and, in

²⁶ Cardinal Gaysruck.

the meantime the diocese is not visited. I could have given him some other advice, for he lacks much assistance which all of us need in working for the salvation of souls entrusted to us. Good-bye, all of us greet all of you.

766. To Father Tempier, provost, Vicar General, Bishop's palace, at Marseilles. B. d. R. France.²⁷

Journey from Milan to Venice. The churches' beauty. Meeting with the Patriarch. Stops at Padua, Milan, Sesto and Stresa.

L.J.C. and M.I.

Venice, May 29, 1842.

My dear Tempier, you will admit that you did not exhaust yourself during this trip by giving me news about yourself. I did not find more letters from you at Venice than I found at Turin. Hence in all it has been but one letter that you wrote to me during a whole big month. To say the least, it is hardly amusing. I think that if I too had been so negligent on my part, you would not at all be satisfied. Fortunately I have not incurred this reproach you could very well have addressed to me. When we arrived at Venice on Thursday morning, after a few accidents on the way which kept us immobile for twelve hours in a cheap inn between Milan and Brescia, our first task was to get ourselves ready to celebrate the sacred mysteries. We were still in time to see the procession pass in Saint Mark's Square. Afterwards we had breakfast on the spot itself and then left from there without ever a moment's rest thereafter, not even now when I am writing to you a few hours before leaving.

Milan, June 2. It was just at the moment of departure [that I was writing to you] and now we have already arrived this morning in Milan. We will not be staying long here: as early as five o'clock tomorrow morning we shall get into the coach and finally set out for Stresa. This haste in our trip tells you why I could not enter into any detail when writing to you from Venice; had we rushed we would have needed at least a week to see all the interesting things this city and its

²⁷ Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L. M.-Tempier.

surroundings contain. What a great number of churches, each more beautiful than the other! The thought of our churches nauseates me, so shabby, miserable, unworthy are they. I am angry with Coste²⁸ for not having more closely patterned himself on so many and such beautiful models. No one should be making plans for churches if one remembers so little of what everyone admires in Italy. There is certainly much to choose from. As you can imagine, I saw the Cardinal Patriarch²⁹ who treated me in a friendly manner. Since it was time for my confession, I thought that it would be better to go to him than to any other. We spoke frankly about many things, and I was well pleased with his way of thinking. It is said, however, that he is somewhat weak though quite capable for everything. I encouraged him and I think we parted good friends. I visited his Seminary where the superior and the professors had great regard for me and were even very kind to our ladies whom I took to them the next day to admire the beautiful church of the *Salute* and their house which was that of the Somaschi — my venerable friend, the Patriarch Milesi had procured it for himself. He left his fortune to this establishment and is buried there. We stopped at Padua for one day to visit the church of the Santo par excellence, namely, St. Anthony of Padua. There they venerate his tongue, which is perfectly preserved, and his lower jaw. These relics are kept with many others in the treasury which is in the back of a magnificent chapel. The rest of these holy remains is placed in an urn below the altar where I said holy Mass. I also visited the large church of St. Justina, which is very beautiful and quite abandoned. I don't think it is being used. Nevertheless, it has a parish priest. It may very well be said that this solitude is a witness to the chastisement inflicted by God on a place where every monk (of the Order of St. Benedict) had³⁰ a carriage and horses and went out in the evening like the most worldly people of the city to distinguish himself by his *conversazioni*. If you were with us — as we keep repeating to ourselves in regretting your absence — you could tell me the dimensions of the huge hall which we find at Padua and you would certainly have measured most of the huge sacred and profane buildings we visited.

²⁸ Probable reference to X. P. Coste (1787-1879) who was the architect for the city of Marseilles in 1844.

²⁹ Cardinal J. Monico, Patriarch of Venice.

³⁰ Mss.: "avec" instead of "avait".

