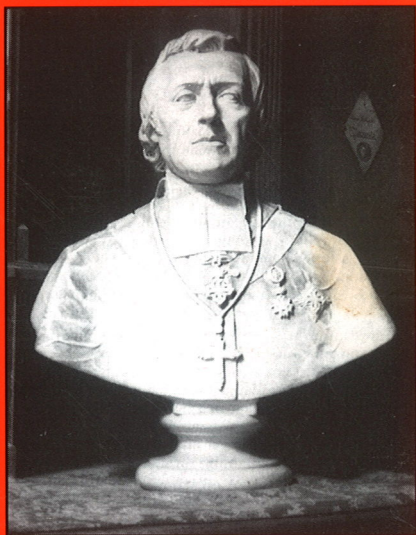


Saint EUGENE de MAZENOD

# DIARY 1838





Collection *Oblate Writings* 19

**Saint EUGENE de MAZENOD**

**DIARY**  
**1838**

Translated by Francis Santucci, O.M.I.  
and  
Edward Carolan, O.M.I.

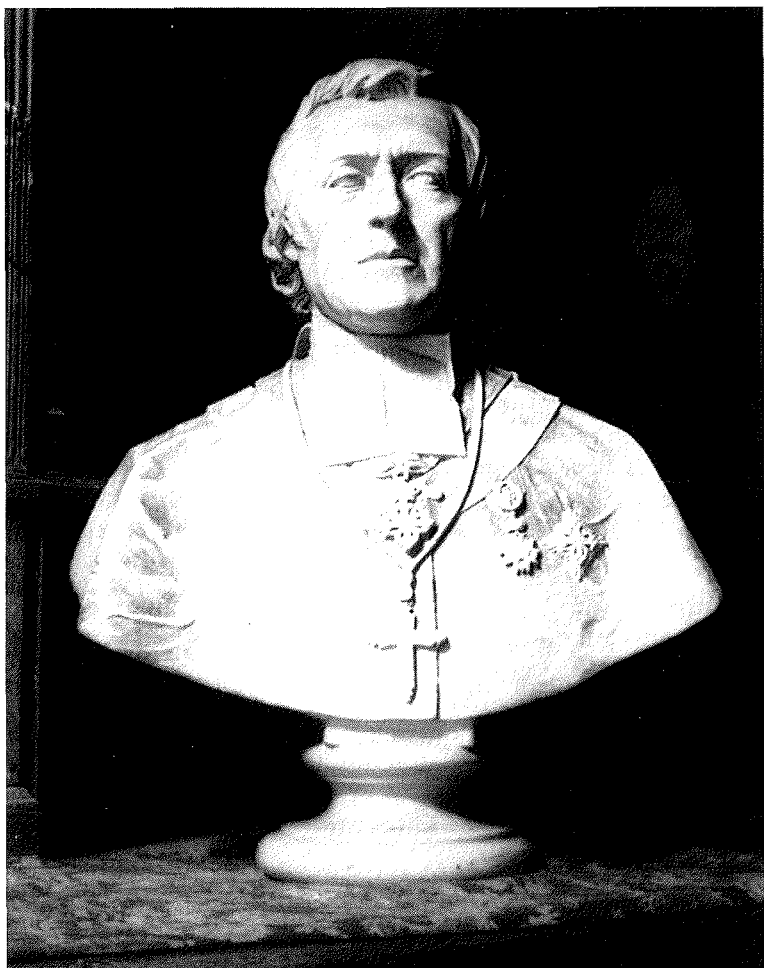
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Bust of Bishop Eugene de Mazenod.  
Original in bronze by Maurel, metal worker in Marseilles.





## INTRODUCTION

*In 1837, to respond to the insistent urging of Father Tempier, Bishop de Mazenod began the practice of writing daily one or two pages, or only a few lines, of what we refer to as his Diary. He tried to keep a record of daily events, probably also for himself as a kind of aide-memoire. This is what makes the Diary a writing that has its own special style which we must receive just as it is: for it contains notes on the day's work, on people he met, his concerns, and, at the same time, it is almost like an examination of conscience, thus bringing up to date sentiments revealed only in this writing and which dignity ought to have kept hidden...*

*The Introduction to the 1837 Diary tried to express these few notions. It cautioned against a too strict an evaluation of this writing. May we again invite the reader to read it with intelligence and understanding. Beyond expressions, at times somewhat strong and manifesting a sensitivity surprisingly formulated, we need to discover the life of a man, a man of faith, of a bishop whom the Church has acknowledged to be a saint.*

*The manuscript notebooks of the 1838 Diary have come down to us<sup>1</sup>. Here, for the first time, they are published and that integrally. Bishop de Mazenod mentions many letters addressed to the cler-*

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<sup>1</sup> Orig. Oblate General Archives, JM notebooks 5, 6, and 7. We have on hand the manuscripts of the 1838, 1839 and 1840 Diaries; in 1839, however, Bishop de Mazenod did not keep a diary from June 9 (trip to Italy) till November 9; likewise in 1840 he made no entries from February 12 (illness and death of his uncle Fortune) until the end of July.

gy and to the civil authorities. Five samples of these are given in the appendix to this volume. In these letters we meet especially “the intellectual”: a man capable of making an argument, to defend a thesis, to expound the different aspects of a problem and to propose solutions. We will also refer to *Oblate Writings* where 28 letters of 1838 are addressed to the Oblates of France<sup>2</sup>.

When we read these letters we are struck by the number and diversity of the Bishop’s activities. New enthusiasm is spurring him on. The pessimism of the year 1837, together with his frequent health problems, is replaced by what one could call a rediscovered apostolic vitality and a surprising capacity for work: he is still able to write several pages in his *Diary* after well-filled days during which he had received and written several letters, welcomed visitors and visited parishes, institutions or different persons.

For example, he mentions 277 letters he received, 107 of which from Oblates<sup>3</sup>, and 194 lettres written, 50 of which addressed to Oblates<sup>4</sup>. He did not, however, mention all the letters received or written<sup>5</sup>. Sometimes he simply writes: “Letters upon letters” (January 20), “letters received and written” (January 27, June 30, July 6), “I closeted myself in my office to clean off my desk a little” (September 8). On November 24 he received a letter from Father Mille who writes him “the most touching things” about Father

<sup>2</sup> *Oblate Writings* - 9, pp. 79-111.

<sup>3</sup> 17 are from Father Guibert, superior of the major seminary of Ajaccio; 16 are from Father Courtès, superior of the house at Aix; 13 are from Father Mille, superior of N.D. du Laus; 7 are from Father Guigues and the same number from Father Honorat, respectively superiors of N.D. de l’Osier and N.D. de Lumieres, and a certain number come from 22 other Oblates. Of all these letters were found only the 8 from Father Albini and 5 from Father Guibert which treat of Father Albini’s illness.

<sup>4</sup> 8 to Father Guibert, 7 to Father Courtès, the same number to Father Mille and some to 18 other Oblates.

<sup>5</sup> For example, many official letters (more precisely, copies of the same) are kept at the Mayor’s office in Marseilles, in that of the Prefecture of the Bouches-du-Rhône, in ministries, etc., but are not mentioned in the *Diary*. These official letters were copied before being sent in the Bishop’s register of administrative letters, registers found in the archives of the Archdiocese of Marseilles and photostats of the same are also kept in the Oblate General Archives.

*Albini, who is gravely ill. He adds: "In regard to these letters, it is not for nothing that I carefully keep them. I beg those who, after my death, will find such a great number among my papers, not to condemn them to the flames too easily. There are very few of those that I keep which do not contain things of interest for our Congregation." In this regard, on December 14 he continues. "I went through my papers. I burned nearly 200 letters. I keep those which could serve as material for the history of the Congregation. In this correspondence one will find many very interesting things which would be lost otherwise. There one will also find precious material on the life of our Fathers. (...) But one will have to find a man who is devoted, patient, zealous and capable to coordinate all these things..."*

*The Bishop of Marseilles felt himself obliged to receive in his office all those who wished to speak to him. He mentions the names of 164 visitors, 13 of whom are Oblates. Often he comments on this, for example on January 26: "As every day, audience to all persons who come"; on February 23: "Visits received and made"; on March 16: "The audiences tire me out"; or on April 4: "Tiring business as every day". On March 17 he says that, during the morning, "five persons tired me out with their pretensions". He names four of them. Two wanted to sell him books. A Jew came to bring him a gift for his works, gift from Abd El-Kader, emir of the Arabs in Algeria. Then someone came to give him 2000 Mass stipends for the repose of the soul of Madame Emerigon, who, when Bishop Fortune de Mazenod arrived in Marseilles in 1823, "got a crowd to rise up and protest against the measures he had taken against the Missionaries of France..." On September 3, 5, and he reflects as follows: "What a crowd of unhappy persons!" "If mornings like that of today were to come too often, I feel that it would be impossible for me to hold out..." "The audiences of every day take up all my time." Again he writes on December 17: "A crushing day"; and on December 31: "Visit after visit."*

*Bishop de Mazenod also mentions many details about more than 150 visits that he made. 10 of these are to the Oblates at Le Calvaire, 2 to the major seminary, and 2 to Aix. Above all in visit-*

*ing parishes, convents and works, especially to administer the sacrament of confirmation, he seems to be in his element and experiences the most joy.*

*The second item that draws our attention is the diocese of which Bishop de Mazenod has just been made pastor and which concerns him before all else. About 45% of what he writes and much more of what he does concerns the diocese<sup>6</sup>. He speaks about the Oblates in 25% of this text, of his family in 5%, equally as much about himself, and, finally, about general events in the Church and in France in about 20% of these pages.*

*To give the reader a foretaste of the contents of this volume and to put a bit of order in the multiplicity and variety of the events narrated and the reflections made by the Founder, I shall point out the main points of what he says about himself, his family, the Congregation, the diocese and general events.*

## **About himself**

*Throughout the whole length of his Diary, Bishop de Mazenod obviously speaks about his activities. The manner in which he speaks of them reveals a great deal about his personality. Furthermore, certain occasions induce him to mention explicitly his most personal sentiments, as, for instance, at the time of the Vèze affair or again when he recalls his promotion to the episcopacy and his appointment to the bishopric of Marseilles.*

*The Vèze affair is well known<sup>7</sup>. The public and calumnious accusations of his former domestic servant, proclaimed on April 1 in the midst of the liturgical celebration and again ten days later on Holy Thursday with announcement of the publication of a pamphlet*

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<sup>6</sup> Father A. Rey, whose narrative of the Founder's life is nearly all based on the Diaries, writes this for 1838: "We note that up to now the diocese absorbed him more fully than his little Congregation." *Mgr de Mazenod...* II, 23.

<sup>7</sup> On François Vèze and the court case that condemned him to prison, cf. Jean Leflon, *Eugene de Mazenod...* III, 38-45.

*repeating these accusations, clearly affected the Bishop greatly. Bishop de Mazenod often mentions this event during the months of April and May. He then writes some beautiful pages asking God to be able "to support with interior resignation this new kind of humiliation" (April 1), or again that, whereas in the past he had been accused "of ambition, avarice, haughtiness, pride and hatred", now, when he is 56 years old, his morals are called into question. "From now on, I could not be jealous of anyone. Saint Athanasius and St. Francis de Sales would not dare to complain after what is happening to me." (April 7) On Good Friday, April 13, speaking of the pamphlet that is ready to be made public against him, he writes again: "I forgive them goodheartedly. If it were not for the scandal that is caused therefrom, it seems to me that God is giving me the grace to proceed to thank Him for the humiliation that weighs upon me and which the cross our Lord had carried all the way to Calvary is a great help to bear all this."*

*He also recalls some difficulties regarding his promotion to the episcopacy in 1832, the obstacles then raised by the Government and the role played by Father Guibert in 1835 to unravel the Icosia affair (February 2 and October 14)<sup>8</sup>. On October 14, the anniversary of his episcopal ordination, he considers at length being responsible for a diocese, whereas, from 1832 to 1837, he thought of the episcopacy only as "as the completion of the priesthood, only as a sacrament that confers a grace, and not at all as the fearsome burden which weighs down the bishop on whom responsibility for a diocese is laid." This reflection seems to contradict a strong affirmation made on May 15 when he mentions that happy old age of his uncle (who was 90 years old) who enjoyed good health and was surrounded with friends and relatives who venerated him, "seeing myself near him, finishing and perfecting the works that I began under his name and of which he shares the glory and the merit."*

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<sup>8</sup> On December 14 he mentions that he has found among his papers a note of October 24, 1832, according to which Pope Gregory XVI dispensed him from residing in his diocese of Icosia.

*We see that he is often touched by the fidelity in friendship and the gratitude of several cardinals<sup>9</sup>, friends and acquaintances of his childhood and youth<sup>10</sup>, of Doctor d'Astros, the medical doctor of the Oblates in Aix (August 18), and especially of several former congregation members of Aix<sup>11</sup>. On May 24, after having copied a letter from the lawyer Tavernier concerning the condemnation of Vèze at Aix, he prelate adds: "One easily thinks that similar sentiments, shared by all those to whom I dedicated the first years of my ministry, compensate me way beyond the persecutions that Hell wages against me."*

*Finally, by chance, one finds among his many reflections that as a young priest he wore a hair-shirt (December 3), that he had been ill from January 19 to 23, indisposed on May 24, August 14, and October 1. On his birthday, August 1, he thinks he is mistaken in counting up his years (57 years) and does not dare "to flatter himself that they were lived out according to God's will."*

## **His family**

*Despite his many occupations, Bishop de Mazenod does not forget his family to which he always remained very much attached. To begin with, he succeeded in having Fortuné appointed a canon of St-Denis, an honor-title that also assured him of a good income<sup>12</sup>. On April 27, the nephew celebrates Mass for his uncle on the day of the latter's birthday, and he writes: "May God keep him for a long time in the perfect state of health he enjoys." On February 1 he buys a piece of land in the cemetery of Marseilles to bury his uncle Chevalier Charles Louis Eugene, deceased on February 23, 1835, and to lay away one day the other members of his family. On*

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<sup>9</sup> Cardinal Pacca (February 27 and March 4), Cardinal Falconieri (April 26).

<sup>10</sup> Emmanuel Gauthier (May 1), Mr. Bouge (May 12), the Missiessy family (June 20).

<sup>11</sup> Giraud (February 6), the Abbé Leblanc (February 18, May 4, August 21), Tempié (April 4), Turcas (May 24), Antommarchi (May 23, July 11, August 23), etc.

<sup>12</sup> February 19, March 1 and May 15.

*October 10, the anniversary of his father's death, who had passed away in 1820, he writes a page extolling his virtues and his holy death.*

*Several times he mentions his mother's name, to whom he wrote several letters, especially on business matters. She came to Marseilles at least twice with the entire de Boisgelin family: on August 28 to assist at the tonsure ceremony and that of minor Orders of Louis, a Jesuit scholastic; and on October 14 to celebrate the prelate's episcopal ordination anniversary. Speaking of the August 28 ceremony, Bishop de Mazenod again comments, as he did in 1837, on the sacrifices made by the family in ceding to the Jesuits this young man whose name, education, virtues, etc., seemed to destine him for high positions in the Church!*

*In the month of February, Bishop de Mazenod is the intermediary in a marriage plan of his niece Césarie (21 years old) with, it seems, the son of Maréchal de Bourmont, the conqueror of Algeria in 1830<sup>13</sup>. On November 14 he writes a page of reminiscences about his niece Nathalie who died at 19 years of age on November 14, 1829. He mentions about ten times especially his nephew Eugene (aged 17 years) who spent a school year in the Institute of Mr. Poiloup in Paris. During February-March, the uncle is concerned because Eugene is ill<sup>14</sup>. The latter returned to Marseilles at the end of the school year and did not want to return to Paris. He explains his reasons to his uncle on October 7. The latter accepts his view and has a letter written to Mr. Poiloup for not having behaved "as a father" as he had promised to do, but had rather been "unworthily unjust in his regard. The youngster, pure and totally innocent, merited only a soft reprimand for his inexperience."<sup>15</sup>*

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<sup>13</sup> Cf. February 11 and 12; August 3, 19 and 24.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. February 19 and 20; March 29.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. August 21 and 14; September 19; October 7, 12 and 13.

## The Oblate Congregation

*If we base ourselves on the 1838 Diary, Bishop de Mazenod received few Oblates in his office. Two or three times he mentions Father Tempier's name when the latter had returned from canonically visiting houses (v.g. July 19 and October 16); and once he mentions the names of Fathers Guibert, Lagier, Ricard, Mille, Telmon, Casimir Aubert, etc.<sup>16</sup> It is by correspondence that he keeps himself informed about the work of the Fathers and Brothers, and even about the good state of the houses.*

*1838 is especially concerned about Corsica. Father Guibert went to Rome in the spring and thus obliged Father Albini to remain at the seminary as professor and director. Without approving this trip, Bishop de Mazenod did not oppose it; he did ask the seminary superior to allow Father Albini as much as possible to preach missions which were enjoying an extraordinary success<sup>17</sup>. Father Guibert praises the virtues and dedication of Fathers Albini, N. F. Moreau and F. P. Marchal, but he is not pleased with Father E. A. Rolleri (who is recalled to Marseilles) and with Father V. Reinaud (who will leave the Congregation in 1841). The Oblates had been asked to establish themselves in Balagne<sup>18</sup>. The Founder was interested in this offer because the convent at Vico was not too well situated for preaching over the entire island. When Father Tempier made the canonical visit of Corsico in July, he noted that "of all the convents mentioned, not a single one can be lived in" (July 19).*

*The house of Aix was suffering. Father Courtès did not like Father Magnan, the only good missionary of his community<sup>19</sup>. In November the Fathers of Aix preached a mission at Rognes*

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<sup>16</sup> See these names, and others that follow, in the Index of Names at the end of this volume.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. especially November 10 and 19.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. *Oblate Writings*, 18, pp. 229-230, 235-236.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. November 20 and December 29.



(November 12). In December the parish priest wrote to the Founder to praise the zeal of the missionaries who had succeeded at giving a mission to half of the population. The Founder comments: "What a setback! That has always been called by us a failed mission. Great God! Half the population did not benefit from a mission of five weeks? Never have we seen such a lamentable result (...). I am afraid that in the diocese of Aix they are not done according to our customs. Otherwise, how explain that everywhere else they succeed as they did in the past?" (December 15).

At Notre-Dame de l'Osier Father Guigues and his fellow workers preach successfully<sup>20</sup>, but Bishop de Mazenod reproaches the superior for not observing all the customs of the Congregation<sup>21</sup>. The Bishop of Grenoble is happy with the good work of the Oblates (April 26) but finds that they are not numerous enough and so he wants to form a missionary team with diocesan priests (November 16).

At Notre-Dame du Laus pilgrims are numerous during the summer and the Fathers are giving too many missions to such a point that the Founder has to force Father Mille, who is ill, to take several weeks of rest<sup>22</sup>.

At Notre-Dame de Lumieres, the number of pilgrims in August is very great and the missions, presided by Father Honorat, enjoy a marvellous success<sup>23</sup>. In this regard Bishop de Mazenod writes: "These are real missionaries! (...) Honorat is pleased with all his collaborators; Courtès complains about all of his. The secret of this difference is found in that Honorat does missions full of confidence in God's assistance, in that he is accustomed to seeing miracles worked, and Courtès, who does not have the same outlook, thinks only about the human means that he could employ..." (November

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<sup>20</sup> Cf. February 18 and April 22.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. January 22 and 23.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. February 7, April 5 and 21, May 17, June 9.

<sup>23</sup> March 27, November 12 and 25.

12) Father Honorat, who has always liked to go ahead, sees to the execution of works for which he and his confreres often go to collect<sup>24</sup>.

The Fathers at Le Calvaire seem to be busy with the faithful who frequent their church and with the Work for the Italians. Still Father J. A. Bernard preached a mission at Cuges in January and a retreat in the outskirts of Aix<sup>25</sup>.

In September Canon Loewenbruck proposes that the Oblates establish themselves in the Abbey of Tamié<sup>26</sup> in Savoy. Father Tempier visits this place in October but discovers that the Bishop does not want the Congregation. Bishop de Mazenod wrote on October 16: "This is the second time that Archbishop Martinet of Chambéry refuses to welcome it in Savoy where its ministry could have been so useful."

More than twenty times the Founder speaks of vocations, in particular of priests who ask to enter the novitiate, for instance, the Abbés Feraud of the diocese of Fréjus, Agniel and Girolet of the diocese of Avignon, J. F. Allard and Chabrier of the diocese of Gap, Allies, parish priest of Orgon in the diocese of Viviers, Curnier, rector of Aubenas in the diocese of Viviers<sup>27</sup>, etc.

The Superior General and the local superiors are not pleased with the conduct of certain Fathers, for instance, Fathers J. A. Pélissier, C. Kotterer, A. Telmon, J. A. Valentin Reinaud. Nevertheless, in 1838 only Brothers H. Blanc and F. B. Marchi leave the Congregation. A few times the Founder speaks of the illness of Fathers Mille, Guibert and especially of Father Albini in November and December, and then of Brother Louis Morandini

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<sup>24</sup> Cf. April 5 and 22; July 23, etc.

<sup>25</sup> Cf. January 17, January 10, 19, and 22.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. September 6, 8, 21, 22.

<sup>27</sup> See these names in the Index of Names. Only the Abbé J. F. Allard became an Oblate.

(1816-1838) who died at Aix on December 27 (cf. *Diary of December 28*). On the occasion of the anniversaries of their death, he recalls the memory of Father M. Suzane (+January 31, 1829) and A. Pons (+16 September 1836), and he composes a real necrological sketch of Father J. Marcou (+August 20, 1826).

Except for February, he speaks little about temporal affairs. On February 7 he says that at her death Madame de Bausset of Aix had left 20,000 Francs to the Congregation. On February 12 he finishes the matter of the Trinquier credit. On February 21 he buys land in the Aix cemetery whereon to construct a funeral chapel wherein the Oblates and the de Boisgelins are buried. On February 24 he mentions the project of selling the Oblate property of du Tholonet at Aix. He also regrets not being able to sell the chateau at Billens<sup>28</sup>.

In 1838 the Congregation lived no event of importance and the Founder's judgment on the men, the houses and he works are rather serene. He hardly mentions his two immediate collaborators, Fathers Casimir Aubert and Tempier. He seems implicitly to refer to the latter when, on the occasion of the visit of a certain Abbé Hoffman, missionary in the United States, he writes: "Everything that M. Hoffmann told us about the United States is good proof that I was well-inspired when I resisted the desire of some of our men-who burned with the desire to go to this country<sup>29</sup>. I knew what it was all about when I declared myself vigorously against this project, which honoured their zeal but was not directed by experience. It is always well to refer oneself to the wisdom of those whom the Lord has placed at the head of the family. When the time shall have come, the Lord of the harvest will know how to say so. In the meantime, let the Congregation sanctify and multiply itself" (March 2).

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<sup>28</sup> Cf. June 15; August 25; November 26.

<sup>29</sup> Shortly after the July 1830 Revolution, Father Guibert, then superior of Notre-Dame du Laus, proposed sending some Oblates to the United States. Cf. A. Perbal, *Eugene de Mazenod reste marqué par sa vocation missionnaire*, in *Etudes Oblates*, 19(1960), pp. 49-55.

## The Diocese

*When he became Bishop of Marseilles, Bishop de Mazenod was especially apprehensive about the clergy. There is where, as vicar general of his uncle, he had found the most opposition. In 1838, his relationship with them seems good, even in the case of certain priests who had particularly made him suffer in the past, for instance, André Caire (cf. January 26 and September 26), Martin-Lazare (cf. January 3 and August 1), Damico (cf. February 18 and May 2), and Polydor Jonjon (cf. November 11).*

*From the Abbé A. Coulin he learns on June 8 that some members of the clergy are speaking against the bishop. In this regard the Bishop wrote: "It is impossible to misinterpret more the purest of intentions, to misunderstand more unworthily good things done, to calumniate more boldly and that in grave matter, in a word, to render more fully evil in the place of good. Would this be Hell's final effort to stamp out in me every thought of zeal, of betterment, of salutary reform?" On June 10 he becomes aware that the Abbé Coulin could only name two priests who had little influence. Nevertheless the prelate profits from the occasion of the retreat that he made at the minor seminary together with 140 priests to tell them on the last day of the retreat that he knows there are "a big number of murmurers", but that he has just received a letter which, he added, "while confirming me in the knowledge I had of the wrongs of a great number of those with whom I was together, had despite myself thrown a sea of ice into my soul, which, however, certainly did not destroy my sentiments of affection for my clergy, which is too deeply engraved on my heart, but which made its expression impossible." He had barely entered his room when the entire corps of the parish priests followed to express to him "the extreme chagrin that they experienced because of the communication he felt obliged to make to them. While the small number of guilty persons were undoubtedly repenting of their fault, the great number of my clergy came to protest their obedience and their attachment to my person..." On the eve of the feast of St. Charles, "the whole clergy" came again to compliment him (November 3).*

*On May 4 Bishop de Mazenod writes that he feels "an extraordinary affection" for all the "good" priests. In fact it was noted that he hastened to the bedside of priests who were ill, v.g. to Mr. Martin, the chaplain of City Hall (March 16), to Flayol, vicar general (September 25-26), to d'Herbes, parish priest of St. Julien. In regard to the latter he writes: "In spite of the rain I hastened to him. My visit, which he did not expect, gave him much pleasure. It was a duty for me, who am the father of all my diocesans, but who loves especially the priests as the elders of my spiritual family."*

*He deplores the bad conduct of a few foreign priests<sup>30</sup>, and he admits difficulty in appointing parish priests and above all that he does not like it when he is pressured in this matter<sup>31</sup>.*

*The Bishop seems to be especially in his element when visiting parishes, works, convents and institutions. During the months of June and July he visits the parishes of the city in order to administer confirmation. He mentions only 12 parishes and auxiliary churches, but in each he confirms the children of several others. On July 5, for example, he confirms 600 children at Notre-Dame du Mont. During the months of September and October he visits most of the 48 other parishes and auxiliary churches of the diocese. He mentions 30 of these. Often he speaks of the children's good intentions and of their attention to the exhortation he gives them in the provencale tongue<sup>32</sup>. At St Henri, after a ceremony which lasted four and one half hours, he went fishing in the afternoon with the children. On October 29, on the day after the confirmation, at Chateau-Gombert, even though it was raining, he made a pilgrimage to Notre-Dame des Anges with the altar boys.*

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<sup>30</sup> Cf. July 21 and 30; August 11, etc.

<sup>31</sup> Cf. February 18, May 22, and June 5.

