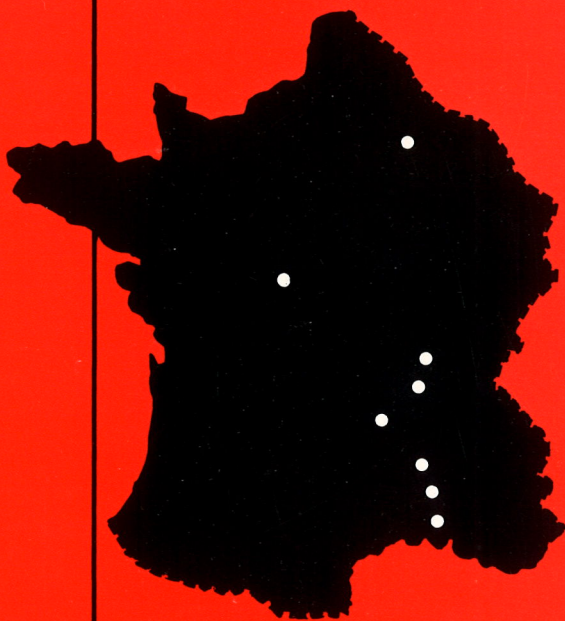


Blessed DE MAZENOD

LETTERS TO THE OBLATES OF FRANCE

1856 -1861



Letters to the Oblates of France

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Blessed EUGENE DE MAZENOD
1782-1861

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Letters to the Oblates of France

1856-1861

Translated by
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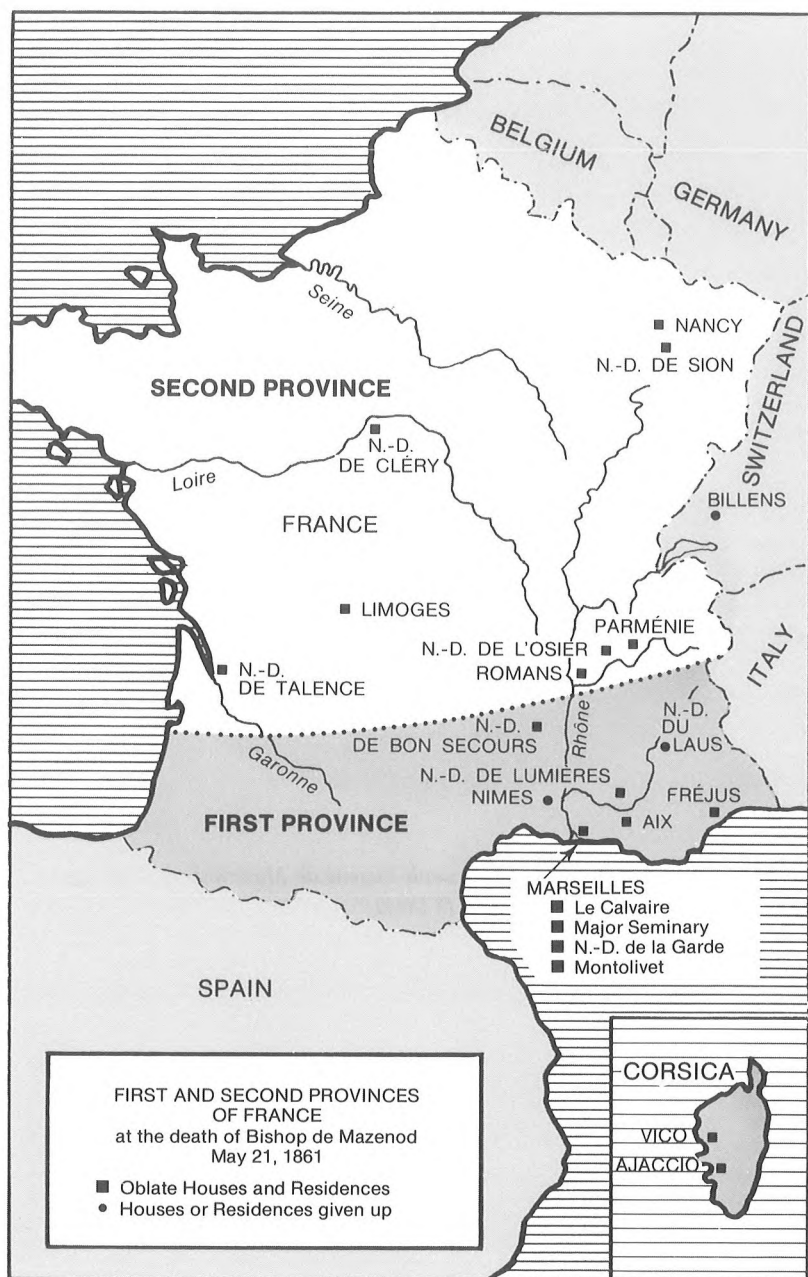
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1856

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Bishop Charles-Joseph-Eugene de Mazenod
(† 1861)



Introduction

This twelfth volume of Oblate Writings, the seventh and last containing Bishop de Mazenod's letters to his religious sons in France, presents a profoundly changed man to us.

Whereas in the letters published in the preceding volumes the Founder primarily dealt with problems facing the Congregation either abroad or in France, in many letters here he speaks as much of his diocese as he does of his religious family; moreover, his concerns are constantly and in an ever increasingly exclusive manner directed towards the major religious and political problems that beset the Church and France. In this final period of his life, he had achieved such an equilibrium in his concern and love for the Congregation, his diocese and the Church that he could not, so it would seem, take a direct interest in any one of these without relating it to the others.

His choice of Oblate correspondents is quite revealing here. Seventy of the 161 letters contained in this volume were sent either to Bishop Guibert (26 letters) or to Father Tempier (25 letters) or to Father Fabre (19 letters). Now the Founder always consulted the first about difficulties in the political order and about major religious problems; the other two, both Vicars General of Marseilles and Assistants General in the Oblates, he saw as representing his diocese and the Congregation.

Nevertheless, two events likewise explain this new manner of corresponding with the Oblates: his appointment to the Senate in 1856 and, in 1859, his being designated by the Emperor to the Cardinalate.

1 – Bishop de Mazenod as Senator

After the proclamation of the Republic on February 24, 1848, Prince Louis Napoleon Bonaparte was elected President. Won over by the promise of freedom of education, Catholics had voted for him. Sending French troops to bring the Pope back to Rome in 1849, and,

in 1850, the passing of the Falloux law which authorized the establishment of free religious schools independent of the official educational system, contributed more and more to reconciling State and Church. The latter approved the coup d'état of December 2, 1851, and the restoration of the Empire in 1852.

In 1851, with the death of Bishop Jean Charles de la Tour d'Auvergne, a cardinalatial position became vacant in France. Bishop Guibert of Viviers, the spiritual son and very devoted friend of Bishop de Mazenod, entered the candidacy of the Bishop of Marseilles. Without the latter's knowledge, Bishop Guibert officially approached the Prefect of the Department of the Bouches-du-Rhône in view of obtaining this favour, a favour justified by the Prelate's advanced age, his pastoral and missionary activity, the importance of the See of Marseilles (the second city in all France) and his good relationships with the President.¹ The Prefect wrote to the Minister of Worship in the same vein, but the whole initiative fell through. The Minister answered that a successor to Cardinal de la Tour d'Auvergne had already been proposed to the Pope and thus they would have to wait for another opportunity.²

Mr. de Suleau, Prefect of the Bouches-du-Rhône and a friend of Bishop de Mazenod, did not entirely admit defeat. After the President of the Republic had visited Marseilles, Mr. de Suleau wrote to Louis Napoleon recommending that he appoint the Bishop of Marseilles to the Senate.³ This second initiative did not have any immediate result; it seems, however, that the Emperor did not forget it.⁴

In 1853, Napoleon III married a young Spanish lady, Eugenie de Montijo, the Countess of Teba. Three years later, the imperial prince was born. Like all the bishops of France, Bishop de Mazenod appeared

¹ Bishop Guibert to the Prefect, August 2, 1851. Arch. departementales de Marseille. In his *Diary*, Bishop de Mazenod adds a title in support of his being appointed to the senate: "... my age, my years of service in the episcopate of which I am the dean, my name perhaps. ..." REY, II, 600.

² Prefect de Suleau to the Minister of Worship, January 1, 1852. *Ibid.* Minister Fortoul to the Prefect, January 15, 1852. Arch. nationales de Paris, F 19, 2448. Archbishop Auguste Donnet of Bordeaux was named Cardinal on March 15, 1852 and in 1853 Morlot became Archbishop of Tours.

³ Prefect to Louis Napoleon, November 2, 1852. Arch. departementales de Marseille. This time Canon Jeancard had reminded the Prefect of Bishop de Mazenod's merits. Cf. Jeancard to the Prefect, October 7, 1852. *Ibid.*

⁴ In 1852 President Louis Napoleon was named Emperor on the strength of a plebiscite; he took the name of Napoleon III (December 2, 1852).

to be more and more pleased with the Emperor and his policies. He published very laudatory pastoral letters on April 13, 1854, at the time of the Crimean War; on September 17, 1855, on the occasion of the capture of Sebastopol; and on October 15, 1855, when it became known that the Empress was pregnant. As soon as the birth of the imperial prince on March 16, 1856, was communicated to him, he hastened to write to Their Majesties. He wanted to crown his congratulations with an act of piety. On March 17th he went up to the shrine of Notre-Dame de la Garde to invoke the Blessed Mother's protection upon the imperial family. After offering public prayers, he blessed "a gold medal, specially coined for the occasion, which bore the image of the Blessed Virgin on one side and that of the shrine on the other". This medal was to be given to the heir to the throne. The Emperor was deeply touched by this gesture of kindness. He thanked the Prelate in a letter of March 25th, which concludes as follows: "This extraordinary and solemn consecration by which the cradle of the imperial prince is placed under a divine protection and these prayers calling down upon him all the benefits of Heaven for the future, are for Us the most precious witness of your special sympathy. . . ."⁵

Napoleon III did not want to be less generous and he, too, knew how to express his appreciation. On June 24, 1856, on the occasion of the child's baptism, at which the papal legate and all the bishops of France assisted, Bishop de Mazenod was made a Senator.

This appointment changed the established pattern of his life. Every year he took part in the Senate's session which opened in January or February and lasted until June. He would arrive for the opening session and be back in Marseilles for Palm Sunday. Only in 1860 did he thereafter return to Paris for the celebration of the Polignac-Mires marriage, and thus take part in the Senate's sitting of June 6th.

When he was in the capital city, he did everything possible to attend each Senate sitting. His place was "so conspicuous", he wrote to Father Fabre on March 1, 1859, that he could not be absent "without that fact being noticed". He also attentively followed the debates and disapproved of some of his colleagues who were Cardinals, who "instead of listening or being bored like the others . . . are quite peacefully attending to their mail. Frankly, that's beyond me," he confided

⁵ Protocol of March 17, 1856. Arch. nationales de Paris, F 19, 2535. Napoleon III to Bishop de Mazenod, March 25, 1856. REY II, 590.

to Bishop Guibert on February 15, 1859, "and I consider this want of attention an exceptional impropriety. Without prejudice to the respect which is due to them, I find this pretense of working *archi-ridiculous*, to use an expression that corresponds their dignity."⁶

Though he listened attentively, it would seem that he spoke only on two occasions. On May 18, 1858, he is the reporter "for a committee responsible for examining a law enabling the Ministries of Public Education and of Worship to draw a credit of 499,450 francs during the fiscal year of 1858 as a contribution to the construction of a new cathedral in Marseilles".⁷ On March 29, 1860, he made a brief but eloquent speech with regard to the petition of Catholics that the Senate intervene in favour of the temporal power of the Holy See.⁸

The Founder was never glad to spend the several months of each year from 1856 to 1860 in the capital city. On February 12, 1857, he admitted to Father Fabre: "Tomorrow I shall begin the woeful profession I have to pursue in Paris. I am bored in advance. Nothing less than the obligation of my position is needed to constrain myself to it. I shall try and shorten it as much as possible." What bores him even more than the Senate's sittings is the social life that his office of senator obliges him to lead: there are visits to make and receive, dinners, receptions, etc. "Dear sons," he wrote to the Oblates at Nancy on February 4, 1858, "believe me, I am doing some strict penance here! I cannot suffer the world which I renounced so readily and here I am forced to be in touch with it — the least I can manage, to be sure, and only to the extent that my position imperiously requires, but that is enough to bore me thoroughly, to make my heart groan at the sight of so much luxury, so much extravagance, so much vanity, so much futility: I assess everything I see by the sacred principles of the Gospel and weigh the value of all this wealth in the scales of God's holiness. . . ." On February 10th of the same year, he expressed the same when he wrote to Father Tempier: "I end my letter. It is time to get dressed for an appearance at the Tuileries, and Cardinal Dupont will soon be calling for me. This is a big chore for me, for I do not like the world of the great. Besides, when I am obliged to be in its presence, I perceive its futility and emptiness more than I ever could in meditation. I find it

⁶ Letters nos. 1401, 1408, 1409.

⁷ Jean LEFLON, *Eugene de Mazenod*, III, 384.

⁸ Letters nos. 1449, 1453.

here in its fullest expression. . . . 'That is all it is!' I tell myself. 'Oh! that is very little indeed! One moment spent at the foot of the holy altar surpasses all this prestige, no matter how brilliant it may be.'

A painful experience that surpassed all the others in personal suffering is the fact that during each of these years he has to celebrate February 17th all alone. He mentions this in several letters. "What you tell me," he wrote to Father Mouchette on February 22, 1858, "has compensated me for the excessive deprivation I felt on the 17th of this month when I had to celebrate, all alone, in the small chapel of my hotel,⁹ the holy sacrifice in thanksgiving for God's great kindness, of which we are today keeping the 32nd anniversary, if I am not mistaken. You were celebrating this at Montolivet as elsewhere. Daily I receive moving reports about this, and I, all alone on my third floor, united myself as best as I could to the beautiful feast that was being celebrated far away from me. . . ."

To console himself in this isolation, the Founder availed himself each year of a few days recess from the Senate in order to pay a short visit to Archbishop Guibert of Tours and to the novitiate at Nancy.¹⁰ In 1857 and 1858 he even spent some time with his sister and his niece at Cirey.¹¹ And he certainly did not decline invitations extended to him to preside over religious ceremonies celebrated in the communities of the capital city.¹²

2 – The Cardinalate

When he was travelling to Paris at the end of the month of January 1859, Bishop de Mazenod made a detour through Bourges in order to visit his old friend, Cardinal Dupont, at home. "What a great blow it was for me," he wrote on February 1st to the Oblates at Marseilles, "to find, upon arriving at the archbishopric, the poor Cardinal abed, already confined for a month with a very dangerous gout! He had kept me in the dark about it, for I certainly would not have had the indiscretion to pay him a visit while he was in this condition." The Cardinal died on May 26th.

⁹ He always stayed at the Hotel du Bon-Lafontaine.

¹⁰ Letters nos. 1321, 1322, 1375, 1376, 1401, 1402, 1404, 1405, 1406, 1408-1412, 1447.

¹¹ Letters nos. 1335, 1336, 1377.

¹² Cf. *Diary*, from which Rey copies entire pages covering the years 1856 to 1860. Also cf. Letter no. 1412.

Being the only bishop who was a senator along with the French Cardinals, Bishop de Mazenod became all at once the bishop best qualified to replace the deceased. Archbishop Guibert hastened to recommend the senator to the Minister of Worship.¹³ Canon Jeancard, for his part, wrote to Mr. Troplong, President of the Senate and the Founder's friend, praising the bishop of Marseilles.¹⁴ Mr. Troplong transmitted this letter to the Minister of Worship, adding the following words: "I have nothing to say to you about the Bishop of Marseilles. He is a pious and very devoted prelate, who is as renowned in Italy and in England as he is in France on account of his many foundations."¹⁵ The affair took its course. On August 15th Bishop de Mazenod received a letter from the Minister of Worship notifying him that the Emperor was proposing him to the Holy Father "for the Cardinal's hat vacant in the order of France's designations."¹⁶ It was, of course, nothing more than an official proposal that the French Ambassador transmitted to Cardinal Antonelli, the papal Secretary of State, on August 26th: "His Majesty's Government cherishes the idea," we read therein, "that raising to the Cardinalate a prelate so recommendable in every respect, will not encounter any objection coming from His Holiness."¹⁷

Pius IX did not raise any objection against the person proposed, but problems of a more general nature did not allow him to meet the Emperor's wishes.

A first difficulty arose immediately. The customary practice required that proposals to the Cardinalate made by heads of State were to remain secret until officially published by the Holy See in order to show clearly that the Pope was not ceding to any inadmissible pressure. Now it so happened that the newspapers of Paris were already publishing this designation on September 1st, only four days after the Ambassador's letter to Cardinal Antonelli had been sent.

¹³ Archbishop Guibert to the Minister of Worship, May 31, 1859. Arch. nationales de Paris, F 19, 2448.

¹⁴ Canon Jeancard to Mr. Troplong, May 30, 1859. *Ibid.*

¹⁵ Mr. Troplong to Mr. Rouland, June 3, 1859. *Ibid.*

¹⁶ Minister of Worship to Bishop de Mazenod, August 13, 1859. REY II, 737.

¹⁷ Mr. de Gramont to Cardinal Antonelli, August 26, 1859. Vatican Secret Archives, rubr. 283, an. 1859.

However, a more serious difficulty was to delay the appointment indefinitely, namely, the war for the unification of Italy. The King of Piedmont, Victor Emmanuel, and his minister Cavour, by supporting the revolutionary movements in the different small Italian States, had launched the movement which in 1870 resulted in unifying all Italy.

Despite the numerous promises he made in favour of maintaining the Papal States, Napoleon III first aided militarily Victor Emmanuel to combat the Austrians and he ceded Lombardy to Piedmont at the armistice of Villafranca on July 11, 1859. In the spring and summer of 1859, the duchies, provinces and legations one after the other drove out their rulers and surrendered themselves to Piedmont. The latter gradually annexed Tuscany, Massa and Carrara, Parma and Piacenza, Modena and Reggio as well as the entire northern part of the Papal States: Romagna, the Marches and Umbria. Furthermore, Napoleon repeated several times that he was going to withdraw his troops from Rome, thus indirectly handing over the last shreds of the Papal States to Piedmont.

Very much concerned about this state of affairs, the Pope did not create any Cardinals at the Consistory of September 26, 1859; instead, on this occasion he delivered a strongly worded allocution condemning the revolt of the Legations and excommunicating all those who had given advice and assistance to the revolution.

As a consequence of this allocution, most of the bishops of France wrote pastoral letters defending the Papal States and often harshly attacking the Emperor. Bishop de Mazenod had to use a great deal of diplomacy to defend the Pope without offending the Emperor. Instead of a pastoral letter addressed to his faithful, he preferred sending a personal letter to the Emperor wherein he expressed his deep concern and that of Catholics and invited the Emperor to put an end to Piedmont's encroachments.¹⁸ Then he wrote to Cardinal Barnabò both to inform him of the approach he made to the Emperor and to assure the Cardinal that he would always defend the Pope.¹⁹

The Emperor thanked Bishop de Mazenod without, however, making any declaration that would reassure him. Cardinal Barnabò thanked him in his turn, but added that in Rome they were astonished

¹⁸ Bishop de Mazenod to Napoleon III, October 22, 1859. REY II, 746.

¹⁹ Bishop de Mazenod to Cardinal Barnabò, November 8, 1859. Arch. Prop. Fide, Francia, vol. 4, f. 383.

at the Bishop of Marseilles' official silence.²⁰ Bishop de Mazenod, who excelled in improvising, "without losing a single moment" composed a pastoral letter wherein he skillfully succeeded to explain his delay, to defend vigorously the Papal States, and not to offend the Emperor in whom he reiterated his confidence as in someone "whose sentiments in favour of the temporal sovereignty of the Head of the Church have never seemed doubtful to us. . . ."²¹

However, Bishop de Mazenod did begin seriously to doubt the Emperor's intentions when the pamphlet *Le Pape et le Congrès* (*The Pope and the Congress*) was published on December 22nd. This text was alleged to have been inspired by Napoleon III. It maintained that the Sovereign Pontiff would have something to gain by the reduction of his States: the smaller his State, the greater the Pope will be. This pamphlet raised up a great furor in Rome and among Catholics. Upon the insistence of Cardinal Morlot, Bishop de Mazenod on December 31, 1859, wrote a second letter to Napoleon III, a letter that is courteous but firm, denouncing the pamphlet and imploring the Emperor to defend the integrity of the Papal States. He received no reply. The year 1859, therefore, ended badly. Bishop de Mazenod had apparently grieved both Pope and Emperor, and his Cardinalate was mentioned no more. Cardinal Antonelli will say, moreover, that in view of the painful situation in which the Holy See found itself, His Holiness did not think it opportune to create new Cardinals: such a creation was by nature a joyful event and the Church, on the contrary, was in mourning.²²

The year 1860 did not at all change the general situation. In his New Year wishes, Napoleon III advised Pius IX "to make the sacrifice of the rebellious provinces". In his encyclical of January 19th, the Pope rejected this advice and energetically claimed possession of the territories in the Romagna.

²⁰ Napoleon III to Bishop de Mazenod, November 14, 1859. REY II, 747. Cardinal Barnabò to Bishop de Mazenod, November 21, 1859. Arch. Postulation: L. M.-Barnabò.

²¹ Pastoral letter of November 24, 1859. Bishop de Mazenod to Cardinal Barnabò, November 28, 1859.

²² Cardinal Antonelli to the Emperor, March 8, 1860. Vatican Secret Archives, rubr. 283, an. 1860.

Obviously, Bishop de Mazenod could no longer depend on the Emperor. Henceforth he frankly and forthrightly espoused the Pope's cause. Despite the Government's ban, he published the encyclical together with a commentary.²³ Instead of the customary refrain professing confidence in the Emperor, he now spoke of divine Providence which was from henceforth the only reliable support. He spent several months in Paris during the winter and returned there again in June, but he did not ask for an audience with the Emperor.

In the meantime, Bishop de Mazenod had received a letter from the Pope which gave him great pleasure and brought him great serenity. On January 6, 1860, Bishop de Mazenod had written to Pius IX to reassure him regarding his principles and to tell him all he had done in favour of the Papal States. The Holy Father answered personally on January 28th. He concluded in the following terms: "We repeat to you the expression of the resolution made because of a quite particular affection for you, which is to confer on your merits, as soon as the times will be more opportune, the greatest recompense it is in Our power to give. . . ."²⁴ This reassurance of the Pope's good dispositions in his regard sufficed for him. If for some months in 1859 Bishop de Mazenod appeared to be uneasy due to the false position into which he had been cast by being designated for the Cardinalate, a designation publicly known and yet not confirmed by the Pope, in 1860 we find him quite serene and submissive to God's will. Already on December 29, 1859, he had written to Archbishop Guibert: "The hat will come whenever the decision is made to send it, or it will not come at all: I am not concerned about it. Up to now I have lived 80 years without having had it, and I shall do well without it also during the short time I have yet to live. . . ." He expressed the same ideas in 1860: "I am quite unconcerned about it. . . ."; "I assure you that I don't trouble myself at all about it," he wrote to Archbishop Guibert. "Thus, I have never reminded either the Minister or the Emperor of my situation. . . ."²⁵

²³ Letter of February 7, 1860, to the Clergy of Marseilles.

²⁴ Cf. Letter no. 1442 to Archbishop Guibert.

²⁵ Cf. Letters nos. 1451, 1458.

Bishop de Mazenod fell ill at the beginning of the year 1861 and died on May 21st without receiving this highest recompense which the Holy Father had promised him.²⁶ Rather, this honour had been a humiliation for him and the Cardinal's hat a crown of thorns.

3 – The Diocese of Marseilles

Detailed information about Bishop de Mazenod and the Cardinalate and his role as senator is contained in different written works;²⁷ nevertheless, a summary must be given here as a help to understanding the references to these matters that we find in a good number of letters contained in this twelfth volume of Oblate Writings.

If in the course of the last years of his life the Founder more and more speaks — almost as though he were obsessed²⁸ — of the Pope's problems and the deteriorating relationships between Church and State, the problems of the Church of Marseilles also gave him much grave concern and continually absorbed him. There was lack of goodwill and little readiness to serve on the part of his main collaborators at the bishopric, muffled discontent of the clergy, misunderstanding with the municipal authorities; but especially there were the daring projects which we will briefly describe here so that we can better situate in their proper context the petty details that we come across in some fifty letters or so.

The major building projects

The construction of major religious buildings undertaken at Marseilles in the course of the last decade of his life made up the first bundle of Bishop de Mazenod's concerns. Four construction projects were then requiring a big layout of capital funds: the cathedral, the shrine of Notre-Dame de la Garde, the bishop's residence, and the monument to the Immaculate Conception.

²⁶ In the summer of 1861, Napoleon III gave assurances that the French army would not leave Rome and would defend the part of the Papal States which still remained in the Pope's hands. New Cardinals were immediately created, among them Archbishop Billiet of Chambéry who had been proposed by the French Government. Cf. LEFLON, III, te 1.

²⁷ Cf. especially R. BOUDENS, *Mgr de Mazenod et la politique*, Lyon, 1951. LEFLON, III, 362-454. A. MITRI, *Inquisitio historica*, Rome, 1968, pp. 331-436.

²⁸ Father Mouchette claimed that the Founder on his death-bed spoke to him more than once of Napoleon III: "That is not an Emperor . . . he is a tyrant, he is persecuting the Church." REY II, 847.

To accomplish these great works, the Bishop could not count solely on the generosity of the Marseilles people, even though trade and industry at that time were reaching "an unparalleled prosperity in the city's history".²⁹ In such a situation, his appointment to the Senate and his annual sojourn in Paris fell like a blessed manna from Heaven. He did not fail to take advantage of the opportunity which presented itself so conveniently to lobby perseveringly Ministers and other great personages of the capital city. If by nature he did not like to stretch out his hand to beg for alms, he was not at all shy to set forth the needs of his Church to the Government, for, as he saw it, such help was its due. The State had taken everything away from the Church during the Revolution; now it had the duty to maintain it.

Bishop de Mazenod had hardly been appointed to the see of Marseilles in 1837 when he began to think of building a new cathedral.³⁰ He could never understand or accept the idea that Marseilles, which had become the second city in the whole of France in terms of the size of its population and the extent of its business, should have as symbol of its religious faith the old Major, "a shapeless and miserable building that was falling into ruin".³¹ As Father Rey writes: "This was the usual line he took with the personages who visited him, with the persons in authority with whom he conversed. We have seen him accept the great fatigue of official receptions only because he profited by them to create a current of opinion which he hoped would one day become irresistible. The Government was not unaware of this. Thus, King Louis-Philippe, conversing one day with a deputy who had told him he had passed through Marseilles, said, "Did you see the Bishop? I am sure he spoke to you about his cathedral.""³²

On this issue the Bishop wrote hundreds of letters: to the Mayor, to the Prefect, to deputies, to Ministers, to Louis-Philippe before 1848, to the President of the Republic from 1848 to 1852, finally, to the Emperor.³³ In 1846 the architect Vaudoyer presented the building plans to the Minister and the municipal council pledged itself to one million

²⁹ Pastoral Letter of February 14, 1857.

³⁰ Pastoral letter of December 25, 1837, p. 9.

³¹ Bishop de Mazenod to the Minister of Worship, July 6, 1852.

³² REY II, 219.

³³ He often speaks of it in his *Diary* and letters to Oblates. cf. Letters nos. 1399, 1411, 1419.

payable in an annuity of one hundred thousand francs for ten years.³⁴ This undertaking, however, did not materialize before the Revolution of 1848.³⁵ Negotiations dragged on for several more years especially in regard to the location: the Founder wanted it in the city's centre and the municipal council's preference was to have it built near the port. Finally, Prince Louis Napoleon, whose cause Bishop de Mazenod had supported at the time of the popular consultation of December 20, 1851, laid the building's foundation stone when he passed through Marseilles on September 27, 1852; he likewise opened the first official credit for the sum of 2,500,000 francs.³⁶

The actual construction progressed slowly. In 1855 Bishop de Mazenod spoke of the construction taking some 12 to 15 years. In 1859 he informed the Minister that the building had "scarcely risen 3 meters above the ground level". In 1860 he had a better grasp of the size of the undertaking and admitted that "a considerable time will pass before the future cathedral will be finished".³⁷ In this he was not mistaken. The work continued some 40 years more and the costs exceeded 14 million francs.

The cathedral was consecrated on May 6, 1897, by Bishop Robert, Bishop de Mazenod's third successor. On this occasion the newspaper *L'Univers* wrote: "This new edifice, a building of immense proportions, towers above the city's quays between the old and the new ports. From afar its mass dominates the forest of masts, the bastions of fortresses, the elegant cylinder of lighthouses, the picturesque and animated scattering of goods brought from all the quarters of the globe. This mass, however, is not one of those whose very height is crushing. Hundreds of curves soften its peaks. The central dome, the side domes, the high vaulted portico, the gracious windows linked in patterns of three all hierarchically combine their unequal roundness. Gold colours sparkle over the blue and the result of this gigantic ensemble is an enchanting grace closely blended with a most serene grandeur. *La Major* is the largest church of France."³⁸

³⁴ REY II, 220 and the *Registre des lettres administratives* for 1846.

³⁵ REY II, 266-267.

³⁶ Bishop de Mazenod to Pius IX, October 1, 1852. *Reg. lettres admin.*

³⁷ Bishop de Mazenod to the Minister of Worship, June 29, 1855, September 25, 1859, December 11, 1860. *Reg. lettres admin.*

³⁸ *L'Univers*, May 8, 1897, in *Missions O.M.I.*, 1897, 237-238.

In some of the letters contained in this volume, the Founder also speaks of another construction project he ardently desired and which he describes as "the most beautiful monument of Marseilles after the future cathedral": this was the shrine of Notre-Dame de la Garde.³⁹

A church dedicated to the Blessed Mother already existed here in the 13th century. Its walls were squeezed between the military fortifications on the hill at the city's centre. By means of a ministerial decision, Bishop de Mazenod obtained leave to erect a basilica within the perimeter of the fortress, "a religious structure . . . suited to the Marseilles people's piety, to the city's beauty and to the daily increase of its population".⁴⁰ He laid the foundation stone of the new building on September 11, 1853.

It was not possible to count on Government assistance for a church that would not serve a parish and would respond only to the needs of popular piety. At first, it was the Marseilles people alone who through their generosity made it possible for the work to begin in 1853 and to be pursued. In order to enable the continuance of the construction, a lottery was organized for the whole of France in 1855-1857.⁴¹ In 1858 the work had already advanced sufficiently to allow Bishop de Mazenod to inaugurate the cult there. There was a temporary stoppage of work at the building site during the time of his illness and death, but Bishop Cruice took the affair in hand and had the joy of consecrating the basilica in a solemn celebration on June 5, 1864.⁴²

Bishop de Mazenod had always complained about the "delapidated state" of the episcopal residence.⁴³ In 1856, when the papal legate to the baptism of the imperial prince passed through Marseilles, the Bishop had to rent some buildings and undertake emergency work so as to be able to give the eminent visitor and his suite hospitality for several days.⁴⁴ When he visited Ministers between 1856 and 1860, the

³⁹ Bishop de Mazenod to the Mayor, May 14, 1858. Letters nos. 1304, 1419.

⁴⁰ Pastoral letter of November 1, 1852.

⁴¹ Bishop de Mazenod to the Prefect, December 12, 1855; to the Commissioner, February 24, 1856; to the Parish Priests, November 10, 1856; to the Prefect, December 1, 1856; to the Minister of Worship, April 17 and December 1, 1857. REY II, 622 etc.

⁴² Cf. *Missions O.M.I.*, 1864, pp. 394-422. Right until he died Bishop de Mazenod kept knocking at every door in search of money to pay debts and continue the projects. The amount of the outlays in 1861 amounted to 700,000 francs.

⁴³ Bishop de Mazenod to the Minister of Worship, May 15, 1856.

⁴⁴ REY II, 592 and Reg. lettres admin.: letters of 1856 to the Minister, to the Prefect, etc.

senator did not fail to speak of the need of repairing and enlarging the bishopric.⁴⁵ In the month of May 1858, the Minister of Worship finally approved the general estimate.⁴⁶ In February 1859, the Founder wrote to Father Tempier: "I have just come from the Minister. As usual, I have been quite pleased with him. He took note of my request for a suitable grant which would provide for my lodging before I die."⁴⁷ Some days later he informed Father Fabre that the Minister had granted him 100,000 francs "for the construction of the south wing".⁴⁸

As in the preceding projects, Bishop de Mazenod did not see the completion of this one either.⁴⁹ In any case, he knew well enough that he was not working for himself. "My successors will owe me this new favour obtained from the Government," we read in his *Diary*. "The matter was proper and that is why I asked for it: for myself, a cell would suffice."⁵⁰

On December 8, 1854, Bishop de Mazenod had with great joy taken part in the definition of the Immaculate Conception. Upon his return to Marseilles in the early part of 1855, he resolved to erect a monument in remembrance of this definition.⁵¹ He laid its foundation stone on December 8, 1855, and inaugurated it on December 8, 1857.⁵² The ceremony of the blessing of the statue which stands at the top of the pillar attracted a huge crowd. The Bishop was most pleased. He wrote in his *Diary*: "In what human terms could a person express what happened in Marseilles today! How depict an entire city of three hundred thousand souls making up but one Christian family attiring itself in festive garments to celebrate the glory of its Mother with outbursts of the most touching devotion! . . . Who could express the emotion, the joy and happiness that the officiating bishop experienced! What a Mass that was!"⁵³

⁴⁵ Cf. letters nos. 1317, 1344, 1399, 1407, 1411, 1420.

⁴⁶ This estimate rose to 408,741 francs. Cf. REY II, 685.

⁴⁷ Letter no. 1407.

⁴⁸ Letter no. 1411.

⁴⁹ He took an interest in it until the very end. Cf. letter to the Prefect, May 9, 1859; to the Minister of Worship, January 3, 1860; etc.

⁵⁰ *Diary*, May 1858, in REY II, 685.

⁵¹ Bishop de Mazenod to the Mayor, November 21, 1855.

⁵² The monument was situated at the extremity of the boulevard d'Athènes, one of the most beautiful promenades of Marseilles. It has since been moved to the intersection of boulevard Flammarion and boulevard National.

⁵³ RAMBERT II, 485-486.

*The work of building the monument's setting still had to be completed and most of all the money had to be found to defray the costs incurred. This was one more of the many concerns the Founder bore until his death.*⁵⁴

*Of the four major construction projects begun in his old age, the Founder only inaugurated this last one. Not until May 7, 1894, when his remains were translated to the new cathedral that had been consecrated the day before, did his lifeless body pass through the midst of the work that had now been terminated. With some emotion the chronicler of Missions wrote on this occasion: "When the corpse of our venerated Father arrived before the door of the cathedral, the cortege, which could only with some difficulty advance into the sacred building that had already been invaded by a compact and select crowd, had to halt for some minutes. During those moments our venerated Founder appeared to us as being in the very midst of all the great works which filled and immortalized his life. Surrounding him were the members of his Congregation of missionaries and the priests of the clergy of Marseilles; at his feet was the cathedral whose beginnings he had blessed; at his head, in the distance, was the basilica of Notre-Dame de la Garde, a magnificent ex voto of his piety to Mary; to his right and only a few steps away stood the bishop's residence which he had wanted to reflect the high idea he entertained of the episcopacy; to his left and so close by one could hear the murmur of its waves lay the Mediterranean which so many of his sons furrowed when setting out on the conquest of the most abandoned souls. The mistral gusted like a tempest, violently lifting the black draperies which covered the coffin. Was this not a symbol of the storms which so many times had beclouded his life and threatened the existence of his works?"*⁵⁵

The great pastoral projects

To the major construction projects corresponds an equal number of great pastoral projects which the Founder often mentions in his letters to the Oblates: the appointment of an auxiliary bishop, raising the see of Marseilles to the status of an archdiocese, establishing life in

⁵⁴ Bishop de Mazenod to Mr. Hava, January 10, 1859; to Tempier, March 30, 1859; *Diary*, July 1860, in REY II, 795.

⁵⁵ *Missions O.M.I.*, 1897, pp. 239-240.

common for the parish clergy, and introducing perpetual adoration. In many of the letters in this volume, Bishop de Mazenod complains — as he did before — of being too busy. He would need “a hundred hands” to write to everyone.⁵⁶ If in the letters of earlier years he found the time to list his numerous occupations, here, in “the whirlwind that surrounds him”,⁵⁷ he no longer has any time to give any explanations. In 1860 he wrote to Archbishop Guibert: “My dear Archbishop, I should always have to begin with the gementes about the crushing chores that await me in Marseilles. . . . With one leap I shall simply pass that by.”⁵⁸

An auxiliary bishop was becoming a necessity. He expressed this need to the Minister of Worship in 1856.⁵⁹ He handed in a formal request for one in 1858. To his great surprise, he won his point at the very outset of his approach addressed to the Minister and to the Emperor. On February 8, 1858, he wrote in his Diary: “Visit to the Minister of Worship. He had not waited until I had seen the Emperor to request the latter in my name to grant me Jeancard as auxiliary bishop. The Emperor had answered him in a most amiable manner that he liked me very much and that he asked for nothing better than to do what pleases me.”⁶⁰ Once the presentation of Canon Jeancard, private secretary to the Bishop and Vicar General of Marseilles had been approved by the Emperor, Bishop de Mazenod petitioned Pius IX for the canonical institution.⁶¹ The nuncio in Paris, Archbishop Sacconi, and the Duke de Gramont, Ambassador of France in Rome, intervened for their part and the request succeeded without the least difficulty.⁶² The papal bulls of appointment arrived in Marseilles on May 27th. The Council of State, however, took several months before registering them: it never admitted the title of auxiliary but only that of coadjutor with the right of future succession. This hurdle was cleared by mid-September and Bishop Jeancard was consecrated on October 28th in the church of Saint Cannat.⁶³

⁵⁶ Letter no. 1304.

⁵⁷ Letters nos. 1389, 1390.

⁵⁸ Letter no. 1453.

⁵⁹ Bishop de Mazenod to the Minister of Worship, February 13, 1856.

⁶⁰ REY II, 670; Letter no. 1377.

⁶¹ Bishop de Mazenod to Pius IX, February 12, 1858.

⁶² Bishop de Mazenod to Tempier, March 9, 1858. Cf. Letter no. 1377 and LEFLON III, 384-385.

⁶³ Letters nos. 1391 and 1393; REY II, 696.

Although the Minister of Worship had readily agreed to the appointment of an auxiliary, he proved to be less generous when it came to providing the auxiliary with a salary. Bishop de Mazenod felt he had to appeal to Archbishop Guibert. He wrote to the latter on November 25, 1858: "I stand well in need of a little of your talent when it comes to obtaining a few thousand francs for my poor auxiliary. I am counting on you coming to my assistance when I have to bring up this issue."⁶⁴ He received nothing but promises in 1859. With the support of Archbishop Guibert⁶⁵ he finally obtained, in 1860, an annual grant of 3000 francs.⁶⁶

Bishop de Mazenod was less successful in another matter that he brought up in Paris three years in succession, it would seem, namely, that of raising the diocese of Marseilles to the status of an archdiocese. This was an issue all the people of Marseilles had taken very much to heart on account of the importance of their city, the first of France in terms of the traffic of its port, the second in terms of the size of its population, and the fact that it was a very ancient Church, one said to have been founded by St. Lazarus.

The municipal council had already passed a resolution in this sense in 1851. In 1857, the Chapter formally requested this, which request Bishop de Mazenod handed to the Emperor.⁶⁷ During his stay in Paris in 1859, the Bishop again received the minutes of a Chapter resolution which requested the Emperor to grant this deed of great benevolence to the city which seemed to be in the process of becoming the capital city of the Mediterranean. Bishop de Mazenod himself presented this document to the Minister,⁶⁸ who showed himself favorable to it; and thereafter he presented it to the Emperor. The latter assured Bishop de Mazenod that he would grant him this request as "a personal favour" which would expire with him; that he was impeded from granting more by other similar requests.⁶⁹ Bishop de Mazenod preferred not to bring up this issue any more. He wrote in his Diary:

⁶⁴ Letter no. 1393.

⁶⁵ Letter no. 1420.

⁶⁶ Letter no. 1453.

⁶⁷ Bishop de Mazenod to Napoleon III, February 1, 1857. On November 10, 1858, the municipal council again deliberated the question of asking the Government to promote Marseilles to the status of an archdiocese. REY II, 702-703.

⁶⁸ Letter no. 1407.

⁶⁹ Among these other projects, there was one of dividing the archdiocese of Tours. Archbishop Guibert opposed this. Cf. REY II, 713-714.

"Personally, I am quite indifferent to this whole affair. I concern myself with it only for the honour of my see: I see it as part of my task to raise it to a higher dignity."⁷⁰

The Founder was very well aware of how important it was to have a good clergy. It was with pleasure that he in 1827 had accepted for the Oblates the direction of the major seminary of Marseilles. He was incessantly alert to get rid of priests who were unfaithful to their vocation, to sustain those who were weak and to encourage those who were generous.⁷¹ Community life in the rectory always appeared to him as the most effective way of assuring an exemplary parish clergy.⁷² After 1837, he resolved to introduce this practice little by little. He began with the parishes outside the city limits. When naming a new parish priest, he would require him to live in the same house together with his assistant priests. In his chapel in 1848, three influential priests made "the vow to live together to devote themselves to the sanctification of youth".⁷³ In 1856 he judged the situation sufficiently ripe to make this a general disciplinary norm. One of the principal decrees of the diocesan synod held from September 28th to October 1st reads as follows: "We gladly profit from the solemn occasion of our diocesan synod to again declare our formal intention to gradually establish the common life, i.e., cohabitation and common board of the parish priest with his assistants in all parishes where the inadequacy of the rectory or many other material difficulties do not oblige us to postpone its implementation. For a long time now priests have been living in common in several parishes of our episcopal city and of the diocese. The number of these parochial communities will increase with the appointment of each new incumbent and we will consider our episcopal conscience to rest in peace only when this practice will include all the parishes of our diocese."⁷⁴

The clergy manifested good dispositions on this occasion. The Bishop closed the synod with a speech in which he expressed his joy and gratitude to have such good priests. "Oh my sons! Oh my dear cooperators! May God, who has so visibly presided over our sessions,

⁷⁰ *Diary*, March 26, 1859, in REY II, 718-719.

⁷¹ A. MITRI, *Inquisitio historica*. . . , pp. 571-756.

⁷² *Monita* of the diocese of Marseilles, 1834-1835, art. XIII.

⁷³ Brunello, Guiol, and Timon-David. Cf. *Diary*, November 4, 1848.

⁷⁴ Ordonnances synodales du diocèse de Marseille, p. 85.

reward you a hundredfold for the ineffable consolations you have given me, for the happy days with which you wish to crown my last years. . . ."⁷⁵

*The clergy's good dispositions did not last when it came to putting this measure into practice. Many priests resisted and the energetic application of this norm aggravated the discontent against the old Bishop.*⁷⁶ *He often speaks about this in his Diary and in his letters. In February 1857, for instance, he was received by the Minister of the Interior. Mr. Billault approved "his manner of understanding the common life of the parish priest with his assistants, and he promised to let the Mayor know of his sentiment regarding this subject and to invite him strongly to second the Prelate in this project."*⁷⁷ *In a letter to Father Fabre, dated September 27, 1857, we see that parish priests and assistants were refusing to submit on this point, but the example of the Archbishop of Aix encouraged Bishop de Mazenod not to give in: "The Archbishop of Aix has declared his decision: he will require all parish priests he will appoint to live in common with their assistant priests. He has written letters of congratulation to all who have anticipated the measure he is resolved to take. . . . When I return I shall lay stress on this point: I reproach myself for an excessive condescension in regard to which I shall have to correct myself."*⁷⁸

*The success of this measure was neither complete nor lasting. Nevertheless, the Bishop had been working for the good of his diocese and his clergy. On this subject Canon Leflon writes: "In the opinion of Bishop de Mazenod the common life was the keystone of his entire work; it crowned the latter at the apex assuring thereby the solidity of the whole religious reconstruction to which he had consecrated his episcopate."*⁷⁹

If the common life of the clergy can be considered to be the keystone of Bishop de Mazenod's entire work, devotion to the Real Presence of Jesus Christ in the Blessed Sacrament was its animating spirit.

⁷⁵ LEFLON IV, 40.

⁷⁶ REY II, 616, note 1 writes: "(After his death) the communities of priests immediately broke up. . . ."

⁷⁷ REY II, 632.

⁷⁸ Letter no. 1361.

⁷⁹ LEFLON IV, 41.

Throughout his entire episcopate the Bishop sought to increase this devotion among his faithful. He encouraged the practice of the Forty Hours and exposition of the Blessed Sacrament during the days of carnival and on Holy Thursday; every year he solemnized the ceremony of reparation for the sacrilege committed in the church of St. Theodore on March 10, 1829, and of others of the same kind; finally, in 1860, he succeeded to establish perpetual adoration in the diocese. The Fathers of the Blessed Sacrament, who had recently arrived in Marseilles, allowed him to fill the gaps which the limited number of parishes rendered inevitable.⁸⁰

During the course of the year, when he was at Marseilles, the old Bishop managed to pray in almost all the churches where the Blessed Sacrament was exposed. This was one of the last joys of his life. Often he speaks of it in his Diary and in his letters.⁸¹ On January 16, for example, he writes in his Diary: "I went to the benediction of the three days of adoration in the church of Saint-Laurent. There was every reason to cry out for joy at seeing, first, the magnificent lighting of the altar on which our Lord's throne was placed. . . ." On January 23rd he wrote: "Adoration at Saint-Lazare. What can I say about the beauty of this magnificent exposition, of the people coming throughout the day, of this zeal for adoration through the night? A person could die for joy! Oh, how our Lord is being glorified!" On February 3 and 4 he again notes in his Diary: "An adoration that is always more delightful! . . . There is nothing more beautiful or moving on this earth! A church like that of St. Joseph is too small to contain the crowd of pious faithful! To be sure this is a real triumph for the Lord! It is impossible to resist the emotion such a spectacle procures. Hence, what tender tears did not flow from my eyes! Were this to last, it would be too much happiness for here below. Thanks, a million thanks to the Lord for these few instants' foretaste of Paradise!"⁸²

The Founder prayed for a long time during these visits of adoration. To the Master, whom he surely believed to be present, he told his joys and his griefs. Father Rey writes: "During the days of his trials until the day when the Prelate will lie on his death-bed, he sought from

⁸⁰ Pastoral letter of December 21, 1859.

⁸¹ Cf. REY II, 762-766, etc. Cf. Letters nos. 1439, 1454.

⁸² REY II, 763-764.

the Eucharist the strength, courage, resignation and consolations which God alone can grant, for only God can proportion them to the extent and depth of the sufferings which can be played out in the heart of a bishop, a pastor and a father. . . ."⁸³

4 – The Congregation

An affectionate father . . . the Founder was especially this toward the Oblates. If in the letters he wrote to them during the last years of his life he cannot abstract from the Pope's troubles, from the Church's needs or the various interests of his diocese, it nevertheless remains true that his attention relates especially to the life of his religious family.

*It is true that his letters are less numerous and more brief, but the love he felt for his sons did not grow cold. In these letters he often expresses this love and continues to affirm that corresponding with the Oblates is "one of the most agreeable occupations of his life".*⁸⁴

*If, for want of time, he writes less and to few Fathers, he consoles himself with the thought that "all the children God has given [him] . . . [are] constantly present to [his] mind and heart".*⁸⁵ *Besides, he feels himself in their company every morning "at the holy sacrifice and at the mental prayer in the evening before the Blessed Sacrament".*⁸⁶ *He always loved them "with all the affection of a most tender mother".*⁸⁷

*Some discordant notes unfortunately now and then shatter the harmony of mutual affection and agreement that unites the members of the family. Twice, for example, the Founder complains about Father Tempier "who reluctantly supports the little vexations he encounters in the general policies to which he remains completely alien, ever considering only Montolivet, which for him is the whole world."'*⁸⁸ *As he grew older, Father Tempier isolated himself and found, so it would seem, that the Founder, henceforth surrounded with men of great value like Fathers Vincens, Aubert, and Fabre, gave him less signs of confidence than he did formerly. He often voiced "accusations" which Bishop de*

⁸³ REY II, 766.

⁸⁴ Letter no. 1365 to Father Fabre and Circular letter no. 2 to the Oblates.

⁸⁵ Letter no. 1314.

⁸⁶ Letters nos. 1304, 1314, 1341, 1345, 1373, 1374, 1404, 1405.

⁸⁷ Letters nos. 1331, 1345.

⁸⁸ Letter no. 1325.

Mazenod found unjust. Always frank and direct in his relations with all and especially with Tempier, he wrote him on March 15, 1859, a letter which may seem harsh to us⁸⁹ and lets us see that even between old friends and faithful collaborators good harmony is maintained at the cost of much virtue.

In spite of his occupations and the habit he has little by little acquired of leaving more initiative and responsibility to the Provincials, the Founder in these last letters is still interested in all the aspects of the Congregation's life: its personnel, houses of formation, foundations, works, religious life, and in a special manner, its financial administration.

The personnel

From 1856 to 1861, after the standstill and intense bloodletting of the six preceding years, the Congregation's growth more or less resumed the rhythm of the first years. Twenty Fathers and Brothers died during the course of these six years and twenty-two left the Congregation. Despite these losses, the personnel advanced from 298 to 414 Oblates. About 215 of these belonged to the two Provinces of France.⁹⁰

Though he was always very sensitive when one of his sons died, the Founder here mentions only a few names: the scholastic brothers Camper,⁹¹ Baland,⁹² and Bonifaci;⁹³ Fathers Richard,⁹⁴ Andrieux and Bouquillon departed to join "the community of Heaven",⁹⁵ as did Amisse,⁹⁶ Lagrue,⁹⁷ and especially in January 1860, Casimir Aubert, secretary general of the Congregation.⁹⁸ The latter was a methodical and very precise man, and very much appreciated by the Founder: he was only half replaced by Father Vincens, a man famous for his distractions and for a zeal which made life at a desk difficult for him.

⁸⁹ Letter no. 1415.

⁹⁰ J. PIELORZ, *Les Chapitres généraux au temps du Fondateur*, II, 131-141.

⁹¹ Letters no. 1315, 1381.

⁹² Letter no. 1384.

⁹³ Letter no. 1391.

⁹⁴ Letter no. 1349.

⁹⁵ Letter no. 1358.

⁹⁶ Letter no. 1384.

⁹⁷ Letter no. 1426.

⁹⁸ Letters nos. 1440, 1455 and Circular letter no. 3.

Until he died the Founder suffered from the absence of Father Aubert. He wrote to Father Soullier on June 20, 1860: "Business affairs have been accumulating since the death, so painful to my heart, of our ever regretted Father Aubert."

On the occasion of one of these deaths the Founder, speaking of the Annales de la Sainte Famille in which Father Bellon was collaborating, wrote to him on July 20, 1858: "These Ladies are fortunate in being better served than we ourselves are. The Congregation would have needed you to busy yourself with its Annales, since you have the aptitude for this kind of work. I suffer to see the years go by without leaving a trace of the wonders the Lord is working through the ministry of our men all over the world. I cannot succeed in bringing us in line on this point. And yet, this is the practice in all religious Congregations. The Jesuits especially do not fail in this regard. The same is true for the Necrology! How often did I not insist that we busy ourselves seriously with it! No one ever says no, but we allow ourselves to be carried away by our affairs. Since I am on this subject, try to recollect and jot down some notes about all our deceased Fathers and Brothers with whom you have lived. If each one brought this tribute of fraternity to the common centre, we would succeed in drawing up a very edifying work which would bring consolation to our souls, for we die very holy deaths in the Congregation."

Departures from the Congregation, a reality which the Founder never succeeded to comprehend, at times are still the subject of his holy wrath. However, he speaks here with a certain serenity about Fathers Humbert,⁹⁹ Aubry,¹⁰⁰ and Lempfrit;¹⁰¹ nevertheless he raises a hue and cry about Father Rouge, one of the chief fomenters of irregularity in Montreal, a man "for ever led astray, without heart, without feelings, without religion";¹⁰² or again about the two scholastic brothers of Montolivet whom he calls "criminals" and "monsters".¹⁰³ Father Bermond, who returned from Canada without permission after years of being a bad influence at St. Boniface, in spite of the confidence that had been shown him by appointing him canonical visitor to the Oblates in Oregon, also receives — and rightly so — a bundle of colourful

⁹⁹ Letter no. 1333.

¹⁰⁰ Letter no. 1334.

¹⁰¹ Letter no. 1369.

¹⁰² Letters nos. 1342, 1424.

¹⁰³ Letters nos. 1459, 1460.

epithets: "inexcusable extravagance", "in my eyes that is monstrous", "the rascal did well to pass through Paris without trying to see me. . . . He is going from bad to worse. Let him return to the mountains of the Upper Alps. What have we to do with rebellious members who disturb everything, take every kind of liberty, who would sow discord in Paradise itself."¹⁰⁴ "It is impossible to come to a resolution that has more conditions. . . . I find Father Bermond's fault unpardonable. There is more than is needed to expel him from the Congregation. . . . That is enormous, incomprehensible! I am really put out about it."¹⁰⁵

The Houses of Formation

Recruitment would seem to have been rather good since, despite the 42 deaths and departures, the personnel increased by more than one hundred men in six years. The house of Notre-Dame de l'Osier remained the main novitiate which every year received about 30 novices under the direction of Father Vandenberghe. Here and there in the correspondence we find letters of congratulations to the novices on the occasion of their profession,¹⁰⁶ but none to the novice master who, it would seem, enjoyed the full confidence of the authorities.

At that time the novitiate at Nancy was receiving on the average some 10 novices a year. The Founder spent a few days with these novices during the years 1856-1859.¹⁰⁷

The postulants came from the seminaries of many dioceses. Because a slight decrease in the number of those seeking admission to the novitiate was noted, in 1860 the decision was taken to reopen the juniorate of Notre-Dame de Lumières.¹⁰⁸ The scholasticate, established since 1854 at Montolivet under the direction of Father Tempier as superior and Father Mouchette as moderator of the scholastics, was going well. The Founder made regular visits there and when he was in Paris, he faithfully wrote to Father Mouchette.¹⁰⁹ He rejoiced with

¹⁰⁴ Letter no. 1400.

¹⁰⁵ Letter no. 1403.

¹⁰⁶ Letters nos. 1312, 1322, 1341, 1434, 1435.

¹⁰⁷ Fifty-three took the habit from 1856 to 1861 under the direction of Fathers Soullier (1856-1857), Guinet (1857-1858) and Lagier (1859-1861). Cf. *Registre des prises d'habit* of Nancy.

¹⁰⁸ Letters nos. 1446, 1461.

¹⁰⁹ Twelve letters of the Founder to Father Mouchette written during 1856-1861 have come down to us.

him over the good conduct of the students who “give so many motives for consolation”,¹¹⁰ who make up “such a beautiful community . . . [and are] the hope of our family”.¹¹¹ On March 11, 1860, he reiterated his joy at the good progress of the scholasticate and, for the last time in the letters he addressed to them, he reminded the Oblates of the precise meaning of their vocation: “I am glad to see them understand the sublimity of their vocation and that they were working courageously to become holy religious. I am confident that they will do honour to their great ministry and that they will all render themselves fit and worthy to be chosen, some to fight the battles of the Lord among the degenerated Christians of Europe, others to walk in the footsteps of the Apostles and themselves become apostles to proclaim the Good News to heathen nations in various parts of the globe. Oh yes! they will go forth from this beautiful community of Montolivet armed with the panoply of true athletes who are immune to bad examples against the seduction of which they will be able to defend themselves. Their very presence and the regularity of their life will revive fervour wherever obedience may call them. I anticipate the blessings the Lord will shed upon them in exchange for their fidelity. By them God will be glorified and our dear Congregation honoured in the Church because of them. . . .”¹¹²

Two months later, however, after he had learned that two scholastics had behaved in a scandalous fashion during the vacations at Notre-Dame de Lumières and that the others had not reacted with sufficient zeal, the Founder imposed an exemplary reparation on them: “Yes, evil has been done in the land of the saints, for everyone should be holy in the Congregation of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate,” he wrote on August 29, 1860. “And what an evil! Profanation of the sacraments, hypocrisy, treason, apostasy, the highest degree of profligacy, in a word. That was too much for one Judas, two were joined therein. Good Heavens! Is this accursed race not yet extinct?”

“We should have to fear that God’s curse will afflict us if we do not take to heart to repair, to the degree that it is in our power, the scandal which has been worked amongst us. . . . I prescribe that for nine days the whole community will go down to the basement chapel and there recite, aloud and with arms extended in the form of a cross,

¹¹⁰ Letter no. 1345.

¹¹¹ Letters nos. 1374, 1375.

¹¹² Letter no. 1447.

the psalm Miserere mei Deus. The recitation of this psalm will be followed by the litanies of the Blessed Virgin, the Sub tuum præsidium and the prayer Defende.

“During the whole course of one year, all the members of the scholasticate will in turn receive holy communion as an atonement of honour addressed to our divine Master Jesus Christ who has been offended and betrayed. . . . That is what my grieved heart inspires me to do for now. May God have pity on us!”