I don't have to tell you that I am often with you in spirit. Sunday I went to St. Mark's church at the time of your beautiful procession, but tomorrow I shall hardly have reached Stresa by the time you will be carrying our Lord through our streets. I shall say Mass at Sesto. Will you please have a Bish[op] to take my place for the pontifical ceremony at which I would have officiated? Good-bye, I cannot speak to you about the diocese for I don't receive any letters. One must be patient. Good-bye, I embrace all of you.

Stresa, June 3.

I brought my letter with me to Stresa where I arrived at 3 o'clock by steamer from Sesto. We left Milan at 5 o'clock and reached Sesto at 11 o'clock, and were able to say holy Mass in the chapel that is on the Square. However wretched the decor was, it was with great consolation that I united myself to the beautiful ceremony that was taking place at this same time in my cathedral. We have just now had Benediction at the very same time your procession is ending. I was with you and with all the people in the presence of our Lord in whose presence we were together at the same time. I found here your letter of May 20, the second one I have received from you. I shall write you again before leaving. Since I am tired from my swift journey, I am planning to rest for a few hours. I also want to give Césarie time to take some medicines the Turin doctor has urgently prescribed. It consists simply of some herbs and tablets.

Good-bye, I embrace you while thanking my dear son Aubert for his kind remembrance.

767. [To Father Casimir Aubert, at Marseilles].³¹

Joy at learning that Father Mille has adapted himself well in the Seminary.

[Stresa,] June 9, 1842.

What you tell me of the right attitude our good Father Mille³² has adopted right from his arrival at the Seminary has really made me

³¹ YENVEUX IX, 164. Aubert had written a letter to the Founder, cf. L. M. - Tempier, May 29-June 3.

³² After the forced departure of the Oblates from Notre-Dame du Laus, Father Mille was appointed professor of dogma at the Seminary of Marseilles.

happy. I know all the merits and good qualities of this excellent Father, and I always counted on him as a person who is devoted to his duty and full of good will. Give him my friendly greetings.

768. [To Father Tempier, at Marseilles].³³

The Oblates of Canada write too much "to the whole world" but not enough to their superior.

[Stresa,] June 9, 1842.

Since we are on the topic of Canada, I would like to express my chagrin in seeing the continuance of this odd practice whereby all the members of this community write to the whole world, often saying what they should keep in silence, and I am the only one who knows nothing about what is happening. The superiors of the Congregation I have just mentioned³⁴ give an exact account every three months of all that takes place among them to their Superior General. This is the only way matters like this can be conceived. A religious Society that does not strive for emancipation will be prosperous only as long as it preserves this spirit, for I know not if there exists a more efficacious principle of dissolution than insubordination of the will which reduces the latter to a mechanical obedience that is without merit, and which a person very easily evades to the detriment of good order and unity.

769. [To Father Tempier, at Marseilles].³⁵

A hotel-keeper's conversion. Father Mille's letter. Rosmini's books.

[Geneva,] June 17, 1842.

I have undertaken a matter of a different sort. Do you remember that big and fat manager of Le Grand Aigle to whom we promised to send customers because he was the only Catholic in that profession?

³³ YENVEUX III, 123.

³⁴ The Rosminians or the Priests of Charity. The travellers were still at Stresa where, on the 11th, the Founder consecrated the Rosminians' novitiate church altar. This altar was paid for by Mrs. Bolongaro Borghese at whose place Bishop de Mazenod and his travelling companions were lodging, cf. RAMBERT II, 124; REY II, 139.

³⁵ YENVEUX VI, 92; VII, 148; REY II, 139.

Well then, faithful to that idea, I made it my duty to give him preference on my arrival here. So we went down to his hotel which he has restored anew. The first thing I did was to tell him the reason for my preference. He showed himself very grateful. But what did we come across! I learnt the same evening that this godfather was living in concubinage with his wife's sister by whom he has a child; and while we were so concerned for his interests when his wife was still alive, he was not married in the Church. You can imagine my indignation! This first impulse was followed by the desire to help this poor man put everything in order before God. I attended to this by writing to his Lordship the Bishop of Lausanne³⁶ and by dealing about this matter with the Parish Priest and his first assistant. Alas! you cannot have the least idea of this man's ignorance in religious matters. He thought that with some big parchment document which he had obtained from the King, I don't know how, he had only to present himself to the Parish Priest to have his marriage blessed. I instructed him as best as I could. The matter is in progress, the priests here will do the rest, and a huge scandal will cease; and I will have to thank God for having called me here for this.