<sup>32</sup> Cf., for example: July 10 at St-Cannat; July 12 at La Trinité; Septembre 4 at Ste Marie Madeleine, Saint Just and St. Barnabé; October 9 at Canet; October 11 at St. Henri; etc.

*He encourages works, confraternities, boarding schools<sup>33</sup>, to which he often went to celebrate Mass, confirm, take part in gatherings of their benefactors. He made at least 3 visits to the minor seminary for confirmation (July 10), to assist at the throwing out of the ball (August 12) and at the ceremony of the distribution of awards (August 16). A few times he speaks of the Brothers of the Christian Schools and he especially mentions the Sisters. He is taken up for several days with the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary because among them there are several cases of diabolical possession; the Bishop had to send Father J.J. Lagier, O.M.I., there to assist Canon Chauvier carry out the exorcisms (April 17-21).*

*He celebrates pontifical Mass or assists at Vespers in many parish churches on the occasion of their patron saints or on other occasions. In February, after the death of the parish priest of St. Martin, he went there a few times to celebrate the liturgy, especially on Quasimodo Sunday (April 22) and on that day he also took the Easter communion to the sick. He writes: "This news stirred up a general sensation. There are people who even said they would like to be sick in order to have the happiness of receiving communion from the Bishop's hands." On Easter Sunday he officiates pontifically in the cathedral, accompanied by Bishop Fortuné and Bishop C. M. Paul Tharin, former bishop of Strasbourg. He notes that the church was filled with people, whereas on Holy Saturday he had sung the Alleluia in the presence of few persons (April 14 and 15). On April 25, feast of St. Mark, he assisted at the station-church at St. Cannat and writes: "I am never happier than when I am carrying out the joyful functions of my ministry." On Sunday, May 20, he celebrated Mass at N. D. de la Garde, and in the afternoon he blessed the corner-stone of the church "that is going to be built in the St-Lazare quarter. A bishop of Marseilles has to be on*

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<sup>33</sup> He names twenty of these, especially the work of the "Refuge", of the Children of Providence, the Orphans of the cholera, etc. Cf. index of proper names, Marseilles, works, etc.

*his feet, he confides, and the ceremonies must not tire him out, for it is a constant item. "Fortunately I very willingly carry out this duty which has never had anything that hurt me."*

*At times he comments about the preachers, especially those of advent and of lent. He finds that too often they carry out their "trade of the pulpit" (April 18) without much zeal. On Christmas Day, at Vespers, he entertains himself by narrating the preacher's "loss of memory".*

*When meditating on the Roman Pontifical during his preparation retreat for the episcopacy, he had written in 1832: "Here you see the incomparable grace, the great character (...); to pass on in my turn the Holy Spirit to work towards the perpetuation of the priesthood in the Church of Jesus Christ, to judge, interpret, conserve, ordain, offer baptise and confirm"<sup>34</sup>..." Faithful to this "incomparable grace" he had received, in 1838 he presided over six ordination ceremonies<sup>35</sup> after having made a day of retreat with the ones to be ordained. On December 6 he allows the Abbé Gaduel to enter Saint Sulpice but on the condition of receiving Orders from the Bishop of Marseilles. On this occasion he writes: "How can a bishop consent not to bring to birth himself all those whom the good God has given him to be his collaborators in his great mission? For myself, it seems to me that at each ordination I do I can say, as Jesus Christ, that power has gone forth from me..."*

*Every Monday, in his chapel, he confirms those who present themselves, especially adult persons. He always responds to the requests addressed to him to confirm converts<sup>36</sup>, military persons<sup>37</sup>,*

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<sup>33</sup> He names twenty of these, especially the work of the "Refuge", of the Children of Providence, the Orphans of the colera, etc. Cf. index of proper names, Marseilles, works, etc.

<sup>34</sup> Cf. *Oblate Writings* 15, pp. 202-203.

<sup>35</sup> Cf. March 10 and 31; June 24; September 22; December 6 and 22.

<sup>36</sup> For example, Mr. Papon, a calvinist (June 10), a protestant woman and her son, converts (August 6 and 9).

<sup>37</sup> Cf. March 21 and December 24.

*and especially the sick. He writes this often<sup>38</sup>. For instance, he is going to confirm a child on the 4th floor (October 17), an old lady on the 4th (December 28); and on November 23 he writes that he had gone three times "into the worst quarters" of the city. On April 17 he was invited to go and visit a 12-year old girl who refused to go to confession. She lived on the Glandèves street, of ill-fame. He writes: "The devil to whom souls are sacrificed in this place was stronger than the grace of my ministry."*

*In his title as Bishop, as well because of his personal relationships, he was intermediary in five marriages of important families<sup>39</sup>. He himself blessed, at midnight according to the custom of Provence, these marriages: one at Toulon on June 18 and 19 (Gerard-Roux Bonncorse) and another at Gemenos on June 20-21 (Turcas, a former congregant).*

*He speaks only some thirty times about business and administration, especially in regard to his project for a new cathedral<sup>40</sup>. On December 3 he says that he had written to the Keeper of the Seals that the Government should increase the salaries of bishops who are in large cities.*

*As Bishop he had to intervene in a great number of matters. Four times he speaks of the relics he had received in Marseilles<sup>41</sup>. On April 8 he writes to the Mayor to denounce a scandal at la Canebière. On June 6 the Abbé Vitagliano asks him to go and see an "inspired" girl. "I proceed slowly on these kinds of things," he comments. On June 11 he has to receive at the bishopric the bull that was to take part in the Corpus Christi procession; and on*

<sup>38</sup> Cf. March 10; June 1 and 15; July 3 and 17; etc.

<sup>39</sup> The families of Gerard-Roux Bonncorse, Magalon-Mathieu, Merindol-Hugues, Reguis-Samatan, Lombardon-Montezan.

<sup>40</sup> Cf. March 5; June 15; July 14, 17, and 29; August 2 and 30; September 17; October 13; November 15 and 29.

<sup>41</sup> St. Lazarus, St. Maurice, St. Thomas and St. Serenus.



*August 2 the wax merchants come to protest against the "star candles" that the prelate considered more appropriate.*

*After 1830 Bishop de Mazenod always showed an interest in Algeria. In vain he had several times offered the Oblates' service. On May 1 he writes to Cardinal Franson, Prefect of Propaganda, asking him for information about the state of religion at Algiers. He confides to him: "I have too many of my diocesans whose salvation is compromised in that region and thus I would like to know what I must do." (May 21) The Cardinal replied to reassure him. On September 1 Bishop de Mazenod advises the Abbé J. M. Landmann to go and help the Bishop of Algiers. He notes: "I had the happiness to contribute to the establishment of this See; so it is right that I take every occasion to assure it spiritual assistance which it needs so much". He is also very much interested in a Catholic association for the colonization of Algeria, an initiative taken by the prince de Mir.*

*In spite of this intense activity, Bishop de Mazenod has above all examined his own situation and prepared the terrain to relaunch the diocese. In 1838 he receives only one new religious Congregation, the Sisters of Charity "du Refuge", but he will found or welcome 25 others from 1839 to 1861. In 1838 he founded only the work of St. Francis Regis for the regularization of marriages; he will found 8 others from 1839 to 1848. With the consent of the Government, he erected in 1838 only one auxiliary church at St-Pierre, and that against the advice of the municipal council of Aubagne and of the parish priest who did not want the limits of his parish to be affected. In spite of similar opposition which occurred everywhere, he will, from 1839 to 1848, succeed to obtain from the Government authorization to establish 12 other parishes or auxiliary churches<sup>42</sup>.*

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<sup>42</sup> Cf. Jean Leflon, *Eugene de Mazenod...* III, 56-67.

## Events of general interest

*Bishop de Mazenod often had to get involved in matters of general interest. Here I shall point out only the main ones. Several times he is visited by an Augustinian, Father Bucchi, who had been condemned by the Inquisition. This priest informed him of the opposition, even of priests, which existed in Romagna against the Pope and the papal administration.*

*During the month of March, C.M. Paul Tharin, a classmate of Eugene de Mazenod at the seminary of Saint-Sulpice and former Bishop of Strasbourg, often came to the bishopric but refused to accept the Bishop's hospitality in order not to compromise him. He was in Marseilles, in fact, to follow the printing of a work on the state of the Church in France, in which book "he does not spare the Government."*

*On May 14 the parish priest of Digne asks him to give, through the intermediary of his uncle, "some good advice to the good Bishop of Digne who is looking for a coadjutor." Bishop Bienvenu de Miollis, a native of Aix and a friend of the de Mazenods, had been bishop of Digne since 1805. The clergy was afraid that he would name as coadjutor a priest who did not have the confidence of the diocese.*

*Bishop de Mazenod was in correspondence with Bishop Charles de Forbin-Janson of Nancy and with Bishop A. Basile Menjaud who was named, in the month of July, the latter's coadjutor. This appointment had been proposed by the Bishop of Marseilles, in the silence of Forbin-Janson who for some time already, opposing as he did the Government of July, could not set foot in his diocese. In this regard Bishop de Mazenod writes: "The most holy men are sometimes quite strange" (August 15).*

*In the month of August the Bishop of Marseilles was visited by Bishop J. J. Pierre Guigou, Bishop of Angoulême from 1824 to 1842. He had been capitular vicar of Aix; this prelate understood and helped Father de Mazenod at the beginnings of the Congregation and that is why the latter proposed him to the Grand*

*Chaplaincy for the See of Angoulême. He writes: "Others have been able to give themselves this position, the truth is that it is I who succeeded to place upon him this enormous burden; in this I acted not so much out of friendship for a man whom I esteemed, but from the conviction I had that he was eminently fit to do good in such a difficult diocese." Bishop Guigou was paralyzed and inactive since 1834. Bishop de Mazenod then advised him to resign. He writes: "I believed to be serving the Church when I facilitated Bishop Guigou to rise to the highest dignity. I acted with the same outlook when I advised him, today now that he is totally impotent and unable to do good, to resign from his See" (August 17).*

*On October 15, "the famous Drach", a converted Jew, arrived at the bishopric. The prelate notes this visit and writes: "M. Drach has still the intention to become a priest and his son, a student at Propaganda, persists in his determination to dedicate himself to the missions of China. There is truly cause to bless God who is admirable in his saints!"*

*In his retreat notes preparatory to taking possession of the See of Marseilles, Bishop de Mazenod had written: "I would like....to be a good bishop. From the very outset of my episcopate I would like to worthily accomplish all my duties..." The pages of his 1838 Diary, in allowing us to follow his activities and reactions day by day, also make it possible for us to note that he accomplished worthily all his duties as pastor and that "there is truly cause to bless God who is admirable in his saints!"*

Yvon Beaudoin, O.M.I.



### **Cardinal Bartolomeo Pacca (1756-1844)**

Cardinal Pacca was prefect of the Congregation of Bishops and Regulars at the time of the approval of the Oblate Rule in 1826. Thereafter Bishop de Mazenod corresponded with him for he appreciated the Cardinal's, warm and friendly letters.

Cf. Diary February 27; March 4, 7, 28 and 30; April 20; etc.

## January 1838

[p. 1 ] **January 11**<sup>1</sup>: Arrival of the Ladies of St-Michel de Tours<sup>2</sup>. I went to install them in the house of the Refuge<sup>3</sup> which they are taking over. A large number of ladies of the organisation were present. Those from the committee had devoted themselves with an admirable zeal to looking after the penitents for more than 24 hours; they had stayed up the whole night to patrol the rooms so as to prevent any disorder. I referred to this dedication in the short speech which preceded the *Veni Creator* and the processional entry of the religious into the house.

My consolation in knowing that from now on this establishment would be in experienced hands was moderated when in reading their act of obedience I realized that these religious remain under the jurisdiction

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<sup>1</sup> The Bishop of Marseilles received many visitors at the beginning of the new year; this explains why Bishop de Mazenod begins his Diary of 1838 only on January 11.

<sup>2</sup> The Ladies of St-Michael of Tours or the Sisters of Our Lady of Charity. This order was founded in Caen by Saint Jean Eudes in 1641. It was Mother Marie de Sainte-Victoire Hoüette (1788-1851), Superior of the monastery of Tours, who conducted the negotiations with Bishop de Mazenod and Mrs Martin-Audibert, on behalf of the committee of the patronesses of the charitable work. Mother Hoüette personally came to make the foundation of Marseilles. These religious replaced the Sisters of Saint-Thomas of Villeneuve who had directed the work since 1830. Cf. Jean Pietsch, *Notre fondateur et les communautés religieuses de Marseille*, in *Etudes oblates* 7 (1948), pp. 226-228; Doctor Poüan, *La très honorée mère Marie de Sainte-Victoire Hoüette*, Freiburg (Switzerland), 1902, p. 314 ff.

<sup>3</sup> House of Refuge for ladies who had repented. This house existed since the 14<sup>th</sup> century. After the mission preached in Marseilles in 1820, it was re-established at the corner of Paradis and Sainte-Victoire Streets. Cf. Payan d'Augery, *Le Refuge des filles repenties...*, Marseilles, 1900, 69 pp. Bishop de Mazenod was scheduled to arrive at around 9 o'clock to preside at the ceremony of installation of the Sisters. "In fact, he only arrived two hours later, as his carriage had not been able to pass through the Aix Street, owing to the obstruction caused by the market which was being held there. The ceremony eventually began at around eleven o'clock...", cf., Poüan, *op. cit.*, p. 364.

of the Archbishop of Tours<sup>4</sup>. The letters of the Superior to the ladies of the organisation, far from expressing this clause, seemed to say precisely the opposite. I expressed my surprise and my dissatisfaction. The beautiful words of the Superior did not dispel my concern on this subject. I will speak more at length on this at our first meeting.

**January 12:** Reply to the letter of Abbé Drach<sup>5</sup> explaining to him how and why I dismissed the Ladies of the Good Shepherd of Angers whom he had recommended<sup>6</sup> to me. Letter to the lawyer Tavernier<sup>7</sup>. Letter to the Father Procurator of the Carthusians in Rome to vouch for the extreme poverty of the mother of Father Lucas<sup>8</sup>, and to tell him that I cannot agree to place this father in my diocese; I would gladly let him go to the Archbishop of Avignon<sup>9</sup>. The pastor of Cucuron asks for this priest as his assistant.

**January 13:** The hundredth visit of the ladies of the office of the charitable work of the Refuge, this time to set my mind at ease on the disconcerting terms of the obedience of the nuns whom they have called.

<sup>4</sup> Bishop Augustin Louis de Montblanc (1767-1841), Archbishop of Tours from 1824 to 1841. The foundations of the Sisters of Our Lady of Charity became autonomous monasteries; Bishop de Mazenod shared the attitude of many bishops of France at that time who wanted to have full authority over the local religious communities.

<sup>5</sup> David Drach (1791-1865), a Jewish convert. Married in 1818, his wife left him in 1823 when he became Catholic. Bishop de Mazenod calls him "Abbé Drach" because, as librarian to the Propaganda Congregation in Rome, he wore the clerical frock-coat, and wanted to become a priest. His son, Paul (1821-1895), became a priest and his two daughters were religious of the Good Shepherd of Angers, founded in 1829 by Marie de Sainte-Euphrasie Pelletier (1796-1868), canonized on May 2, 1940. Cf. *infra*, Mazenod Diary, October 15, 1838.

<sup>6</sup> Some people of Marseilles had asked the Ladies of the Good Shepherd of Angers to establish themselves in the Diocese of Marseilles, without informing Bishop de Mazenod; in the meantime he had already called upon and installed the Sisters of O.L. of Charity of Tours. Cf. letter of Bishop de Mazenod to the Superior of the Ladies of the Good Shepherd of Angers, January 3, 1838. Auth. copy: *AAM, reg. lettres administratives*, vol. III, n. 363.

<sup>7</sup> Adolphe Tavernier (1799-1883), a former member of the Youth Congregation of Aix who always remained a friend of Bishop de Mazenod, and wrote one of his first biographies: *Quelques souvenirs sur mgr C. J. E. de Mazenod*, Aix, 1872.

<sup>8</sup> Father Lucas, originally from Marseilles, had recently left the Carthusians.

<sup>9</sup> Bishop J. M. A. Célestin Dupont, Archbishop of Avignon from 1835 to 1842. Cucuron is 28 km from N. - D. de Lumières.

**January 14:** The gentlemen from the Providence<sup>10</sup> came to inform me about the result of their vote. After they had approached the Archpriest and he had agreed to be named director of their organization, the majority of the votes [p. 2] went to M. Court<sup>11</sup>, parish priest of St.-Martin. This great impropriety requires that in the future I myself name this director without waiting for the presentation of these gentlemen. I note it here so as to remember it. Letter to the Bishop of Ajaccio<sup>12</sup>.

**January 15:** Visit of the ladies of charity from the Refuge. Assurance that the question of the dependence on the ecclesiastical authority of Tours would be settled. The superior has accepted the sense of what I indicated, that means that without my specific authorization it won't be permissible for anyone to withdraw any of the nuns who have come to form our community.

**January 16:** Journey to Cuges<sup>13</sup> via St.-Menet where I stopped to see the Marquis and the Marchioness de Montgrand<sup>14</sup>. Arrived at Cuges shortly before nightfall. Solemn reception. The mayor and the deputy wearing the sash, speech, reply. To the church, speech in my honour by the pastor. Reply. All according to the ceremonial.

**January 17:** Mass. Instruction before communion, great reverence, tears from men who had not set foot in the church for 47 years. The communion lasted one hour. It was the second for all these people. All remained for the confirmation. Another instruction considered necessary in the circumstances. Large number of elderly men and women received this sacrament. After dinner there were no Vespers. I blessed the cross. Very cold weather during the procession. The whole population. The

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<sup>10</sup> The Children of Providence, a charitable work for orphans, was created in 1820 and set up in the De la Roquette mansion or Revest college, at Place de Lenche. After their establishment in Marseille in 1821 the Oblates had been directors (chaplains) of this work for some time.

<sup>11</sup> M. Esprit Joseph Marie Court, pastor of St.-Martin, died on the following February 15.

<sup>12</sup> Bishop Toussaint Casanelli d'Istria, Bishop of Ajaccio from 1833 to 1869.

<sup>13</sup> Cuges is about 30 kilometres from Marseilles.

<sup>14</sup> Jean-Baptiste de Montgrand (1776-1847), Mayor of Marseilles from 1813 to 1830, with a brief interruption in 1814.

farewells of the missionary<sup>15</sup> were not very good. After the blessing, the pastor went up into the pulpit, a few good things mingled with some improprieties. From the throne where I was placed, I said some words to close the celebration, to express my feelings and to give some beneficial advice regarding perseverance that the missionary had forgotten. Much satisfaction in the congregation.

**January 18:** Return to Marseilles, fatigued after yesterday and from the irritation in my chest.

**January 19:** In bed for the whole day.

**January 20:** Letters and more letters. Visits, etc. Unable to fulfil the promise to say the Holy Mass at the Mission of France<sup>16</sup>. No Mass. Cough.

**January 21:** Failed to keep the promise of going to say Mass at the Cholera house<sup>17</sup>. Said it in my small chapel not without effort. Regret not having been able to crown the end of the retreat for these ladies who were very edifying. [p. 3] Letter to Mr. Abeille, of Saint-Chamas, containing my proxy to sell to Mr. Lavison my credit to the younger Trinquier at the cost of 2 000 francs, of which Mr. Lavison would keep 200 francs to hand on to this woman, and he, Mr. Abeille, would keep the same amount for his efforts<sup>18</sup>.

<sup>15</sup> Oblate Father Jean Antoine Bernard (1807-1870) from the house at the Calvaire, who had preached this four-week mission, cf. Rey II, p. 5.

<sup>16</sup> The Mission of France: church and old building, in rue Tapis-Vert, where the seminary of the Priests of the Mission (Lazaristes) was situated before the Revolution. The Poor Clares lived in this house from 1806 to 1833. It was there that the Jesuits established themselves in 1839. In 1838, Bishop de Mazenod sometimes went to this church to celebrate Mass for the associates of the Society of the Propagation of the Faith. Cf. Mazenod Diary, 3 May and 3 December 1838. On the history of this establishment, cf. Jean Michel Sanchez, *De la Mission de France aux Jésuites, dans Marseille, revue culturelle*, 1997, n. 179, pp. 68-73.

<sup>17</sup> Society for Orphans of Cholera, promoted by the Mazenods during the cholera epidemic of 1834-1835. This work was first confided to the care of the Sisters of The Holy Name of Jesus, founded by Marie Catherine Ruel in 1828, under the direction of Fathers F. S. Pontier and Charles Fissiaux. Cf. Abbé E. Roux, *Charles Fissiaux (1806-1867)*. Marseilles, 1941, pp. 22-30; and A. Ricard, *Vie de la Mère Marie St-Augustin de Jésus Ruel*. Ligugé, 1895. 560 pp.

<sup>18</sup> This matter is mentioned in the *Diary* on February 22 and March 9, 1837, as well as on February 12, 1838.



**The 22nd and the 23rd:** Sick as a result of my journey to Cuges. Various letters received about our missions<sup>19</sup>. The one of Bédarrides, excellent since the first days. The one of St.-Michel-Les-Portes, diocese of Grenoble, sought after and well begun. The one in Mens also goes well. The pastors of La Mure and de Vizilles are so happy with it that they are asking for one in their parishes. Father Guigues<sup>20</sup> would like to suppress the entrance ceremony and the penitential procession. We must not give in to that. This father confesses that as he is not convinced of their usefulness, he does them without a spirit of faith. There is the fault! He needs to have less confidence in his own enlightenment, and to enter into the spirit that inspired them and led them to be approved by the Church, and then he will experience the good results that are experienced elsewhere. Mission in Montmiral, mission in Rovon, mission in St.-Just-de-Claix, mission in Devençais. One of these missions is in the diocese of Valence. It is a first attempt in this new field; and it has succeeded.

Sad information about Fr. Pélissier<sup>21</sup>. He has an apathy without equal, knowing how not to inconvenience himself in anything, taking on the works of zeal only when they are according to his taste and don't cause him any effort; of a touchiness without equal; moody because of a petty word, and fulfilling his duties as pastor in a very imperfect manner. He is a dead body, he has no zeal, nor conscience; he is getting fat, there it all is: simply put, everybody complains about him. Brother Blanc<sup>22</sup> doesn't have the necessary dispositions to make his second vows. I wrote that they get rid of him. I authorised that they do the woodwork in the interior choir at l'Osier. I agree to provide 150 francs to the deacon who wants to come to the novitiate<sup>23</sup>.

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<sup>19</sup> These missions were being given in various departments. In Vaucluse: Bédarrides; in Isère: La Mure, St-Michel-les-Portes, Mens, Rovon, St-Just-de-Claix, Vizille; in Drôme: Montmiral. We do not know where Devençais is.

<sup>20</sup> Eugène J. Bruno Guigues (1805-1874) was superior of N.-D. de l'Osier from the time that the Oblates had accepted the direction of this shrine in 1834. He was sent to Canada in 1844 and was appointed Bishop of Bytown in 1848.

<sup>21</sup> Word scratched out. Jacques Antoine André Pélissier from the house of N.-D. de l'Osier. He left the Congregation in 1840.

<sup>22</sup> J. A. Hippolyte Blanc, entered the novitiate on the 31<sup>st</sup> October 1835.

<sup>23</sup> Probably J. J. Frédéric Perron (1813-1848) who entered the novitiate on 24 December 1838 and was ordained a priest on 25 May 1839.

**January 24:** Discussion with Mrs. Aymes. She places certain conditions on the transfer of her son to the father, which will be difficult for him to agree to. Letter to Mr. Aymes to speak him about this business and to give him various errands<sup>24</sup>.

**January 26:** Letter to M. Caire<sup>25</sup>. I don't hide from him that on which I based my conviction regarding the faults that I blamed him for in Paris. I mentioned, in a straightforward way, M. Maurel<sup>26</sup> and M. Ricaud<sup>27</sup>, his brothers-in-law, as being very guilty in the way of opposition that they have followed until now. Audience like all the other days for all those who present themselves. [p. 4]

**January 27:** Current business. Letters received and written. Nothing remarkable. I forgot, among other things, to note the letter to Guibert<sup>28</sup> in which I authorise him to use again this year the salary of the directors of his seminary to complete the furnishing and for the other expenses of Vico. I recommended Father Rolleri<sup>29</sup> to him, who gets bored alone in that country house devoid of books, etc. I prefer that he call him to Ajaccio to wait there for the opportunity to accompany Father Albini on whatever mission he must give during the year<sup>30</sup>. On this topic I let Father Guibert know how inconsistent it would in the eyes of the Congregation to keep Father Albini, so useful for the missions, at the major seminary, under the

<sup>24</sup> We know nothing about this matter. Cf. below, 30 April.

<sup>25</sup> André Caire (1797-1856). Ordained priest in 1821, he went to work in Paris. Bishop Fortuné de Mazenod recalled him to Marseilles in 1823 to appoint him superior of the minor seminary. Father Caire resigned on the 21st November 1824 and returned to Paris.

<sup>26</sup> Claude Marie Maurel (1780-1856) had been named superior of the major seminary in 1823, but resigned the following year and left the diocese. He returned some years later and was named pastor of St. Théodore, where he remained for 23 years.

<sup>27</sup> Bishop de Mazenod seems to write the other name: Ricard. He probably refers to Joseph Innocent Ricaud (1756-1831) of the Society of the Good Shepherd of Marseilles. This society of priests had the direction of the minor seminary in Marseilles at the time of the arrival of Bishop Fortuné de Mazenod in Marseilles in 1823 and they quarreled with him.

<sup>28</sup> Joseph Hippolyte Guibert (1802-1886), superior of the major seminary of Ajaccio

<sup>29</sup> Etienne Antoine Roller (1814-1890), originally from the Diocese of Vintimille (Italy), collaborator of Father Charles Dominique Albini in Vico.

<sup>30</sup> Father Charles Dominique Albini (1790-1839) had written to Bishop de Mazenod on the 18th November 1837 to complain about Father Guibert who had called him back to the seminary. Father Albini could no longer preach missions, and the young Father Roller remained alone in Vico with Brothers Ferrand et Métifiot.

pretext that an extra director is needed, and that then he himself, the superior, leave the house to go and make a journey to Genoa and to Rome. I authorise the admission of Brother Pierre<sup>31</sup> to first profession. I think it useful to dissuade the Bishop of Ajaccio from his wish to name Fathers Moreau<sup>32</sup> and Albini as honorary canons of his cathedral. It is acceptable for the superiors of the major seminaries, because that is in the statutes of the Chapters, it is not the same thing for others.