Realizing no doubt that the letter's tone and the rigor of this penance might appear excessive, the Founder, as was his custom, ended by letting his heart speak: “Have I only words of grief to address to you? Well, it is because my heart is filled with bitterness. It is fitting that I bless you. May you then be blessed in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and may this blessing remain upon you, preserve you from all evil and make you advance in the perfection of your holy state.”¹¹³

The Communities and Foundations

During 1860-1861 there is no development at all in the Midi [southern] Province: it kept its ten communities: Aix and Le Calvaire, the major seminaries of Marseilles, Ajaccio and Fréjus, the shrines of Notre-Dame de Lumières, Notre-Dame de Bon Secours and Notre-Dame de la Garde, the houses of formation of Vico and Montolivet.

The Province of the North in 1861 had eight houses and one residence: Notre-Dame de l'Osier, Nancy and the residence of Notre-Dame de Sion, Limoges, Notre-Dame de Talence and Notre-Dame de Cléry, the new community of missionaries at Autun (1858), Paris (1859) and Angers (1860). In 1857, however, this Province lost the major seminary at Quimper (accepted only the previous year) and the house of missionaries at Romans where the Oblates had been working since 1853.¹¹⁴

¹¹³ Letters nos. 1459, 1460.

¹¹⁴ As to the loss of Romans and Quimper, we have many letters of the Founder in the *Registre des lettres administratives*; but he speaks of it only twice here in his letters to the Oblates, cf. Letters nos. 1356 and 1387.

If, in order to make up for the losses of Quimper and Romans, the Founder accepted the houses of Autun, Paris, and Angers, he refused several other foundations in France, preferring instead to send his sons abroad.¹¹⁵

Apostolic Works

The main apostolate of the Oblates in France remained preaching, especially missions to the people. In 1858, for example, the Founder reminded Father de L'Hermite of this duty. The latter was at Notre-Dame de Cléry functioning more as a parish priest than as a missionary. The Founder wrote to him on October 5th: "I advise you not to withdraw entirely from this precious task. That is the principal end of our Congregation. I would not gladly see a superior of our communities abstain therefrom."¹¹⁶ He did all he could to assure the maintenance of a team of missionaries in most of the houses; he encouraged them and occasionally reminded them that isolated sermons, Advent and Lenten sermons must always cede to the missions: it is the latter which bear much fruit.¹¹⁷

The Founder often speaks of the foreign missions, especially at the time of departures for the mission,¹¹⁸ or when a missionary is passing through,¹¹⁹ or of difficulties which always arise too frequently and everywhere.¹²⁰ We find a few reflections about work in parishes,¹²¹ on major seminaries,¹²² and on a new work: the spiritual direction of the Association of the Holy Family of Bordeaux.

In Bordeaux, Father Bienvenu Noailles had founded, in 1820, an association which grouped together married laity, others bound by vows, and religious women who gradually resulted in 9 branches or

¹¹⁵ J. PIELORZ, *Les Chapitres généraux au temps du Fondateur*, II, 129-130. In this volume the Founder speaks of Notre-Dame de Sauvagnac at Limoges (Letters nos. 1321, 1363), Notre-Dame d'Arcachon at Bordeaux (Letter no. 1322), St-Dié (Letters nos. 1385, 1387), Arras (Letter no. 1387), Narbonne (Letter no. 1308), Montet in Switzerland (Letters nos. 1384, 1391).

¹¹⁶ Letter no. 1389.

¹¹⁷ Letters nos. 1309, 1310, 1311, 1329, 1331, 1333, 1334, 1338, 1347, 1348, 1359, 1364, 1368, 1389, 1402, 1404, 1410, 1414, 1424, 1429, 1431, 1447.

¹¹⁸ Letters nos. 1310, 1313, 1340.

¹¹⁹ Letters nos. 1338, 1370, 1449.

¹²⁰ Letters nos. 1343, 1344, 1349, 1354, 1359, 1370, 1371, 1387, 1388, 1400, 1427.

¹²¹ Letters nos. 1329, 1338, 1342, 1419, 1422, 1446, 1448.

¹²² Letters no. 1305, 1333, 1351, 1356, 1382, 1387, 1389.

congregations each specialized according to different works of zeal. In order to assure a spiritual direction which would be continuous and uniform, the good Father tried unsuccessfully to found a religious congregation of priests. He likewise tried for several years, always without success, to affiliate the Holy Family to religious communities of priests.

In 1856-1857 this good priest became acquainted with the Oblates who had been established for some years now at Notre-Dame de Talence. He made friends with Father Delpuch and, after studying the nature of the Congregation, he became aware that the ends of this Society corresponded a great deal to what he himself had in mind when he founded the Poor Priests in 1822 and the Auxiliary Priests of the Holy Family in 1833. He told Father Delpuch in confidence that he would like to affiliate his Association to the Congregation of the Oblates. Father Delpuch replied that Bishop de Mazenod would never accept. Only one person could possibly convince him, namely, the Archbishop of Tours. "If Archbishop Guibert takes your cause in hand, he will prevail upon our well-beloved Father to give his consent." Father Noailles wrote to Archbishop Guibert who was well-known to him. The Archbishop informed the Founder of the good Father's wishes and this entire matter was settled at the end of August 1857, when Bishop de Mazenod visited Bordeaux on his return trip from England. The contract of affiliation bears the date of January 14, 1858.¹²³

In the summer of 1858, Father Charles Bellon was sent to undertake this apostolate, together with the good Father, whose strength was declining.¹²⁴ On November 16, 1860, the Founder wrote a circular letter to the Oblates, inviting them to give their opinion about this project of affiliation which "appeared to remove us from the spirit of our Congregation" and which could especially hinder many Oblates from devoting themselves full time in the ministry of the missions: the Holy Family already counted 223 houses, 2200 Sisters and very many associates.

Father Bienvenu Noailles died on February 8, 1861. By that same fact Bishop de Mazenod, himself seriously ill, became the Director

¹²³ H. TASSEL, "Affiliation de la Sainte-Famille. . .", in *Études Oblates*, t.2 (1952), pp. 297-311. Y. BEAUDOIN and Sister Monserrat Palau, *Premier dossier sur la vie et les vertus du S. de D. P.B. Noailles*. Rome, 1985, chap. IV.

¹²⁴ Letters nos. 1373, 1374, 1381.

*General of the Holy Family. On February 14th he appointed Father Bellon to be his representative to the Association and, on March 15th, he sent his last circular letter to the Oblates in which he gives the result of the replies received in response to his previous circular, lays down the main points of the affiliation and establishes some norms for the Fathers who will have to take on the ministry to the members of the Association.*¹²⁵

The Religious Life

Provincials and local superiors had the special duty of watching over discipline; nevertheless, on occasion the Superior General continued to intervene. He does so in about thirty letters contained herein, and especially in the circular letter of February 2, 1857, which, together with his other circular letters, is published at the end of this volume. His assessment at the time is that the situation is rather good. He again on several occasions recalls the obligation to regularity,¹²⁶ reproaches some Fathers whom he sees as too independent or disobedient,¹²⁷ and especially deplores the overly much travelling:¹²⁸ the latter to such a point that, if he is to be asked for permission in this regard, he no longer manages to know who is travelling and who is not. On October 10, 1860, for example, he is surprised to receive from Father Charles Baret a letter written from Cirey, the castle where the Founder's niece resides. "Your appearance at Cirey is an enigma to me," he wrote. "I have been asking myself how it is that you are there and for what purpose. . . . It is true that for some time now our Oblates are so much en route and on the road that it is easy to forget some of these trips, so numerous have they become!"

*Nevertheless, he readily granted permission for journeys he deemed necessary,¹²⁹ even if they were quite numerous, and he did not forget that he himself was at that time often on the move!*¹³⁰

¹²⁵ Circular letters nos. 4 and 5 reprinted at the end of this volume.

¹²⁶ Letters nos. 1331, 1369, 1373, 1424, 1427, 1434.

¹²⁷ Letters nos. 1400, 1403, 1449, etc.

¹²⁸ Letters nos. 1348, 1357, 1373, 1461.

¹²⁹ Letters nos. 1329, 1347, 1358, 1359, 1385, 1386.

¹³⁰ The trips of the Founder in 1856: Paris, Chartres, Nancy, Notre-Dame de l'Osier; in 1857: Viviers, Lyon, Paris, Cirey, Nancy, England, Ireland, Scotland, Tours, Cléry, Talence, St-Martin, St-Laurent; in 1858: Paris, Nancy, Cirey; in 1859: Bourges, Paris, Tours, Nancy, Lyon, Châlons, Macon, Autun, l'Osier, Lumières; in 1860: Paris, Tours, Aix.

The Financial Administration

Bishop de Mazenod has always been acknowledged to be a good administrator and great sums of money passed through his hands. Never before in his letters to the Oblates, however, did he speak so much of money, debts, loans, investments, bonds, rentals, stocks and shares.¹³¹

Before he died he wanted to establish precisely what he possessed and to put the financial administration of the Congregation in order. That is why he often mentioned business matters to Fathers Fabre and Tempier and why he concluded his two main circular letters by dictating rules of bookkeeping and publishing directives on administration.¹³²

If he then concerned himself with money and spoke of it so often, the reason was, as he wrote to Father Tempier, "in order to leave my heirs a capital that will give them the means to discharge all my religious legacies without depriving them of what I bequeath to the Congregation."¹³³ On May 10, 1859, he ended a long business letter as follows: "Frankly, my dear Tempier, I am bored and weary of all these worries. I would like not to have anything to do with them any more. I really don't know how we shall extricate ourselves from the Duprat business. I had let myself be carried away intending the good of the Congregation to which we can assure, in a few years, a rather considerable income, but in so doing I have given over the rest of my days to embarrassments and privations. . . . God only knows whether all the world's riches would induce me to add a plate more to my dinner, and nothing more for the service of my person."

Last Bits of Advice

In several letters from these last years of his life, the Founder expresses astonishment at being in such good health, so that he is able to travel, to fast, to work incessantly.¹³⁴ Illness took him by surprise, however, early in January of 1861 and brought to a sudden end all his activity and correspondence. In this volume we have only two letters

¹³¹ See almost all the letters written from Paris.

¹³² Circular letters nos. 1 and 2 reprinted at the end of this volume.

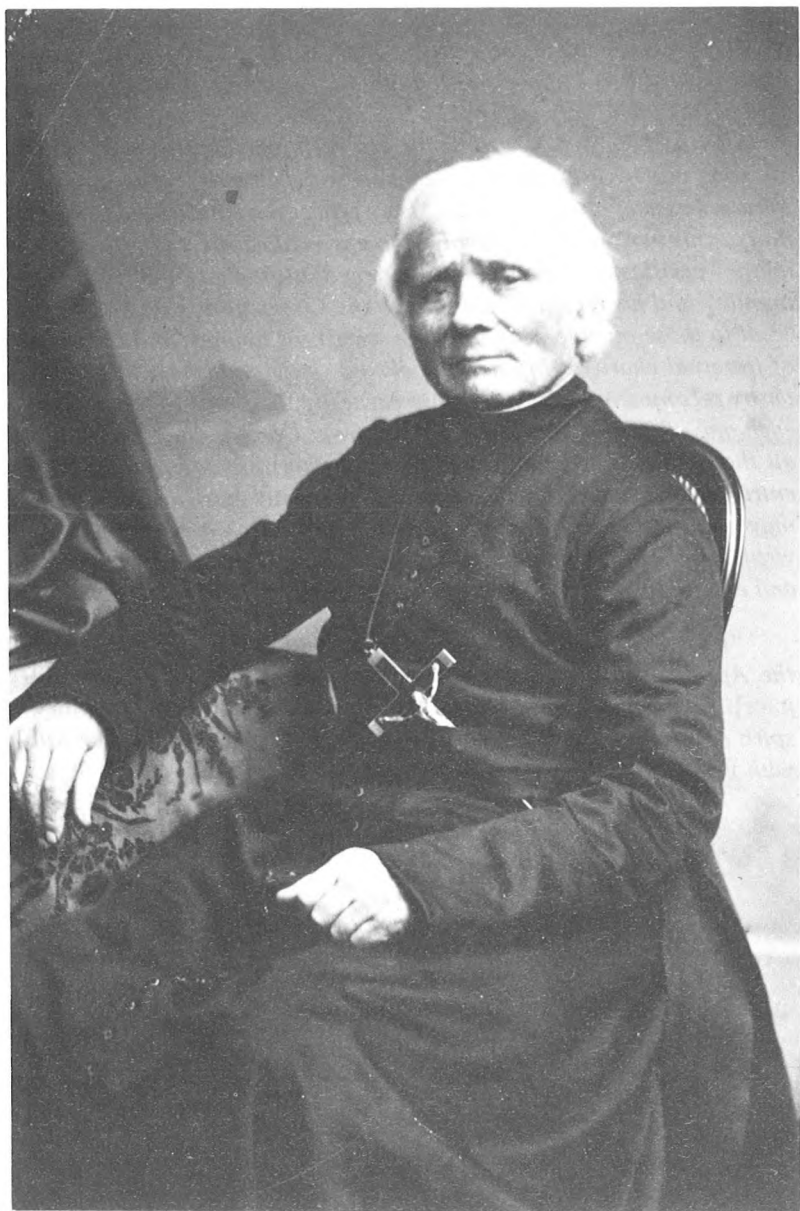
¹³³ Letter no. 1360.

¹³⁴ Letters nos. 1321, 1393, 1413, 1416, 1423, 1427, 1438, 1447, 1458.

signed by him in the course of his last year. He concludes the last, that of March 15th, with these words: "I am happy . . . to be able to add that my health is improving, though very slowly." It worsened again and he died on May 21, 1861. His last reflections about himself as Founder and Father as well as his last recommendations addressed to his sons and written out in his hand were already expressed in the circular letter of August 2, 1853. They reflect the state of the Congregation at this period: overly involved in external works and afflicted with many "apostasies". Hence, his personal attitude is entirely one of humility and his recommendations to the Congregation do not mention "zeal to those outside", but only the search for holiness and the practice of fraternal charity: "My dearly beloved sons, I conclude this long letter by recommending myself more earnestly than ever to the prayers of each one of you so that I may obtain, from God's kindness, pardon for all the faults I have committed in governing this dear family He has entrusted to me and to which I have devoted my existence; and that He may grant me, as my days decline, the consolation of seeing it grow in virtue and holiness, just as He has given me to see it increase in number and extension.

"I sum up all my recommendations and wishes in these words of the Apostle Saint Paul to the Corinthians: 'Finally, my brethren, [re-joice], render yourselves perfect, encourage one another, be united in spirit and in heart, live in peace, and the God of love and peace will be with you.'"

Yvon BEAUDOIN, O.M.I.



Father François-de-Paule Henry Tempier
(1788-1870)

1304. [To Father Charles Baret, at Bordeaux].¹

Prayer and affection for all the Oblates. Lacks time to answer letters. A foundation in Bogota is not possible.

Marseilles, January 4, 1856.

Because God predestined me to be the father of a large family in his Church, he gave me a heart of such a quality that it is capable of enfolding all my children, of giving to each one that degree of affection and true love which is his due. But I would need a hundred hands were I to correspond as I would like with all who give me a testimony of their attachment. I find myself reduced to concerning myself with them copiously before the Lord, either by daily offering the holy Sacrifice for them or by praying for them each day during my oraison before the Blessed Sacrament. I give them all a kind of rendezvous in the adorable Heart of our divine Saviour. Giving thanks and asking new blessings for them is an obligatory concern in my humble and grateful conversation with our Lord in this holy exercise.

April 20th.

You have above, my dearest son, the first lines of a letter which was meant to be written to you from the very first days of this year. Already then I had wanted to apologize to you for the delay I have so very unwillingly occasioned in my writing to you, for I knew that I had distressed you; you see how my good will has been thwarted and that I am not further advanced now. I beg you, my very dear son, to blame only my situation which is well known to everyone, and not to insult me with accusations of forgetfulness or indifference. God knows that if I am to reproach myself with anything, it is that I love you too much and, as for yourself, rest well assured, my dear son, that you have nothing to ask me for in this regard.

I am touched with the benevolent thoughts entertained by the worthy Mr. de Mosquera. I would deem myself fortunate were I able

¹ Orig.: Rome, Postulation Archives, L. M.-Baret.

to respond positively to his ideas and place under the protection of his family several of our men in this diocese of Bogota to which I am attached by so many memories; we are, however, far from being in a position to make a new foundation. You know that we have all the difficulty in the world to maintain those which already exist. We are suffering from shorthandedness everywhere and what is really amusing is that I am being blamed for it, as though it were possible in the Congregation to be ignorant of the state of our personnel. Frankly, I am somewhat annoyed by all these complaints; nevertheless, I latch on to being patient. What I never stop saying is that it is useless to worry, since it is certain that we are not obliged to do what is beyond our power. People find it difficult to understand something that is so just and reasonable.

May 2nd.

Definitely, I am going to send my letter to the post office. From the time I had taken it up again, I have had to follow the stations of the Rogation Days, to visit the hospice for the aged, to give at N.-D. de la Garde two conferences which kept me busy for the half of two days, to preside at the divine office of the Ascension . . . in short, there simply is no end to it. Meanwhile you are exposed to feeling vexed. Hence, whatever tender things I may still like to tell you, I finish here, all the more so because I already see tramping about some people who are only too keen to have my hand relinquish the pen. Good-bye then, my dear son. All I beg from you as I hold you to my heart is that you have some compassion for me and that, no matter what happens, you will never be cross with a father who loves you so tenderly.

† C.J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.
s.g.

P.S. I want to tell you something which should bring you some pleasure: first, that your brother² is always excellent and acquits himself well in all that he is assigned, etc.; and that the young nephew has risen well above the lapses that occurred during his holidays and has recovered a taste for his vocation. I have recently seen him at Montolivet and was delighted with his attitude.

² Victor Baret.

Greet all our Fathers on my behalf. I owe an answer to Father Delpauch. The trouble is that the approach to be made to the Arch[bishop] is an embarrassment to me.³

1305. [To Fathers Fouquet and Balain, at Ajaccio].⁴

Affection. Father Balain is to rest and Father Fouquet should not overtax his strength. Greetings to Fathers Chaine and Pompei. The Provincial's next visit.

L.J.C. et M.I.

Marseilles, J[anuar]y 8, 1856.

When I can at the most say only a few words to you, I must remind you, my dear and well-beloved children, of how much I love you. I am overburdened with work, but always full of strength. What greatly distresses me is that people don't allow me the time to converse, as my heart would wish, with sons who are as dear to me as you are. Things have come to such a point that, to benefit from a moment that I steal for myself, I am writing to both of you in one and the same letter. The few lines from our dear Father Balain did reassure me a bit, but not enough to advise him to resume his work. And you, my good little Father Fouquet, don't you think you have taken on too much? I know you are a grèat worker; but take good care, my child, not to abuse your strength. As soon as you feel fatigued, don't be afraid to apply the brakes. Before all else I insist on my children's health. I would not be very much put out if the classes progressed a little less well.

The weather at sea is so miserable that I would like to allow the season to advance a little before sending you the Provincial. But do count on his visit, in default of the presence of your aging father. I am on the outs with [the sea]⁵ for the rest of my days.

I cannot be too thankful for your affectionate remembrance. I excuse the lazy Father Cha[ine] for having deprived me of the pleasure

³ What precise approach to the Archbishop is at issue here? From other letters we know that Cardinal Donnet was requesting the Oblates to preach too many missions and he wanted to entrust the shrine of N.-D. d'Arcachon to the Oblates: cf. Letters nos. 1308, 1322, 1331 and 1334.

⁴ Orig.: Rome, Postulation Archives, L. M.-Fouquet.

⁵ The upper part of this page has been cut.

of receiving a few lines from his hand. Give him greetings from me, but without reproaching him. I want to believe that our good Father Pompei does not remember that I am perhaps late in replying to him. Greet him also and tell him at the same time that it is not always possible for me write to those I would like to. Don't think that what I am doing now gives the lie to my assertion. There are two people with me who are urging me to finish. I leave you now, for I have been able to tell you again that I love you with all my heart and I also bless you with all my soul.

† C.J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.
s.g.

1306. [To Father Luigi, at Vico].⁶

Bishop de Mazenod writes little for want of time, but concerns himself with the Oblates twice daily before the Lord. Watch over his own health. It is not possible to increase the personnel of the house.

L.J.C. et M.I.

Marseilles, J[anuar]y 17, 1856.

My dear Father Luigi, is it really true that I am late in replying to you? I don't think so: it seems to me that I wrote to you not so long ago. It is true that the excessive tasks people lay on me here brings it about that I cannot exactly calculate the time, my days pass with an appalling speed. No matter, I would not want you to be forgotten because of that. When I say forgotten, I want to speak only in regard to correspondence by letter, because memory of you is so engraved upon my heart and you are so much present in my mind that twice daily I concern myself with you personally before the Lord: before dawn during preparation for Mass and at the approach of night during oraison before the Blessed Sacrament. Here no interference is allowed, these two exercises must take place, whereas I am not always the master when it comes to taking up my pen and writing you.

⁶ Orig.: Rome, Postulation Archives, L. M.-Luigi.

I have just been told, my dear son, that you have been somewhat ill. For goodness' sake, take care of yourself, postpone your missions until you have fully recovered. Too much work before a person is fully recovered can be disastrous: do not, therefore, do anything imprudent. By postponing your work you are performing an act that is more meritorious than were you to go on mission at the risk of reducing yourself to a state wherein you can no longer do anything.

I would like to come to the assistance of your *studentato*,⁷ but we cannot do it right now. It is thus necessary to stir up the zeal of the small number of workers you have at your disposal. On certain occasions one has to crowd the sails' capacity. That is what we did constantly at the beginnings of the Congregation. No one sought his own comfort during that happy era. Our men possessed the spirit of mortification which enabled them to embrace joyfully things that are most difficult and painful to human nature, and God helped our weakness to second our good will. . . .⁸

1307. [To Father de L'Hermite, at N.-D. de Cléry].⁹

Moderation in our work. See that the Fathers of the house observe regularity. Greetings to Fathers Sigaud and Marchal.

L.J.C. et M.I.

Marseilles, February 23, 1856.

It is very nice of you, my very dear son, not to forget your aging Father. You know the pleasure your letters give me and you did not want to deprive me of it, though you discussed business matters with those of our Fathers who are especially responsible for this service. I praise God for the success of the mission with which I have entrusted you,¹⁰ but I find that you give yourself too much. Thus, why give cate-

⁷ The minor seminary established at Vico since 1853. Cf. É. LAMIRANDE, "Les œuvres d'enseignements dans la Congrégation du vivant du Fondateur", in *Études Oblates*, 1966, pp. 9-12.

⁸ We no longer possess the second page of this letter.

⁹ Orig.: Rome, Postulation Archives, L. M.-L'Hermite.

¹⁰ Superior of the house of Notre-Dame de Cléry and in charge of the parish.

chism every day? And this Latin class? It is certainly a good thing, but how will you remain adequate to the task without incurring considerable harm to your health? You should have consulted me before undertaking it, and I don't think I would have consented to it.

You understand that not for a single instant did I ever think of taking Father Sigaud away from you. I asked Father Fabre to tell you to keep him. Nothing astonishes me more than to see him being called for by the superior of Nancy who had rightly been complaining about the repugnance this Father had shown for the ministry he had been given. On this point, I advise you not to let Father Sigaud acquire any bad attitudes. He needs to reflect more on the duties of his vocation, to be more detached in regard to what obedience may assign to him, and to do willingly even that which goes against his grain. Assume your proper place with him as well as with all the others, that is to say, carry out all that your duty as superior demands. During the conferences that are prescribed, point out to all that you cannot deviate from what the Rule obliges you to do, and that no one should take it ill or be surprised to see you demand exact regularity and total obedience to the holy Rules. Forget the fact that you are so young. Timothy was too, and St. Paul wanted him to be respected. It is the same in your case. Responsibility for good discipline, for regularity and for the sanctification of your men — which can only come about through this way — rests entirely upon yourself.

How I would like to continue conversing with you! However, I have already been interrupted several times since I started this letter and I would miss the mail service if I did not at once send it to the post, two days after its date, for today is the 25th. Good-bye, then, my dear son, convey many kind regards to our good Father Marchal: I am advising him to take care of you, and I embrace and bless both of you with all my heart.

† C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles,
sup. gen.

1308. [To Father Vincens, at Bordeaux].¹¹

Father Vincens' preaching at Bordeaux. Cannot accept a minor seminary at Narbonne. Project of Father Vincens' retreat at Carcassonne.

L.J.C. et M.I.

Marseilles, March 1, 1856.

I knew beforehand, my dear Father Vincens, that the good Lord would bless your apostolic work. Consequently, I have never experienced concern about your apprehensions. The Cardinal¹² is thanking me for having sent you and I am thanking God for assisting your efforts by his powerful grace.

I had to give the bishop of Carcassonne,¹³ who had asked me for Oblates for his minor seminary of Narbonne, a negative answer, as you can well imagine. However, to give him a ray of consolation, I reminded him that Father Vincens will be contributing to his diocese's welfare by preaching its pastoral retreat.

It seems that I caused some worry to good Bishop de la Bouillerie when I informed him of something he did not know. His Vicar General writes to my Vicar General in the following terms: "A letter from the Bishop of M[arsei]lles tells us that an Oblate Father from your city had been invited by our Bishop's predecessor to preach a pastoral retreat in Carcassonne. As Bishop de Bonnechose did not leave any notation on this matter before leaving for Évreux, I am taking the liberty of addressing myself to you, the V[icar] G[eneral], in order to know through your good offices at what period of time the Reverend Father expects to preach this retreat. This could only be next year at the earliest because Bishop de la Bouillerie, who did not know the arrangements made in this regard by his predecessor, has already decided on a preacher for the present year.

"Please, Mr. V[icar] G[eneral], be so kind as to furnish me the information I have been asked to seek from you, and accept the assurances . . . etc."

¹¹ Orig.: Rome, Postulation Archives, L. M.-Vincens.

¹² Cardinal Bonnet, Archbishop of Bordeaux.

¹³ F.-A. Roulet de la Bouillerie was appointed bishop of Carcassonne on February 6, 1855. His predecessor, Bishop Gaston de Bonnechose had been transferred to Évreux.

As my Vicar General was not able to give the requested information, and I was not sure what time period had been set when the cholera threat had postponed the giving of this retreat, I am addressing myself to you for the precise information on this matter. Let me know what answer is to be given to this Vicar General whose name is Rigal. I find it strange that the main Vicar General does not know what has taken place or else has so well forgotten it.

I would ask for nothing better than to heed your advice and go to Bordeaux this spring, but travelling is no entertainment for me when I have to go by coach. The railroad is at best tolerable! Then, to go to Bordeaux, how many stops in episcopal sees would I have to make?

Definitely, if I had to make the trip to Paris, I would make the extra distance and go to Bordeaux. This item will probably be decided in the course of this month.

1309. [To Father Bellon, at Romans].¹⁴

Few members available to meet the needs of the different houses. Reports on the missions.

[Marseilles], March 19, 1856.

We are poor, and thus it is not fitting that we would play the part of the rich. We have to know how to be satisfied with the little that we can do, with the small number of members we have, and to spare ourselves useless lamentations and unjust recriminations. What is the good in wanting to go faster than time allows? Let us be patient: at the end of the year we shall have some new priests, all our hope is in that fact; and when we will have to apportion them among so many needs, we shall be obliged to concede that we are still not sufficiently provided for. Should we be upset because of that? Is it our role to revolt against Providence? God knows our needs, he is master of hearts; if he is not moving a greater number and directing them to us, what can we say? We must do the best with the means we have, we must not become upset and not weary our superiors with untimely claims. This is what both common sense and religion tell us.

¹⁴ YENVEUX V, 92; VII, 269.

I think our missionaries are sending you reports of their missions. Forgetting this prescription would result in an unfortunate gap in the annals of the Congregation. If they have not done this during the mission, require them to make good this omission after they have returned home.

1310. [To Father Soullier, at Nancy].¹⁵

Transfers of Father Pineau to Nancy and of Father Eynard to N.-D. de Cléry. Report on N.-D. de Sion.

L.J.C. et M.I.

Marseilles, April 14, 1856.

Here, my dear Father Soullier, is my letter via Father Pineau whom I am sending as a help to your community. He is an angel of virtue, a model of regularity, gentleness itself. I am offering you a real gift. His inclinations would have taken him to the foreign missions, but we must not forget what the saintly Pius VII told us at the beginning of our existence: *Ite primum ad domesticos fidei*.¹⁶ We therefore have to consider before all else the needs of those who have been Christian for a long time: the good Lord will aid us later in regard to the heathens. Not that I want to lose sight of the latter, but at first we have to attend to that which is more urgent.

With interest I read your report on N.-D. de Sion. I presume you have obtained the permission of the Provincial to have it printed: I myself did not want to ask this of him. Since you did not speak to me about it, I prefer to remind you directly of your obligation to request such a permission.

You may ask Father Pineau to serve either at Nancy or Sion, according to your need. Only do be attentive to his health. He never complains, he is well, but I do not think he is very strong, and that is the situation with all our young Fathers and Brothers. Father Eynard, whom I am sending to N.-D. de Cléry is even less strong than Father

¹⁵ Orig.: Rome, Postulation Archives, L. M.-Soullier.

¹⁶ Cf. REY I, 169 and *OBLATE WRITINGS*, VII, p. 6.

Pineau and it is not too long ago that he was quite ill. A third man is going to England where he will prepare himself to go on the mission to the Kaffirs. But what is this in terms of meeting so many needs! Let us pray to the Lord that, in return for those he takes away from us to place in his holy Paradise, he send us men according to his heart, who are capable of carrying out the great mission he has given us in his Church.

I was able to write you these few lines by hiding out in Father Fabre's room while he was giving his class. Affectionately greet on my behalf all our Fathers in your two houses. I bless them as well as you with all my heart.

† C.J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles, s.g.

P.S. To make short work of the difficulties we encounter in covering the missionaries' travelling expenses, I have decided that the Father who is coming to you will apply his Mass intentions for the benefit of the general treasury up to the sum that will be given him for his trip.

1311. [To Father de L'Hermite, at N.-D. de Cléry].¹⁷

Transfer of Father Eynard. Moderation in work.

L.J.C. et M.I.

Marseilles, April 14, 1856.

From the Major Seminary.

I start by telling you, my dear and well-beloved son, that, if you could perceive the pleasure receiving your letters brings me, you would write to me more often without calculating whether I am not a little in arrears with you. I am immediately going to reward you for the last letter I received from you. I do not have it with me because I have gone into hiding in the seminary to expedite some matters without being disturbed as I am from morning till night at the bishopric. Nevertheless, I can definitely tell you that you are not taking enough care of yourself. I beg you as a favour what I could prescribe to you, namely, that you take your measure not from the work there is to be done but rather from your strength. On that score you have to set a standard

¹⁷ Orig.: Rome, Postulation Archives, L. M.-L'Hermite

and then not deviate therefrom. I am sending you Father Eynard as a helper, that will give you one man more. Though he is a good man, he will not completely fulfill your expectations, for it is absolutely necessary that you be attentive to his health which has been considerably damaged. What can we do about this? We must be such as the good Lord wants us to be. Let us be satisfied with our own share, let us beware of complaining. One thing is certain, he does not require anything from us that is beyond our strength. This is what I would really like to bring home to you in order to moderate your zeal and keep you in a state of rest even when you see there is more to be done than you can do. No consideration is to shake you in this regard. Let the people, the clergy, the bishop say what they want, don't do more on account of that. Note that he who is giving you this advice, which is not just a simple counsel, is not a man who generally spares himself nor is he a friend of excessive caring for self: thus I should inspire more confidence in you regarding the decision I am giving you after reflecting on the matter.

I have written to the Bishop of Orleans. According to the way you encouraged me, I told him I was willing to give the directive a trial run, but that I could not possibly agree to our missionaries staying nine months outside the community, so that. . . .¹⁸

1312. [To Father Roux, novice at Notre-Dame de l'Osier].¹⁹

Friendship. Invitation to write more often.

L.J.C. et M.I.

Marseilles, April 22, 1856.

Why don't people leave me a little time and freedom, my dear Father Roux, so that I can converse with you for a few moments? But no! Just at a time when I would like to be alone a little, people are there to bother me with a thousand things, even to the point where I have to give an immediate decision regarding an unfortunate person who has committed suicide and whom they would like to bury with the

¹⁸ We no longer possess the second page of this letter.

¹⁹ Orig.: Rome, Postulation Archives, L.M.-Roux.

honour of a church burial. My dear son, I thank you for having written me at the time of your arrival; a few more words thereafter would have pleased me very much. It is quite enough that I am separated from the portion of the family that I find so interesting; so it is necessary from time to time to shorten distances by sending a few lines which always are a delight to me, even though I may not be able, as a consequence of my situation which is known to you, immediately to manifest my satisfaction. It is not a matter of distracting you in your recollection or from your holy occupation, but rather to keep you in touch with myself. You know how interested I am in all that concerns you. So write to me from time to time, now and then, if you like, but do not leave me without news of yourself as if I were a stranger to you or you did not know me. It seems like a century ago that you left me. I realize that this is an illusion due to my affection for you, so clear away my error by reminding me how long it has been. Tell me whether you are in good health, whether the sudden change in climate has not taxed you, whether you are satisfied, whether the good Lord continues to pamper you a little by the gentleness of the Holy Spirit's anointing, whether you are profiting from the quiet and solitude to advance in the knowledge of the priceless advantages of your vocation, whether your heart, already so well disposed, is being fashioned according to the virtues of a good religious, virtues which guarantee his salvation and prepare for him an abundance of blessings which everywhere will accompany his holy ministry.

I am asking too much of you, my dear son, that is not what I wanted to tell you when I picked up the pen. Here we are in the area of full direction, whereas I intended simply to give you a proof of my remembering you, of the paternal sentiments I nourish in your regard. You are already aware of them, but I am very pleased to again reassure you of the same by embracing you and giving you my blessing.

† C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles,
s. g.

1313. [To Father Mouchette, at Montolivet].²⁰

Complaints against Fathers Tempier and Mouchette who do not keep the Founder informed as to what is going on in the scholasticate. Departure of Brother Manuel for England.

L.J.C. et M.I.

Marseilles, April 23, 1856.

I cannot understand how it is possible, my dear son, that, with only a walk's distance away from me, you can leave me for whole months at a time without taking the trouble of telling me anything about Montolivet. In this matter Father Mouchette is perfectly imitating his local superior. But it is not from the latter that I am to expect information about things that concern our young people. Why don't you take one day a week and come and see me, especially when you notice that I have not been able to come and call on you myself. This is the subject of my present complaint which I am sending you via the good little Brother Manuel about whom in particular you should have spoken to me before he came to take his leave of me. I kept him here for two extra days in order to await the return of Father Aubert who will probably have some commissions for England to give him.

Good-bye, my dear son. I greet you very affectionately.

† C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles,
s. g.

1314. [To Father Gouret, novice at Notre-Dame de l'Osier].²¹

Regrets not having written for so long to Father Gouret. Affection for all the Oblates.

L.J.C. et M.I.

Marseilles, April 24, 1856.

My dear Father Gouret, if all the children God has given me were

²⁰ Orig.: Rome, Postulation Archives, L. M.-Mouchette.

²¹ Orig.: Rome, Postulation Archives, L. M.-Gouret. Father Francis Gouret, born September 8, 1827, began his novitiate on January 12, 1856.

not constantly present to my mind and heart, I couldn't forgive myself for having waited so long to write you. During the holy Sacrifice and at the evening oraison before the Blessed Sacrament, when I pass our holy army in review, it seems to me that I am with all of you and so I perhaps feel less the need of methodically replying to the letters which I have nevertheless received with great pleasure. If you only knew how little master I am in disposing of my time! I do not exactly complain about it because I know that a bishop has to be everyone's servant, but I feel often thwarted and that is especially the case when I am hindered in satisfying certain family proprieties, outpourings of the heart that I would so gladly share by conversing with my children for whom God has given me such a great charity. Fortunately, everyone is aware of my situation and takes my good will into account. The older men will have told you this, my dear son. And you will be good enough to accept this late reply and the expression of my affectionate sentiments with which I give you my fatherly blessing.

† C.J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles,
s. g.

1315. [To Father Mouchette, at Montolivet].²²

Death of the scholastic François Camper. The next ordination.

[Marseilles], April 30, 1856.

With joy and some anxiety I see the great ordination of our deacons approaching. An immense void will thus be created, less on account of the number than of the quality of the excellent young religious we have in this group.²³

I agree with you, it is good to ordain a subdeacon so that he can be advanced to the diaconate when the great lot of our deacons will be ordained to the priesthood. I am referring in this to your presentation of the man whom you propose: you will however, have to make him

²² YENVEUX VI, 123, 124; VIII, 157, 205.

²³ The following scholastics were ordained priests at the ordination of June 8th: A. Vassal, P. Duclos, A. Martens, J. J. Pouzin, J. Bouquillon, C.J. Mestre, C. Frain.

well appreciate the privilege that will be granted him. May he prepare himself well in advance to be worthy of this favour. You will inquire as to whether it would be appropriate that I make that clear to him.²⁴

I repeat the advice to put aside all that was used by our good Brother Camper.²⁵ I even add that we should not hesitate to get rid of these things, including the blankets. This is certainly a loss, but it is an imperative! My intention would be to make a parcel of all these things and send it to the Little Sisters of the Poor. In their establishment they have only people at an advanced old age: there would be no great disadvantage were they to use these things. The good Lord will see to the replacement of what we have lost. If need be, I shall give thereto the first hundred francs I shall have left over.

... This is a new cross that the good Lord has had in store for us. Make sure that charity abounds.²⁶

1316. [To Father Fabre, at the Major Seminary in Marseilles].²⁷

Father Fabre is to rest at N.-D. de l'Osier.

L.J.C. et M.I.

M[arsei]lles, May 22, 1856.

My dear son, I have learned that far from feeling better, you rather continue to be ailing. My mind is quickly made up. You will leave Saturday morning so that you can reach Romans and spend the Sunday there; from there you will leave again on Monday and proceed to N.-D. de l'Osier where you will rest according to your own discretion, taking care, however, not to poison yourself with your pills. If I could believe that a change of place could effect some amelioration in Brother Couasnon's illness,²⁸ I would tell you to take him with you, provided, of course, that you won't tire yourself out with him once you are at l'Osier. I leave this matter to your own judgment.

²⁴ Brother J. P. Michaelis.

²⁵ The scholastic Camper had died of pulmonary tuberculosis on January 19, 1856.

²⁶ According to YENVEUX VI, 123, this new cross is not the death of Brother Camper, but rather "a scholastic Brother who lost his head". Two scholastics were in this condition during 1856-1857, namely, Brothers Verdier and Couasnon. Cf. Minutes of the General Council, May 13, 1857.

²⁷ Orig.: Rome, Postulation Archives, L. M.-Fabre.

²⁸ Ms.: "de f. Couanon."

Father Vincens will go to replace you until you return when the ordinations are near.

Good-bye, my dear son. I bless and embrace you with all my heart.

† C.J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles,

1317. [To Father Tempier, at Marseilles].²⁹

Visit to Chartres. News. In Paris, where he has gone to assist at the baptism of the imperial prince, the Founder will soon begin to concern himself with matters relevant to his diocese.

L.J.C. et M.I.

Paris, June 20, 1856.

Before setting out for Chartres where I shall be spending the day, I will write you these few lines, my dear Tempier. It was not possible for me to do it earlier. Yesterday morning I was giving first communion and I administered the sacrament of confirmation to the children of David's parish.³⁰ That cost me the entire day. Today I shall be at Chartres all day long and tomorrow I must set out right in the morning to see the most. . . .³¹

This is the fourth time I am taking up the pen to write these few lines. This delay has given me time to receive your letter of the 18th and yet today we are on the 21st. Since the letter I addressed to you in common, I have written to Cailhol: without going into other details I approved that you subscribe in my name the sum of 500 francs in favour of those who are harmed by the flood. We are going to be a bit embarrassed, for the bishops in their turn will have to appeal to our charity to distribute our alms through their hands. I have told Cardinal de Bonald, who is to write in their name, that we would be much embarrassed to respond to his appeal because we have already handed

²⁹ Orig.: Rome, Postulation Archives, L. M.-Tempier.

³⁰ Parish of an old friend of Bishop de Mazenod, namely, Father David, the parish priest of Fontenay-les-Roses. Cf. REY, II, 599.

³¹ The sentence is unfinished.

in our offering to the commission. All that we can do is to recommend to this totally lay commission that it assign to the bishops a portion of what it will have to distribute.

Father Rey has informed me about the sufferings of our dear Father Fabre. I had intended to write to him, but I lack time here, even though I say Mass at six o'clock.

We will have time to think about a successor to Mr. Maurel when I return. I have not yet been able to start handling our affairs. We still have the Nuncio's dinner tomorrow. The day after tomorrow I shall broach our matters, but I would like to know whether the papers concerning the furniture are ready, so that I can refer to these documents.

It seems to be that, since I am away, I have no choice but to visit our different establishments. On the one hand, that will entail a ruinous cost and, on the other, it will take a long time.³²

1318. [To Father Soullier at Nancy].³³

Proximate visit to Nancy.

L.J.C. et M.I.

Paris, June 28, 1856.

Even though I will not be long before coming to see you, my dear Father Soullier, I do not want to leave unanswered the two letters I have received from you. As always, they gave me the greatest pleasure. There is indeed a brief word³⁴ which could temper the joy I was looking forward to when I shall be in your midst; like you, however, I hope that my own presence will diminish or even dissipate these little clouds which have appeared on the horizon.

³² We no longer possess the second page of this letter.

³³ Orig.: Rome, Postulation Archives, L. M.-Soullier.

³⁴ The Founder had no doubt wanted to say, "a brief word [from your last letter]". In his letter of January 16, 1856, Father Soullier had complained about the bad character of Father Audruger, although he acknowledged that the latter was an "indefatigable missionary".

I cannot precisely pinpoint the day of my arrival at Nancy. My stay in Paris will hardly extend beyond next week. Now be sure that it is not only a few hours that I intend to spend with you, but rather several days. My intent is even to go as far as Sion to visit this shrine and to assess your situation. I am a bit embarrassed by the Bishop of Nancy's offer to me that I stay with him; but I hope that this good bishop will understand that, since I am going to Nancy to visit you, it is only fitting that I reside under the same roof as you.

Well then, good-bye my dear son. I delight in the thought that in a few days I shall hold my children at Nancy to my heart. In the meantime I embrace you and give you my blessing.

† C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles,
s. g.

1319. [To Father Tempier, at Marseilles].³⁵

As senator, Bishop de Mazenod will not change anything in his customary lifestyle and will always remain in Marseilles.

[Paris], June 29 and July 7, 1856.

Tell everyone with a loud voice that I shall never leave my diocese and that I shall be the Bishop of Marseilles until I die. I do not agree with you about the household style and management you would like me to adopt in Marseilles. My new dignity³⁶ is not to change anything in my modest way of living: hence, no livery, above all, no sumptuous meals. As for alms, I will not make any that cause sensation. Such a thing does not seem appropriate to me on the occasion of receiving a dignity that is purely political. I sum up by telling you that I shall be in Marseilles about July 20th.

³⁵ REY II, 603-604.

³⁶ Bishop de Mazenod was on June 24th appointed Senator of the Empire.

1320. [To Father Soullier, at Nancy].³⁷

Joy of seeing his children again soon.

L.J.C. et M.I.

Paris, July 4, 1856.

My dear son, I am letting the two persons who want to see me wait in order to tell you quickly that I intend to leave on Monday by the seven o'clock train. Do not be put out, however, if you do not see me arrive. A person can never foresee everything. Nevertheless it is all firmly settled in my mind and only an unsurmountable impediment could divert me therefrom. I have taken leave of pretty well everyone, today I shall finish doing so. It was impossible to respond to your invitation. It is already a great deal that I can leave the Senate before closure: I could hardly sneak away at the time when I was just admitted into it. Good-bye, then, my dear son, soon I shall embrace you all with the warmth of heart of a father who has been deprived for so long from enjoying the presence of his children.

† C.J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles

1321. [To Father Soullier, at Nancy].³⁸

His trip postponed for a few days. Schedule of his visit to Nancy, Sion, Cléry, Limoges and Bordeaux.

L.J.C. et M.I.

Paris, July 4, 1856.

It seems, my dear son, that when I wrote you this morning I foresaw what has just happened. The Keeper of the Great Seal of the Senate pointed out to me that it would not be fitting for me to leave at a time when they are about to vote on the great issue of the regency, which is one of the most important matters to be dealt with in the

³⁷ Orig.: Rome, Postulation Archives, L. M.-Soullier.

³⁸ Orig.: Rome, Postulation Archives, L. M.-Soullier.

Senate. I had to yield to this observation and consequently defer my trip until Wednesday.³⁹ So it will be only on that day that I can set out. That thwarts me quite a bit because, having a rather large tour to make, I shall have to shorten my stay in each place I shall be visiting. So, my dear friend, arrange things in such a way that nothing hinders me from going to Sion. I think that by starting very early in the morning, we should be able to go there and back in one day. According to my plan, I would be staying with you the rest of Wednesday, we would go to Sion on Thursday, we would spend Friday together, and I would return to Paris on Saturday to proceed to Orleans and Cléry, and from there pass on swiftly to Limoges, at this place take a look at the shrine they want to give us,⁴⁰ leave there as soon as possible for Bordeaux where I also have to examine the place where they want to build, and then very speedily head for Marseilles where I would like to arrive a few days before the opening of the Chapter.⁴¹ All of this is to happen when I am close to achieving seventy-five years of age, which commence, as you know, on August 1st at eight o'clock in the evening.

Good-bye, my son, I have to hurry to where they are waiting for me. I embrace you with all my heart and bless you all.

† C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

P.S. If you have the occasion of seeing the Bishop of Nancy, give him my regards.

1322. For Father Delpuech, [at Bordeaux].⁴²

Permission to go to Arcachon. The Founder cannot go to Limoges and Bordeaux.

L.J.C. et M.I.

³⁹ Wednesday, July 9th, and not Monday, July 7th, as planned.

⁴⁰ The project was to entrust the shrine of Notre-Dame de Sauvagnac to the Oblates. Cf. General Council, June 2, 1856.

⁴¹ The Chapter was held from August 4th to August 12th.

⁴² Orig.: Rome, Postulation Archives, L. M.-Delpuech.

Paris, July 7, 1856.

Dear God! How can I manage to measure up to my work! This morning I wrote to H[is] E[minence]⁴³ with regard to everything else except that which you ask me. Go, if the Superior⁴⁴ doesn't see any problem therein, go to Arcachon so as not to displease the Cardinal, but I shall be very hard put to it to meet all the needs. At the Chapter I anticipate demands from all sides.

I had intended to speak to the Cardinal about the parish priest who would like to associate himself to your ministry, but now I am put off indefinitely. Being obliged to stay longer in Paris on account of the duties I have to perform in the Senate has disrupted by whole itinerary. With good reason they demand my presence in Marseilles two weeks before the opening of the Chapter. I cannot hide myself from the faithful of my diocese when I return. Consequently, no visit to Limoges, none to Bordeaux this month. Please believe me that I am utterly put out by this. I was contemplating a real happiness in seeing and tenderly embracing you. But this will only be postponed. Good-bye. I should be far away at the moment when I am writing this to you. I am afraid of missing those I am going to ask to grant our missionaries the favour of travelling by train at half fare. Good-bye, then, my good and dear son: once more I embrace you from afar.

† C.J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles, s.g.

I bless you all.

P.S. Would they not be thinking of sending you to Arcachon in order to remove you from Talence?⁴⁵

⁴³ Cardinal Bonnet.

⁴⁴ Father Merlin.

⁴⁵ The parish and pilgrimage of N.-D. d'Arcachon, located some 50 kilometers southwest of Bordeaux, were entrusted to the Oblates only in 1869. Cardinal Donnet really wanted to put them into Oblate hands in 1856, but the Founder declined the offer. Cf. ORTOLAN, *Les Oblates de M.-I.*, III, p. 103.

1323. [To Father Mouchette, at Montolivet].⁴⁶

Gratitude for his last letter. Friendship.

L.J.C. et M.I.

Paris, July 7, 1856.

My dear Father Mouchette, here is all I can manage to thank you for the nice little letter you have sent me. Here I always have several things to do at the same time: just at this moment I should be at the Ministry of the Interior if I am not to miss the person whom it is important that I see there. Nevertheless, in spite of the bad pen which doesn't put down the words on paper any more, I do want to tell you your letter made me very happy, especially by telling me that you feel better. Dear son, keep yourself thus, never forcing yourself in your work. When I perceive you suffering, I am in anguish: I try to conceal this, but it does tear my soul.

Good-bye, good-bye, my dear son. I absolutely have to go. I have only time to embrace you tenderly and to bless you as well as all our men.

† C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles,
s.g.

1324. [To Bishop Guibert of Viviers].⁴⁷

Invitation to come to the General Chapter. Hopes to consecrate Bishop Semeria during the Chapter.

Marseilles, July 22, 1856.

Only today, my dear Bishop, have I been able to take up my pen to remind you that we all eagerly expect you for the General Chapter which will be held during the first days of August. So you would have to set out in our direction by the end of next week, so that we might have the time to talk a bit about the great issues facing the Congrega-

⁴⁶ Orig.: Rome, Postulation Archives, L. M.-Mouchette.

⁴⁷ Orig.: Rome, Postulation Archives, L. M.-Guibert.

tion. Everyone has arrived, even this admirable Father Semeria brought here all the way from Ceylon by the papal bulls appointing him coadjutor. I have written to Rome for authorization to consecrate this dear and good brother at Marseilles, assisted by two other bishops of the Congregation, amidst all the Chapter members. I have much insisted with the new Cardinal⁴⁸ that he obtain for me this favour from the Pope. I do not dare to say that I hope for it, but I do await it with a certain confidence. It would really be something quite moving; they are, however, so slow in Rome.

I leave countless details for our interview. For the time being I limit myself to these few lines which I am writing at the moment when they are telling me it is time for me to go and have my guests eat supper. Good-bye, then, I embrace you with all my heart.

† C.J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles,

1325. [To Father Fabre, at the Major Seminary].⁴⁹

Unjust complaints by Father Tempier.

[Marseilles], August 26, 1856.

. . . Moreover, I have to show you a very painful letter which a bad mood has inspired Father Tempier to write: he has really forgotten himself in his unjust and outrageous complaining. This good brave man, whom I have always allowed to do his will, accepts with difficulty the little vexations he encounters in the general measures to which he remains completely foreign, never considering anything but Montolivet which to him is the whole world. His letter is nothing but a diatribe covering the 27 years he has spent in the major seminary; briefly, according to what he says, I have always sacrificed him in favour of everyone else. It is painful to hear him say such things. I am restraining myself quite a bit in the answer I am sending him. If he does not speak of this to you, don't you say anything to him yourself. On the other hand, if he opens up to you, don't be afraid to blame him so that he may understand, if possible, that he is very much in the wrong.

⁴⁸ Cardinal Barnabò.

⁴⁹ YENVEUX VII, 21.

P.S. I shall mail my answer to Father T[empier] only after I have read it to you. It is all made out, I am holding it back.

1326. To Father Courtès, Oblate Superior, House of the Mission at Aix, B. du Rhône.⁵⁰

Regrets that Bishop Guigues and Father Honorat did not celebrate Mass in the Oblate chapel of the cemetery at Aix: one Mass a month is to be celebrated at this place.

L.J.C. et M.I.

St-Louis near Marseilles, August 27, 1856.

Dear Courtès, a few words only to tell you that I leave it to your own discretion either to accept or refuse the proposal made to you by V[icar] G[eneral] Leloir.

I was on the point of sending off Father Honorat, who is staying with me, to go and say Mass in our funeral chapel. I scolded him plenty for not having fulfilled this duty. He told me that Bishop Guigues hadn't done any better than he. I blame him and perhaps also your Father Sacristan who should have the key of this chapel at his disposal, so that people do not have to look for it in vain when it is needed. We must not shrink from the trouble of having to carry the vestments: that is a rather small chore that our gentlemen, the Brothers, will gladly do, and that not only on some extraordinary occasion such as has just occurred, but once a month when one of your Fathers, according to my wish, ought to celebrate Mass over the sacred bodies which rest in this shrine. It is not for nothing that I have at great expense built a chapel and consecrated its altar.

Thank you for having sent me the brief note which contains so many fine sentiments. It will be handed over to the historiographer of the Congregation so that he can transcribe it into the record of all the moving and marvellous things that have happened at Montolivet.

Good-bye, good-bye, I embrace you with all my heart.

† C.J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles, s.g.

⁵⁰ Orig.: Rome, Postulation Archives, L.M.-Courtès. The address is in Father Aubert's hand, who writes: "Courtèz".

P.S. If you have to be at l'Osier for the time of the great feast, prepare a short sermon. We have only one up to now. Yours will make a good impact and, as you know, the Church is small, so you won't be hampered in delivering it, for your ordinary voice is more than sufficient.

1327. [To Father Vincens, at N.-D. de l'Osier].⁵¹

The Founder's impending trip to N.-D. de l'Osier.

[Marseilles,] August 27, 1856.

I am planning to come up a few days before the solemn feast.⁵² I insist that the best room be reserved for the Bishop of Grenoble.⁵³ I will be all right anywhere, only I would like you to get rid of all the bugs from the room which I am to occupy. If this is not possible, put me up without ado right above the hothouse: I will be wonderfully at home there.

1328. [To Father Tempier, at Montolivet].⁵⁴

The sick should not return to their families and be cared for there.

[Marseilles], August 31, 1856.

I am quite convinced, my dear Tempier, that sending our sick people back into the world to be taken care of is a detestable procedure. Father Telmon has applied it and Father Saby wanted to profit therefrom. I have managed to have the former return, but Father Saby finds it very hard to persuade himself that he is in duty bound not to remain outside of our communities. This Father is a conceited man whose vocation, I think, is more than a little compromised.

⁵¹ YENVEUX IV, 49.

⁵² Bishop de Mazenod went to l'Osier for the feast of the 2nd centenary of the miracle at l'Osier: it was celebrated on September 8th.

⁵³ Bishop Ginoulhiac.

⁵⁴ YENVEUX VI, 334.

1329. [To Father de L'Hermite, at N.-D. de Cléry].⁵⁵

Permission to stay with the Marquis de Poterat.

L.J.C. et M.I.

Marseilles, October 5, 1856.

My dear son, I hasten to reply to the letter which I have just received from you. My letter will serve as an answer to two of your letters. Don't you dare withdraw from the house of the Marquis de Poterat. From this excellent gentleman I have just received a letter that is both most reassuring and friendly towards you and the Congregation. This letter of the Marquis takes care of all our anxieties, there is no more any reason for you to worry. Always act with the reserve and prudence you have thus far shown in your habitual relationships with this honorable family and don't listen to anyone in terms of changing your conduct: since the master of the house has spoken as he has, no one has the right to speak or think otherwise.

I say as much regarding your position as vicar. Remain such and continue busying yourself with the parish's spiritual welfare. This must not hinder you from giving a mission from time to time. Elsewhere vicars take a month's holiday during which time they are absent from the parish; why shouldn't you also be absent for a short month to follow your wish of doing the ministry of the missions?

You see, my dear son, how beneficial it is to carry on a correspondence with the S[uperior] Gen[eral]. It is a means of receiving a suitable direction, not to mention the consolation that you bring him by communicating with him: since he cannot enjoy your good presence because he is forced to keep you far from him.

It is in hurrying that I have been able to write you and I have to finish sooner than I had wanted to. This is so true that I do not have the time to write to the Marquis de Poterat as I had intended to do. I shall try and do so tomorrow or the day after, because I now have to go and administer the sacrament of confirmation to the prisoners. Good-bye, dear son, I bless you and embrace you with all my heart.

† C.J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

⁵⁵ This letter is certainly addressed to a Father at N.-D. de Cléry (REY II, 606), and apparently to Father de l'Hermite who was superior and parish priest there. He was no doubt taking a rest at the Marquis de Poterat's residence.

October 10th.

While rummaging around on my desk, I find this letter in an unsealed envelope. I thought I had sent it off on the day that I wrote it in such a hurry. Apparently the person I gave it to to seal had overlooked it.

Mr. de Poterat will receive the letter I wrote him yesterday at the same time that you will be receiving this one. I told him that I had written to you. That is true, but there was no way you could have received this letter.

1330. [To Father Tempier, at Montolivet].⁵⁶

Diocesan business items.

St-Louis near Marseilles, October 25, 1856.

Now and then, dear Tempier, an idea occurs to me. A person has so many things on his mind that he cannot think of everything. Well, then! When talking to Carbonnel, he said that he was having difficulty in paying the Sisters of St. Thomas. That I do believe! That is why I would never have agreed to take on the responsibility of paying for the full value of their property. I had always counted both on Mr. Léautier's assistance as well as on the sale of Mr. Bruchon's country estate.

It is about this item that I am writing to you. Where are we in regard to this sale? We are no doubt waiting for a higher price and we exercise patience by leasing this country estate. But that does not serve my need. I cannot reduce myself to a situation wherein I can no longer manage anything of the funds which these payments will exhaust. I therefore ask you to urge Mr. Bruchon a little to make good his promise. That is all I wanted to tell you. Good-bye.

⁵⁶ Orig.: Rome, Postulation Archives, L. M.-Tempier.

1331. [To Father Ch. Baret, at Bordeaux].⁵⁷

Friendship. Prayer for success of Father Baret's preaching. Advice.

L.J.C. et M.I.

Marseilles, November 9, 1856.