Father Mille's letter has given me the greatest pleasure. I laughed very much about the fact that the treatise on grace provides him with material to put all his enemies in their place. That's the funniest joke. The serious part is no less interesting. I shall see this Father again with an indescribable joy. He is like the good soldier after battle, whatever the outcome may have been. I greet him affectionately as well as dear Father Aubert for whom I am bringing several philosophical books by the famous Rosmini. Someone in France should go deeply into these teachings and make them known through a good translation. The Pope encourages the author and several universities of Italy have adopted his doctrine.

Don't take any decision until I have arrived, either on Bermond's trip, or on that of Aubert.³⁷ Good-bye. I am going to visit the Catholic orphans who live a quarter of an hour's trip from the city. They have sisters and brothers here. 50 years ago there were 100 Catholics, today there are 8,000 of them. Let us pray to God for these people who have gone astray.

³⁶ Bishop T. Yenni of Lausanne and the Parish Priest Varini, cf. REY II, 139.

³⁷ Father Bermond wanted to go to Canada (*Oblate Writings*, I, 24-26), and Father Casimir Aubert was to leave soon for England (*Oblate Writings*, III, 1).

770. [To Father Guigues, at N.-D. de l'Osier].³⁸

Brother Nicolas has to be trained well.

[Marseilles,] July 1, 1842.

I request Father Vincens to pay special attention in training the good Brother Nicolas³⁹ in the religious life. When he will be in charge of dogma class, there won't be time any more. It would certainly be a pity that such a good member were not equal to his duties because he had not applied himself sufficiently to working on himself according to the spirit of our Institute. He is charming, but he seemed to me to be somewhat too active, enthusiastic, and from his letters I judge that he attaches too much importance to politics and especially that he holds too exclusively to the party of his choice.

Good-bye, I affectionately greet all the members of this beloved community who have made me so happy by their good conduct. I bless them.⁴⁰

771. To Father Courtès, superior of the Miss[iona]ries at Aix.⁴¹

Missions in the diocese of Aix and Marseilles. Father Roux receives his obedience for Aix, to be trained for the ministry by Father Courtès.

L.J.C. and M.I.

Marseilles, July 22, 1842.

My dear Courtès, I must know if some missions are to be given in the diocese of Aix. Now is the time to arrange what we have to do. In my diocese, one of them will be given in November, one in December, one in January and one during Lent. Two miss[iona]ries are enough

³⁸ YENVEUX VIII, 63.

³⁹ Pierre Joseph Auguste Nicolas (1812-1903) made his oblation on December 8, 1842 and was ordained priest on August 27, 1843.

⁴⁰ At Genoa, on June 17 or 18, the Founder parted company with his sister and niece who were to spend the summer at Lorcey. He returned to Marseilles on June 28 after having stopped at N.-D. de l'Osier and Viviers. He made the canonical visit of the novitiate from June 20 to 22, cf. REY II, 139-140.

⁴¹ Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L. M.-Courtès.

for each. But since the house of M[arsei]lles has come to your aid, I must of necessity know what there is to be done in the diocese of Aix.

I am going to send you Father Roux who will belong to the community of Aix. I think you already know him a little. Though he is timid, he does not lack good common sense. He is young, he will profit from your experience in training himself, but don't forget that it is you who must train him, namely, that you guide not only his behaviour which has always been good, but his studies and the exercises of the different kinds of ministry in which you will employ him. I don't need to stimulate your zeal in this matter. You understand our young Fathers must be looked after and I don't think I can do anything better for them than give them a teacher such as you are. Good-bye, I embrace you. I am somewhat tired since a few days, and this is due to my excessive work. Things will go on all the same.