**January 28:** Letter from Doctor d'Astros<sup>33</sup> to announce the death of his sister, Mrs. Castellane. Immediate reply to this true friend. Letter from Father Courtès<sup>34</sup>. He proposes that someone join Father Bernard<sup>35</sup> for the retreat that we must give in the suburb of Aix. His idea would be to send for M. Cuynat<sup>36</sup>. It is not feasible. He repeats ad nauseam how regretful it is not being able to do some missions in the diocese of Aix. Why do they not ask for them in good time?

**January 29:** Mass at the first monastery of the Visitation. Presented M. Cailhol<sup>37</sup>, Vicar General, to replace me when I will be prevented from attending to the business of superior. Visits to the municipal councillors and others. My uncle was given the pastoral letter written on June 4, 1755 by my great-uncle<sup>38</sup>, on the occasion of the death of Bishop de Belsunce<sup>39</sup>, whose Vicar General he was; just as he was of the Chapter and of Bishop

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<sup>31</sup> Pierre Métifiot (1814-1878), entered the novitiate on the 15th October 1836

<sup>32</sup> Noël François Moreau (1794-1846), at that time professor at the major seminary

<sup>33</sup> J. J. Léon d'Astros (1780-1863), medical doctor in Aix. Cf. *Mazenod Diary*, 15 April 1837.

<sup>34</sup> J. J. Hippolyte Courtès (1798-1863), superior in Aix.

<sup>35</sup> Jean Antoine Bernard (1807-1870), attached to the house of the Calvaire in Marseilles since his return from Billens (Switzerland) during the summer of 1837.

<sup>36</sup> Ms.: Quinat. Jacques Cuynat was already a priest when he entered the novitiate on the 31st October 1836. He left at the end of 1837.

<sup>37</sup> Jean Baptiste M. M. Cailhol (1802-1864), appointed Vicar General by Bishop Eugène de Mazenod. He had been episcopal secretary during the episcopacy of Bishop Fortuné.

<sup>38</sup> Charles Auguste André de Mazenod (1719-1795).

<sup>39</sup> Henri de Belsunce (1670-1755), Bishop of Marseilles from 1709 to 1755.

de Belloy<sup>40</sup>. It pleased my uncle very much. He remembers every action of the deceased bishop whose eulogy this is.

**January 30:** Mass for our dear Suzanne<sup>41</sup> Explanation to M. Martin Lazare<sup>42</sup> on his position with me. This vicious priest appealed to my kindness. I had to tell him that I loved him very sincerely, to the point that I would consider myself happy to do him some good, but that I could not place my confidence in him. Mrs. Auban came to explain her conduct with regard to the Refuge. She appears not to be as wrong as one had supposed. The church wardens of St.-Victor insist on accepting the resignation of M. Matalian<sup>43</sup>.

**January 31:** M. Barthélemy gave me a small breviary which was used by Bishop de Belsunce; he also gave me a curious work, it is a *Breviarium Massiliense*, printed in Lyons in 1526 in which are found the offices of our saints, and the litanies where their names are invoked.

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<sup>40</sup> Jean Baptiste de Belloy (1709-1808), Bishop of Marseilles from 1755 to 1801, then Archbishop of Paris from 1802 to 1808.

<sup>41</sup> Father Marius J. A. Suzanne (1799-1829).

<sup>42</sup> Father Lazare Sérénus Martin (1804-1849). He had written several articles in the newspaper, *Le Séraphore*, in defense of the priests who had rebelled against the Mazenods.

<sup>43</sup> It appears that M. Matalian had been a church-warden of the parish of St-Victor.

## February 1838

[P. 5] **February 1st:** Letter of the Bishop of Ajaccio. Applying glue again<sup>1</sup>. Letter of Fr. Albin. He wants to know if I approve that he remain at the seminary. His letter is full of the sentiments of his great virtue. I had already answered in my letter to Fr. Guibert.

Fabri, Councillor at the Court, came to speak to me the other day about his desire to arrange for his sister-in-law to be married to someone of my choice. I proposed this match to Mister Roux-Bonnecorse<sup>2</sup>.

Letter to the Bishop of Fréjus to ask his agreement to the entry of Abbé Feraud to the Congregation<sup>3</sup>.

The Mayor<sup>4</sup> sent us the concession for the land bought in the cemetery of the city of Marseilles in which to bury my uncle the chevalier<sup>5</sup>, at the cost of 200 francs paid on March 5, 1835. I placed this title, numbered n. 902, among my papers. We all have the option to let ourselves be buried in this plot of earth.

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<sup>1</sup> The word used "Recollement" means "to glue again" but we do not know what it refers to here.

<sup>2</sup> Sister-in-law of Fabri: probably Miss Gérard (cf. below, February 14 and 15). Bishop Mazenod corresponded with Madame Roux (born de Bonnecorse). This family possessed 18 letters from Bishop Mazenod, written between 1818 and 1842. She donated them to Bishop Etchegaray, Archbishop of Marseille, on the occasion of the Founder's beatification. Photocopies: AGR L M-R.

<sup>3</sup> This Abbé Féraud did not enter the novitiate. Refer below to February 11 for the motivation. The Bishop of Fréjus from 1829 to 1845 was Bishop L. C. Michel.

<sup>4</sup> The mayor of Marseilles in 1838 was M. D. Consolat.

<sup>5</sup> Vice-admiral Charles Louis Eugene of Mazenod, deceased in Marseilles, February 23, 1835.

Letter from the apostate Ailhaud<sup>6</sup>. After a thousand attempts and having made me speak to I don't know how many people, he finally writes to tell me that he is ready to submit to everything that I will require; even if this were to be to go back into a community whose merits and advantages he had not known how to appreciate sufficiently (I copy his expressions); he wishes nothing more than to spend many years of zeal and devotion for the salvation of souls in order to make reparation for his present state of idleness - if I condescend to give in to his wishes (it is still he who is speaking). He entrusts himself to God's grace so that he will never give me the slightest reason for me to regret my clemency. I really don't know whether to take this letter seriously, and if I must present it to the Council as a formal request for it to give a ruling of agreement or refusal to this proposal.

**February 2:** The Minister of War allocates fifty francs per month to the priests who attended to the sick soldiers in Ratonneau; it is more or less half of what these men spent. Thus the Minister was not generous. It will be up to me to make up the deficit, because it is not just that these men be out of pocket<sup>7</sup>.

Letter to Mister Caire to entrust him with the task of collecting, from the Ministry of the Interior, Cherubini's *Requiem Mass* that the Minister allocated to us<sup>8</sup>.

I have just written the following note in the margin of the King's decree<sup>9</sup> that allows the transcription to the Council of State of my bulls as bishop *in partibus*: "It is good to point out that I never recognized the supposed irregularity of my acceptance of the title of bishop *in partibus*, for lack of having obtained the king's prior authorization. I have never stopped upholding the opposite. All that I have asked for is the regular-

<sup>6</sup> Name scratched out. Marius Jean-Baptiste Ailhaud, born March 15, 1807 in Marseilles, novice in 1829-1830, ordained priest June 16, 1832, left the Congregation in October 1835.

<sup>7</sup> On October 31, 1837 Bishop de Mazenod had sent Abbés Antoine Henryon and Marc Dalmas to the island of Ratonneau, cf. Diary, October 31, 1837.

<sup>8</sup> Luigi Cherubini (1760-1842), composer of profane and sacred music. He was of Italian origin and lived in Paris. He composed about ten Masses. The Minister made a gift of one of these compositions to the Diocese of Marseille

<sup>9</sup> Royal decree of December 17, 1835. This document has not been found.

ization which was lacking in the legal formalities which are necessary for the transcription of the bulls to the Council of State". [p. 6]

**February 3:** Fr. Tarrot<sup>10</sup>, missionary of the Gambier Islands, came to take leave of me. He has kindly taken the responsibility of having my seals altered in Paris. I entrusted him to tell the Archbishop of Chalcédoine, Superior General of his Congregation<sup>11</sup>, that I ask him for a "participation of works and merits"<sup>12</sup>, as I grant it to them on our part. Fr. Tarrot expressed much pleasure at this good idea.

Letter to Fr. Mille<sup>13</sup>. My concern about his condition. I received a letter from him yesterday. I would like him to suspend his missions so as to catch his breath. If he postpones it until Lent I will be able to make the sacrifice, Fr. Bernard, who is nevertheless very necessary for me in Marseilles.

**February 4:** Pontifical Mass at St. Victoire. Music of Cherubini with a full-size orchestra. I reconciled M. Matalian<sup>14</sup> with the pastor by inviting them to dine with me at the big ceremonial dinner. The pastor, the administrators and especially M. Matalian were delighted with this measure. If I had not taken this measure the grudges would have been never-ending.

Letter of Mme Joséphine de Coriolis<sup>15</sup>. She maintains that she did well to give all her possessions to the Sacred Heart. Her arguments didn't convince me. May it greatly benefit these Ladies, but woe to the poor families who are the victims of these ideas. In the past the convents were sat-

<sup>10</sup> Fr. Rey (II, 5) writes: "Fr. Tarrot, superior of the Fathers of the Sacred Heart of the Gambiers Islands", in the South Pacific.

<sup>11</sup> Bishop Raphaël Bonamie (1798-1874), Superior General of the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary (of Picpus) from 1837 to 1853.

<sup>12</sup> Bishop de Mazenod often made this exchange of "participation of works and merits" with other Congregations. We have some of these certificates (AGR DM X b). One of them is dated March 29, 1817 on behalf of Brother Augustin, Abbot of the Trappist Monastery of Aiguebelle. Among other things, is written: "You will have a participation in all our pious, religious and penitential activities, even in the Holy Sacrifices on our altars, in the communions of our brothers..., "etc.

<sup>13</sup> Fr. Vincent Mille (1807-1885) was then superior of Notre-Dame du Laus. This letter is published in *Oblate Writings* 9, pp. 83-84.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. above, January 30.

<sup>15</sup> Joséphine de Coriolis of the Ladies of the Sacred Heart of Trinità dei Monti in Rome. She came from a family of parliamentarians of Aix and was related to the Boisgelins.

isfied with a dowry. I am in agreement that people give more, but the Ladies of the Sacred Heart want everything for themselves. That's charity all right! Nothing will remain any longer for the families to maintain their rank. It will no longer be possible to marry the girls of good homes according to their birth, unless one has sufficient dowry; the real aunt will have taken 80 000 francs, it could happen that she will claim another 15 or 1800 francs; but they may receive some nuns free, but they won't require the whole pension from some boarders who present themselves, but they will also buy some Biron<sup>16</sup> mansions, some castles of St.-Joseph and other small manors in this way! No, no, never will I agree that it is a good thing that families are robbed in this way by principles of strict justice, but of supreme impropriety.

Letter to M. Fabri, councillor at the Court of Aix, to give him an account of my approaches to the family that I had in mind to propose to him for the marriage of which he had spoken to me. [p. 7]

**February 5:** I convened the Council of the Congregation to deliberate on several questions: 1 - the request of M. Ailhaud who asks to return; 2 - the request of the unworthy Kotterer<sup>17</sup> who asks for dispensation while staying outside; 3 - the admission of Brother Daly<sup>18</sup> to oblation. The request of M. Ailhaud has been rejected. The one of the unworthy Kotterer accepted and his loss will be attributable only to him. Brother Daly has been admitted and will be able to make his oblation the 17th of this month.

**February 6:** Act of the Archbishop of Tours by which he commits himself not to recall the Nuns of the Refuge except with my consent.

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<sup>16</sup> Ms.: Byron. Through their connection to the Jesuits and their dealings with the bourgeoisie whose children frequented the schools and boarding schools, the Ladies of the Sacred Heart expanded quickly and bought important properties. In 1820, the founder, Madame Barat (Saint Madeleine-Sophie Barat, 1779-1865) bought the Biron mansion in Paris. This 18th century residence, on the Rue de Varennes, then belonged to the Duchess of Charost.

<sup>17</sup> Calixte Kotterer, novice in 1829 and ordained priest on March 14, 1835, left definitively in 1840.

<sup>18</sup> William J. M. Daly (1814-1894), Irish, entered the novitiate on February 16, 1837. Ordained priest on May 2, 1841, he was the first Oblate to be sent to Ireland and to England.



Letter of Magloire Giraud<sup>19</sup>, full of warm feelings.

Visit of M. Coustet<sup>20</sup>, Pastor of Istres, to pressure me into letting him have some missionaries for Lent. Refusal. Commitment for Lent of next year. Notify Father Courtès about it.

**February 7:** Letter of Father Bermond<sup>21</sup>; he informs me a little late that he thinks that Fr. Mille truly needs a rest. He has left for the mission of Banon<sup>22</sup>, my prompt reply thus did not reach him in Laus.

Letter of Fr. Courtès informing me of the sudden death of the esteemed Madame de Bausset<sup>23</sup>, friend and distinguished benefactress of the Mission. I immediately wrote to all our houses so that every priest say a Mass for the repose of her soul, that every oblate novice and brother make five communions for the same intention, and that the indulgences, good works, etc., be especially applied to her for eight days, regardless of the rights that she has forever to all the merits of the Congregation.

Second letter of Fr. Courtès informing me that the will of the excellent Madame de Bausset holds that I will be paid the sum of 20 000 francs during the year. We cannot ignore that this charitable Christian and good friend provided 600 francs per year, over a period of ten years, for the education and the living expenses of our Fathers. God should already have rewarded this holy soul, but it is the duty of the Congregation to maintain an eternal obligation to her. As for me, I miss her loss with the pain that I cannot prevent myself from feeling when such dear and precious friends are taken away from me; I am not sure that one replaces such treasures easily; instead of true, sincere, virtuous friends, one only comes across the indifferent. The good Madame de Bausset will have a place in my prayer of remembrance of the dead every day of my life, and I would never know how to run dry on the praise of her virtues and her good qualities. [p. 8]

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<sup>19</sup> Probably an ex-member of the Youth Congregation of Aix. In the registers of this Congregation one finds four Girauds, of which two have no indication of their first names.

<sup>20</sup> Ms.: Costou.

<sup>21</sup> François-Xavier Bermond (1813-1889), was at N.-D. du Laus at this time.

<sup>22</sup> Banon (In the Alps of Haute-Provence).

<sup>23</sup> Madame de Bausset was a friend of the Oblates and Madame de Mazenod. On the occasion of her death, the Founder wrote a circular letter, which has not been found.

**February 8:** Father Bucchi<sup>24</sup>, Augustinian, who was announced by a recommendation of Madame Charpentier, friend of Madame Sauvaire, presented himself at my home with a letter from his General that informs him of the advice that has been given him by the Holy Office: "You should present yourself to the Ordinary of the place, to make a faithful and sincere confession of all your conduct to him, without hiding from him anything whatsoever about your business, while demonstrating to him at the same time your desire to reconcile yourself with the tribunal of the faith. Afterwards, the Ordinary will think about the rest, supposing that he has the appropriate directives for this"<sup>25</sup>.

**February 9:** Letter of Count Tourini that does not conceal his displeasure at my not wanting to interfere in his disagreement with his uncle, Mister de Lander.

Lettre of Mister Beraud, lawyer in Aix, which informs me that the late Madame de Bausset left me 20 000 francs in her will, payable in three years with interest at five percent as of the day of her death.

**February 10:** Letter of Father Honorat<sup>26</sup>. Details about the mission of Bédarrides which are necessary to keep because they are so touching. One would be able to classify this mission among the most beautiful that we have done.

Letter to the parish priest of the suburb of Aix<sup>27</sup> to grant one week extra to Fr. Bernard because of the good he is doing in the retreat that he began last Sunday.

<sup>24</sup> In his *Diary* of March 28, 1838, Bishop de Mazenod says that this priest had been condemned by the Inquisition (Congregation of the Holy Office) and withdrew with the "enlightened ones".

<sup>25</sup> We have translated this text transcribed in Italian by Bishop de Mazenod: "Dovrebbe ella presentarsi all'Ordinario del luogo, e fare al medesimo schietta e sincera confessione di tutto il suo operato, senza occultargli veruna cosa che potesse riguardarla sul noto proposito; manifestandogli insieme il desiderio di riconciliarsi col tribunale della fede. Egli poi, che si suppone avere le opportune istruzioni in simili affari, penserebbe a tutto il resto".

<sup>26</sup> Jean Baptist Honorat (1799-1862), then Superior of Notre-Dame de Lumières.

<sup>27</sup> Faubourg Saint-Jean.

**February 11:** Letter to M. Gay<sup>28</sup>, parish priest of Cassis, to invite him to come to an agreement with me regarding the arrangements for the new situation that I have arranged for him. I very clearly express to him my unshakable intention of establishing community life for the pastor and the curates in all the parishes successively, while starting with his. I notify him of the changes that I have made so that he will find all the facilities when he arrives. [p. 9]

**February 11:** Letter of the Bishop *Uditor Santissimo*<sup>29</sup>, in the name of the Pope, to approve my having taken the oath at my predecessor's hands before my installation.

Letter of the Bishop of Fréjus. He consents to cede M. Feraud to me, but he supposes that this priest will ask him for the permission to leave his diocese; he will give him his discharge<sup>30</sup> then, but if he were to leave the diocese, he would like him to remain under my jurisdiction. It will oblige me to examine the topic more closely.

Letter from Joséphine de Coriolis. She wants to sound us out regarding marriage arrangements. The Marshal of B<sup>31</sup>. would like to marry one of his sons to a young lady of good quality, well brought up, and having a reasonable fortune. These young people are so devout that Joséphine refers to them as angels. If this suits us for Césarie<sup>32</sup>, we only have to write to him.

Letter to M. Beraud, lawyer in Aix, to acknowledge receipt of his.

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<sup>28</sup> Honoré Gay (1794-1855)

<sup>29</sup> Generally in legal matters the auditor is the one to whom one confides the task of preparing the cases for judgement and of giving a decision regarding them. In 1837-1838, there was an "Auditor of His Holiness", and an "Auditor general of the apostolic Chamber". This last function was fulfilled by the prelate Charles J. E. Acton (1803-1847) who was made a cardinal in 1842, at the age of 39 years. Bishop de Mazenod met him several times in Rome in 1845, and the Mazenods had known his father in Palermo: John Francis Acton, of English origin and minister of the King of Naples, cf. *Oblate Writings*, *Roman Journal*, vol. 17, pp. 159, 166-167, 169.

<sup>30</sup> Ms. "excorporation"

<sup>31</sup> Probably Marshal de Bourmont (1773-1846), conqueror of Algeria in 1830, cf. *Biographie française*.

<sup>32</sup> Césarie de Boisgelin, niece of the Founder.

Visit of M. Massot<sup>33</sup>, first deputy serving as mayor. One would not know how to be more agreeable nor to say things more honestly and more pleasantly than M. Massot did in this visit. He told me to watch how the business of St.-Lazare<sup>34</sup> is going, and asked me to do him the favour of never putting myself out to go to him when I have something to ask him, but that he would make it his duty to come to me, and that he would consider himself happy to be able to serve me in every circumstance, etc.

**February 12:** Letter to my brother-in-law to acquaint him with the proposition that Joséphine de Coriolis made to me.

Letter of M. Abeille. He has finished the business of the Trinquiers and of M. Lavison. This one has bought at the cost of 1800 francs. He only gave this amount because it was realized at the survey that there is less land than the acts report. See his letter of February 10. He refuses the 200 francs bonus that I offered him. He sends me two bills of exchange, one of 700 francs payable on sight by M. Durand, commissionaire, rue nationale number 3. The other is an obligation worth 945 francs, subscribed by M. Lavison and payable at the end of January 1839. The 200 remaining francs are in the hands of M. Abeille, which he intends to make pass over to me, reserving for himself only the travel expenses of the young Trinquier and her husband from St.-Chamas to Marseilles. [p. 10].

**February 13:** I received from Paris the complement to the beautiful vestment given by the King. To this consignment the King added the gift of a magnificent pastoral stole embroidered in gold on a gold fabric that, without my having requested it, he considered appropriate for me.

I placed in my portfolio two promissory notes on the loan on St.-Lazare that are made out in favour of my mother. When their numbers will be drawn, the sum will be given back to me to be used for whichever good work I choose.

The Municipal Council yesterday unanimously adopted the findings of the commission regarding the recognition of St.-Lazare parish. Now a matter of great importance has been concluded, in a short time and by

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<sup>33</sup> Marius Massot

<sup>34</sup> It concerned the sale to the city of the Church of Sainte-Lazare, built at the expense of the Diocese. cf *Diary* 21 and 23 May 1837.

mutual agreement; it was necessary that our great patron get a little involved from the heights of heaven where he is still the friend of his Divine Master, Our Lord.

**February 14:** Mme Gérard and her son came in person to my home to hear about the marriage proposals planned for their daughter. I wrote to M. R[oux] asking that he pass by the bishop's house tomorrow. We have just dealt with this business to the advantage of all.

Went to visit several of our convents. Here is what the prioress of the Carmelites told me about one of her nuns who stands out from the others by her virtues and particularly by her obedience. This holy child had hurt her finger and for a while it was necessary to dress the wound every day, to apply some poultices etc. One day, the prioress told her, there is this feast that we must celebrate, tomorrow you will be seen to be a sad figure carrying the candle with your finger bandaged, I order you to heal. The good nun agreed, the following morning she came in all simplicity to show her completely-healed finger to the prioress who was astounded by this miracle. This was not the only time, on another occasion when the same sister was sick, the prioress ordered her to heal, and she obeyed, or better stated, God, by healing her, wanted to give this proof of the love that he has for the virtue of obedience since he wanted, in a manner of speaking, to obey himself in the person of this holy religious by listening to her prayer. [p. 11]

**February 15:** The pastor of St.-Martin died suddenly yesterday evening. According to the new regulation that I made, the archdeacon of St.-Martin, will take over the curial jurisdiction during the whole time of the vacancy in the parish. I found out tonight that early tomorrow morning they intend to have a procession to the poor corpse that has been placed in the church this evening. I hastily wrote to prohibit this absurd practice. When the Chapter will bear the body to carry it to the cathedral, they will be able to take it around the parish without causing any inconvenience; but to pull it off its catafalque to go running with it and then to return to place it back on the catafalque while risking that the poor deceased won't have returned by the time that the Chapter arrives to fetch him, is the height of ludicrousness. I had to oppose it, and I write it here so that it will be remembered when another pastor or honorary Canon dies.

Visit of the Prince of Mir<sup>35</sup> who came from Algiers where he set up some establishments. This Polish prince told me some very interesting things about the colony. His properties are three miles from Algiers, but he doesn't have the least fear of the Arabs who respect him and his family because they witness the exercises of piety which take place in his home. They regard him as a Christian Marabout, and when there are prayers in his house, the Arabs remain standing and in silence out of respect. He boldly displayed the cross on his property. No Arab has ever affronted him in the slightest way. He assured me that there would be nothing easier than winning over, through virtue, all these infidels who have been distanced from us only as a result of the profanity of our colonists.

Meeting here of the two families Roux and Gérard. The marriage of their children was negotiated in my presence. All this leads me to believe that it is God who directed me to obtain such a well-matched union.

**February 16:** Funeral of M. Court. I assisted at the High Mass and did the absolution.

M. Coursin came with a request on behalf of a certain Mr. Samat, who had given a great number of objects to Notre-Dame de la Garde. He was rich then, but now he is poor, old and sick; he asks for some help from the administration. [p. 12]

**February 18<sup>36</sup>:** Twelfth anniversary of the approbation of the Institute. I said the Mass at the Calvaire where the two houses of Marseilles had come together. Brother Daly, an Irishman, made his oblation. Eighteen professed were present at the ceremony and renewed their vows. The numerous novices, together with the priests and oblates of the society, filled the chapel. The ceremony was very beautiful and very

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<sup>35</sup> Teofil Mirski, known in France as "the Prince of Mir", was one of the numerous Poles who had fought in 1830 for the independence of Poland. After the Russian army had crushed the insurrection, he took refuge in France, first settling in Levroux (Indre), then in Algeria. After the failure of the company for the colonization of North Africa, the Prince became a member of the Orthodox Church and left for Russia, cf. J. Pielorz, *Mgr Eugène de Mazenod et les Polonais*, Rome, 1970, pp. 53-67.

<sup>36</sup> Bishop de Mazenod probably did not have the time to write on Saturday 17, and this is why on the following day, he absent-mindedly wrote, "February 18: Twelfth anniversary of the approbation of the Institute."

touching. Although still unwell, I could not stop myself from addressing some words to the large gathering. After going to the refectory, I left, deeply edified and very happy.

Mr. Gabriel, counsellor of the prefecture, came in the name of a large number of people to ask me to entrust the care of St.-Martin to M. Léautier<sup>37</sup>. I had to answer as I did, explaining the principles of this matter.

M. Damico<sup>38</sup> wrote to M. Cailhol that he left for his parish so as to not give the impression that he is purposely prolonging his stay in Marseilles. However, he especially asked my Grand Vicar to tell me that he is quite prepared to accept the appointment that I would offer him if I have the intention of recalling him to the diocese.

Letter from Leblanc<sup>39</sup>. He saw Chappuis<sup>40</sup> who was very upset to have missed me in Marseilles. *He compensated for this disappointment, Leblanc told me, by chatting a lot about our father and common benefactor. Believe us that the memories of our past relations are so precious after so many years that they are still alive in our hearts.* The three-page letter is full of fine feelings. *You are today, this dear child tells me, what you have been at all times in your ministry, as I observed you when I had the happiness of not leaving you for one instant, knowing so well how to reconcile the kindness of charity with the rigour of duty.* This recognition is very dear to me. It comes from a good priest whom I esteem to the extent that I have always loved him and that goes back to the first years of my ministry when this good Leblanc was among the most fervent disciples of my beautiful congregation of Christian youth, of which he was one of the first members. [p. 13]

Letter from Fr. Guigues of February 13. He comes back on what he had told me about Brother Blanc, apologizing about what he had said

<sup>37</sup> Jean Baptiste Laurent Léautier (1799-1865)

<sup>38</sup> S. L. Marius Damico (1786-1866), originally from Marseilles, was a pastor in the Diocese of Fréjus at the time.

<sup>39</sup> Father H. J. Leblanc, formerly a member of the Youth Congregation of Aix, now a curate in Paris. Cf. *Diary* entries of 11 et 28 April 1837. We have 31 letters of Father Leblanc to the Founder, however we do not have that of February 1838.

<sup>40</sup> Adrien Antoine Chappuis, formerly a member of the Youth Congregation of Aix, now an advocate in Paris. Cf. *Diary* entry of 11 May 1837.

which was based on the opinions of Fr. Péliissier who is anything but indulgent when it is a question of another person. This brother is exactly as I perceived him to be in Laus. Fr. Guigues asks me again for an answer on the topic in the light of the new information that he gives me. He sends me a copy of the report on the mission of Mens to be passed on to the novitiate. They transcribed it into their register. I must not forget to write to Lumières to ask them to do the same for their missions at Le Comtat<sup>41</sup>.