My dear son, how can you think that a letter such as your heart dictated can remain buried among the papers without number which daily accumulate on my desk? Were I only to thank you for your good remembrance of me, I would thereby prove to you that I am sensitive to kindness which you know must fill my heart with the best satisfaction. I admit that people leave me with little time, but if I could only say one word to you, I have to tell you again that I love you with the affection of the most tender mother. That is why I follow you in every phase of your life: in the interior of our communities, in your apostolic journeys, in the pulpits of Libourne and Bordeaux, wherever you may go. I accompany you with my constant prayer that you sanctify yourself by working at the conversion of others. I rejoice at the blessings the good Lord pours on your ministry and I implore the Lord that, though he may give you greater growth in your obvious talent, he may also keep you in an attitude of humility which will induce you to recognize that all you possess comes from God's goodness and that you ought to refer to him all the glory of your success.

One more thing I recommend to you is that, when returning to the community after the most brilliant ministry, you immediately live in the most exact observance of the Rule, in the practice of the virtues of religion, so as to conform yourself well to the spirit of our vocation which wants us to be apostles on the outside and in a certain sense recluses in our communities in order to devote ourselves therein to study and to our personal sanctification.

November 22nd.

From the original date of this letter you will see, dear friend, that it is not yours which remains buried on my desk. If I were to list for you all the things I have had to do from the time I began to converse with you, you would have the explanation for the delay of this letter.

⁵⁷ Orig.: Rome, Postulation Archives, L. M.-Baret.

Hence, for fear of some new misadventure and knowing that forthwith I have to go and confirm a sick man who is dying and while speaking about business matters to one of our Fathers who is present here, I hasten to embrace and bless you.

† C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles,
s.g.

P.S. I expect from you a report, made out in all simplicity, of the Advent sermons you have given at the cathedral.

1332. [To Father Roux, at Notre-Dame de l'Osier].⁵⁸

Greetings and best wishes for Father Roux's perseverance. Three priests from Marseilles are at the novitiate.

L.J.C. et M.I.

Marseilles, December 3, 1856.

My dear Father Roux, I do not want to leave any of these fine letters that I receive without an answer, but in my position it is not easy to succeed in this. I must thank you for the good testimony you give about our dear confrere who quite recently dedicated himself definitively to God.⁵⁹ I am writing to him in this same mailing to congratulate him for this. It consoles me to think that soon I shall be in a position to offer you my congratulations. I truly long for the month of February to come when you will be joyfully saying these good words: *Funes ceciderunt mihi in præclaris*⁶⁰ and I shall be able to give you the triple name of son. You are already a son by your birth as my diocesan; you are also a son in closer way through the laying on of my hands which communicated to you the sublime character of a priest of Jesus Christ; furthermore, you will be a son through your religious profession which will make you a member of the Congregation and

⁵⁸ Orig.: Rome, Postulation Archives, L. M.-Roux.

⁵⁹ Father Casimir Berengier, from Marseilles, entered the novitiate on November 17, 1855 and made his oblation on November 21, 1856. Cf. General Council of November 14, 1856.

⁶⁰ Psalm 15:6.

will give you as father him who has founded it and is its head. So you see, my dear son, the many reasons which make you dear to me and the rights I have to your affection. I count on this all the more inasmuch as I myself nourish a greater affection for you.

You will perhaps have been surprised and certainly very pleased with the arrival of the good Mr. Paul at l'Osier. I am hoping that your example and good advice will encourage him in the new career he is entering. I see him as timid by temperament and very reserved. Tell the novice master not to be astonished at this, and advise Mr. Paul not to be ill at ease with the novice master whose wisdom and real merit you yourself know.

Good-bye, my dear son, I am so glad that I have been able three times to free myself for a few moments in order to converse with you and to express to you again all my fatherly affection.

† C.J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

1333. [To Father Soullier, at Nancy].⁶¹

Invitation to write more often. Is sending Father Berengier.

L.J.C. et M.I.

Marseilles, December 9, 1856.

You have surely taken an oath, my good and dear Father Soullier, not to spoil me. How many days, weeks and months now that I am pining for a letter from you! Not that I feel a need that you remind me of yourself, for you are certainly too much in my heart for me not to have your image constantly present to me and my love for you is incessant too. However, I am still imperfect enough to desire something in return for such a constant and tender affection. Having looked into myself I acknowledge that, when all is said and done, the suffering your long silence brings me has its source in this sentiment. I would reproach myself for it were it not permissible for a father to love, and even to love greatly, a son in whom he recognizes so many good and fine qualities which are God's gifts, gifts he wants to use to further his glory.

⁶¹ Orig.: Rome, Postulation Archives, L. M.-Soullier.

Did I not also inform you of the help I am sending you, you could say, my dear son, that I am writing to you only to send you this reproach. I have written about it to Father Guinet, but I am happy to tell you about it simply to show you that our relationships of local superior to the Superior General must remain intact as long as the Lord leaves me on this earth, independently of the relationships you may entertain with the Provincial. This is a privilege I reserve to myself in order to maintain the close communications I want to keep up with my children, whatever their station may be.

Thus you will be receiving, I would say almost at the same time as this letter, Father Berengier whom I have been keeping for you. You will be able to derive good advantage from this worker who is endowed with talent and zeal. He is coming out of the novitiate with excellent dispositions, he has shown himself generous in his consecration and has edified everybody. I do not need to tell you that you will have to treat him as a good brother and with a certain consideration due to his age and devotedness. You will find him a little too eager, but this liveliness, well directed, can result in good things. Show him some confidence, take him out first on mission with you to direct the course he has to follow. Don't let him suffer from the cold: this is the only thing he dreads in the areas of the north. He will serve you marvellously in the mission on which Father Guinet is not to go in accordance to what I have informed him in the last letter I wrote him. I insist that he never absent himself for more than one week from the novitiate: this latter must be the object of his principal, I would even say, his sole concern.⁶²

I read the article on hope published in *L'Univers* with great pleasure. There is every likelihood that it will have good results. I learned about it yesterday through the intermediary of a Jesuit who came to take part in a ceremony at which I myself assisted at the Refuge where I had gone to say Mass. This article will serve for the letter which you

⁶² The novitiate at Nancy, which had been closed since 1849, reopened its doors in 1855. Father Soullier was novice master in 1855-1856, and he was replaced by Father Guinet at the end of 1856.

had intended to include in your newspaper.⁶³ We should not entrust it to others now that it is in the hands of the P[ro]p[ag]a[tion] of the Faith. If there is too long a delay in publishing it in the *Annales*, then we can publish it elsewhere, but then it would have to be sent to you from here where it has been corrected before it was forwarded to Lyons. It could not have been made public without these corrections.

Hopefully our seminary of Quimper will soon be sending you some novices. This house is getting on exceedingly well: the bishop, the clergy and the seminarians are delighted and show it by what they say and by their conduct.⁶⁴ Your appeal to the people of Lorraine will have some good results, I hope. Since you went to such lengths to name those who serve the Church in the foreign missions — which I very strongly approve — you would have done well to add without limiting yourself those people who are engaged in various ministries in Europe, for, thanks be to God, the list of our people of Lorraine does not end with those who are missionaries in heathen countries.

If there are good ones, it is possible that there is some weakling among them too. You understand that I want to speak of the companion⁶⁵ we have given to Father Conrard. I fear that the latter is too good hearted to direct so imperfect a man; so, my dear son, don't forget to watch over what is going on at Sion. I make you especially responsible for this, you understand its importance. It is as a last resort that I have taken this extreme position. It was a matter either of trying this means which the person concerned himself suggested or of dismissing him. This poor child has very little virtue, he himself is aware of his weakness, which is not very reassuring, all the more so in that he finds it difficult to rid himself of a kind of coquetry, of a pampering of his little self, which makes him attractive to persons whose attention he should be avoiding more than anything else. He has promised heaven

⁶³ On the occasion of his visit to Nancy, the Founder had administered the sacrament of confirmation to the pupils of the convent of the Sisters of Hope at Nancy (Flavigny): cf. REY II, 604. Could the article in question be a report of this ceremony? According to the context it would seem that Bishop de Mazenod is rather alluding to a letter from a missionary Oblate, perhaps that of Father Paillier who was a missionary in Labrador. The *Annales de la Propagation de la Foi*, t.30 (1858), pp. 110-114, published a letter of this Father, written on October 25, 1857 to the parish priest of Pompey (Nancy). Father Paillier had gone to America in 1850 and had written a letter in 1856 which the *Annales* did not carry.

⁶⁴ The direction of Quimper's seminary was accepted in 1856.

⁶⁵ Father J.-B. Humbert, born at St-Maurice (Nancy), left in January 1857. Cf. Letter of Conrard to Vincens, January 28, 1857, and the General Council of January 22, 1857.

and earth if he is placed under good Father Conrard's direction: the latter will obtain everything he needs! You understand that this can hardly inspire me with great confidence. Good-bye, my well-beloved son, I hold you to my heart as I bless you.

† C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles,
S.G.

1334. [To Father Delpuch, at Bordeaux].⁶⁶

Joy in receiving letters from Oblates. Invites him to moderate his zeal. Sisters of the Holy Family. Chapel.

L.J.C. et M.I.

Marseilles, December 10, 1856.

My dear son, I would have liked to express to you more promptly the pleasure your letter brought me. The delight it gave me was all the more intense in that it is unfortunately too rare. I do not really want to reproach you, but simply express a sentiment, a desire. Indeed, I do miss something if I am left for too long a time without receiving news from my children. I know very well that in my position in the centre of a city of three hundred thousand people who don't leave me one day of respite — this is literally true, my calendar vouches for it — it is impossible for me to keep up a continuous correspondence with all those whom God has given me. That is a quite legitimate excuse I make to them when they feel some delay in my answering them; but that does not dispense them from bringing me the sweetest joy I can experience and derive in my close relationships with each one of them.

Not, my dear son, that I do not know what you are doing. On the contrary, I follow you on all your evangelization journeys. I do have to thank God for the good that you are accomplishing through his grace. However, I also would like to persuade you strongly not to exhaust yourself as you are doing. I beg His Lordship the Cardinal's pardon for this. It costs him nothing to keep on urging, to say ceaselessly: go ahead, go ahead. But I maintain that you are not to tempt God and do what is beyond your strength. Therefore, know how to moderate your zeal and to resist the pressure exerted on you. No one is obliged to do more than what one can reasonably ask of him. You yourself perceive

⁶⁶ Orig.: Rome, Postulation Archives, L. M.-Delpuch.

that you are wearing yourself out prematurely in the task they lay on you. God has established a day of rest for each week. This is to teach us that in everything the same is needed. So put some interval of rest between your missions and now that you have two others to assist you,⁶⁷ employ them in such a way that they relieve you. Don't give them other work elsewhere which would then let everything you have been doing up to now continue to weight you down, but let their portion be a relief to yours. This is how I understand things.

Father Vincens must have written to you and replied to several of your questions. To myself I have reserved telling you that I perfectly agree with your viewpoint regarding the benefit you can derive from the little services that you would gladly render to the Congregation of the Holy Family. Very willingly I grant the association of prayers and merits. I shall give instructions to have the official document drawn up. You have done very well to repudiate loudly all contact with that apostate Aubry. Bear well in mind that I consider as such all those who through their own fault place themselves in a situation where they have to be dismissed.

I have told Father Vincens that I consider it absolutely necessary to set up a chapel inside the house where the Blessed Sacrament can be kept. It is essential that our evening oraison be made in the presence of our Lord, and we must have the facility to visit Him often during the day. All of this is not possible if we are obliged to betake ourselves to a public church.

Father Vincens will tell you the rest. I am under too much pressure to prolong further this agreeable conversation with you. I conclude in haste by repeating the assurance of my tender affection and by blessing you with all my heart.

† C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles,
sup. gen.

P.S. A good greeting also to your companion whom I bless too.

⁶⁷ There were at least six Fathers at Bordeaux in the beginning of the year 1857: Fathers Merlin, Delpuch, Baret, Audruger, Gillet and Duclos. The Founder here is no doubt speaking of Fathers Gillet and Duclos. The latter, ordained to the priesthood in 1856, had just come to Bordeaux. Cardinal Donnet entrusted many missions to them: cf. Charles Baret to his brother Victor, February 24, 1857.

1335. [To Father Fabre, at the Major Seminary of Marseilles].¹

Account of his journey to Viviers, Lyons, Paris and Cirey. News.

L.J.C. et M.I.

Cirey, February 6, 1857.

My dear Father Fabre, I am writing to you from Cirey, for I do not know whether Father Tempier is at Lumières where our interests required his presence. The sun is shining on my paper: it is coming through the window pane under which I am writing, but without melting the icicles that cover it; still, we have only 9 degrees of cold here: this does not frighten the people here who are not worried that the olive trees may be destroyed. Moreover, I prefer this weather to that which awaited us at Viviers where it did not stop snowing: this shower from the sky accompanied us until we were beyond Lyons. There was none of it anymore once we were en route to Paris.²

We were very well treated at the station of Lyons by the station-master who gave me a car restricted to myself and my companion, and we made a very good journey. I would be exaggerating were I to say that we therefore spent a rather good night. We did sleep, it is true, but we could not shield ourselves from the cold which was excessively severe. It is sufficiently so right now for me to put aside the pen.

Now I continue my account.

We arrived in Paris at a quarter past six and I proceeded to the Bon Lafontaine where I said Mass in the hotel's chapel. I took a cup of chocolate and immediately proceeded to the station of Strasbourg. The train took me to the junction which leads to Joinville where my niece's carriage³ was waiting to receive me. It takes all of four hours to reach Cirey where I found everyone in good health. I have already spent a good night and I shall rightly devote a few days to this delightful fam-

¹ Orig.: Rome, Postulation Archives, L. M.-Fabre.

² From 1857 to 1860, the Founder went to Paris every year to take part in the Senate's winter session. He left Marseilles with Bishop Jeancard and his servant: cf. L. M.-Tempier, February 7, 1857.

³ His niece, Césarie de Boisgelin (Mme de Damas). The Founder's sister, Eugénie, was in Cirey at that time: cf. L. M.-Eugène de Boisgelin, February 7, 1857.

ily. All these little children are with me as though they have known me for a long time. I am planning to be back in Paris on the 13th. You will conform to this schedule in writing to me, for I insist that our correspondence remain continuous.

I forgot to tell you that at the Bon Lafontaine I learned that the Bishop of Quimper was there. I did not try to see him, however, even in bed, so as not to run the risk of missing the departure. I did write him a few lines with the idea that they would not fail to mention to him that I had passed through there.

The Bishop of Olympia⁴ will have told you that we met at Viviers. I rushed his departure a bit. He had to make a stop at Avignon because of a letter from Mr. Aubanel which seemed to promise him some benefit for his mission.

Before sending out my circular letter,⁵ I would like a copy forwarded to me in Paris. To do this, you could profit from Mr. Canaple's departure:⁶ he will not delay proceeding to Paris for the session's opening. Expedite the matter a little. Should Mr. Canaple have already left, we would still have the hope of benefiting from Gen[eral] Rostolan⁷ who, I have the impression, does not seem to be in such a hurry.

I end my letter here for fear of missing the mail. I have just been handed yours which I cannot possibly answer now except to thank you for your attention: this has brought me the the greatest pleasure.

I embrace you with all the affection which you know I have for you and I bless you.

Affectionately I greet all our Fathers and the illustrious person who shares your table.⁸

I wrote a community letter from Viviers which will no doubt have been communicated to you. Good-bye.

† C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

⁴ Bishop Semeria.

⁵ Circular letter of February 2, 1857. It is reprinted in the last part of this volume.

⁶ Mr. Canaple, an elected deputy. Cf. L. M.-Parish priests of Marseilles, June 16, 1857.

⁷ Mr. Rostolan, General of the 8th Division at Marseilles.

⁸ Bishop Semeria.

P.S. I find it rather unusual that the Minister has not answered my letter regarding the Archdiocese of Aix. Here I am told that we are threatened with receiving Bishop Coeur whom people will be as glad to see leaving Troyes as he will be content to get away from there. What a future prospect!⁹

1336. [To Father Tempier, at Montolivet].¹⁰

Bishop Guibert is named Archbishop of Tours. Regrets seeing him leaving Provence. Diocesan affairs.

L.J.C. et M.I.

Cirey, February 9, 1857.

My dear Tempier, my letters will reach you even at Montolivet, since you are a man who likes living out in the country! You should already have received some news about me through the letters I wrote to the gentlemen who are my Vicars General at Marseilles and to our dear Father Fabre. This dear Father had the good idea of writing to me in his turn and thus I had the consolation of receiving news of all of you on the day after my arrival at Cirey. Jeancard, whom I left at Viviers, will certainly have informed you about our interview with the good bishop. I complained to him about his refusing without having consulted me, but when I read the reply to his letter I was expecting what has indeed come to pass. Now here he is Archbishop of Tours, that is to say, at the other extremity of France instead of being in a way under the same roof as we at Aix. God has disposed things in this way: he requires a great sacrifice from me, for it is impossible to be better towards me than this dear bishop is.

⁹ Bishop de Mazenod had written to Paris proposing Bishop Guibert be appointed to the see of Aix after the demise of Archbishop P. Darcimoles on January 11: cf. REY, II, 629. Bishop Guibert refused this see and he was appointed Archbishop of Tours. Bishop Coeur remained at Troyes. He was a Gallicanist. When he arrived in his diocese in 1849, he changed the seminary personnel, eliminating therefrom all who held the Roman doctrines. This explains Bishop de Mazenod's exclamation: "What a future prospect!"

¹⁰ Orig.: Rome, Postulation Archives, L. M.-Tempier.

At Viviers I found this other good prelate, the Bishop of Olympia. I urged him somewhat to betake himself to Marseilles, though he did not appear to me to be overly concerned about missing the departure of the 5th and then being able to leave only on the 20th. I do not know whether he was fortunate or not at Avignon: there was some hope for help for his mission there. At Nancy he did obtain something, though not all that he had hoped for. Father Marguet¹¹ had promised a great deal, but this dear man always has the good intention of doing well but does not succeed in his intents.

Tell Father Vincens that Father Soullier has written to me that he has had the grief of sending Humbert away. He is asking for help. Doubtless he will himself have written this to him.

I assume you will have put in the appearance at Lumières that was asked of you. When shall we be rid of the embarrassments that this unworthy Mr. Vaison¹² pits against us? He is not satisfied with having seized our property, he would even like to set everyone else against us.

I would like an account sent to me each week of the weekly council meeting which is to take place for the affairs and administration of my diocese. This is an administrative order to which I must adhere.

The 16th. Even in castles a person is not master of every moment of his time. I have to close my letter if I am not to miss the mail.

I charge you to convey my remembrance to our entire precious family which I bless, as well as yourself, with all my heart.

† C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

1337. [To Father Fabre, at the Major Seminary in Marseilles].¹³

Departure for Paris to take part in the opening of the legislative session. Regrets seeing Arch. Guibert leave for Tours. Different matters: Carbonnel, Bishop Semeria, Father Barthès, an undesirable parish priest at Lumières, etc.

¹¹ Vicar General of Nancy and superior of the major seminary.

¹² A whole quantity of papers on the Vaison affair have come down to us. This gentleman claimed to be the owner of the square in front of the shrine and of several lots of the estate of N.-D. de Lumières.

¹³ Orig.: Rome, Postulation Archives, L. M.-Fabre.

Cirey, February 12, 1857.

My dear son, before leaving Cirey I still want to send you a few lines. At about eleven o'clock I shall be leaving to take the train which from Joinville catches the train at Blesme that leads on from Strasbourg to Paris. I shall arrive in this capital city at 10 o'clock in the evening and tomorrow I shall start the sad business I have to carry on in Paris. In advance I am already bored by it. Nothing less than the requirements of my position was needed to constrain me thereto. I shall try to shorten it as much as I possibly can.

I shall be meeting with our dear Archbishop of Tours who has announced his arrival in order to establish his communications. This will for some days at least be a relief to my boredom. I have not rebelled against the designs of Providence. With resignation I accept the choice of Tours instead of Aix that Providence seems to have made for our friend. What I do not understand is the letter of Courtès that you mention in the letter I received from you yesterday. He is greatly pleased that our bishop did not come to Aix whereas, in a previous letter, he not only saw no problem in this but he even desired it. Neither his desire nor mine, nor the reluctance expressed later, have had any effect in the matter: our prelate is well and duly appointed to Tours and will be living 200 leagues away from us. After saying all this, I do not claim that the good Lord cannot be glorified thereby. There more than elsewhere his friendship with me and his affection for the Congregation can render him useful to our common interests.

To begin with I am surprised that Carbonnel¹⁴ had the idea of travelling to Toulon and to La Ciotat during my absence and that of my two Vicars General. His post was at Marseilles; he should not have left it. I am not less astonished that he is showing himself vexed at the life in common he is assigned to live with you. It would have been amusing had I kept open house for him. I gave definite orders that during my absence my house was to be closed. Otherwise there are no grounds to roll out the red carpet to everyone who is passing through. And, between ourselves, I did not notice that people were very much moved by my excessive politeness. In the future I shall be less obliging and hence more at peace and less disturbed.

¹⁴ The general secretary at the Bishopric.

I did indeed foresee that Bishop Semeria would not leave before the 20th. I am concerned lest his mission suffer because of his overly long absence. Hopefully the Minister of Foreign Affairs has answered the letter which the Finance Minister has sent him regarding the free passage of the Bishop and his missionaries.

Good-bye, good-bye, I greet all our men and bless them all.

† C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

P.S. What can our good Father Barthès be thinking about in wanting me to approve something that I have not read? Such is not my way of doing things. There is no hurry: when I come home I shall examine the matter and see what I shall have to do.

Nor do I understand any better what the parish priest you mention claims to be doing at Lumières. Had he not been the occasion of some scandal in this locality? I recall a letter which good Father Ricard wrote to me, asking me to rid him of this man. Which of our Fathers is it who claims he can give him absolution? Whoever it is shows that he hasn't got the first notion of what our obligations are. Why does this parish priest not rather go to the Trappists where he would do well to remain and thus bring to an end the scandal of his presence in my diocese.

You would do me a great favour if you could find a way to forward to me the razors that I generally use. The one which is in the small dressing-case you gave me does not cope with my hair. The Bish[op] of Viviers lent me one of his when I passed through Viviers and I would like to give it back to him. He had only one left for himself.

Good-bye once again, I embrace you before leaving.

1338. [To Father de L'Hermite, at N.-D. de Cléry].¹⁵

Father de L'Hermite to rest. Visits in Paris from Bishop Taché, Father Garin and Bishop Guibert. The feast of February 17th.

L.J.C. et M.I.

Paris, February 16, 1857.

My dear son, the letter which I have just received from you was a double pleasure, for it reassured me completely in regard to the state of your health about which I had been quite worried. Keep on taking a lot of care, and be convinced that God does not ask anything that is beyond our strength. You have our dear Father Marchal to serve the parish and he is quite competent in that field; and for the missions, you have Fathers Bonnard, Sigaud and Séjalon: that is all you need at this time.

I much approve the project your love for our Mother inspires you with, but I cannot possibly provide you with the materials you ask of me. No one has as yet forwarded to me the newspapers which give an account of. . . .¹⁶

The 18th.

Here is what has been happening in Paris. I was unable to continue writing my letter. Meanwhile, Bishop Taché and his companion Father Garin have arrived. They have crossed a portion of France and were everywhere given the warmest welcome by the bishops, the clergy and the faithful; they have no written account, however, of the tour they have made. The Bishop is going to preach here six times in five days. I am going to ask Father Garin to write out a bit of a description of their trip. Will he manage to do so? If I get one, I shall send it on to you.

Yesterday, the session opened. Shortly I shall have to go to the Senate. I am going to send my letter to the post office so that I do not risk having it fritter away on my desk.

The Archbishop elect of Tours has also arrived. You will have him as your neighbor, but how far distant he will be from me! He declined to accept Aix. The good Lord has permitted it thus for the greatest good, no doubt: this truly eminent Prelate can render great service to the Church.

¹⁵ Orig.: Rome, Postulation Archives, L. M.-L'Hermite.

¹⁶ This sentence remains unfinished.

I greet and bless the entire family at Cléry, so dear to us. I have not excluded visiting you again, but it will not be this time.

You will understand that on a day such as today, February 17th, though I was bodily absent, I have been in spirit present in very many places; that my Mass lasted a bit longer and that it had to be quite fervent.

† C.J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles,
s.g.

P.S. If your excellent Lord Mayor insists that I write to the Bishop of Algiers, I shall certainly do so; you should know, however, that I have very little contact with this Prelate.

1339. [To Father Nicolas, at Marseilles].¹⁷

Joy in receiving Father Nicolas' letter. Gratitude for his good attitude and services.

L.J.C. et M.I.

Paris, February 26, 1857.

My dear Father Nicolas, the letter which you have so kindly thought of sending to me has brought me so much joy that I simply must lay other matters aside and thank you for it. It is not its overly flattering contents that I find touching. What, alas, can we do of ourselves? And when we do manage to accomplish something good or useful, are we not simply the echo of that soft voice which resounds in our hearts and comes from the author of all that is good, namely, the lovable and adorable Jesus to whom may honor and glory be forever given?

What particularly pleases me in your letter, my dear Father, are the sentiments of zeal and fervor you express therein; is finding you imbued with elevated thoughts that are in the line of your vocation and place you in the front ranks of the sons of our little family, which is called to do some good within the Church, of its sons who are grateful to Jesus and Mary.

¹⁷ Orig.: Rome, Postulation Archives, L. M.-Nicolas Pierre-Joseph.

How good it is to feel oneself understood, to speak to men who have a clear grasp of their duty and who have so well accepted the truths God inspires to guarantee our path!

I am confident that your good words will be helpful in the advice I shall be giving to all those with whom you are in touch and that the results I await therefrom will be all the more certain. May you then be blessed, my dear son, for the encouragement you have given me and for the assistance your good example will lend to the efforts I have had to put forth to sustain all of us in the duties of our sublime vocation.¹⁸

Together with my blessing, accept my dear son, the expression of my greatest affection.

† C.J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles, sup. gen.

1340. [To Father Casimir Aubert, at Marseilles].¹⁹

Missionaries' departure ceremony.

[Paris], March 4, 1857.

My eyes fill with tears when I read the account of your beautiful departure ceremony. Together with you, I made my way to the feet of these apostles, admirable for their zeal and devotedness,²⁰ and I kissed them with the respect due to a mission that is so sublime. We are sending out veritable angels to proclaim the Gospel. May the good Lord fill them with his blessings; in his Name I give them mine too, as I also bless you, my dear son, whom I embrace with all my heart.

¹⁸ An allusion to his February 2nd circular letter.

¹⁹ YENVEUX I, 102*.

²⁰ Fathers Pouzin, Laclau-Pussacq and Gouret left for Ceylon on March 2 with Bishop Sameria. Cf. *OBLATE WRITINGS* IV, p. 136, footnote 3.

1341. For Father Roux, [at N.-D. de l'Osier].²¹

Congratulations on his consecrating himself to God.

L.J.C. et M.I.

Paris, March 18, 1857.

I cannot possibly write to l'Osier, my dear Son, without adding a few lines for you. I want both to congratulate you and to express my joy and satisfaction lest I allow this occasion to pass by. I would have liked to write to you sooner, but who can get anything done in Paris? When I come in at night, it is ten o'clock and I have to say my breviary for the next day for as earlier as six o'clock I have to go out to Passy where I will be saying Mass in the Brothers huge boarding school.²² On my desk I find the unfinished letter I was writing to Father Vandenberghe. Quickly I seize the pen to write you these few lines during the time that my travelling companion is taking his supper; I shall lay it aside when he comes back up to say the breviary with me. So there you are, my dear son, really one of us! Constant faithfulness to the grace of your vocation throughout the novitiate was meant to assure you this grace. I thanked the Lord in advance for it, filled with confidence that I would see you do much good in our sublime ministry. It would have been a great consolation for me to receive your vows and to bless your consecration to God; nonetheless, I was with you with my most affectionate good wishes. In spirit I was present at this moving ceremony and, from the altar where I was standing at the very hour that you made your oblation to the Lord, I sent you all the blessings which flow from the Holy Sacrifice which I offered for the whole family, but more particularly for you. We were at one and the same time in the presence of Jesus Christ and through him an intimate communication took place: while he was responding to your vows, he was also listening to my prayer. I am enraptured by this thought.

Goodbye. Breviary, breviary! is the call I hear. The breviary, so be it. Well then! To compensate myself for being obliged to leave you, I am going to place you under the special protection of our great patron, St. Joseph, whom I am about to invoke. This does not exclude my blessing you and embracing you with all my heart.

† C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles, s.g.

²¹ Orig.: Rome, Postulation Archives, L. M.-Roux.

²² The Brothers of the Christian Schools. Cf. REY II, 632.

1342. [To Father de L'Hermite, at N.-D. de Cléry].²³

In spite of his sickness, Father de L'Hermite is to stay on at Cléry.

L.J.C. et M.I.

Paris, March 20, 1857.

My dear Father de L'Hermite, your letter which I would have liked to answer sooner has distressed me. I pains me to see that you are still ill — which is already a very bad thing — but also that this state of suffering has cast you into a kind of anxiety which urges you to ask that you be moved to a different place. Consider, my dear man, that we take ourselves with us wherever we may be and it is not the location which makes us ill. It would be impossible to replace you at the present time. So we must make of necessity a virtue and provide you where you now are with the rest that you need. Father Marchal can quite ably replace in all that concerns the parish and the others in what concerns the missions. Therefore, be patient a little longer. Once I am back in Marseilles, I shall do my utmost to make some arrangement that I cannot manage to do here.

Would you be so kind as to remit the previous page to Father Sigaud. What I tell him therein will encourage him a little. Goodbye, my dear son; I embrace and bless you with all my heart.

† C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles,
s.g.

1343. [To Father Casimir Aubert, at Marseilles].²⁴

Sad state of the Oblate community in Montreal.

[Paris], March 22, 1857.

By letter from your brother I have learned what is going on in Montreal. The state of that community is really astonishing. We will have to decide on a regular and strict visitation which will remove from

²³ Orig.: Rome, Postulation Archives, L. M.-L'Hermite.

²⁴ YENVEUX VIII, 135.

this house the mischief-makers²⁵ who entertain so abominable an attitude that every vocation is kept away from us. For years now not a single novice has come to us, whereas the Jesuits abound in vocations. Why would anyone want to enter a Congregation that is scandalizing the whole of Canada with its internal dissensions.

1344. [To Father Fabre, at the Marseilles Major Seminary],²⁶

Affection and esteem for Father Fabre. Affairs of the Marseilles diocese treated in Paris. Imminent return.

L.J.C. et M.I.

Paris, March 22, 1857.

I had come home, my dear friend, after assisting High Mass at St-Sulpice, hoping to take advantage of Fissiaux's departure to give him letters addressed to Marseilles, but all in vain! Bishop Taché came in right after I did and he is going out now just when the sun is setting and in half an hour I will not have enough light to write more. Nevertheless, dear friend, I want to thank you for your excellent letter of March 17th. I cannot express in writing all that it aroused in terms of affection and tenderness in my heart which loves you so much. For that, I would have to be able to hold you fast in my arms and press you to my heart whose temper you know so well. Not just today for long ago I began to thank God for having given me a son such as you. I would land up saying too much if I allowed myself to give in even a little to the natural and just inclination of a father for a son who is so worthy of his esteem and affection. Oh, how I long to see you again! I stop here so as not to converse with you only about what is so agreeable for me to say to you.

In seeing the Ministers, I left out nothing that is of interest to my diocese and especially to the seminary. On the item of bursaries, the Minister acknowledged its justice but the issue is postponed until the next year. It is quite true that the Minister of Worship is given short shrift in the budget; the increase of the bursaries will be the object of his requests for next year.

²⁵ Difficulties caused especially by Father Rouge, who will be recalled to France. Cf. *OBLATE WRITINGS* II, letters nos. 239, 246, 250, 264, 265.

²⁶ Orig.: Rome, Postulation Archives, L. M.-Fabre.

Only yesterday were the papers on the Dessuart affair scheduled to be sent to the Council of State. I insisted at the Ministry as soon as I arrived in Paris, but things go slowly even when good will is shown.

I have also pushed for the establishment of Cadolive. The bureau chief added his observations in my presence so as to expedite this matter. I would like people to proceed without delay to finish the rectory, that those concerned be told that this matter will certainly be expedited as soon as they are able to house the parish priest in his rectory.

The documents concerning the furniture arrived at the Ministry only yesterday. Mr. Blanc placed them on his desk in my presence: he took them out of a voluminous dossier wherein they might have remained for a long time to come. They realize that it is advantageous to expedite this matter, but it is no small task. You will inform the Council of these details; I shall probably not have time to speak of them to others besides yourself.

I have received a letter from Father Pinet which tells me that the loan has been negotiated. He strongly invites me to come and visit them in England and to bless the new church which he assures me can be opened at the end of June.²⁷ I replied to this good Father that he could not have given me better news than that of the acquisition of this loan. I hope they will be wise enough to take stock of their situation so as not to get into trouble any more. As for the journey there, I have not ruled it out altogether. If it is seen advisable that I visit all our new establishments, I think I shall have to decide myself on this matter this year; doing so now is already a bit odd, but to do so later would be madness.

I am writing to our dear Father Mouchette that I am quite disposed to do an ordination on Holy Saturday. I advise you of this so that, should you have some arrangements to make, you can make the same in good time.

You have decided to send Father Magnan to Auriol. If it was a penalty, he had merited the same; I would have much preferred, however, that he did not pass through St-Michel first. Since we moved against him for the bad counsels he had given to the parish priest of

²⁷ The Oblate church in Leeds. Cf. *OBLATE WRITINGS* III, p. 132.

St-Cannat, I would especially have liked that this had been explicitly mentioned to him, for then he would not be able to say that he is being punished for not having the same views as Father Dassy.

I was of the opinion that Gajeau would do well at Crottes. It would seem that you knew him better than I. I find it hard to understand why in this shuffle you did not also include the deaf parish priest of Acates. In conscience we cannot any longer leave this invalid in charge of a parish, wherever it may be located.

Jeancard has just told me that he has done his utmost and that he is writing to you and to Carbonnel as well. He is perhaps telling you the same things that I am writing here. Had he told me beforehand, we could have arranged things together. Goodbye, the daylight is fading. I am so glad to tell you that it is now a matter of only a few days more and that soon I shall be able to embrace you.

If the papers concerning Marseilles had not been delayed for so long, I would have set the date of my return a few days earlier; however, I have to follow up our business at the Ministry after a long wait. Nevertheless, I insist on blessing the palms in my cathedral, even if I were to come back only on the eve before.

Affectionately I greet all our Fathers at the seminary as well as all our seminarians. Goodbye, dear son; I embrace you with all my heart.

† C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles,
s.g.

1345. [To Father Mouchette, at Montolivet].²⁸

Affection for Father Mouchette. Glad to know that the scholastics are well behaved. Illness of Brother Célestin Augier.

[Paris], March 22, 1857.

My dearly loved son, I cannot resist my need to tell you in writing at least once the tender paternal affection which I express orally each time that I have the happiness of seeing you.

²⁸ YENVEUX V, 168; VIII, 157; REY II, 721-722; Notes of Father C. Augier, Rome, Postulation Archives, L. M.-Mouchette.

Often I have told the good Lord that, since he has given me a mother's heart and sons who merit my love under so many titles, he must allow me to love them immeasurably. This I do in good conscience. It seems to me, dearly loved son, that the more I love someone like yourself, the more I love God who is the source and bond of our mutual affection. This sentiment is a permanent feature in my soul: I bear it with me wherever I may be, and when these cherished persons are not present, I pour out my feelings before Our Lord in my evening visit, during which I concern myself with them. How do you want me to refrain from sharing these secrets of my heart with you when I receive such a letter as that which reached me this morning? Dear friend, show some concern for me. No indeed, I have no need that you make yourself so perfect in my regard; how can one cope when to the tender affection I nourish in my heart for you is added that of your gratitude too?

How happy I am to learn that our dear children of Montolivet provided you with so much consolation. Admit that this is a fine reward for the diligent and charitable care you so lavish upon them. Oh do tell them that every day I concern myself with them before the Lord; and that I did so especially on the beautiful feastday of St. Joseph which I celebrated in the midst of a community of some 800 persons: there I kept them very much in mind, confident as I was that they for their part would also be praying for me. Our good wishes for each other were at the same time laid at the feet of our great patron. Good sons that they are, they wished me some more years of life and I, for my part, called down upon them and upon all of you the most abundant blessings, so that you would be more and more worthy of your sublime vocation.

I had returned, my dear son, for the explicit purpose of writing to you, and so I have put aside all other matters for the moment.

I was deeply pained when I learned about the alarming state of our good and dear Brother Augier's health. Do not delay consulting what should be done to keep this excellent man for the Congregation and the Church. Oh, if it were only a matter of giving him my blood, I would immediately present both my arms to the lancet. I long to elevate this dear child to the priesthood. If necessary, prepare him for me for Holy Saturday.

1346. [To Father Tempier, at Montolivet].²⁹

News. Diocesan business.

L.J.C. et M.I.

Paris, March 23, 1857.

I wanted to write to everyone through Fissiaux³⁰ who has just left to return to Marseilles; he left us so quickly, however, that I didn't have the time to give him even a few lines addressed to you. I wrote to you not so long ago, and sent that letter to you via Mr. Teissier;³¹ in regard to this Mr. Teissier, I asked you whether you would not give him something for his trouble. I do not know on what terms you are with him, and that is why I addressed you this question.

My return is too near at hand for me to discuss diocesan business with you. Since you had decided to inflict a change of parish as a penalty on Father Magnan, I would have wished only that you had not made him pass by St-Michel before sending him on to Auriol immediately afterwards.

I must not forget to tell you that on April 1st I have to pay the money for the convent I have purchased from the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament. If there should be some disadvantage in awaiting my return for making this payment, or that a delay would obligate me to pay interest at Bérengier, you would be able to take up this sum at Pastré³² where it is on deposit. I do not know exactly what these gentlemen have on hand in my account, but they will see it in their written records. In case they do not have the entire sum required, I shall complete the same with my remuneration as Senator which falls due on April 1st.

Someone is coming in. Farewell to my conversation with you, for I have to return to the Minister of Worship whom I did not find at his office this morning for he had been at the Tuileries for council with the Emperor. The Minister of the Interior was away for the same reason. I shall go to see him tomorrow. All these errands are quite a nuisance. I

²⁹ Orig.: Rome, Postulation Archives, L. M.-Tempier.

³⁰ The Abbé Fissiaux, a friend of Bishop de Mazenod, had founded a work to help young prisoners.

³¹ This Mr. Teissier is mentioned but once in the letters of Bishop de Mazenod, and that without any specific data.

³² Marseilles bankers.

have not, however, wasted my time this morning when I appeared at the Ministry of the Interior. You know that it is still in regard to the matter of the Sisters.³³ I have requested those who have come into my room to let me finish these few lines. Carbonnel will give you the details of the day which I report to him in the letter which accompanies this one.

I must not abuse the patience of my visitors; and so I end what I have to say here and embrace you with all my heart.

† C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles,
s.g.

1347. [To Father Charles Baret, at Bordeaux].³⁴

Permission to come and rest in Paris at Canon Gay's home.

L.J.C. et M.I.

Paris, March 29, 1857.

I guessed your objective, my dear son, when in your letter you spoke to me about the rest that you needed. As I was quite disposed to grant it to you, I was asking myself where you could take it. Mr. Gay's appearance at my place soon provided me with a solution to the problem. So, that is well and good. This respectable friend must have already told you how inclined I am to please you and I realize that I could not please you more than by agreeing that you come and share what he calls his solitude. There is one condition however, namely, that you remember you are coming to live with him in order to take a rest and thus will not preach at all either in Paris itself nor in its outskirts. You will even ask Mr. Gay not to entertain the idea of committing you to preach later, not even in Paris. I forgot to mention this to him on the day that he did me the honor of coming to see me.

³³ He is certainly alluding to the project entertained by the administrators of the Marseilles hospices to entrust to the Sisters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul the new civil hospital of St-Pierre. Bishop de Mazenod's preference was to place in this establishment the Hospital Sisters of St. Augustine, who were already directing a hospital of minor importance in Marseilles. Cf. L. M.-Administrateurs des hospices, June 15, 1857, *Registre des lettres administratives*, vol. VI, p. 235.

³⁴ Orig.: Rome, Postulation Archives, L. M.-Baret.

I am writing without being able to see properly for wielding my pen, but I must still congratulate you for the success of your preaching endeavours at Nantes. I find this expression to be against my taste unless it can be translated into "God's blessings", and this supposes the conversion of souls. Without the latter, I lay no weight whatsoever on the most lovely sermons in the world, for I prefer the simple words of the missionary who is bringing sinners back to God.

I can't see any more. I have to go out, and so I shall close this letter tomorrow.

31st.

It was not on the morrow but the day after that with haste I am able to take up my pen again and finish this letter. There only remained to express all my affection for you; I do not say my gratitude for your letter which nevertheless did please me a great deal. Would I offend you if I were to tell you that I think you would not have thought of writing to me if you did not have to ask for the permission that I grant you? In any case, I bless and embrace you with all my heart.

† C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles,
sup. gen.

P.S. I leave Paris tomorrow to return to my diocese.

1348. [To Father Charles Baret, in Paris].³⁵

The Founder does not allow Father Baret to make a trip to Rome. The Congregation's poverty.

Marseilles, April 20, 1857.

You know, my dear son, how easily I agreed to allow you to come and rest in the home of Canon Gay, your respectable friend. Knowing that this would please you sufficed to have me sacrifice the satisfaction I would have felt in having you take the rest you needed at a place

³⁵ Orig.: Rome, Postulation Archives, L. M.-Baret.

close to myself. But you have too much discernment not to understand that it would indeed be impossible to authorize you to make a journey to Rome under the cloak of taking a rest. The economy factor is not the only one, as you understand very well, though it is a major element to be considered in the actual state of the Congregation which is so deeply indebted; and, in this regard, I remind you that you must not dispose of the remuneration for your Lenten sermons, which remuneration you must give an account of either to the bursar of your House or to the procurator of the Province. Make the best of your stay with your friend in order to take a pleasant rest; that will be worth more than undertaking a long journey. In the companionship of this saintly priest you will find all that is needed to rest the body and to relax the mind. I beg you to thank him for the fraternal care he is willing to give you and I embrace you with all my heart.

† C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles,

1349. [To Father Casimir Aubert, in Corsica].³⁶

Death of Father Gustave Richard. Advice for visiting the Oblates at Vico and Ajaccio.

[Marseilles], April 30, 1857.

I don't know if they will be using the postal service to pass on to you in Corsica the sad news of the death of our Father Richard in England.³⁷ As was to be expected, his death was like that of a saint. One would have to have more virtue than I have, however, to find even in that some consolation that could help me bear such a great loss with perfect resignation. So much is my heart in pain that I am looking ahead to my imminent trip to England, from which I was expecting some real satisfaction, with a kind of repugnance. It is the second time that I shall be going to weep on a tomb.³⁸ I am at the point of reproaching myself for having agreed to send this excellent Father to live in England's foul climate. It is true that I did not then know that

³⁶ YENVEUX VI, 21; IX, 188.

³⁷ He died in Dublin on April 20th.

³⁸ He is alluding to Father F. Perron, who died on February 22, 1848, the first Oblate to pass away in England. The Founder certainly visited his grave in Everingham in 1850.

his lungs were vulnerable. I am really inconsolable at this immense loss, for he was an accomplished person. What is more, I won't even have the consolation of having his picture: it would have placed before my eyes the features of a son whom I miss so much.

I imagine you will be conferring confidentially with all our men at Vico. You will not forget that there is one man who was sent there as on probation. I don't know whether he is keeping Father Mouchette informed about his interior life. He has not spoken to me about this since he left here. We would have known what is to be done, however, when it comes to the question of sacred Orders.³⁹

I recommend also that you require Father Santoni to give an account of his interior life to you inasmuch as you are the Visitor and the Provincial; he should also give you an account of his external conduct and of his relationships both with the Fathers and with outsiders. You know how accustomed to independence he has become. It would not be a bad idea if you were to find the occasion of reproaching him for his correspondence with Canada at the time of the Chapter. His indiscreet letters contributed much to the discontent that became evident with the arrival of Father Honorat and the Bishop who is Provincial.

1350. [To Archbishop Guibert of Tours].⁴⁰

Archbishop Guibert received at Tours. Coming trip to England, Tours and Quimper.

Marseilles, May 22, 1857.

My dear son, I was beginning to be concerned because of not receiving any news about you. Your letter of the 11th set me at ease. I was consoled to read therein information no one else had brought to us. You deserved the reception extended to you and I was very pleased to learn of it. Your predecessor was so much regretted that I did indeed fear lest that people had convinced themselves that they were beyond consolation. Here I have our new General⁴¹ whose command was for-

³⁹ Probably Yves Nicolas who was at Vico since 1856. Cf. L. Nicolas-Mazenod, June 16, 1856. He was still not a priest in 1860. Cf. L. Nicolas-Mazenod, December 30, 1860.

⁴⁰ Orig.: Rome, Postulation Archives, L. M.-Guibert.

⁴¹ General de Courtigis.



Cardinal Joseph Hippolyte Guibert
(1802-1886)

merly at Tours; the praises he voiced to me about the good Cardinal were laughable, so much were they exaggerated. He had found him so amiable that he did not fail to go and see him twice weekly. They would walk in the garden together, a fact which showed that the Archbishop had some leisure time and that he used it well. Archbishop Morlot seems to have confided to him that the Emperor had undertaken to pay all his debts. We cannot offer too much for the good fortune of having such a bishop in Paris.⁴² As I have written to him, I hope he will profit from this excessive attitude to obtain what would be refused to others.

The 23rd.

Before leaving to consecrate the church of the Ladies of St. Thomas, I shall finish this short letter: it will at least bring you some news about me and prove again that I am never given the time to give myself to what would be most pleasant to me. That is why I give myself completely, knowing full well that, with God's help, I shall be greeting everybody in one month. True, it will be a very busy month. Once I have left, I shall arrange my itinerary so that I can spend several days with you in your new empire. I cannot as yet say whether this will be before or after my trip to England. I am more than a little put out because I definitely have to go to Quimper just at the time that they would like to have me in England.

Goodbye, goodbye. I am leaving and I embrace you.

† C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

1351. [To a Seminary Director].⁴³

Importance of piety for seminarians. The Founder's imminent trip to England.

⁴² Cardinal Morlot had been appointed Archbishop of Paris.

⁴³ Orig.: Rome. Postulation Archives, L. M.-X.

Marseilles, June 8, 1857.

Keeping me in mind and writing me a letter that was dictated by your good heart was very kind of you, my dear son. I was very pleased to receive it and was edified in reading it. Oh, how much I love seeing you imbued with the sublimity of your priestly vocation and that you appreciate your holy vocation as you ought to! You were very well inspired in the direction that you gave to the Month of Mary. We cannot too much encourage young seminarians to piety. When this resource is lacking, a priest does little good in the Church. It is during his seminary years that he must ground himself in this virtue which seasons all the others. Do not demand anything that is excessive, but always lead your students along this road.

I am excessively busy this year. I have to double the exercise of my holy ministry. What I want to say is that I have to redo in the evening what I did in the morning and even then I will find myself short of time and will not be able to finish up everything before my imminent departure on the great visit I am going to undertake on the first days of next month.

Dear son, I wanted to write you these few lines quickly before going up to a chapel where I am expected to administer the sacrament of Confirmation; for I feared that, were I to delay but a few hours, I would be so taken up that I could not again take up my pen. So, my dear son, accept this haste as the expression of the tender affection I have for you and which will last longer than my life. I embrace and bless you. It is time to go up to my chapel.

† C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles,
sup. gen.

P.S. This letter, already belated, stayed even longer on my desk before it was mailed.

1352. [To Archbishop Guibert of Tours].⁴⁴

The many tasks to be done before leaving on the trip to England.

Marseilles, June 22, 1957.

Dear friend, I was beginning to find your silence rather long. I attributed it, however, to all the bother of arriving in an area of which one is now bishop. As for me, I am not given a moment's breath. I have more than enough of being told how marvellous it is to see me doing all these things at my age and then have them come nevertheless to load me up even more. After crowding all sails to the end of this month — which will end with a large group of ordinations — I shall slip away and strike out on the highways. This first lap will not bring me to your area. I have only some faint hope of seeing you when I am passing through Parish where I am arriving on the 8th and leaving on the 10th for England where they are waiting for me. On my return trip, I will have the good fortune to affectionately greet you at Tours. I cannot fix the date now; I shall let you know from England. It will most likely be after I have been at Quimper where the Congregation's business demands my presence.

Goodbye, dear friend. I consider myself fortunate for having been able to steal these few moments to give you news about myself and to embrace you with all my heart.

† C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

1353. [Mr. Guinet, Oblate of Mary, rue de Montet, at Nancy, Meurthe].⁴⁵

Imminent arrival at Nancy after a visit to Cirey.

L.J.C. et M.I.

Marseilles, June 23, 1857.

You can well imagine, my dear son, how busy I am since there are

⁴⁴ Orig.: Rome, Postulation Archives, L. M.-Guibert.

⁴⁵ Orig.: Rome, Postulation Archives, L. M.-Guinet.

only eight more days left for me here. Nevertheless, I want to write a few lines in reply to the letter that I have just received from you. I shall not go into the details of your report. We can deal with that at Nancy.

I want to tell you right away that, with God's help, I shall be arriving on Saturday, the 4th in the month of July. I ask for nothing better than to ordain the good deacon Gourdon on the next day; since, however, he is only a novice at this time, I shall have to ask his Bishop for dimissorial letters. That is a big todo. I shall nevertheless make the effort. I have to tell you that my time is limited and my itinerary irrevocably determined. In a short period of time I have to travel across three quarters of France, England, Ireland and Scotland. So, arrange everything so that I can leave Nancy on Tuesday evening, the 7th. I shall spend the night in the coach so that I can give you the whole day of Tuesday. I shall be arriving on Saturday evening, for I am in the morning leaving Cirey-sur-Blaise to catch the train at Blesme which will bring me to Nancy.

Goodbye, my dear son. With all my soul I bless you as well as all your good novices whose acquaintance I am happy to be making soon.

† C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles, sup. gen.

1354. [To Father Tempier, at Montolivet].⁴⁶

Itinerary of the trip from Marseilles to Cirey, then to Nancy and Paris where the Founder will wait for some Oblates with whom he will leave for England. During his absence, Father Tempier is as much as possible to look after the interests of the diocese and of the Congregation.

Cirey, July 3, 1857.

My dear Tempier, I had intended to write you from Nancy; since, however, I have a moment to myself, I shall pleasantly spend it with you. I shall first of all give you news of our trip which has been excellent.⁴⁷ We pushed on to Troyes where we waited for the train which

⁴⁶ Orig.: Rome, Postulation Archives, L. M.-Tempier.

⁴⁷ Father Casimir Aubert was accompanying Bishop de Mazenod.

⁴⁸ Ms.: Aural.

was to take us to Bar-sur-Aube, at which place we were to be met by my niece's carriage. The two hours of waiting allowed us to say holy Mass and to visit the cathedral which is undergoing major repairs. At noon we took the convoy that brought us at 2.30 p.m. to Bar-sur-Aube; here we immediately took the carriage for Cirey where we arrived at 5.30 p.m. Here I found everyone in good health. Here too I received your letter.

I am leaving again tomorrow at five o'clock to catch the train at Joinville which will take us to Blesme. Here we have one hour's wait for the convoy to Paris which will take us to Nancy; here we will be arriving in good time, at two o'clock, I think. That gives us more time than we need to prepare things for the ordination the next day. I don't need to tell you that we are leaving Nancy on Tuesday in order to arrive in Paris on Wednesday morning. We will be staying in Paris the whole day of Wednesday, Thursday and a part of Friday; on this latter day, we shall start out for London.

Don't forget that among the things you have to provide for those of our men who are destined for England is the dress that is obligatory for that country. You know that we had chosen the new Father Moulin and the two Oblates, Guillard and Ayrat.⁴⁸ They must join us in Paris on Friday morning, at the Bon Lafontaine hotel where I will be staying. Let them make out their tickets all the way to Paris so that they can profit from half-fare prices for the entire route. Father Aubert had no difficulty in obtaining it up to Montereau.

I presume that you sent the other three new Fathers to the shrine of la Garde as we had agreed. There they are to busy themselves with reviewing the whole of their moral theology so that they can take the examination in September; this would not prevent them from putting some time into composing sermons if Father Dassy, who has indeed asked to live at La Garde, could look after them. I was not able to speak about this to Father [Dassy] before leaving. Maybe it might be better to give them a little break in this regard, so that they can say that they had a bit of a holiday.

As for Father Visidari, I think he will have to rest for some time yet before he is sent off to Corsica, the place to which he is destined. You know that on several occasions he has been spitting blood. The turbulence of the sea could do him much harm.

Since I have left, you will have seen the new door-keeper and made an agreement with him as to the day that he will move in to my house. It was agreed that I would give him 600 francs and the cost of lighting, and not a penny or anything more. You will have to explain clearly to him what he is expected to do. Besides keeping the door and doing errands in the city, he will have to keep clean the secretariate and the vestibule as well as bring in the water for the common areas of the house.

I don't have to recommend diocesan affairs to you. Don't lose sight of the fact that my absence is due to my serving the Congregation. There you have an additional motive not to leave anything in abeyance under any pretext whatsoever. If others should neglect doing their duty, you would all the more have to do yours, even if you should be the only one to replace me, a situation which, as I hope, will not come to pass.

I greet and bless all at Montolivet and embrace you with all my heart.

† C.J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

1355. [To Father Fabre, at the Marseilles Major Seminary].⁴⁹

Information about the novitiate at Nancy. Ordination. Numerous guests invited to dinner.

L.J.C. et M.I.

Nancy, July 7, 1957.

My dear son, I wanted to write you a few lines before leaving Nancy, but the time for leaving has come without my having had a minute to carry out my intention. You know what it is like to spend three days in a fairly large community wherein several members were unknown to me. I assure you that I spent my time well here and, if I am taking up my pen to write you briefly, it is with the request that I may have a short respite: I have promised not to abuse it and make them wait too long.

⁴⁹ Orig.: Rome, Postulation Archives, L. M.-Fabre.

The house is getting on marvellously well. Here I have met fine men who give much promise. Among the novices there are men who are already well-formed, as are the two priests who are the cream of the crop.⁵⁰ I have every reason to believe that they will persevere right to the end. The third one, whom I ordained yesterday, is a fervent religious, a real angel;⁵¹ he has only one more month to do as a novice, and will be making his profession on the 2nd of the coming month. The Fathers of the community are excellent. This is a house as it should be and it is highly esteemed in this area.

I have alternated my special meetings with each individual person with the ordination which I did in the chapel of the Ladies of the Sacred Heart. The entire Oblate community was there for it. It was really a family feast.

Yesterday we had the idea of inviting to dinner His Excellency, the Bishop of Nancy, first of all, his Grand Vicars, and, as a sign of fraternity, the Prior of the Dominicans, the Rector of the Jesuits, the Superiors of the two great Congregations of St. Charles and the Christian Doctrine, the chaplain of the Ladies of the Sacred Heart, and so forth. That was an imposing gathering. It was a good thing that this occasion was used to extend these appropriate courtesies.

I am leaving in two hours' time. I shall spend the night on the railway carriage and early tomorrow morning I will be arriving in Paris, if it so pleases God. If I don't find a letter from you there, I shall have every reason to complain; I do hope you have been kind enough to provide me this pleasure.

People are at the end of their patience: so I am giving in and I end by embracing you with all my heart. I bless you and our Fathers at the seminary.

† C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles,
sup. gen.

⁵⁰ The abbés Adolphe Chalmet and Gustave Simonin.

⁵¹ Father Gourdon, who began his novitiate at N.-D. de l'Osier.

1356. [To Father J. J. Lagier, at Quimper].⁵²

Sadness occasioned by the Oblates being sent away from the major seminary of Quimper.

Paris, August 17, 1857.

What, my dear Father Lagier, what can one pit against such a shocking denial of justice, an arbitrary act of a legitimate authority that abuses its power to defy all the laws of equity and justice? To protest forcefully and in courteous terms as I have done and then undergo resignedly the greatest humiliation and the gravest wrong that the Congregation has ever sustained!⁵² I would never have believed that a bishop could err to such a degree. Nothing in this world can surprise me anymore. In default of human justice, I appeal to the sovereign justice of God, while at the same time asking him to forgive the person who is crushing us as well as those who have urged him to this iniquity.

I don't understand why you have kept secret from me the names of the Bishops who have managed to write against us.⁵⁴ I needed to know them, be it in order to refute their assertions, be it in order to know with whom we have to deal with. I beg you, therefore, to fill in this oversight in your letter.

The Bishop of Quimper had the courage to persist in his injustice after the substantiated, very courteous but strongly reasoned letter that I wrote to him from the heart of Scotland where I had received his inconceivable letter, a letter that was like a thunderbolt to me. This letter of mine — with which I shall acquaint you — neither touched his heart nor shook his determination. He replied in glacial terms to me: I

⁵² Copy, Rome, Postulation Archives, Registre lettres 1855-1863, pp. 124-125; YENVEUX III, 154. During the course of his trip to England, the Founder wrote several letters to Fathers Tempier, Fabre and Soullier; these have been published in *OBLATE WRITINGS* III.

⁵³ In 1856, Bishop Sergeant of Quimper had offered the direction of his seminary to the Oblates. At first, the Founder sent only Fathers Lagier and Bellon there, but he was to complete the personnel for the 1857-1858 year. Regarding this "deceptive effort", cf. *Études Oblates*, 23 (1964), pp. 210-228.