So as not to re-write my letter, I am sending you the one that was ready when I had to send Father Roux to you.

I am well and very pleased to have affectionately greeted you.

Good-bye.

772. [To Father Vincens, at N.-D. de l'Osier].⁴²

The cincture is one of the distinctive signs of the Oblates' habit.

[Marseilles,] July 29, 1842.

I request you to give all of them cinctures just as I have determined for the Congregation. This is about the only distinctive sign of the habit they have to take on joining the novitiate. Those who wear other cinctures, even among the Fathers, are acting formally against my intentions.

⁴² YENVEUX VI, 23.

773. To Father Semeria, superior of the Miss[iona]ries at Vico. Corsica.⁴³

Success of the missions. Bishop Casanelli d'Istria's presence at Vico costs the house too much.

L.J.C. and M.I.

Marseille, August 4, 1842.

What can I do, my dear Father Semeria, if an indiscretion has been committed in my absence? I am very annoyed by the silence and still more by the revelation of the poor brigand's secret. I hope it will go unnoticed. In any case, my good little Father, confess that the good Lord is really spoiling you. He is making use of you to display his power and his greatest mercy, and your holy ministry is blessed abundantly everywhere. I congratulate you and I don't have to remind you that you must thank God unceasingly. You told me that you were planning to remain at Vico until after the Assumption and now Father Bellon writes Father Moreau that two miss[iona]ries have gone down to Ajaccio, no doubt to go on a mission. That is good, I don't see why the whole comm[uni]ty should remain at home just because the Bishop is there. If you are tired and should need some rest, then it is all right, otherwise go ahead with your work provided someone stays home to attend to business; for I very much fear that our affairs may suffer because of the crowd of visitors who come to pay homage to his Lordship and who in all probability are not eating at the hotel. This is an important matter which deserves all your attention. Who then is paying all these huge expenses? I am told that his Lordship pays five francs per day. That is all right for him, but it certainly costs you three times more. All these priests who come one after another, how was it decided to feed them at the expense of the house? Yet his Lordship knows full well that you have no resources. In spite of this, I don't see that he has granted you the title of the parish which is a couple of steps from your house and which you, in fact, serve; so do they think you are coining false money, for where would you get money from? Is it not enough that you have spent so much on maintenance? You will end up being bankrupt.

⁴³ Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L. M.-Semeria.

I limit myself to writing to you. Give my news to your good Fathers whom I love as much as you, my dear son. I bless you and with you, all your brothers.

† C.J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

774. [To Father Bellon, at Ajaccio].⁴⁴

The title "Monsieur" is not to be given to fellow Oblates. The missionaries' habit.

[Marseilles,] August 4, 1842.

You can't imagine how shocked we are to hear you give the title of "Monsieur", now to one and now to another of our Fathers. You must give up this usage which is against the prescriptions of one of our General Chapters.⁴⁵

You will also have to provide cinctures such as are to be worn in the Congregation. The clerical band is tolerated only because we are in the Seminary and because we must be a model for the dress your boarders have to adopt. When you are at Vico you will do well to remove it. You must be aware that our Fathers, at the Major Seminary of Marseilles, wear the habit of the missionaries, except when they are in the Cathedral choir. Only then do they wear the clerical band in order to conform to the habit which the Canons are obliged to wear.

775. [To Father Courtès, at Aix].⁴⁶

More vocations. Neglect nothing in forming true religious.

[Marseilles,] August 23, 1842.

There is no sacrifice we should not make for the education and good direction of the numerous members the Lord has so liberally given us, for which fact we will never be able to thank him enough.

⁴⁴ YENVEUX V, 216; VI, 24.

⁴⁵ 1821 Chapter. The Founder, however, always wrote "Monsieur" on the address of letters because the Congregation was not authorized by the Government.

⁴⁶ YENVEUX VIII, 61.