**February 19:** Mass at the great catechism of which M. Coulin is the director. There were at least 250 girls or ladies who received communion. This is a very beautiful institution which I have encouraged from the start and which I encourage because I know how much one can benefit from the instructions which they give. I would only have preferred that the director not be put in a position to be accused of arranging things too well for himself, and that his impartiality be given credit.<sup>42</sup>

Letter from Mister Puissant, personal secretary to the Guardian of the Seals. He sends me the ordinance of nomination of my uncle as a Canon of the Order of St. Denis. The letter of the Guardian of the Seals to my uncle is very nice. Finally this business has been brought to an end after costing me a lot of effort to bring it about successfully<sup>43</sup>.

Letter of Fr. Bernard. His retreat-mission in Aix is going marvellously.

Letter of Fr. Guibert. Very elaborate details of Fr. Reinaud<sup>44</sup> and Fr. Rollerli. They are tiresome whereas comforting are those which he gives me on Fathers Albini, Moreau and Mouchel. He insists on making the journey to Genoa and Rome. I wrote to him to send Fr. Rollerli back to me, and I blamed him for not having looked after him sufficiently. This poor

<sup>41</sup> Le Comtat Venaissin in the département of Vaucluse

<sup>42</sup> Father F.X. Alphonse Coulin had been a novice and scholastic with the Missionaries of Provence from 1819 until 1822. In 1838 he was pastor of O.L. of Mount Carmel. In 1832 he had a house and a chapel built on the Boulevard des Parisiens. In 1838-1839 the city wanted to buy this property in order to lengthen the Cours Lieutaud., On being offered 160 000 francs, Father Coulin asked for 250 000. This business was only concluded in 1859. Cf. A. Fabre, *Les rues de Marseille*. Marseille, 1869, Vol. IV, pp. 132-135

<sup>43</sup> Ordinance of 15 February, published in Rey II, p. 7

<sup>44</sup> Names scratched out. Father J.A. Valentin Reinaud, professor of dogma at the Major Seminary of Ajaccio, left the Congregation in 1844.



young Father appears to be very imperfect, but was it also not asking too much of a man so young to be abandoned to the solitude of Vico? Letter to Fr. Guibert; quick reply to his letter of today.

Letter of M. Girolet, pastor of Goult. He asks me insistently to write to the Archbishop of Avignon to obtain his permission to be able to enter the Congregation. He admits that this has always been his vocation, but that he had not dared to make it known until now because of the scarcity of priests. In my position it is impossible [p. 14] that I write to the archbishop. It is up to M. Girolet to force his way in.<sup>45</sup>

Letter of Vignolo to inform us of the illness of Eugene<sup>46</sup>. It is a pleurisy which does not manifest any alarming symptoms. I cannot be any less apprehensive in my great anxiety. I have just written to the Abbesses of the Capuchins and the Poor Clares and to the Prioress of the Carmelites asking them to begin to pray immediately. My trust is there, but I cannot prevent myself from having a strong sentiment of anxiety.

**February 20:** A reassuring letter from Vignolo on the illness of Eugene. The Good God has paid attention to the prayers from our holy daughters and of the sacrifice which my uncle and I offered for him this morning.

Letter from the Bishop of Fréjus who lets me have M. Feraud, a priest of his diocese. He asks me for M. Michel in exchange.

Letter to Louis<sup>47</sup> to tell him about the illness of his brother.

Journey to Aix to visit the Archbishop to sort out some business. This visit to the Archbishop is not obligatory. My letter, when I was instituted, was sufficient, but the other bishops of the province have submitted to this formality, for lack of thinking about the consequences of a false step, and I believed it necessary to do the same, knowing the sensitivity of this

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<sup>45</sup> This M. Girolet never entered the novitiate.

<sup>46</sup> Eugene de Boisgelin was a student in Paris at the college of Mr. Poiloup. He had left Marseilles the preceding autumn with Mr. Vignolo. Cf. Mazenod Diary, 1<sup>st</sup> October 1837.

<sup>47</sup> Louis de Boisgelin, brother of Eugene, at that time a novice with the Jesuits in Avignon.

prelate who was already wary of me, and strongly bad-tempered against my uncle.<sup>48</sup>

**February 21:** I visited the new cemetery in Aix where I would like to build a chapel to place the venerable remains of my two families. The expense which I would have made for the *Enclos*<sup>49</sup> will be more suitably used in this holy ground. My intention would be to use five or six thousand francs at most for this building. I would authorize that they publicise all the dead whom they bury in this cemetery and that they celebrate Mass whenever their devotion inspires them to, in the confidence that the souls of our loved ones will benefit. I would make one condition to this concession<sup>50</sup>. I will have to get in touch with the Mayor of Aix before embarking on this work. [p.15]

**February 22:** The parish priest of Holy Spirit parish<sup>51</sup> graciously invited me to say the Mass in his church on the occasion of exposition of the Blessed Sacrament. I was extremely edified by the large number of communions. In the evening I returned to his church to attend the sermon and to give the benediction.

Yesterday I attended the sermon of our Father Bernard in the suburb and I gave the benediction afterwards. The retreat which this Father is giving in this parish is producing much fruit. It will end on Sunday with the general communion that the archbishop will come to give these good people.

**February 23:** Visited the Public Prosecutor. He expressed his affection for the city of Aix which he had nevertheless treated badly during a

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<sup>48</sup> Bishop Joseph Bernet ( 1770-1846 ), Archbishop of Aix from 1836 until 1846. He was "strongly bad tempered" against Bishop Fortuné because he had obtained the recall of the Sisters of Saint Thomas de Villanova to their mother house in Aix - the work of the Refuge had been confided to them. cf. Rey II, p. 4.

<sup>49</sup> Some members of his family and some Oblates had already been buried in the family property at l'Enclos near Aix.

<sup>50</sup> Concession: land sold or rented to serve as a burial place.

<sup>51</sup> The church of the Holy Spirit in Aix was built on the site of the Hospital of the Holy Spirit for foundlings, and completed at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

formal occasion. He insists that the canal<sup>52</sup> pass through Aix. In connection with this canal, he told me that they have just discovered the work which the Romans had made to bring water underground from Jouques and Peyrolles to Aix. It is the solution to a problem with regard to the present case, since the greatest difficulty which they object to is the fear of not being able to succeed in the breakthrough which the project requires of the canal passing by Aix.

Received and made visits.

**February 24:** The court house which I still did not know. I visited it from top to bottom. Beautiful courtyard, small halls, bad construction, it will already be necessary to redo the roof. The President Mr. Verger invited me to have dinner on Monday. I turned him down, having to leave tomorrow.

Agreement for the sale of our property of Tholonet<sup>53</sup>, originating from the widowed Madame David. Everything was concluded this morning with Mister Courtès, father. He will pay one thousand ecus to the seller, and will occupy the property during his lasting lifetime, his daughter will occupy it after him, and the property will return to us on the death of the last survivor. This evening everything changed. The women were angered by the danger and the difficulties of this acquisition. The father could not resist this grousing, he withdrew from the sale.

It is raining all day, impossible to leave. Put forward to tomorrow.

**February 25:** Early Mass in the Mission. Departure for Marseilles. Letter from Dassy<sup>54</sup> telling me that the lithograph of my portrait will be made by M. Belliard at the price of 500-francs. It will be 13 1/2 inches high on 10 wide. He retouched the original portrait himself. I wrote to him to approve what he had done. [P. 16]

**February 26:** Mr. de la Villegontier passed through Marseilles. Letter of Fr. Guibert, full of praise for Fr. Albin and Fr. Moreau and Fr.

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<sup>52</sup> The Durance canal.

<sup>53</sup> Oblate property 5 kilometres to the east of Aix, cf. the Diary of 5 May 1837.

<sup>54</sup> The painter, Jean Joseph Dassy (1791-1865), brother of Fr. Louis Toussaint Dassy, OMI.

Mouchel<sup>55</sup>. I made a mistake about the date. It is a later letter than this. He speaks of the dealings with the Bishop of Ajaccio who shows himself increasingly less capable of governing his diocese. This prelate does not have enough appreciation for what is done for him. It will be good to be on one's guard. The letter of Guibert is convincing. It is dated February 17th. The previous one is of the 2nd.

Letter of D. Giacomo Semeria written from Rome. Lots of gratitude for what I did for his nephew<sup>56</sup>; he offers me his services.

Visit of Fr. Bucci. He again discussed his business with me and handed me a very long report to familiarise me with all the details. At the same time he gave me a letter which he wrote to Fr. Olivieri to make known to him the despicable comments which a certain Roman medical doctor named Freduzzi has made here; he went around saying everywhere that the pope was good fellow, that he allowed himself to be influenced in everything by his manservant through whom passed all business, even the most secret; that this despicable subject made him change the most serious decisions made with the Secretary of State or any other cardinal in the place; that the Pope passed his time in playing the fool, enjoying throwing water on those of his court while they walked in his garden. These repeated disgraceful statements are likely to decrease the respect which is due to the Holy Father; this doctor who produces them should be denounced to Rome as a very suspicious man. He did not fail to make contact here with the Roman refugees who are the most relentless against the Holy See<sup>57</sup>.

**February 27:** letter of the Bishop of Gap<sup>58</sup> who asks for help. It is the most extraordinary letter that it is possible to write. I hope that he will succeed, but I doubt it.

Letter from Cardinal Pacca, affectionate and very friendly as usual.

<sup>55</sup> Frédéric Mouchel (1802-1880), novice in 1830-1831, ordained priest on 26 February 1832 in Fribourg. He was bursar at the Major Seminary of Ajaccio.

<sup>56</sup> His nephew, Fr. Etienne Semeria OMI, was responsible for the Work of the Italians in Marseilles. Bishop de Mazenod had given him permission to go to Corsica when his father died.

<sup>57</sup> On the Roman refugees, cf. the Diary of 28 March and 14 December.

<sup>58</sup> Bishop N. Augustin de La Croix d'Azolette (1779-1861), Bishop of Gap from 1837 to 1840.

M. Bonnafoux<sup>59</sup>, the new canon, gave me an invaluable relic of Saint Lazarus for the Chapter. It is a phalanx of a toe. He obtained this relic from M. Boyer, honorary canon of Malta, who had brought it here from this island where the foot of the saint is kept. He is the same person who gave us a considerable portion of this foot which he had also brought from Malta. Both of these relics are duly authenticated by the Archbishop-bishop of Malta.

**February 28:** I did the ceremony of the ashes at the cathedral. In the evening I presided at the beautiful meeting in St. Martin's. The church was full because they had known that I would be there. So when I was seated on the throne, [p. 17] I addressed the assembly, which made an impression and gave pleasure. It was indeed the case, because the scandal of dissipation is at its height today in Marseilles, and it was thus correct to speak paternally to the good people who gathered around their chief pastor to offer God such an edifying compensation and reparation.

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<sup>59</sup> Father Jean-Jacques Bonnafoux (+1841), named titular canon of the cathedral in January 1838.



### **The basilica of Saint Victor at Marseilles.**

Built over the tombs of Christian martyrs of the 3rd Century, the Abbey of Saint Victor, founded by Jean Cassien ca. 415, received the title of basilica in 1934.

It is one the most ancient monuments of Marseilles.

Bishop de Mazenod mentions it in his Diary on April 20.

## March 1838

**March 1:** The War Minister, taking into account my observations, has granted the small sum for which I had asked in order to defray the expenses of the priests at Ratonneau. If this Minister is kind, the Minister of Worship is hardly so because he has again just made a new difficulty regarding the requested repairs.<sup>1</sup>

I forgot to note that in Aix I had written to the King to thank him for acceding to my request to appoint my uncle to the canonry which receives a stipend from St-Denis.

Letter from M. Allard<sup>2</sup> telling me that M. Chabrier, superior of the Minor Seminary of Embrun, wants to enter the Congregation. M. Girolet, pastor of Goult, of the diocese of Avignon, had written the same to me, but how can I flatter myself to obtain it from the Archbishop of Avignon!

**March 2:** visit of M. Hoffman<sup>3</sup>, a missionary from the United States who is on his way to Rome. What he told us about the dioceses of that part of America is hardly comforting. The indifference of the Catholics is at its height, and the country is destroyed by an infinite number of bad priests

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<sup>1</sup> The Bishop had asked for 17 000 francs for the work at the bishop's house. Cf. Letter to M. Legrand, Director of Roads, 8 March, and to the Prefect of Bouches-du-Rhône, 10 March 1838. Copy auth.: AAM, reg. lettres administratives, vol. III, nn. 395 and 396.

<sup>2</sup> Jean François Allard ( 1806-1889 ), priest of the diocese of Gap and the future Vicar Apostolic of Natal. He had officially begun his noviciate on October 28th, 1837, but had remained a professor at the Minor Seminary of the diocese of Gap, cf. *infra*, 6 May. Father Chabrier, of the same diocese, never was an Oblate novice.

<sup>3</sup> During his journey to Algeria, in autumn of 1842, Bishop de Mazenod met a Father Hoffmann, priest of Dely Ibrahim. Cf. *Missions OMI* 1874, p. 438.

coming from all nations. The monks of Mexico and from other parts of Spanish America, who were chased away from their homelands, are almost all unworthy of their vocation. There is no more common sight than to see priests living publicly with women, not hiding their shame and publicly parading their children. M. Hoffman no longer wants to return to this country where he does not see any possibility of doing any great good. The love of study calls him to become a Benedictine in Montecasino or in Subiaco. He is the bearer of papers hardly favourable to the Bishop of Detroit<sup>4</sup>. They advise this prelate to stay in Rome and not to return to a diocese which, in the opinion of M. Hoffman, he did not know how to govern. It is this same Bishop of Detroit who made the unfortunate choice of M. Reynaud as his Vicar General. We were right to prevent this man from taking a collection in Marseilles only for the diocese of Detroit to the detriment of the general work of the faith. The Bishop of Detroit had obtained about [p. 18] ninety thousand francs from the Léopoldine Society<sup>5</sup>, and none of it benefited America. This sum was lent to an Irishman, a friend of the bishop who ran away with it.

Everything that M. Hoffman told us about the United States proved that I had been well inspired when I resisted the desire of some of our men who were burning with desire to go to this country. I knew what it was about when I pronounced so energetically against this project which did credit to their zeal but was not directed by experience. One always does well to concur with the wisdom of those whom the Lord has placed at the head of the family. When the right time will have come, the Master of the Vineyard will know perfectly how to make it known. In the meantime, may the Congregation grow in perfection and in numbers.

M. Maurel<sup>6</sup>, the designated pastor of St. Martin, wrote me a moving letter to dissuade me from my resolution to appoint him to St-Martin. His letter, although very well presented, did not persuade me to change my resolve. I answered him very politely, but told him that he had to resign himself to collaborate with my views, so as to facilitate my fulfilment of

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<sup>4</sup> Ms.: of Détroit. Bishop Frederic J. C. Rese, Bishop of Detroit from 1833 to 1841.

<sup>5</sup> The Léopoldine Society in Vienna, whose purpose it was to help the missions of North America. Cf. *Journal Mazenod* of 21 May 1837.

<sup>6</sup> Pierre-Noël Maurel (1782-1851 ), rector of the parish of St. Vincent de Paul and appointed pastor of St. Martin, on 15 May 1838. Cf. AAM, *reg. des Insinuations*.



my duties in the painful position in which I am placed.

**March 3:** letter from Bishop Garibaldi<sup>7</sup>, the Nuncio, to ask me for information about Mr. Escalon and the other aspirants for the position of consul general in Rome. Favourable answer for Mr. Escalon based on Mr. Buret's testimony.

Visit of M. Deguerry<sup>8</sup> who has come to preach the Lenten sermons at St. Ferréol. I wish him success in other areas rather than in those he expects as a result of his talent. He looks like the portrait which I had seen of him on the sidewalks in Paris: proud attitude, original hairstyle, haughty speech, etc.

**March 4:** I confirmed the good brother Luigi<sup>9</sup>, our dear scholastic.

Letter to Cardinal Pacca<sup>10</sup> returning the report which he had sent me regarding the business of the religious, Bucchi.

Letter of friendship and reproach to Cardinal Falconieri<sup>11</sup> congratulating him on his elevation to the cardinalate. [p. 19]

**March 5:** an edifying letter from the Bishop of Digne, acknowledging receipt of my pastoral letter<sup>12</sup>.

Letter from Mr. Massot, who is replacing the Mayor of Marseilles during his absence, replying to mine about the project of constructing a

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<sup>7</sup> Mgr. Antonio Garibaldi was chargé d'affaires in Paris from 1831 (at the beginning of the July Monarchy), and then Nuncio.

<sup>8</sup> Jean Gaspard Deguerry, born in 1796, was a renowned preacher. In 1848, he was named pastor at La Madeleine in Paris. Napoleon III proposed him for the See of Marseille at the death of Bishop de Mazenod (1861), but he refused "so as not to leave his parishioners". He was one of the hostages shot by the Paris Commune on 24 May 1871, at the same time as Archbishop Darboy.

<sup>9</sup> Dominique Luigi, born on February 11th, 1817 in Barretali (Corsica), novice in 1836-1837, ordained priest on June 27th, 1841. Died in Vico on December 28th, 1858.

<sup>10</sup> Cardinal Bartolomeo Pacca (d. 1844) was Prefect of the Congregation for Bishops and Regulars during the time of the approbation of the Congregation in 1826.

<sup>11</sup> Cardinal Falconieri Mellini, Archbishop of Ravenna, co-consecrator of Bishop de Mazenod in Rome in October 1832. He was made cardinal on February 12th, 1838.

<sup>12</sup> Possibly referring the Lenten pastoral letter of February 18th, 1838. Bishop F.B.B. Miollis was Bishop of Digne from 1805 to 1838.

new cathedral. He thinks that it would be more suitable to wait for the return of Mr. Consolat so that he can present it himself to the City Council, the proposal will have more influence if it is presented by the chief magistrate of the city.

The ladies of the Work of the Refuge came to ask me to make a donation towards their new building. I was only able to offer them 100 francs and that is still a lot at the rate of the requests which weigh on me. I made them realise that this small amount at the top of their list could be a bad example and encourage others to contribute little. They felt it only too keenly, and they also suggested that I write down one thousand, while giving only a hundred. My sensitivity refused this solution. We looked for other means, finally we arrived at this solution which is that these ladies, without consulting me, will themselves write down what they will judge to be useful, leaving it up to me to review their account and to give only what I can. This is fine like this. I write it so that if I die, it will be known that I persist in wanting to give only a hundred francs to this work. These ladies know, but others may not.

**March 6:** Arrival of Father Rolleri. He did not succeed in Corsica. We shall use him in the service of the Italians in Marseille where I will establish him in the house of the Calvaire. Letter from Fr. Guibert. Letter from Fr. Reinaud.

**March 7:** Letter to Father Guibert on the project of letting the young priests formed in his seminary do missions, and to let them exercise this ministry under the supervision of Father Albin and some of our other Fathers when they will be there. I disapprove of this project.

Today I consigned my letters to Cardinal Pacca and Cardinal Falconieri to a man who will be leaving by the boat tomorrow; Doctor Hoffman had come take them while I was in the Refuge.

I went to say Mass this morning for the big meeting of the Ladies of the Good Shepherd<sup>13</sup>. Never has there been<sup>14</sup> such a large number of ladies, I received some ten new members. After the reception, we went up to the

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<sup>13</sup> Ladies of the Good Shepherd: ladies of the Work of the Refuge. Cf. Rey, p. 8, and the Diary of January 12th, 1838.

<sup>14</sup> Ms.: "Jamais il n'y en avait eu..."

big parlour, where the secretary reported on the situation of the house and announced the enlargement projects. They thanked me profusely for the interest which I took in their work. On my part I had praised them in my instruction [p. 20] while underlining for them the spirit necessary in order to carry out the works of charity which they exercise towards these poor penitent girls. I am really edified by their zeal.

Visit of Captain Pegulu. This good soldier was filled with gratitude for a small service that I was rather happy to do for him, thanks to the kindness of the Cardinal Archbishop of Genoa<sup>15</sup> who, at my request, sent papers which nobody had been able to obtain for Mr. Pegulu, and which were extremely important for him. The joy of this serviceman made me experience a moment of true happiness.

**March 8:** letter to the Archbishop of Bordeaux<sup>16</sup> in reply to the his which was brought to me by Mr. Matthieu, son of a commendable magistrate of Bordeaux. This man came without leaving me his address. I ask the Archbishop for it.

**March 9:** letter from the Archbishop of Avignon to ask me for Sister Marcel<sup>17</sup> for three more years. It would be difficult for me to refuse him this favour, but I do not know how the nuns here will react to this decision.

I gathered some notables at my place to establish the Work of St. François Régis<sup>18</sup>. The session lasted three hours. The regulation was adopted, sections were formed, the officers were appointed. I shall take care of seeing the honorary members whom we have added to the active committee, such as President Reguis<sup>19</sup>, Deputy Loubon, etc. I shall see the Mayor to try to obtain a room in the city hall to hold the ordinary sessions of the Work.

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<sup>15</sup> Bishop Placido Maria Tadini, Archbishop of Genoa from 1832 to 1852.

<sup>16</sup> Bishop F. F. Auguste Donnet, Archbishop of Bordeaux from 1837 to 1882.

<sup>17</sup> Sister Marcel, Visitation Sister of the second convent of Marseille. Cf. *Diary*, 23 April 1838.

<sup>18</sup> The Work of St. Francis Régis aimed at the regularization of marriages.

<sup>19</sup> Jean François Reguis, President of the Court of Marseille.

**March 10:** Ordination in the private chapel of the Calvaire. Brothers Rouvière<sup>20</sup>, Luigi and Daly were ordained, the first sub-deacon and the other two were simply tonsured.

Confirmation of a small sick person. By making her say her prayers, I convinced myself even more how wrong we are to teach them in French to the people's children. I pointed this out to the priests who accompanied me. This poor girl did not know what she said, they were words which we saw that she understood neither the sense nor the connection. A further argument to prove that I was right to take the measure which I took for St-Laurent.<sup>21</sup>

Unexpected arrival of Bishop Tharin<sup>22</sup>, former Bishop of Strasbourg, my old friend and classmate. He did not want to accept accommodation with me for fear of compromising me. His intention is to spend time in Marseille to keep an eye on the printing [p. 21] of a work which he has just written on the state of the Church of France. It seems that he does not spare the government in this booklet; if he wants to be just, he can go as far back as the time of the Restoration to formulate his complaints. There is no bishop who could not supply him with some pages accusing the government of this time. I said this to the bishop, who did not deny it.

Confirmation of another poor sick person on his deathbed.

**March 11:** Mass at St-Théodore on the anniversary of the sacrilege<sup>23</sup>. Visit to Bishop Tharin.

Letter from Mr. Beraud, lawyer, stating: *"If you want to comply with all the formalities prescribed by the law regarding Mr. de Lubières, you*

<sup>20</sup> Pierre Rouvière ( 1809-1875 ), was a novice in 1836-1837, ordained a priest on 24 June 1838, and died in Marseille on 26 December 1875.

<sup>21</sup> The parish of St. Laurent.

<sup>22</sup> Claude Marie Paul Tharin (1787-1843) was a classmate of Eugène de Mazenod in the Seminary of St. Sulpice. Ordained priest the same day as Eugène, he also returned to St-Sulpice to fill in for the absence of the Sulpicians who had been expelled by Napoleon I. He was Bishop of Strasbourg for three years (1823-1826). He then resigned his See to become a private tutor of the Duke of Bordeaux (son of the Duke of Berry, and thus grandson of King Charles X and pretender to the throne). After the fall of Charles X, he retired to Switzerland, then to Piedmont. His links with the deposed royal family, and with the Duchess of Berry, explain his caution regarding Bishop de Mazenod whom he does not want "to compromise".

<sup>23</sup> Theft of consecrated hosts during the night of 9 - 10 March 1829.

*are entitled to ask him for the release of the legacy which was made to you by Madame de Bausset (art. 1014 of the civil code) and, within six months of the death, to make an inventory of the contents of the estate so as to maintain the profits of the separation of the patrimonies (2111 c.c.). Your good sense will decide, Sir, if the situation of Mr. de Lubières does not dispense you from fulfilling these formalities". Aix, 10 March 1838.*

I shall notify him after having taken advice from my lawyer.

**March 12:** Arrival of the priest we have been expecting for several months. Refer [p. 211], to 30 September<sup>24</sup>. I authorized him to present himself at the Calvaire to get ready to begin his novitiate.

Visits to all the outstanding honorary members of the Work of St. François Régis.

The former Bishop of Strasbourg dined at my home yesterday.

**March 13:** Regular visitation of the first convent of the Visitation. I employed the whole day without being able to finish. I am very satisfied with the spirit of this community. It has grown exceptionally since the last visit. It was proved to me that the stumbling block was the former superior who allowed everything to pass, who was considered as a prophet outside, but who was better known by some ladies of common sense whom I knew how to appreciate and thus bring to the leadership of the house, and who have raised the spirit. All this is said in peace of poor Madame Remuzat<sup>25</sup>.

**March 14:** Continuation of the visitation. I was determined to make a decent job of it. It lasted the whole day. I ended it, conforming myself punctually to what was written. So the nuns are filled with happiness and gratitude, and I am very consoled by all the good which was strengthened. There is really only one heart in this community. [p. 22]

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<sup>24</sup> In the *Diary* entry of 30 September 1837 the Founder speaks about a priest who wants to enter the novitiate. He does not name him. There was no priest novice in the spring of 1838.

<sup>25</sup> Was the previous superior called Sister Remuzat? Either this or else the Founder simply refers to the famous sister Anne Madeleine Remuzat, Visitation Sister of the same convent a century earlier. She was born in Marseilles in 1696 and died in 1730. She had been the successor of Saint Margaret Mary and had propagated devotion to the Sacred Heart.

**March 15:** I did not want to give a letter of recommendation to this certain brother who has come from Cape Corsica for it. I do not want to be guarantor of his eccentricities. The Bishop of Ajaccio will judge for himself and will decide.

Letter from Father Guibert. He believes his journey in Italy to be useful for the interests of the diocese and for his health.

**March 16:** visit to M. Martin, chaplain of the city hall. I made him enjoy my appointment of a survivor<sup>26</sup>. Audiences swamp me.

Yesterday a numerous assembly of the Work to legitimise marriages; I chaired it, and we arranged to begin activities the next week.