⁵⁴ Among others, Bishop Casanelli d'Istria of Ajaccio and Bishop Dufêtre of Nevers, friend of the Bishop of Valence who had decided to thank the Oblates for their services in major seminary of Romans, cf. *Ibid.*, pp. 218-219.

hesitate to write to him once more, for it would be impossible for me not to raise the question of impropriety as I have emphasized that of injustice in the first. You are more or less driven out as unsuitable lackeys are, and this is being done after your praises were sung right up to the last instant. The reasons alleged are of no value whatever. They are a pretext pure and simple as a basis for an outrageous iniquity. And so that nothing would be lacking to procedures so unworthy that we never find them used by people of the world, you are put to sleep with disloyalty and trickery right up to the moment of the explosion, when there is no more chance of parrying the blow. This is beyond all comprehension! I feel I am but dreaming whenever I think of it. There can be no doubt that Father Vincens's trip will be altogether useless. They have taken the precaution of warning you in advance that they will not enter into any discussions with him. I would not be surprised if they were to refuse to see him. As I have already told you, in their eyes it is not a matter of a contract that has been arbitrarily broken by one of the parties; it is a matter of lackeys whom they have shown the door. You can conclude from this that I do not have to meet up with men of this ilk; and so I am giving up the idea of travelling to Brittany where the doors are locked to me. If you write me, address your letters to Tours, to the Archbishop's place: I am planning to spend two days with him. I shall be there most likely on Thursday. From there I shall go to Bordeaux, where they are awaiting me, and, finally, I shall return to Marseilles for the feast of our patron, the friend of Jesus.⁵⁵

Goodbye, dear Father Lagier. Let us help each other to bear the humiliations and mishaps of this miserable life. God will give us the grace to earn this as merit in his eyes. I would not experience much difficulty in resigning myself to this, I assure you, if the Congregation — which should be more dear to us than life itself — did not suffer therefrom. Who indeed can estimate the harm this will cause her? This time, the Devil used sacred hands to beat us. Let us place our trust in God so that he may raise us up, I won't say at Quimper, but in some other part of the world. I bless you and Father Bellon too — he is as deeply hurt as you are — and all of us, for the sledge hammer has been generously banged down on the head of us all.

⁵⁵ Feast of St. Lazarus, August 31st. Bishop de Mazenod came back on September 2nd and the solemnity of St. Lazarus was celebrated on September 6th.

P.S. It is fifteen minutes after three o'clock.

I have just received the telegraph message of Father Vincens and I am waiting for his letter. But should I answer that of the Bishop in view of the fact that my first epistle impressed him so little? The posterity which in the Congregation's history will be acquainted with it will not be able to believe it. If my letter had not been so long, I would have sent you a copy; now I am put out that Father Vincens did not know its contents before he saw the Bishop. Could he not have asked the latter to show it to him? But now, everything is finished and over now. Greet this good Father for me. Must he also drink to the dregs as we do this cup extended to us in return for our sacrifices and devotedness? I wish the Bishop had shown him as well as to you the letters of these other Bishops who had the nerve to give us a bad name in his eyes; [Father Vincens] could then have answered their stealthy attacks in a victorious manner.

The shrine that the Bishop wanted to entrust to us has also gone down the drain: is that too for the greater glory of God and the good of souls?

1357. [To Father Tempier, at Montolivet].⁵⁶

Trips of Fathers Sardou and Vandenberghe.

[Bordeaux], August 29, 1857.

Nothing has astounded me more than Father Sardou's appearance in Bordeaux. I can find no reason why such a considerable expense was necessary. If a change of air was needed, that can be accomplished without going so far. That is quite enough of these obligatory trips which occur only too often.

No more do I approve Father Vandenberghe's pilgrimage. A master of novices should know how to make his retreat in the place of his own residence. During the time of his retreat, the novices would refrain from speaking to him but they would not lose sight of him but would rather be edified by the good example he would be giving during those days of recollection. Briefly put, I would like this mania for travelling to cease completely in our ranks.

⁵⁶ YENVEUX VI, 82.

1358. [To Father Soullier, at Nancy].⁵⁷

Permission to make a trip. Father Guinet remains novice master. Death of Fathers Andrieux and Bouquillon.

L.J.C. et M.I.

Marseilles, September 6, 1857.

My dear son, my travelling pace has been so rapid and so little time was available to me wherever I had to stop over that my correspondence has suffered greatly in consequence. I had to deal with other matters that were important and very distressing. Briefly put, I realize

the 7th.

that I don't have more time in Marseilles than I had when I was on the trip. So, in haste I tell you that I authorize you to respond to the invitation you have received, for I cannot refuse something that you find so agreeable. Try to expedite your business in such a way that you remain as little as possible away from your community which can only suffer from your absence.

You must have noticed that, in response to your observations, I wrote to Father Provincial to give up the idea of taking Father Guinet away from you.⁵⁸ I beg you to remind this Father not to neglect keeping me — to me personally — posted in every detail as to what concerns the novitiate and, when you are absent, the house. I have not been able to reply to Father Jeanmaire about the great matter he has in hand.⁵⁹ I presume that he spoke of it to you and, since you yourself are present on the spot, you are qualified to advise him. From a distance I can only greatly mistrust the dispositions of this person who does not seem to have a moral existence that inspires confidence.

When Father Vincens has come back, we shall concern ourselves with looking for the companion Father Conrard wants.

⁵⁷ Orig.: Rome, Postulation Archives, L. M.-Soullier.

⁵⁸ In its June 28th meeting, the General Council had decided to send Father Guinet to Bordeaux as superior. On September 3rd, Father Delpuech was appointed instead and, in the end, Father Martin was named on October 22nd. He remained there until the end of the year 1859.

⁵⁹ There was a plan to build a public chapel on the rue du Montet and someone had promised Father Jeanmaire a sum of money for this purpose. On September 12th, Father Soullier replied: "I dread some mystification here. Not that I suspect the person of being in bad faith; but I do think that this person is self-deceived, takes idle fancies for reality. . . ."

The good Lord has taken two of our Fathers: Father Andrieux and Father Bouquillon. Thus our community in Heaven is growing, but, when they thus take possession of their throne, they are greatly missed by us here on earth. This is not a complaint you hear from my mouth, for I submit myself to God's holy will, as it is my duty to do; it is not forbidden, however, to make known our needs to the Father of the family in whose vineyard we are at work.

Didn't Father Michaelis stay too long a time with his family? Returning to one's family is already much; at the least, one should only make it a flying visit. I fear we do not insist enough in our novitiates and communities on detachment from relatives. Women who by nature are more sensitive than men are also more generous than they.

I am fortunate, my dear son, to have managed to reach this page. I am being called to order now, but will obey only after having embraced and blessed you with all my soul. Greet with affection for me all our Fathers and Brothers. I bless them.

† C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles, s.g.

1359. [To Father Roux, at N.-D. de l'Osier].⁶⁰

Father Roux's apostolic work. Permission to come to Marseilles.

L.J.C. et M.I.

St-Louis near Marseilles, September 18, 1857.

So as not to risk giving an answer in about a month's time to the letter that I have just received from you, my dear son, I am putting aside some sixty other letters which are awaiting their turn in order quickly to greet you. I have just returned to Marseilles to prepare myself for the ordination tomorrow, at which the deacon you have sent me from l'Osier will be raised to the priesthood.⁶¹

⁶⁰ Orig.: Rome, Postulation Archives, L. M.-Roux.

⁶¹ Léopold Gigaud, ordained priest on September 19th.

I am not surprised at the consolation that the good Lord is sending you: they are a reward for your fidelity. Why anticipate the time of trial and aridity? It may perhaps not come at all; and, if the Lord wants you to pass through these tests, he will provide the required graces and even make these tests a gain for you. I am glad to see you evangelizing the villages of the diocese of Grenoble and I am edified to see you going on foot, as the Apostles did, to seek out the strayed sheep; but I would like you to take better care of yourself and that you do not venture to the point of making thirty kilometers. That is really too much!

Not only am I not opposed but I would be very pleased if you were to make the little trip which you mention to me, when you can make it without detriment to the duties of your ministry. For me that will be an occasion to hold you to my heart and to vocalize my satisfaction in having you as my son under a double title. Arrange this trip with your superior who will gladly indicate your itinerary to you, provided, of course, that you will be returning to him. I am not committing any great indiscretion when I tell you that he is very happy to have you. So help him to support his responsibilities well, as you have always done, by your regularity and good example.

Goodbye, my dear son, I am not allowed to continue. People are coming in on business. So I conclude by blessing and embracing you with all my heart.

† C.J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles,
sup. gen.

1360. [To Father Tempier, at Montolivet].⁶²

Trip to Aix and to St-Martin-de-Pallières. Advice on some changes to be made in the diocesan personnel. Money to invest.

⁶² Orig.: Rome, Postulation Archives, L. M.-Tempier.

St-Martin, September 23, 1857.

My dear Tempier, in God's eyes, we have as always made a happy and even very agreeable journey, thanks to my new uncovered carriage. After arriving at Aix at nightfall, we went to visit our dear missionaries and had supper with them. I found Father Maurand already quite settled in despite the preconceived notions people like to entertain against this residence. On the following day I went to the cemetery to offer the holy Sacrifice in our sacred chapel over the bodies of our saints. The chapel is in the same state in which I left it the last time I had made my pilgrimage. I nine o'clock we stepped into our carriage and, since my horses do not need to be prodded to move on, by noon we were at Jonques where the parish priest — a cousin to Father Courtès, as you know — came and asked us to stay with him where he lives in community with his assistant. By four o'clock, we had reached St-Martin from where I am writing you, after having spent a good night. I found everybody, both young and old, in good health; only my sister's eye-sight seems to be diminishing: she can neither read nor write. That grieves me very much.

Insist that the parish priest of St-Cannat hand in his resignation unconditionally. Inquire where Mr. Couren can be found, so we can tell him that he is not to be placed in the minor boarding school as reserved for a possible need in the minor seminary, but that he is to be actively in service at the minor seminary. You will remember that by giving this house, in addition to Mr. Couren, Mr. Henry and Mr. Coste, the priest who had left the Jesuits, we have abundantly provided for this house's needs, even though we removed Mr. Cayol from it.

If the other changes could be made before I return, I would be spared much trouble. Don't forget to collect the annual income from Mr. Fissiaux: I believe it is already due for some time.

I have commissioned Carbonnel to take shares in the railway of the West. He felt he would risk making them rise in price if he took out too great a number; so he has taken out only ten of them. We should take out another twenty at least if we are to make use of the capital I have with Mssrs. Pastré. Check if Mr. Théric feels this is a good investment, and, if the view is that this is the best investment I can make, do not wait for the rate to rise.

I have to consider leaving my heirs a capital that will give them the means to satisfy my religious bequests, without depriving them of what I intend to give to the Congregation.

Breakfast is being called and this letter must be mailed. Quickly I embrace you.

You can write to me at St-Martin. The mail service is good. Goodbye.

† C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

1361. [To Father Fabre, at the Marseilles Major Seminary].⁶³

Planned trip to St-Laurent. Diocesan business. Common life for parish priests and assistants.

L.J.C. et M.I.

St-Martin, September 27, 1857.

My dear son, Father Fabre would probably complain if I were to leave this little countryside without writing to him. I myself ought not to complain for not having received anything from him during the week that I have just spent away from him! Now there is no way to remedy this oversight. I will no longer be here at the right time to receive an answer to the present letter. It cannot be mailed until tomorrow, and the day after I am leaving for St-Laurent where, however, I shall be staying for two full days; that means, I will only take the road for Aix and Marseilles on Friday when my carriage, having left St-Martin in the morning, will catch up with me at Ginasservis: I will be arriving at this place with my nephew's horses which will have taken me to St-Laurent.

We have just spent Sunday in a holy manner. I delivered the sermon this morning and after vespers I again addressed some edifying words to the women who were present. This morning, as I was told, the man came in some number to Mass, because of me, curious, no doubt, to hear a bishop preach. Here, in fact, they do not trouble themselves about going to Mass. These poor people are living in a mortal indifference from which it will be difficult to arouse them.

⁶³ Orig.: Rome, Postulation Archives, L. M.-Fabre.

By the same mail I am writing to Mr. W. Puget, who has written me a fine letter in his name and in that of Mr. Canaple;⁶⁴ the latter did not sign the letter. In my reply to him, I say that in ecclesiastical administration, as in any other, there are things that cannot be achieved.

I would like to have known how our two Fathers were received at the Work for Youth.⁶⁵ You will tell me that I will find that out later; I would have been glad, however, if you had given me some details about this matter. Now I shall be patient until my return.

The rain has not stopped and so my trip to St-Laurent is in doubt; it could therefore happen that I advance my return by a day or two, depending on the weather. In any case, though, do not expect me before Saturday.

As soon as I arrived, I wrote to Father Tempier; then I wrote to Jeancard, before receiving his letter. Give both of them my news. Tell Jeancard that I consider the resignation of Mr. Espanet to be insufficient. How could I determine another stable service in view of this possibility of a return? My intention is to set up a serious propastorship, to form it into a community, in a word, to establish a wholly different system. It is true that when we write to the Minister we can say that the parish priest had given his tired condition as the motive for a temporary withdrawal; the truth, however, is that he is incapable of governing a parish and he has compromised himself to such a point that he cannot return again to the parish he is leaving, and that is why I built him a golden bridge inducing him to leave: for I am adding a thousand francs which will be legally his upon his retirement.

The Archbishop of Aix has declared himself. He will ask all the parish priests that he will appoint to live in common with their assistants. He has sent congratulatory letters to all who have anticipated this measure that he is determined to take. He has sent such a letter to the parish priest of Jonques who, as you know, is the cousin of our Father Courtès. I think this item has been made clear to the new parish priest of St-Loup. He is not being asked to do a favor, but to comply to a prescription. I don't remember if we have replaced the assistant of Cas-

⁶⁴ An elected deputy.

⁶⁵ Fathers J.-V.-M. Roulet and Célestin Augier. Cf. "L'affiliation aux Oblats de l'Institut de l'Oeuvre de la Jeunesse dite de M. Allemand, à Marseille (1857-1862)", *Études Oblates*, 22 (1963), pp. 145-167.

sis. There, too, things must be made clear to the parish priest. It is not enough for me that he live with his assistant under the same roof — he has already done that for some time with Long — but I want the assistant to share the parish priest's table and that he does not install his sister, mother or niece in the rectory. Upon my return, I shall insist on this important matter. I reproach myself for an excessive condescension that I need to correct.

Goodbye, my dear son. It is Monday and still raining. If the weather does not improve between today and tomorrow, my trip to St-Laurent is out of the question — that would vex me somewhat. I embrace you wholeheartedly.

† C.J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

P.S. Push the arrangement for the minor seminary and the Holy Family.⁶⁶ We must not put ourselves into a position where we are reproached for having become too late aware of exacting demands of the gentlemen at the minor seminary.

1362. [To Father Mouchette, at Montolivet].⁶⁷

Come to the Bishop's House. Illness of Father Guinet, the master of novices at Nancy.

[Marseilles], October 27, 1897.

I have learned that the excellent Father Guinet was spitting blood after a few preaching sessions. Alas! How much I advised him not to go to any extremes. But how does one restrain the zeal of this fine man! I would have to be everywhere to watch over each one of you! Come as soon as you can to console me! Bring along the letter that you must have received; it will give me detailed information about this unfortunate event.

⁶⁶ Besides the official minor seminary, there existed at Rouet the Work (minor seminary) of the Holy Family that the Abbé Bruchon had founded. Cf. L. Tempier-Cures de la banlieu de Marseille, March 31, 1857; copy: Bishopric of Marseilles, Reg. lettres administratives.

⁶⁷ YENVEUX V, 175.

1363. [To Father Burfin, at Limoges].⁶⁸

The Oblates will not make a foundation in an outskirt of Limoges.

Marseilles, November 2, 1857.

My dear Father Burfin, Through your Provincial, who has just returned from a trip to N.-D. de l'Osier, I was pleased to learn that His Excellency, the Bishop of Limoges, now convinced of the truth and seriousness of your and Father Vincens' objections against establishing yourselves in the outskirt of Montfovis, has finally given up the idea and leaves you in peaceful possession of the house that you have been living in to the present and which thus remains definitively dedicated to the purpose to which it was originally designed. According to the information Father Vincens has given to me, I see now that the project in question was not acceptable; that is why you have to be grateful to the Bishop for not having followed through with the request that he had addressed to me on this matter. This worthy Prelate truly shows himself full of kindness toward our house of Limoges by granting you, besides the favor of which I have just been speaking, that of enlarging your chapel whereby you will thus be able to render greater service to the faithful of his episcopal city. Please do not fail to express to him, when the occasion presents itself, how touched I am by his kind procedures in your regard and show yourselves grateful to him in every way.

Goodbye, etc.

† C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

1364. [To Father Charles Baret, at Libourne].⁶⁹

Obedience of Victor Baret for N.-D. de l'Osier. The missionary has no permanent abode. Father Baret's preaching at Libourne.

⁶⁸ Copy, Rome, Postulation Archives, Reg. correspondence 1855-1863. Father Burfin was named superior of the house at Limoges in the month of May. He succeeded to Father Bise. Cf. General Council, May 26, 1857.

⁶⁹ Orig.: Rome, Postulation Archives, L. M.-Baret.

Marseilles, November 28, 1857.

My dear son, how could you have been worried for a time about your excellent little brother? What reason for complaint did you expect such a good child to give to anyone whosoever? It is at his request that I relieved him of the heavy burden that weighed upon him at the seminary and it is to please him that I have placed him at l'Osier. This dear Victor has never been able to overcome his excessive timidity; his professorship has always been a torment to him; and so, when he saw the number of students increase this year, he could not hold out any longer and approached me for deliverance from his anguish. I could not turn down his request because in all truth this child was not at his ease and I transferred him to N.-D. de l'Osier where he has been very glad to go.

I am surprised at your observations concerning the matter of the house at Limoges. Don't you know yet that a true missionary does not have a fixed abode? I see no grounds why anyone should become discouraged or weary. There is nothing more simple and natural than to go with detachment to wherever the superiors have before God judged that such and such a person can do more good or that it is more appropriate that they go. When a person walks in obedience, he is always on the right road. Let us put aside ideas that are too human; they never result in very much. Our whole confidence is in God.

I would have liked you to tell me what work you have been assigned to in Libourne. You must not forget that you were tired out in your last two postings. I would like you to take sufficient care of yourself so that things do not get beyond your strength. When a person does well, everyone wants to have some share of him. It then is not enough that a person is preaching in a parish — already here more than enough is requested — but he is to preach in convents, for the associations, etc: we do not dare to refuse and so we get played out.

I shall not conclude, my dear son, without wishing you a happy feastday — this in response to your bouquet. I am praying to our holy patron to protect you in God's presence and to obtain for you a great sharing in his spirit.

For my part, I bless you with all the affection of my heart and lovingly embrace you.

† C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles, s.g.

1365. [To Father Fabre, at the Marseilles Major Seminary].¹

Various business of the diocese and the Congregation. Orsini's criminal attempt.

L.J.C. et M.I.

Paris, J[anuar]y 20, 1858.

My dear friend, this letter will not have the same fate as the first one that I addressed to you. On the very day that we arrived here,² I wrote to you, giving you an account of our successful trip and of our first impressions here. Due to the oversight of all sorts of people, my letter stayed on my desk. Fortunately I noticed it at a time when I thought it had already reached you.

When I received your letter today, I immediately took up my pen and even though I manage to write you only a few lines, it will be taken to the mail.

I approve and praise everything you did in response to the telegram's message. One reservation only: you should not have accepted a refusal from Caihol's maid. You should have forced the issue and, even though the Grand Vicar had been sleeping for some two hours, you should have entered his room and communicated to him what you had to say. In certain circumstances no one's sleep is respected, not even that of the Emperor or the Pope. Caihol will no doubt have expressed to you his regrets that you did not do this. In all else, you have done things very well. Your circular letter is very well done: it has only one

¹ Orig.: Rome, Postulation Archives, L. M.-Fabre. On January 18, Father Casimir Aubert, the Secretary General of the Congregation, had written to the superiors that the Founder had left for Paris, "called there for the legislative session in his capacity as Senator, and from where he will probably not return before the last two weeks of March." The "well-beloved Father" offered his apologies for not having been able to reply to so many letters, but he is always glad to receive letters from his sons — they are to be addressed "to the Bon Lafontaine hotel. . . . He sees it so important that the Father of the family is in communication with his many children . . . that he sees the same as one of the most agreeable occupations of his life." Reg. des lettres 1855-1863.

² Bishop de Mazenod was accompanied by Bishop Jeancard and by his servant Philippe.

expression that I find unsatisfactory — it is the safe and sound which I would not have used for it is a trite saying. All the rest is excellent.³

If Mr. Caihol had not remained in bed, it would have been proper for him to sign with his colleagues a circular letter which, in my absence, ordered public prayers to be said.

In my portfolio I found Father Tempier's letter, the one that was to reassure us about the loss of our ten obligations. In this letter, he mentions only the twenty obligations that he had taken, whereas we have always estimated that he had taken thirty of them. All that is left to us is to calculate from the money he has paid out whether it is twenty or thirty; I presume, however, that it is the first figure that is the correct one. We shall verify all that when I return.

From Nancy they are asking me what has been decided concerning Mauroit's request.⁴ Father Aubert did not mention anything about this in his reply. Frankly, I don't remember it. Fill me in on this in your next letter.

I count on you extending compliments to whoever may have some coming. Remember to meet together in Council at least once a week and that each time one of you writes to tell me what was on the agenda.

I finish in haste because I have to go out and will come back only for dinner. Then it would be too late to mail this letter.

Countless affectionate things to all, a special greeting to our sick men,⁵ a special sign of affection for you from my heart.

† C.J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

P.S. I beg you, have someone of the bishopric tell Philippe's wife that he is well.

³ A dispatch of January 15 from the Minister of Worship requested that a Te Deum be sung as thanksgiving to God for having preserved the Emperor and the Empress from Orsini's murderous attack. A circular letter was immediately sent to all the parish priests in this vein; it was signed by Father Tempier as Provost and Vicar General.

⁴ Ms.: Morroit. Brother Manuel Mauroit had asked to make his 5-year vows. Cf. L. Fabre-Mazenod, January 25, 1858.

⁵ Father Gourdon of the seminary had been ill but was getting better. Cf. L. Fabre-Mazenod, January 25, 1858.

Also tell Father Aubert that the bookseller to whom he has sent Philippe for the little book on the blue scapular has never heard of the same. Nor could he even tell Philippe where it could be found.

Philippe has done your errand. He has ordered the crosses Father Aubert asked him to order.

1366. [To Father Soullier, at Nancy].⁶

The trip to Nancy is postponed for a few days.

L.J.C. et M.I.

Paris, J(anuar)y 28, 1858.

My dear Father Soullier, it seems to me that I foresaw what is happening when I wrote to our dear Father Berne. I was counting on leaving here Monday in order to be with you on the next day. Before writing you, however, I was waiting to know what we would have to do in the Senate to which we have been convoked only once to date. And now, all of a sudden, a Senate consultation was presented to us yesterday, for which we are going to name in each office a commission that is to examine it. Thereafter we will have to assemble to deliberate on it, and this will take several days. I cannot, therefore, absent myself before this affair is concluded. Hence, I must give up the idea of traveling on Monday.

If you see no inconvenience in delaying for a few days the profession of good Father Chalmet, I am quite sure that in the first half of next week we will have finished the main item that is before the Senate. If I leave aside the other items of lesser importance, especially after having been present for this main one, I could take measures to be at Nancy on Sexagesima Sunday. I would arrange to get there on the Saturday. I shall decide only after you have written to me that this arrangement suits you. I only ask you to answer me by return mail so that I know for sure; then I shall be able to reply to the various invitations that are extended to me here.

⁶ Orig.: Rome, Postulation Archives, L. M.-Soullier.

If you see the least difficulty in deferring the profession of good Father Chalmet, do not be put out; I shall be paying you a short visit regardless, sooner or later. It seems to me, however, that my absence will be less noticed in the Senate if it occurs immediately after the adoption of the Senate consultation.

I hasten to finish so that my letter will still leave in today's mail. I bless all of you. Goodbye.

† C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles,
s.g.

1367. [To the Oblates of Nancy].⁷

The visit to Nancy is postponed till later. Boredom in Paris where he is faced with the world's vanities.

L.J.C. et M.I.

Paris, Feb[ruary] 4, 1858.

What a place, my dear friends, what a place Paris is! I am getting giddy, I cannot take it any more. Here, nothing is ever finished and there is always something to do. Who would have believed the other day when I was told that the Senate's report on the Senate consultation was imminent — an event for which it was proper that I be present — that I would have had the time to make a little trip to Nancy and return in time for this session which will take place only tomorrow? That, however, is how things stand. Moreover, banking on what I had been told, I hastened to hand in a request for an audience with the Emperor which my business required and now here I am waiting for an answer which may come at any moment: this obliges me to stay put.

It is not at all easy to tell you how vexed I am by these delays. You will certainly grasp it, you, my dear children, who are surely as much put out as I am. What especially grieves me is the delay for our dear Father Chalmet's profession. Except for this event, I would have planned things either a little earlier or a little later, I would in any case have had the consolation of going to see you. But to feel this dear Father being kept waiting is something intolerable. I must have written

⁷ Orig.: Rome, Postulation Archives, L. M.-Oblats.

you, however, that I could not come to Nancy for Sunday. I cannot even tell you beforehand on what day I shall be free to go there. The presence of the Prussian princes here, the arrival of all these diplomats who are coming from every country to pay their compliments to the Emperor and the Empress almost assure me that I will not get my audience this week. If it had not been requested, I would not worry about it, but, as matters stand, I cannot absent myself. As soon as there is something definite, I shall hasten to let you know. For now, I have only regrets to communicate to you.

Dear sons, believe me, I am doing some strict penance here! I cannot suffer the world which I renounced so readily and here I am forced to be in touch with it — the least I can manage, to be sure, and only to the extent that my position imperiously requires, but that is enough to bore me thoroughly, to make my heart groan at the sight of so much luxury, so much extravagance, so much vanity, so much futility: I assess everything I see by the sacred principles of the Gospel and weigh the value of all this wealth in the scales of God's holiness. I put in an appearance only in those instances from which I cannot dispense myself. How many serious reflections I make during the short time that these last! I dare say that my soul rises up to God with greater ease than it does in the secret of my oratory. Yes, the contrast of the sight of vanity at its peak with the supernatural thoughts familiar to men of our stamp, with my desires and tastes immediately place me in God's presence and binds my soul to him whom it is called to love above all else.

I don't know how I have allowed myself to express these reflections to you. They will at least show you that I consider you fortunate to have been called to live a supernatural life, the only one that is consistent with the dignity of our nature and of our vocation for which we cannot thank God too much.

Goodbye, dear children, may you be blessed a thousand times.

† C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles,
s.g.

1368. [To Father Soullier, at Nancy].⁸

The visit to Nancy is deferred until after the audience that the Emperor will give the Bishop of Marseilles. Baptism at Passy.

L.J.C. et M.I.

Paris, February 7, 1858.

I was going to take up my pen and write you, my dear son, that I was planning to leave tomorrow upon leaving the Senate and arrive at Nancy on Tuesday morning. This was the only way to avoid postponing to the Greek Calends this trip which both you and I desire so much. Your letter places me in a new quandry from which I can extricate myself only by deferring my arrival in your midst to after Quinquagesima Sunday.

Telling you all the arrangements I have had to make would be too lengthy an affair. People thought they were doing me a service in not scheduling sooner the audience that I had requested from the Emperor. Now I am anxiously waiting and all signs are that it will be granted to me precisely on the same Sunday on which you are expecting me in Nancy. So I cannot possibly leave here precisely on the day on which I could be called to see the Emperor. Had I been able to leave tomorrow, I would have assisted at the Senate session for the business where my collaboration was important and I would have been back here for the audience as presumed. This planned trip can no longer be arranged like this, for already you are embarked and at work with the candidate. I therefore conclude that nothing is easy on this earth. Thus I give up the idea of undertaking the trip tomorrow and am postponing it until after my audience with the Emperor. I shall certainly inform you at the proper time.

Goodbye. I am leaving to do a baptism at Passy⁹ where I will afterwards give a solemn benediction. At least you must acknowledge

⁸ Orig.: Rome, Postulation Archives, L. M.-Soullier.

⁹ In this letter, the Founder wrote: "Passy". This was a municipality in the former outskirts of Paris that were annexed in 1860. In his Ordo, he had plainly written: "Baptism of the little Patras at Poissy. Benediction in the parish and in the Brothers' boarding school." Poissy is a city on the Seine River. According to REY (II, 672- 673), Passy is correct here. The Founder presided over a second benediction in the boarding school of the *Brothers of the Christian Doctrine*.

that this time the delay does not originate with me, otherwise I would have to make new excuses to our dear Father Chalmet whom I bless and embrace, as I do you and all the others in your house.

† C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles,
s.g.

1369. [To Father Casimir Aubert, at Marseilles].¹⁰

Advice to be given to Father Bermond who is to make the canonical visitation of the Oblates in Oregon.

[Paris], February 8, 1858.

When you write to Father Bermond, bring home to him that he is wrong in not appreciating the confidence I have shown to him when I entrusted this delicate visitation to him. Remind him, first of all, that it was not possible to leave him at St. Boniface, for the Bishop of the diocese did not want him there and that giving him the responsibility for a commission so important as the visitation of the Oregon missions was an honorable way of withdrawing him from this mission. Tell him that he should have accepted this matter in a very serious way and not commit the wrong of complaining as he travelled about in Canada. Also add that, in order to fulfill his mission conscientiously and to respond to the confidence I have placed in him, he will have to examine everything in the smallest details so that he can form a judgment on such grave interests and to give me reasons for adopting it. He has to go and see certain localities and gather trustworthy information about the others. He is to consider the present and the future, give his assessment in a detailed report which he must prepare carefully and which must speak not only of Oregon, Olympia, Puget Bay, the Cayouses, Yakimas and other places of the diocese, but also on Vancouver and other areas, even of California which the bad conduct of some of our men, known to the Archbishop, has moved us to exclude.¹¹

¹⁰ YENVEUX I, 124; III, 115; VII, 99.

¹¹ Allusion to Father Honoré Lempfrid, who was expelled from the Congregation in 1853. Cf. L. M.-Fransoni, November 24, 1853, in *OBLATE WRITINGS* V, pp. 80-81.

Also advise him to give himself the time to assess persons well, their qualities, their defects; what we can expect from each one of them; if there are any who are incorrigible. Let him also consider the lay Brothers who, at a certain period, were quite problematical. Let him also get an account of how temporal matters stand. It is horrible how expenses have risen! Father Ricard has not managed to look after the Congregation's interests. Is there no regulation that could be laid down in regard to these costly journeys? Let Father Bermond be imbued with the responsibility he has in God's sight so that he will neglect nothing that can re-establish religious regularity and discipline, which are more necessary in the foreign missions than anywhere else, though they are necessary everywhere. Should I have forgotten something in these recommendations, add whatever you yourself feel is useful. Let him impress on everyone that we have to be holy and lead a holy life if we are to accomplish the great work that God has entrusted to us in his mercy.

Among others, Father Ch[irouse] seems not to have any religious virtues. He is a scoundrel and nothing else. Father Ch(irouse)'s company it is that has led astray this other Father who wrote me the odd letter that you are acquainted with. How then can we entrust to them missions which require men of zeal and devotedness and especially men of God? There is reason for grief when we see that the salt has become so tasteless.

1370. [To Father Fabre, at the Marseilles Major Seminary].¹²

Fathers Cooke and Fox passing through Paris. Father Lynch will not be superior at Dublin. Trip to Nancy is still postponed to later. News of the Fathers in England. Boredom resulting from the visits that he must make.

L.J.C. et M.I.

Paris, February 8, 1858, sent off on the 9th.

My dear son, I shall start, but without any hope of getting very far. I have just come in from my visit to the Minister who kept me with him a good length of time; and shortly I shall have to go out to the Senate where I will probably be taken up until evening.

¹² Orig.: Rome, Postulation Archives, L. M.-Fabre; YENVEUX VI, 74.

Don't think that here you can plan and count on the morrow. I am back at my letter without any hope of finishing it. I shall begin by telling you that Fathers Cooke and Fox have passed through Paris on their way to No[rmandy] where they will take a look at this retreat house which will serve them as a model. Father Cooke has changed our attitude in regard to Father Lynch. He met him in London and found him totally crushed by the mission which I had assigned to him. He claims he would prefer being the second in Leeds rather than the first in Dublin. Father Cooke shares his view completely and. . .¹³

The 9th.

I no longer know what I wanted to say with the above "and". I answered Father Cooke — who is convinced that Father Lynch would be quite a problem at Dublin — that Father Pinet would not be too pleased to have him at Leeds where the community is doing well. Cooke claims that Father Pinet has admitted that he did not know how to bring forth the best in Father Lynch and that all would go well; he insists, however, that he does not want him in Dublin for he fears that, far from maintaining the great regularity established in our house, he would rather reduce it to the state of the other religious houses with which he would be in contact. I did not think it good to be opposed to the Provincial's view; he would have been discouraged in regard to the projects he has in mind and is actually carrying out.

You will be surprised to learn that I have not yet gone to Nancy. Since I could not go there for the 2nd, which was the day of Father Chalmet's profession, I was planning to leave [yesterday] after the Senate session so that I could receive his vows today and leave tomorrow [or], at the latest, the day after tomorrow. But then Father Soullier wrote that he and the Father are busy giving a retreat which is to begin today itself: they were presuming that I would be more free on Quinquagesima Sunday and the days following. That is precisely what will not be the case and so I remain undecided as to when exactly this trip will take place. They will be quite put out and I even more.

You did well to write to America in order to keep them going. You have a business sense, it is better that you follow things from Marseilles. I would have liked to learn how things have been going in

¹³ The text breaks off here. Because this sheet has been torn, it is not possible to reconstitute the beginning and ending of certain lines.

Buffalo (people are chattering near me). How do we stand in regard to that property which is so problematical? Is it definitively ours or must we continue running the risk of having it taken away from us? How has Father Tempier sent the 55,000 for England? I presume there is something for Liverpool included in this sum. In conscience, we can no longer forget this community. You must know that the proprietor concerned has become a great personage: he has inherited a sort of lordly domain which gives him the right to take possession of the property of those who are in arrear in their payments. Thus he has established himself in a chateau of which he took possession. I certainly advised Father Cooke to see to it that the well situated locale where we are does not pass out of our hands. It seems that our house in Leeds is quite advanced. Sicklinghall, however, is no longer sufficient for the number of novices who want to come there. I count 13 excellent ones in Father Arnoux's letter. Ah, my dear man, what a letter the good Father Ayral has written me! One has to be an accomplished imbecile to be able to speak or write in such a disjointed manner. What are we going to do with this man? What were we thinking of when we sent him to England? We cannot ever entrust any ministry whatsoever to such an idiot. How could he have been admitted to profession? Alas! his beautiful and long letter explains Father Arnoux's notes only too well. He has weighty reasons not to venture saying Mass at our good neighbors; saintly though he is, he would cover us with shame. Tell me, what will they do with him in England? I am asking this: they are so charitable at Sicklinghall that they take care not to raise the issue. That is certainly not the case where Father Guillard¹⁴ is concerned. He is good for everything. I only regret that out of regard for Madame Blanc, he was assigned as chaplain to this lady; he had been staying at her place six weeks already when Father Arnoux wrote me his report. Madame Blanc has left our vicinity and established herself in Yorkshire. Father Guillard is hearing confessions there and even beginning to preach. Father Arnoux is ever more pleased with him, be it in regard to his virtue or in respect of his talent.

I have written my worthy friend, the Chevalier de Collegno, to consult him about the Piedmont pension. He has informed me about the steps to be taken.¹⁵

¹⁴ Ms.: Guignard.

¹⁵ Ms.: gamine à suivre. We no longer have the second sheet. YENVEUX (VI, 74) has copied the following passages: from "I have written. . . ." onwards. The Piedmont pension was a remuneration paid by the King of Turin to the Fathers who were in charge of the Work of the Italians or Piedmontese in Marseilles.

My dear son, I have written to Tempier and to Carbonnel. The latter will have shown you the contents of my letter, and so I shall not repeat it. I am taking advantage of this day of rest imposed by the weather to converse a few moments with you. The life that I have to live here is truly unbearable, totally against my taste and habit. If it were only a matter of being present in the Senate, that would be a duty like any other which I would fulfill out of love for God; what annoys me terribly, however, are the social duties that flow therefrom. There are visits to receive, visits to make, dinner invitations, obligatory appearances at ministerial evening parties. And, besides, how behind I am in these courtesy visits. I humbly admit that I have not yet made them, except to our good President¹⁶ who received me in a most friendly manner.

I conclude lest others may take my overly prolonged absence amiss. I saw the Minister of Worship¹⁷ and the Minister of the Interior as well: to the latter I was only to speak of one business item, that concerning the hospital.

1371. [To Father Tempier, at Marseilles].¹⁸

Debts of the Oblates at Buffalo and of the Abbé Fissiaux. Flu at Montolivet. Visits in Paris.

[Paris], February 10, 1858.

. . . That is where I see the sum of Buffalo raised to 15,000 francs and this amount has to be taken from the account of the 30,000 francs to which I am pledged.

You will have to advise Father Fabre of the repayment made by Fissiaux, so that he can reduce by half the amount of my claim on the list he has of my possessions.

¹⁶ Mr. Troplong, President of the Senate.

¹⁷ On the 8th, the Founder wrote in his Ordo: "Visit to the Minister. Positive assurance concerning the great affair", namely, the appointment of Jeancard as auxiliary bishop to Bishop de Mazenod of Marseilles. It is for this matter that the Founder had asked for an audience with the Emperor.

¹⁸ YENVEUX VIII, 34; REY II, 681.

It appears that the flu has been raging at Montolivet. These spit-tings of blood greatly disturb me; they are certificates of premature death. I nevertheless agree to the admission of Brother Derbuel;¹⁹ still it is not easy to bear in mind this sad premonition.

I end my letter. It is time to get dressed for an appearance at the Tuileries, and Cardinal Dupont will soon be calling for me. This is a big chore for me, for I do not like the world of the great. Besides, when I am obliged to be in its presence, I perceive its futility and emptiness more than I ever could in meditation. I find it here in its fullest expression. . . . 'That is all it is!' I tell myself. 'Oh! that is very little indeed! One moment spent at the foot of the holy altar surpasses all this prestige, no matter how brilliant it may be!

1372. [To Father Tempier, at Marseilles].²⁰

Reflections concerning money matters, a servant, and the scholastics.

[Paris], February 11, 1858.

Since my letter of yesterday was not taken to the post, I shall add these few lines to ask you to tell Carbonnel that Naud, when I consulted him yesterday as to how he wanted to be paid, told me that we could deposit 9,665 francs in his account at Marseilles, for they will have to send some money to pay the dividends. Let Carbonnel only take care that the one to whom he gives the money will give him a receipt in proper and due form. I don't remember the name of the clerk concerned. Elie Bonnard is still here, so it is someone else who is in charge of accounts at Marseilles.

There, that is one item.

Next I will tell you that I was told at the Ministry that the Minister of Finances has decided that Bishops who have responsibilities outside of their dioceses should enjoy postal exemptions under the signature of the delegated Vicar General. Mr. Caihol has taken advantage of this in regard to several letters that have been written to me and it is

¹⁹ The lady-copyist of Yenveux wrote: "Verbuet". It would seem that there was no scholastic with such a name, but there was at that time a Brother Derbuel whose health was not very good. Cf. General Archives, doss. Montolivet, Notes sur les scolastiques.

²⁰ Orig.: Rome, Postulation Archives, L. M.-Tempier.

appropriate that he continue to do so. If my own letters have been taxed, Carbonnel, using this decision [of the Minister], could claim a refund.

In his last letter, Carbonnel made a remark that disturbs me a good deal in regard to Alphonse. Carbonnel seems to be dissatisfied with him. Speaking to me like that does not suffice; people should lay things out clearly for me. I ask you to inform yourself on this matter and to apply a prompt remedy. I shall write, if I have to, but if perchance there is something amiss with the man's morals, I will give up totally on this young man whom I trusted in this regard. Concern yourself immediately with this matter.

Dupuy²¹ is coming in right now. I don't know if he will explain his affairs better to you than to us. He is so mixed up that we more or less understand nothing of it all. Besides, my grief is a chastisement for having been stupid enough to listen to him.

I wanted to write a few lines to Father Mouchette; the arrival of Dupuy on the one hand, that of Fathers Cooke and Fox on the other, plus the visit of some Bishops have taken up all of my time. So please tell this to this dear Father and advise him to take good care of himself because of his delicate situation. I give you the same advice.

I assume you are providing our young people with the means to warm themselves, for it is so cold at Marseilles.

Goodbye. I again assure you of my best wishes.

1373. [To Father Casimir Aubert, at Marseilles].²²

The Founder's sadness at spending February 17th alone with his servant. Father Lagier does not observe the Rule. A Father is to be sent to Father Noailles at Bordeaux.

²¹ Dupuy, an ex-Oblate, was a titular canon of Marseilles.

²² YENVEUX IV, 40; IX, 46*.

[Paris], February 17, 1858.

Had I been able to continue my letter, I would have expressed to you my sadness on this beautiful February 17, for I found myself alone in my little chapel, with Philippe, my loyal servant, while everywhere else where we are my children were gathered together at the foot of the altar to give solemn thanks to God in memory of the day that our Institute was approved! I have thus begun my Lent with a severe penance. May God in his goodness credit it to my account!

You are not too well informed about what is going on in your Province. Here is what I happen to know. Father L[agier],²³ to the great consternation of those who love the Rule, allows people without any reasonable ground to get up only at six o'clock. It is rightly said: if there are reasons to remain in bed, that is fine; but let him not authorize others to break the Rule, especially on Sundays when there are confessions to be heard. I am also told: to have him love the spirit of poverty more would be desirable. He went and made a trip no one knows to where and without saying when he would be back. Priests come to ask him for retreats and our men won't know what to say to them. At *oraison* he uses a lit candle like bishops do and that is a scandal to all the Fathers. Everywhere else people are content with one lamp. These are the things that someone who sincerely loves the Rule has sent me. It is good that you know these things, for it is important that abuses of this sort do not set in.

And so it is Father Noailles who informs me how things stand with our great concern. He has informed all the local superiors of the different Institutes of the union that has been achieved. He has proclaimed a novena and communions to draw down God's blessings on this new phase of his work; and now he has approached me to ask that we select from among our excellent Oblate Fathers a collaborator whom he wants to initiate into the Holy Family — he may even be obliged soon to ask for a second one, for the harvest is great and there is a dearth of workers. And he continues in this vein. *Hic labor*. I have not as yet answered this embarrassing letter. Do you know why? Soon we won't know anymore how to satisfy so many claims and so many requests.

²³ The General Council on October 22, 1857, had appointed Father J. J. Lagier superior at N.-D. de Bon Secours.

1374. [To Father Fabre, at the Marseilles Major Seminary].²⁴

Joy at receiving Father Fabre's letter on February 17th. A Father has to be sent to Father Noailles at Bordeaux.

L.J.C. et M.I.

Paris, February 19, 1858.

My dear son, I let you imagine how fitting it was that your delightful letter²⁵ was handed to me on February 17th. On so solemn and joyful a day for all my children, I was in the sadness of my solitude. I alone was reduced to celebrating the holy Sacrifice with my ordinary servant in the small chapel of the hotel where I am staying. I united myself as best as I could to all of you who are spread out over the four parts of the earth, but I felt my cruel isolation just the same. And then came your letter, so affectionate and touching: through a particular effort on your part, you arranged its arrival so that it would be in my hands on the feastday itself. It was handed to me at a time when my thoughts were depressing me even more. You can well understand what a balm this dear letter was for me. Certainly, I already knew your customary sentiments, but no matter, it is so nice to see them so well expressed and felt. They could only add to the affection that I have nourished for you since a long time hence and they stirred my recollection of them and imprinted them, so to speak, even more deeply. So it is that this fine letter was a truly great consolation for me. In dear Father Mouchette's letter, which I have received today, I see that you went ahead with the good idea of getting together at Montolivet. That was the place to go and rejoice in the midst of a fine community, the hope of our family, who respond so well to the care lavished upon them with so much zeal and devotedness. Father Mouchette's description of it to me is most consoling. We hope to see good missionaries and holy religious come forth therefrom. The need for such is everywhere felt and soon we will not be able to respond to so many claims and requests.

²⁵ Letter of February 7, 8 pages in length, kept in the General Archives. L.

²⁴ Orig.: Rome, Postulation Archives, L. M.-Fabre.

The Abbé Noailles is presently a source of embarrassment to me. He is reminding me of our agreement by which we are to send him one of our most competent men so that he can initiate him into serving his many Institutes; the latter have been informed by a circular letter of all that has been arranged.

21 [February].

I give up hope of ever finishing this letter. When I came back from the church where we spent a part of the day, I had to dine. After dinner, the visits began, and here the evenings extend far into the night. A person still has to go to bed and that happens never before 11.30 and often only at midnight. Nevertheless, I get up at six o'clock so that I can say Mass at half past seven in the chapel that we have in the house. So I wish you good evening and good night, even though you are already asleep at the moment that I am penning these few lines. So I kiss your forehead and bless you in your sleep.

† C.J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles,
s.g.

1375. For Father Mouchette, [at Montolivet].²⁶

February 17th in Paris. The trip to Nancy is still postponed to later. Fasting. Care for the scholastics' health, etc.

L.J.C. et M.I.

Paris, February 22, 1858.

My dear and very good son, I don't know which way to turn in order to comply with all the obligations that crush me in this place. With the best will in the world I do not manage to do so. This tells you why I have waited so long to write you. I would have very much liked to tell you sooner how much pleasure I derived from your letters. I

Fabre-Mazenod.

²⁶ Orig.: Rome, Postulation Archives, L. M.-Mouchette.

read them always with renewed consolation. They are a double source of joy for me: I receive news about you from your own self and through you I learn of the blessings which the Lord has not ceased to shower upon our most dear family. What you tell me about the latter compensated me for the excessive deprivation I suffered on the 17th of this month when I had to celebrate, all alone, in the small chapel of my hotel, the holy sacrifice in thanksgiving for God's great kindness, of which we are today keeping the 32nd anniversary, if I am not mistaken. You were celebrating this at Montolivet as elsewhere. Daily I receive moving reports about this, and I, all alone on my third floor, united myself as best as I could to the beautiful feast that was being celebrated far away from me. There was, however, a certain moment when we were very close to each other. That is at the consecration when we are all equally in the presence of the same Jesus whose heart at the same time received the vows of us all. This idea consoled me in my loneliness on that day.

Would you believe that I have not yet made my trip to Nancy? Here too is a sacrifice I am obliged to impose upon myself, one that is all the more painful because others have felt it as much as I. They had prepared a celebration, hoping to have me in the midst of this fervent community for the great day of our feast. It was impossible for me to go, and this good Father Chalmet, who finished [his novitiate] on the 2nd and who wanted to make his vows in my presence, is thus held back a good month. This grieves me but force major has kept me in Paris. At least I don't want him to lose his place of precedence and, whatever be the day on which I can come to Nancy and receive his profession, I want him to precede all those who have made their vows after February 2nd. I tell you this so that you can arrange this matter when you assign the [Oblation] numbers.

I shall not conclude this little letter without telling you again and with the greatest insistence to take great care of your health. You have to speak much, for you have so many under your direction. So, don't hesitate to freshen up your chest by taking a hot drink in the morning, a warm drink of pearl-barley, for example. Allow such a drink to all whom you notice prone to coughing, or who would need some sustenance during days of fasting: thus even if some milk has to be added — though only a small quantity — to this drink which I see as a sort of remedy and which I therefore authorize.

I explicitly charge you, my dear son, to tell all the Fathers and Brothers at Montolivet all my affection, the pain I feel to be at present

absent from them — though in body only, for I am very much with them in heart and spirit. I bless all and you too with all my soul.

† C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles, s.g.

1376. [To Father Soullier, at Nancy].²⁷

Trip to Nancy on February 26th to 28th.

L.J.C. et M.I.

Paris, February 24, 1858.

Dear Father Soullier, I am going to crowd my sails lest I have the grief of visiting your house during your absence. I would have liked to leave today if at all possible, we have a session at the Senate tomorrow and we are to vote an important law which deals with measures of general security. I simply cannot be absent in such a circumstance. I have to be in Paris on March 1st, at six o'clock in the evening. So here is what I have decided to do.

I shall leave Friday morning by the express train at nine o'clock. With God's help, I shall arrive at Nancy at five o'clock. I shall spend the whole of Saturday and Sunday with you, and take my leave on Monday morning at 6.00 a.m., and that will bring me here a little before the time of my rendez-vous at six o'clock. In this way, I shall have the consolation of finding you with this dear family which for the last month has been the promised land that I could not enter, though certainly not because I was wandering around in the desert. I will not say more to you now, the main thing is that my letter leaves by today's mail. Goodbye.

† C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles,
s.g.

²⁷ Orig.: Rome, Postulation Archives, L. M.-Soullier.

1377. [To Father Tempier, at Marseilles].²⁸

The Founder's visit to his sister and niece at Cirey. Snow and cold. Success of his negotiations in Paris. The Mirès marriage. The scholastics' health.

L.J.C. et M.I.

Cirey, March 9, 1858.

My dear Tempier, I assume that I will find a letter from you upon my return to Paris. In the meantime, I am taking the advantage of a brief moment where I am free at Cirey in order to wish you a nice good day. Since I was spending more than two months in Paris, it was hardly possible for me not to visit Cirey. I profited from Eugène's passing by to go with him and see my sister and my niece. Eugene is returning to Aix today and tomorrow I am returning to Paris so that I do not overly miss the sessions of the Senate: I shall have to leave it very shortly. I arrived here on Sunday morning: this makes a three and one half days' stay with my family. I found my sister reasonably well, but rather grieved that she cannot observe Lent as she used to do formerly. But, weak as she has been, it will certainly not be I who will allow her not to pay attention to the requirements of her weak condition. She had to keep to her room for two weeks without being able to come downstairs for Mass in the chapel, even on Sunday. She is better now, but she needs a lot of care. My niece is about to give birth. All her children are healthy and in delightful spirits.

Here we have been treated to the sad sight of the earth covered with snow. What a contrast with our smiling countrysides, even in winter! The cold, however, is tolerable, though the frost is severe and biting. I suffered from it a little only during the night of Saturday to Sunday in the carriage which took us from Bar-sur-Aube to Cirey. That takes about four hours of rather difficult travelling when the roads are covered with snow and it froze very hard that night. I was well covered up, however, but it was during sleep that I was soon warmed up by keeping myself awake.

You will no doubt have marvelled how in the space of one session with the new Minister I settled our two great affairs. On returning to Paris, I hope to learn that our hospital is in operation and that the

²⁸ Orig.: Rome, Postulation Archives, L. M.-Tempier.

Sisters of St. Augustine are in charge of it. The gentlemen of the Commission should have been more grateful for the success which is due to my credit and my efforts. They have even left me without an answer to the letter that I wrote to them. The Prefect and Mr. Martin replied by return mail. If I do not find in Paris a letter from them, I will have every reason to be irked.

These are not the only matters that I brought to a good conclusion with God's grace. Let this be said secretly — for the Pope requires this secrecy — the Holy Father, in response to the request I presented to him via my letter of the beginning of February, has granted me without the slightest delay the dispensation from the diriment impediment so that in the quality of an apostolic delegate I can marry the Catholic N. with the Jew Mirès. You can imagine how happy I am to have followed up my inspiration and to have obtained such a result. The Mirès family is overjoyed. I wanted to give the Catholic party a few days to prepare by confession for this great event in which I shall officiate upon my return to Paris.

This is not the only favour I have received from the Holy Father. I am expecting yet another which will delight all of us. As always with God's grace that assists me and moves things in my favour, I overcame without the slightest difficulty the obstacles that were in the way. I leave it that and will tell you the rest later. I have not as yet said anything about this to anyone. You won't guess it either, no matter how shrewd you are!²⁹

I end my chatter and take up my pen again only to close my letter. Before I do so, however, I advise you not to defy the flu and to take better care of yourself. I would also advise you not to sell all your milk, but to give the community more of it. I have been told that they have been receiving too little of it. That should not be tolerated. Milk must be the chief staple for a community which is fasting. This need has to prevail over the estimate of the revenue the cows bring in. The first privileged customers ought to be those of our own house. I embrace you.

† C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles, s.g.

²⁹ This probably refers to the appointment of Jeancard as auxiliary bishop.

1378. [To Father Berne, master of novices at Nancy].³⁰

Admission to vows of some novices. Postulants. Father Guinet.

[Marseilles], April 17, 1858.

My dear son, I did not want to give the task of writing you to anyone else. I indeed have very little time for myself, but I have enough to tell you again how happy I was with my stay in your dear community. Not in the least do I retract the promises which the fervor of your novices inspired me to make. The Council has given its warm approval to my view and without any difficulty we have admitted to oblation all the men you have presented to me.³¹ For this purpose, I grant them the necessary dispensation for the second year of novitiate. I also entirely second your viewpoint by not depriving you all at once of these excellent men whose absence would depopulate your novitiate too quickly. Let them therefore peacefully make their profession and let them stay until the holidays in the house that they have so edified by their good conduct during the time of their novitiate.

I have no hesitation in giving you a favorable answer in regard to the man of whom you spoke in one of your letters. I have again found this request in re-reading your letter. How is it that we did not speak about this matter at Nancy? I gladly agree to sacrifice 300 francs for three years and get a good priest in return. So conclude this matter which has been delayed too long through an oversight.

In Paris I have seen another man whom you had indicated to me. He came to see me and I strongly urged him not to defer too long in following God's call. He wanted to wait until Easter, I think. Easter is now over, how do matters stand with him? Kindly let me know.³²

³⁰ Copy: Rome, Postulation Archives, Reg. lettres 1855-1863, p. 164. Father Berne was appointed Master of Novices in the October 22nd and November 5, 1857 General Council sessions; he was to replace Father Guinet, who was ill. After several months, Father Guinet resumed his responsibilities. During his convalescence, it was Father Soulier, the superior, and not Father Berne, who presided at all the taking of the habit ceremonies.

³¹ Were admitted to vows: Father G. Simonin, Brother F.-M. Le Bihan, deacon, and Brothers G. Salatin, Y. Le Cam and J. Simmerman. Cf. General Council, April 14, 1858.

³² Two postulants took the habit on April 30: Yves-Marie Nicolas and Auguste Pineau.

If Father Guinet's health is restored, I will probably give him back to you, but it will not be as novice master. Regardless of what you yourself may think, you are doing very well in this position and experience will only improve you all the more. So do not grow weary doing good in this good post; let us only pray to God that he sent food for your zeal.

Goodbye, my dear son. Daylight is gone but I can just see enough to bless you as well as our entire beloved family, both the actual and the future Oblates.

† C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles,
sup. gen.

1379. [To Father Mouchette, at Montolivet].³³

Advice in helping a scholastic.

[Marseilles], June 17, 1858.

I have just had a lengthy session with our poor man who is ill. Though he is still sick, he is doing better. We agreed that he would resume the community's exercises in common and that he will give as much edification as he possibly can. I am sending him back to you. Always receive this dear Brother C³⁴ with great kindness and goodness. God may perhaps give us the grace of calming down his spirit. He accepted my entire reasoning and agrees that it is his duty to observe the Rule.

³³ YENVEUX VI, 126.

³⁴ We have Father Mouchettes notes on the scholastics for the months of May and June. The copyist has written "C". At this time there were 4 Brothers whose name began with the letter "C": Cantillon, Carli, Constantin and Courbet. Father Mouchette especially complained about Carli.

1380. To Reverend Father Mouchette, moderator of the Oblates of M[ary] I[mmaculate], at Montolivet.³⁵

Imminent visit to receive the profession of two Brothers.

L.J.C. et M.I.

St-Louis near Marseilles, June 21, 1858.

Dear son, your wishes are orders for me and so on Monday I shall come to Montolivet and take part in everyone's joy.

It has been a bit more difficult to arrange things in regard to the ceremony on the day of St. John the Baptist. I was already engaged to say Mass at the minor seminary and administer the sacrament of Confirmation there. I am writing to the superior that I shall indeed be coming to confirm his students, but that I shall have to say Mass elsewhere. According to this new arrangement, I will advance by one half hour my visit to the minor seminary. I cannot advance it further on account of the parents. From there I shall go to Montolivet where I shall say Mass for the profession of two Oblates.³⁶ I shall take my dinner with you and later I shall go to confirm the students of the St. Thomas boarding school. In this way I shall reconcile everyone's interest.

Goodbye, my dear son. I hold you to my heart and gladly give you my blessing as well as to your *ordinandi*.

† C.J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles,
sup. gen.

P.S. I can hardly arrive at Montolivet before 8 o'clock.

³⁵ Orig.: Rome, Postulation Archives, L. M.-Mouchette.

³⁶ Brothers J.-B. Gazard and J.-B. Bartet. Cf. Notes of Father Mouchette, May 1858.

1381. [To Father Bellon, at Bordeaux].³⁷

The new tasks of Father Bellon are consistent with his tastes. Regrets that the Congregation does not yet have its own Annales and Necrology. Necrology.

[Marseilles], July 20, 1858.