Our duty in response to this remarkable favour is to neglect nothing in training religious who are fit to serve the Church and Society. In moments when we feel hard pressed, we may now envisage a fairly near future when we will be able to act with greater ease. That is sufficient motive to encourage us and to help us to be patient.

776. [To Father Vincens, at N.-D. de l'Osier].⁴⁷

Request for patience if the personnel of houses is insufficient.

[Marseilles,] September 7, 1842.⁴⁸

I thus find myself always deprived of the needed assistance which would ease my work a little.⁴⁹ I have to be patient; I exhort other superiors who are also having difficulties to be patient like myself. We will have a little more to endure, but the good Lord will not call us to account for the impossible.

777. [To Father Guigues, at N.-D. de l'Osier].⁵⁰

It is not possible to increase the house personnel. Let us obey and trust in God. Let Vincens take care of the novices and the scholastics.

[Marseilles,] September 27, 1842.

No one could have imagined that in the present state our Congregation could adequately provide the service of the missions for the whole diocese of Valence. It is already a great deal that you make a few appearances there, as long as you are not provided with members. Moreover I believe that the Marists are as embarrassed as we are. If they can do better, I bless the Lord for it. *Dummodo Christus annuntietur . . . gaudebo.*⁵¹

⁴⁷ YENVEUX VII, 259.

⁴⁸ Yenneux writes: "September 7, 1848. According to the context of this excerpt, however, and the entry in the *Diary* of September 7, 1842 (YENVEUX III, 86 and VII, 260), it is rather 1842.

⁴⁹ At that time the General Council consisted of Fathers Tempier, Courtès, Guibert, third assistant and General Secretary, and Mille who had replaced Father Mie. Only Tempier and Mille, who were residing at the Seminary of Marseilles, could help the Founder sometimes.

⁵⁰ YENVEUX I, 26-27; V, 89; VII, 253, 7*.

⁵¹ Ph. 1:18.

You are right in being resigned to what God will decide for you. He will never ask of us anything beyond what we can do. Men are more demanding than God, but it is not men whom we are to please. If we do God's will we shall succeed against peoples' expectations and in spite of them.

You are wrong in troubling yourself so much about what will happen as a result of my decision concerning your house.⁵² Your conscience should be perfectly at ease after what I told you. You are only repeating to me what I knew as well as you did. I don't have to change my decision. I don't have the time nor the will to disprove your reasons. Let it suffice you to know that it cannot be otherwise. Once and for all know how to accept your lot with a good grace and not aggravate my anxieties through demands which you should understand that I am unable to grant. After all, for Father Vincens it is only a question of adding one class of theology per day to directing his novitiate, for the scholastics whom you present to me as a separate category, as also the Brothers, are part of the same novitiate. The Jesuit Fathers are a little richer than we are in numbers; nevertheless Father de Jocas has been appointed rector of his huge residence at Avignon without being relieved of his fifty novices or so or of some small services he renders in the city. These Fathers don't make so much fuss, because obedience reigns among them with greater simplicity and they have more trust in God.

I beg each one of you to stop complaining and murmuring. Your duty is to suppress this disorder which occasions so much evil. Do what is laid down for you without so much groaning which is heard in the house and outside. Make a virtue out of necessity and God will help you. As for myself, I recognize my powerlessness to create and I remain at peace.

Nothing surprises me more than the picture you give me of the novitiate. If you are not exaggerating what you tell me about its difficult condition, you will have to reprimand yourself for allowing Father novice master to be engaged in other things. As far as I am concerned, I put him in charge only of this, and this task is not beyond the

⁵² In 1842-1843, the ten scholastics who were theology students and had been living at the Seminary of Marseilles until then, were sent to N.-D. de l'Osier, cf. *Registre des chapitres généraux*, 1843, July 11, evening. Brother Nicolas was to teach dogma there, cf. L. M.-Guigues, July 1, 1842.

strength of one who is as able and zealous as he is, even if we add thereto the class of theology, which I have seen done elsewhere. Any other Father can take charge of the hospice in your absence even if it should fare less well.