**March 17:** Who will be the most indiscreet in asking me for exorbitant help. Five persons tired me with their requests this morning. Mr. Fabre<sup>27</sup>, magistrate and municipal councillor, the author of a history of Marseilles, written in a very bad spirit, had the patience to wait more than one and a half hours for his turn to enter my place. This perseverance gained him a very polite reception which he appeared to be satisfied with because he graciously offered me his services at any time.

Mr. de St-Priest brought me a letter of recommendation from Mr. Gaultier de Claubry<sup>28</sup>. He strongly urged me to recommend the Encyclopedia of which he is publisher. It is a question of nothing less than 52 volumes, with the names of some authors as the only guarantee. I have good reason to reflect more about it.

A pleasant story. While I was holding council, they told me that there was a very urgent message. I let him in. To my surprise through the medi-

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<sup>26</sup> M. Martin had had a stroke. Bishop de Mazenod proposed Father Carrier, curate at St-Théodore, to replace him. This priest who was already old, and whom the Founder calls "a survivor" would also obtain a supplement to his resources there. Cf. Letter to the Mayor, 8 March 1838. Auth. copy: AAM, reg letters adm. Vol. III, n. 393.

<sup>27</sup> Augustine J.E. Fabre (1797-1870), was also author of the work *Les rues de Marseille* in 5 volumes, in 1868-1869.

<sup>28</sup> Emmanuel Gaultier de Claubry, doctor, friend of Bishop de Mazenod since his journey to Paris in 1805.

ation of a Jew I received a letter from the envoy of Abd El-Kader<sup>29</sup>, who sends me a five hundred-franc note for the needy of my community. I hesitated for a moment, but after a moment of reflection, I told the bearer of the letter that when it is a question of helping the poor we have to accept gifts from wherever they come. Through one of my Vicars General I replied with a polite letter to the envoy of Abd El-Kader. His messenger informed me that he had even donated to the works of charity. I presume that this act of philanthropy is inspired by politics, and that in this way he wishes to make his master popular in France where many people hardly like him. [p. 23]

Madame Emerigon<sup>30</sup> left 2000 Masses for the repose of her soul to the superior of the Missionaries of Provence - to be distributed among his missionary confreres. This is the same lady who, on the arrival of my uncle in the diocese, aroused the population to oppose the measures that he had taken against the "Missionaries of France". She is also the same one who punched a woman who did not want to shout like her, and this punch on the chest caused her to get the cancer which killed her. Compare this fact with the previous one which amazed me at the time, that is, to see a certain Madame Moulinard, who turned herself into a seer in order to announce the imminent death of my uncle, and who was the centre of all the rebels grouped around M. Rodet (when this insane priest, defying the orders of the bishop, wanted to remain in the city to stir up the opposition which he and his followers had aroused there, preferring rather to refrain from saying Mass than to give up), to see, I say, this Madame Moulinard choosing me as her confessor, and eventually being assisted by me at her death. These facts are connected with things that I have no time to narrate, but which ought to cover with shame the priests who are called the Missionaries of France, among whom one was a M. Rodet, their superior, a weak spirit who was involved in all the illusions of an insane Illuminism,

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<sup>29</sup> Abd El-Kader (1808-1883), Emir of Algeria, led the fight against the French conquerors. In 1837, a treaty with France recognized his sovereignty over a part of Algeria. This treaty was broken in 1839... He intervened later in favour of the Christians of Lebanon threatened by Druses (1860). We have this saying of his: "If the Moslems and the Christians listened to me, I would end their differences and they would become brothers inside and outside". Cf. *Biographie française*.

<sup>30</sup> Regarding Madame Emerigon, Madame Moulinard, and Fr. Rodet, and the opposition to the appointment of Bishop Fortuné as Bishop of Marseille, cf. Jean Leflon, *Bishop de Mazenod*, vol. II, pp. 205-216.

either by writing sheets of paper<sup>31</sup> under the dictation of the seer Moulinard, or by being the dupe of certain priest, Joseph<sup>32</sup>, who was put under inquiry in Rome, and who had to retract his vile errors so as to be able to leave there even with the protection of the Ambassador of France. Another one was this Marius Aubert<sup>33</sup> whom it was necessary to interdict *etiam a sacris* in the diocese for enormous errors; another was this M. ...<sup>34</sup>, today a priest of Carpentras, news of whom it would be necessary to ask the Archbishop of Avignon; the other one was a certain M. Bart, an unrefined man against whom nevertheless I have no other bad information other than that he had been the cause that all the so-called penitents of the Refuge being crazy about him because he was on first-name terms with them and was involved too much with them, doubtless for a good purpose. It was these people who, as long as my uncle was not canonically appointed, maintained, or better stated, stirred up an opposition which upheld their crazy claim to get Father de Janson<sup>35</sup> as Bishop of Marseille so as to exclude my uncle whom they insulted by fearing him because of me; they even circulated a petition to collect signatures to pressure the government. This despicable operation did not succeed, but the will was nevertheless manifest. [p. 24]

**March 18:** Letter to the Bishop of Fréjus to tell him that the Abbé Feraud was not considered suitable for the Congregation, and that I advised the latter to go to him to receive an appointment proportional to his abilities.

Close of the octave of the sacrilege at St-Théodore's. I went to St-Théodore, and attended Vespers wearing the *cappa magna* from the throne. After the sermon I went to the sacristy to fetch the alb and the cope, while canticles were being sung in the church and candles for the procession were being distributed. On returning to the choir, I carried the

<sup>31</sup> Orig: "Une main de papier" - refers to 25 sheets

<sup>32</sup> Father Joseph Girard whom Father de Mazenod met in Rome in December, 1825. Cf. *Oblate Writings* 17, pp. 46-47

<sup>33</sup> Marius Aubert, entered the Missionaries of Provence as a priest in April, 1818 and made his oblation on November 1st, 1818 for one year. He left the Congregation in April, 1820.

<sup>34</sup> Name omitted. There are several parishes in Carpentras.

<sup>35</sup> Charles de Forbin-Janson, friend of Eugene de Mazenod. Together with Rauzan he founded the Missionaries of France.



Blessed Sacrament in the procession, and gave the Benediction; we ended the beautiful ceremony with the *Te Deum*. As is expected, I remained standing throughout Vespers. The officiating priest sat, so I had him informed that the Bishop was standing and that he could not remain seated. But what shocked me, is that all the men who cluttered the sanctuary, on seeing us respectfully standing, did not even think of imitating us, except for a few of them. Last year, those who did not sit down were rather numerous. Next year I shall not forget to notify all the people who will want to place themselves in the sanctuary, that they must take a suitable posture there. We do not sit down in front of the King, even if we stay all evening long with him. We can do the same for Our Lord during the 3/4 hour that Vespers last.

Vigil of St. Joseph. I am afraid of forgetting that in the permissions which I shall give for Lent next year - if God gives me life - I must retain the day of abstinence on the Vigil of Saint Joseph and on that of the Annunciation. This is the practice in Italy.

**March 19:** Mass at the Sisters of the Retreat<sup>36</sup> to give them some consolation regarding the anxieties that the Archbishop of Aix's inquiries are causing them - he does not feel as confident as I do about these good women. I believe fundamentally that they work for their salvation with too much fear and trembling regarding the truth, but without their doctrine being positively erroneous. The hard and austere character of their founder, M. Receveur, has been continued by the respect which his memory inspires in Father Charles Breteni  re<sup>37</sup>, who would not be naturally inclined to this; among the mediocre priests who succeeded one another or replaced each other [p. 25] in this mixed society, one finds some who really behaved extravagantly. Personally, I would have some reproaches to make to Fr. Charles, and to some of the others, but on second thoughts I do not think that it is necessary to disturb them in the situation which they have created for themselves in my diocese. Nevertheless, keeping an eye on them appears to me to be not only a wise thing, but a duty. Fear of

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<sup>36</sup> Sisters of the Christian Retreat, founded in 1789 in Fontenelles, in the Diocese of Besan  on, by Father Antoine Sylvestre Receveur ( 1750-1804 ).

<sup>37</sup> Before 1808, Bishop de Mazenod had already known Fr. Charles, then superior of the Fathers of the Retreat in Aix. In 1809, Madame de Mazenod thought that Father Charles had influenced Eugene in the choice of his vocation to the priesthood. Cf. *Oblate Writings* 14, p. 111.

drawing my attention is the only constraint which will control them from pushing their schemes. After the Mass, in which I gave first communion to two older boys whom I also confirmed, I went up to the work room where the community was assembled. I left to return to the cathedral where I had to pontificate at the High Mass and at vespers. After dinner, confirmation - first of a young patient at the parish of St. Laurent - then three others at the hospital where I had visited the administrators on New Year's Day.

Interview with the Abbé B. who would like to establish a small society, together with some other good priests, following the example of that of Fr. Clorivière<sup>38</sup>.

The Work of the Savoyards<sup>39</sup> wants me to write to the Bishop of Aosta<sup>40</sup> to inform him of its existence and asking him to write to his priests so that they send the children who come to sweep to M. Caire, their director.

**March 20:** Assisted at a sermon on charity in the church of St-Ferréol. The Abbe Deguerry preached it. Visit to the Ladies of St. Thomas and to the cholera orphans. Nothing is more moving than to see the care given in this house to 140 children, a certain number of which can hardly talk.

**March 21:** I had a very long conversation with Father Telmon;<sup>41</sup> I have to say that I was very content with the frank and respectful way in which he opened himself to me on everything that he was reproached with. His is a difficult character, he uses a sharp manner, but he listens to reason on many things and with kindness one can win him over. His prejudices against Father<sup>42</sup> are, however, too deeply rooted to hope that he

<sup>38</sup> Michel Julien Picot de Clorivière, S.J. (1735-1820), founder of the Congregations of the Priests of the Heart of Jesus and the Daughters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

<sup>39</sup> Chimneysweepers.

<sup>40</sup> Bishop André Jourdain, Bishop of Aosta from 1832 till 1867.

<sup>41</sup> Adrien Telmon (1807-1878), novice in 1822-1823, ordained priest on April 10, 1830, was then professor at the major seminary of Marseilles.

<sup>42</sup> Word scratched out and impossible to read. It is probably Father Guibert. Cf. Diary Mazenod, May 1, 1837.

will free himself from them soon. This is a man with whom one must be patient and not treat brusquely with him.

Letter from Father Dassy,<sup>43</sup>. Via stage coach, he is sending me his little work on Notre-Dame de l'Osier.

The *Gazette*<sup>44</sup> did not say everything when it mentioned the retired military serviceman whom I confirmed on his deathbed the other day. This good man, who had been decorated with the cross of the Legion of Honour for army bravery, had fallen into misery. When he became sick, he called for a priest, but the *Gazette* does not say that this priest found with him four men, members of a republican society, of which he was a member, who told him that if he saw the priest again, they would withdraw all support and abandon him. The sick man, assisted by the grace of God, firmly replied to them that they were not speaking to him as honest people, that if they abandoned him Providence would take care of him. That is what happened. I was moved to tears at the attitude of this man and, as is right, with the sacrament of confirmation, I brought him the assistance that his confidence merited, of which the *Gazette* did well not to speak, when it mentions that which the priest had furnished him.

**March 22:** Letter to the Archbishop of Avignon, dated (March) 20, to inform him of the difficulty I have to grant him Sister Marcel for another three years. I quietly let him know that Mr. Girolet, parish priest of Goult is asking me to enter the novitiate, and that Mr. Agniel<sup>45</sup> cannot continue and will return to the diocese.

I subscribed to the Encyclopedia of the 19th Century, or, better said, I took out two shares to this enterprise according to the conditions spelled out in the contract.

Today I witnessed a miracle of grace, which proved to me what assistance God accords to a pastor in the exercise of his ministry full of chari-

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<sup>43</sup> Louis Toussaint Dassy, born November 1, 1808, at Marseilles, novice in 1829-1830, ordained priest on December 17, 1831, at Fribourg, left in 1865 after having rendered great services to the Congregation and preacher and founder of several houses. He died at Marseilles in 1888.

<sup>44</sup> *La Gazette du Midi*.

<sup>45</sup> François Agniel, who entered the novitiate on December 7, 1837.

ty. I was called to a poor woman, a most unfortunate creature in the world, who, from childhood, was paralyzed in half her body and did not have hands free to work. Alone in the world, she had not left her room for more than forty years. To these infirmities was added, over twenty years ago, total deafness so that she could hear nothing. In this deplorable state, she had to provide living needs to her old father who could do nothing. Her assiduity made her an extraordinary worker, but those who gave her work, abusing her condition, did not pay her the value of her work. Burdened with her sufferings, no one helped her to support them. Thus, left to herself and to the instigation of the demon, and also deprived of all religious instruction, she gave her soul to despair, that is to say, to a reasoned hatred for God whom she saw as unjust for having created her and then left her to be so miserable. For a time bad neighbours gave her bad books to read and thus this poor creature totally lost the faith. She lived like this until she was 55 years old. Not long ago the house in which she lived became a prey to fire and she was saved from the flames by people taking the greatest of risks, carrying her across the fire. She was then taken to a house of a good women who lavished on her all the care that Christian charity can inspire. The poor stricken one was grateful, but the good Christian woman could never get her to thoughts of resignation nor to faith. If God existed, she said, he would treat me as a father, he would send an angel to comfort me in my excessive infirmities. Who would believe it? God sent her this angel in the person of Miss Lautard<sup>46</sup> and Miss Martin who seek out all kinds of misery in order to ease them.

These earthly angels came, we do not know how, to her and they began that which belongs to my sublime ministry to complete. These young ladies softened by their presence the bitterness of her ulcerated heart and they furnished the good hostess a strong argument against the poor sick woman's despair. Everything was extraordinary in Providence's conduct towards this soul: yesterday the hostess came to me with her little stepchild so that I would confirm her before she left by sea. During the Mass, she was inspired to talk to me about her sick woman. She did this before I left the chapel. I sent my blessing plus some words of consolation to the unhappy woman. The hostess (Mrs. Eron) had succeeded to make herself understood by the movement of her lips and she did not fail to carry out my commission. What was not her surprise when she saw this

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<sup>46</sup> Ms.: Léautard. According to Father Rey (II, p. 11), it is Amelie Lautard.

poor woman begin to weep when she had understood what I had wanted to say to her. Would the Bishop come to see me? Yes, certainly, replied Mrs. Eron. Oh, that is not possible. You will see him, replied Mrs. Eron. She came to me this morning and asked as a favour that I do this act of charity. I readily agreed, seeing this as an act of justice to which my responsibility obligated me. I agreed to the time and on the minute I had myself transported to the sick woman [p. 28]. I found Mrs. Eron and Miss Lautard who told me that thought they had seen her die just a few moments ago. My presence reanimated her, I tried to make myself understood by signs, she looked at me with a radiant smile, but she did not respond to the signs expressing trust in God and repentance that I repeated to her several times. I was frightened by this lack of sensitivity. She did speak to me about her ills and misfortunes. I started to write that which I wanted her to understand. She read this with difficulty and then did not seem to be moved thereby. I insisted and prayed over her and laid my hand on her head. To the great astonishment of the good Christian women who were taking care of her, for the first time since she had stopped speaking about God, she raised her eyes to heaven and joined her hands in the form of a suppliant. This invocation filled us with joy, we rightly saw it as a victory over hell and a presage of the conversion of this ulcerated soul that God wanted to call at the eleventh hour. At this point the vicar from the parish arrived: I presented him to the sick woman as another myself to inspire him with the needed confidence to finish what I perceived as begun. I gave my instructions to the vicar and, after having blessed the sick woman, I left.

**March 23:** Letter from the Bishop of Nancy.<sup>47</sup> He tells me that his problems, far from resolving themselves, are on the point of escalating. He quite wrongly persuades himself that the Government is afraid of him. He insists on points about which it would have been better to be discreet; in short, he has done nothing of that which I advised him to do. I fear for his poor diocese.

Letter from Father Courtès.<sup>48</sup> He gives me his quarterly report; it seems to me that these are wishfully made reports. His father has again

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<sup>47</sup> On the problem of Bishop Charles de Forbin-Janson, cf. *Diary Mazenod*, May 11, 1837.

<sup>48</sup> Word scratched out: Courtès.

mentioned the business of the Tholonet property. Without any form of process, even though the agreement was broken by the yelling of the women in his house, he brought to my mother the 3000 francs which he was to receive in order to enter into possession of the property. This is a wierd way of handling business affairs. Let it pass: since all this dealing suits us for our successors, who will have possession of the property upon the death of those using the revenue thereof; they are younger than I am, I am therefore dealing in favour of those who will come after us.

Today I went back to the poor sick woman; she had gone to confession and had just received holy Viaticum. I confirmed her. Is this not something to proclaim as a miracle of God's mercy? [p.29]

**March 24:** Letter to Abbe Girolet. I communicate to him the letter that I wrote to Archbishop of Avignon about his desire to enter the Congregation.

**March 25:** Profession of a Capuchin Sister. An absurd discourse of the Abbé Feraud<sup>49</sup>, vicar of St. Vincent de Paul. Visit to the Poor Clares. Sermon of Father Desmazure.

Letter of Sister Jean-Baptiste. She would like me to call her Order into the diocese or at least that I allow them to return. She also would like me to obtain for her the retirement pension to which she claims to have a right because of her services in hospitals. She invokes the law of February 118, 1809 in her favour.

**March 26:** Blessing of the statue of the Blessed Virgin which in the Major will replace the horrible statue that the Abbé Bernard had made. It was within the locale of the Calvaire that this blessing was done. I was assisted by my two Vicars General, by the Archpiest and by Fathers Jeancard, Lander and Marc Cailhol.<sup>50</sup> The locale and all the nearby windows were filled with people, the congregations of the Major under their banners and some other parishioners came processionally to the square at the foot of the hill. The statue was placed before the door of the sepulchre,

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<sup>49</sup> Marie François Feraud (1807-1871).

<sup>50</sup> Father François de Paul Henry Tempier and the Abbé Jean Baptiste Cailhol, vicars general; Jean Raymond Gauthier, archpriest of the Major and its pastor; Jacques Jeancard and Jean Chrysostom de Lander, titular canons, Marc Cailhol, secretary at the Bishopric.

covered until the moment when I arrived. The clergy came to fetch me in the sacristy of the church and I went in cope and mitre to the chair prepared for me. I did the blessing according to the pontifical and then withdrew. Military music played a charming symphony, some "boxes"<sup>51</sup> were shot off, and the procession started for the cathedral and crossed all the streets of the parish which had been decorated. All the houses had fluttering carpets or leafy wreaths, feast decorations and all sorts of ornaments gave all the streets an air of a joyous celebration. Also work was suspended in a great part of the city and the crowd hastened to the streets where the procession was to pass. Chairs lined the hedges on both sides and those who occupied them, as well as the many walkers, were dressed in their festal garb. That is how things are done in Marseilles. Not everything is devotion, but a religious ceremony is always an interesting spectacle for this people.

Letter from Mr. Chanuel<sup>52</sup> who proposes to do the Christ of the Calvaire on a higher level. He claims that this project of the Christ would cost only from 2000 to 3000 francs. Besides not having collected this sum, it is known that this famous artist, who esteems his own works greatly, is never satisfied with the price agreed upon.

**March 27:** Sermon at St. Ferréol for the orphans. The preacher<sup>53</sup>, who is famous, was not up to his subject. The people who judge by the content would never have assessed him as such. It was all the more ridiculous [p.30] to put so much emphasis on so little.

The parish priest of Roquevaire came to denounce a horrible crime committed in his church. The deed has unfortunately been fully proven and too much known. The whole town of Roquevaire is shaken. The guilty ones have been interrogated and convicted before the judge of the area and they have been transferred to the prison of Marseilles. They will be judged before the correctional police as guilty of a crime both contrary to public morality and to respect due to a holy place. In the meantime, I had to interdict the church and as this temple is consecrated, I shall be obliged to go

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<sup>51</sup> Boîtes: little cylinders of iron which are filled with powder and which, instead of canons, are lit for salvos during public feasts.

<sup>52</sup> The artist who in 1837 had made the gilded statue of our Lady for Notre-Dame de la Garde. Cf. Diary Mazenod, March 12, 1837.

<sup>53</sup> The Abbé Deguey.

myself and reconcile it according to the prescribed rules for consecrated churches which have been profaned. This church was literally profaned at the very moment of benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. No matter how painful for me the trip will be, I shall make it a duty to perform the ceremony, seeing myself thus fulfilling an obligation of my duty and entering into the Church's spirit that wants to express the greatest horror for profanations that are revolting both to nature and to the faith.

Letter from Father Honorat who asks for help for the mission he is starting next week. He claims Father Ricard<sup>54</sup> is too ill to go to the front lines and that the parish priest of Goult has to, as usual, return to his parish as Easter approaches; but I suspect that there is more a lack of will in Father Ricard, who complains too much about outside concerns, who likes to build and to destroy, in a word, who lacks zeal, even though he is a good priest and a good son.

**March 28:** Father Bucchi hastened to come and tell me that he was mistaken in his letter to Father Olivieri when he named Freduzzi as the doctor he was denouncing, that he has learned that his name is Renucci. I shall communicate this to Cardinal Pacca.

Father Bucchi also told me that a certain lawyer Zaccaroni, a supposed name of a priest, chief of all the Romagna<sup>55</sup> people expelled from the Papal States, must know the priest suspected of conniving with Porracciani. He is certain that he was recommended to him when he went to Corsica. This unworthy Zaccaroni reproached him when he saw him put on the soutane again, using unworthy expressions. Zaccaroni had been condemned to death for having stirred up a revolution at Imola. He ([p. 31] is associated to a Mr. Roussier, rue des Dominicains, no. 16, and is very well received by the consul of Rome.

The Brother Director of the Brothers came to inform me that they have come to take levees of children from the Charity to make "mousses" of these poor children. What is really deplorable is that they take a good-

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<sup>54</sup> Ricard: scratched out. Pascal Ricard (1805-1862), novice in 1827-1828, ordained priest in 1831, and first superior of the Oregon mission in 1847.

<sup>55</sup> The Romagna, part of the Papal States, was then experiencing several rebellious movements against the papal government.



ly number before they have made their first Communion. It is my duty as pastor to protest loudly against this horrible abuse of power.<sup>56</sup>

Yesterday Father Guibert came from Ajaccio. He is going to Rome on business for the diocese.

**March 29:** Letter from Eugene<sup>57</sup> that is quite reassuring regarding his health.

Mr. de Saint-Priest came to say goodbye to me. I gave him a proxy for the Duke of Almazan, be it for inscribing my name on the shareholders of the Encyclopedia of the 19th Century, be it to represent me in the shareholders meeting which is called yearly.

Father Guibert exposed the needs of his house. He is certain that once Father Albini returns to work on missions, one more director will be needed at the seminary. I hope to be able to provide for this at the beginning of the school year.

**March 30:** Feast of the resurrection of Lazarus. Assisted at the High Mass. Reunion at dinner of the Lenten preachers: Father Desmazure<sup>58</sup>, Mr. Deguerry, Mr. Molinier and Father Ambroise, Guardian<sup>59</sup> at Chambéry. Mr. Molinier and M. Deguerry spoke among themselves as professional preachers, or, better, as men of that trade. I detest this sort of thing and I interrupted the conversation by addressing the good Father Desmazure and Father Ambroise who did not tell each other that such and such a person was able to occupy the pulpit in such and such a locality. Oh holy Word of God! You are not always proclaimed by apostles!

Letter to Cardinal Pacca to recommend Father Guibert to him and to correct a name badly indicated in Father Bucchi's letter to Father Olivieri.

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<sup>56</sup> Bishop de Maznod protested against the administrators of the hospices because they allowed 60 children to leave, even before they had made their first communion, because requested by the Ministry of the Navy. Cf. letter of March 28, 1838. Authentic copy: AAM, reg. lettre admin. vol. III, no 399.

<sup>57</sup> Eugene de Boisgelin, his nephew, then in Paris.

<sup>58</sup> Orig.: Desmasures. Probably the Abbé Piere Claude Desmasures, born in 1771, a preacher well-known then.

<sup>59</sup> The Father Guardian: superior of a convent of Franciscans and Capuchins.

**March 31:** Ordination at the minor seminary. One sole priest, two deacons and a subdeacon. Father Rouviere was one of the deacons.

Departure for Roquevaire. On passing through Aubagne, I left with the parish priest<sup>60</sup> the letter which tells him that Saint-Pierre has been established as an auxiliary church. This good man will respect more the royal ordinance than the conscientious will of the first pastor. When he knew I was about to dismember this part of his parish, which had been [p.32] suffering for too long a time, he proudly said that he wanted to transmit to his successors his parish in the same entirety that he had received it from his predecessors. This ridiculous claim, based no doubt on the divine institution of parish priests, made me smile with pity. The opposition of the administration at Aubagne and the stronger worded one of the municipal council did not disconcert me. I was so convinced that the good of souls required the establishment of this new parish that, if the Government had not agreed with my views, I had decided to establish at Saint-Pierre a priest with parish jurisdiction and to detach this entire area from the jurisdiction of the parish priest of Aubagne: the latter could not serve this area himself and he looked after it very imperfectly through his vicars. The Government spared me from the worry of procuring a salary for this priest by acknowledging the rightness of my views and by legally establishing the auxiliary church.

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<sup>60</sup> M. Louis Chauvet (1765-1844).

## April 1838

**April 1:** It was not an April fool trick that was awaiting me at Roquevaire, but the greatest outrage I have received in my life. The infamous François Vèze<sup>1</sup> inflicted upon me the whole repertoire of his awful diatribes, his atrocious calumnies about all those who had the misfortune to try and do him a good deed. Because all that his evil heart could think of saying and doing against the people of my household and especially against my two Vicars general, did not bring him what he had hoped for by way of money to prevent him spreading his calumnies, this man, or as he be better described, this monster, has thought up other plans which are equally iniquitous. First of all, he had tried in vain to have an audience with me, doubtless with the idea of arousing my compassion, which is all too easily done, I admit. Then, in desperation, he undertook to insult me personally, even though I am his benefactor. I am the one who tried to set him on the right path when he had been dismissed from here: it was he himself who said that I had put the bread in his mouth and did for him, as he said, more than his own father could have done. I gave him enough money to buy a grocery store and make an honest marriage. And now! This miserable wretch, perverted by the company he keeps after he left my household, consumed all that I had given him and lost all sense of honor, tact and religion. He has proved that, because he has shown that he has become the most ungrateful, the most infamous, the most abominable of men. Nevertheless, he still kept his hand hidden with regard to me. While calumniating my Vicars general in the most atrocious manner, [p.33] he had nothing but good to say about me. The prefect<sup>2</sup> told me that when I

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<sup>1</sup> The case of François Vèze and the trial which sentenced him to prison is narrated in J. Leflon, *Mgr de Mazenod*, III, pp. 38-45.