I learned with pleasure that the tasks I have entrusted to you correspond to your taste and that you are meeting up with good material for edification in the persons whom you are to direct.³⁸ They will benefit greatly from the zeal that you apply for their good. For myself, I fear that you are overburdened. Beware of overexerting yourself. Would one instruction a day not be sufficient? And these *Annales* which you undertook to edit, is this not a surplus of work you could have left to Mr. Noailles who is so much relieved because of all the things for which you have accepted responsibility? These Ladies are fortunate indeed to be better served than we are. It is the Congregation which needs you to busy yourself with its *Annales*, since you are suited for this kind of work. One of the things that sadden me is seeing the years flow by without leaving a trace of the marvellous things the Lord is working through the ministry of our men in all parts of the world. I am unable to bring our people to order on this point. And yet, that is what is done in all the other Congregations. The Jesuits especially do not fail in this. It is the same thing for the *Necrology*! How often have I not reminded people to concern themselves with it seriously! No one says "No!", but everyone allows himself to be carried away by events. Since I am speaking to you about this, try to recall the things you remember and make some notes of all the deceased Fathers and Brothers with whom you have lived. If each one contributes to a common centre this tribute of fraternity, we could then compose an edifying work which would bring consolation to our souls, for people die very holy deaths in the Congregation. What a saint this dear Father Amisse

³⁷ YENVEUX IX, pp. 47-48*.

³⁸ The General Council on April 14th appointed Father Bellon as "the auxiliary of Mr. Noailles with the Association of the Holy Family". Concerning the rank he occupied in the Congregation as the Superior General's representative, cf. General Council of June 8th.

who rose to Heaven after having, during his life and long illness, aroused the admiration of all who had the good fortune to be living with him! The life of Brother Camper is finished, we will soon be taking it to the printers. You will distribute it in your communities and will find food for their piety therein. What a good effect it will produce in the region which gave us this angel, who can be favorably compared to Aloysius Gonzaga, Berchmans and others of this kind!

1382. [To Father Tempier, at Montolivet].³⁹

The Founder is obeying Father Tempier and taking a rest. Invitation to dinner. Father Chauviré will remain at Frejus.

L.J.C. et M.I.

St-Louis near Marseilles, 21 J[uly], 1858.

My dear Tempier, I bow before the prescriptions of my well-beloved admonitor and, as proof of my docility, I am pleased to inform him that yesterday I went to bed a little after ten o'clock and that I only got up this morning at half past five: this adds up to a total of seven hours in bed. I admit that I find that exorbitant, but I have humbly obeyed. I would, however, prefer to settle for six hours plus the promise to do all I can to take a fifteen-minute siesta during the day.

You would do a favor to my sister and to myself, dear Tempier, if you were to come to St-Louis on Saturday to have supper with us. Otherwise, there is no indulgence of Carmel for us and even, as you know, no communion for my sister. You won't forget that dinner is at six o'clock. You could warn the Oblates who come to you for confession that they come on the morning of your departure for the city. In any case, we shall plead the right of pre-emption.⁴⁰

³⁹ Orig.: Rome, Postulation Archives, L. M.-Tempier.

⁴⁰ The "right of pre-emption" had a number of precise meanings in the Middle Ages, v.g. a lord's right to take back a manorial estate by reimbursing the buyer, priority right to buy a property, etc. Here the Founder wants to jest and is using the expression in a very broad sense: the right that he has, prior to the scholastics, on Father Tempier who has for a long time been his and his sisters's confessor.

I received two letters from Father Vincens and one from Father Chauviré. The conversation Father Vincens had with the latter has certainly induced me to modify my decision. I will show you these documents and you will see with me that it is better that Father Chauviré return to Fréjus: his reputation and the honor of the Congregation demand it.⁴¹

Brother Bouquet is in a hurry to get back and so I conclude by embracing you.

† C.J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles, s.g.

1383. [To the newly professed],⁴²

Congratulations. Greatness of the Marian and missionary vocation.

L.J.C. et M.I.

St-Louis near Marseilles, July 24, 1858.

My dear sons, you are quite right to congratulate yourselves for the happiness you have experienced in consecrating yourselves to God in the Congregation which has Mary Immaculate as its Mother. This is a grace of predilection, a true guarantee of your predestination to eternal bliss. The saintly death of all those whom the Lord has harvested from our midst has proved this to date. But before going to Heaven, what good things you are called to do here on earth!

And so with great pleasure to rejoice at your vocation, convinced as I am of your constant fidelity to respond to this special grace of God's mercy in your regard. My dear children, I leave you to consider how happy I am to be able to count you among the number of those whom the Lord has given me as sons in a family which is soldiering in the Church under the banner of Mary. In advance I calculate, so to speak, all the good that you will be able to do in the course of your life.

⁴¹ The General Council on July 18th had decided to withdraw Father Chauviré from the major seminary of Fréjus. A seminarian had accused him of "inexcusable behaviour".

⁴² Orig.: Rome, Postulation Archives, L. M.-Oblats. We know only of Brother J. H. Zabel and perhaps Brother Constant Vallet who made their vows at N.-D. de l'Osier at the beginning of July.

You will be enriched not only by these merits of your own, but, because of the solidarity within our family, you will be enriched by all that is meritorious accomplished in the works of your brothers in all parts of the world.

Goodbye, my dear sons, I bless you from the abundance of my father's heart.

† C.J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles,
sup. gen.

1384. [To Father Bise, at Montet, Switzerland].⁴³

A foundation in Switzerland is out of the question. News.

[St-Louis near Marseilles], July 24, 1858.

My dear Father Bise, here I am at St-Louis to clean out, if possible, my portfolio. I am now coming to you who gave me the pleasure of writing me two letters. First, I congratulate you on the amelioration of your health. Even though I maintain that all healthy climates are good, nevertheless I understand that the satisfaction of seeing one's native place influences morale, a factor that has so much power over our physical makeup.

As soon as I received your letters, I submitted to my Council the project you are proposing. One cannot deny that it is rather an attractive one. Still, we did think that accepting it would mean forgetting that it would be a matter of making a foundation in the revolutionary Switzerland, in a canton which, Catholic though it is, has chased out the Jesuits, Redemptorists and so many other religious communities and which would certainly not tolerate seeing them succeeded by another religious Congregation. Besides, how do we establish ourselves in someone else's house? If the charitable person who is willing to give us hospitality were to die, what would become of us? How can we presume that even while alive this person can take on feeding and supporting the missionaries: these latter would not receive in their ministry

⁴³ Copy: Rome, Postulation Archives, Reg. des lettres 1855-1863, pp. 194-195.

in the parishes, which are usually quite poor, the resources to provide for their needs. All these considerations plus the shortage of personnel and the factor of distance have prevented my Council from giving a favorable vote to your proposal and I admit that I found it impossible to come to a different conclusion than they did. The region is not sufficiently at peace. The majority of the good has not sufficiently curbed the seditious minority: the latter have not given up hope of acceding to power, which they would use much more energetically than those did who managed them so carefully. Hence we risk to reawaken passions by our presence, a presence which would be denounced as a jesuitic attempt.

Then, my dear Father Bise, I had to add that we can hardly form a community made up of two Fathers only. What regularity can be observed in such a situation? What exercises corresponding to the Rule can be made in such a context? Such an isolation would be too harmful to the men concerned: if we had the men, we would be withdrawing them from the midst of a community where the Rule is being faithfully observed and we would be throwing them into a situation that is abnormal, so to speak.

Such are the conclusions of our deliberations which I communicate to you in all confidence. The time may perhaps come later when we can take up this project again with more hope of success. We must allow the good to gain more strength in the canton; among our ranks we will always find men of zeal and devotedness.

I don't know if you have been informed of the saintly death of our dear Father Amisse and also of the edifying demise of a scholastic Brother.⁴⁴ Thus the good Lord has been harvesting for Heaven in our little family. In the midst of our sorrow, it is consoling to foresee them as being among the Blessed.

Goodbye.

† C.J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles,
sup. gen.

⁴⁴ Father P.-J. Amisse passed away at N.-D. de l'Osier on July 7th and scholastic Brother J.-B. Baland died at Nancy on June 27th.

1385. To Mister Fabre, vic. gen, and sup[er]ior of the m[aj]or seminary, at Marseilles.⁴⁵

Convokes him to St-Louis for a Council meeting.

L.J.C. et M.I.

St-Louis near M[ar]seilles], August 24, 1858.

My dear Father Fabre, I did not expect your request that I go to l'Osier. When one has available such an agreeable countryside as mine is, to which one can come and take a rest close to one's father, it seems useless to look so far afield for this rest. Nevertheless, I do not forbid you from undertaking this journey; we have too much business on the table, however, for you to leave before it is taken care of. So, I am calling Father Tempier, Father Aubert and yourself for a rendez-vous at St-Louis for Thursday.⁴⁶ I would like you to be here for breakfast at 10 o'clock. Because of this, the Bishop of Ceramis⁴⁷ would have to stay at Marseilles: he intends to go there tomorrow. If the Bishop cannot take part in the secretariate session, I would be satisfied if you came after you have finished with the secretariate. When we start doing our business too late, we cannot finish anything and everything remains at a standstill.

You won't forget that tomorrow our titles will have to be presented at Bonnard. I wish you a good evening.

† C.J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles,
s.g.

⁴⁵ Orig.: Rome, Postulation Archives, L. M.-Fabre.

⁴⁶ Several important matters were treated in the General session of Thursday, August 26th: the reform of the school at Vico, personnel of the college of Bytown, project of a foundation at St-Dié, advice for Father Boisramé, the novice master in England.

⁴⁷ Jeancard, the auxiliary of the Bihop of Marseilles. He was ordained on October 28th.

1386. [To Father Fabre, at the Marseilles Major Seminary].⁴⁸

Permission to go to N.-D. de l'Osier.

[St-Louis near Marseilles], August 28, 1858.

What does it matter, my dear friend, whether I grant a permission gladly or not: when it is granted, one must suppose that I had sufficient reasons to fight against my reluctance, which, after all, is based only on a principle of the general order that can admit exceptions. I assure you that the desire you have to make this trip is a sufficient motive for me to admit such an exception. So make your trip without any scruple.

⁴⁸ YENVEUX III, 65.



Father Joseph Fabre
(1824-1892)

1387. [To Father Vincens, at Arras].⁴⁹

He should give more details about his visit to Quimper and Arras. The Congregation is too indebted to make a foundation at St-Dié. Seminaries of Quimper, Arras and Romans. Jesuit behaviour at Valence. News from Canada.

[Marseilles], September 1, 1858.

My dear Father Vincens, I have just replied to the Bishop of St-Dié⁵⁰ in a sense that corresponds with your own views. I expressed to him our regret that we could not second him in his view and respond to your desire. What, dear Father, were you thinking of when you were on the verge of committing yourself to such an exorbitant expenditure? In a moment of fascination, you forgot what a state the Congregation's finances were in. We have nothing else to do than to preserve the monuments of St-Dié at our own expense! No one in the Council, moreover, was in favor of a project such as that which seduced you for an instant. Let us think no more about it. How come you gloss over so easily on your mission at Quimper? If ever a person expected some interesting details, it was for this occasion. That your retreat succeeded, that we knew in advance; but how many things could be mentioned about your relationship with this Clergy that the Bishop had described to us as so opposed to our Fathers. And wouldn't we be curious to know the Bishop's attitude and the topic of his conversations with you? How would you not have induced him to manifest at least some regret, if not to undertake a just reparation? What kind of an establishment is possible with such a man as bishop?⁵¹ Did you meet no one who was interested in us? Didn't the Viscount⁵² tell you anything? You didn't meet a single young man of good will whom you could direct to our novitiates? That is simply not possible! So why don't you tell us these things, aware as you are how impatient we are to know all these things.

And now you are at Arras. Between one retreat and the next, set aside a few moments to inform us of what you have done and what you can hope for. You say that the Bishop⁵³ is looking for a Congrega-

⁴⁹ Copy: Rome, Postulation Archives, Reg. des lettres 1855-1863, p. 198.

⁵⁰ Bishop Charles Jean Fillion was appointed to the see of St-Dié on January 30, 1858.

⁵¹ Bishop Nicolas Marie Sergent was Bishop of Quimper from 1855 to 1871.

⁵² Viscount de La Houssaye, priest, professor of moral theology at the seminary of Quimper and a friend of the Oblates.

⁵³ Bishop Pierre Louis Parisi was Bishop of Langres from 1835 to 1851 and of Arras from 1851 to 1866.

tion to which he could entrust his seminary. Why not apply for it? Is our adverse fate at Quimper so difficult to explain? I don't think that the Bishop of Arras looks upon him as a great man. I know that he complained about him concerning his way of acting in the Great Academic Council. Being called to take on another seminary is something we would really need in order to restore our reputation and recover from the massive blows [we sustained] from Quimper and from Valence. At Valence, things have come to the stage of regrets. They [claim] they did not want to do any harm, but the documentary evidence exists. Even the Jesuits are looking for some excuse to downplay their infamous conduct. In the meantime, they have taken from the diocese three of the best men in the seminary into which they entered *per fas et nefas*. I am going to do two ordinations, one right after the other, and *extra tempora* to fill up the [number of] men we have to send to Canada.⁵⁴ I give you the following as an item of good news: Father Rouge, moved, as they tell me, by the letter that I wrote him in reply to his pamphlet and request to leave the Congregation, has embarked to come and see me.⁵⁵ Once he has arrived, I shall also summon Father

⁵⁴ At the time Father Tabaret left for Montreal with Fathers Tortel, Dédeban and Pian.

⁵⁵ Father Rouge arrived in Marseilles in the beginning of September. Even though the Founder received him as a son, he did not persevere in the Congregation. The Founder wrote this to Father Antoine in a letter dated September 8. This letter was found in the General Archives after the publication of *Letters to North America (OBLATE WRITINGS II)*. Only a few paragraphs of this letter — which is quite torn — remain. They are as follows:

L.J.C. et M.I.

St-Louis near Marseilles, September 7, 1858

My dear Father Antoine, I lived the moment in which I had to let the excellent Fathers I am sending to Canada leave without giving them a few lines that are meant only for you. Matters proceed at such a pace here that there is no way of finding the moments of rest one would need in order to have the leisure to be with one's own. To give you an example proving this, no later than yesterday when I had stayed in the city after the pontifical service of the previous day, I began my day by giving Confirmation . . . taken in my carriage and we came for supper in my country place where I can tell you he slept very well this last night. One has to be a father to understand the pleasure I experienced in seeing this dear son again; you will never comprehend the love that I bear for you. No matter how much trouble and even grief persons may give me, love always predominates. When one sees the elder son, one's heart fills with joy, one has only sentiments of affection to express, there are no more reproaches to be made, one has to do violence to oneself to remember some wrongs. That, my dear child, is the kind of person I am, that is what I have just experienced. This tells you, my dear son, that in writing to you, I have only sentiments of affection to speak to you. . . . I have been detained longer than I would have liked, it is so easy to come here from the city. And so I have only time to tell you again that I love you a great deal, to embrace and to bless you.

† C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles,
sup. gen.

Bernard and thus we shall weaken this centre of complaining and resistance that is doing so much harm in Canada

Goodbye, I embrace and bless you with all my heart.

† C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

1388. [To Father A. Rey, at Briançon].⁵⁶

News. Authorization to settle family affairs.

L.J.C. et M.I.

Montolivet, September 8, 1858.

My most dear son, I am answering you very briefly from Montolivet where I have come to ordain five of our men.⁵⁷ We took advantage of our being together in this house to treat of the ever complicated affairs of the Congregation.⁵⁸ So I cannot converse with you as I would have liked. The Fathers who are on their way to Canada are here waiting for my blessing: I give it with my whole being but also with great regret at seeing these excellent Fathers going so far away from me. The ordination this morning was a very moving family reunion. Had you been there, you would certainly have been as deeply moved as I was.

To pass quickly to your business. I give you every authorization you need to terminate your business,⁵⁹ but do hurry. Goodbye.

† C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles, s.g.

⁵⁶ Orig.: Rome, Postulation Archives, L. M.-Rey. The person to whom this letter was addressed is not specified in the letter. Father Fabre filled up the three pages on which the Founder did not write. A number of details allow us to conclude that the letter was sent to Father Rey, professor at the seminary of Marseilles.

⁵⁷ Ordained were Fathers J. S. Gallo, F. J. E. Bonnefoy, J. M. E. Pian, Y. J. M. Piraud, B. Jean Dédebant.

⁵⁸ The following matters were treated in the September 6th meeting of the General Council: study of the report on the novitiates, project of a foundation at St-Dié, reform of the school at Vico, affairs of Canada and Oregon.

⁵⁹ Authority to alienate his goods. Cf. L. Rey-Fabre, 1 and 7 September; Fabre to Rey, September 8.

1389. [To Father de L'Hermite, at N.-D. de Cléry].⁶⁰

Booklet on N.-D. de Cléry. Sending Father Richard. Importance of Missions. Life of Brother Camper. L'Univers.

[Marseilles], October 5, 1858.

In the whirlwind that is all around me, I am happy, my dear son, when an urgent reason determines me to do what I have been long thinking of doing and from which I am hindered by incessant business which diverts me therefrom. And so it is that today I leave aside everything else and will come to you, first to thank you for the lovely little gift you gave me of your little booklet on the shrine of Cléry.⁶¹ I had already read, with the interest I give to everything that comes from you, the articles that you had published in *l'Univers*. Nevertheless, I reread this with renewed pleasure. You would have done well generously to make this same gift to all our houses; perhaps you have done so.

This letter will be brought to you by Father Richard who will be a member of your community. This Father possesses very good qualities and you can draw benefit therefrom; he is, however, a bit new in the ministry of the missions. I withdrew him from the seminary in Ajaccio, as he prefers to get initiated into the apostolic life. On this point, I recommend that you do not entirely dispense yourself from this precious work. It is the principal end of our vocation. I would not gladly see a superior of our communities abstain therefrom. Certainly, we must not attempt things that are beyond our strength, but, after measuring things and having oneself assisted in proportion to the need one perceives for the same, it is appropriate to engage in this combat, the more so because you know how to execute this duty very well.

Father Aubert must have told you what I think of the unfortunate quarrel people pick with you regarding *l'Univers*. It comes about all the more inopportunistly in that I was counting on having you write an account in this newspaper of the life of our Brother Camper, which is under press, indeed, its printing is almost finished. I have not given up entrusting you with this task, but I am quite put out that you will not be able to sign it. Nevertheless, you have to yield to the inconceivable

⁶⁰ Copy: Rome, Postulation Archives, Reg. des lettres 1855-1863, p. 201.

⁶¹ M. de L'Hermite, O.M.I., *Un pèlerinage à N.-D. de Cléry*, Orleans, 1858, 106 pp.

injunction laid upon you by the authority that you must respect and whose dissatisfaction, perhaps anger, you would arouse if you did not give in with good grace to its indications which you can consider as orders.

Concerns of economy in the distressful situation of the Congregation had led me to take the decision to prescribe that our houses subscribe only to the semi-daily edition; nevertheless, I do consider this newspaper — in spite of the wrongs for which I reproached it publicly when necessary — as one that is useful to religion whose cause it ably defends. So what does one do? You cannot pit yourself against the Bishop of the diocese in which you are living at the head of one of our communities.⁶² You will have to bear this sort of violence in order to avoid a greater evil.

I fully expected to be disturbed before finishing my letter which has to leave today. I conclude, for people are here to discuss business. Let them give me at least the time to embrace you affectionately and to bless you and all our men. Remember me to the de Poterat family.

† C.J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles,
s.g.

1390. [To Father Gondrand, at the château of Tournay in Normandy].⁶³

Reasons for being late in answering a letter he received. Sadness at learning that Father Gondrand's health is shattered. Authorization granted.

⁶² The misunderstandings between Louis Veuillot and Bishop Dupanloup are famous. They were especially concerned with the role of the classics. Canon J. Lefflon speaks of it in his work *Eugène de Mazenod*. . . , vol. 3, pp. 309 ff.

⁶³ Copy: Rome, Postulation Archives, Reg. des lettres 1855-1863, p. 201. On October 14, Father Gondrand replied: "I thank you very much, my Lord, for the good letter that your heart has recently written to me. Each of these fatherly favors strengthens my determination to remain ever worthy of you and of the rules of behaviour that you have so wisely given to your children."

[Marseilles], October 6, 1858.

My dear Father Gondrand, it is not my fault if I have not replied sooner to the letter that you sent to me quite a long time ago. I did not know to what address I should send my reply. I requested Father Aubert to ask Father Nicolas to inform us of your whereabouts. There was some delay in all this correspondence. In the meantime, your letter remained on my desk and hundreds of others got continually ahead of it. You are perhaps a bit anxious now, who knows, you may even be accusing me of indifference; I am, however, quite innocent and do not deserve any reproach.

I have since learned that you are in Normandy, I believe, and have thus proposed to write you. But you know how little master I am of my moments in the whirlwind in which I find myself, unceasingly impelled from one side to the other both by the demands of my diocese and by those of the Congregation. In short, here I am yours for some time which, I am sure, people will cut down, so accustomed have they become to giving me no rest.

Your letter, my dear son, certainly gave me pleasure in the sense that it was in some way an act of communion with me; yet, how much the account of your ills and miseries afflicted and saddened me! Thus, far from getting better as you had hoped [would result] from the kind of life you had requested to lead, you are yet more tired because of it and in some way exhausted; and yet I find you disposed to continue this work which is edging you to the wall! What can I tell you, except to urge you to take stock of your forces and not be determined to kill yourself! . . .

In view of the your deplorable state of health, I bless God that he has brought you to meet this charitable family⁶⁴ which has accepted the holy mission of caring for your shattered health. It will receive the reward promised to those who receive a prophet in the Lord's name, namely, the reward of a prophet himself.

May you derive, my dear son, from this noble and Christian hospitality all the good results that your good hosts expect therefrom. But

⁶⁴ On this point, Father Gondrand replied on October 14: "My noble hosts have been very flattered and say they are very thankful for the several delicate words your letter includes in their regard. . . . I ask you for a special blessing for this family of St-Denys which has had fine ancestors and deserves fortunate descendants."

I repeat: if, for example, your strength allows you to preach once, you are not to preach twice and then come down a dying man from the pulpit where you have utterly spent yourself.

I thought that when you left our communities I had given you an authorization equivalent to that which you request of me in your letter. With pleasure I forward you the testimonial that you would like. I shall draw it up in the sense that you have indicated to me, that I shall do without any problem at all. You know very well that I have never disavowed you, even in the cases where (at Lyon, by the Cardinal) your sermons were not applauded.

Goodbye, my dear son, I embrace you with all my heart and give you my fatherly blessing.

† C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles,
s.g.

1391. [To Father Tempier, in Switzerland].⁶⁵

Happy to learn that Father Tempier had a good trip to Geneva and to Sion. Illness of a scholastic and a seminarian. Preparations for the consecration of Bishop Jeancard.

L.J.C. et M.I.

Marseilles, October 15, 1858.
From the M[ajor] Seminary.

You know, dear Tempier, that I always worry when I know that you are away on a trip all alone. I was also quite impatiently waiting for the letter dated from Sion that I received from you yesterday. Your trip has been good, I thank God for that. You did not tell me what effect your ecclesiastical dress had on the people of Geneva as you crossed this alleged Rome of the Reformation.

⁶⁵ Orig.: Postulation Archives, L. M.-Tempier. Father Tempier was in Switzerland probably to examine the feasibility of making a foundation there as repeatedly requested by Father Bise.

I am not at all surprised at the fine welcome you received from the worthy Bishop of Sion. I charge you to present my respects and thanks to him, for I consider done to me the things that people do to you. Father Fabre, at whose desk I am writing this, asks me to tell you — and such is my view also — that you not be in a hurry to return. Since you are on the spot, carry out your business affairs, don't allow the bad conditions of the region to affect you too easily. The main thing is to see clear in the matters before you and to know on what one can count. Your presence is more needed where you are now than here where you are being replaced in everything.

Today Father Fabre paid out the enormous sum of 14,000 francs.

The M[arquis]e du Plessis would like to buy M. Ancey's chapel. Only the money is lacking, I believe.

We spoke of you this morning at the Carmelites where, as you know, I go in accordance with a foundation to say Mass on the feast day of their holy Mother to the detriment of our own holy Patron to whom I pay my dues tomorrow.⁶⁶

Everyone is well here, except the young Bonifaci who at Montolivet has several times vomited blood. This is another mourning that is in store for us, for what other can be the result of such repeated occurrences? I went to visit him as was fitting. His sheets had just been changed, but they were still wet with blood to such a degree that it caused pain just to see them.⁶⁷

Father Fabre has this morning administered [the last rites] to Rizaucourt who will soon succumb to his sufferings. He could still last for several weeks, however.⁶⁸

At the episcopal ordination we will have, besides the two assisting prelates, the Archbishops of Aix, Avignon and Tours.⁶⁹ I thought it fitting to invite the Archbishop of Avignon, this pleases him very much.

⁶⁶ St. Teresa and St. Cannat.

⁶⁷ This Oblate died on November 17th.

⁶⁸ F. A. E. Rizaucourt, a deacon, died on November 14th.

⁶⁹ At this ordination on October 28th were present the two assisting Bishops Jordany of Fréjus and Ginoulhiac of Grenoble, and the Archbishops of Aix, Avignon and Tours, namely, Their Lordships Chalandon, Debelay, and Guibert.

Today I am urgently writing to the Bishop of Digne, but I have no hope that he will be able to come on account of the imminent feast of All Saints; besides, there is no railway on this route. Nevertheless, I thought I should make this act of courtesy towards this prelate. We shall be exactly fifty people at table. You can see that, when necessary, I can say: the plague on avarice.

So, enough for now. I did not resist the pleasure of chatting a little with you, no matter what business matters are crowding me. Goodbye until we meet again. In the meantime, I greet you with affection and bless you with all my heart. Father Fabre greets you.

† C.J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles, s.g.

1392. [To Father Caille, at Autun].⁷⁰

Concern for Father Soullier's illness.

L.J.C. et M.I.

Marseilles, October 27, 1858.

My dear Father Caille, I am writing to you from the major seminary on the first piece of paper I can lay my hands on in order to ask you for information about our dear patient. How come that after informing us of his serious illness you have left it at that? You can well imagine that from that time I haven't been at ease and each day I expected to receive a letter from you keeping me informed about the condition of this dear man. It is even by chance that I learned of his illness. People were content with writing to Father Vincens, as though I am able to remain a foreigner to events of this kind, I who am so fondly attached to all of you. Since I received this terrible news I have not ceased asking God to keep this dearly loved son for us and to grant him relief. I violently support the fact that I am so far removed from him and that I cannot look after him myself or at least regularly visit him and console him by my presence. Please, Father Caille, do not

⁷⁰ Orig.: Rome, Postulation Archives, L. M.-Caille. Father Caille had in July joined Father Soullier in the new community at Autun. Cf. L. Vandenberghe-Soullier, July 4, 1858.

delay any further to let me know what the situation is: I impatiently await more news from you. I take advantage from this sad occasion to assure you again of my affection.

† C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles, s.g.

1393. [To Archbishop Guibert of Tours].⁷¹

Invitation to come each year for a rest at St-Louis. Bishop Jeancard. Archbishop's skill in managing to obtain Government subsidies.

Marseilles, November 25, 1858.

My dear Archbishop, it will not be said that a letter from me will arrive in your postal package at Tours wherein I have not also added a few lines for yourself.⁷² Here we are back at our painful situation, an immense distance one from the other. One thing consoles me a little, however: you were able to see for yourself that the solitude of St-Louis could be a good place for you to stay, a place to which you could safely come and take some rest after the ceaseless work of your holy ministry. The canons grant you three months, I stipulate half as much in order not to suffer a refusal. This is something that I take for granted: you cannot refuse me such a thing in my old age. After my death you are free to go and look elsewhere for a just and proper relaxation from your ordinary tasks. You won't be committing yourself for a long time: how long can one still live when one is almost 80 years of age? I must not, however, be thankful to God's kindness, for he is keeping me in constant good health. I keep on going at my [usual pace]⁷³ and if this keeps on, I do hope to be able to greet you in Tours this winter; but it will be to have you ratify your promise to come and spend your summer vacation with me at St-Louis as long as God gives me life here below.

⁷¹ Orig.: Rome, Postulation Archives, L. M.-Guibert.

⁷² Bishop Jeancard or the Secretary of the Bishopric had no doubt written to Tours in the Founder's name to thank Archbishop Guibert for his presence in Marseilles on the occasion of the episcopal ordination of October 28.

⁷³ In starting the second page, the Founder forgot to complete the sentence he had started on the first.

The Bishop of Ceramis is getting accustomed to his new state. I persist in thinking that I did the proper thing in raising so worthy a man to this dignity and in keeping him close to me. He has a good spirit of adaptation and, taking everything into consideration, he is in his right place; and if God continues to give me good inspiration and to help me, neither he nor the Church will lose anything thereby.

I am pleased — and not at all surprised — to see that your matters are following the course which your skill has given them. You will soon be able to rest on your laurels. You and only you could have succeeded in such a complicated business. I will certainly need some of your talent when the matter of obtaining a few thousand francs for my auxiliary will arise; you will surely come to my assistance when I shall have to tackle this delicate matter. Daylight is gone and I can no longer see to pursue this conversation with you. I embrace you with all my heart.

† C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

1394. [To Father Soullier, superior at Autun].⁷⁴

Invites him to write more often, to inform him about his health and the apostolic work of the Fathers in Autun.

L.J.C. et M.I.

Marseilles, December 7, 1858.

If I were give the time to lament, my dear son, I would not have waited until today to draw your attention to the fact that a century has passed since you have last written to me. I would overlook your forgetfulness if it did not occur after a grave inconvenience, after an illness which we considered for some time to be dangerous. It is possible that you have given the Reverend Father Provincial news about yourself; since, however, I have not bequeathed to anyone the affection I bear you, I admit that my heart would have been grateful if you had thought to console it.

⁷⁴ Orig.: Rome, Postulation Archives, L. M.-Soullier.

I would also have liked to learn some details about your new position and the ministry of our men in the new area they are evangelizing.

I shall not undertake to give you any news here: I have time only to remember myself to you and embrace you. It goes without saying that I bless you from the bottom of my heart.

† C.J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

1395. [To Father Bellon, at Bordeaux].⁷⁵

Wishes for Christmas and the New Year.

L.J.C. et M.I.

Marseilles, December 23, 1858.

If I don't . . . (I was interrupted for two hours). I most likely wanted to tell you, my dear Father Bellon, that I am ashamed for not yet having answered your last letters. (Another interruption).

Surely this time, dear Father Bellon, I shall finish my conversation with you. Our dear Father Audruger, who was to leave before Christmas, was kept back on business here in Marseilles. I have already given him two letters for you, and yours remained on the shelf. As this Father came in to receive my blessing before setting out on his way, I asked him to wait a moment so I can wish you a good Christmas feast and a good New Year. That is all I can manage at the moment. An incredible thing: at the very moment I am writing these lines, two people have come in and I have made them sit down so that I have the time to give you my deep affection and to express my regret that I am so pursued by some bad spirit who wants to prevent me from enjoying a few seconds of conversation with a cherished son who, for that matter, does not need me to repeat things in order to be convinced that he has all my affection.

† C.J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

⁷⁵ Orig.: Rome, Postulation Archives, L. M.-Bellon.

1396. [To Father Médevielle, at N.-D. de l'Osier].¹

Coming oblation. Greatness and demands of the religious life. Invites him not to be concerned about his future.

L.J.C. et M.I.

Marseilles, J[anuar]y 3, 1859.

My dear Father, the best way I can answer the question you put to me in the letter that I have just received from you is to tell you that you have just been approved to make your profession of the 2nd of the next month. Don't worry about what you can and cannot do. It suffices for you to walk in the name of obedience. You will preach when you have to preach, hear confessions when you have to hear confessions on a mission or elsewhere. Rest assured that you will never be asked anything that is beyond your strength, and it will happen more than once that — without being obliged thereto, however - your tastes and particular propensity will be consulted. I would only like you to have a better idea of the great privilege and priceless advantages of the religious life. You ought to esteem your vocation to this holy state as the greatest grace that God's goodness could grant you; and, on the eve, so to speak, of attaining this happiness, I would like to see you taken up with thanking God, who did not give this great grace to many others, instead of wrongly worrying about what may perhaps never happen. Go ahead, then, my dear Father Médevielle, without looking back. Remember the words of our Lord Jesus Christ; they will encourage you to persevere in the way to which you have been called: *nemo mittens manum suam ad aratrum et respiciens retro, aptus est regno Dei*.²

Goodbye, my dear Father Médevielle. I recommend myself to your good prayers and I bless you.

† C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles,
sup. gen.

¹ Orig.: Rome, Postulation Archives, L. M.-Médevielle.

² Luke 9:62.

P.S. Please pass on the part of the letter attached hereto to Father Vandenberghe.

1397. [To the Oblates in Marseilles].³

Narrative of trip to Bourges via Vienne, Lyon and Saint-Étienne.

Bourges,⁴ February 1, 1859.

Thanks to your prayers, my dear friends, my journey to date has been most successful. Once in the coach from Marseilles to Vienne, we slept like the blessed. At Vienne, we took the road to Givors; we were there in less than one hour. Soon afterwards we took the train which brought us in less than an hour and a quarter to Saint-Étienne.

Imagine my astonishment when I came out of the train car and was accosted by a priest I did not know who asked me whether I was the Bishop of Marseilles. To my affirmative reply, he told me that a carriage was waiting to take me to the place where I wanted to go. I then understood that this priest must be a Jesuit Father to whom Father Poncet had communicated the fact of my passing through and recommended that appropriate courtesies be manifested. I was speaking to the superior of the college, but without my suspecting it, so young did he seem to be. After a moment's reflection, I told this Father that I had intended to go and say Mass in a certain church that had been mentioned to me, but, in response to his courtesy, I would go and celebrate Mass at the college. The Father then invited me to do this all the more readily because, as he said, this church — referred to as of the Sun — was as far away from the railway station as the college was. And so we crossed the city rapidly and under the bright sun that I brought with me from Marseilles, though it had paled a bit for having had to shine through clouds which had brought us rain from as far back as the other side of Vienne. I said Mass in the college's inner chapel. In the meantime, the young young people were getting ready to

³ Orig.: Rome, Postulation Archives, L. M.-Oblats.

⁴ Bishop de Mazenod had for some time already promised the Archbishop of Bourges to visit him at his residence. On the occasion of his trip to Paris to take part in the Senate sessions, he fulfilled this promise. He left Marseilles on January 30, accompanied by his servant, Philippe. Cf. REY II, 711.

celebrate my arrival with some music during my breakfast. I came down to the yard to say some good words to them and to grant them a holiday. I then visited their collection of natural history items: it is already richly furnished. After more than two and one half hours of rest, I again found the carriage at the door to take me back to the station. This time I was accompanied by the Father Minister: Father Paillon, the superior, had had to take his leave of me for he had to go to some place where he was expected. This college is a house magnificent in appearance. It was built by the Brothers who spent some five hundred thousand francs on it and did not succeed in their objectives. The Jesuits came on the scene, fortunately for them, but it goes without saying that they did not give them what it had originally cost. The college succeeded beyond all expectation under the rectorship of Father de Damas and enrolled as many as 400 students. But the stupidity of the young Anselme and his companions, who had the foolish idea of throwing stones at the Emperor's bust and smashing it to pieces, — and, I would add, to the even greater folly of the Fathers who allowed this spree to go unpunished — the college was closed. Thereafter, the Emperor deigned to have it reopened, but the college has not recovered from this blow: its enrolment today is reduced to one hundred and fifty. A second misfortune was a typhus epidemic from which six students died in the house before there was time to dismiss the youngsters.

We left St-Étienne at 1.53 o'clock, and we arrived at Bourges only at about ten o'clock. Though I was a little late; through some misunderstanding I was expected even later yet. Thus it happened that I did not find the Cardinal's carriage at the station:⁵ it arrived only when I was already crossing the city in an omnibus.

How distressed I was when I arrived at the archbishopric and found the poor Cardinal confined since one month to bed with a dangerous gout. He had concealed this from me, for I surely would not have been indiscreet enough to come and see him in this condition. He had nevertheless made all the customary arrangements and today the Prefect will dine at the archbishopric in my honour and tomorrow the Chapter will do so. Already by this time the Chapter has visited me

⁵ Cardinal J. Dupont, whom the Founder got to know well at Avignon, was a Senator; he died on May 26, 1859.

and I am hastening to write you before new distractions prevent me from giving you my news. The cold is quite bearable, and I even see the sun piercing through the clouds a bit.

So goodbye for now. Though I am far away, I bless you and embrace you with all my heart.

† C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

P.S. Would one of you please give the news about my trip to my sister?

1398. [To Archbishop Guibert of Tours].⁶

Visit to Bourges. Ceremonie of the blessing of the candles, etc.

Bourges, February 2, 1859.

Here I am at Bourges, dear friend. It would only be a hop from here to Tours if people had had the good idea of building a railway from Vierzon to Tours. So I will again have to postpone the pleasure of greeting you and of passing a few hours with you. Tomorrow I shall leave for Paris, for I would like to have two days available to me before the great gathering for the opening of the session. A long long time ago I had promised to come and see the Cardinal in his residence. Every year he requested this of me in a most pressing and amiable way. Finally, this year, I gave in to his insistence. I communicated my arrival to him, the Cardinal answered with a sort of joy, but taking care not to conceal from me the condition he was in. I arrived on the day and hour as announced. What was not my astonishment to find the poor Cardinal abed, nailed down since one month with a very dangerous gout which had occasioned lots of anxiety because of the difficulty they had to clear it away in part from his chest. This did not prevent the good Prelate to see to everything that he felt would please me. He had invited the Prefect to dine with me. He is on very good terms with him

⁶ Orig.: Rome, Postulation Archives, L. M.-Guibert.

and I felt myself in duty bound to thank the Prefect for the courtesy he had had to offer to the Cardinal to give me hospitality. They had me visit the magnificent minor seminary which the Cardinal has built with his own money; and so it is called the seminary of St. Celestine. I haven't seen any other that is finer or better kept. I also visited the convent of the Ladies of the Sacred Heart. It too is magnificent; they may try to be modest, but I estimate that this structure must have cost them six hundred thousand francs. Next I admired the truly beautiful, superb cathedral. The Cardinal wants me to take the ceremony of the blessing of the candles today and that I assist pontifically at the high Mass; this is a prerogative proper to the local Ordinary but, so he claims, as I am Archbishop of Bourges during my stay here, this should be so. This tells you how kind this poor Cardinal is to me. He suffered terribly this last night. The doctor, however, says that there is no longer any danger.

You perceive how put out I am at this adverse situation. Nevertheless, it seems that he is pleased by my visit, notwithstanding the pitiful state in which he finds himself.

I didn't want to pass by so near to you without sending you this brief friendly greeting. I embrace you, looking forward to the day when I shall be able to see you more directly.

† C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

Bishop Jeancard arrived in Marseilles on the day before I left this city. His concern for his eyesight is unfounded. He is in good health. Today he will pay his respects to Prince Napoleon who is spending four hours at Marseilles.

1399. [To the Oblates in Marseilles].⁷

Visits and invitations at Paris. Danger of war.

Paris, February 4, 1859.

My dear friends, I arrived here in good health yesterday evening at

⁷ Orig.: Rome, Postulation Archives, L. M.-Oblats.

six o'clock. At the Bon Lafontaine hotel I expected to find at least one letter from you as well as the newspapers which would have informed me about what has been happening since my departure. This letter has not as yet arrived today: so I shall patiently wait for it. I gave you a good example by writing to you while I was still at Bourges. I am back at this activity today during the intervals between the visits that I make upon arrival. I have seen Mr. Troplong⁸ who received me in the manner that I expected. I have also seen Mr. and Mrs. Hautpoul,⁹ did my little business at the Senate secretariate, left a calling card at Baron de Lacrosse,¹⁰ and saw the Cardinal¹¹ at his residence before dinner. Invitations are coming in. The Cardinal has retained me for dinner on Sunday; the Keeper of the Great Seal has sent me a formal card for Monday the 14th. All that is not worth a little rest in my living room which is lit up with the most beautiful sun of Provence that I brought along with me from Marseilles, for this last month the skies here were overcast. I am going to resume my errands, beginning with Mr. de Suleau.¹² I shall go to see the Minister only tomorrow — as I told Mr. Troplong, I shall do so with my punches ready.¹³

Everywhere I have been since leaving Marseilles people are afraid that there will be war.¹⁴ Nothing is more unpopular than this, except with the revolutionaries who are so well represented by certain newspapers in the capital. The view is, however, that the Emperor will not make such a blunder. That is how they refer to the idea of waging the unjust war to which the revolutionaries are egging us on. No one, however, dares to guarantee that it will not happen. Monday's speech will tell us what is what. That of the Queen of England has been rather reassuring. We shall see.

Two visits have interrupted me: these importunate people have taken a portion of the time that I wanted to give you. So I leave things here for today by embracing you with all my heart.

† C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

⁸ The President of the Senate.

⁹ The Marquis A.-H. Hautpoul was the keeper of the Senate's great seal.

¹⁰ Baron B. T. J. de Lacrosse was secretary of the Senate.

¹¹ Cardinal Morlot. Bishop de Mazenod had to discuss with him the plan of opening an Oblate house in Paris.

¹² Viscount L. A. A. de Suleau, a Senator, was a former Prefect of the Bouches-du-Rhône and the Founder's friend.

¹³ The Founder was dissatisfied with the Minister of Worship for the latter was slow in granting subsidies for the new cathedral and for repairing the bishopric.

¹⁴ The rumours of war concerned Piedmont, to whom the Emperor was allied, and Austria which occupied a portion of northern Italy.

Tomorrow I will get some metal pens which, I think, will make my handwriting more legible. Please give the enclosed letter of Philippe to Joseph who is to give it to Philippe's wife.

1400. [To Father Casimir Aubert, at Marseilles].¹⁵

Complains about Father Bermond, Visitor in Oregon, who returned to France without permission.

[Paris], February 22, 1959.

. . . It is an inexcusable extravagance, one apt to inflict immense harm on the good that the Congregation could hope to do in Oregon, at least in the region that we have been exploring recently. I am quite indignant at it. To leave one's post in such interesting circumstances without awaiting the orders of the Superior from whom an enormous distance separated him; to make his departure depend on the reception of a letter which could have been more or less delayed before reaching him; to take flight, as it were, after having undertaken so important a matter as the one in question, is, in my view, monstrous. Less than this is required to be expelled from the Congregation whose interests he has betrayed as well as those concerning the conversion of souls. The scamp did well in passing through Paris without trying to see me. We have counted too much that he would change. He is going from bad to worse. Let him go back to the mountains of the Upper Alps. What have we to do with rebellious men who upset everything, who allow themselves everything, who would sow discord even in Paradise. He would not be worthy that you read to him the letter which we had sent him and in which we gave him the power to do all the good discernible in the situation that he himself spoke highly of. This is indeed terrible!

¹⁵ YENVEUX III, 134.

1401. [To Archbishop Guibert of Tours].¹⁶

Reflection on senators and on the senate's work. Details on the Founder's next trip to Tours and N.-D. de Cléry.

Paris, February 15, 1859.

Here we are, dear friend, launched in great affairs. But I still must go to Tours to greet you. This is a decision taken, as it were, before God and I cannot fail to do so. I see, however, that if I would carry this through, I have to make arrangements immediately. Soon I will no longer be sufficiently free to disappear from my post: the latter is too conspicuous in the Senate and [my absence] would be taken amiss, all the more so because my eminent colleagues beside whom my poor person is located never miss a sitting — they are so established in their places that they are settled down in them as though they were at home and are the only ones in the whole Senate who, instead of listening or being bored like everyone else, are each of them peacefully doing their correspondence. Frankly, that is beyond me and I find this careless conduct a rare and strange impropriety. Without prejudice to the respect due to them, I find this affectation of work arch-ridiculous, to express myself in a manner that befits their dignity.¹⁷ Good Cardinal Dupont and, this I must say, Cardinal Gousset resist the seduction of this example and, like myself, do not amuse themselves with writing.

Today they presented the project of a Senate consultation which has its share of importance: it is a matter of granting to Prince Napoleon a little subsidy¹⁸ of five hundred thousand francs a year — this, added to the 300,000 which have already been allotted to him, and I don't know what else, would give him a small million of income. In addition, he will be awarded the miserable sum of eight hundred thousand francs for the expenses of his marriage, wedding gifts, etc. Further, the Princess, his wife, is assured of a dowery of 200,000 francs of income if her husband, the Prince, should die.

¹⁶ Orig.: Rome, Postulation Archives, L. M.-Guibert.

¹⁷ Here the Founder seems to be speaking of the Cardinals, who were all senators. Besides Cardinals Dupont and Gousset whom the Founder mentions, there were Cardinals De Bonald, Mathieu, Donnet and Morlot.

¹⁸ Ms.: Apannage. The person here is Napoleon III's cousin, Prince Jerome Napoleon (1822-1891), who in January 1859 married Princess Clothilda, the daughter of King Victor Emmanuel II of Sardinia. The Founder is obviously jesting when he speaks of "a little subsidy of 500,000 francs, etc."

Well, my dear man, my trip to Tours will certainly deprive me of the benefit of voting for this Senate consultation, for I have grounds to believe that I shall be absent on the day that the commission will make its report. Since it is quite certain that the vote will be unanimous, I need not trouble myself for not being there.

Here then are my travel plans. I will leave on Friday at 9 o'clock in the morning and, with God's help, arrive at Tours at 2.20 o'clock.

I shall stay with you the remainder of that day, all of Saturday and Sunday. If I didn't have to stop at Cléry, I would also give myself Monday. Since, however, it would not at all be proper to dispense myself from visiting that community, to which I can only grant one day for I am engaged here on Wednesday evening, I shall leave Tours on Monday to spend the night at Cléry and leave again from there early on Wednesday morning.

The above is all that I can allow myself — all the more so because I will again have to absent myself in the first days of March in response to the insistence of the community at Nancy to whom I cannot refuse a brief visit. I would be really reprehensible if I were to please myself to the point where I would be lacking in the duties of my position. I must even admit that allowing myself these two absences, I have to do violence to my deep inner sense of things — I don't want to say my conscience exactly — which already condemns me, all the more because I will be leaving my post long before the end of the session, while the other Senators hold out to the very end, as their duty requires them to do.

Goodbye, dear friend. I leave you to pray and to go to bed. It is almost midnight. I embrace you with all my heart, happy with the thought that in a few days I will hold you close to me.

† C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

1402. To Father de L'Hermite, [at N.-D. de Cléry].¹⁹

Coming visit to Cléry, if all the Fathers are not out preaching missions.

L.J.C. et M.I.

Paris, February 15, 1859.

You are no doubt thinking, my dear son, that I am only few hours away from you and so I am not receiving any letters from Cléry. I shall inform you then that I am in Paris and, what is more, quite disposed to pay you a little visit, if nothing thwarts the carrying out of this project. The absence of the greater number of your community would hinder me from satisfying this desire of my heart. If you should be on mission, as it is reasonable to assume, and there would be properly speaking no community at Cléry at this time, it is clear that I would give up going there simply to greet the caretaker of the shrine or of the parish. This is what I beg you to tell me, my dear Father de L'Hermite. And since the duties I have to fulfill at the Senate oblige me to count my moments, I ask you to write me rather quickly, so that I receive your letter by Thursday. It would be safer to address it to me at Tours where I shall be on Friday. If I were to come to Cléry, on the supposition that the community is there at this time, I would leave Tours on Monday the 21st, spend Tuesday the 22nd at Cléry and leave on Wednesday morning at the latest so that I am back in Paris on the 23rd, for I am expected there in the afternoon of that day.

In case I should be going to Cléry, arrange in advance how I could get there if I leave Tours on Monday morning and how I could leave from there so that I am in Paris at four or four-thirty o'clock in the afternoon.

I take advantage of this occasion to tell you I went to the direction of *L'Univers* today to ask these gentlemen to be so kind and publish under their own name the account that you must have sent them on the life of our Brother Camper. These gentlemen told me that they had not heard that M. Aubineau had received this article, but that they were quite disposed to publish it under the name of one of their people as soon as you will forward it to them. I could not tell them more about this as I did not know what the Bishop of Ceramis has written to me.

¹⁹ Orig.: Rome, Postulation Archives, L. M.-L'Hermite.

It is close to midnight and I enjoy the thought that you are peacefully asleep while I am writing this. Sleep, sleep well, my child. From here I kiss your brow with a gentle father's kiss that does not wake you. Goodbye. I also include my blessing for all of you.

† C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles,
s.g.

1403. [To Father Tempier, at Marseilles].²⁰

Father Tempier writes too little. Father Bermond's disobedience. The bishopric.

[Paris], February 16, 1859.

Bravo, dear Tempier, you have not been able to take up your pen and answer some of my letters addressed to the Gentlemen Vicars General of the Bishop of Marseilles. If I had not seen your signature on the envelope of one of the letters that others at Marseilles have written to me, I would have been concerned. This time I intend to provoke you into writing me a few lines by addressing myself directly to you. Besides, you are not the only guilty one: Father Fabre hasn't been any kinder than you and, if Father Aubert had not written me twice, I would be without news of the family at Marseilles.

I am taking it for granted that you will give me an account of what impression the unexpected arrival of Father Bermond made on you. It is impossible to pull off a more deliberate stunt. When I closely scrutinize this escapade and the rather odd letter he brought me from Father d'Herbomez, I have enough to be cross with. In the circumstances described to us both by this letter and by what Father Bermond has added thereto, I find Father Bermond's fault unpardonable. There is more than enough here to expel him from the Congregation. What would become of us if each one took it upon himself to withdraw from obedience, to leave the post assigned to him, to make fun of the mission he had been given by interpreting in his way and according to his own caprice the very clear orders of superiors? This is shocking, incomprehensible! I am really quite put out.

²⁰ YENVEUX III, 135; V, 80.

I don't need to recommend that you keep a bit of a lookout as to how things are going at the bishopric, to see if things are in order there, if everyone is doing his duty, if people are satisfied with Alphonse's conduct.²¹ It is important that he attend some instruction on Sundays. When I am on the spot, I supply that. I would like him to go to confession every month. Give him informally a little bit of good advice.

1404. [To Father Mouchette, at Montolivet].²²

Union of the Oblates gathered at Montolivet for the feast of February 17th. Coming visits to Tours, N.-D. de Cléry and Nancy.

L.J.C. et M.I.

Paris, February 17, 1859.

My dear Father Mouchette, I am writing you these few lines precisely at the time when your entire precious community is prostrated at the feet of our divine Saviour to adore him and thank him and fervently to renew the consecration that binds it to him for life and even beyond. Is there anything better that I can do in my exile than to fly in spirit into your midst in thus blend the sentiments of my heart with yours, and, at the sight of this admirable concert of love and devotedness, thank God for having given me such an edifying family, a family wherein each member, moved by grace, responds so well to his sublime vocation. I seem to see in each one of them an apostle who is called by a great favour of God's mercy, like those whom our Lord chose when he lived his life here on earth, to proclaim in every place the good news of salvation: in Europe, to wake up sinners who have forgotten or never known what it means that they are Christian; in far off regions, to proclaim and make known Jesus Christ and to open the door of Heaven to so many unbelieving people who, without our men, would never have known or loved God. It is with thoughts like these, my dear son, that I cheat, so to speak, the exile forced upon me, and this sweet illusion brings me solace in my solitude: for, on this beautiful day, I

²¹ A domestic servant.

²² Orig.: Rome, Postulation Archives, L. M.-Mouchette.

offered up the holy Sacrifice all alone with my loyal servant in the small, shabby chapel of my hotel. By a happy chance, it happens that today I said the office of the Blessed Sacrament and thus the prayers of my Mass coincided with your beautiful feast before the Blessed Sacrament exposed.

You will perhaps be surprised that I did not avail myself of the consolation of going to celebrate this feast with our family at Nancy, but they preferred that I visit them a few days later so that they could be all gathered together: several of them are still on missions today. I shall perhaps see our men at Cléry sooner. Tomorrow I leave for Tours and I have written them that, if their community is not dispersed, I would be spending two days with them when I am on the return from only a three-days' stay with our good Archbishop.

I expressly charge you, my dear son, to greet with affection all our Fathers and Brothers at Montolivet. I bless them and also you, my good son, with all my heart.

† C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles,
s.g.

1405. [To Father Fabre, at the Marseilles Major Seminary].²³

Union with the Oblates on February 17th.

[Tours], February 20, 1859.

My loving son, I need to spend two days here in Tours to be sufficiently at ease to tell you, in response to my overflowing heart, how touched I was by the moving expressions of your feelings for an aged Father whose special love for you you appreciate so well. Your letter arrived at the right moment to console me in my isolation on the memorable day of the 17th. I was all alone in my little chapel to celebrate such a great feast, one that calls forth the gratitude of all the members of our little family spread out over the whole earth. But I was at the same time as you were in the presence of the same Person to

²³ YENVEUX VIII, 100.

whom you were paying homage at that very hour, and you comprehend that space did not at all separate us in that moment. In this centre, that is, our divine Saviour, we all found ourselves reunited. I did not see you, but I did hear you and felt your presence, and I rejoiced with you as though I were in Marseilles, which was more than 200 leagues distant from where I was.

1406. [To Archbishop Guibert of Tours].²⁴

Return trip with no stopover at N.-D. de Cléry.

[Paris], February 24, 1859.

My return journey was very successful. All along the route the instructions you gave when taking leave of me were observed. At first I regretted not having brought along a book; but one arrives so quickly that, after having said my breviary and read some chapters of the New Testament, I did not at all find the time heavy as we passed through these different places. We enjoyed ourselves by watching, as though it were travelling with us, the beautiful church of N.-D. de Cléry, which we could clearly see a short distance away, so clear the horizon was. Next came the tower of the cathedral of Orleans which dominates the entire plain. In a word, the journey was over like a flash.

I don't know whether the contrast of going and returning has given me this impression. Paris is a magic lantern where one incessantly sees bishops passing who apparently have nothing to do at home. But I went to see you, dear friend, and with affection I greet you.

²⁴ REY II, 714.

1407. [To Father Tempier, at Montolivet].²⁵

Diocesan business dealt with in Paris.

[Paris], February 24, 1859.

I wrote to the Mayor about the Saint-Cassien affair.²⁶ It seems that he wants to deal ever more unworthily in our regard. I have not as yet seen the Minister of the Interior, so I do not as yet know where things are at in their licensing procedures. I see by the paper that they are carrying out the work of beautifying the city according to their point of view.

I have just come back from the Minister. As usual, I was pleased with him. He took note of my request for a suitable grant towards my lodging be made before I die. He also took note of what I told him about Bishop Jeancard. I informed him that in a few years' time, when everyone will be agreed that I am an old man, I will ask for him as my coadjutor. That did not alarm him. We brought back the issue of the archbishopric.²⁷ He has not forgotten it, though he did not conceal the difficulties. He wanted me to speak about it again to the Emperor. For me it is a major difficulty to ask for an audience. I would prefer that the Minister acted all alone. He is sensitive to what is proper in this case.

P.S. [The Mayor's reply concerning the church of Saint-Cassien.] This is an arranged affair. To the Mayor's letter, I am adding the corrected chapter of Mr. Timon-David's work.

²⁵ REY II, 714.

²⁶ The city's purchase of the terrain on which the new church of Saint-Cassien had been built.

²⁷ Bishop de Mazenod and the authorities of Marseilles had for a long time already wanted the diocese to be raised to the rank of an archdiocese. The Founder was unable to obtain this favour which he wanted for the honor of his episcopal city: the latter was then the second most important city in the whole of France.

1408. [To Father Guinet, at Nancy].²⁸

He is coming to Nancy.

L.J.C. et M.I.

Paris, February 28, 1859.

My dear Father Guinet, I have so arranged things that I am setting out the day after tomorrow, Wednesday, March 2nd, and, with God's help, reach you on the same day. I am taking the train at nine o'clock which, I believe, arrives at around five o'clock. I am planning to spend the rest of the day with you, the whole of Thursday and Saturday, and leave again on Saturday so that I will be in Paris on Sunday. That is not a long time, to be sure, but as I do not intend to remain in Paris — far from it — during the entire time of the Senate session's duration, I am at least bound not to be absent so much that I would miss several sittings; that would be noticed and create a bad effect. I will use well the few days that I shall have the happiness to spend with you. I am coming to Nancy only for your sake and so I will be entirely at your disposal. In advance I rejoice because of this. Even though I am still far away, I embrace you with all my heart and give you my fatherly blessing.

† C.J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles,
s.g.

1409. [To Father Fabre, at the Marseilles Major Seminary].²⁹

Sends money. Danger of war. Coming trip to Nancy. Project of a foundation in Paris.

L.J.C. et M.I.

Paris, March 1, 1859.

With some real apprehension I am sending you 38 Denain.³⁰ People claim that this cannot be done otherwise. You know that I shall

²⁸ Orig.: Rome, Postulation Archives, L. M.-Guinet.

²⁹ Orig.: Rome, Postulation Archives, L. M.-Fabre.

³⁰ Denain: shares of the Société Denain et Anzien. Cf. letters nos. 1411 and 1412.

not be at peace until you have acknowledged receipt of this remittance which is worth no less than 38,000 francs. I would have preferred leaving this sum with the Bonnards until my departure, but as everybody else does otherwise, I am doing the same, though with fear. It needs but a dishonest postman or anyone else to remove such a package which one can easily discern as containing valuable items.