You should certainly relieve Father Vincens from the task of the extra-ordinary confessor to the Sisters of Saint-Marcellin. This task is entirely incompatible with his duties.

As a bit of comfort, I assure you that your malaise will not last beyond this year. I have only one regret, namely, having counted too much on your courage. If I had thought you would insist on ignoring our sorry state, I would have taken other measures at the proper time.

778. [To Father Vincens, at N.-D. de l'Osier].⁵³

Oblation of Brothers Pianelli and Piot. Apostasies. Last will.

[Marseilles,] October 16, 1842.

Apostasy is such a horror to me that I cannot recommend enough that you be quite cautious with Brother Pianelli.⁵⁴ The proposition he made you still resounds in my ear. Even to hint at the possibility of an apostasy makes me tremble. Let him understand well the magnitude and consequences of such a crime. All the dispensations in the world, when they are induced by one's fault, save external appearances only.

I would not want Brother Piot to give the impression of placing conditions.⁵⁵ It would be more fitting and perfect to abide by the wisdom and kind sense of the superior.

I am far from opposing the good use he wishes to make of a part of his wealth but I have not quite understood his intention from the note you enclosed in your letter. First of all it is only a matter of 400 francs that Brother Piot would like to use for charitable works. But the specifications would amount to much more and certainly would encompass his entire possessions. There is nothing to be said about

⁵³ YENVEUX VIII, 92-93, 309.

⁵⁴ C. Laurent Pianelli made his profession on December 8, 1842. He left the Congregation in 1855.

⁵⁵ Jules Piot made his profession on November 1, 1842.

article 1, but article 2 is too vague. How can we calculate the cost of his education and what does he mean by helping his brother-in-law? The gift of 100 francs made to the church is all right but how can we find the 100 francs annually if this expense is to be added to that of no. 2, for it seems to me the latter must require the greater part of the sum available. Article 4 mentions 400 francs to be given to a poor relative. From where does he intend to take this sum? This is all for the time being. In future the faculty of making arrangements in favour of relatives who may be in need should not be granted beforehand. That would be an agreement which is against religious poverty. If such a situation arises the member should have enough trust and be convinced that the superior will not refuse assistance. In article 5, here again 100 francs for a poor person of his village. From what sum are these 100 francs to be taken? Is it still from the 400 francs to be distributed to the poor of the commune? This kind of alms given by a religious after he has made his profession does not seem to be in order. I cannot make anything out of article 6. What is this amount he is talking of, and then what is the remaining sum which the superior is to give every year to charitable works?

So here are, to begin with, my observations. You will understand that I cannot give a pertinent reply to the questions on the small note. Your letter too has not given me sufficient information either. For the rest, let Brother Piot not worry: he can make his profession even before I have replied to other questions he may ask me, for I am on the eve of my departure for Africa where I am going to accompany St. Augustine's relics to Hippo.

779. [To Father Courtès, at Aix].⁵⁶

Forthcoming departure for Africa with Father Tempier. Father Courtès will take charge of the Congregation during this absence.

[Marseilles,] October 21, 1842.

My dear Courtès, I am going to leave for Africa.⁵⁷ With God's help, I hope to be back in a couple of weeks. I will be accompanied by

⁵⁶ YENVEUX VII, 17.

⁵⁷ Bishop Dupuch of Algiers had obtained for his church a famous relic of Saint Augustine kept at Pavis. As the former Bishop of Icosia, Bishop de Mazenod was invited for its translation. This trip extended from October 22 to November 13. The Founder's *Diary* describing this trip has been preserved.

Father Tempier. Jeancard has been personally invited by his Lordship the Bishop of Algiers. His Grace, the Archbishop of Bordeaux, their Excellencies, the Bishops of Digne and of Châlons⁵⁸ will make the pilgrimage with us. On my part, this is purely and simply an obliging gesture. No matter, I am going all the same. During these two weeks you will represent me on the continent and if I am shipwrecked, you will have to care for the welfare of the family.