<sup>2</sup> Mr. Charles-Aristide de la Coste, prefect of the Bouches du Rhône department from 1836 to 1848.

went to lodge a complaint on behalf of the persons of my household whom he had outraged. Yesterday again, when my carriage stopped on my arrival at Roquevaire to pick up Fr. Tempier at the Poor Clares, he had the audacity to approach me, humbly of course and with hat in hand, asking me to listen to him. I refused him and reproached him as he deserved because of his unbecoming conduct with regard to my Vicars general. He apologised as best he could and asked if I could get him a means of livelihood by procuring him a job in the customs. I could have recommended him when I used to consider him honest but at present, I told him, I can do nothing more for a man who has dishonored himself in the eyes of the whole city by the infamous calumnies which he has repeated everywhere. That was the point in the forced conversation when Fr. Tempier arrived. Vèze was obliged to get out of the way to let him get into the carriage and although he had threatened to break his arms and legs, he did not say a word to him. We continued our journey to Roquevaire where we alighted at the parish priest's house. Who would have thought that this evil being, having found out the direction I was travelling, would have followed us and arrived that same evening at the lodging where my carriage was parked. This morning he appeared at the parish priest's house. My servant had forewarned me of his arrival and I had given orders that he should be refused entrance. He absolutely wanted to see me.

When he was refused he became upset and he issued threats. No one paid any attention. The ceremony for which I had come to Roquevaire commenced. It was the reconciliation of the church which had been publicly profaned the week before. All the prayers outside had been said before this man made his appearance. Soon, there he was in the midst of the crowd in the church. He had planned his campaign and he was waiting for me at the narrow entrance to the sanctuary. Following the rubrics of the pontifical ritual, I sprinkled holy water on the inside walls of the church. The sacristan walked in front of me, carrying a vessel of the holy water which had been solemnly blessed and mixed with ashes and wine. Here comes this miserable wretch and, pulling a key from the pocket of his overcoat as though it were a rapier, he threw it into the holy water vessel, yelling loudly: there is the key which I had or which he had given me so that I could enter his apartment, this ... Then he added a horrible insult at the top of his voice. By the grace of God, I was less moved at that moment than I am as I write the account of this deplorable affair. But either [p. 34] because some thought that when he put his hand inside his coat to pull out the key, it was in fact to pull out a rapier or a pistol, or because people were so angered at him because of the insult he had hurled

at me, the people rose up and grabbed him. Two hundred men dragged him out of the church and pushed him rather than accompanied him to prison. In his anger he threatened to shoot those who were nearest to him. In fact he did not have any weapon but he shouted all sorts of abominations which his infernal soul prompted him to say. As for me, I had to complete the ceremony by celebrating the sacred mysteries. Sitting there before the altar, while the cloths and candlesticks were being placed upon it, I asked myself if my emotions were such that I should abstain from approaching the altar. I confess that I felt so calm, so little disturbed, in a word, less moved, than I would certainly have been if I had witnessed such a thing happening to another. I considered the thoughts in my heart. Evidently, God's grace was helping me at that moment. I was not aware of any sentiment of hatred in my mind, or of any feeling of revenge, however justified it might have been. I felt that, in all sincerity, I could pray for this wicked man and I got up to begin the holy sacrifice. I had the happiness of being able to continue in this frame of mind and, with God's help, I was able to speak twice to the numerous assembly without showing the slightest change in my appearance.

Scarcely had I returned to the presbytery than everyone came to express their regret at what had happened: the Mayor, his assistants, the justice of the peace. The latter had already interrogated the culprit who continued with his tactic of horrible calumnies. I spoke to him in words suited to my office, that is I expressed my pardon. I admit, nevertheless, that the grace of state was necessary to prevent wanting to crush this miserable being when I heard his awful suggestions. The fact that I could remain so unperturbed remains a miracle in my eyes. I pray God that He make me bear with inner resignation this new kind of humiliation. On leaving Roquevaire, I passed through St-Pierre and I walked all over the area and that of Baudinard. I wanted to see the locality in order to know it well and to arrange the confines of the new parish.

**April 2:** Letter to Cardinal Tadini, archbishop of Genoa, to recommend Fr. Guibert who will be passing that way on his return from Rome. [p. 35]

**April 3:** Letter from the administration of orphanages in reply to mine by which I let them know that I was displeased that children were taken away before they had made their First Communion.

Meeting of all the leaders of the Rosary<sup>3</sup> to arouse their zeal and to see what is to be done for the month of May.

**April 4:** Visit of Mr. Autran<sup>4</sup> to inform me of the marriage of his son with Miss Montazan.

Visit of Mr. Tempié<sup>5</sup>, lawyer, to introduce his wife, and for himself to renew my memories of the past. The feelings which he expressed touched me deeply. He recalled how I had cared for his childhood when he was a member of the youth congregation which I had formed in Aix. He had forgotten nothing of what I had done to keep them wise and virtuous.

Visit of Mr. Sylvestre, also a lawyer, and rector of the Confraternity belonging to St-Lazarus. He came to ask if I would consent to be appointed, as had all my predecessors, to be prior of their Confraternity. As is well known, these brothers have the privilege of burying the bishops of Marseilles, and also the Canons of the cathedral. On this subject, they told me that when their members came to pay their respects to Bishop de Belloy, they did not forget to remind him of this beautiful privilege. The bishop replied that he hoped they would have to wait a long time, and in fact they did<sup>6</sup>. As for me, I do not have any presentiment of living a long life. I do not intend to boast when they come on Sunday morning to confer the honor of the presidency. Who knows but that this monster Vèze, having disgraced himself by the calumnies which he does not fear will fall back on himself, might not to wish to expiate them on the scaffold on coming out of prison by assassinating me. In those conditions, the good penitents of St-Lazarus would exercise the prerogative which they claim and which they have not exercised since the death of Bishop de Belsunce<sup>7</sup>.

**April 5:** Overwhelmed by business, just as on any other day. Madame Lucas presents me with the secularization of her son, who was a

<sup>3</sup> See Footnote 53 for May 16, 1837 for the association of the Rosary. *Oblate Writings*, 18, p. 148.

<sup>4</sup> Paul Autran (1778-1869), writer and lawyer, was assistant to the Mayor, president of the Chamber of commerce and one of the administrators of Notre Dame de la Garde.

<sup>5</sup> M. Tempié (or Tempier) had been a member of the youth congregation in Aix. He was admitted June 13-16, 1820 (See Journal de la congrégation de la jeunesse, Orig.: APR DM VIII 2a, p. 77.

<sup>6</sup> Bishop J.-B. de Belloy died at the age of 100.

<sup>7</sup> Bishop de Belsunce died in 1755.

Carthusian. It was accompanied by a letter from him. He has retired to Cucuron to live with Fr. Raspaud<sup>8</sup>.

Letter from Fr. Martin<sup>9</sup>. He feels that, in Lumières, there is too much concern about buildings and lawsuits. He asks permission to go and help the priests in Laus in some of their missions.

Letter from Fr. Albini. He wants to know what are my intentions with regard to his destination.

Letter from Fr. Mille on the mission in Banon (see date March 22), and on that in La Roche, date of March 28. Letter from Fr. Guigues dated March 24<sup>10</sup>. [p. 36]

**April 6:** Letter to Fr. Dassy, addressed to Fr. Guigues, replying at the same time to both their letters<sup>11</sup>.

Letter to Mr. Magallon<sup>12</sup> asking him to come and collect an important message for his family.

The king's prosecutor came to to get some information from me on the abominable subject of the infamous Vèze. He asked me if I wanted him to be charged with disturbing and insulting a minister of religion in the performance of his duties or if he should be charged with defamation. He explained the advantages and the inconvenience of both procedures. I did not hesitate to choose the former as being more in keeping with dignity of my office and the mildness of character with which I am endowed. The king's prosecutor will come back on Monday to know what I have decided. Today he is going to interrogate that unworthy man.

<sup>8</sup> Fr. Raspaud was parish priest of Cucuron (Vaucluse).

<sup>9</sup> Joseph Alphonse Mathieu Martin (1803-1900), novice in 1821-1823, ordained priest on July 30, 1826, was Superior of Billens (Switzerland) until that house was closed in the summer of 1837.

<sup>10</sup> These letters have not been preserved.

<sup>11</sup> Letter dated April 5. See *Oblate Writings* 9, pp. 86-87.

<sup>12</sup> The Magallon family were from Aix. The Founder knew Paul de Magallon (1784-1859) well. He stayed at the Mission (1816-1817). He became a Brother of St. John of God and reconstituted the French Province of the Order. See Paul Dreyfus, *Paul de Magallon*, Paris, 1993, 232 pages.

**April 7:** Mass in the house of the poor girls<sup>13</sup> for the meeting of the ladies. There was quite a number of them present. I gave them an instruction explaining to them how Christian ladies should spend Holy Week. Report on the condition of the house. At present there 140 children. It must not be forgotten that on the day the house was opened, three years ago, I presented 12 girls to the few ladies who began the institute. Since then we have built a spacious house, and big as it is, it is not big enough anymore to house the children who must be kept there.

Visit to the director of the postal service to ask his clemency for one of his employees. I had found him plunged in deep sorrow because of the death of a dear daughter. I did my duty as pastor and came away very edified by the religious feelings which filled the heart of this sorrowing father.

Visit to Mr. La Boulie<sup>14</sup>, vice president, to let him know what sort of man this unworthy François Vèze really is. He will be his judge in the police court.

Letter to Fr. Courtès about the scene which took place in Roquevaire and the man who caused it. When infamies were posted on the walls of the city of Aix and on the doors of the archiepiscopal palace, I deplored this disorder. I dared to mention that at least I had the consolation, in the midst of so many tribulations, contradictions and persecutions to which I have been subjected during the course of my university, of never having been accused of anything against morals<sup>15</sup>. I was accused of ambition, avarice, haughtiness, pride, hatred, and much more, of everything which is the antithesis of my real feelings and my character. Nobody ever uttered the slightest hint of anything against morals. There was nothing to brag about, but in fact that was the case. But here at the age of 56 is a man who does that. Henceforward I can be jealous of nobody. Saint Athanasius and Saint Francis de Sales may no longer complain after what has happened to me. Besides, [p. 37] I have the consolation of being able to say how I have been paid for doing good. Ah! If ever I were tempted to do good to men out of compassion for them and for the pleasure of making them happy, then

<sup>13</sup> Institute for the orphans of the cholera epidemic, founded in 1835.

<sup>14</sup> Joseph B. Gustave de la Boulie (1800-1867), vice president of the court, had been a member of the youth congregation in Aix from 1813 to 1819.

<sup>15</sup> The word in French is "moeurs", usually referring to sexual morals.



immediately the memory of François Vèze arises in my mind to prevent me from giving anything whatever for any other reason than out of strictly Christian charity! The ingratitude of human monsters is doubtless common, but this proves to me that it is possible to utilize the gift in order to assassinate the giver. And so! Should the heart become hardened to the miseries of humanity, should one ever dwell on the happiness which a sensitive soul may hope to experience by thinking of the misfortune it has helped relieve, should one ever count on the acknowledgement of those to whom one has done good, into whose hand one has placed bread to eat, when one snatches from despair, when ingratitude bursts forth, when it shows itself in all its bare reality, the heart has too much to suffer. If one does good to the degenerate human race only for the sake of God, abstracting from all human instruments, then one will not suffer pain on encountering men as sin has made them. So far I have not thought that way. On the contrary, I tended to support the opposite thesis. I thought I had found support for my opinion in the life of our divine Saviour and model. I was wrong.

**April 8:** Blessings of the palms. The prince de Mir came to ask me to find him a confessor. His practice is as strong as his faith.

I have asked the (former) Bishop of Strasbourg to come and celebrate the solemnity of Easter with me, in episcopal vestments.

Letter from the Bishop of Nancy. He writes to me about the business I had begun to deal with in Paris to reconcile him with the Ministry<sup>16</sup>. This holy prelate always has threatening words on his lips. With that attitude, it is not easy to come to an understanding with those who hold the power and have the strength to wield it.

Letter to the Bishop of Aosta to inform him of the ministry being done here for people from Savoy and to ask him to let his parish priests know of the care being taken here of these poor children so those who come here may get in touch with Fr. Caire<sup>17</sup>, spiritual director of this charitable work.

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<sup>16</sup> With the Ministry for Worship. See Jean Leflon, *Mgr de Mazenod* III, pp. 28-29 on this question.

<sup>17</sup> A.J. Eugène Caire (1802-1880), brother of Fr. Caire. He was ordained in Marseilles on September 23, 1826. First he taught in Paris and then, in 1830 he was appointed to the parish of Grand Carmes in Marseilles. He founded an association for young people of the working class, shared in the foundation of the charitable work called Les Petits Savoyards and also that of St. Francis Regis.

Letter to the Mayor of Marseilles to denounce the scandal that took place several days ago on the Canebière. Sellers [p. 38] of posters were selling infamous items cheaply and claiming blasphemously that they would purchase those that represented religious objects.

Visit to the vice-president of Laboulie and to the king's prosecutor. Acting on the advice of the Bishop of Strasbourg and other wise persons, I decided to have the unworthy Vèze charged not only with interrupting me in the exercise of my functions but also with outrage done to my person.

Sermon at St-Ferréol on motherhood.

Letter to the gentlemen of the Providence institute asking them to change the article of their rule which concerns the appointment of their spiritual director. See this letter in the register of letters for this day<sup>18</sup>.

Letter to Fr. Albini about my plans for him. My intention is to send him back to the missions and to assign Bro. Gibelli<sup>19</sup> as his companion. I regret that it was not possible to keep Fr. Roller who would have been a third member to begin with. It is not possible to think of withdrawing Fr. Semeria from here, unless by replacing him with Fr. Gibelli when he is ordained priest and that would be to the great detriment of the ministry to the Italians. Such a violent transition would upset them.

The president and the vice-president of the Providence turned up without fail to make their observations on the very polite and reasonable letter I had written them so as to avoid in future the unbecoming balloting to present me with their spiritual director. I held my ground, even though it may mean that certain awkward individuals will withdraw from the association.

**April 12:** After the morning office during which the Lord deigned to give me great interior consolation as though to strengthen me for the blow

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<sup>18</sup> The letters to the Mayor and the administrators of the charitable work of the Providence have been copied in the register of administrative letters, Vol. III, Nos. 403 and 404.

<sup>19</sup> Antoine Gibelli (1813-1846), novice in 1834-1835, ordained priest on June 24, 1838.

that was to fall, Mr. Decanis<sup>20</sup> brought me proof of an infamous libel based on the scurrilous accusations made by the unworthy Vèze. This little booklet is entitled: *The key of the bishop's house: a fifteenth century anecdote*. There is no sort of horror which is not narrated in these two pages of print. [p. 19] It is a repetition of the infamous Vèze's story. Only the names have been changed but I am clearly marked out by my height and by the personalities mentioned, even though disguised<sup>21</sup>, as the fifteenth century bishop of Marseilles. The Roquevaire incident is narrated as though it had taken place in Montredon: There is also a Vicar general who is as useless as myself. Poor Abbé Decanis was quite dumbstruck by such an excess of rashness and iniquity. I do not know if it was the result of the supernatural thoughts which had filled my mind throughout the morning, or because I have become accustomed to hearing the infamies of this wretch so often repeated, but my feelings were immune to this new outrage and since the time was approaching for me to go to the cathedral for the washing of the feet, I left without giving further thought to this affair which would have been a distraction from the thoughts of faith which I wished to entertain during this holy ceremony. The office followed. Then the visits to the churches. On my return I wanted to pray a while before God at the altar of repose. I remained for almost one hour. On returning to the bishop's house, I went to see my uncle and to speak with him about the visit of Fr. Decanis. We chatted as a family for some moments. It was only on returning to my room and reflecting on the matter that it occurred to me that it might be appropriate to let the king's prosecutor know about what I had been told in confidence. I wrote to him declaring what had happened. I do not understand how accomplices in iniquity work. Is there some starving writer who wishes to exploit this mine of scandal, urged on and paid by the enemies of religion? They clap their hands when chance provides them with material to belittle one of its pontiffs. Is this just a trap so that it can be said that they were offered payment to keep silence? The writer of the of the item let it be understood that, since he knew the author, he could use money to induce him to desist from his infamous clandestine publication. and while not wanting to expose himself by a clandestine publication, is it possible that, in collaboration with this evil author, he was trying to obtain money by threatening a new scandal? All things are

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<sup>20</sup> This Mr. Decanis was a priest (see Diary, April 13) but he is not mentioned in the list of clergy for the diocese of Marseilles.

<sup>21</sup> The word used in French is "gagé" which literally means disguised.

possible to human perversity and I am payed to believe it. So I am resigned to whatever excess may happen and I resign myself in anticipation. [p. 40]

**April 13:** Good Friday. Why should such holy days be troubled and my soul, which would like to remain in meditation at the foot of the Cross, be diverted from the only thing that should occupy my mind and my heart? The reason is that evil people are on the lookout today as they were in time of our divine Saviour. Let us thank the Lord who has had me share abundantly in the bitterness of his Passion this year. It is up to me to profit by it.

The king's prosecutor came to see me, having received my letter. He said that he regretted not having received it yesterday in the afternoon. He would have had the unruly press watched during last night. He will be waiting in the city hall for any fresh information I may have from Fr. Decanis. I have written to the latter asking him to come and see me to report on the conversation he had with the young man who had shown him the proofs of the libellous publication. The king's prosecutor returned to bishop's house to tell me that he had to give orders to find the infamous publication and that he was impatiently awaiting further information. Fr. Decanis came to supply that. The proofs he had seen had been printed on the printing press of Mr. Mossy. The time of the office for which I would have preferred a different preparation obliged me to leave Jeancard to inform the prosecutor of this discovery. Mr. Mossy would have been all too ready to help with this infamy, according to Decanis, because he wished to have revenge for having lost the contract from bishop's house. That is another name that I felt obliged to add to the prayers I offered at the foot of the altar, in the name of the Church, for all sorts of people. I was careful to try and understand all those who persecute me with such vengeful anger, because I pardon them with all my heart. If it were not for the resulting scandal, I think the good God would give me the grace to go and thank him for the humiliation which weighs upon me and which the Cross my Saviour bore to Calvary helps me to bear. [p. 41] Towards evening, the king's prosecutor wrote to me to let me know that his research had not been in vain. The chief commissar had in fact found out that the libel had in fact been composed in the printing shop of Mr. Mossy. However, no trace of that composition remained except a fragment of the first proofs which he has sent me requesting that I return it to him.

Perhaps the fear of being compromised will deter him, but I do not think we can rest assured that Mr. Mossy will be deterred from publishing

it in spite of the fact that it has been proved that the libel was printed in his printing shop. That is sufficient for Good Friday! This time I can say that I have been crucified. May it really have been on my Saviour's Cross! That sweetens all the bitterness.

**April 14:** Fr. Decanis came to see me. He had persuaded the young man who wants to purchase Mr. Mossy's printing shop that it would tarnish his good name to allow himself to mixed up in this infamy. The latter had agreed to make the author give up the idea. The typeset had now been broken up and the proofs destroyed. I am not convinced that this has been a sincere conversion or that things are as I have been told. I am inclined to think that both the author and the typesetter had agreed to try and extort money. Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof! Let us go and pray to God in the cathedral. Let us sing the Alleluia with the few faithful who will be there. I am disturbed by being obliged to concern myself with other things than the mysteries of these beautiful days. I had to reply to the king's prosecutor by returning to him the burnt piece of proof.

**April 15:** The holy day of Easter. Pontifical office with the former bishops of Marseilles and Strasbourg present. There was an immense crowd present. All the chapels were full of people. The music was modest but good. The Prince de Mir who had done his Easter duty on Thursday was present. The papal blessing was the most solemn and made a deep impression. I judge by the profound silence of all who were present. Fr. Desmazure preached after Vespers. The Bishop of Strasbourg was present and I had him bless my people after the sermon.

**April 16:** Mass for the penitents of St-Lazarus. They defined for me the superiority of their confraternity in keeping with the custom of my predecessors. There is something amusing about the procedure, but since it has been done since before my time [p. 42] I did not wish to change it. A deputation of the principal members of the confraternity came to bring me from the bishop's house. I was received under the canopy at the entrance to their enclosure. The penitents sang the *Benedictus*. At the door of the chapel, the chaplain had me bless the incense. Then he presented the thurible and incensed me. I was accompanied in this way to the sanctuary where I said the prayer. During this time the choir sang *Sacerdos*, and the chaplain said the antiphons and prayer prescribed for the visit. As I went up to the altar, the antiphon for the saint was sung. I said the prayer and then sat down to give a little talk to the confraternity. I did not forget to remind the members of their obligations and of the prerogatives of the

confraternity. They asked me to intone the *Te Deum*. Then I sat on the throne which they had prepared for me and the prior and assistant prior made me a presentation: the former presented me with a cincture on a silver tray and the latter with a candle which I touched symbolically as a sign of my investiture. Then all the brothers came and kissed my hand. I celebrated the holy mysteries and finished by giving Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, leaving all these men very satisfied with my visit.

**April 17:** Fr. Chauvier<sup>22</sup> came to tell me of what had happened during the night in the convent of Jesus and Mary<sup>23</sup>. Fr. Tempier had allowed them to have the Blessed Sacrament exposed in order to try and calm the unease and fatigue caused by the obsession of a number of Sisters. I shall not tell all that happened. I recommended that a written account be made day by day of the works of the evil spirit. It is impossible not to recognize the real nature of these obsessions. It is not just one of these virtuous novices, there are no less than five or six who are tormented, but who put up with this trial with heroic courage. They remain pure in the midst of all the horrors which they witness and with which the demon is able to test them. Only their bodies suffer from the blows they receive and the violence they are made to undergo. They alone see the demon in the different forms under which he presents himself, but sometimes the others who care for them hear whistling and noise. Whoever reads the account of all that happened during the past eight months in this house will be obliged to admit that there has never been anything of this nature quite so striking. I think I shall order the great exorcism of the Church, but [p. 43] I am inclined to have that done by an exorcist who is not yet an acolyte. I shall think some more about the matter. The house has been occupied by the freemasons and the chapel was their lodge. Nevertheless, a number of Sisters have been attacked in other houses. Consequently these diabolical happenings cannot be attributed to the place itself.

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<sup>22</sup> Jean-Baptiste Chauvier (1805-1882), was ordained priest on May 28, 1831. He was first of all a parish priest and then chaplain to the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary. See [Mgr. A. Ricard], *Vie de monsieur le chanoine Chauvier...* Marseilles, 1888, 138 pp.

<sup>23</sup> A new convent of the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary in rue Paradis No. 189. It had been a masonic lodge. What the Founder writes about here is described in detail in the book: *Vie et mission de la mère Marie Saint-Augustin de Jésus, dans le monde Marie-Catherine Ruel, fondatrice et première supérieure générale des religieuses des Saints Noms de Jésus et Marie*. Ligugé, 1895, pp. 356-400.

**April 17:** Today again I went to assist at Vespers in the church of St-Martin. My presence was visibly pleasing to the audience. The church was full. It had been announced that I was to bless a bell after Vespers. I did so very solemnly. Afterwards I gave Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. After that I arranged to be brought to a sick child of twelve years of age. She had refused to make her confession although knowing that she was in danger of death. Alas! To do so I had to go to a house in rue Glandevès and I had Frs. Flayol and Cailhol accompany me because I was not sure what the house was. The demon to whom souls are sacrificed in this place was stronger than the grace of my ministry. It was impossible to persuade this child to fulfill her duty. Having tried to reason with her in kindness and with threats, I knelt down and shaking the dust from my shoes I came away more saddened than surprised at what I had just seen.

**April 18:** A Sister of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary came to ask for my help. The community was awake again throughout the night. The demon continued to torment a large number of these girls. Nothing is more admirable than the mien of these girls. They are all very courageous and resigned. Nevertheless, they are horribly tormented not only by the appearance of the most revolting obscenities and the corporal impressions of these demons which they are forced to experience. Sometimes they appear to them as unclean animals such as he goats etc. and sometimes in human form in a state of complete nudity. What really afflicts them are the blows they receive. They are beaten, trampled upon, crushed, scratched, made to bleed and all of this in broad daylight and in the presence of the whole community who were not aware of what was happening when only one or two of the Sisters [p. 44] were involved but who are witness to what is happening now that a large number are affected. Those who are not possessed do not see anything but they can hear and they can see the results because it is in view of everyone that the poor Sisters are violently thrown on the ground. They take on the appearance of persons who are being smothered and the wounds, the scratches, the blood flowing can be seen by everybody. Immediate remedies are necessary. For example, when a Sister cries out and complains that she is being trampled upon and the marks of the feet left by this being are very visible to all those who are possessed can be seen and touched by all the other Sisters, the wounded part is torn, bleeding to the extent that bandages and poultices have to be applied. One day when all the Sisters were in the refectory, the demon jumped upon one of the Sisters in the form of a he goat. Then he jumped to the ground and all the Sisters heard the noise made by the feet of the animal when he jumped. At that instant he vomited noisily. Nobody saw

the animal except the possessed Sister but everybody could see the result of what he had done because the filth which had come out of his mouth had to be cleaned up. It was an abundant yellowish substance as is the vomit emitted by animals at times but it did not smell. I do not have time to write all the facts which will be narrated in the report which I have ordered to be made on all that has happened. There have been so many incidents that it is no longer possible to postpone the exorcisms of the Church. Consequently I have written to Fr. Chaurier saying that I have given him the mission to so so, but that he should be assisted by Fr. Lagier<sup>24</sup> who will go to the convent for this purpose in the morning.

Fr. Lagier came to see me this evening to give an account of his mission. He found the community in a deplorable state. Seven or eight Sisters were possessed. The scene was frightening. Their cries [p. 45] were not the cries of human beings; they were so tormented as to make one's spirit writhe. The Sister<sup>25</sup> had just been kidnapped and she was being searched for everywhere. In the end she was found to be locked in a room of the house with the key in the outside of the door. The others had exhausted the strength of their Sisters through the violence of their movements and injuries. Five or six Sisters were necessary to hold one of them. If precaution had not been taken to place mattresses on the ground they would certainly have been killed by the violence of being thrown by the demons whom they, but only they, could see. The exorcist and his assistant began the prayers of the Church. The demons replied through the mouths of the possessed but not with their natural voice, to the questions which the Church asks through the ministry of the exorcist. Who are you? The demon of pride: To another: who are you? The demon of impurity. Why have you come? To humiliate the Sisters. Who sent you? Our master, our king. Who is your king? Satan. Leave this body etc. The force of the exorcism had its effect. When Fr. Lagier came away all but one of the Sisters had been freed. There was only one demon of all those which had possessed the Sisters. All joined in saying that they wished to destroy the Superior. She, who until now had encouraged the others with heroic strength, felt that she was overcome by a violent force. She asked for the help of prayers and grabbed the stole as if for support. Immediately, temp-

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<sup>24</sup> Jean Joseph Lagier (1807-1876), ordained priest on September 18, 1830, novice in 1834-1835; he was then professor of moral theology in the Major Seminary of Marseilles.