I am also quite concerned about my other investments. War is all but sure. Here people are as though blind on this point. I am afraid that this blindness comes from God, and then it would be to the loss of many people, beginning with those on the top. Indeed, people must have lost their minds to be willing to exchange the prosperity that is ours for the risks that are the inevitable consequences of a war, and above all of a war that is as unjust as the one we are about to undertake.³¹ How come we cannot see that we are going to assist all the revolutionaries who [are awaiting]³² only our help to bring about a terrible explosion which will necessarily backfire on us who foolishly think we can contain it. Yesterday I became angry with a president and a general who, while deploring war as in immense misfortune, surrendered the papal Government without ado, claiming that the priesthood and the Empire could not be reconciled. I inveighed against them and reasoned better than they, but one cannot imagine how filled they are with false ideas, prejudices and lies.

I have come back from Tours where I left our Archbishop in good health. Tomorrow I leave for Nancy where I shall be spending two days with our Fathers and Brothers. No matter how burdensome such a rushed journey may be, I could not refuse this consolation to a community that is so good and interesting. Coming and going requires spending a whole day in a railway car. An absence of four or five days is already much when one has so little time to stay in Paris for the Senate session. I am taking advantage of these carnival days for I have noticed that we do not meet often during that time. I think I will only be missing one sitting, which was also the case when I made the trip to Tours. My place in the Senate is so conspicuous that I cannot be absent without it being noticed.

³¹ The French Government was getting ready to assist Piedmont chase the Austrians out of the Romagna, the Papal States where the presence of Austrian soldiers was preventing a general uprising against the Government of Rome.

³² When changing pages, the Founder wrote a sentence whose meaning is incomprehensible: "Tous les révolutionnaires qui sont préparés que notre secours pour faire. . ."

The petitioners tire me excessively. Some have just taken me away from you and I cannot again take up your letter for the time has come to go to the Archbishop with whom I will no doubt settle something for our establishment in Paris. His Council is quite hostile to religious corporations and wanted none of it. I have reason to believe that the superior of the Sisters of Hope brought the Prelate back to a more reasonable attitude; at least, she came to tell me on her own that she was glad to do something which would please me. It seems to me that he will have all the pleasure and the profit. I have certainly told him that our Oblates would be men of zeal available to him to catechize the people of the suburbs who live like savages when it comes to religion. If I find the Cardinal at home, I shall see what the result will be. I missed him yesterday. Before sealing my letter, I will tell you what the situation is.

I could not go and see the Archbishop. I shall therefore do so only upon my return from Nancy. I have been detained here where I am staying until this moment.

Would you believe that I am still hesitant to send by mail a package that contains such a large sum? I don't know whether I will actually decide to do so. I am going to go Bonnard where I am tempted to deposit it until I can take it with me when I return to Marseilles. I am letting my letter leave, however. In any case, you will receive the package one day later because I will no longer be in time to get it to the mail today. If I regain my courage when I am at Bonnard, they will put it in the mail tomorrow when I shall have left for Nancy.

Goodbye, dear son. I bless and embrace you with all my heart.

† C.J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles,
s.g.

1410. [To Father Soullier, at Autun].³³

Details on the Founder's visit to Nancy. Congratulations for the success of the Oblates' apostolate at Autun.

Nancy, March 3, 1859.

My dear Father Soullier, I cannot resist the desire of writing you these few lines from the place where several times I had the pleasure of spending a few days with you. What an interesting house this novitiate at Nancy always is! It is not large in numbers, that is true, but there is a good situation here. I have only seen the men's faces and attitudes, but I am well pleased with them. The day was spent for a large part in the church and also a little in the refectory. Here Father Guinet, breaking the Rule a little — which is a great scandal if done on the occasion of my visit — had us eat what was not exactly a dinner based on abstinence. The only outsiders present was our friend, Canon Manse and another friend whom we acquired today, the Abbé Bureau, an honorary canon and a man who is highly esteemed at Nancy. He was delighted with our community with which he is collaborating by giving — at least by his wish and approval — a priest who used to be one of his former students. The latter came to see me and will be entering the novitiate in less than two weeks' time. This priest's name is Michaux³⁴ and is from the diocese of Metz. He says there are other vocations for us in his diocese. He has an excellent disposition and is already experienced in works of zeal, a fact which makes him valuable to the city and the clergy of Metz. Working among soldiers and those in prison is part of what he has been doing.

People are waiting for me. This prevents me from congratulating you in some detail for all the good news you have given me in your last letter. I am happy to know the blessings God is granting to all your works. That is marvellous and we can never thank God's kindness enough for all the good he is working everywhere through the ministry of our men. I am convinced that people would be stunned and amazed if we could make these facts known to the general public. Let us in the meantime be content with the fact that God appreciates it and puts it to our account, for it is he who has inspired all this within us.

³³ Orig.: Rome, Postulation Archives, L. M.-Soullier.

³⁴ MS.: Michault. He was the abbé Donat Michaux.

Goodbye, goodbye. I have only one more day here and I will scarcely be able to say a few words individually to those who are glad to speak to me.

I beg you to greet with affection all our Fathers at Autun. I bless them and yourself with all my heart.

† C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles,
s.g.

1411. [To Father Fabre, at the Marseilles Major Seminary].³⁵

Different items of money investments.

L.J.C. et M.I.

Paris, March 7, 1859.

I am writing to you, my dear Father Fabre, so that there may be less delay in the matter I am going to communicate to you. You can tell Tempier that I have understood all his arguments which are very clear and perfectly founded. But I don't think I ought to deprive myself of revenue that I need to meet all my expenses by buying the lands of Biaucourt which would be dead capital for me.

I prefer to take advantage of the good will that M. Bonnard shows me by agreeing to take at par value — without demanding the quarter in money — the Bonnards that I shall give him in exchange for the Denains.

He assesses these Denains as being such good business that, as I happen to know, he has taken out a large number of them for his own account and that of his family.

On the other hand, I am convinced that the Bonnards, independently of the stock exchange speculations to which I pay no attention, will become immeasurably more valuable because of the transaction which has just been made. Being freed from the enormous expense of the forest which was costing more than 200,000 francs in expenditures,

³⁵ Orig.: Rome, Postulation Archives, L. M.-Fabre.

the redrafting of a large number of other Bonnards which lessen the burden on the capital by the reduction of interest, etc., all this induces me to see the Bonnards as still being a good investment.

Nevertheless, to reduce the amount of my capital at this bank and to enter into your way of seeing things, I agree to exchange a certain number of my share for Denains, since Mr. Bonnard gives me the occasion of doing this at a good rate. So confer with Tempier in order to decide whether I should limit myself to exchanging 200, which would reduce my capital to 500. Then you could also exchange 100 of those that belong to the Congregation. Or, should you think that I should take 300 on my capital of 700 so that only 400 remains to me, that would still be a reasonable amount.

In one way or the other, make your consignment as you have did with regard to those that you sent by the Bank of Marseilles addressed directly to the Bank of Paris. I have apprised Eli who will advise me immediately of their arrival. We shall then have a rather considerable sum of money on Denain. These values are not quoted at the stock market but they are considered to be a great item.

This is what I wanted quickly to tell you. I don't need to tell you that Mr. Bonnard is agreeing to this arrangement only out of deference for myself. Therefore, you must not speak about this to anyone.

Decide this issue without the least delay. No one says that Mr. Bonnard can for a long time dispose of the Denains he is keeping reserved for me.

I have been writing since morning and am really very tired; but it is always a matter of urgent business. I embrace you with all my heart.

† C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

I have just seen Mr. Vaudoyer.³⁶ On Thursday he is leaving for Marseilles where he will arrive on Friday. Notify Tempier so that he comes to a good understanding with him. The Minister was most friendly. He granted me 100,000 francs for the construction of the south wing. We can count on that.

³⁶ The architect for the cathedral of Marseilles and the work at the bishopric. The Minister had granted the money needed to redo one wing of the bishop's residence. Also cf. letter no. 1420.

P.S. I don't have any more space to speak to Carbonnel about the business of my stable. Joseph wrote an incomprehensible letter to his brother. We more or less understood that he has sold the horse for the price of a thousand francs. That would be exactly half of what it had cost. We must be careless not to be misled when we match the horse that remains. There is no hurry. I would be satisfied with but one horse when I return, if between now and then a good deal has not been found. Why can't I do without horses! I am weary of so many miscalculations. In my letter to Carbonnel, I treat of the matter concerning the house of the Minimes. I told him to communicate this to you in Council. Insist that things be done as they ought to be.

1412. [To Father Fabre, at the Marseilles Major Seminary].³⁷

Visitors. Ceremony of the Ashes at St-Sulpice. Nancy. Oblate foundation in Paris. Business.

L.J.C. et M.I.

Paris, March 9, 1859.

Dear friend, your correspondence is somewhat languid, it seems to me. Perhaps my need to live in your company makes me say this; I would not want to be unjust.

Here, things are odd! I don't have a free moment. If I want some time to write, I have to bar my door and even then people force their way in. Yesterday I received the visit of Mr. de Cormenin, Mr. L. Veuillot, Mr. and Mrs. Mirés, the Princess San Cataldo, Mme. de Flotte, and I don't know who else. I received them in the glow of my lovely sun which obliges me to let my fire go out and warms my living room to such a degree that I have had to open the window. I was taken up until evening and this has prevented me from writing to you. The forenoon had to be devoted to religious exercises. On Ash Wednesday it would have been too sad to be content with my simple Mass in my little oratory. So I had a fine fresh tonsure made and as early as nine o'clock went to St-Sulpice. Here, though I was not wearing the choir

³⁷ Orig.: Rome, Postulation Archives, L.M.-Fabre.

dress, I was worthily placed to the right of the seminary superior and thus assisted at the absolution celebrated in the Parisian rite *pro remissione peccatorum* before the high Mass; boldly I presented myself at the altar to receive the ashes, thus joining the many seminarians who as a body received Communion during the high Mass that followed. You cannot imagine the satisfaction I felt to be again after so many years in this choir that I had so often crisscrossed in my ecclesiastical youth. I also united myself to what was taking place in Marseilles: habitually my spirit and heart are with you.

The day before, I experienced another great joy when I carried the Blessed Sacrament and when I made with a youthful voice the act of reparation that is customarily made on that day in the church of St-Séverin.

Tomorrow I will give benediction in the chapel of the Ladies of the Retreat where the devotion of the 40 Hours is being held. And the Saturday after, on the day that is privileged as the feast of our great patron St. Joseph, I shall pontifically officiate in the Brothers of Passy's church. You see that these are the welcome distractions from our tasks in the Senate and from the other concerns that are mine here in Paris.

I made my journey to Nancy after the one I had made to Tours. I was extremely pleased with our little novitiate. They are not many in number but they are fervent. The Fathers too are excellent. They had me meet a priest from Metz who will be taking the habit in two weeks and who hopes others too will come. I chatted with Brother André. I must admit that this young man reasons very well, that his conduct is exemplary. Those who have examined him, Father Guinet, Father Vincens were satisfied with his answers. I wouldn't have the courage to refuse him when he is presented.

I decided to take advantage of the kind offer of Mr. Bonnard and reduce my capital with his bank. So I request you to take out, as I indicated to you in my last letter, 300 of my shares: this will reduce my capital to 400, a sufficient sum lower than which it is not prudent to go. You must send this as soon as possible because, in a delay, it could happen that Bonnard gets rid of all the Denains he has in hand. As a special favour he will take back at par my 300 shares without requiring that I pay him one fourth in money. If we had ready cash we would have made great profit by buying Bonnards on the spot and presenting them at part to the bank.

I cannot agree with Tempier who was proposing that I invest in some lots of land which are for sale. What would we do with this unproductive land? Tempier says they would serve us to make our foundation there. And with what money would we build?³⁸

The Cardinal has given his consent that our Fathers come and establish themselves in his diocese. Only with difficulty did he come to this decision: the gentlemen of his Council were not at all of the same view.

The problem, therefore, no longer lies in that; I see rather as to how we are going to lodge those whom we shall be choosing to take care of the Sisters who are the key reason for our coming here.³⁹ Speak of this to Father Vincens; I cannot write to him now. I have learned that this apartment of 800 francs consists only of a living room and one bedroom. I am planning to go and inspect it, to see if these rooms could not be redivided so that three cells would result. If that is possible, what do we do? I stated that after Easter Father Vincens would come to install our men. If possible, he will make an arrangement with the Sisters who are impatiently waiting to see him. I have also informed the Cardinal who is quite satisfied with this plan.

You can tell Father Rey that I received his letter this morning. I shall inquire how to proceed in carrying out his errand. I would like to flatter myself that I will be successful but a lot of courtesy holy water has to be sprinkled around here.

Goodbye, my dear son, I embrace you with all my heart, I especially greet the seminarians, I bless them as well as their directors and superior.

† C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles,
s.g.

P.S. I have just received the 30 shares that were sent me from Marseilles. They were immediately exchanged for thirty shares in the Société Denain et Anzien, but I had to add 300 francs because the manager is allowed to take back the shares of the bank only on this condition. I don't understand very well why but that is the way it is. It seems that he is not authorized to take back the shares at par value

³⁸ The foundation in Paris.

³⁹ The Sisters of the Holy Family of Bordeaux.

unless one would pay one fourth in cash. Since we are not paying this one fourth in cash, he perhaps has to take them back at the price of the stock market. In my case, he is charging me the least possible amount. I did not hesitate to pay out this minimum for I purchased much above par when I made my investment.

I think we will have to give back to the bank of Marseilles the receipt they had to make out to you when you made your remittance.

I don't have time to fill out this empty space. I have to go out so that I am on time in the church where I shall listen to the sermon and give benediction on the occasion of the 40 Hours. I greet you with affection.

Father Gubbins, who has just gone to England, told me that Father Mouchette did not receive the letter I wrote to him on the 17th as a way of being united to you on that lovely day. Please tell this Father, as you greet him on my behalf, that at Nancy I met his sister and brother-in-law, both of whom are in good health. I greet the entire *casa*.⁴⁰

1413. [To Father Tempier, at Montolivet].⁴¹

The Founder is in good health; let Father Tempier look after his. Investment business.

L.J.C. et M.I.

Paris, March 10, 1859.

My dear Tempier, it is very kind of you to assure me that you treated with loving kindness the guest who came to install himself at your place without letting you know beforehand. I distrust him enough, however, to fear that he won't let himself be shown the door when you would like to wish him farewell. So don't omit anything that might bring him to his senses. This periodic return that he is pleased to make causes me great dissatisfaction. Chase him out as soon as possible by a prolonged stay in bed and sweating, suitable drink and ordinary fare adapted to the circumstance. Leave athletes like me sustain

⁴⁰ Italian word for "house".

⁴¹ Orig.: Rome, Postulation Archives, L. M.-Tempier.

the blows of the Lenten prescriptions which I support without the least detriment to my robust health. To no avail do you remind me of the crutches formed by the digits of my great age; I nevertheless crisscross the whole of Paris at a quick pace over several hours during these fine days we are enjoying here since my arrival. I went to Tours, I have just come back from Nancy, just as though I had gone for a walk at Montolivet. Everyone expresses amazement at my good mood, my healthy appearance; nobody wants to believe in my age. I am not telling you these things out of self-flattery but to completely reassure you as to my condition.

Good Carbonnel leaves me completely ignorant about diocesan affairs. I have to kept posted at least weekly about the things that were discussed in Council, which is to be held once a week precisely, if my prescriptions are obeyed. I am learning things sooner through the newspapers. I am put out by this because it is my duty to remain involved with everything that could concern the administration of my diocese.

I have asked for a list of all the matters I should treat at our Ministry: I am still waiting for that list. May it get here before I make my arrangements to leave! Should we not urge that St-Mauront be established as a parish?

My nephew finally wrote to me and told me that he consulted you about the Duprat affair. But he asks me what amount I can pay in now. I have just written him in today's mail and told him that I haven't a cent at my disposal at the moment. My first revenue will come in during the first days of April. I will then be able to remit some ten thousand francs to him, and thereby remain indebted to the house of Pastré for the advance payments it had to make to me for the transaction I mentioned to you: the latter brought me some ten thousands francs of profit, but in paper only. My entire wealth, therefore, is now invested. In all this, I am thinking only of my heirs, for all these investments keep me in continual embarrassment: I never seem to have a cent. Before I die, I would like to recover for the Congregation the enormous loss that the good Dupuy brought upon us: with regret I admit that I listened to him without sufficient reflection.

In order to enter into your viewpoint, I have decided to take advantage of Mr. Bonnard's good disposition in my regard and have written to Father Fabre to send me 300 shares which he will accept at par. It's enough to have 400 shares left over. The only concern I have is

that I am exchanging one kind of paper for another. Even though I am assured that it is an advantageous investment, I find myself in the same inconvenient situation of having too large a sum invested in one operation. I already have 38; the 300 Bonnard will exchange will give me another 30. That means I shall have 68 thousand francs in Denain et Anzien, which is a lot of money.

If I were sure that Mr. Bonnard is not blind but a man who was near-perfect, I would find the standing of his bank improved by all that was done. He has freed himself from a large amount of unproductive and expensive capital, considerably decreased the number of shares which return to him and which he attaches to the principal, that is to say, annuls them. Thus he has less interests to sustain, and if sales succeed as they seem to be succeeding, he will have the means of paying out a certain dividend. That is what should happen, so it seems to me. But when I see this man reduced to such a piteous state of health, I must admit that I am somewhat anxious — no matter how skilled his grandson Mr. Naud might be — about this enormous business shuffle that is presently launched. I am thus afraid of a liquidation and, in that event, how can I hope to obtain the par of my shares?

You suggest that I buy land, but how can I embark on this new venture? First of all, land sales are quite expensive. I am ready to believe that it will increase its value later but we would have to wait and that perhaps for a number of years and during that waiting there would be no income at all, etc. Independently of the difficulties of such a transaction, the expenses I have do not allow me to reduce my income very much.

Frankly, my dear Tempier, I am annoyed and tired of all these worries. I would wish not to have to deal with them any more. I really don't know how we are going to extricate ourselves from the Duprat affair. I let myself be dragged into it for the good of the Congregation to which in a few years time we could assure a considerable income, but have thereby committed the rest of my days to embarrassment and privation. Still, in 1858, I was able to give out 14,000 francs as alms from my own pocket. God knows that not all the world riches would induce me to add an extra plate to my dinner, would add nothing to the service of my person. Goodbye, dear friend.

† C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

1414. [To Father Casimir Aubert, at Marseilles].⁴²

Make a survey of the activities of the Oblates in France accomplished in the space of one year.

[Paris], March 14, 1859.

There is one thing I would like to do for the Congregation's honour: an exact survey of all that was done in all the dioceses of France during the course of one year. We would make a limited tableau of the same which would mention only the name of the place, the population figure, the number of Communions compared with the small number of those who fulfilled their Easter duties before the mission. Such a tableau would have a great impact, would be edifying to read. We would be speaking only of France, and content ourselves with a general indication of what we are doing elsewhere. Apply yourself to this task.

1415. [To Father Tempier, at Montolivet].⁴³

Admission of a scholastic to the subdiaconate. Reproaches Father Tempier who is too sensitive.

[Paris], March 15, 1859.

. . . If it were a matter of admitting to profession the Brother of whom you speak to me, frankly, knowing him as I do, I would not admit him. The feminine character he has taken on and the grave defects he has not corrected give me much concern about the future of this man, all the more so because he is older than we thought. Nevertheless, in the situation that is his, it would be too severe to verify whether he manifests sufficient guarantee to keep him in the Congregation. We should have concerned ourselves earlier with this question and without forgetting the violent scenes wherein he was driven so far

⁴² YENVEUX II, 261.

⁴³ YENVEUX VII, 213; VIII, 201.

as to snatch the cross from his chest and hand it back to the person who had given it to him: then we could have required a more reassuring amendment.

God grant that this be not a fault of which we will have to repeat. But here we are with a young man who is on the point of being called up,⁴⁴ and still a member of our religious family. What is to be done? Rely on God's mercy who will, so we hope, bless our decision which is more charitable than it is prudent. So present him for the subdiaconate, but bring home to him the new obligation he is contracting to become a holy religious devoted to all the duties of his vocation, to be resolved to divest himself from all that he well knows has been up to now an obstacle to being fit for the combat we must wage against the enemy of the salvation of souls.

I come to the last point in your letter. I would have much wished that you had refrained from the reflection you were so wrong as to add thereto. You cannot doubt how painful I find your recriminations on this matter and how much they offend me. I am aware that one of your defects is your excessive sensitivity and the depth of your grudges. You do not give up your prejudices once you have contracted them. I have often made this observation and you prove it once more today.

These prejudices, however unjust they may be, are so rooted in your soul that, far from repelling and rejecting them as I have several times begged you to do, you nourish them, you maintain them within you in such a way that you cannot restrain yourself and are not afraid to manifest them on every occasion. Well, that is very bad, and I would be obliged to blame you even though I myself would not have personal grounds to complain about such injustices in my own regard.

In taking me to task the way you do, you say that you wanted to get things off your chest. You have not succeeded therein. I find that, to the contrary, you have soiled your good heart in so crudely expressing such vile sentiments. It seems to me that I give in often enough to your opinion that you can allow me, without taking offense, the freedom to take at times another viewpoint, especially in matters which essentially pertain to my competence.

⁴⁴ "Être saisi" could mean: being called up for military service, if he is not in sacred Orders.

I drop the subject here because, were I to reply to the silly fourth page of your letter — which you imagined to be of an overwhelming logic at my expense — I would prove you mistaken from beginning to end, independently of the supreme injustice of the approach you direct to me to get things off your chest, as you say.

1416. [To Father Fabre, at the Marseilles Major Seminary].⁴⁵

Dinner at the Tuileries.

[Paris], March 17, 1859.

Yesterday I was invited to dinner at the Tuileries. I went there with all the reluctance I experience every time I have to move in the higher circles of society. It is an enormous burden for me. I knew that there would be from 60 to 80 seated at table, but I had no idea that the place of honor was reserved for me. I was placed to the left of the Empress. The Emperor was on her right. The Empress was extremely affable to me during the entire meal and I was sufficiently close to the Emperor to be able to exchange a few words with him from time to time. When the Empress noticed that I had sent back the soup without having touched it, she realized that I did not want to eat meat. She had the goodness to excuse herself, saying that she had not thought of this: as it was a Thursday, she did not think that I would abstain from meat. I begged her not to be put out on my account, that there would surely be some serving of fish which would be enough for me. She was not content with this answer but immediately called the head waiter and instructed him to bring me a Lenten meal. This was promptly done. Nor was I presented only with a single meatless dish, but they brought for me alone some poached eggs and fish, besides the salmon which had been prepared for everyone. When the Emperor heard the instructions that the Empress gave, he asked me whether I ate meatless dishes throughout the whole of Lent, I replied to him with a smile that such was an old habit of mine which my good health allows me to maintain.

You can imagine the impact on this large gathering caused by the place I occupied and the attention lavished on me. This pleased me

⁴⁵ YENVEUX VI, 52.

because it reflected on the sacred dress I was wearing. I too wanted to be friendly to the Empress and here is how. She is suffering from a very bad cold. I made known to her my regret that I did not have available certain tablets which the Sisters of Charity give me in such a circumstance. So, I would like you to go and see Sisters Bonfils and ask her in my name for to give you two of these nice little octagonal boxes wrapped in gift paper which contain these tablets that in their kindness they offer me from time to time. You will immediately send them to me by mail, and I will forward them to the Empress with a brief letter. I have reason to believe she will be pleased with this bit of attention; it is the least I can do as a response to her utter kindness of yesterday. I could not but contrast this truly touching conduct of a Sovereign Lady with the indifference of a great Prelate who during last Lent made so little effort to provide for me in a similar circumstance.

1417. [To Father Guinet, at Nancy].⁴⁶

Greetings via an Irish novice.

L.C. et M.I.

Paris, March 20, 1859.

Dear Father Guinet, I can only write you a few words because I have to go right away to the church if I want to make my oraison before going for dinner to the Archbishopric to which I am invited.

I am taking advantage of Brother O'Connel who is passing through on his way to your novitiate. I will at least wish you a good day and thank you for your last short letter.

I cannot tell you why this young O'Connel is being sent to your novitiate. Father Boisramé, whose letter came in before the arrival of this young man, did not tell me for he claimed you had given me all the pertinent information. I had difficulty making myself understood and he had as much difficulty understanding what he was being told; you have to speak slowly and then one does not always succeed. This morning he received Communion at my Mass, which he served. I observed that he wanted to be of service, he has a meek and unassuming manner. When you have seen and assessed him, write me a little about him.

⁴⁶ Orig.: Rome, Postulation Archives, L. M.-Guinet.

I can no longer see to write more. I embrace you and now I am going to concern myself with you, myself and many others in the Lord's presence. Goodbye.

1418. [To Father Courtès, at Aix].⁴⁷

Care for the portrait of St. Theresa. Enlarge the garden of Aix.

L.J.C. et M.I.

Paris, March 21, 1859.

I cannot possibly answer the hundred or so letters that have piled up on my desk except in the manner of the former Bishop of Grenoble.

I don't know how I can get a fine painting for your church. People would certainly point out that it is neither a cathedral nor a parish church. Besides, where would you put it?

You have a great responsibility in the use that is made of the painting of St. Theresa. Beware lest people will accuse you of spoiling it by having it restored. Always take good care of by protecting it as much as possible from dust, the sun and especially from the fire of your unsteady candle sticks.

Don't let Father Chardin be away from Aix too long. When one has such a considerable clientele in a city, they are quite put out when their confessor is taken from them.

You cannot make too many sacrifices to obtain if only the garden border which is in front of your house. The more you extend yourself in that direction, the better. We need air, so let us get that before anything else. If you leave the present opportunity go by, you will regret it when it will be too late.

Goodbye, goodbye. I am now writing for more than six hours. I bless and embrace you with all my heart.

† C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles, s.g.

⁴⁷ Orig.: Rome, Postulation Archives, L. M.-Courtès.

1419. [To Father Tempier, at Montolivet].⁴⁸

Project of opening a house of Franciscans in Marseilles. Various visits received in Paris. No ministry during the novitiate. Diocesan affairs.

L.J.C. et M.I.

Paris, March 30, 1859.

My dear Tempier, I am taking a large sheet of paper for want of others, but without hope of filling it, so many are the things that I have to do here. I have just come down from the chapel, and already I am given notice of visits [I am to receive]. I cannot postpone them till later any more than that which yesterday I received from Reverend Father Fulgence, the Commissioner of the Holy Land, who would have come a good twenty times to talk to me about his hope to establish at Marseilles a house of his Order such as he has here and in other dioceses of France. In Marseilles he envisages a Commissariat for the Holy Land, but, with God's help, he would put religious of every language at my disposal. I did not reject this proposal because I ask for nothing better than having good religious, and those that he spoke to me about are such: they would come from the Ara Coeli or from San Francesco a Ripa⁴⁹ who, as you know, are the son of the great Patriarch, St. Francis of Assisi, who are most known for their regularity.

I agree with you that we sustained no loss by Baroffi's leaving,⁵⁰ for he did come out of his madness. I am greatly pleased with the charity we showed to poor Blois,⁵¹ I would have blamed myself if we had not helped him all I could. I had no difficulty in discovering that they had assessed him badly at N.-D. de l'Osier; in Heaven he will take into account what I did for him. Father Lancenay kept me informed about his condition and told me about his edifying death. Only I found it odd that this good Father managed to add to the ceremonial a rubric all his own. Before giving him the holy Viaticum, he addressed him as follows: Do you believe that you are going to receive the Body of Jesus Christ? The dear child gave a perfect answer. Still, I will never approve us adding anything to the rite determined by the Church.

⁴⁸ Orig.: Rome, Postulation Archives, L. M.-Tempier.

⁴⁹ Two Franciscan monasteries in Rome.

⁵⁰ F. M. G. Baroffi or Baroffo had entered the novitiate at N.-D. de l'Osier on May 3, 1858.

⁵¹ C. F. E. Blois, who entered novitiate on April 30, 1858.

Should I mention it to you? I have been disturbed so much that it is now 11:30 a.m. and I have to go out at noon. It is true that among those who came in was Mr. Vaudoyer with whom it was important that I chat; he brought me some good news, among other things that they are going to move back the street which had been opened opposite the 13 corners: this will add several metres to the size of my garden.

Now I shall quickly review the various items of your letter which I received this morning and which contained several other letters, but I did not find that from Bishop Taché: I would have been glad to have it so that I would know exactly when the Bishop of Satala will be arriving.⁵²

I share your view that sending the novice Bonifay all alone to give a retreat at La Pomme⁵³ is certainly odd. Not that in our Congregation such an excursion interrupts the novitiate. That is the case in certain Orders which do not even allow a novice to sleep a single night outside the novitiate. In Congregations like ours, it is admissible that novices may be employed during their novitiate in a given work of zeal commanded by obedience. In the present case, however, I saw a different kind of oddity: they assigned this novice to giving a retreat in the diocese without informing the Grand Vicars in my absence.

I am going to see Mr. Mosquera to thank him for his fine gift. Since his address accompanies the date of his letter, I therefore know where to find him. Father Fabre and Marc Cailhol have consulted me about the dais. I replied that I preferred to have it in red. Marc wrote me again to thank me for having given preference to this colour, though he was of a different view because of the rubric. But after he had visited the dais of St-Vincent de Paul, he had found it so faded and deteriorated that he was delighted I had opted for the red. It's the money that is my problem. How does one find 12,000 francs when we have had to beg so much to finish that which we have begun? Mr. Vaudoyer told me it was very important, indeed indispensable, that we cover N.-D. de la Garde. We must also complete the monument. We shall need a brain wave as to how we are to meet these two expenditures.

⁵² Bishop Grandin.

⁵³ Ms.: La Pome.

The day before yesterday I went to see the Minister about establishing St-Mauront; he took note of this, but the question is postponed until the month of January. It is too bad that we were not in a position to present at least one other. I have the impression that they would have granted it. They admit that we have been asking little of them.

I understand that we cannot possibly leave Les Olives in the piteous state to which the illness of the parish priest has reduced this parish. But where are the priests we can choose to serve it? How many parishes are there in other dioceses that are deprived of priests? We will be obliged to come to that while we wait for the seminary to supply us with something. If worst comes to worse, if we have to withdraw Antonin from there, we could ask the neighboring parish priests to supervise that parish. Couldn't we temporarily make use of a man like Father Sumien, a man we don't know what to do with?

As for the parish priest of Plan-de-Cuques, I hand him over to you for what he is worth. Could you not place him at St-Barthélemy, for we finally must give in to the insistence of Pinatel who wants to become a Dominican?

I did not keep the anniversary of your ordination, but I well remember your birth day and I shall do what my heart inspires me to do. With this I say goodbye for today. Galloping as I must, you will nevertheless unravel⁵⁴ in this scrawl the sentiments of my affection for you.

† C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

1420. [To Archbishop Guibert of Tours].⁵⁵

Archbishop Guibert writes too rarely. The Abbé Dabert. The Minister granted the money needed for the work on the bishopric and will increase the salary of Bishop Jeancard.

⁵⁴ Ms.: Défricherez.

⁵⁵ Orig.: Rome, Postulation Archives, L. M.-Guibert.

Paris, April 3, 1859.

My dear Archbishop, I have been wanting to write you for more than two weeks and tell you the things that daily concern me. Yes, I was telling myself every day, is it really possible that I am only a good walk away from the place where the person of all my affection lives and we give each other no more sign of life than if we were two hemispheres⁵⁶ apart? Why don't you write, why don't they write you more from Tours?⁵⁷ These reflections, my dear friend, will at least show you that, in the midst of the unimaginable and perpetual disturbances that I sustain, I do not cease to think of you and that my heart crosses space in order to draw near to you.

April 5th.

That is Paris! A person is unceasingly disturbed. I am given time only to write all in all the preceding line. People are not at all shy to force their way in. I just wanted to tell you how pleased I was to get your letter. I also want to tell you what excellent effect your letter to *l'Ami de la Religion* has produced. When I visited the Minister the time before this last visit, he did not as yet know of it. After I had told him about it, he asked to see it and was delighted with it.

I did not speak to him about Mr. Dabert⁵⁸ because I think it better to write him about this matter. I have reason to believe it by virtue of what I have experienced of the effect produced by a certain letter addressed to Fortoul concerning a priest whom I knew only through the reports Father Vincens gave me about him. This letter, which had remained in the file boxes, has been dug out and the present Minister used it to name the present Bishop of St-Claude. This will perhaps also happen in the case of your protégé who is supported by your letters and mine. I am going to return to Marseilles next week and as soon as Easter is over, I shall be writing to the Minister.

I have to give just praise to this Minister and to Mr. Hamile: they did not wait for your letter before accepting my request. They under-

⁵⁶ Ms.: émisphères.

⁵⁷ The Founder must have wrongly expressed himself for this sentence does not make any apparent sense.

⁵⁸ Abbé N.-J. Dabert was Bishop Guibert's Vicar General at Viviers; he was named Bishop of Périgueux on May 6, 1863.

stood that they could not let me live in a tent for the rest of my days and they have allocated a sufficient sum to build the wing which will serve as my residence.

I would really need your assistance to get, if not a salary, at least a pension or some annual support for the Bishop of Ceramis. They comprehend the propriety of this and they have not refused it, but they pretend to be embarrassed as to how they are to deal with it. We can leave this concern to them because, in fact, they do know how to deal with it. It's the amount the concens me: the Minister had mentioned 2000 francs. He had no doubt discussed the matter with Mr. Hamile who said more or less the same thing in the flood of words a person has to endure every time one has to see him. Yet, Mr. Hamile made the point that the Bishop of Ceramis keep his position as a canon and this, in his view, motivated the minimum kind of sum he was proposing. I would like them to raise it to at least 3000 francs, and above all I would like them to make a decision. It is in this that you could give me some assistance. It is useless to think of this year, unless something is given to the municipality of Marseilles. We are caught in the heat of a domestic war.

I am not informing the Minister that Ceramis has room and board with me without it costing him anything. I don't conceal from you that fact that Ceramis attaches great importance that he be granted something that is appropriate. So you will have to make known to the Minister and to Mr. Hamile that you are much interested in his case; to tell them in passing that he merits that something suitable be done for him, for he is a prelate according to my outlook both in regard to doctrine and to politics.

They won't let me proceed any further. So goodbye, dear friend, I embrace you with all my heart.

† C.J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

1421. [To Father Courtès, at Aix].⁵⁹

Sends a procuration. Approaching return to Marseilles.

L.J.C. et M.I.

Paris, April 9, 1859.

I won't delay a day, dear Courtès, in sending you the signed procuration. I don't know why you are making this acquisition in my name. It would have been better to choose a proxy name of someone younger than myself so as to delay the transfer charges which will threaten you so much sooner because of my age.

I certainly regret that Mr. Bret forces us to vacate the rooms which face the courtyard. If that is a condition *sine qua non*, we will have to put up with it. His father, too, was so demanding. But in that case, could we not have asked him for more space in the garden? We are certainly fortunate to obtain a border strip so that those who live in the house can take some air; we have to admit, however, that it is quite narrow and it would have been nice to have something a few metres wider — even the whole garden, if we were richer. Let us be content, however, with what we have been able to acquire.

With God's help, I leave here on Wednesday in order to arrive at Marseilles on Thursday. So I will not be here long enough anymore to receive letters from you.

Goodbye. I await the happiness of affectionately greeting you after Easter.

1422. [To Father Soullier, at Autun].⁶⁰

Imminent departure from Paris. Reproaches Father Soullier for not writing.

⁵⁹ Orig.: Rome, Postulation Archives. L. M.-Courtès.

⁶⁰ Orig.: Rome, Postulation Archives, L. M.-Soullier.

L.J.C. et M.I.

Paris, April 11, 1859.

My dear Father Soullier, you have so thoroughly forgotten me that it is a useless precaution to tell you that I am leaving Paris the day after tomorrow and that you must no longer send any letters to me here in the city. You haven't thought of writing to me during the two and one half months I have spent here, and so I can presume that this idea won't strike you at the moment of my departure either. In the absence of your letters, I did have the consolation of receiving news about you sometimes and I have been able to thank God for preserving your health and for the blessings he has deigned to shower on your ministry and on that of our Fathers in the diocese that you are evangelizing. Upon my imminent return to Marseilles, Father Vincens will no doubt inform me about your present situation in Autun: I have the impression that you must have taken possession of the parish adjacent to your establishment. So you see I remain an outsider to all that you are doing, but it is not because I lack interest therein.

I affectionately greet all our Fathers and bless them as well as yourself with all my heart.

† C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles, s.g.

1423. [To Archbishop Guibert of Tours].⁶¹

Imminent departure for Paris. Friendship. Invitation to come to Marseilles.

Paris, April 12, 1859.

My dear Archbishop, to me it really seems as though each of us were eagerly expecting each other, and yet I have to leave without having embraced you. I leave tomorrow at 8 o'clock and will be in Marseilles the day after at 4 o'clock. I am entrusting these few lines to the abbé Bonnaud as a greeting to you as I leave; he has assured me that you are well and he will tell you that I am surprisingly well. It is no effort at all for me to observe Lent, and I would consider myself blameworthy were I to grant myself these little considerations sug-

⁶¹ Orig.: Rome, Postulation Archives, L. M.-Guibert.

gested to me by my friends but for which I don't have the slightest need.

I won't write more. I have to go out for the second time and take care of remaining business or courtesies. We have a sitting at the Senate tomorrow, I insist on being present for the last time this session. Upon leaving the Senate, I shall have my dinner and then be quickly on my way to Marseilles. That will take some twenty hours, some of which will be spent in sleeping. Goodbye, goodbye. Will it be I who will go first to see you, or you who will come for some days of rest at St-Louis? You will not be sufficiently amiable to take a decision. I embrace you with all my heart.

† C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

1424. [To Father Vincens, Provincial of France-North].⁶²

Father Rouge is to be expelled from the Congregation. Foundation in Paris.

[Marseilles], May 12, 1859.

Dear Father Vincens, the Emperor's passing through here has deterred me from making known to you already yesterday the impression Father Rouge's letter made on us. This is a man who is forever in illusion, without heart, feeling, religion. Yes, without religion, I say this quite deliberately. That is what I think of a religious who perseveres in attitudes contrary to his vocation, whose hardened heart has no taste for virtue or piety, who acknowledges his fall and does not want to rise up from it, who, quite the contrary, eagerly longs for a life of dissipation and independence which he himself admits he has lost.

How can one explain this latest feature, namely, his flight to the Trappists where, on his own accord, he wants to go and await your reply, rather than prolong a few days more his stay in one of our most edifying communities? He does this because he is bored to death in our midst. No doubt, one can amuse oneself at the Trappists. Dear Father Vincens, I would like to admire your charity in the conclusion you draw from this foolish letter, but I cannot do so. My conclusion is the

⁶² YENVEUX VII, 60; VIII, 272.

very opposite and all our Fathers share my view. The test has been made. Since this unfortunate man has remained what he was after you had poured out on him the full measure of your kindness, there is no longer any hope that he will mend his ways.

The last effort you are proposing to make would be as useless as the rest. With cannot with compromising ourselves present such a man among a clergy who need edification. Since he refuses to use the means of sanctification that our holy Rules offer him so abundantly, let him be handed over to Satan, that is to say, let him carry out, if he dares to, the project he has been nourishing for so long in his evil heart and from which the Congregation has done everything to divert him. In view of the state in which he is persevering, that would be a very tiny loss.

. . . It will be difficult to put together this elite personnel that we need in Paris to accomplish our mission there. You will need to wrack your brains over that one. We need men of the Rule, who edify, are capable of directing religious communities and able to distinguish themselves in the pulpits of Paris. This last requisite does not, however, strike me as indispensable. What a task we are taking on! If there is anything that is inane and of no benefit for the salvation of souls, it is these occasional sermons of Paris. Were you to speak to me of instructions to be given in the suburbs, where there is such a great need for conversion, I would understand you.

1425. [To Archbishop Guibert of Tours].⁶³

Pastoral letter on the occasion of the war in Italy.

[Marseilles], May 13, 1859.

. . . I have been just as upset as you are at the situation into which we have been placed. The reluctance I have shown to accept the presumed views of the Minister according to his first letter, gave me time to receive his second one, which is more explicit, as well as the Pope's encyclical.⁶⁴ I have therefore decided to put together a little pastoral

⁶³ REY II, 724-725.

⁶⁴ Pius IX's encyclical of April 27 asked that prayers be offered for peace.

letter which will respond to the wishes expressed in all these documents.⁶⁵ While remaining moderate in my terms of expression, I had to state some principles of reflection which relate to this deplorable war. The Emperor had made oral and written declarations regarding the Pope's sovereignty. I therefore had no difficulty from that quarter, but that was not enough to put my heart at ease. Austria's ultimatum served my purpose by providing me with sufficient reasons to argue according to my principles of reflection on the legitimacy of this hateful war.

I would not have dared to hope that the Emperor could receive such a welcome in Marseilles as he did when he passed through here.⁶⁶ I was glad about that. . . . I presented the Bishop of Ceramis to him, telling him that this was the auxiliary bishop he had given to me. . . . He is taking along with him as chaplain of the High Command his own confessor who is known to me as such. There are twenty-six other chaplains assigned to the army. . . .

1426. [To Father Guinet, at Nancy].⁶⁷

Sorrow at the news of the death of Father Lagrue.

L.J.C. et M.I.

Cassis, during the pastoral visitation,
May 21, 1859.

My dear Father Guinet, I am not going to wait until I am soon back in Marseilles to reply to the painful letter that has just been handed me. Even though I had no hope at all that our angelic Father Lagrue would be kept with us,⁶⁸ it is always a heart-rending blow to receive the news of losing one of our men. I know that they are not to be pitied and that Father Lagrue, like the others before him, has taken possession of Heaven. It would, therefore, perhaps be more perfect to

⁶⁵ The Founder's pastoral letter is dated May 15.

⁶⁶ The Emperor passed through Marseilles on May 11th, when he was en route to Italy.

⁶⁷ Orig.: Rome, Postulation Archives, L. M.-Guinet.

⁶⁸ Father Lagrue died at Nancy on May 18th.

rejoice at his happiness than to grieve at his death. But, as I admit to my shame, I have not reached this degree of perfection and I know that, in the way that the good Lord has fashioned my heart, I shall never attain it. I submit myself to God's will to be sure, I even thank him for showering so many graces on our men and thus disposing them for a holy death; but, when I consider what the Lord is asking of our little family, I cannot refrain from complaining to him that he rewards too soon the cherished sons he has given me in order to do his work.

I passed on your letter to Father Aubert so that he take the measures needed to procure for our dear deceased member the help he has a right to. I have already acquitted this duty, at least in part, for I want to say Mass five times, even if it be to raise this holy Oblate to a higher level in Heaven.

Be content, my dear son, with these few lines. You know how busy a bishop is during a pastoral visitation and I am busier than quite a few others. I say a quick goodbye. With all my heart I bless you and all of our men.

† C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

P.S. I haven't a cent at the moment, even less than that for I am at least 10,000 francs in debt. I shall try to send you the 1000 francs you request during the course of the summer.

1427. [To Father Vincens, Provincial of France-North].⁶⁹

Pastoral visitations. Obediences. Father Bermond refuses being named superior of the Oblates in Oregon.

L.J.C. et M.I.

Marseilles, June 2, 1859.

Dear Father Vincens, have you grown weary in writing to me? If I don't have the good fortune of having you with us, give me at least a

⁶⁹ Orig.: Rome, Postulation Archives, L. M.-Vincens; YENVEUX III, 136.

little compensation for your forced absence by frequent letters. Don't pattern yourself on my answers. It is not my fault when they are a long time in coming sometimes. I am over my head in work and you know that no one spares me. Morning sessions are not enough, I have to begin again after dinner and often resume in the evening. Oh, how beautiful is St. Paul's statement: *Nos autem servos vestros per Jesum*.⁷⁰ If we meditate this statement a little, it prevents all murmuring. We will never be tempted to say: That is enough; and even less: That is too much, especially when the Master of Masters grants a person health and strength as I enjoy. So let us always go ahead without complaining, indeed, on the contrary, let us rejoice in the work he has entrusted to us for his glory and the good of the souls confided to us. But the more I am busy in one area, the more I would need help in another. This is why I feel your absence so keenly. You know what confidence I have in you and how I like to discuss matters with you. How can we understand each other at such a great distance?

I fully agree with your views about the personnel of our nascent community in Paris. But we must not hide from ourselves the difficulties which could arise. Replacing Father Magnan at Fréjus will be a major item, not in the sense that he will be greatly missed there, but because we will be dismantling Vico when we take out Father Balaïn from there.⁷¹ You will perhaps run into some difficulty from the Bishop of Orleans, who is never very accommodating, when you take Father de L'Hermite away from him. You will take this negotiation in hand.⁷² Some time later you will have to insist strongly with this small community on the need of being exemplary in observing all the points of the Rule, first of all, and on the most proper behaviour in regard to those outside.

⁷⁰ 2 Corinthians 4:5.

⁷¹ The Bishop of Fréjus and the seminary directors were asking for a change of superior. The Fathers were proposing Father Cumin. Cf. General Council, May 28. Father Magnan was replaced by Father Balaïn. Cf. L. Aubert-Bishop of Fréjus, September 25, 1859.

⁷² Father de L'Hermite stayed at Cléry.

The mission referred to as that of Oregon concerns me.⁷³ Father Bermond's reports were fine and good. Not only did he come here without permission but also with the conviction that we did not want him to leave his post. Here, he began by declaring that the missionaries who are in these places are incapable of directing the work that has been started. The natural conclusion was to send him back to carry out the functions awarded to him.⁷⁴ He has answered me in writing saying that he absolutely refused. The motive of his refusal is rooted in a poorly dissimulated pride. My first reaction was to insist on his obedience, and, if he did not, he would be expelled from the Congregation, for one would have to give up trying to govern it if people can disobey with impunity in so grave an issue. But now I received a letter from Vancouver which shows me that Father Bermond, who had so much "honored" the others, left a great deal to be desired when he passed through there. Father d'Herbomez feels that he did not conduct himself well with the Bishops; that he was prodigal with the Congregation's goods by giving away as a loss all the horse and cows that we owned. He had even given orders that our house of St. Joseph be sold, which, to tell the truth, is not useful for our missions but is very good capital nevertheless. So all this throws me into great perplexity. Your advice would be very useful to me on this as on so many other things. . . .

1428. [To Father Tempier, at Montolivet].⁷⁵

Visitation and ceremonies at Lyon, Mâcon, Châlons and Autun.

L.J.C. et M.I.

Châlons, July 25, 1859.

(This letter can be read at the Bishopric before it is forwarded to Montolivet.)

Yesterday we spent the whole blessed day at Macon where we had

⁷³ We no longer have the second page of this letter Yenveux has copied the beginning of page 3: "Les rapports. . . ."

⁷⁴ Father Bermond proposed that the Oblates request the establishment of an apostolic vicariate entrusted to the Oblates in British Columbia (General Council, May 13); he refused, however, to be sent there either as superior of the Oblates or as the future vicar. Cf. General Council, May 28.

⁷⁵ Orig.: Rome, Postulation Archives, L. M.-Tempier.

arrived on Saturday evening. The Prefect had sent his son and his carriage to the station for me. At the Prefecture, I met the Bishop of Autun⁷⁶ and received the most friendly and warm welcome of Mr. and Mme. Ponsard who extended a generous hospitality to me. Only I abstained from meat at the dinner which had been prepared for me; they have a privilege in the diocese of Autun that I myself do not use and no one imagined that I did not eat meat out of respect for abstinence; only at the end of the dinner did they serve fish and this course never came to be offered to the people at table. This was a slight mortification that I offered to God and it must have done more good to my body than to my soul. I had had a very light breakfast with the Cardinal⁷⁷ when I left Lyon: we had come to this latter place from the countryside where, as you know, we had passed the night.

Our Sunday at Macon was used to the full. They had me say the parish Mass at St-Vincent while the Bishop of Autun and the Bishop of Belley⁷⁸ were administering Confirmation in the boarding schools. Immediately afterwards, the Bishops gathered at St-Pierre to assist at a Mass sung by the members of the town's choral society. The Bishop of Autun gave me the honour of giving the blessings, etc. We went to breakfast at the Prefecture and returned for vespers to St-Pierre where the Bishop of Belley preached. After the sermon we went in procession to the site where they are building the new church whose foundations, already quite advanced, were blessed by the Bishop of Autun. The whole population of Macon was gathered together in this vast enclosure and the approaches leading to it. The locale was nicely decorated: one would have said we were in Marseilles. The Bishop of Autun preached in the open air with a very sonorous voice on the meaning of the ceremony and attributed to everyone the due tribute of praise and gratitude for having helped in such a fine work. His speech was quite appropriate and so was that of the Bishop of Belley who had preached simply and in a useful manner. The authorities, in formal attire, assisted at all the ceremonies.

The administration of St-Pierre on this occasion gave a grand dinner at the city hall which is located in front of the new church. I had

⁷⁶ Bishop François de Marguerie had invited Bishop de Mazenod to come and venerate the relics of St. Lazarus and to visit the Oblate community. The Founder left on July 21 and returned to Marseilles for the feast of August 15. On the return trip, he stopped at Avignon and at N.-D. de Lumières.

⁷⁷ Cardinal L. J. Maurice de Bonald.

⁷⁸ Bishop Pierre Henri Gérault de Langalerie.

to endure the boredom of this interminable meal. When it was over, we went back to the Prefecture where we donned our travelling clothes and left Macon to come here: we arrived after a trip of two hours, and went to bed.

The honours paid me are always to the detriment of my stomach but certainly contribute to my greater perfection. Today I am told is a fast-day as I expect tomorrow will also be. The Bishop of Autun is consecrating the altar of the Carmelites and that makes it possible for me to write to you. At ten o'clock — if he has finished — I shall offer the holy Sacrifice on this new altar; but there will also take place the profession of the sister of the Bishop's secretary who will be making a speech for the occasion and that will eliminate my poor breakfast.⁷⁹ It will be noon at least before we'll be getting out from there. Tomorrow the same thing is in store for me. The Bishop wants me to officiate pontifically for I don't know what feast.

He will let me have Thursday to go to the health resort. I am planning to spend Friday also with our Fathers. Then I shall come back the same way: the Bishop of Dijon⁸⁰ is not at home, for he is also at the health resort. So I will probably be at l'Osier by Saturday at the latest.

My health is good and so is that of my companion. The intervals of rain we have had have refreshed the air so that we are not suffering from the heat any more: I hope you will enjoy the same relief at Marseilles. The heat we endured was general; it would be nice if it were the same for the fresh coolness.

I received a letter from the Bishop of Ceramis. I thank him for his precision and affectionately greet him as well as you and all our men.

Father Fabre joins me in embracing you.

† C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

⁷⁹ This sentence can hardly read otherwise.

⁸⁰ Bishop François Victor Rivet.

1429. [To Father Tempier, at Montolivet].⁸¹

Warm reception from the novices at N.-D. de l'Osier.

L.J.C. et M.I.

N.-D. de l'Osier, August 1, 1859.

My dear Tempier, on the point of entering my 78th year, I am going to talk with you for a few moments. I have sent the novices out on a walk and I have just ended by interview with the superior; before that, I had visited the convent and found the superior of the sisters in an alarming state of health. Now I am all alone for a bit. As I write you, I am installed in the corridor: the room I am in is a furnace, one can't breathe therein.

You cannot imagine what a nice reception I was given here. I arrived here the day before yesterday at two o'clock. I had planned to say Mass at Rives after getting off the train; Father Beuf, however, who together with the superior came to take me, suggested that I stop at a village where the church is right by the road and there, at fifteen before twelve, I was able to celebrate Mass to the great satisfaction of this good parish priest of Renage, who is a friend of our house and who was beside himself with joy to make my acquaintance. His only regret was our refusing to accept the meal that he wanted us to take at his place. We were expected at l'Osier, so we were reduced to thanking him and we set out again in the lovely little light carriage that you are familiar with.

Our meeting with this large community was most friendly, but the most pleasant surprise was in store for me yesterday evening. At the back of the garden a marvellous arch of triumph adorned with banners and flowers had been erected. I don't know how they were able to paint my portrait on a transparency placed under the image of the Blessed Virgin. The whole walkway was lit up and so was the house, in the centre of which was another transparency representing my senator's coat of arms. After having taken my place on a platform where I was surrounded by our Fathers, a large choir standing under the arch sang a moving cantata with a refrain, the whole inspired by the finest filial sentiments. In the interval between one song and another, a novice

⁸¹ Orig.: Rome, Postulation Archives, L. M.-Tempier.

came forward at the head of his brothers and addressed me in compliments of a similar inspiration. I duly responded to such a warm initiative. On this occasion the public was allowed into the garden, to take part in these festivities; the Sisters and their little boarding school were placed behind the platform where I was and they united themselves in spirit to all the sentiments that were expressed in this family reunion. This morning they also as a corps assisted at the Mass that I celebrated in our church, at the centre of our community, and united their prayers to mine with all the fervor of their zeal and the enthusiasm of their filial affection.

That, my dear Tempier, is a description of what happened on this memorable day, beginning with the day's vespers.

I am confident that you, for your part, will not have forgotten to return my faithful remembrance of April 1st.

Here I found 18 novices, three of whom are priests. They all have the proper attitude and the superior is very pleased at this.

People are prowling around me and I understand that I am to finish. So I embrace you with all my heart and explicitly charge you to greet in my name all the Fathers and Brothers of Montolivet.

† C.J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

1430. [To Archbishop Guibert of Tours].⁸²

The Emperor has proposed Bishop de Mazenod to the Holy See for the cardinalate.

[Marseilles], August 15, 1859.

As is only right, you, dear Archbishop, should be the first to learn of the bouquet that the Emperor has just sent me for his feast. . . .

According to what the Minister told me about the deliberate delay he took before communicating this good news to me,⁸³ you will con-

⁸² REY II, 737.

⁸³ The letter of Mr. Rouland, Minister of Worship, is dated August 13th.

clude as I do that he has already received Rome's reply. He would not venture to tell me this matter if he were not assured of the Holy Father's consent.

1431. [To Father Vincens, at Mende].⁸⁴

Father Vincens' retreat to the clergy of Mende.

[Marseilles], August 27, 1859.

I shall address my letter to you at Mende, since you are to begin the retreat there on Tuesday. I assume you will be there the day after tomorrow at the latest. And how long has the retreat at Troyes been postponed? Everyone is getting into the act of giving this holy exercises, and that is why those who would be capable of doing better are not much sought after.

1432. [To Archbishop Guibert at Tours].⁸⁵

The war in Italy will delay the cardinalate.

[Marseilles], August 30, 1859.

I must explain what is supposed to happen before they will get busy with his matter.⁸⁶ Maybe I shall know something later and, as soon as I do, I shall let you know. I thought that all we had to do was await a Consistory and that the cardinal would be appointed with the bishops. If it were to be otherwise, it would be quite annoying. But why do they let the affairs of Italy become so mixed up as they now are? I do not understand why the Emperor does not feel deeply hurt by the

⁸⁴ YENVEUX I, 67.

⁸⁵ REY II, 739.

⁸⁶ Bishop de Mazenod had received a letter from Archbishop Spaccapietra which said that in Rome "the proposal [that Bishop de Mazenod be made a cardinal] was well received, but the current political events did not allow them to pursue this matter for the moment."

mystification that he is tricked by.⁸⁷ In his place, I would approach this matter in quite a different way and no Cavour, Ratazzi or any of these self-made dictators would make me retreat.

1433. [To Archbishop Guibert of Tours].⁸⁸

The cardinalate.

[Marseilles], October 5, 1859.

. . . Let us therefore be patient.⁸⁹ But if this is a tactic to show how dissatisfied they are with France, then there is no reason why the matter should be brought to a head. I don't see what purpose this sulking can serve when, in fact, they exist only by virtue of our presence and they can expect to be safe only because of us.

I do not deny that they have many things to reproach us for, but it would be better to lodge complaints otherwise than by this form of teasing. Besides, I do not think that this is the determining factor. Be that as it may, in the most favorable conjecture, the presentation cannot take place before the end of December. This vexation will delay the happy moment which would have brought me near you. So once again I embrace you from a distance, but always with great affection. . . .

⁸⁷ The armistice of Villafranca on July 11 and the resignation of Cavour seemed to put an end to the Piedmont expansion. And yet, Piedmont continued to annex duchies, provinces and legations, little by little eating up the Papal States, and Napoleon III did not in any way intervene.

⁸⁸ REY II, 744.

⁸⁹ Pius IX held a Consistory on September 26th.

1434. [To Father Desbrousses, at N.-D. de l'Osier].⁹⁰

Congratulations on his oblation. Observance of the Rules.

L.J.C. et M.I.

Marseilles, October 29, 1859.

My dear son, if I am late in replying to your letter by which you inform me about your oblation, it is certainly not through indifference or forgetfulness. That is due to the countless matters that take up all of my time. To the contrary, I was happy to learn that, in fidelity to your vocation, you have consecrated yourself to the good Master whom we serve and that you are now part of the family whose father I am. I am delighted and I also congratulate you, for I know all the profit you will derive therefrom for your sanctification and all the good that you are called to accomplish in the apostolic ministry that you will be carrying out in the Congregation. Only be faithful in the exact observance of the Rules which you have come to know during your novitiate. These Rules are not made only for novices; when one has finished the novitiate, we need to encourage each other to continue living them out for common edification. What I have seen of you during my short stay at l'Osier reassures me entirely in this regard. Be therefore blessed, my dear son. I embrace you with all my heart.

† C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

1435. [To Father Bovis, at N.-D. de l'Osier].⁹¹

Congratulations on his oblation. Greatness of the Oblate vocation.

[Marseilles], October 29, 1859.