780. [To Father Courtès, at Aix].⁵⁹

Plan to send Father J. J. Frédéric Perron to Canada.

[Marseilles,] November 24, 1842.

As for Father Perron, he has already been destined for Canada. His presence becomes all the more necessary in that three priests have already joined us,⁶⁰ and you know well enough that we need to present them with a model of regularity other than the men we have over there. The Bishop of Montreal insists that we do not give up the cross near which he has placed our men and yet we could not refuse⁶¹ . . .

781. [To Father Guigues at N.-D. de l'Osier].⁶²

Regrets seeing Father Dassy dedicate part of his time to non-essential tasks.

[Marseilles,] November 24, 1842.

You told me in the letter I am answering that Father Dassy was at Parménie⁶³ for three weeks, busy with his book.⁶⁴ Is this the work you

⁵⁸ Their Lordships Donet, the Archbishop of Bordeaux, Sibour, the Bishop of Digne, de Prilly, the Bishop of Châlons, and several others.

⁵⁹ YENVEUX IX, 180.

⁶⁰ Fathers Dandurand, Léonard and E. Durocher.

⁶¹ First they were established at St-Hilaire, but the community had just been transferred to Longeuil.

⁶² YENVEUX III, 72.

⁶³ Chapel dedicated to our Lady of the Cross, situated some twenty kilometres from N.D. de l'Osier and served by the Oblates from 1842 to 1848, cf. ORTOLAN, *Les Oblats de Marie Immaculée*, t. 1, pp. 384-388.

⁶⁴ Dassy was at the time working on the book: *L'abbaye de Saint-Antoine, en Dauphiné. Essai historique et descriptif*. Grenoble, Baratier, 1844, 514 pp. The text was ready for printing in May 1843, cf. L. Dassy-Mazenod, May 21, 1843.

assured me was to have been done by way of recreation? I see, to the contrary, that Father Dassy has made it his main pursuit. Everything else must suffer therefrom. If he were fit only for this sort of work or if we had a great number of labourers to take care of the evangelizing, I would be glad about this. But in the dearth we have to face, seeing one of our best members infatuated with a task that has so little to do with the duties of our ministry, is a real pity.

782. [To Father Moreau, at the Major Seminary of Ajaccio].⁶⁵

Father Lagier becomes Father Moreau's first assistant. See to the observance of the Rule.

[Marseilles,] November 25, 1842.

I very well recognize good Father Bellon in the proposal he has made you. For me this angel will be a source of consolation in all the situations of life. Believe me, dear friend, that I need this as a compensation, for I meet with great disappointments in the family that should have but one heart and one soul and have no other spirit than that which the good Lord has inspired us to establish within it and which has served it well until now. So your house will be constituted thus: Father Lagier, first assistant, and by this very fact he becomes the first director at the Seminary; Father Bellon, however, though second assistant, can continue to be the spiritual director. Father Lagier will understand that it would be really inconvenient to deprive him [Father Bellon] of this duty. It would give him the impression that he has not fulfilled it as he should. On re-reading your letter, I notice that you have already established Father Lagier as the spiritual Father. Let it be, if it has already been done; you can continue going to confession to him. But do tell this dear child about all the consideration I would have liked to maintain for him, which as is clear, is nothing else than the expression of my esteem and affection for him.

You tell me nothing about Father Lagier. Nevertheless you must know that I had to really pressure him before he decided to take up his post. I was hoping that the prospect of a Seminary so well set up as is yours would rekindle his zeal and that he would consider himself for-

⁶⁵ YENVEUX B 11; II, 6; III, 88; VIII, 155; IX, 44.

tunate to be called to contribute towards the clergy's regeneration and therefore of the people of this interesting island; however, one of his letters to Father Tempier that I have just read shows me that he is still more keen on the direction of some pious women, whom he believes he is leading on the path of sublime perfection and with whom he is wasting precious time, rather than give it up to the ministry I have assigned to him. He speaks of God's will as if it could be manifested to him in some other way than through the channel of his legitimate superiors. We nevertheless paid the full measure of attention and consideration in establishing him at Ajaccio in the position he now occupies there. What would become of us if we had to deal thus with everyone.