<sup>25</sup> The Founder does not give the name of the Sister.



tations against the faith came to darken her mind as she had never experienced them before. Grasping her crucifix, she cried out that she wished to die in the bosom of the Catholic Church, that she believes all that the Church teaches, and especially that Jesus Christ Our Lord is really in the Sacrament of the Eucharist. The most violent temptation was against this mystery.

Fr. Ambrose came to bid me farewell. He complained both of the number of the public who came to listen to his sermons and of the fact that the administration does not want to pay as much as he thought they were worth. [p. 46] According to what he said, when all expenses were paid he would have only 300 Francs for the benefit of his monastery, of course. Nevertheless, the vestry gave him half of what was contributed by those who were present. It is a pity he was not able to attract more people, because it must be said that today more than ever the Lenten preachers make a profession out of the pulpit. If the good Fr. Ambrose, instead of lodging in the Hotel de Malte to dine well and to be independent, had stayed in a religious house, he would not have spent six Francs per day and so he would have earned 300 Francs more, ostensibly for his monastery. He would also have saved something on his shoe leather and on the fine cloth of his habit in a city where his confreres are clothed in coarse material and go barefoot according to the rule of St. Francis which they have in common. I admit that, all in all, I was little touched by the misfortune of the good priest.

While we were in Council, the bursar of the vestry of St-Martin came accompanied by Fr. Olive. They wanted to consult me about what they had done. Fr. Ambrose wanted nothing less than 600 Francs clear profit. The bursar was prepared to settle<sup>26</sup> for 500 Francs and this together with the 300 Francs hotel expenses and 200 Francs for travel would amount to 1,000 Francs at the expense of the vestry. In my opinion that is more than is necessary for a son of St. Francis. If the priest refused, a letter would be written to the Fr. Guardian saying that a sum of 500 Francs was being made available to the house in Chambéry. I doubt if the pretensions of Fr. Ambrose would be edifying to those who knew of them. A little reform for these good priests would not do any harm. But they live on alms and

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<sup>26</sup> The French uses a legal term "abbonnerait". Which means to reduce a debt to a fixed amount.

Rome does not find fault with them. Fr. Ambrose took the precaution of filling his bag. It is no wonder then that nobody came to his sermons. Grace does not pass through channels such as those.

Letter from Fr. Magnan<sup>27</sup>. He gave me an account of his little excursions. He wanted to make an appearance in Marseilles before returning to Aix. He asked for help for that community as if nobody knew that I do not have anyone available. [p. 47]

**April 19:** Distribution of the Holy Oils. I bought, second hand, a superb set of vestments: red and white, bordered in gold. Chasuble, stole, maniple, cape and veil, all for 1,500 Francs. It was said to have cost 9,000. I had it valued. The sum paid was so small that it is feared it might have been stolen.

Here is the letter Fr. Lagier wrote to me from the convent of Jesus and Mary. *"While awaiting the occasion to give Your Excellency an account of what has happened since yesterday evening, I kiss your paternal hand and announce to you that almost one hour ago the community was entirely released. It was about half past eleven that the last possessed person was finally freed after we had performed the exorcisms throughout the morning. The demon left at the moment when he was forced to admit that Jesus Christ had conquered him by the wood of the Cross. Since that time, joy, calm, happiness, thanksgiving have filled our hearts. We humbly ask your excellency for permission to hold a procession of the Blessed Sacrament throughout all the house so that our great and good Master will fill this community and live and reign in it alone. We have been particularly struck by the Church's power over hell. From the beginning of the exorcisms yesterday at midday, the demons gradually withdrew. Their power was felt to weaken visibly. This morning, the last to be possessed was only delivered after she had made her confession. I ask for your blessing etc.*

Later, Fr. Lagier came to repeat all that he had written. Added to the extraordinary events which had been reported to me, he told me of another event which happened the other day in the presence of the whole community and of Fr. Chauvier who happened to be there at that moment. A

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<sup>27</sup> Jean Joseph Magnan, born in Marseilles on May 12, 1812, novice in 1829-1830, ordained priest on November 1, 1834. He was then in Aix.

Sister was lifted from one corner of the room where she was seated and carried at the level of the heads of the other Sisters who were seated to the opposite side of the room so that the hem of her skirt brushed the heads of the Sisters. Fr. Chauvier, struck by this happening as was everybody else, ordered the demon to bring the Sister back to her place which she had left without permission but he forbade him to make her fly. The poor girl did as she was told by the exorcist but she could only do so with extreme difficulty, dragging herself along as if she scarcely had the use of her limbs.

Fr. Agniel, a priest from the diocese of Avignon, having spent some months in the novitiate but being found unsuited to the work, has withdrawn with full military honors. I shall give him a letter of recommendation for the Archbishop of Avignon. [p. 48]

**April 20:** Letter to Mr. Trucy asking him to tell Fr. Bucchi what Cardinal Pacca had written to me.

Letter to the Archbishop of Avignon. I give a good reference to Fr. Agniel. I deal in depth with the question of Fr. Girolet's vocation. I ask for information about Fr. Avignon, a priest who has been compromised in the Ansouis affair.

Visit to the procurator general, returning his visit of yesterday.

Visit to Mr. Jauffret<sup>28</sup>, librarian and with him was Raoul Rochette who is going to visit Athens. We exchanged some compliments with this knowledgeable man who seemed to promise to send me his book on Christian antiquities. He has identified in the crypt of St-Victor<sup>29</sup> the oldest remains of antiquity. I took advantage of the situation to define our tradition, all the more willingly because of the presence of Mr. Toulouzan, one of the authors of our statistics. It is well known that, in that book, well established historical truth is not respected. That has become fashionable since the time of Launoy of unhappy memory.

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<sup>28</sup> The persons named in this paragraph are: Louis Jauffret, librarian of the city of Marseilles and writer, Raoul Rochette (1789-1854), archeologist; Toulouzan, professor and publisher, Jean Launoy (1602-1678), canonist and critic, nicknamed "dénicheur des saints".

<sup>29</sup> Abbey founded by Cassien in the IV century. It originated from the tomb of St-Victor, a Roman soldier who underwent martyrdom in Marseilles at the end of the III century. The area beneath the church is considered to be the oldest evidence of Christianity in Gaul.

The Sisters of the Retreat sent me the sum of 300 Francs, the result of their work and labours. I have lodged it with my debts.

The Mayor of Aubagne came to inform me that there would be some opposition on the part of the municipal council when it comes to outlining a new parish. I am not much worried about that. Would to God that it were so easy to appoint a parish priest.

**April 21:** Letter from Fr. Mille. New blessings on their last mission. The Bishop of Gap was present for the closing and gave communion to the men who filled the church by themselves. On that day, when returning from the mission, the Fathers separated and visited the parishes where a mission had already been given. Fr. Hermitte<sup>30</sup> was not able to do all the work he was asked to do in the parish where he had been.

Since the exorcism, I do not see anything supernatural in the convent of Jesus and Mary. [p. 49]

**April 22:** Quasimodo Sunday. Since the parish priest of St-Martin has not yet been installed, and in fact his appointment has not yet been approved by the government, this parish is still without a pastor. I thought it fitting that I should arrange the ceremonies there. Besides, this is essentially my duty as first pastor. I had therefore announced that it would be I who would bring Easter communion to the sick this year. This news created a general sensation. Some people even went so far as to say they wished they were ill so as to receive communion from the hands of the Bishop. Everything was done to make understood the value that was attached to this act of paternal benevolence. I arrived at St-Martin at half past seven. On going up to the altar to take the holy ciborium I felt I had to address the numerous assembly and say a few edifying words. I tried to make them understand what we were about to do and what was the disposition suited to the occasion. I also explained why I undertook to preside at this touching ceremony. We were quite a large group as we started out from there singing the *Pange lingua* which was sung by a large number of men who went before the canopy carrying candles. A crowd of women followed the Blessed Sacrament. In that way we went back and forth in every direction through the parish to visit the fifteen sick people

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<sup>30</sup> J.T. François Hermitte (1805-1884), novice in 1825-1826, ordained priest on May 31, 1828. He spent all his life as a missionary in the houses of the France Midi Province.

who had prepared to make their Easter communion. The canopy was carried by four levites and four members of the vestry held the cords while others carried torches. There were children dressed in white albs, some of whom carried torches and others the episcopal insignia. Six thurible bearers offered incense throughout the triumphal procession. In that way we entered the fifteen houses where the sick people lived. Everywhere we found real depositions where the ciborium would soon be set. After the Easter sprinkling with holy water and the *Confiteor*, I addressed a few words of faith and consolation to the sick person. These were always received in a spirit of recollection and emotivity. We arrived back at eleven o'clock. When I saw that the church was full, I decided I must again address these people who were so well disposed to receive the words of their principal pastor. At the end I gave the blessing and I withdrew filled with consolation because I had just fulfilled one of the holiest functions of my paternal ministry.

Letter from Fr. Guigues. The mission in ...<sup>31</sup> (if I have made it out correctly) has [p. 50] succeeded perfectly. People come from all the neighbouring parishes when a mission is being given in some place. It would be necessary to have ten confessors even in the smallest of parishes because of those who come from the surrounding area. He asks me for helpers as though I could make them.

Tempier has returned from his inspection journey to Lumières. The work is not yet finished. It has been done according to the agreement made. That is the place where more men are necessary. I am made to experience the wrenching of *parvuli petierunt panem* etc.

Letter to Fr. Magnan. I give him permission to come to Marseilles.  
Letter to Fr. Courtès.

The parish priest of St-Cannat is in danger of losing the legacy left to him by Mademoiselle Roustagny. In the final analysis and to avoid complications<sup>32</sup>, he would agree to concede 3,000 Francs to his unworthy co-heirs. They have indeed been lacking in good manners by disputing the

<sup>31</sup> The name in the manuscript seems to be Gonireux but there is no area of that name in the diocese of Grenoble.

<sup>32</sup> In the manuscript the expression is "rédimier vexation" which is frequently used by Bishop de Mazenod. See May 6 and September 4.

wishes of their benefactress, from whom they had no right to expect anything. I shall make that suggestion to Dosithée Tessière<sup>33</sup>, the assistant of the lawyer Audiffret who should not have undertaken to defend such a bad case.

Letter from the Superior of the monastery of the Visitation asking me to recall Sister Marcel from Avignon after her three year term.

**April 25:** I thought it my duty to go to the station church of St-Cannat to be present at the High Mass. That is what I plan to do always both for the procession of St. Mark and for the Rogation Days. I believe that a bishop who seriously considers his duties could not do otherwise. As for myself, I am never happier than when I am performing [p. 51] these pleasant functions of my holy ministry. At such times I feel compensated for all my suffering. They are always too short for my liking.

**April 26:** Consecration of the chapel in the charitable institute for Orphans under the title of the Blessed Virgin conceived without the stain of original sin. The whole society was assembled. The ceremony was most touching. The Minor Seminary were servers.

Letter from Cardinal Falconieri, charming and filled with the friendship he bears me. He had not received the life of Ligouri which I had sent him already several years ago.

Letter from Fr. Testou, Cistercian religious. He has the audacity to ask me to write to Rome asking to obtain secularization for him. This gentleman had been a Jesuit. His case is similar to that of our Fr. Pachiaudi<sup>34</sup>. He pretends that he was much talked into entering the Order. His letter is strange. I indignantly reject any cooperation of this sort.

Letter from our heretofore Fr. Sicard<sup>35</sup>. Since he wishes to come back into the diocese he is not afraid to "admit his wrongdoing", and to "ask for pardon". He hopes that I "will not turn away a rebellious child who is

<sup>33</sup> D. Tessière, general councilor of the Bouches-du-Rhône department.

<sup>34</sup> Pierre Pachiaudi (1811-1874). Novice in 1834-1835, ordained priest on September 20, 1834, he left the Congregation to enter the Grande Chartreuse. On the subject of Pachiaudi and Testou, see *Diary de Mazenod*, January 26, 1837.

<sup>35</sup> Sicard: the name is scratched out. Joseph André Sicard, born in Aubagne in 1810, novice in 1831-1832, ordained priest June 2, 1833, left in 1837.

ready to sweeten by coming back the sorrows he has caused me through his errors". The whole letter should be read. It is dated April 22, 1838.

Letter from the Bishop of Grenoble. He denounces Fr. Marsillac<sup>36</sup> *Iste presbyter*, he says, "*monstrum est horrendum*" etc. See his letter of April 22, 1838, deposited in the secretariat. That prelate tells me in that same letter: "Today our dear Fathers finish the mission. They have had much success almost (the word "almost" is too much) everywhere. They are now going to rest and they really need to do so."

Letter from the Bishop of Angoulême<sup>37</sup>. Excuses. He announces his coming to Marseilles. Exaggerated praise of his preacher. His opinion of poor Angoulême is too flattering.

**April 27:** My uncle's birthday. I said Holy Mass for him. May God preserve him for a long time in his present state of health.

Letter to the parish priest of Cuges, very detailed in various matters.

Letter from the Bishop of Nancy. He wants to know what steps I took with the Minister with regard to his business<sup>38</sup>. He is going to Besançon for the consecration of the Bishop of Nîmes<sup>39</sup>. Soon he will be coming here. [p. 52]

Letter from Mgr. Menjaud<sup>40</sup>, very long and very detailed on the matter which concerns him. According to me, he is taking it too much to heart. I have written to the Minister on his behalf.

<sup>36</sup> Fr. Marsillac was a preacher. Bishop de Mazenod spoke about him many times. See letter of April 6, 1837 to the Bishop of Cahors and the letter of April 18, 1837 to Marsillac; also Diary, April 36 and 28 and May 1, and 2, 1838.

<sup>37</sup> Bishop J.J. Pierre Guigou (1767-1842), Bishop of Angoulême from 1824 to 1842. He had been Vicar general in Aix and remained paralysed for some years. It was he who encouraged and supported the Missionaries of Provence in 1815-1816.

<sup>38</sup> Bishop de Mazenod had written to the Minister of Worship, on April 19, asking that he appoint an auxiliary (suffragan) bishop in Nancy. He suggested Mgr. Menjaud, already a Canon and Vicar general of the diocese.

<sup>39</sup> MS., Montpellier. There was no new bishop in Montpellier in 1838. Bishop de Mazenod had probably written Montpellier instead of Nîmes because, on April 22, 1838, Bishop Jean F.M. Cart, Bishop of Nîmes, was consecrated in Besançon by Bishop Mathieu.

<sup>40</sup> Mgr. Alexis Basile Menjaud, was appointed coadjutor of Nancy and of Toul, by royal order on July 19, 1838.

**April 28:** Letter to the Bishop of Nancy in reply to his from Lons-sur-Saunier. I invite him to put his plan into action soon and to come and stay here. Bishop Loras<sup>41</sup> of Dubuque in America came to see me. He is passing through Marseilles on his way to Rome. His diocese is about 600 square (miles) in area. He is the fifteenth bishop of a diocese in the United States. Altogether there are nineteen bishops, including four coadjutors of diocesan bishops. That is a good reason to give praise to God.

Coulomb informs me in a letter with yesterday's date, that Fr. Saurin<sup>42</sup>, parish priest of Le Ciotat has died after a brief illness. He has left his library to the Major Seminary of the diocese of Marseilles and his vestments to the church of Le Ciotat. This priest had priestly virtues. His passing is mourned by the parish.

Letter to the Bishop of Grenoble thanking him for the information he gave me about Fr. de Marsillac and which completes what has to be said about this gentleman who is only too well known to me and to my Vicars general.

**April 29:** Letter from the Archbishop of Avignon. It would be necessary to copy it in full to have an idea of the extent to which this prelate deceives himself with regard to the extent of his power in matters of vocation. His pretentious convictions cannot destroy good reasoning, and principles even less so.

A great day of consolation for the soul of the bishop. This morning I went to the chapel, known as the Mission of France, to give First Communion to children from Savoy. The young people of their Society and Fr. Caire had prepared them. I gave them Confirmation after Mass. In the talks I gave them before Communion and after Confirmation, I emphasised the motive they had for thanksgiving to this Society which had received them, cared for them, taught them etc. It was felt that I should make known this Society to the public, since it is still unknown today. I did so with pleasure and much to the edification of the faithful who listened with interest.

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<sup>41</sup> The manuscript has Lauras; the person in question is Bishop J.M. Pierre Loras, appointed Bishop of Dubuque (Wisconsin) in 1837.

<sup>42</sup> Joseph Vincent Saurin (1761-1838), parish priest of La Ciotat. Vincent Coulomb (+1851) was vicar at La Ciotat.



[Book VI, p. 1) This day was really full in the presence of the Lord. After the office of the French in the church of the Calvaire, the church was filled again with Italians<sup>43</sup>. It was the day set aside for the confirmation of children from that country who are being catechized by our Fathers. There were so many people in the church that it was difficult to get in. The balconies were filled with men. As usual the rosary was recited in two answering groups. After the rosary I entered the sanctuary where a seat had been prepared for the consul of Sardinia. I began by addressing the assembly in Italian. I spoke at some length on the benefit which Providence had bestowed on them by providing so much help for them. I ended by recommending that they do not forget to be thankful and that by not neglecting in their Easter duty. I extended the time until Pentecost for the Italians because of the limited number of priests who hear confessions in Italian. I then questioned the children on the catechism and all replied wonderfully well. They really deserved praise. I then gave an instruction on the sacrament they were going to receive, and if I had reason to be pleased with their instruction, I had even more reason to be pleased with their devotion. They came forward like angels, each one accompanied by their sponsors. Finally I gave the Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament to all present and thanked the good Lord with all my heart for the good done in this numerous colony through the ministry of our Congregation. I offered all that to the Lord trusting that he will weigh it on his scales as a counterbalance to my own numerous infidelities.

**April 30:** The good (former) Bishop of Strasbourg has left today for Piedmont, having had his book printed here. It is on the sighs and the hopes of the Church. It pained me to see this old and dear friend take his departure. I would have wished to see him stay until the arrival of our common friend, the Bishop of Nancy but Bishop Tharin who is familiar with the delays of our friend, the Bishop of Nancy, was unwilling to wait any longer for him.

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<sup>43</sup> There were many Italians in Marseilles. The Mazenods received them in the church of Le Calvaire. We know that in 1828 Fr. Albini, professor in the seminary, devoted some of his time to their evangelization. On August 15, 1828, Fr. Albini wrote: "This morning the church was full for the instruction by Fr. Albini. This instruction in Italian is a blessing for the people from Genoa and Nice." (Rey I, 454). When Fr. Albini left for Cosrica, Fr. Etienne Semeria took his place for the ministry to the Italians and he remained in that position until his departure for Vico in July 1840. See Rey I, p. 665.

Letter to Mr. Aymes. I recommend that he see if my seals which have been brought to him have been refurbished. His wife is asking him for a little gratuity of 600 Francs.

Visit of Mr. Emile Mathieu<sup>44</sup>. It has been agreed that I shall write to the Archbishop of Bordeaux asking him to send me information with regard to his family and his fortune.

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<sup>44</sup> On the subject of his forthcoming marriage, see Mazenod Diary, March 8, and July 18, 19, 20 and 23, 1838 etc.

## May 1838

**May 1:** Sung Mass in the cathedral. I assisted pontifically.

Letter to His Eminence Cardinal Falconieri with which I enclosed a copy of the life of Blessed Ligouri<sup>1</sup>. Mr. Isnard, whom I have asked to accompany the Bishop of Dubuque, will be the bearer of this message.

On the same occasion I have written to His Eminence Cardinal Franson, prefect of Propaganda, asking for precise information on religion in Algeria. It is important that I should be informed with regard to the legitimate jurisdiction in this colony and who exercises it<sup>2</sup>. There are too many people from my diocese whose salvation is being compromised in this country for me not to know what attitude to take<sup>3</sup>.

A friendly and pious letter from the good Emmanuel Gaultier; he informs me of the forthcoming marriage of his daughter Alphonsine. He wishes me to reply and to pray for her.

**May 2:** I concluded my dealings with Fr. Damico<sup>4</sup>, having informed him of my intentions to which he agreed on all points. He shows that he

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<sup>1</sup> A biography of 612 pages, written by Jacques Jeancard, who was then a member of the Congregation, and published in Marseilles in 1828.

<sup>2</sup> The problem of jurisdiction in Algeria would only be settled by the appointment by the King of Bishop Dupuch as Bishop of Algiers. That took place after many years of negotiation on August 22, 1838. With regard to the role of Bishop de Mazenod in this question, see May 21 below.

<sup>3</sup> The original of this letter of May 1 is in the archives of Propaganda, *scrittura riferita nei congressi*, Barbaria, Vol. 1826-1840.

<sup>4</sup> Fr. Rey (II, 20) writes on this matter: "Appointment of new parish priests, Fr. Damico, Fr. Mestre, Fr. Brunet, etc.; all agree to live in community with their assistant priests."

is willing to act according to my instructions and he assures me that he will always be the most submissive and the most agreeable of my priests.

Letter to the Mayor asking him once again for the plans and drawings of St-Lazarus.

Fr. de Marsillac had the insolence to come and see me in spite of what my Vicars general had told him. I showed him what the Bishop of Grenoble had written to me about him and I let him know that since he has left Marseilles I have heard terrible reports about him. Consequently I refused him faculties to celebrate Mass and ordered him to put his conscience in order. He plans to go to Rome. I was inspired<sup>5</sup> to recommend him to the Cardinal Prefect of Propaganda.

**May 3:** Mass at the Mission de France for the Society for the propagation of the faith. The assembly was most edifying. The chapel was full and almost everybody approached the holy table. In my address before beginning Mass, I exhorted the associates to acknowledge the blessings they had received from God on their work and I told them of the blessings bestowed on the missions in the known world. After the Mass I had to congratulate the assembly etc. [p. 3]

**May 4:** Letter from the Bishop of Nancy. The former Bishop of Strasbourg did well not to wait for him. He has now set off for Chambéry on his return from Besançon. He wished to be present for the consecration of the Bishop from Savoy<sup>6</sup>. It is being said that no bishop will be consecrated without our friend being a witness to the event.

The parish priest of Roquevaire<sup>7</sup> to whom I have offered the parish of Le Ciotat has been perfect in the sentiments he expressed to me. He shows that he is also attached to me personally and he is available to do whatever I consider useful for the good of the diocese. Of course it is true that I made no secret to him of the affection which I have for all the good priests of my diocese and for him in particular since he deserves it.

Fr. Ricard has left to return to Notre Dame de Lunières.

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<sup>5</sup> The French phrase is: "bien m'a pris".

<sup>6</sup> Bishop J.F. Marcellin Turinaz, Bishop of Tarentaise from 1838 to 1866.

<sup>7</sup> Fr. Jean-Baptiste Brunet (1798-1869) appointed parish priest of Le Ciotat in 1838.

The Abbé Leblanc has written to me once again. He wants me urgently to recommend him to the Archbishop of Paris. I have learned to judge men. For twelve years this gentleman had not written me a single line. Apparently he thought that I could be of no use to him; now he writes me one letter after another. I am not very much touched by his expressions of friendship which would have sounded quite different during the time when he never bothered to enquire if I was still alive. Nevertheless, I shall try to find some way to be useful to him.

Visit to the Ladies of the Blessed Sacrament<sup>8</sup>. I presented Fr. Cailhol, my Vicar General, to them as their Superior.

Visit to Nazareth. That is the house of the Ladies of the Sacred Heart<sup>9</sup>; already they have thirteen little girls.

**May 5:** Letter to Doctor Gaultier de Claubry in answer to his in which he told me of the marriage of his daughter Alphonsine.

Letter to Matassy nephew, to offer my consolation.

100 francs to the work of the Refuge.

An offer to the businessmen heirs of Mademoiselle Routagny on behalf of the parish priest of St-Cannat in an effort to offset hard feelings. Mr. Audibert offers them 3,000 Francs. Tessière is the intermediary.

Letter from the deacon Revest<sup>10</sup>. He claims that he has been converted, after a despicable life. I wish to believe him, but he shall never be raised to the priesthood in my time.

**May 6:** Letter to Fr. Mille. I want him to keep Fr. Allard in his good attitude and I want the latter to implore the Bishop of Gap and urge him to keep his word and to find a replacement for him in the Minor Seminary.

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<sup>8</sup> The Ladies of the Blessed Sacrament, or the Perpetual Adorers of the Blessed Sacrament of Our Lady, founded in 1639 by Dominican Fr. Lequieu, had a convent in Marseilles from 1660 to 1792. They returned to Marseilles in 1817.

<sup>9</sup> Ladies of the Sacred Heart or the Daughters of the Heart of Mary, founded in 1781 by Adélaïde Champion de Cicé and Fr. J. Picot de Clorivière.

<sup>10</sup> On April 20, Bishop de Mazenod had written to the rector of the Aix academy advising him not to accept this gentleman, "...unfortunately in sacred orders", as a teacher. "Because of his abominable habits he is very dangerous when close to children".

It is already too much to have forced him to put off for a year the implementation of his vocation<sup>11</sup>. Fr. Mille should, give up preaching and follow a diet, but let him not annoy me [p. 4] by continuing to ask me for men that he knows I do not have.

**May 6:** Pontifical Mass in St-Joseph on the occasion of the feast of his patronage.

Letter to the abbesses of the Capuchin Sisters and the Poor Clares and to the prioress of the Carmelites to ask them for prayers. Their response is worthy of their great devotion.

Visit to the Ladies of the Refuge at the request of the acting Superior. An excellent community who have already done considerable good among the penitents.

**May 7:** Letter from Fr. Mille. He informs me of the wishes of the Bishop of Gap that the missionaries should precede him in his visits to certain towns of his diocese. In my reply which I have written this very day, I protest against the submissiveness of Fr. Mille which has caused him to agree to this extra work load and for which he does not hesitate to ask me for Fr. Courtès, Fr. Martin, Fr. Bernard and Fr. Gignoux<sup>12</sup> and besides, all the Fathers must go to Gap on Friday. It is almost folly. I have not forgotten that Fr. Mille had written to me in his last letter that he had been spitting blood and that he was exhausted after the forced labour which he had done during the Winter and that my reply to him had been to well and truly forbid him to preach for whatever motive.