I congratulate you on your happiness in consecrating yourself for life to serve God and to work for the sanctification of souls in the Congregation which is soldiering under the banner of Mary Immaculate. By making this blessed profession, you have signed the contract of

⁹⁰ Orig.: Rome, Postulation Archives, L. M.-Desbrousses.

⁹¹ YENVEUX VIII. 112.

your predestination. Be faithful for your part, God will keep his word in your regard. He has accepted your consecration and he has promised you eternal life.

This promise has been verified in the deaths of each of our men, I mean to say those who die in the bosom of their mother, the holy Congregation of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate. All of them have died as the truly predestined.

Your vocation, therefore, is a grace that we cannot fully appreciate. Let us try to comprehend it and let us not cease to thank God who has chosen us from among so many others by reason of his infinite mercy. Is sacrificing our life in the service of such a good master really too much? Oh no! Let us not fear doing too much.

1436. [To Archbishop Guibert of Tours].⁹²

Relic of St. Lazarus at Marseilles. Metropolitans.

[Marseilles], November 11, 1859.

Dearest friend, I shall not let the feast of St. Martin pass by without congratulating you as his worthy successor. I unite myself to your prayers and ask this great saint that he obtain for you from God everything that you can desire in this world and in the next. We have here placed ourselves under the protection of St. Lazarus of whom the Bishop of Autun⁹³ has himself brought us an exceptional relic. This Prelate chose to make his retreat with our Fathers at N.-D. de la Garde. He will leave us tomorrow and is very pleased with us.

The day after tomorrow I will be consecrating the chapel that Mr. Fissiaux has had built on his property of the Carthusians for the boarding school run by the Sisters of St. Joseph of Belley. The Bishop of Belley⁹⁴ will be here for the occasion, as he will be leaving for Rome the next day. The Archbishop of Aix,⁹⁵ too, will be here and he will be giving the benediction.

⁹² REY II, 748-749, 752.

⁹³ Bishop de Marguerie.

⁹⁴ Bishop de Langalerie.

⁹⁵ Archbishop Chalandon.

... Even though you are a metropolitan, I am not afraid to tell you that your dignity does not dazzle me and that I consider it as really amounting to rather little, no matter how much the trend to extoll it is in vogue today.

1437. [To Archbishop Guibert of Tours].⁹⁶

Pastoral letter requesting prayers for the Sovereign Pontiff. Cardinalate.

[Marseilles], December 3, 1859.

... [The bishop of Belley] asked me to be allowed to tell me that in the present circumstances a pastoral letter from me would make a good impact. The matter was clear: the Pope had spoken to him about me in this regard and most probably the Pope had asked him to tell me about his wish. From that moment on, I hesitated no longer.⁹⁷ Three days later, that is, on the following Sunday, the pastoral letter was read in all the churches of my diocese.⁹⁸ You must have received it. God be praised, I have finally been able to spend a few moments with you. When I came down from the chapel, they brought me the mail which had your letter of December 1st. I laughed heartily when I saw the metropolitan respond so skillfully and in so friendly a manner to the onslaught of the daring suffragan.⁹⁹ What a heavy rock he has cast into the game! I shudder at the indigestion that threatens me when I shall

⁹⁶ REY II, 753.

⁹⁷ During the course of that autumn, most of the Bishops wrote a pastoral letter in which they asked for prayers for the Pope and defended the Papal States. Instead of associating himself with them, Bishop de Mazenod addressed himself directly to the Emperor. In Rome, there was astonishment at the silence of the Bishop of Marseilles. As soon as the Bishop of Belley informed the latter of the Pope's wish, the Founder hastened to prepare a pastoral letter which he had considered unnecessary as he already had on July 7th sent a circular letter to his clergy in this sense.

⁹⁸ Pastoral letter dated November 24th.

⁹⁹ Archbishop Guibert had replied to the paragraph in the November 11th letter which concerned metropolitans: "I shall not try to defend myself. One must not too much maltreat the vanquished, however. The metropolitans have seen their prerogatives first diminished and then reduced to nothing only when the Congregations of cardinals took over and centralized all the affairs of the Church. It is the cardinals who have gobbled up the archbishops. Very willingly I am resigned to what exists and do not want to protest against the invasions of your order." (REY II, 752-753).

have to do my part in this enormous repast where metropolitans are devoured by cardinals. There is no way out for me except to sharpen my appetite so that I am not found wanting in my task. Fortunately, I am being given the time to prepare myself. Joking apart, no one tells me that there is going to be a Consistory, still less that I will be proclaimed in one. It would seem to me that a person should be notified of such a fact.

1438. [To Archbishop Guibert of Tours].¹⁰⁰

New Year wishes. Surrender to God in the cardinalate matter.

[Marseilles], December 28, 1859.

My dear Archbishop, I am writing these few lines to reply with New Year wishes to your own. I do so in haste, for you know what kind of existence I live here in Marseilles. I have just assisted at the funeral of one of our most virtuous lawyers, the faithful companion, friend and schoolmate of my so much regretted nephew, Louis de Boisgelin, so like my nephew and worthy to be compared to him. I spoke of Mr. Cournand whom you must know and who was at the head of the famous Congregation referred to as that of Mr. Allemand. From there I had to go and give my blessing to Mr. Nicot, one of our priests who is near death. My presence was a great consolation to him in this supreme moment. My Tuesday Council meeting was waiting at the bishopric and I am breaking my word to them for a time so that I can talk to you an instant.

All your reflections on my affair are perfectly correct but in Rome they are formalistic and sometimes too political. Gladly I would give up the hat if that would even slightly advance their business, were it bring only the smallest taste of consolation to the good Pope who is toyed with in this infamous pamphlet which you mention.¹⁰¹ I find it

¹⁰⁰ REY II, 754-755.

¹⁰¹ On December 22nd, a brochure appeared: *Le Pape et le Congrès*. The author — it was said that he had been inspired by the Emperor — maintained that possessing a temporal domain limited the spiritual freedom of the Pope and that the latter would gain if his States were reduced.

impossible to believe that it comes from on high, so contemptible it is and — I am not afraid to say it — so absurd. What makes me think that it does not come from so high is Rome's decision to send Cardinal Antonelli to the Congress.¹⁰² Such a move would not have been without prior assurance about the Emperor's real position. Otherwise, what would be the good of coming to one's condemnation? As for the brochure, it merits nothing more than to be scorned and despised by every intelligent person.

[The 29th].

Yesterday I did not take into account that I had to close a supplementary exercise at Saint-Charles, to confirm some fifteen old men whom the mission given by the Capuchins had brought back to God along with many others. I thus ended my day which brought me the consolation of having fulfilled a number of my duties. I would be quite unworthy if I did not profit of the amazing health God grants me to look after the requests and needs of those whose servant and father I am.

Yesterday I was speaking about the misguided pamphlet which to our shame is being peddled all over Europe. If that is the notion that will be expressed in the Congress, let them be very careful: in my pastoral letter I have pointed out what will happen to them. Under Pius VI and Pius VII we saw the Church crushed and reduced to naught. This daughter of Heaven rose up again and the oppressor has disappeared. Later, the Bourbons received the mission of restoring it to honor: they wanted to enslave it and they have disappeared in their turn. Louis-Philippe secretly undermined it and openly strangled it: what happened to him?

This year as last year, it is clear, my friend, that I shall have to make my pilgrimage to Tours. I would have to be quite far gone to deprive myself of the happiness I feel when I hold you close to my heart. The hat will come when it will come or it won't come at all: I am not concerned nor do I spend time on it. I have to date lived for 80 years without it, I will certainly get along without it during the little time that I still have to live. One thing is certain: if, finally, they decide one day to bring me this gift, I am dispensed from being grateful for it.

¹⁰² A congress was to bring together the great powers in Paris. It was to treat of the unity of Italy and the Papal States.

1439. [To Archbishop Guibert of Tours].¹*Perpetual adoration.*

[Marseilles], January 4, 1860.

You comprehend my sorrow in seeing the Church threatened by so violent a tempest.² Every day I am going to make my adoration in the Church where our Lord is solemnly exposed³ in order to unite myself to the crowd — which I can describe as huge — of my people who daily respond to my invitation. It is with the intention of drawing down on the Church and its Head the assistance of which we stand in such great need under the present circumstances.

What a pitiful pastoral letter was put out by the Bishop of X. . . ! May God forgive me! I have compared it to the kiss of Judas. Good-bye. I find it very hard to be so far away from you in so critical a time.

1440. [To Archbishop Guibert of Tours].⁴*Death of Father Casimir Aubert.*

L.J.C. et M.I.

Marseilles, J[anuar]y 18, 1860.

My dear Lord and good friend, when we are greatly afflicted and have had recourse to God, to whom can we go for support if not to those who can comprehend and share one's affliction. And so, my dear and gentle friend, I am separating myself a moment from those who

¹ REY II, 764.² On January 4, the Emperor named Mr. Thouvenel to be Minister of Foreign Affairs. He replaced Mr. Walewski, who had been favorable to the Pope and hostile to Italy.³ The arrival in Marseilles of the Fathers of the Blessed Sacrament made it possible for the Founder to establish perpetual adoration of the Blessed Sacrament in the diocese. The solemn opening took place on January 1 in the church of St-Martin which was being used as an interim cathedral.⁴ Orig.: Rome, Postulation Archives, L. M.-Guibert.

surround me and come to lay an immense sorrow in your bosom. Yesterday, the good Lord took away from us with lightning speed that perfect person whom you brought in to enrich the family. It is not a dream! It is only a certain fact that the dearly loved Father Aubert,⁵ who still carried out throughout the day I don't know how many deeds of his charitable ministry, whom I saw in my office at three o'clock full of life, and who, after he had left me, had still run several errands such as visiting the sick, etc. When he had returned to the house, he had a headache and he was dead within two hours, without any struggle or further movement as though he had fallen asleep — as indeed he has fallen asleep in the Lord. The pen is being snatched from my hand. Goodbye.

† C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

1441. [To Father Fabre, at the Marseilles Major Seminary].⁶

Asks him to come to the bishopric.

L.J.C. et M.I.

Thursday morning, at six o'clock.
[End of January 1860]⁷

If my good son Father Fabre could come today and pay me a little visit for a few moments, I would repay the pleasure that his too rare appearances in my place always procure me by remitting to the

⁵ Father C. Aubert, Secretary General of the Congregation, 4th Assistant General and Provincial of the France-South Province, died at Le Calvaire on January 17th. He was the Founder's most valuable collaborator in matters concerning the Congregation. Bishop de Mazenod wrote in his *Journal*: "The holy and incomparable Father Casimir Aubert died suddenly! I cover my face, I prostrate myself, I adore. *Nescio loqui!* Let them fall, let them fall my tears, that is all that I can do. . . ."

⁶ Orig.: Rome, Postulation Archives, L. M.-Fabre.

⁷ Undated letter, but written on paper bordered in black and therefore shortly after the death of Father Aubert. The Procurator General that the Founder is greeting is Father Fabre himself.

Reverend Father Procurator General a New Year's gift of one hundred francs which was sent to me yesterday; I would also reimburse him five hundred francs of the thousand that he had the goodness to lend me. I greet the Reverend Father Procurator General and embrace my dear son, Father Fabre.

† C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

1442. [To Archbishop Guibert of Tours].⁸

The Pope will make Bishop de Mazenod cardinal as soon as circumstances will allow it.

Marseilles, February 10, 1860.

Dear friend, I will not wait until I am near you again to communicate to you part of the letter or the Brief that I have just received from the Holy Father.⁹ Up to now, I had only officiously learned of the Pope's consent in regard to my being made a cardinal; today's Brief gives me official information of His Holiness's will. Later, you can read the first three quarters of the Brief. Here is the passage which settles the issue:

"Nos idcirco rationem quam inivisti laudamus, ut Sanctae hujus Sedis ac Religionis iura apud eum, qui exspectationi respondisse non videtur, propugnare. *Studium tibi confirmamus præcipuae caritatis Nostræ quo ducimur, ut ubi opportunitas ferat, majus quod possimus, virtuti tuæ præmium exhibeamus.* Ab auctore ac largitore cælestium bonorum Domino omnem Tibi *corporis* animique prosperitatem precantes, horum auspicem esse cupimus apostolicam [benedictionem], etc."¹⁰

⁸ Orig.: Rome, Postulation Archives, L. M.-Guibert.

⁹ The Pope's Brief, dated January 28, was a reply to Bishop de Mazenod's letter of January 6, in which Bishop de Mazenod had written in detail all that he had done in regard to the Emperor in defense of the Papal States.

¹⁰ " . . . We praise you for what you have done to protect the rights of this Holy See and of Religion in regard to him who does not seem to have responded to what we could hope for. We repeat to you the decision made out of Our very special affection for you, namely, that when the times will be more opportune, to confer on your merits the highest award it is possible for Us to give. We pray the Lord, the Author and Dispenser of the heavenly blessings, to grant you every prosperity of body and soul, and want to impart to you as a pledge of the same the apostolic blessing. . . ."

That is all that I could wish for. This Brief will be sufficient evidence in the Congregation's archives to promote its honor in the Church's eyes. What does it matter whether I am dressed in red or violet? Goodbye, dear friend, I embrace you with all my heart.

† C.J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

1443. [To the Oblates].¹¹

Father Aubert's various responsibilities will be temporarily taken up by Fathers Vincens and Fabre. Leaving for Paris.

[Marseilles,] February 12, 1860.

After the first moments which were spent in mourning the loss we have just sustained, I had to provide, my dear Fathers, for the various duties that were being fulfilled by the dear man who has passed away. First of all, I called in Father Vincens and entrusted to him the direction of our First Province of France. My Council also appointed him to fulfill the task of Secretary General. In the same Council session, Father Fabre was elected fourth Assistant General. This Father will nevertheless continue to carry out the work of the Procurator General. Also, until I shall have chosen another Provincial for the Second Province, Father Vincens will be performing this function.

I take this same occasion to tell you that I am leaving for Paris.¹² My address there is, as usual: Bon Lafontaine, no. 2, Grenelle-St-Germain.

† C.J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles,
sup. gen.

¹¹ Copy: Rome, Postulation Archives, D. M. X: Reg. lettres 1855-1863, p. 253.

¹² Bishop de Mazenod left Marseilles on February 25; the legislative session was scheduled to open on March 1.

1444. [To Father Fabre, at the Marseilles Major Seminary].¹³

Cost of purchasing land for a foundation in Paris.

[Paris], March 4, 1860.

I am not sufficiently informed about our affairs and I feel the difficulty of giving a definitive answer. It's a matter of buying at a cost of 100,000 francs the land considered suitable for our establishment. The seller is asking for 50,000 francs in cash. The notary would give a loan of 50,000 francs if we give him collateral that is sure. He cannot accept such based on our lands, because they are not acquired by public deed and besides, it would not be sufficient. It would seem that he would accept a mortgage on a building located in Marseilles. How do matters stand in this regard? This is one more thing that I do not know, perhaps through my own fault and much more through the fault of others. To what degree is Montolivet mortgaged? If there are only the 80,000 francs of the loan contracted to effect an instalment with Béranger, we could offer that to Mr. Demoz, the notary in question.

Fathers Magnan and Delpeuch have just spoken to me about the great affair. You will find the details in the letter enclosed herein and addressed to Father Vincens. Examine the question and make a decision. I shall accept what you decide.

1445. [To Archbishop Guibert of Tours].¹⁴

Prudence in relations with the Government.

[Paris], March 8, 1860.

My dear Archbishop, I quite strongly approve that you let each person do what he sees fit, without giving the impression that you are the central point or instigator of the measures that conscience may dictate. Already the Minister has become aware that you were approached to become part of a coterie that has adopted as its mission to aggravate the relationship between the Government and the Holy

¹³ YENVEUX VII, 87.

¹⁴ REY II, 779.

See, and that you had the good sense to refuse. . . . Since I was on the spot, I did not write to the Minister to protest against the circular letters¹⁵ about which we have so much reason for complaint, but I told him orally what was a propos and with a tone of just indignation. . . . I have come in contact with quite a number of bishops. They are all as much distressed as we are and they have written as you did. . . . Who can possibly keep silence in such circumstances?

1446. [To Father Vincens, at Marseilles].¹⁶

Project of asking that the Oblates be given a parish in Paris. Reopening the juniorate at N.-D. de Lumières.

[Paris], March 10, 1860.

I still have to make an effort with the Archbishop of Paris — which I think will be totally in vain — and propose to him that the parish of Saint-Mandé be entrusted to us. In that case, we would no longer need to build. The rectory is sufficiently large to house six missionaries and the parish would require their zeal, for it is in a deplorable state. This proposal, which will probably be rejected, was suggested to me by the Bishop of Blois,¹⁷ who would also like to see an establishment of our men in his diocese.

I still attach great importance to the formation of our juniorate, so set aside the men who will be employed there. This establishment has given us very good missionaries! Counting them is a consolation. Perhaps we shall be fortunate enough to form new ones. What will become of us if the Bishops show themselves adamant in not releasing men to join us? I know that, strictly speaking, we could make use of

¹⁵ On January 19th, the Pope published an Encyclical defending the Papal States. Many bishops had it read in the churches and *L'Univers* published it. This angered the Government and it suppressed this newspaper and sent out several circular letters by which preachers were restrained, Mass in army barracks was suppressed, etc. Cf. J. LEFLON, *Mgr de Mazenod* III, p. 431.

¹⁶ YENVEUX II, 138; VIII, 30, 119.

¹⁷ Bishop Pallu du Parc.

the Encyclical which determines the rules to be followed in such cases; but we would then draw back, perhaps, because of the inconveniences that could result therefrom.

1447. [To Father Mouchette, at Montolivet].¹⁸

Greatness of the Oblate vocation. Important role of the moderator of scholastics. Visit to Tours.

L.J.C. et M.I.

Paris, March 11, 1860.

My dearest Father Mouchette, my greatest regret is to see myself, both in Marseilles and even more in Paris, obliged to live separated from those with whom I would be happy to spend my life. If you only knew how often I bewail my fate before God! It is a daily privation. Divine Providence has placed me in this situation which is so contrary to my taste: I am resigned to it, especially when I think that great good has come from it for our dear Congregation.

The satisfying news which you give me of your community of Montolivet fill me with consolation. My eyes and my heart even more are always intent on these dear children who are the hope of our family. I am happy to see that they grasp the sublimity of their vocation and that they are courageously working to become holy religious. I am confident that they will honor their great ministry, and that they will all prove themselves worthy to be chosen, some to fight the Lord's battles among the degenerate Christians of Europe, the others to walk in the Apostles' footsteps and become themselves true apostles to proclaim the good news to unbelieving nations in different parts of the globe. Yes, indeed, they will all come forth from the fine community of Montolivet, completely equipped like real athletes immune to bad example, to every seduction against which they will know how to defend themselves. Their very presence and the regularity of their life will revive

¹⁸ Orig.: Rome, Postulation Archives, L. M.-Mouchette.

fervor in every place where obedience will send them. In advance I rejoice at the blessings the Lord will shower on them in return for their faithfulness. God will be glorified by them and, on account of them, our dear Congregation will be held in honor in the Church.

My dear son, do not complain about the part that has befallen you in this great work of the sanctification of our young scholastics. Don't be put out by the distractions that stem from this work. It is difficult, I agree, and it seems to divert you from what you would like to do, especially for yourself. Let that not in the least bit worry you. Those whom you are forming — apparently to your loss — are a hundredfold value for you in comparison to whatever you could do for yourself.

Do not worry about my health. I am in marvellous shape and I keep Lent without the slightest difficulty. I am so little concerned about this area that tomorrow I am leaving for Tours where I shall be spending 24 hours with our good Archbishop. You will say that this is a young man's schedule. I agree, but this shows you that I have the strength to make this double course without claiming, be it understood, of making the least breach of the holy Lenten fast.

My dear son, I want you to greet with affection all our Fathers and Brothers at Montolivet. I bless them and you with all my heart.

† C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles,
s.g.



Father Louis Soullier
(1826-1897)

1448. [To Father Fabre, at the Marseilles Major Seminary].¹⁹

Negotiations for a foundation in Paris.

[Paris], March 15, 1860.

First, I shall speak of the affairs of the Congregation. I second all the reasons which determined you to give up the project of buying new land in Paris. Father Magnan wanted to return to this question, I allowed him to do so. He told me that Father Tempier had almost concluded the deal at the time of his stay in Paris. That would have been a misfortune.

As a desperate last resort, as I have written to Father Vincens, I went to ask the Cardinal to give our Fathers the parish of Saint-Mandé. The Cardinal agreed with this proposition very much, but he does not proceed quickly in business matters. This delay gave me time to receive Father Vincens's letter by which I learned that you have agreed to return to your first point of view.²⁰

I admit that if we had to deal with another bishop, I would immeasurably prefer that we take a parish like that of Saint-Mandé, which is at the entrance-gate to Paris — the parish had been divided in order to give a portion of it to Paris; we would have to pay out nothing and we would have to do a great amount of good; and from there we would go forth to evangelize the parishes of the suburbs. This is what the priests whom Bishop de Ségur had formed into an association²¹ had tried to do, very imperfectly [by the way]. Such are my observations. I add that the value of our lands has not increased since we have purchased them and were we to sell them now we would lose our deed expenses even if we should get back what we originally paid out. After all this, if you persist in your confident position, I shall adhere to it.

¹⁹ YENVEUX II, 139; VII, 83.

²⁰ Father Magnan had been commissioned to find a house in Paris. We have a number of his letters addressed to Fathers Vincens, Fabre and Tempier. Father Magnan insisted that Father Tempier come and see for himself. It would seem that the General Council wanted to begin quite poorly whereas the Founder wanted a fine piece of property. On March 26, Father Magnan wrote to Father Vincens: "I must tell you that the Superior General gives me the impression of taking into account the state of our funds when it is a matter of making a purchase; but that he somewhat forgets our misery and our debt of 300,000 francs as soon as it is a question of choosing a location or purchasing a house. His tastes as a gentleman are whetted and he is difficult. By this noble disdain I recognize his blood, the poet would say!" Finally, on March 31, the Founder gave the order to purchase the lot on the rue St-Petersbourg. Cf. L. Magnan-Vincens, March 31.

²¹ Bishop Gaston de Ségur (1820-1881) founded an association of diocesan priests who took their inspiration from the spirituality of St. Francis de Sales.

1449. [To Archbishop Guibert of Tours].²²

Friendship. Requests. Bishop Grandin's illness. Little hope of being named Cardinal.

Paris, March 23, 1860.

Dear Archbishop, the anniversary of the day on which I gave to the Church a bishop such as you are is for me too beautiful a day not to put aside every other concern and the thirty some letters that are waiting on my desk — I have just received another six — and to busy myself a moment with you. Already at the altar, from which I have just come, I prayed the Lord as best as I could that he shower ever more his most abundant blessings on you; I thanked him for having given me a son who is so worthy of all my love, and for having inspired in your heart the sentiments of affection for me which are my happiness. A person can appreciate such sentiments on the day of the feast of the resurrection of Lazarus when at the Mass we read the beautiful Gospel that reminds us of our Lord's tender affection for the one whom he deigned to call his friend and for the sisters of this privileged man.

I will be staying here only a few more days. The day after tomorrow the report on the petitions²³ will be read in the Senate. On Monday, we will debate, that is to say, that the conclusions of the report should go on the agenda. We will be supporting the contrary, which will not hinder the Senate from deciding in accord with the stance of the Commission's reporter. After we have made this sort of profession of faith, nothing will keep us in Paris any longer and we shall all return to our dioceses in time for Holy Week there.

At this very instant I have just received some bad news. A letter from Mans tells me that the good Bishop of Satala has fallen ill there and is in bed with fever. Who knows what that may turn into! I am so keyed up that the least threat frightens me. I am even asking myself if I should go and see for myself what the situation is in regard to this illness. I am going to write immediately and ask that they inform me

²² Orig.: Rome, Postulation Archives, L. M.-Guibert.

²³ The petitions of Catholics addressed to the Senate in favor of the Papal States. Mr. Royer, the reporter of the commission, proposed as an agenda that the Senate refuse to forward these petitions to the ministries concerned.

with complete frankness. This holy Bishop has tired himself out too much in all his work for the good of his mission. He was already coughing when he passed through Paris and he concurred that he was really quite tired.

We have learned that the collective letter which I told you about has been received by the Pope. Now we await the response.²⁴

As you are aware, we cannot flatter ourselves that my affair will succeed in this state of things. The Minister maintains that we are the Pope's best friends, that the Pope could not do better than to attach himself to France. It is true to say that the Holy Father would be mistaken were he to trust very much in help from Naples. The people of Naples are quite exposed to fraternise with the revolutionaries of Rome once the latter are so close to them. Only our troops can keep them in check. God will have mercy on his Church and will inspire it with what is best. In the meantime, we are certainly in difficulty.

If only people could leave me alone for a moment! Here they are coming into my room. Being gracious will be impossible. To calm me in my bad mood, I embrace you with all my heart.

† C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

1450. [To Father Tempier, at Montolivet].²⁵

Visits from the poor.

[Paris], March 27, 1860.

I can't stand Paris anymore! The weather is terrible and I am continually disturbed. This morning, for example, I was besieged by men who came to tell me their miseries, some wanting me to help them by loaning them 3000 francs, others asking for 12,000. I was more

²⁴ They had heard that the Pope was preparing a Bull against all the errors of the time. On March 5, the Cardinals who were Senators and their colleague, Bishop de Mazenod, wrote to the Pope to assure him of their devotedness and discreetly to invite him to inquire among them first, before severely intervening at the risk of irking even more the civil authorities who were already unhappy with the clergy and the Catholics.

²⁵ REY II, 783.

fortunate in getting rid of the son of X by giving him a few pieces of money so that he could buy himself some bread and send some also to his wife and his mother. He does play the counter bass in the Gaieté theatre. but they are making him wait in their payments and, in the meantime, he is dying of hunger. I also had to give something to eat to the famous Mlle de Lamerlière who is living in the most horrible misery here. . . . There you are. Now that the word seems to be out, I shall extricate myself only by leaving. Goodbye, goodbye. I am writing so quickly that the tendons of the chest and abdomen are fatigued to the point where I feel it. I embrace you with all my heart.

1451. [To Father Tempier, at Montolivet].²⁶

The Pope's letter to the French Cardinals and to Bishop de Mazenod.

[Paris, April 1, 1860].²⁷

The Pope has answered our collective letter. I will get a copy of it and you will show it to you in turn. It is addressed to his dear Sons the Cardinals and to his Venerable Brother Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles. I don't know when the Brother will become a Son. Nothing indicates that that will happen soon. That gives me no concern at all.

1452. [To Father Tempier, in Paris].²⁸

An Oblate establishment in Paris.

L.J.C. et M.I.

Marseilles, April 24, 1860.

My dear Tempier, how does it happen that your letter of the 21st only reaches me here in the evening of the 24th, at night? I had left it

²⁶ REY II, 778.

²⁷ The Pope wrote on March 28th. This letter to Father Tempier is not dated. It must have been written shortly before the Founder left Paris on April 2nd.

²⁸ Orig.: Rome, Postulation Archives, L. M.-Tempier.

up to Father Fabre to answer Father Vincens. I went to Aix to give first Communion to my grand-niece Marie de Boisgelin. Father Fabre had taken it upon himself to send things to the Notary and he has done so. You should know the results. Mr. Mignon must have become sufficiently acquainted with all of you for him to be satisfied with your signature when there is an unforeseen delay. You don't give the impression of being people who are too mean. Would Bonnard not have been able to give you an advance of a few days when you were in need?

I am going to send your letter to Father Fabre; he had stayed with me the whole after-dinner period for the Council on Tuesday. In the meantime, I am writing you these few lines which I am going to pass on to him so that he can add to my letter whatever he sees fit and that he can mail it immediately afterwards.²⁹

You did well to take care of your cold, continue doing so. I greet all of you³⁰ with great affection.

† C.J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

1453. [To Archbishop Guibert of Tours].³¹

Speech in the Senate. Allocation of 3000 francs for Bishop Jeancard. Project of a foundation at Angers.

Marseilles, April 26, 1860.

My dear Archbishop, I always have to start with *gementes*³² about the crushing tasks that await me in Marseilles as an excuse for the delay in my correspondence. I will simply leap over that. First, I must thank you for your good letter of the 14th of this month. Each one that I receive from you is such a source of pleasure.

Before speaking to you of an important affair in respect of which I am putting a letter from Father Löwenbrueck into my envelope, I want to tell you that it seems in the Senate, without being aware of it, I hit

²⁹ Father Fabre did add a page to the Founder's letter.

³⁰ Fathers Tempier, Vincens and Magnan.

³¹ Orig.: Rome, Postulation Archives, L. M.-Guibert.

³² Complaints or lamentations.

the nail right on the head.³³ Your approval, though precious to me, did not surprise me: we have but one heart and one soul and, moreover, you are naturally inclined to see as good whatever comes from me; but the letters I received from various areas of France congratulate me for having said in a few words better things than others did in long speeches. I had taken it as a jest when people from Paris wrote to me saying that the honor of the sitting had been mine; but after seeing Bishops, like the one from Grenoble who is not given to handing out compliments, and others too, everyone here as well as in Aix, I began to believe that the few words I did say with a certain authority, were well inspired and so true that the President of the Council of State³⁴ responded to them, to reassure those who might have come to agree with my viewpoint.

Besides, no one took what I said too much amiss, for the next day I was named President of a commission.

I was still more put out by a phrase that escaped the usual kindness of the Cardinal who sits near me,³⁵ namely, that the impertinence of the person after whom he himself spoke was such that his unworthy speech merited blame, not compliments.³⁶ Yesterday's *Moniteur* carried a reparation of this *lapsus linguae* which must have saddened everyone who thinks aright, but astonished only those who do not know the habitual benevolence and courtesy for everyone of the Cardinal in question.

I also want to tell you that I was sufficiently persuasive or fortunate enough to obtain a subsidy of 3000 francs for our Bishop of Ceramis. I had to overcome the scruples of Mr. de Berthy, who is, on the other hand, disposed to be guided by the will of his superior, the Minister. They did not forget that our Prelate remains a canon. That gives him an acceptable situation and that is all that I wanted. Would

³³ On March 29, when the petitions were being debated, Bishop de Mazenod was the last to speak. As the sitting had been a long one, he was brief and made, among other things, the following remark: "The purpose of your refusal [to send the petitions to the Ministers], of your agenda would be for them [the Catholics] a real affliction. . . . There would be grounds to make them greatly dissatisfied! Gentlemen, from dissatisfaction to aversion is a short distance and such a situation would be a grave misfortune, for it is important to rule over hearts."

³⁴ Mr. Baroche.

³⁵ Cardinal Morlot.

³⁶ Cardinal Gousset.

you believe that Mr. de Berthy — to excuse the delay of this subsidy which had been promised a long time ago even though all the legal difficulties were pointed out to me — was not afraid to tell me that they had calculated — which means that he had calculated — that in my quality as a Cardinal I would have 10,000 francs added to my salary and that from this increase I could provide for the Bishop's needs. I don't need to be a Cardinal to free the Prelate from every worry about food, lodging, heat, lighting; but I did manage to tell the Gentleman that the Bishop was not in my pay and since they had given him to me as auxiliary, his work ought to be remunerated.

I pass on to business. As you can see from his letter, Mr. Löwenbrueck has a property in the diocese of Angers which is perfectly fit for an establishment of missionaries. The parish priests of the area, who have been witness of the Oblates' prodigious success, have expressed to them their intense desire to see them come and establish themselves in their midst. It was they who acquainted them with Mr. Löwenbrueck's property and they took it upon themselves to suggest to this good man that he cede it to the Congregation. Mr. Löwenbrueck did not reject this; he wrote me the letter which I am forwarding to you and in which you can read the advice that he. . . .³⁷

1454. [To Father Tempier, in Paris].³⁸

Perpetual adoration.

[Marseilles], April 28, 1860.

Goodbye. I am leaving for Montolivet but not by the shortest way, for I want to make my adoration in the church of Saint-Genest where the Blessed Sacrament is solemnly exposed. Yesterday it was the turn of Saint-Laurent where things were magnificently done. As elsewhere, the faithful there bore the costs of the immense illumination. What a fine sermon the parish priest of St-Charles extra muros gave us! It was a real rhapsody, whereas a Capuchin. . . .

³⁷ We no longer possess the second sheet of this letter.

³⁸ YENVEUX IV, 73.

1455. [To Father Soullier, at Autun].³⁹

Chagrin when he learns that Father Soullier is ill. His talent and virtue allow him to remain superior at Autun.

L.J.C. et M.I.

Marseilles, June 20, 1860.

With everything else taken care of, I come to you, my dear son, to express all the chagrin I feel at the accident that has befallen you. Who would have expected that a man of such a good constitution, so robust and already well tested in the fatigues of our holy ministry, showing no prior signs of the illness that plagues us, would be affected?

St-Louis near Marseilles, July 14, 1860.

What is your comment on these dates? They will at least show you my good will and fatherly concern. I have since learned that you have not been in the least further affected by what was fortunately a chance indisposition. But it is a sufficient warning that you be a little more cautious in your work. I have been quite put out that for so long a time I have not been able to meet with you. I would have liked to have an exchange with you on the simplicity of obedience. I am confident that you would have had no difficulty in agreeing that duty and reason must always come to the conclusion which the Apostle illustrated by his example: *in nomine tuo laxabo rete*.⁴⁰ Where would we be in God's Church or in religious families if each one set himself up as the judge of his capacities or means of action? My dear son, I have too high an opinion of your good sense, your piety and religious spirit to be certain that on your own accord you will say to me in all simplicity: *Ecce ego, mitte me*.⁴¹ This tells you that I am somewhat preoccupied about you. I would like to make use of you according to the lights that the good Lord gives me for governing the Congregation he has entrusted to me. I would have to bring you nearer to me so that I could communicate my viewpoint to you. I shall come back to this. For the moment, take care of yourself so that you will soon be able to tell me that you are quite well.

³⁹ Orig.: Rome, Postulation Archives, L. M.-Soullier. The person to whom this letter is addressed is not specified, in his *Ordo* the Founder on July 14 noted: "To Father Soullier".

⁴⁰ Luke 5:5.

⁴¹ Isaiah 6:8.

I leave it at that. I am under excessive pressure: matters pile up more than ever since the death, so painful to my spirit, of Father Aubert whom we regret constantly. I bless you, my son, and affectionately embrace you.

† C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles,
s.g.

1456. [To Father Mouchette, at N.-D. de Lumières].⁴²

An Oblate is sent away.

[St-Louis], August 5, 1860.

At this time I am alone and obliged to deal with diocesan affairs. For matters that concern the Congregation, I am reduced to Father Fabre: naturally, I have to go and find him at the seminary.

The letter that the Reverend Father Tempier wrote to this poor apostate⁴³ seems to have disillusioned him. He has repented in the sense that he admits his fault and is asking for a dispensation for the reasons he alleges. I see no advantage in keeping this poor man against his will. As soon as I can get a Council together, I shall leave him to his unfortunate fate.

1457. [To Father Vincens, at Angers].⁴⁴

Gratitude to Bishop Angebault and to the Canon Löwenbrueck who are giving a house to the Oblates.

[St-Louis], August 5, 1860.

In the meantime, I am in a hurry to write to the Bishop of Angers,

⁴² YENVEUX VII, 19; VIII, 266; IX, 87.

⁴³ This may refer to the scholastic H.-J. Courbet who left in 1860. Fathers P. H. Bordel and B. Séjalon also left the Congregation in 1860.

⁴⁴ YENVEUX VI, 172.

who has first written me a nice letter, to thank him for the fine welcome he gave you and the admirable sentiments he expressed to me. You are right to bless the Lord for the turn that this matter has taken. I deeply share this gratitude with you. And how do we thank this good Father Löwenbrueck for his generosity and abnegation? This is superb! Only someone who is truly a man of God can do something like that! May he not in any way be disappointed. If he wants to stay on with us, let him stay.⁴⁵ We are not used to meeting benefactors of this kind.

1458. [To Archbishop Guibert of Tours].⁴⁶

All of Bishop de Mazenod's collaborators are absent. Difficult relationship between Church and State. The Cardinalate.

[St-Louis], August 6, 1860.

My friend, you will excuse my delays, repeated so often, once you know that I am all alone to look after the affairs of the diocese and of the Congregation. Father Tempier is usually at his perch at Montolivet, but this time he has almost come down from it for good. We were quite anxious about him for several days. He has had to go to the countryside to look after himself. Cailhol⁴⁷ is constantly ailing, and has decided to go to the health resort. Carbonnel, the secretary general, afflicted with severe catarrh, has made off and is wandering from one countryside to another. My auxiliary is suffering from a stubborn eye inflammation and has convinced himself he is about to lose his eyesight. Father Vincens, who could have given me a hand for the Congregation's business, is covering the world with giving pastoral retreats. And so I am reduced to Father Fabre for both administrations, and this means that there is enough left over for me to succumb, were it not that God has granted me an extraordinary health. To give you proof of this, I stayed for two successive days ten hours a day at my desk. I must admit, as I confess this to you, that I have to regret that your turn did not come sooner. Finally I am at it.

⁴⁵ The copyist of Yenveux has written: "comme salut".

⁴⁶ REY II, 801, 807-808, 821-822.

⁴⁷ Vicar General.

I won't speak to you about the deplorable matters which are becoming ever more complicated. That is too painful. Father Vincens tells me that you have written to the Minister a letter that is worthy of St. Ambrose. For my part, I have taken the liberty of sending him some observations about his last circular letter on Peter's pence.⁴⁸ My letter is couched in terms which cannot offend him, but I do inculcate serious truths which may be accepted as coming from a friendly hand. I was very pleased with your letter that appeared in the newspapers. I would have liked to cut out something from the letter which ordered a *Te Deum* for Savoy's annexation. I know it is hard to restrain oneself in the situation into which the Church is put.

In what concerns me, there is nothing one can hope for. The Pope has established as a principle that the Roman Church is in a state of mourning, and so it is not fitting to rejoice. It seems to me that nothing would be easier during this time of mourning than to suppress the illuminations and orchestras, let us say for the creation of Italian Cardinals! Myself, though, I understand that there is another over-riding reason which is that they do not want to grant a favor to the Sovereign whom they see as the author of all these ills. (The Pope explains it thus to all and sundry). Furthermore, the biretta would be sent by a Legate who would have to make a speech before him. And what does one say in the present situation of things? I know that in the case of a general creation, I could be included without any extra ado and since in such a case nothing would be personal to me, I could be proclaimed as though it were the Pope's initiative; the Pope, however, will not do this. I assure you that I do not in the least bit worry about this. Thus so as not to poison relationships which are already so tense, I have never spoken of my position either to the Minister or to the Emperor.

1459. [To Father Mouchette, at N.-D. de Lumières].⁴⁹

A certain scholastic is to be expelled from the Congregation as soon as possible.

⁴⁸ Rey writes: "La Société de St-Pierre". Rather, it is a matter of Peter's pence. Cf. letter of July 16 to Mr. Rouland, Minister of Worship, in reply to the Minister's May 5 letter against the Peter's pence.

⁴⁹ YENVEUX VIII, 279.

[Marseilles], August 26, 1860.

I shuddered with horror when I read about the criminal quality of this monster.⁵⁰ How have you hesitated even an instant to dismiss immediately this wretch, who should not have remained a single hour in the holy house that he was profaning by his presence. Send him to me without delay. Perhaps it might be better to accompany him yourself so that he does not take off by another road. When he has come here, I shall dismiss him in disgrace. I don't know how you could give communion to a criminal who was known to you otherwise than by confession alone. You should not have done it.

Later on I shall make other observations about the ignorance of the confidants who are very guilty because of their silence. Goodbye. May God bless and assist you.

1460. [To the Fathers and Scholastic Brothers at N.-D. de Lumières].⁵¹

Prayer of reparation.

[Marseilles], August 29, 1860.

Has Satan obtained leave in our community so that we have had to witness the horrible sacrileges that have been committed there? Yes, evil has been done in the land of the saints, for everybody is meant to be a saint in the Congregation of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate. And what evil! The profanation of sacraments, hypocrisy, treachery, apostasy, in a word, the height of criminality. One Judas was already too many, and we have met two of them. Good Heavens! is this accursed race not yet extinct?

We have reason to fear that God's malediction will come down heavy on us if we do not take to heart making all the reparation we can for the scandal given in our midst by men whom I cannot describe in other terms than as monstrous. Let them bear this malediction! I could mention some who finished like Judas: *Ipsi viderint!*

⁵⁰ According to Father Mouchette's report for the summer of 1860, several scholastics besides Brother Courbet were a cause of concern to the Moderator, especially for particular friendships.

⁵¹ YENVEUX VIII, 248.

In this desolate situation, let us have recourse to our Mother Mary and, since you are at present in her shrine, go and at the feet of her sacred image beg through her powerful mediation God's mercy for us.

I prescribe that for nine days the whole community will go down into underground chapel and recite there, aloud and arms in the form of a cross, the psalm *Miserere mei Deus*. The recitation of this psalm will be followed by the litanies of the Blessed Virgin, the *Sub tuum* and the prayer *Defende*.

If it were not for the care that I want to take in regard to health, I would have laid down a rigorous fast. Supply for this with some expiatory mortification.

During the entire course of the year, each day a communion will be made and offered by all the members of the scholasticate in turn as a form of reparation to our divine Master Jesus Christ whose honor has been offended and betrayed by those who belonged to us and have apostatized.

That is what my sorrowful heart inspires me for the time being. May God have mercy on us!

Have I only words of sorrow to address to you? Ah, my soul is indeed full of bitterness. It is appropriate that I bless you. And so, be blessed in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit; and may this blessing remain with you so that it may keep you from all evil and make you advance in the perfection of your state.

1461. [To Father Charles Baret, in Paris].⁵²

The juniorate at N.-D. de Lumières is reopened. The Oblates are travelling too much.

⁵² YENVEUX VI, 82, VIII, 119.

[Marseilles], October 10, 1860.

At the same time we have opened our juniorate at Lumières. It is already promising well, so that we can hope that, like the former one, it will furnish good, valuable men to the Congregation. Where then are we going to find those required by an establishment such as is being proposed to us?⁵³

Your showing up in Cirey puzzles me.⁵⁴ I have been asking myself how come you are there and why. I had some reason to be astonished, since I was not at all informed of it. If Father Vincens knew something about it, he kept the secret to himself and has forgotten to mention it to me. It is true that for some time now our Oblates are so much on the roads and on the move that one can easily forget a few of these overly multiplied trips.

1462. [To Archbishop Guibert at Tours].⁵⁵

Bishop de Mazenod does not approve Archbishop Guibert's latest writings defending the Papal States.

Marseilles, October 18, 1860.

My dear Lord, I am writing to tell you that I cannot manage to write you. Still, I would have many things to tell you, but I don't have the time to enter into details: this would take me too far afield. To tell you crudely that I regret a few expressions in your last written piece is to say too much. Quite for nothing you are losing all the advantages which your good sense and wisdom had acquired for you for the good of the Church's cause. No one could have served her better than you. It is a great misfortune that you have put yourself into a position where no one will listen to you any more. These considerations merit to be carefully pondered.

⁵³ Angers.

⁵⁴ Mme de Damas, the Founder's niece, resided at Cirey.

⁵⁵ Orig.: Rome, Postulation Archives, L.M.-Guibert

I know how strange it is to speak to you like this without giving you the reasons for my assessment, but I simply cannot do otherwise today. In a few days, given the opportunity, I shall speak about this more explicitly. but then to what purpose? The evil has been done.

Goodbye, dear friend, I embrace you with all my heart.

† C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

1463. [To Archbishop Guibert of Tours].⁵⁶

Good wishes for the feast of St. Martin.

[Marseilles], November 10, 1860.

I have just said Matins, my dear Archbishop, and as I invoked the great saint Martin, your predecessor, my spirit was carried away to you, so much so that when I laid my breviary aside, I had to take up the pen to wish you a good feast and to express my sentiments to you. Tomorrow, as I usually do, I shall be taken up with you again when I shall be celebrating the holy Sacrifice. That is how I reduce the enormous distance that separates me from you. When you were at Viviers, it seemed to me that you were within my reach; it meant taking only a few steps to go to see and speak to you. But in regard to Tours one can have no illusion: we are hundreds of leagues distant from each other and, were it not for this beautiful dignity that your friendship has found me worthy of,⁵⁷ I would almost give up hope of embracing you before leaving this world.

1464. [To Father Martens, at Marseilles].⁵⁸

Approval of a German catechism.

⁵⁶ PAGUELLE DE FOLLENAY, *Mgr Guibert*, II, p. 408.

⁵⁷ Bishop Guibert was one of the first who, as early as 1851, proposed Bishop de Mazenod for the Cardinalate and, indirectly, for the dignity of Senator. Cf. J. LEFLON, *Mgr de Mazenod*, III, p. 405 and note 99 p. 494.

⁵⁸ Copy in *Kurzer Katholischer Katechismus für die Deutschen in Marseilles*, Marseilles, Marius Olive, 1861, pp. VI-VII.

Bishopric of Marseilles, December 2, 1860.

My dear son, I have had three priests of my diocese — they are well versed in the German language — examine the catechism that you submit for my approval. The report they gave me is entirely favorable to your work. I therefore approve the publication that you seek and I do so all the more because several of my venerable colleagues in the episcopate from different areas in Switzerland and Germany⁵⁹ have expressed to you the high approval they give to this summary of the truths a Catholic must believe and practice.

Continue, my dear son, to devote yourself completely to the work I have entrusted to you.⁶⁰ I bless it and yourself with fatherly affection.

† C. J. Eugene,
Bishop of Marseilles.⁶¹

⁵⁹ Pp. VI-VII reproduce the approval of the Bishops of Freiburg-im-Breisgau, Paderborn, Basle and Strasbourg.

⁶⁰ The Work of the Germans in Marseilles. After the conquest of Algeria in 1830, the French Government tried to colonize this land. Many Germans went to settle there. Difficulties of all kinds brought a number of them back to Marseilles, for the city's port, commerce and industry was then rather prosperous. Canon de Lander of the Chapter of Marseilles founded this work which was continued by Father Martens from 1856-1857 onwards.

⁶¹ The Founder's letter is reproduced in French and in German:
Mein lieber Sohn,

Den Katechismus, den du meiner Approbation unterwirfst, habe ich durch drei der deutschen Sprache kundige Priester meiner Diöcese prüfen lassen. Da der Bericht, den sie mir darüber mitgetheilt, deinem Werkchen überaus günstig ist, erlaube ich die Veröffentlichung desselben, wie es dein Verlangen ist, und dieses thue ich um so lieber weil mehrere meiner bischöflichen Amtsgenossen aus der Schweiz und Deutschland dir ihre hohe Approbation haben zukommen lassen, welche sie diesem Auszuge der Wahrheiten, die jeder Christ glauben und ausüben muss, ertheilen.

Fahre fort, mein Sohn, dich ganz der Mission, welche ich dir anvertraut habe, zu widmen. Ich segne sie, indem ich dich selbst mit der väterlichsten Liebe segne.

† K. J. Eugenius
Bischof von Marseille

1465. [To Father Charles Bellon, at N.-D. de Talence, Bordeaux].¹

Father Bellon is named delegate of Bishop de Mazenod, Director General of the Association of the Holy Family. He will take the oath called for in the general Rules.

Marseilles, February 14, 1861.

When they gave us the news of the sorrowful loss of its venerable Founder, the Holy Family, through the intermediary of the president of the General Council of Mary, reminded us that in our quality of Superior General of the Oblates, we had become Director General of the Holy Family; and that we have to delegate one of our men who will effectively represent us by residing in the midst of the works of the same Society and by guiding them in our name and with our authority.

After the first moments of sorrow which followed the death of so kind a friend, the providential founder of an ensemble of works that are so useful to the Church, we hastened to provide for the government of those whom we must henceforth see as our daughters and who ought to find in us him whom they so truthfully called their good Father.

Consequently, aware that you have been able to draw from the source of this venerated Founder's spirit, and that by the affection and confidence he honored you with until his last moments he seemed to be designating you in advance as our choice; taking into account the formal request sent to us by the General Council of Mary; knowing ourselves the affection that you have dedicated to the Holy Family, your filial attachment to us and your devotedness to the Congregation, and being convinced that your personal qualities make you quite fit to fulfill these tasks, we now designate you and appoint you to be our representative in conformity with what has been agreed upon in the affiliation contract.

Therefore, my dear son, you must be deeply imbued with the

¹ Orig.: Rome, Archives of the Holy Family.

duties that are now yours because of this new position. We do not need to tell you what zeal, devotedness and prudence that you must bring to the accomplishment of this grave and difficult mission. Nor will you forget that, having been called to direct under our authority, you must through frequent communications and a complete openness enable us to follow constantly your administration and to lend it the support of our dignity.

In order to facilitate this mutual understanding, we have designated one of our Assistants who is resident near to our person, the Reverend Father Fabre, as the official correspondent with you in matters concerning the Holy Family.

The objectives that we should aim for are: to maintain always in the Holy Family the spirit of their venerated Founder; to see to the observance of the very wise rules that he has left us; to assure the sanctification and happiness of his children; to take care that the union of the two families under one and the same head be consolidated by relationships which are ever more apt to procure the common edification and progress of the persons concerned.

Nor will you lose sight of the fact that we profess a special devotedness to our Lords the Bishops, that we love to receive their light and have at heart to merit their blessing on our works. We owe a special gratitude and complete deference to the Eminent Cardinal² in whose diocese the Holy Family has its origins.

Place all your trust in God, my dear son; place yourself under the tutelary protection of the patrons of the Holy Family and especially of our Immaculate Mother. The assistance of Heaven will not fail you.

I bless you, my dear son, and all my daughters of the Holy Family.

C.J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.³

Vincens, s[ecretary] g[eneral], O.M.I.

² Cardinal Donnet.

³ The Founder had been seriously ill since the first days of January; he only signed these texts prepared by Father Vincens.



Father Antoine Mouchette
(1828-1894)

To our dear son, Charles Barthélemy Bellon.

We, Charles Joseph Eugene de Mazenod, Founder and Superior General of the Congregation of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate, in the moment of taking on the general direction of the Holy Family's works, want to fulfill the obligation that befalls each new Director General to make and to receive the oath prescribed for such a circumstance by the general rules, and, using the freedom allowed us to have ourselves represented for this act by someone who replaces us:

Delegate for this purpose the Reverend Father Charles Barthélemy Bellon, priest in our Congregation and presently resident at Notre-Dame de Talence near Bordeaux.

We want him to make the oath in our name and to receive in our place the oath which was to have been sworn before us and we determine that these acts thus carried out have the same force as if we had ourselves proceeded thereto in person.

Given at Marseilles on this 14 February,
Eighteen hundred and sixty one.

C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles.

Vincens, s[ecretary] g[eneral], O.M.I.

Circular Letters
of Bishop Charles Joseph Eugene de Mazenod
to the Oblate Fathers and Brothers
of Mary Immaculate

Circular Letter no. 1¹

Sending out the Constitutions and Rules modified by the 1850 General Chapter and approved by Pius IX in 1853. Joy at the many virtues and great heroism among the Oblates, but also sorrow at seeing lack of regularity among a number of men and in some communities. Causes of imperfections, list and consequences of the same. Nature of the additions and changes made to the Rules: the establishment of provinces and vicariates, new form of keeping accounts, etc. Role and responsibility of the Provincials and the Vicars of Missions.

L.J.C. et M.I.

Marseilles, August 2, 1853.
(Feast of St. Alphonse de Liguori)

My dear sons and brothers,

The great work of reprinting our Rules, such as the Holy See has again approved them, is finally finished. I am sending you the copies that are to be distributed to each one of you. This is the code that the Church gives you so that, by diligently meditating it, you may make it the constant and imprescriptable rule of your conduct, and you may thereby carry out the duties of your holy vocation. For it is according to this code that you will be particularly judged — either for reward or punishment — by Jesus Christ.

¹ Polycopied text, bearing the no. 1. [Sending out the new edition of the Rules.] Rome, Postulation Archives, D M IX 5. Father Fabre published a good part of these pages in Administrative Circular no. 14 of May 20, 1864. Cf. *Circulaires administratives des Superieurs Generaux*. . . , I, Paris, 1887, pp. 108-113.

I avail myself of this circumstance to address to you a number of observations which it was not fitting to include in my encyclical that is printed at the head of the book of Rules and that is like its promulgation. Certain things should be said only face to face and in secret within the family. All my hope, my most dear sons, is that this second promulgation of our laws may arouse new fervor in the heart of each one of you, that it may bring about a kind of renewal of your youth, so that your virtues, shedding a stronger lustre in the Church, may better edify the faithful and contribute more to the conversion of sinners who are evangelized by your ministry.

Does this mean that you have so far strayed from the duties of your holy state so as to alarm my concern for you and to merit some stern admonitions from me? God forbid! No one knows better or appreciates more accurately than I the virtues that are practiced within our Congregation, the zeal and devotedness that animates the greater number of its members, and even the heroism of a certain number who are well known to me. But we have to admit that, if the majority have a right to praise and fill my heart with consolation, some imperfections have for some years now subtly made their way into certain communities, which imperfections are such that I cannot conceal them today when I must speak to the whole Congregation.

These imperfections, which one should not have to deplore in the first ages of a Congregation that is newborn, so to speak, spring from several causes: 1^o – an excess of outside work; 2^o – the small number of men in communities; 3^o – the absence of local superiors who are obliged to go in person to the giving of missions, without being able to have themselves replaced by a sufficient authority; 4^o – the lack of vigor [this must be said] on the part of local superiors in requiring a stricter observance of the Rule; 5^o – the laxity of our men who demand conveniences they could well do without if they were more fervent and better religious.

And so it has come about the regularity is less observed, that obedience, charity, poverty, mortification and other indispensable virtues leave a great deal to be desired. Of what use is a Rule, if we are not imbued with its spirit? if we do not practice what it prescribes? Hearing so much murmuring, often seeing simple religious summoning to their own tribunal their superiors to judge them, blame them and loudly complain about them, are these not intolerable things? Can we put up with the detestable habit of speaking about everything and

against everything, of closely observing the conduct of our brothers, of laying stress upon the defects of their character, and too often also upon the defects that rightly or wrongly we reproach them with?

Don't we go to the point of expressing ourselves in this regard without restraint, even in the presence of outsiders, who are always scandalized thereby? This is a wicked habit which engenders grudges, animosities and all kinds of resentments that charity condemns. With that, can we be surprised that we have to bewail so many apostasies and to deplore the loss of so many of our men? Is it those who faithfully observe the Rule, those who are humble, charitable, obedient, mortified who look back from the plow and abandon their vocation? Certainly not! It is rather the imperfect, the easygoing, the sensual, the unmortified, men for whom the code of their Rule is a sealed book which they are unable to read, whose advice and prescriptions they have forgotten; such men progress from imperfection to imperfection and become blind to their key duties. They are the men who end up crashing against the fatal barrier and compromise their eternal salvation by their infidelity.

I have before me the items of advice St. Alphonse de Liguori gave to his religious during the first years of his Institute. I would not dare to reiterate these warnings. They are crushing, they are the expression of the judgment he passed on not observing the Rules and on the permanent defects of certain individuals. He strongly abhorred these things, for he launched such terrible anathemas and, despite his natural kindness and compassionate charity, he showed a severity without mercy. The saint is especially inexorable toward local superiors who do not insist on the holy observance of the Rule; he makes them responsible for all the evil which results from their weakness and he is not afraid to threaten them that he will accuse them before God's tribunal. From his men he requires a great love for regularity, the spirit of mortification, an obedience that is blind to superiors, no matter who they may be, a holy indifference, a perfect detachment from relatives, country, from all the things of the world, the esteem of poverty, the practice of recollection, flight from the world — in short, all that makes up a genuine religious.

For my own part, my dear sons, I would like to sum up my advice by this single recommendation: *read and meditate your holy Rules*. There you will find the secret of your perfection; they include everything that is to lead you to God. Adorn your souls with the most

beautiful virtues, accumulate merit, assure your perseverance; read, meditate and observe your Rules, and you will become true saints, you will build up the Church, you will honor your vocation, and you will attract graces of conversion on the souls you will evangelize as well as every kind of blessings on the Congregation, your mother, and on its members who are your brothers. Read, meditate, faithfully observe your Rules, and you will die in the peace of the Lord, assured of the recompense promised by God to him who perseveres to the end in the performance of his duties.

The additions made to our Rules principally consist in the establishment of provinces. This necessarily entails some modifications in the administration of the Congregation. Several things which were immediately dependent on the Superior General now belong to the domain of the Provincials or the Vicars of Missions. The bookkeeping has been determined under another form and it is easy to understand that, in the great expansion it has pleased the Lord to give to our small family, it is more than ever indispensable to establish a perfect order in all the levels of administration.