Still I exhort you to act with kindness but insist that the Rule be observed. Don't allow abuses to slip in which can lead to all kinds of consequences. Especially insist that all letters be handed to you. It is your responsibility to distribute them after having opened them. It is also you who are to seal them. Don't forget to give the prescribed conferences; give short but frequent instructions, at least every two weeks, on the duties of your state. In a word, don't lose sight of the fact that all of you have made profession in the Congregation of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate and you must show yourselves as such and not as Sulpicians or priests assembled together from all over the world. Your house has been accused of having deviated somewhat from these rules, from this notion, during the term of your predecessor. Establish order in everything. That is your duty. In your first letter give me an account of all and of each and every one, priests, novices and Brothers.

783. [To Father Vincens, at N.-D. de l'Osier].⁶⁶

The Brothers' work and religious life.

[Marseilles,] December 8, 1842.

I reply that I have always considered it an injustice to make men, who have come to us to become religious, work from morning till evening. Surely they have to work but they must also pray and be

⁶⁶ YENVEUX VIII, 227.

instructed in the duties of the religious life. They are not common labourers, they cannot be treated as hired domestics who are paid so that they work the whole day. Our Brothers must be present at the oraison and before they go for their work, say the *Pater*, etc., that correspond to Prime and Terce. If on heavy days their kind of work requires them to be in the fields before the community's rising time, they must stop and join the community for the oraison, unless it was laid down that in such a situation they would make their oraison before leaving. The Brothers must also leave their work for particular examen which they will advance by three or four minutes to be able to say the *Pater*, etc., that correspond to Sexte and None. They will have their dinner at the first or the second table, and depending on the house or the kind of work, they will return to their work immediately thereafter, having been careful to say the *Paters* that correspond to the hours of Vespers and Compline. Those who are in the house will go for the common recitation of the rosary, the others will say their prayer while working in the fields. All of them will do their spiritual reading daily and when a Father has been appointed to be in charge of them, he will give the first instructions indicated by the Rule in common. If there is no such priest, at least once a week the master of novices must attend to their instruction, even if he has to cancel that day what he would normally give to others. The Brothers must also assist at the spiritual conferences and in the evening give in their turn an account of the day's events.

You talk to me only about Brothers Ravier, Ramel and Perrin, but is there not one called Barras and another named Clavel?⁶⁷ What has become of them?

⁶⁷ Joseph Ravier, Claude J. Ramel, Joseph Perrin, Joseph Barras and Etienne Chavel. Barras and Ramel did not make vows.

784. To Father Courtès, superior of the Miss[iona]ries at Aix. B[ouches]-du-R[hône].⁶⁸

Missions of Roquebrune, Gémenos and Simiane.

L.J.C. and M.I.

Marseilles, December 15, 1842.

My dear Courtès, the mission of Roquebrune begins on Sunday.⁶⁹ Since Father Perron is indisposed, I am obliged to send Fathers Martin, Viala and Rouvière. Father Viala leaves tomorrow morning, will spend a quarter of an hour at Aix to hand you this letter so that you can inform Father Rouvière to get ready to take the coach the day after tomorrow, Saturday, when Father Martin will come to fetch him. I have arranged for his seat here.

To arrange this mission I was obliged to postpone somewhat the one that was to start at Gémenos the first week of January. It will not delay much the one you have to give at Simiane. So an additional fine mission will be given, and the slowness of the Parish Priest of la Roque has had this good result. It is one more victory over hell. Good-bye.

† C. J. Eugene, Bish[op] of M[arsei]lles.

⁶⁸ Original: Rome, Archives of the Postulation, L. M.-Courtès.

⁶⁹ We have three interesting letters on this mission, cf. L. Martin-Mazenod, December 23 and 29, 1842, January 3, 1843.

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