Far from relaxing the bonds which link all the members of the corps to the head that governs it, this division into Provinces rather makes relationships easier by facilitating communications, which had become impossible, in spite of all the good will and total devotedness. Every Province or Vicariate has an authority that is adequate to discharge the ordinary and most urgent cases; and the exact reports and relationships of Provincials and Vicars of Missions with the Superior General will enable him to assess with knowledge of cause everything that pertains to his concern and care and to apply his authority in all that refers to persons and the business of the entire Congregation. We must acknowledge that the Provincials and Vicars will have a great responsibility in the intermediate position in which the Rule places them. The future of the Congregation for a great part rests with them. If they take the importance of their charge to heart, they will maintain perfect regularity whether by the annual visitation of the province entrusted to their care or by the regular correspondence with the local superiors and other members of the communities under their jurisdiction. Adamant in regard to the observance of the Rule, they will be the first to give an example of a fidelity that withstands every test; compassionate for the true needs of those who are suffering, they will watch most carefully lest any abuse be introduced under any pretext whatsoever. Their delegated authority is granted to them only for maintain-

ing regularity, and not to sanction through their example or their weakness² the least laxness. They will especially see to it that the local superiors do not neglect either the spiritual conferences, or the conferences of theology, or the other exercises over which they are to preside. Nor will the Provincials lose sight of the fact that they draw all the force from the higher authority, of which theirs is only an emanation and which has been given them in the measure inherent in their charge to represent the Superior General wherever there are children of the family whose only father he is. Their whole effort, therefore, will be to become imbued with his spirit so as to act only in conformity to his views; the least divergence on this point is destructive of the unity without which there can be any good government and there would be an intolerable disorder: it would need to be immediately suppressed by the severest measures.

The administration of temporal goods and bookkeeping require, I repeat, the most minute and rigorous attention. Up to now, we have had to reproach ourselves greatly in this regard. Each house has been considering only its own convenience without being concerned about the general needs of the Congregation. Personal expenses sometimes rise above that which the observance of the poverty that each member has professed by vow allows. Some have been partial to the quality, quantity and form of our clothing. The weakness of certain local superiors has introduced the abuse that others than they give orders to the Brothers in the kitchen or to the bursars. And if after such abuses there was something left in the till of the house, these wretched savings were under various pretexts and by arbitrary and sometimes puerile interpretations of the Rule, absorbed in alleged necessities which were never submitted to the judgment of the Superior General. In the last analysis, the Procurator General of the Institute has always had nothing to draw from for the general needs of the Congregation, even though at certain times he had to see to the nourishment and other needs of over a hundred persons, oblates, novices or lay brothers.

This state of things cannot become permanent. It exists nowhere in the other religious Congregations, all of which understand that the corps of the Society has to be nourished by its members and they have provided for this with wise regulations. The same principle has to be operative in our case. For this reason, I very expressly recommend to

² The polycopied text reads: "ou par leur exemple ou par faiblesse."

the Provincials, Vicars of Missions and local superiors to adhere strictly to the prescriptions of the Rule and to authorized usages, be it for nourishment and clothing of the religious, be it for reparations, demolition or building. I also recommend to them the system of book-keeping prescribed by the Rule, as well as that placed at the head of the printed registers whose observance I have previously prescribed. In order to assure henceforth regular and indispensable funds to the general treasury especially to defray the expenses of the nourishing and lodging of the oblates and novices, I ordain that in all houses and residences, both in Europe and overseas, each Father will acquit ten Masses per month for the benefit of the aforesaid general treasury. The stipend of these Masses will be calculated at the ordinary exchange rate of one franc. The amount resulting therefrom will be paid in twice a year by every Province to the Procurator General of the Institute, who is authorized to draw on each Province or Vicariate for the sum corresponding to the number of Fathers who make up this portion of the Congregation; he will take as norm for this sum the ten francs per month that each priest of the Institute owes to the general treasury as representing the stipends of the Masses he acquits to its credit. As to the far distant provinces and especially for the vicariates of missions, the sum of the Mass stipends acquitted to the credit of the general treasury may be subtracted from the grants that the Procurator General receives from the Propagation of the Faith for these provinces or vicariates. The mode of contributions that I have just described will go into effect on the day that you receive this circular letter.

It goes without saying that I have to inform you that, in accord with the wishes expressed by all our Fathers and according to a formal decree of one of the General Chapters, the former *Proprium*, which was too bulky and overloaded with a great number of feasts that had no special relationship to the Congregation, has been simplified. It has been reduced to a booklet of a convenient format so that it can easily be incorporated into the editions *in totum* of the Roman Breviary, or it can be bound separately as a little volume for those who prefer to use the breviary in four parts. The Ordo particular to our Congregation will be drawn up each year according to the new Proper, and the Offices that this Ordo indicates are the only ones that we declare as approved for the recitation of the breviary and the celebration of holy Mass.

My well-beloved sons, I conclude this long letter by recommending myself more urgently than ever to the prayers of each one of you,

so that from God's goodness I may obtain pardon for all the faults I may have committed in governing this dear family he has committed to me and to which I have dedicated my existence; and that he grant me now when my days are declining to see it grow in virtue and holiness, just as he has given me to see it increase in number and extension.

I sum up all my recommendations and wishes with these words of the Apostle Paul to the Corinthians: "Finally, brethern, rejoice; strive to be perfect; help one another; be united; live in peace, and the God of love and of peace will be with you. Greet one another with a holy kiss. May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen."

De coetere, fratres, gaudete, perfecti estote, exhortamini, idem sapite, pacem habete et Deus pacis et dilectionis erit vobiscum. . . . Salutate invicem in osculo sancto. . . . Gratia D. N. Jesu Christi, et caritas Dei et communicatio Sancti Spiritus sit cum omnibus vobis, amen. (Epist. II ad Corinthios, cap. 13)³

† C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles,
Superior General

Circular letter no. 24

Joy to correspond with the Oblates. Recalls the 1856 General Chapter and the episcopal ordination of Bishop Semeria. Many novices and scholastics in the novitiates of l'Osier, Nancy, England and Montolivet. New foundations in Dublin and Quimper. Imperfection of some Oblates who would be confirmed in fervor if they observed the Rule. Responsibility of Superiors. Commentary on some points of the Rule: obedience, poverty, chastity, mortification, etc. Invitation to regularity, discretion and charity in conversations. The way of celebrating Mass.

³ The text as presented in the polycopied text is as follows: first, the French translation and then several extracts of the epistle in Latin. We omit here the section that follows and has the following heading: "Tableau of the division into provinces and the composition of their personnel".

⁴ Polycopied text, bearing the No. 2 [State of the Congregation, commentary of the Rules]. Rome, Postulation Archives, D M IX, 5. Father Fabre published this letter in almost its entirety in Administrative Circular no. 14 of May 20, 1864. Cf. *Circulaires administratives des Supérieurs Généraux*. . . , I, Paris, 1887, pp. 113-121.

[Marseilles, February 2, 1857]

My dear sons,

Since the last circular letter I sent you when I promulgated the additions to the Rule approved by the Holy See, I have several times nourished the idea of writing to you again. I was always hindered from doing so by some new concern which absorbed my time each day and often during part of the night. You will comprehend how distressed I have been because of it, if you attach as much importance as I do to a father's communication with his many children. Not that I am entirely deprived of the consolation that springs from frequent relationships with a large number of you. That is one of the most agreeable occupations of my life and I appreciate its benefits so much that I adhered with joy to the Chapter proposal which obliges every member of our Congregation to correspond with the Superior General at least once a year.

But independently of these personal relationships, which eminently tend to foster mutual sentiments that make up the charm of the family life proper to our Society — a Society which in a way came forth from my heart, most of whose members were raised to the priesthood by the laying on of my hands, whereas the older ones were either the companions or the immediate successors of my first works — it is fitting that in certain circumstances I should speak to the entire Congregation in order to rekindle its fervor, to congratulate it for the good it is doing by God's grace, and to denounce as necessary the abuses which may have crept in and have to be corrected as soon as possible.

Such are the reasons, my dear sons, that move me to address to you this circular letter today.

I hasten to tell you — though you may already have some knowledge of it — how moving was the spectacle the of the fine reunion of the General Chapter held last August in our house of Montolivet near Marseilles. It is not possible to describe how delightful this reunion was, a reunion of the delegates of all our provinces or vicariates, who came from the four parts of the earth and gathered around the Head of the family, all animated with the same spirit of zeal for the glory of God and the salvation of souls, of love for the Church and devotedness to the Congregation. Who can express the joy manifested with a sort of rapture when after so many years of separation one found oneself

together again, or the unaffectedness of intimate communications, or the happiness of enjoying the presence of so many brothers with whom we are but one heart and soul? Thus the union and conformity of views we admired in the Chapter's different sessions is not surprising. Each wanted nothing else but the good of the Congregation and so it was easy to agree and not a single discussion failed to reach this end peacefully. This is, in fact, what was attained by God's grace and the assembly's good spirit. If only I could transcribe for you the reports which are, as it were, the contemporary history of our Congregation! You would, as I do, bless the goodness of God, who has deigned to do so many and such great things through the ministry of our men.

I cannot keep silent about a very consoling event which happened, as though explicitly programmed, at the time when our Fathers were gathered for the General Chapter: the episcopal ordination of our brother, Bishop Semeria, whom the Supreme Pontiff has chosen as coadjutor to the Vicar Apostolic of Jaffna, part of the island of Ceylon evangelized by our men. The papal Bulls had been sent to Ceylon just when this good Father was on his way to the Chapter. This apparent inconvenience served to bring out even more the goodness of the Head of the Church who, upon my request and, as he deigned to put it, to do me a favor, authorized me to ordain our brother under the title of Bishop *in partibus* of Olympia. This favor was greatly appreciated by myself and our Fathers. The ordination took place, in fact, in the newly consecrated chapel of Montolivet and, to complete our satisfaction, the two assistants were, like myself, of the Congregation. They were Our Lords the Bishops of Viviers and of Bytown who had come to the General Chapter in their quality as members of the Congregation. Those of you who know Bishop Semeria will have no difficulty in understanding that the new Prelate, called to raise the esteem for the Congregation and to consolidate its work in this far away country, particularly edified all our Fathers by his modesty and humility. He will soon be going back to his mission, accompanied by three of our Fathers who are leaving, full of zeal and determination, to work for the spread of the kingdom of Jesus Christ and to sacrifice their life to bring a large number of souls into the fold of the Father of the family.

Since my last circular letter, a great number of vocations have materialized and we have had the consolation of seeing our novitiate at N.-D. de l'Osier constantly supplied with men who are a source of edification. Since their number increased in these latter years, we have

had to put together another novitiate at Nancy. The one in England is also beginning to furnish us with some good novices. These different novitiates furnish good men for the scholasticate which is established at Montolivet near Marseilles and which is a model community into whose midst I come often to be edified and from where I am writing you this circular letter.

Divine Providence has given us yet another major reason for joy by paving the way for the Congregation to open a much desired house in Dublin: it has just been started and everything promises very well; and by inspiring the venerable Bishop of Quimper to entrust to us the major seminary of his diocese. I have had to refuse other foundations, in France, in America, and in particular three apostolic vicariates in Asia and in the new world that the Holy Father's confidence in us wanted to confide to us.

So, my dear sons, from the little that I have just told you, you see what blessings the Lord is showering upon our Congregation; on the other hand, you cannot fail to see also all that God asks in return for so many gifts and what the Church expects of us.

Who will not realize that, in order to respond to so many graces from the Lord and to the Church's expectation, one has to make himself worthy of his vocation, that is to say, fulfill and observe with the most scrupulous fidelity all the precepts and counsels contained in the sacred Code which the Church has given us as a rule?

Thanks be to God, the great majority of you have understood this well. Yet, I say this in sorrow, too many still leave much to be desired in this matter. One would say that our Rules and Constitutions are for them a sealed book which they have never opened or never understood. Their life can be compared to that of certain priests who do things by routine, who do nothing in a spirit of faith and stagnate in a habitual state of imperfection. These priests scandalize the Church by their tepidity. But a greater scandal is given by those who are called to the religious life, i.e., to a state of perfection, and who, after having consecrated themselves to God by the vows of obedience, chastity and poverty, proceed from infidelity to infidelity in regard to these solemn promises and drag themselves along in a rut of imperfection from which, it would seem, they don't know how to get out. This deplorable misery, which neutralizes all the good that they could do or at least robs them of a large part of the merit that would be theirs, is incom-

prehensible: for in their Rule they have all that is needed to get out of this misfortune or to rise out of it. Don't they take part in the exercises in the houses that they live in? What are they doing during oraison, which twice a day places them in God's presence in order to contemplate his divine perfections, to enter in his mysteries and to train themselves in imitating the divine Model, whose life we meditate and precepts we appreciate? The evening oraison especially has Jesus Christ as its objective, the Jesus Christ in whose presence we have the great happiness of being gathered together. Of what use to them are the two examinations of conscience which all by themselves would suffice to be rid of and successively destroy all these defects? Do they find no food for their soul in the Holy Office properly recited in choir, in the holy Sacrifice preceded by the morning prayer which fashions the soul to receive all the impulses of grace? And what about the day of retreat each month and the spiritual exercises which each year precede the renewal of vows? Or confession at least once a week, and direction, conferences of the couple? In short, this ensemble of a life of perfection which is quite adequate to form great saints in God's Church? *Flens dico*, it is precisely the abuse of so many graces and so many means of sanctification which constitutes unfaithfulness, darkens the intelligence to the point where it no longer is aware of its own deplorable state, hardens the heart to the point where one can doubt that God is still loved with a charity that unites the soul to him and makes him live in us.

Should we be astonished that in such a state a person lands up by falling into the abyss? This deplorable disorder explains the distressing apostasies that embarrass us. No, it is not when one finishes full of fervor the novitiate or the scholasticate that the Church is given such scandal: at that time, one is really worthy of his vocation and longs for the time when one can apply one's zeal and sacrifice oneself for the glory of God and the salvation of one's neighbor. So what happened? One lands up in one of these houses where certain men, bereft of piety, are a stumbling block to the newly arrived and soon lead them, by their bad example, to a series of infidelities which precipitate their loss. Nothing more than this is needed.

This consideration naturally leads me to the conclusion that the weakness of local superiors is one of the principal causes of this disorder. Generally speaking, they are not sufficiently aware of their duties. They are good for themselves personally but do not know how

to use the authority the Rule gives them in order to maintain their men in regularity. They do not sufficiently realize that they are placed at the head of their community in order to represent God in whose name they are to command, by virtue of the Rule. They are not sufficiently imbued with the sense of the responsibility that weighs on them, with the fact that they must give an account to the Church and to the Congregation for the men entrusted to their care and concern. They are afraid to call them to order when they begin to stray, they condescend too easily to every weakness. In short, the nerve of discipline is relaxed in their feeble hands and, through their fault, one ends up losing completely the sense of what it means to be a religious, of what distinguishes him from the ordinary priest. In this way, if we are not careful, our houses will soon be mere hotels where priests live under the same roof but without the religious spirit and regular discipline.

My dear sons, I cannot protest too much against this trend that is diametrically opposed to all the duties of our vocation. And so take in hand, once and for all, the Code that the Church has given us and be imbued with its spirit. I ask you: to what have the members of our Institute devoted themselves, what have they sworn to be for their entire life? Listen: "They must wholly renounce themselves, and strive solely for the glory of God, the good of the Church and the growth and salvation of souls. They must continually renew themselves in the spirit of their vocation, and life in a state of habitual self-denial, seeking at all times to reach the very summit of perfection. They must work unremittingly to become humble, meek, obedient, lovers of poverty and penance, mortified, free from inordinate attachment to the world and to family, men filled with zeal, ready to sacrifice all their goods, their talents, ease, self, even their life, for the love of Jesus Christ, the service of the Church, and the sanctification of their brethern. And thus, filled with unbounded confidence in God, they are ready to enter the combat, to fight, even unto death, for the greater glory of his holy and very adorable Name."⁵

This means that they are to aim at perfection by the means offered to them in the holy pages of the Rules and Constitutions.

What else does the Rule say to remind the members of the Insti-

⁵ Extract from the Preface, according to the translation of the 1982 Constitutions and Rules. In this circular letter, the Founder uses the Latin for all his quotations from the Constitutions and Rules. Here we quote in French the first French edition of the CC & RR, 1912, or, for some texts, the *Règles et Constitutions à l'usage des frères convers. . .*, 1859.

tute of their obligation to strive for a life of perfection? "The whole life of the members of our Society ought to be a life of continual recollection. To attain this, they will first of all make every effort to walk always in the presence of God, and frequently to bring him before their minds by short but fervent ejaculatory prayers. They must also have the greatest love for holy solitude, and they will not leave their rooms without good reason."⁶

Compare these precepts with the life of those whose blindness I deplore and tell me whether they do not bear with them their own sentence of condemnation.

To touch only a few points, first of all, how do they understand the obedience they have vowed? "That is why the vow of obedience is taken by us. Our obedience ought to be prompt, humble and universal We ought not merely to do as we are told, but also to conform our will to that of the Superior in the conviction that he is right in the command which he gives. . . . Especially they ought to observe an exact obedience: first of all to their Rules and Constitutions . . . , secondly to all the orders and all the dispositions of their Superiors so that it may be said of them to have no will of their own, but to have given it into the hands of those placed in authority over them. . . ."⁷

Does that have anything in common with the resistance, too little concealed, which put pressure on the superiors to surrender the needs of service and yield to the imperfection of the individual whom they feel they have to cater to? Where do we recognize holy detachment which readily acquiesces in everything that is prescribed: "prompt"; which humbly submits to those who have been put in charge to govern: "humble"? Where do we see the sacrifice which is not content with merely doing what has been commanded, but which induces a person to conform his own judgment to the judgment made by the one who represents God among us? St. Ignatius says in his maxims: *A religious soul must see God in his superiors in order to carry out their orders and to honour their dignity. It must be convinced that obedience is a guide who never leads astray and an oracle which cannot delude. . . . In all things that do not involve sin, one has to follow the judgment of one's superiors and not one's own. One has to be in their hands like soft wax which takes on the form that they want. One should consider oneself like a dead body which of itself does not move.*

⁶ CC & RR, 1853, pars II, cap. II, parag. I, art. 1, 2, 3.

⁷ *Ibid.*, pars II, cap. I, parag. III, art. 1, 2, 3, 5

St. Francis Xavier, for his part, adds: *You must submit your will and judgment to your superiors, trusting that God will inspire them, as far as you are concerned, with what will be most useful to you.*

And what happens when murmuring and complaining is added to these grave imperfections in the domain of obedience? The most characteristic example of disorder, a deplorable and intolerable state which has to be ended as soon as possible, even by severe censures, if persuasion and remonstrances do not suffice.

Have we nothing to blame ourselves for in the area of holy poverty which, no more than obedience, may be only an imaginary thing in our Congregation. What does the Rule say about it? "Voluntary poverty [has been regarded by all the Founders of religious Orders] as the foundation and basis of all perfection. . . ." That is already enough to estimate it at its proper value. Consequently, everything among us has to be after "the manner of the poor. . . . Out of love for poverty, we are to be content with a frugal fare. . . . Our rooms have to be small and their furniture plain. . . . The missionaries are to wear a simple and modest dress. . . . The cassock, one's coat and clothes are to be of common wool. . . . Each one procuring clothes as he likes them is forbidden. The Superior is to keep watch that everything be uniform."⁸ Is it not enough for religious who have made the vow of poverty to see themselves assured of their "nourishment" and "clothing"? The Apostles were content with that. Has not divine Providence provided us in all places with a hospitable roof which serves us as a dwelling, whereas our divine Master and Model had to say of himself that he had not *a stone whereon to lay his head*? Who then would dare to complain without being unjust if it should happen on occasion that one lacked something in regard to clothes, or food? Such would occur only in the case of men who are utterly dead to mortification for, thanks be to God, our houses provide everyone with more than is strictly necessary. I have deliberately recalled these important points of the Rule with the intention that in the future they be observed exactly, for no one under any pretext whatsoever is allowed to procure himself clothes according to his tastes.

The superiors have to take care of each one in perfect conformity either in terms of number or of quality, as is mentioned elsewhere, namely, in the regulations attached to this circular letter. And in regard to this topic, I want to point out that the article of the Rule which

⁸ *Ibid.*, pars II, cap. I, parag. I, intro., art. 4, 5, 6, 9, 13, 34, 35.

tolerates table-ware and watches in silver is not to be extended beyond that under any pretext; and I want to advise those who have to wear glasses to be content with a steel frame which the laity generally use.

What shall I say about the vow of chastity? To be true to this precious virtue, we must not consider it too much to observe faithfully all that the Rule prescribes in order to make us men of God, true religious; do not forget, I repeat, that “the whole life of the members of our Society ought to be a life of continual recollection. To attain this, they will first of all make an effort to walk always in the presence of God.”⁹

In addition, if one is not imbued with the spirit of mortification and penance, if one does not imitate all the saints from the Apostles until our time and strive to dominate the flesh, then one risks to become the plaything of concupiscence “which is at war in our members,” as the Apostle St. James puts it (IV, 1). Here too, let us look at what the Rule prescribes in this matter: “Since the ministers of the Gospel cannot hope to reap abundant fruits from their labors, unless they hold in highest esteem, and always bear about in their body the mortification of Christ, the members of our Society will earnestly wage war upon their natural inclinations. . . .”¹⁰

How can we reconcile such formal prescriptions with the conduct of some who are unable to impose any voluntary privation on themselves, who strive for ease and comfort in a state of life in which only death to self and to the inclinations of one’s nature should be the concern, and who so easily find excuses to exempt themselves from particular penances laid down by the Rule — for the Rule does not merely prescribe mortification in general, but it goes into detail in regard to this virtue: “they will fast, therefore. . . .”¹¹ Now, in order to comprehend that the desire of the Rule is not limited to this kind of mortification — though it does not want to determine anything respecting the other corporal penances, “which all the saints have ever regarded as so well calculated to bring their body into subjection”¹² — it places before you the practice and example of the saints and recommends that you imitate them: “Let our members emulate these examples”.¹³

⁹ *Ibid.*, pars II, cap. II, parag. I, art. 1, 2.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, pars II, cap. II, parag. III, art. 1.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, art. 2.

¹² *Ibid.*, art. 6.

¹³ *Ibid.*, art. 16.

That was understood in the beginning. With astonishment and sorrow we have learned that some of our men fail to recognize the spirit of our Institute and despise the traditional practice of the Congregation in this regard. They seem to want to relegate these salutary exercises of penance to the novitiate and scholasticate houses — a deplorable blindness due to sensuality, which hinders them from knowing that they have greater need of this preservative in the midst of the world where they have to give combat than do those young souls who are so full of fervor and are serving God in a context where they are withdrawn and far removed from every danger. Consequently, in accord with what I myself have laid down in several acts of visitation, I renew the order to ring the bell, on the day and hour determined by the superior, to indicate the space of time that is dedicated to bodily penance. From the very beginning the custom has been not to prolong this beyond the recitation of a *Miserere*. Shame on the lax who shrink from so slight a penance!

In the domain of mortification, we have also become too lax by allowing ourselves to accept meals outside of the community. And yet, the Rule is quite explicit on this point: “It is forbidden to eat outside the house” and the Superior is to allow it only “for good reasons and very rarely.”¹⁴ Otherwise, would we not be exposing ourselves to the dangers that the Rule wants the members of the Institute to avoid in regard to chastity? For on this point, in a few lines, the Rule says: “That is why they will be very prudent with women. They will not enter their houses, nor the houses of anyone at all, except for urgent motives, and never without the express permission of the superior, and then only with an appointed companion.”¹⁵

What wisdom in this rule of conduct! Is it not the formal condemnation of the regrettable license extracted from the weakness of certain local superiors who have allowed men to reside in the houses of laity where there are women under the pretext of restoring their health.

Why do we have to look outside to restore our health at the risk of one’s soul when, should need be, we can easily find a change of air in one of our houses, for God has granted us the favor of having them in every sort of climate? If a person really has the spirit of piety which ought to animate every member of the Congregation, he would not so

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, pars II, cap. III, parag. III, art. 14

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, pars II, cap. I, parag. II, art. 2, 3, 4, 5.

readily seek this kind of relief which presents so many dangers. One would dread to separate oneself from one's brethren, even for a short time and under specious pretexts; one would be attached to our communities as to the ark of salvation, as to the impregnable citadel from which it is important not to exit and thereby risk losing one's soul.

Now in order to appreciate the good fortune of living thus in community with brethren, great value has to be placed on all the religious observances. One has to love oraison, prayer, meditation, all the exercises which promote piety and maintain it in our souls; especially one has to offer the holy Sacrifice with fervor and guard against routine and rushing. Saying Mass badly is so great a disorder that I draw your attention in a special way on this point and remind superiors of their responsibility. The Rule says: "In accord with the reverence due to the sacred mysteries, etc., . . . they will spend half an hour, not much more, and not much less, in the celebration of Mass."¹⁶

I add that I regard haste in the celebration of the sacred Mysteries as a real scandal and, if need be, recourse to punishment should be taken against someone who is guilty of this. Thanks be to God, this remark applies only to a rather small number of our men.

There is, however, a deplorable habit of which a great number of our men are guilty. I urgently insist that the local superiors curb it forcefully. I am referring to the unfortunate mania of speaking without reflection, without charity, about everyone and everything. This lack of continence in our speech offends God and neighbor; it often brings about serious problems. First, one risks falling into cases reserved by the General Chapters in this regard;¹⁷ grave harm is often done to the reputation of family members, germs of disorder are sown among the brothers that are difficult to smother. The wound that is caused is often without remedy and it is not rare that great scandals result therefrom. As soon as a man arrives in a house, he is immediately surrounded, overwhelmed with questions about the personnel of the house that he has just left, about the superior's manner of governing, about each one's talents, character and shortcomings. In exchange for the indiscretions wheedled out of him, he is brought up to date of everything that is happening, countless suppositions are entertained, no one is spared.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, pars II, cap. III, parag. II, art. 4.

¹⁷ 1837 General Chapter, canon 21, no. 1: *Discordiarum seminatio inter Patres et Fratres*, etc. 1843 General Chapter, canon 3.

What we have here, briefly put, is gossip unworthy of men who are religious, of men who take this liberty almost without any scruple, so ingrained is this unfortunate habit. I stress this disorder, for it is only too common, and with the hope of seeing it radically corrected, because it deeply harms charity and is subversive of regular discipline in grave matter.

Good God! Do we not have ample reason to groan when we see so many means of salvation and sanctification that the Lord has provided us with in the Congregation, to which his mercy has called us by a choice of predilection, neutralized by infidelities that are so easy to avoid? I dread God's judgment on those who resist the good example of so many of their confreres who are walking in the ways of perfection and whose regular, edifying life draws down God's blessing on our persons and our works. That will not be the case. . . . In response to my plea, let each one look into himself, examine himself; and if he finds that some of the observations, which the duty of my position and my love for all whom God has given me as children [have obliged me to make known], apply to him, let him thank the Lord for revealing this to him, let him correct himself immediately and let him take resolutions that are so efficacious that he will always adhere to them thereafter. Then our dear Congregation will everywhere spread the good odor of Jesus Christ and will accomplish the mission it has to fulfill in the Church.

Is there, in fact, any need that I insist further and outline a rule of conduct for you? Do you not have in your code all that is required to reach the perfection of your sacred state? Read this precious book diligently, attentively; meditate its maxims, advice, counsels, the precepts it contains, and you will save your souls as you work for the sanctification of others. And thus you will receive the double award that is promised to the faithful servant who worthily acquits himself of his duty: *maxime qui laborant in verbo et doctrina*.¹⁸

When someone reads these lines, he may be tempted to ask whether our Congregation is not, already in its youth, on the point of falling into the decadence of certain corrupt orders. No, thank God, such is not the case. [The majority] of you live holy lives in the exact observance of your Rule and carefully abstain from all the faults I have mentioned in this circular letter. The spectacle of the apostates, how-

¹⁸ "Principally those who labor in preaching and teaching" (1 Timothy 5:17).

ever, whose loss we have to deplore, have led me to reflect on the path they followed before falling into the abyss and, having to admit that most of them were at first men of regularity and even fervent, I noticed that they began by being unfaithful in matters considered insignificant and, with one fault after the other, came to be disgusted with their vocation, and this was soon followed by a complete betrayal of their sacred commitments; and so by calling the imperfect back to the practice of their duties, I want to divert them from the misfortune that threatens them if they persist in this path.

Now I have only to speak of the regular system that is to be established everywhere for the administration of the Congregation's temporal goods and the uniformity that is to be introduced in our clothing and dress, in accord with what has just been decreed by the General Chapter. I felt it was better to deal with these matters in a separate regulation which I have approved and is attached to the present circular letter.

Given at Marseilles, on the 2nd day of the month of February, feast of the purification of the most holy and immaculate Virgin Mary, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and fifty-seven.

† C. J. Eugene de Mazenod, Bishop of Marseilles, sup. gen.

P.S. One will be pleased in the Congregation to learn that the Holy See has granted it a new favor. We have several times heard our men remark that it would be desirable that, because of the title the Congregation bears in God's Church, it might receive some special means to propagate among the faithful devotion to the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin. This desire was expressed more formally in the General Chapter held during the month of August last, and that with such an insistence that we felt it was our duty to take steps in Rome in view of responding to it. Consequently, we addressed a petition to our Holy Father the Pope, requesting that our Congregation be granted the privilege of the Clerics Regular who are called Theatines in regard to the blue scapular of the Immaculate Conception. This request, which our dear Bishop of Olympia on the occasion of his trip to Rome had himself handed to the Holy Father through the intermediary of Cardinal Barnabò, Prefect of "Propaganda Fide" and our devoted friend, was favorably received; and a little later we received from the Cardinal Prefect a letter which contained Pius IX's favorable response to our petition.

By virtue of this communication with the Theatines, our Congregation henceforth enjoys all the privileges, graces and indulgences which were granted to them for the scapular of the Immaculate Conception, in regard to faithful of both sexes. This means that our men have the faculty of receiving this scapular, of forming associations with all the prerogatives attached to this scapular and under the same conditions. In order to attain more surely the goal we have had in view, we shall soon publish a brief notice on the nature of the scapular of the Immaculate Conception, the indulgences that enrich it, as well as the other favors proper to the devotion towards this glorious privilege of our heavenly Mother and patroness.¹⁹

Circular Letter no. 3²⁰

Presentation of the French text of the Constitutions and Rules to be used by the Oblate Brothers

Marseilles, August 15, feast of the Assumption
of the Blessed Virgin Mary, in the year 1859.

CHARLES-JOSEPH-EUGENE DE MAZENOD

*Bishop of Marseilles, Superior General of
the Oblates*

of the Most Holy and Immaculate Virgin Mary, etc.

To our dear sons, the Lay Brothers of the Congregation

Greetings and Blessing in our Lord Jesus Christ.

Ever since the second edition of our Constitutions and Rules has been published according to the copy recently examined and approved by our Holy Father, Pope Pius IX, we have been thinking of printing for the use of the Lay Brothers of our Congregation an extract in French of these same Constitutions and Rules. Thus we appointed two

¹⁹ There then follow the texts of: the petition of Bishop de Mazenod to Pius IX (undated); the Pope's reply of September 21, 1856; a letter from Cardinal Barnabò, dated September 30, 1856.

²⁰ Printed text, without the no. 3, at the beginning of *Règles et Constitutions à l'usage des frères convers.* . . . published at Marseilles, Marius Olive, 1859, 126 pages. Oblate General Archives.

Fathers to take this task in hand. They have carried it out with all the attention and care that it merits, using as their guide the original French text which we ourselves had composed in the first years of the Congregation. Once this translation was completed, we designated one of our Assistants, the Secretary General of the Institute, to supervise its printing. Today, as this latter task draws to an end, we wanted by means of the present promulgation to confer on this publication an authentic character. We give you then this book, dear sons. It contains an exact translation of all the parts of the Rules and Constitutions which directly concern you as well as those which, though not referring to you in the same manner, are nevertheless suited to edify you and to give you a higher esteem and greater affection both for your holy vocation and for the Society to which you have the good fortune of belonging.

So that nothing might be wanting in this book of the Rules for the Lay Brothers, we added to it as a complement some paragraphs where you will find expressed clearly and in detail how you are to conduct yourselves in regard to the various material tasks you have to perform in the houses of the Congregation. Finally, we also wanted this book to contain the Bull of Approval of the Rules and the Institute given by our Holy Father, Pope Leo XII, our distinguished benefactor, so that you will at all times be able to read it and thus renew yourselves in the appreciation of your vocation.

Now what else do we have to say to you, my dear Brothers? Only that you receive this book as coming from him you also love to call by the gentle name of Father, or rather from the hand of our Lord Jesus Christ, whose place he takes here on earth, and that you receive it with all the respect and love that you can muster. This book is the law according to which you will pattern your entire conduct; it is the sacred code according to which you will be judged after this life before the supreme tribunal. Therefore observe all its articles faithfully; accomplish generously everything it prescribes and avoid with the greatest care the negligences it condemns and the failings it points out in the fulfillment of your duties. Thus you will accomplish every righteousness and one day you will merit to hear from the mouth of the divine Master these consoling words: *Well done, good and faithful servant, because you have been faithful in little things, I shall set you over greater things: enter into the joy of your Lord.*

† Charles-Joseph-Eugene,
Bishop of Marseilles, Superior General.

Circular Letter no. 4²¹

Death of Father Casimir Aubert, Assistant and Secretary General of the Congregation.

Marseilles, February 1, 1860.

My dear sons, Fathers and Brothers of M.I.,

In the profound sorrow which overwhelms and rends my heart, I have no greater consolation than that which comes from your charity and filial love. You understood the state of desolation into which the blow that has just struck us has cast my soul and in your kindness you sustained me and softened the bitterness of my sorrow, calmed my anxiety and dried my tears. Be blessed, my sons! I pray God that he will reward you for the good that you have shown me by giving you longer life so that you may increase the merits of your ministry in a long succession of years spent serving the Church from within our dear family. This, wish, my dear children, is inspired by reflection on the immense loss we have just sustained through the premature death of our well-beloved and forever regretted Father Aubert.²² He had scarcely entered into his fiftieth year when he was so unexpectedly taken away from us. How much good the Church and the Congregation could have expected to receive if the precious life of this indefatigable worker in the Lord's vineyard had been prolonged! You know his zeal and devotedness, his great piety, modesty, rare intelligence, the steadfastness of his principles tempered by the gentleness and graciousness of his amiable character, his love for regularity, spirit of mortification, detachment from the things of earth, his charity for all his brothers and the constant desire that was his to serve each one. His entire life was dedicated to the good welfare of the Congregation for whose benefit we can say he sacrificed himself. When we consider that the fervor of this elite soul dates from his early childhood and never wavered throughout the whole course of his too brief life, we have reason to mourn when we see this living example of all the virtues taken away from us just when his collaboration was such a necessity. Is this murmuring that comes forth from within me? Oh, dear God, no! I know that you have nothing but designs of mercy for your elect and that the one you have called to yourself had apparently already filled

²¹ Printed, without the no. 4, Rome, Postulation Archives, D M IX, 5.

²² Deceased at Marseilles on January 17, 1860.

the measure of merit you required to crown him in Heaven and to have him share your glory. May this dear son, this Father protect us from Heaven. He leaves too great a void in the family and so we weep and, at the same time, we congratulate ourselves on the happiness he now possesses. So let us repeat the word that is capable of calming us in our just sorrow: *Fiat voluntas tua*.

My dear sons, I would have liked to be able to write directly in my own hand to each one of you, to thank you personally for the good that your letters did to me. After some attempts, however, I had to admit, as I am so overburdened with never-ending business matters, I shall never manage to pay off the debt which I have contracted through your filial love. On the other hand, a silence that is too prolonged may have hurt you, for you have so opened yourselves to my woe. I have therefore decided to send you this common letter which will express to each of you both my gratitude for the kind attention you gave to ease the sorrow of your aged Father and all the affection for you that fills my heart, to the point that I could not possibly love you more. Accept this assurance, my dear children, and receive my fatherly blessing.

† Charles Joseph Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles,
Superior General.

Circular Letter no. 5²³

All Oblates are asked to give their opinion about the project of affiliation with the Association of the Holy Family of Bordeaux.

Marseilles, November 16, 1860.

My Reverend Fathers,

Most of you are already aware of the important work founded in Bordeaux by the Abbé Noailles, known as the Holy Family.

You are also aware that this pious Founder wanted and still wants to place his work under our direction.

The Sisters of Hope who take care of the sick, the Sisters of the Conception who are in charge of schools, hospitals and homes for the

²³ Polycopied text, without the no. 5. Rome, Postulation Archives, D M IX, 5.

homeless, the Ladies of Loretto who look after boarding institutions, the Ladies of St. Joseph who are running several orphanages, the St. Marthas, referred to as the serving Sisters, the Farming Sisters and one or two houses of Hermits are like so many branches of the same tree to which they are attached by common rules, the same aspirations and a single authority.

God has marvellously blessed this foundation. The pious Founder has seen his children multiply beyond all expectation. He now counts them by the thousands. Their devotedness extends to everything and thus seems to include all the different kinds of work that responds to the zeal of women. Many houses already exist in France and outside of France; everywhere they are doing good work and have acquired an excellent reputation.

Concerned as he was to assure the future of such an important work, the pious Founder felt the need to have it sustained by an already existing religious corporation.

With this in mind, how he came to think of giving preference to us over so many other congregations who would have accepted, as we know, more than I can tell you.²⁴ I simply adore the designs of Providence. The fact is that a request reached us from the hand and patronage of His Eminence the Cardinal of Bordeaux; it was also most strongly supported by Archbishop Guibert of Tours, whose devotedness to the Congregation you all know.

Mr. Noailles asked that the Superior General of the Oblates, in adopting the Holy Family, would in perpetuity take it under his direction and be its Superior General, however with the faculty of having himself represented by one of our Fathers, and in the way our Fathers would become, under the latter's direction, the [Association's] spiritual directors.

A proposal of this nature, coming as it does from such a man as the Founder of the Holy Family and supported by such recommendations was worthy to be taken into serious consideration.

²⁴ On the various efforts made by the Good Father to affiliate his Association to a religious Congregation of priests, cf. Yvon BEAUDOIN and Sister Monserrat PALAU, *Nouveau dossier sur la vie et les vertus du S. de D. P. B. Noailles*, Rome, Congregation for the Causes of the Saints, 1985, chap. IV; and H. TASSEL, "Oblats de M.I. et Sœurs de la Sainte-Famille de Bordeaux. Une page d'histoire", in *Études Oblates*, XI (1952), pp. 297-311.

We prayed, had others pray and, after having fully reflected together with my Council, we came to the conclusion that we should accept.

For it seemed to us that if, on the one hand, the Holy Family would find in the implementation of this project a real support, precious assistance, a direction that remains the same and, in consequence, true guarantees for the future, on the other hand, by uniting themselves to us and placing themselves under the authority of our Superior General, the Holy Family was handing us an already powerful instrument with which to do good, was coming as a natural help to us, and would often supplement us in a multitude of our own works, and would also open up a vast and fruitful field to the zeal and piety of our Fathers.

To elaborate on these considerations here would serve no purpose; you yourselves will easily supplement for what we do not say.

We thus see in this offer a distinct sign of Providence and with the advice of my Council I signed an agreement which was one of acceptance.

This was done in January 1858.

Since that time, even though according to this agreement the venerable Founder is to retain until his death the full direction of his work, we have in a way taken the first steps towards this union.

One of our Fathers is living with the venerable Founder and is helping him in the work of this immense direction.²⁵

Several of our Fathers are assigned to the spiritual direction of different houses of the Association. In most of the communities, the annual retreats are preached by our Fathers.

From all this a mutual and deeper knowledge of the two works has resulted and everyone can understand the precious advantages that the proposed union will necessarily bring about.

We believe, my Reverend Fathers, that the time has come to ensure the execution of the signed agreement and ask the Congregation for its approval of the union that I have just described to you.²⁶

²⁵ Father Charles Bellon.

²⁶ The Founder felt the need to consult the Congregation. As a matter of fact, the 1818 Rules had forbidden Oblates to be confessors or ordinary directors of communities of religious women (1er partie, chap. 2, parag. 1, art. 16). The 1827 and 1853 editions had retained this prohibition (pars 1, cap. 2, parag. 1, art. 23).

Consequently, in our desire to know the Congregation's thought on this matter, we are addressing the present circular letter to all the Provincials and Vicars of Mission so that they in turn send a copy of it to all the houses of their province or vicariate.

After he has familiarized himself with it, the superior of each house will as soon as possible bring together all the Fathers present in his house who have at least three years of oblation.

When the Fathers have thus assembled and the *Veni Creator* has been recited, the Superior will read our letter to them; after that, he will simply receive the opinion of each and will note it down in a report that is to be immediately forwarded to the Provincial or Vicar of Mission.

The latter will then promptly send us the different reports together with their own opinion. Serious reasons urge us to see that this matter may be concluded as quickly as possible.²⁷

Receive, dear Father, the assurance of my deep affection and my fatherly blessing.

† C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles,
Superior General.

**Circular Letter no. 6
on the affiliation with
the Sister of the Holy Family of Bordeaux²⁸**

Death of Father Noailles. The General Council of Mary recognizes as its first head the Superior General of the Oblates and proposes Father Charles Bellon for the title of pro-director. Main points of the affilia-

²⁷ Father Noailles was ill; he died on February 8, 1861.

²⁸ Printed: Rome, Postulation Archives, DMIX, 5. This circular letter has the no. 5. This number designates the fifth letter published in *Circulaires administratives des Supérieurs Généraux* . . . from 1861 onwards. The first four were written by Father Tempier (January 17th and 30th; February 10 and March 7th, 1861) on the Founder's illness. This one was composed by Father Vincens. Cf. obituary notice by Father Fabre, *Notices néc. O.M.I.*, VII, p. 494.

tion treaty. Rules of conduct for Fathers who will be ministering to the Sisters. Branches and works of the Holy Family.

L.J.C. et M.I.

Marseilles, March 15, 1861.

My reverend and dear Fathers,

Barely a few months ago, we addressed to you a circular letter regarding a matter of the highest importance: the proposed union with the *Holy Family*.

Your replies were fortunately not long in coming. We have them all in hand, even those from the foreign missions — all except those of the vicariates of St. Boniface and of Natal. The Fathers there are located at such great distances from each other that, to our great regret, in view of the circumstances, we cannot count on their votes which, as far as that goes, would not occasion any notable change since your viewpoint is almost unanimous.

Generally speaking, your replies are such as we expected them to be. You either approve quite simply or else you trust yourself to our own wisdom. There are very few conflicting voices which to us seem to be refusing something that was not at all requested.

This consent, which we had made a condition in the treaty of affiliation, was necessary to us as an assurance in a matter which, while presenting real advantages, seemed at first sight to be counter to my own views and to remove us from the spirit of our vocation.

It would seem that God has himself chosen to dissipate our doubts.

One could say, in fact, that he was only waiting for the verification of this condition before he would call to himself the Founder of the *Holy Family* to crown his merits and to put the final seal to the proposed union.

As early as February 10th, two days after the death of the Good Father, we received the following letter which you will certainly read with holy emotion:

My Lord and Reverend Father,

You undoubtedly already know the sorrowful loss we have just sustained in the person of our well-beloved Father and Founder. In

spite of the profound sorrow into which we are immersed, in spite of the sad thoughts that preoccupy us, we cannot lose from sight the duty which we have to fulfill towards your Lordship.

And first of all, allow us to say how fervent are the hopes and wishes we entertain for the restoration of your precious health. While removing from us the kindest and best of Fathers, may God be pleased to keep for us him to whom we are bound by ties that are all the stronger because they have been fashioned by our venerated Founder himself.

I shall limit myself, my Lord, by communicating to you an extract from the deliberations of the General Council of Mary, which has met today, for the purpose of setting out in the direction that the treaty of Affiliation points out for us.

EXTRACT OF THE DELIBERATIONS *of the General Council of Mary*

Today, February 8, 1861, Mother Octavie Daudigeos, Permanent President of the General Council of Mary, called into meeting the general councillors of Mary present in Bordeaux, for the purpose of carrying out, as far as they are concerned, the sole clause of the affiliation treaty that remains to be implemented.

She explained the necessity into which the painful circumstances have placed us to embark immediately upon the route so explicitly charted by our beloved and forever regretted Father.

In the same line as she had taken, all the Council members emphatically affirmed that their most ardent desire was to conform fully and entirely to the perfectly well-known will of our venerated Founder.

After the said treaty of affiliation had been read aloud, and particularly articles 3, 4 and 5, from which it follows that by the sole fact of the death of the Founder of the Holy Family the Superior General of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate becomes, by right and in perpetuity, the Director General of the Association of the Holy Family, all the Council members declared that they recognize as their first Head the said Superior General of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate, and that they consider themselves to be the obedient and devoted daughters of him whom their venerated Founder has designated to replace him in the government of the Associations' members and works.

After article 28 of the treaty of affiliation had been read, all the Council members again declared that they gave their full and entire adherence as mentioned in that same article, aware as they were that the Superior General was for his part working to implement this clause.

It was decided that the Permanent President of the General Council of Mary would communicate to the Superior General of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate this extract of the deliberations with the intention:

1^o – to offer his Lordship the assurance of submission and obedience that all the General Councillors of Mary send to him in all sincerity;

2^o – to remind his Lordship that, according to the terms of the treaty, he is to have himself substituted in the administration of the *Holy Family* by one of his own men, who will reside in the centre of our Association and administer it with full authority under the dependence and direction of the Superior General;

In this respect, the members of the General Council have unanimously expressed the wish that the Reverend Father Bellon, who has been in a position to comprehend better our venerated Father's ideas and sentiments and upon whom this good Father seemed to rely with so much confidence and affection, especially during this last illness, be the one whom the Superior General designates as his representative;

3^o – the Council members also take the liberty to draw the Superior General's attention to article 17 of the treaty of affiliation according to which one of the Assistants General attached to the person of the Superior General is to be designated to concern himself officially with matters pertaining to the *Holy Family*;

4^o – Finally, one last formality must be attended to: the oath which, according to the general rules and article 5 of the treaty of affiliation, the new Director General of the Association of the *Holy Family* is to take when he assumes his duties of office either in person or through his representative.

Deign to accept, my Lord, our filial and respectful submission; we want to be your most devoted and obedient children. Be a good Father to us; help us by your prayers and paternal affection to bear the weight of our profound and so legitimate sorrow and be so kind as to accept

the expression of the veneration filled with respect with which I have the honor to be

Your Lordship's most humble and
obedient servant and daughter,
Octavie Daudigeos,
Permanent President of the General Council of Mary.

Bordeaux, February 8, 1861.

As you can well imagine, reverend and dear Fathers, upon receipt of such a letter, there was no reason at all to delay.

Though seriously ill, two days later I wanted my Council to meet in order to take cognizance of this letter, to verify your assent by studying your reports, and to take a definitive decision.

Acceptance was unanimously voted and on the same day I authorized the Reverend Father Bellon to assume, on my behalf and that of my successors, the duty of Director General of the *Holy Family*.

Such being the situation, Reverend Fathers and Brothers, we deem it necessary to give you some explanations which will be useful to direct your conduct in this new state of affairs.

Here, first of all, are the main elements of the treaty which serve as a basis to this union.

First article. – A spiritual association is now formed between the Congregation of the Oblate Fathers of Mary Immaculate and the Association of the *Holy Family* which consists of different Works or Branches related to it.

... These different Branches will continue to form only one united whole. All will be equally subject to the general rules and to the particular rules which their Founder has given them, as well as to one and the same direction which originates with the Director General or his representative and is transmitted by the one superior whom the rules indicate under the title of General Directress.

Art. 2. – As a consequence of this affiliation, the two Societies will henceforth form only one as to the spiritual domain and there will be communications of merit and privileges to the degree that the different positions render possible.

Art. 3. – The Superior General of the Oblates gives his consent, for himself and his successors, to accept the government of the *Holy Family* as he does for his own Congregation.

Art. 11. – The Superior General of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate will direct the Holy Family according to the constitutions and rules given to this Association by its Founder.

Art. 15. – In the administration of the Holy Family, the Superior General will be substituted by one of his own men who is to reside in the centre of the *Holy Family* and who will carry out his administration with the full authority of the Director General according to the rules of the Association, but always under the direction and dependence of the Superior General.

Art. 16. – The representative of the Superior General can be removed at his will.

Art. 17. – One of the Assistants attached to the person of the Superior General will be designated to concern himself officially with the *Holy Family* affairs. Administrative measures concerning the Holy Family's members and works ought normally to pass through the representative and the General Directress.

Art. 18. – The four assistants of the Superior General will also be assistants in regard to the Holy Family in all matters that are forwarded to the Superior General's Council.

Art. 19. – The provincials, vicars of mission and local superiors will not by right have any authority over the provinces and houses of the *Holy Family*; the Superior General, however, will be free to delegate this authority to them in a transitory manner as visitors.

Art. 20. – In towns where both an Oblate House and a community of the *Holy Family* are located, whenever possible an Oblate Father will be entrusted with the spiritual direction of this community.

Art. 21. – The Director General is not bound to give spiritual directors of the Congregation to all the communities of the *Holy Family*; but he will see to it that the Sisters are not deprived of the spiritual aid that they need.

Art. 22. – Nevertheless, in order that the Sisters may find in these holy exercises instructions that are more in line with their vocation, the annual retreats will as much as possible be preached by Oblate Fathers.

Art. 23. – The temporal goods of the two branches of the Congregation remain completely distinct.

Art. 26. – Finally, as a consequence of this affiliation, the two works will see each other as forming but one single family and will

reciprocally render each other all the good services that their respective positions allow them to offer or to claim.

My Reverend and dear Fathers, these are the main articles of the treaty which served as the basis for the affiliation which we have just contracted.

It is easy to deduce therefrom the kind of zeal and devotedness with the two works ought to help each other in temporal and spiritual matters; since they now have but one Father, they will truly constitute one and the same family.

We do not see it necessary to give you an exhortation in this regard. The spirit of charity, zeal and holiness that we have tried to inspire in all our children guarantees that in all circumstances the *Holy Family* will find in you priests according to God's heart as well as devoted Fathers. Here are some points, however, that should be kept in mind.

Please note, first of all, that only the Superior General and his representative exercise authority in regard to the *Holy Family*. Consequently, except for a special delegation, no one, no matter what position he may fill in the Congregation, will have to concern himself with the works or members of the *Holy Family*.

You will surely before God show a lively interest in those whose merits you share. You will pray for them, you will consider yourself fortunate to be able to help them, to find vocations for them, to contribute to the success of their works; but never, unless specially authorized thereto or with an explicit invitation, are you to meddle in their works, even under the pretext of exercising your holy ministry.

The more the bonds that unite us are close and sacred, the more reserve and discretion are necessary in our relationship.

Thus, when travelling, the Sister superiors of the various communities will certainly be glad to receive your visit, to open their chapels to you for celebrating the sacred Mysteries; they will be concerned to help you as we will consider ourselves happy to render them some service; but you will never stay with them and, unless their chaplain is well-known to you or you have received an explicit invitation to do so, you will not stay with him either.

Likewise, as a general rule, you will not ask to see any individual Sister; or, in certain cases when you have sufficient reasons to request this, you will explain these to the superior in all simplicity and the latter will decide what is appropriate.

For the same reasons, there will be no correspondence with the different members of the *Holy Family*, except with explicit permission.

Secondly, since it is extremely important that the spiritual direction of the Sisters retain a unity which is its strength and security, you will take care not to attract individual dirigées to yourselves from the houses of the *Holy Family*; nor will you offer yourselves to hear confessions there, except when authorized thereto by your superiors or upon a special invitation from the Sister Superior.

On the other hand, the superiors of our different houses will readily be prepared to render, either in person or through the men under their jurisdiction, all the services they can to the communities of the *Holy Family*.

The ministry we will most often have to exercise among our Sisters will be retreats.

Those of our Fathers who will be assigned to this important task will do all they can to prepare themselves and to be fit to accomplish this service in a most fruitful manner.

We shall be breaking the bread of the Word for Sisters and that ought to be a consolation for us. Since, however, this sublime ministry is beset with difficulties, nobody will undertake it on his own responsibility, but everyone will leave it completely up to the superiors to call them thereto and to designate the communities to be thus evangelized.

My Reverend and dear Fathers, in these retreats you will beware against every particular bias and preconceived ideas. You go there not to make your views prevail, not at all to introduce a new spirit, but to reanimate your Sisters in the spirit of their vocation. You will remember that the main purpose of a religious retreat is to bring people back to regularity, to draw them closer to their superiors, to revive the spirit of piety and abnegation, by maintaining above all the fervent devotedness which, so to speak, is the very essence of the vocation of the *Holy Family* Sisters.

It is possible that you may be consulted about changing Institutes. Generally speaking, this is a very dangerous temptation, a snare laid for souls in an effort to have them return to the world. But especially in cases where you feel you ought to favor a change, take care not to set yourselves up as masters and even take care to conceal your doubts. One cannot make a definite decision about a Sister's future after seeing her only once or twice and having heard only her side of the story.

There is no need, my dear Fathers, to tell you with what reserve you ought to conduct yourselves toward the Sisters during the time of the retreat. *In omnibus exhibeamus nosmetipsos tanquam Dei ministros*. This maxim is sufficient. I only want to add that you will carefully avoid establishing relationships which are meant to last beyond the time of these holy exercises. Let us do good while we are there doing the work, *let us withdraw as soon as we have finished* and then let us limit ourselves to pray for the souls to whom it was granted us to do some good.

Some of our Fathers who are qualified to do this kind of ministry may be called upon to undertake the spiritual direction of *Holy Family* communities located near our houses. You are aware of the importance that we attach to such a position.

Many reasons motivate a good priest to concern himself with devotedness to souls that are solely dedicated to procuring God's glory and the neighbor's sanctification.

In the case of our own men, other more powerful reasons join the more general motives. Henceforth, the works of the *Holy Family* are our works, their merit is added to ours, their success is our own. These Sisters are working for us. And what good work they do!

Let us tell you, my dear Fathers, that the zealous Founder of the *Holy Family* had undertaken the task of sending his devoted daughters wherever there was good that needed to be done, however difficult its accomplishment may have seemed.

The Association of the *Holy Family* has its Hermits who, far removed from the world's noise, pray without ceasing for us and for poor sinners.

It has its Sisters of Hope who enter the dwelling of the dying wicked person, will take her place near the bed of his suffering, and watch day and night in an effort to win his soul through the power of charity and abnegation.

It has its humble Farming Sisters who will condemn themselves to the most difficult manual work, to tilling the fields, in order to teach the children of good farmers to love their farm, their work, and God.

The Sister of the *Holy Family* teaches the child of the poor in modest schools; likewise, in the midst of our most populated cities, she opens boarding schools to which the highest classes send their children to receive the benefit of a Christian education.

We see her visiting the needy in their homes, serving him in hospitals, opening homes for him, directing workshops, establishing orphanages, and, finally, developping abnegation to such a degree that, under the name of Sister of St. Martha, she will become a maid-servant out of love for Jesus Christ. Souls who can offer themselves to all these kinds of devotedness are truly daughters of God alone. The merits of such a life must be abundant and, since a portion of them are shared by us, we have all sorts of reason to promote the good success of these works.

It is therefore our task to work ardently at sanctifying these elite souls, to encourage their zeal, to sustain them in suffering and trials, to find devoted members for them, to neglect nothing on our part which would hinder our Sisters from finding in the *Holy Family* all the means of perfection that they came to discover there.

We shall therefore apply ourselves with a holy earnestness to fulfill this important ministry.

On the other hand, you will always keep in mind the rules of wisdom that ought to guide your conduct:

1^o – First, it is from us, through the intermediary of our Provincials, that you will receive your mission and you will not cease from being placed under the dependence and direction of your ordinary superiors.

Our representative to the *Holy Family*, the General Pro-Director, has no authority over you, but in a spirit of respect and deference for him, you will gratefully receive his advice, observations and the direction that he may wish to give you on the best way of fulfilling your important functions.

2^o – To assure unity in an Association that is so vast and made up of such different elements, the general direction of the houses and members must come from the centre.

Not only will you refrain from thwarting this course, but you will also strive to bring back thereto those who may be tempted to withdraw from it.

3^o – The Sister superior of each house must, under her Superior General, enjoy full and entire authority. You are not to meddle with the government of the houses. You have no permission or dispensation to give, to order to give in anything that is under the jurisdiction of the

Sister superior. Your constant concern should be to draw all members close to this salutary authority.

40 – Consequently, you must never forget that the members being open to the superiors is a basic point in every religious community. Their happiness and security rests almost exclusively on this practice.

We can even affirm that this total openness is even more necessary in the *Holy Family* than it is elsewhere. In the various tasks that the sublime devotedness of this Association has undertaken, the members risk the greatest dangers if they do not care to make sure that they are well known.

The direction given by the confessor cannot replace that of the superior. We help people to sanctify themselves in the situation in which they are; we cannot do anything to change or modify that situation. Consequently, convinced as we are of the importance of that regular direction, we will do all we can to encourage it among the members.

50 – Generally speaking, you will make the effort to be imbued with the spirit of the *Holy Family's* constitutions and you will always conform yourselves to the same in your direction.

On the other hand, keeping in mind the world's malice and the weakness of certain people plus our own, and want to keep intact the honor of our dear Congregation, we will conduct ourselves towards our Sisters with a great deal of prudence and an extreme reserve.

Generally speaking, you should see the Sisters only in the tribunal of penance. Too many parlor visits occasion miseries, pave the way for criticisms and are not without their dangers.

Finally, my Reverend and dear Fathers, we are deeply convinced that the *Holy Family*, if well directed, will continue to be a powerful instrument for the salvation of souls; that it will be one of the glories of the Congregation, but on the condition that, as we become fathers to these spouses of Jesus Christ, who are meant to be angels on earth, we ourselves feel the need to fill ourselves more and more with God's spirit, to detach ourselves totally from all human sentiment, all self-seeking, and to live only for Jesus Christ.

My dear Fathers, I am very happy to add that my health is improving, though quite slowly. I take this occasion to thank you for your good prayers and I bless you and all the members of the family with the tenderness of a Father.

† Charles-Joseph-Eugene,
Bishop of Marseilles
Superior General of the Congregation of
the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate.

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