Today the court passed judgement on the infamous Vèze and imposed the maximum penalty prescribed by the law. This monster had miscalculated when he believed that the scandalous vengeance which he had thought up would cost him only a few weeks in prison. He was dumbfounded when the president of the court pronounced the penalty of five years, so much so that he interrupted the president by saying that he must

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<sup>11</sup> Jean François Allard had begun his novitiate in Marseilles on October 23, 1837. The Bishop of Gap recalled him to the Minor Seminary where Fr. Allard was teaching. There he spent the school year 1837-1838 and made his vows on November 1, 1838. See *Missions OMI*, Tome 40, (1902), p. 81.

<sup>12</sup> J. A. Jérôme Gignoux, born October 17, 1809 in Briançon (Hautes Alpes), novice in 1832-1833, ordained priest on June 2, 1833, left in 1839.

be mistaken. Then he said that I wanted to be his executioner. He claimed that he did not have a defence lawyer because I had paid them to refuse to serve him in that capacity.

**May 8:** Letter from Fr. Moreau. He apologises for his delay in writing to me. He expresses his justified anger at the infamous deeds of the despicable Vèze. He offers me his consolation by reminding me of so many bishops (holier than I, may I add) who have experienced similar trials.

He confirms what Fr. Guibert has always said with regard to the lack of consistency and recognition on the part of the the Bishop of Ajaccio and he praises the seminary and Fathers Mouchel and Albini, while telling some less satisfactory things about Fr. Reinaud.

Visit to Mr and Mrs. Clapier<sup>13</sup>. Visit to the president of La Boulie whose conduct of the infamous Vèze affair was perfect.

**May 9:** Letter to the councillor Fabry<sup>14</sup>. Even though it is boring to do so I shall copy it since it contains a thought which is of much concern to me: *My dear Auguste, Canon Jeancard will have let you know that the infamous Vèze has been condemned to the maximum penalty imposed by the law of March 25, 1822. As was to be expected he has appealed against this very equitable judgement. You shall therefore be in a position to judge for yourself about this execrable matter. He persisted to the last in his scheme, making every effort to create as much scandal as he could, both by keeping his promise to make one repent of not giving him all the money he wanted and by giving vent to his vengeance and his lack of respect.*

*Fr. Jeancard will tell you the extent to which I have been shocked to hear in public the infamous accusations which the examining magistrate has so mistakenly committed to writing. There were some atrocious calumnies which there was no need to record since they were so extraneous to the trial and which it was impossible for me to refute. This I consider to be such an enormous injustice that I believe it is my right to ask that, once the trial is completed, to have them eliminated from the text,*

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<sup>13</sup> A Mr. Clapier was city councilor in 1838.

<sup>14</sup> The manuscript has Fabris; Auguste Fabry had been a member of the Aix youth congregation from 1814 to 1822. In 1838, he was president of the court of appeal in Aix.

*because even though our contemporaries will do me the justice of rejecting with disdain all the infamous accusations which this agent of the devil was pleased to accumulate against me, as well as exhausting the whole litany of calumnies of this nature against those of my household from the doorkeeper to the venerable old nonagenarian patriarch who was my predecessor and not having spared my Vicars general etc. is it not to be feared that in successive generations, when my name, my person and character shall have been forgotten, this monumental infamy should be unearthed and there not being the elements which today reject it as dust, it should be thought that at one time there was a bishop of Marseilles with such a name and who was accused of such horrible deeds, and that there should not be a word in the account which would neutralize the evil consequences etc. [p. 6]*

**May 10:** Letter from Madam de Legondès, née d'Orcel, from Clermont-Ferrand. She asks me to find out if a Mr. Roux, formerly a draper's merchant in Toulon and who later moved to Marseilles has been paid a debt of 600 Francs which was due to him and which was entrusted to a person who was supposed to deliver the sum to him.

The president of the Society of the gentlemen of Providence came again with two other gentlemen to negotiate the matter of the appointment of a spiritual director. I have continued to repeat to them what I have said in my letter of April 10 of this year. Their rules state that they shall choose a spiritual director. It is a pretext which they by passed rather shabbily. When it came to choosing, a voting system was established to judge and weigh the merits of the most respectable priests. The name of the one who had been approached on the matter to ask his consent and who had agreed to be appointed was placed on the list<sup>15</sup> and after much debate did not win the quota against the competitor who was listed as his opponent. That was how the archpriest was put aside and Fr. Court was appointed. A similar inconvenience arose on the death of Fr. Court, even though, to avoid it, I had wanted to appoint the person myself; Fr. Maurel was on the voting list together with Fr. Carrier. Therefore it is my duty to cut short such disorder. The more these gentlemen resent giving up a right which they only held as a concession from the bishop and which the bishop must now revoke because of the abuse and inconvenience it has caused, from the

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<sup>15</sup> Balloté: placed on the list to be voted for.



moment an attempt is made to put it in practice, the more I must struggle to bring matters into line with the common law. I have tried so hard and so honestly to make the right decision in this matter that only men who have no common sense could feel wronged by it. Besides I have no need to worry about it since I acknowledge before God that what I have done has been for the honor of the priesthood and in an effort to overcome the inconveniences which occur each time there is another election.

**May 11:** Letter to the Archbishop of Bordeaux about the plans for the marriage of Mr. Emile Mathieu.

Letter to Mr. Trucy about the matter of Fr. Bucchi.

Letter from Courtès telling me of the horror felt by all those who have heard of the case brought against me by the infamous Vèze.

The gentlemen of the Providence society have decided to return my letter so that I can write them another one in which I will solve their difficulty. That is what I have done.

**May 12:** Arrival of the fine picture by Dassy. It is Saint Philomena<sup>16</sup> whom this excellent painter has done for the Capuchin Sisters. Before sending it to them [p. 7] I wanted to exhibit it in the bishop's house to be seen by all admirers of beautiful painting who happen to come along.

I had the consolation of seeing Mr. Bouge<sup>17</sup> whom I had taken the trouble to bring here after he had been several years in retirement and had lost all contact with my uncle and with me. This gentleman had some faults with which to reproach himself. Having become his pastor, I took steps to bring him back. God blessed my efforts and it was with great pleasure that I embraced him and I was able to tell him that not only had I forgotten everything but that I considered myself happy to have renewed my former acquaintance with him.

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<sup>16</sup> On the subject of St. Philomena, see *Oblate Writings* 18, p. 266.

<sup>17</sup> Probably the man who had a trading business in Palermo and who knew the de Mazenod family well. From 1802 to 1815, almost all the letters of Eugene to his father have the address: to MM. Bouge, Cailhol and Co., for Mr. Bloquetti senior, that is, for President de Mazenod, in Palermo.

**May 13:** Mass for the congregation of the Cross<sup>18</sup>. A short discourse to recommend that they persevere in their fidelity to their rule.

The little and the big Savoyards, because one was 21 years of age and another 19, to whom I gave their First Communion the other day<sup>19</sup>. Their catechists are always more interesting.

**May 14:** Letter from Mr. Th. Segon Cresp, lawyer, grande rue No. 60, informing me that a legacy of 1,000 Francs has been left to the seminary by Mademoiselle Marie Madeleine Blanc according to the conditions expressed in her will.

Letter to the above to thank him for the friendly tone of his letter. Letter from Fr. Magnan, reply to same. Letter to Jeancard, addressed to Cannes. The parish priest of Cuges has warned me that Sicard whom we had expelled, is planning to pay me a visit.

Letter from the parish priest of Digne. He wishes me to get my uncle to advise the Bishop of Digne who is looking for a coadjutor. What could a coadjutor do "*for a prelate who adheres stubbornly to his own ideas and who is surrounded by priests who do the administration?*" What seems to be the cause of most concern is that the prelate will look for his coadjutor precisely among those priests who surround him and who are far from being trusted by the diocese.

**May 15:** Letter to the lawyer Bugnon requesting his signature for the loan to St-Lazarus. [p. 8]

**May 15:** Letter to Mr. de Saboulin<sup>20</sup>, in response to his letter of invitation to his brother's wedding. Letter to Fr. Moreau in Ajaccio. Reply to his letter of May 8. Letter to Jeancard asking him to return to Aix at once. Tavernier writes that the judgement will be passed on the infamous Véze on the 23rd. It is important that the judges be informed.

<sup>18</sup> This was a confraternity in the parish of St-Victor.

<sup>19</sup> The sentence is incomplete. It is easy to see that Bishop de Mazenod wrote his Diary hurriedly without re-reading it.

<sup>20</sup> Léon Jules de Saboulin (1801-1871) had been a member of the youth congregation in Aix and entered the novitiate in 1853.

Finally the minister has returned my uncle's pastoral letter to me with apologies for the delay<sup>21</sup>. That completes the blessing that the holy old man received from the Lord, *de rore coeli* first of all and then *de pinguedine terrae*<sup>22</sup>. I believe that there is no happier man on earth. Having reached the age of 90 without any illness, enjoying the serenity of mind of a man of 30, with a happy and jovial disposition, not allowing anything disturb his peace of mind. He is surrounded by a family which cherishes and venerates him, and friends who share his feelings. He sees me near him accomplishing and completing the works which I had begun in his name and for which he shares the glory and the merit. He was raised to the highest dignity in the Church without having to fear the responsibility; enjoying in the eyes of men the rare advantage of being credited with all the good which was achieved during his episcopate and of which the painful part, the part which irritates and contradicts, in a word, the hateful part which is inseparable from the wisest administration, fell to me<sup>23</sup>. Finally, my affection for him has gained for him an honorable retirement which has left him independent and free to devote himself to whatever his generous heart wishes. That is the recompense for a sweet and saintly life which the good God has reserved in this world for our holy patriarch, without lessening the reward which will be given him hereafter in heaven, after 100 years, I hope.

**May 16:** Letter to Tavernier about the case on appeal in Aix. Interview with Fr. Mestre<sup>24</sup> during which I informed him that he had been appointed to St-Vincent-de-Paul. He accepts the appointment. He would like that I should have him installed by the archpriest. [p. 9]

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<sup>21</sup> On April 28, Bishop de Mazenod had written to the Master of the Seals reminding him that Bishop Fortuné had been appointed a Canon of St-Denis on January 28, 1838 and had not as yet received the stipend assigned to that title.

<sup>22</sup> See Genesis 27, 29: "from the waters of heaven and the richness of the earth".

<sup>23</sup> A very revealing text; According to this judgement concerning his role as Vicar general, Bishop de Mazenod states clearly that it was he who was the inspiration of his uncle etc.

<sup>24</sup> J. A. M. Mestre, appointed rector of St-Vincent-de-Paul in 1838.

**May 17:** Letter to Courtès. Letter to Fr. Guigues, lengthy and detailed. I commission him to inform Dupuy<sup>25</sup> of my intention. I tell him to reply promptly. I am offering the latter the rectorship of Chartreux but I want him to make a request to me so that the formalities will be correct<sup>26</sup> in the eyes of the Bishop of Grenoble. I recommend to Fr. Guigues that he spare the expense and save me the trouble of listening to the same tune time and again as he asks me for subjects whom I do not have and he knows that very well. I shall reserve for him one of the four who are due to be ordained in six weeks time.

Letter to Fr. Mille in which I confirm the order I gave him not to preach. I also forbid him to hear confessions during the night when there is a rush of pilgrims. In order to make his obedience easier, I am sending Fr. Martin to him to supplement the work he cannot do himself. I do not neglect to reproach him because of his lack of sincerity and simplicity with regard to his health about which I am very much concerned.

Poor Sicard<sup>27</sup> came to throw himself at my feet. I showed myself to be a father to him which means that I pardoned him. Better attitudes could not be expressed. He acknowledged his wrongs and is ready to expiate whatever penance I shall impose upon him. In order to obtain the grace and happiness of being reintegrated in the Congregation, would it be necessary to throw himself at the feet of each of its members. There is nothing which would restrain him. He does not consider himself worthy of favors but if he is rejected he will not lose courage. He has decided to leave all behind. He turns down the advantages offered to him in the diocese of Fréjus. He has made his decision. He will not leave the diocese any more even if he has to place himself under my feet. He can no longer live far from him whom he looks upon as his father and whom he has had the misfortune to make suffer, to betray etc. He is happy that he has not been

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<sup>25</sup> Jean Alexandre Dupuy (1798-1880), entered the Congregation in 1816 and left in 1830. He was appointed parish priest in Notre Dame de l'Osier by the Bishop of Grenoble and had bought the property which he sold to the Oblates in 1837. He wished to return to the diocese of Marseilles and to be appointed Canon which was something Bishop de Mazenod could not arrange immediately. See Letter to Fr. Guigues, May 15, 1838 in *Obalte Writings* 9, pp. 88-89.

<sup>26</sup> The manuscript has "pour me tirer de qualité" which means "to respect the formalities".

<sup>27</sup> The name is scratched out.

chased from my presence as he deserved to be. He has come with the intention of allowing himself to be crushed. He will leave with the intention of returning. He himself will bring a letter which he wishes to submit to me and which he begs me to support. If those are not expressions of a sincere repentance, then I do not know what is. I consoled this prodigal son [p. 10] and I shall pray for him that his wishes may be fulfilled.

Yesterday I forgot to take note that Mr. Besson from La Ciotat came on behalf of the people of the town, with the express purpose of persuading me not to give them Fr. Mestre as parish priest. Can you imagine why? It is because he limps and in this town above all others it is being said that I am sending them this man because I am unhappy with them: *risum teneatis amici*<sup>28</sup>.

Something I gathered from my conversation with this man and which is of more value than the reason for his coming to see me, is that, in his will, he leaves 53,000 Francs for the establishment of a school by the Brothers of the Christian Schools in La Ciotat. I gave him some advice in this matter because it could very well be that, if he arranges things as he told me he had, his wishes could be frustrated. I sent him to consult with the lawyer Lajard. If the Brothers were to be established there right away, Mr. Besson could not dispose of more than about 10,000 Francs.

There are some good things even in books that have rightly been condemned. Here is a passage from the moral reflections of Quesnel<sup>29</sup> which I have come across in writings other than his book: "Neque murmuraveris sicut quidam eorum murmuraverunt et perierunt ab Exterminatore"<sup>30</sup>. Rising up against legitimate authority, grumbling against pastors who are only doing their duty, condemning their conduct, that is attacking God. If this sin and this punishment are only figures of what is to come, how great must be the crime and how severe the penalty it must incur in the new law? It is one of the commonest of crimes and one which is least reflected upon. Nothing stands out more in God's anger, and is more capable of bringing its effects on a people than to misjudge his gift of a good pastor,

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<sup>28</sup> Please don't laugh, my friends.

<sup>29</sup> P. Quesnel (1634-1719), priest of the Oratory, condemned by Clement XI in 1708 because of his Jansenist and Gallican teachings.

<sup>30</sup> "Do not grumble as some of them did and they suffered death by the Destroyer". 1 Cor. 10, 10.

or even to obstruct him<sup>31</sup> in his work, or to change to poison the milk of his apostolic teaching". [p. 11]

Letter from Mr. Dassy telling me that his lithograph portrait of me is finished and that it is very good. He suggests that he will send the proofs to persons of my choice in Paris.

Letter to the Ladies of the Visitation in Avignon. They ask me if Sister Marcel may stay on for another three years. I am willing to let them have her for good.

Letter to the Archbishop of Avignon to let him know that I will let him have Sister Marcel as Superior of the monastery in Avignon, but on condition that she be affiliated to that house and she does not come back here any more.

Letter to Fr. Brunello<sup>32</sup>. He presents me with the plan of some devout people who wish to establish a convent of Minim Sisters. We shall see about that later.

Something that deserves more attention is the proposal forwarded to me by the venerable Fr. Matassy<sup>33</sup>, formerly parish priest of St-Cannat. He has a burning desire to re-establish his order before he dies. The only thing he is waiting for to begin is my consent. Certainly, I agree with all my heart. One of my principles is to agree to all good ideas if I can judge that they come from God. This good religious is associated with another Minim<sup>34</sup> who is waiting impatiently to come to Marseilles. A Brother is ready to follow him. They are going to begin with a courage which is worthy of their zeal and, it might be said, beyond their strength if we consider their age. I praise God for the wonderful example which these old men will give to the Church.

<sup>31</sup> The French text uses "le traverser".

<sup>32</sup> Fr. Félix Brunello (1806-1860), then assistant priest in the parish of Grand-Carmes.

<sup>33</sup> Aimé François Matassy (1763-1844).

<sup>34</sup> Fr. Matassy and the Minim whom the Founder does not name, did not succeed in reviving the Minims in Marseilles. See J. Leflon, *Eugene de Mazenod* III, pp. 119. In 1845-1848, Fr. M.P. Etienne Boeuf (1807-1862) formed a community of Minims which was dissolved in 1858.

**May 18:** Letter from Fr, Guibert postmarked Genoa. I needed to be released from suffering. In fact he had been ill when he left Rome. As a consolation and reparation, I copy the following sentences: *I did not hesitate to point out to the Holy Father, as far as modesty permitted, what the Congregation has done for the diocese of Ajaccio. On this subject the Pope spoke at length about the zeal of the Bishop of Marseilles and he made no secret of the great esteem which he has for him. The question of the scapular was settled without any difficulty. The Pope and Cardinal Castracane were both willing to concede it. The only embarrassment was that the Theatines have a scapular of the Immaculate Conception<sup>35</sup> which is very much the same except that it is colored blue. It was suggested that we be given a simple communication [p. 12] with regard to the scapular but when I pointed out that your intention was not to form a confraternity of the scapular but only to give it to the members of the Congregation as a distinctive mark and that it was not to apply to others than those of the society, there was no further insistence on the point. I drew up the petition along these lines. On the following day the Cardinal made his report to the Pope and in the evening I had it in my brief case. I must not forget to present you with the good wishes of Cardinal Castracane who was very friendly towards me from the moment he learned that I was one of your sons etc.*

**May 19:** Letter to the perpetual secretaries of the Academy to apologise that I was unable to be present at the academic session to which they had invited me since at the time of the session I had to go and bless the foundation stone of the church of St-Charles-extra-muros.

Visit of Fr. Jean-Baptiste, a Carmelite from Mount Carmel. He was very insistent in asking my permission to make a collection for the reconstruction of the monastery and church of Mount Carmel. Bishop Garibaldi had written to me recommending this cause. I granted his wishes but I asked that he not begin his collection for another month because at this time we must try to collect what is still lacking for the needs of the Brothers and their schools.

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<sup>35</sup> On the question of the scapular of the Immaculate Conception see the *Dictionary of Oblate Values* and the *Etudes oblates* 2 (1943) pp. 79-82.

Sicard came and he personally gave me the letter which is his urgent request to be readmitted into the Congregation. I shall make use of it as soon as possible.

Letter from Fr. Mille. He assures me that his health is alright, begs me to lift the ban and thanks me for my concern in his regard. Recently he is very pleased with the zeal and the work of our Fathers. He asks for permission to have Brother Joubert<sup>36</sup> dispensed from the quinquennium in order to make his perpetual profession. According to Fr. Mille this Brother is increasingly holy and affable.

**May 20:** Mass in Notre Dame de la Garde. I had to make this act of respect to our shrine but since Sunday was the day on which I had to go there, there was always some new obligation which prevented me from doing so. Today I climbed up there. Having spoken to the faithful who filled the chapel, I consecrated a handsome chalice in gilded silver which had been presented to the shrine in acknowledgement of a cure received through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin. I explained the ceremony to the people [p. 13] and they showed a great interest.

I had been invited to a public session of the Academy and I presented my apologies because I had to go and bless the foundation stone of the church which is to be built in the St-Charles area. The Bishop of Marseilles has to be in good form and he must not find ceremonies tiring because it is a never ending circuit. Luckily I acquit myself willingly of this duty and I never find it painful.

Letter from Bishop Menjaud. His situation overwhelms him and he cries out for mercy in the hope that I will come to his rescue<sup>37</sup> if I can. Apparently he thinks that the Bishop of Nancy is here with me. But who knows where this good prelate may be? He had told me he was going to Chambéry to be present at the consecration of the Bishop of Tarentaise. Where he is in the meantime, he will not know himself until he returns. The good Menjaud, whom I had suggested myself, seems to have taken the whole matter too seriously. He is afraid that a bishop other than himself will be appointed to Nancy and that Janson will recommend someone

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<sup>36</sup> Pierre P.N. Marie Joubert (1801-1870), novice 1836-1837.

<sup>37</sup> The French text has "radoube" which means to repair something.



like himself which he has said is what he wants as his coadjutor<sup>38</sup> to be. We know what that resemblance means.

**May 21:** Confirmation in my chapel. I was present at the Rogations station. I followed the procession as far as the cathedral and consequently I blessed the sea.

Profession of faith by the parish priest of St-Vincent-de-Paul.

Visit of Canon Chervaz who brought me letter from the Bishop of Lausanne<sup>39</sup> who requests urgently that a collection be made to save the church of Lausanne where there is still a debt of 75,000 Francs and which the Protestants are about to expropriate. I am somewhat surprised by this extreme need which seems to me to be an exaggeration on the part of the petitioner. He has succeeded in having authorization from the Archbishop of Paris<sup>40</sup> for this collection. I seem to remember that the parish priest of Lausanne, while making known his needs to me when I visited his parish, did not mention this desperate state of affairs. Whatever the situation may be, I shall authorize a collection when the Brothers have finished theirs. However, it may be well to remember that large sums of money have already been spent and that France has contributed an enormous amount already. It almost seems rash to risk a further debt of 75,000 Francs in such difficult circumstances. [p. 14]

Have I noted the reply of Cardinal Fransonì to my letter of May 1? I had asked him for some information on the church in Algiers in order to find out if there is a legitimate jurisdiction etc. In his reply, the Cardinal tells me that Fr. Joseph Montero, chief chaplain to the garrison, has received all the necessary faculties from the Holy Father. In a *Post Scriptum* the Cardinal adds some explanations to the letter in his own handwriting. Until now certain obstacles had been placed in the exercise of the apostolic faculties but things have changed since Marshal Vallée has been appointed governor and besides, *si spera quanto prima di stabilire*

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<sup>38</sup> Bishop F. F. Auguste Donnet, coadjutor of Nancy diocese from 1835 to 1837, then Archbishop of Bordeaux and Cardinal.

<sup>39</sup> Bishop Pierre T. Yenni, Bishop of Lausanne from 1815 to 1845.

<sup>40</sup> Archbishop H. L. de Quélen, Archbishop of Paris from 1821 to 1839.

*una sede episcopale*<sup>41</sup>. I had written to the Cardinal: *Quando ero in Parigi m'impegnai moltissimo presso del re acciocché provvedesse ai bisogni spirituali di quel gran numero di cristiani che patiscono in quel bel paese; e posto che non voleva consentire che i missionari di San Vincenzo de Paola vi andassero come era stato proposto, feci premura per che allora domandasse al papa di provvedere al bisogno pressantissimo di quelli abitanti, moltissimi dei quali erano miei diocesani, colla nomina d'un vescovo che si piglierbbe poi l'impegno di farsi aiutare a norma dei suoi bisogni*<sup>42</sup>

I could have added that the King received my suggestions very favorably and that he entered into considerable detail with me, even asking me how many Canons it would be strictly necessary to appoint if a see were established, and telling me that he had only 40,000 Francs allocated for the task etc. During this prolonged conversation on the subject, I gave the King to understand all the advantages there would be in having an episcopal see similar to those of France, and I suggested that he get the Holy See to put it in the same category as ours. I added that, to my mind, this would be necessary for the consolidation of the church, because otherwise these countries remain under the jurisdiction of Propaganda even though a bishop *in partibus* is appointed there. The King understood what I said very well. His reply left no doubt in my mind, and if he already knew what the situation was my words convinced him that this was the path to follow. I remember that he asked me if two Vicars general and two canons would not be sufficient at the beginning and that I smiled as I replied that there is an axiom in Canon [p. 15] Law which may not be neglected, that at least three are necessary to form a Chapter *tres faciunt capitulum*<sup>43</sup>. I added that if no better could be done, two Vicars general and four Canons would be necessary to form a Chapter. That would make six, but it would be necessary to have evangelical workers, men who would have the title of Canons but who would devote themselves zealously to the ministry, and

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<sup>41</sup> "It is hoped that soon an episcopal see will be established".

<sup>42</sup> "When I was in Paris, I pointed out emphatically to the king that he should see to the spiritual need of the large number of Christians who are suffering in that beautiful country and if it were still not permitted to the missionaries of St Vincent de Paul to go there as planned, I urged him to ask the Pope to see to the pressing needs of these people, many of whom are from my diocese, by appointing a bishop who would subsequently undertake to obtain the help he needed."

<sup>43</sup> Three form a chapter.

that it would also be necessary to have an apostolic<sup>44</sup> bishop. These were my very words. I was free to speak frankly and I regarded it as my duty to do so in the circumstances. I took up this question after much reflection. I had even informed the Internuncio, because I had seen that much intrigue had been introduced, certainly unknown to the Vincentians and perhaps with good intentions, but which, in my view, had resulted in an outcome which was less advantageous to religion than what I suggested. Was it not obvious that, once a see had been established and a good bishop appointed, this prelate would be unlikely to want to do without the zeal and dedication of the Vincentians and that he would call upon them and, if need be, on others too. Why then, should it be thought necessary to force the King, who is not a man who allows himself to be hurried, to dwell on a measure which for good reasons he finds unacceptable and which in fact would be less advantageous than the one which he himself preferred! Therefore I believe that I have done a good deed and been of service to the Church by emphasizing the advantages of appointing a bishop and, if I have contributed to clearing up the King's doubts on this matter, I congratulate myself and I feel consoled as a result.

Meeting of the Council of the Congregation. Surprise, horror!<sup>45</sup> Sicard, whose expressions of what seemed sincere and heroic repentance had touched me so deeply, Sicard who wanted to speak to me only on his knees, who having written me several letters in which he humbly admitted his faults and who brought me a final letter requesting reintegration into the Congregation, this Sicard is a monster of intrigue. On leaving my house, where he had availed of all his powers [p. 16] of seduction to beguile a tender heart, he boasted that he had appealed to my weaker nature and that he had deceived me with regard to his real disposition. It would be impossible to find greater hypocrisy, combined with the greatest perversity. To deceive one's bishop by using what religion considers most sacred, I mean, to have apparently repented in order to obtain a pardon which could not be refused if the sinner were sincere, that is a horror!. Still so young and yet so deeply perverted. Let me stop thinking of this cheat. I have written to the parish priest of Aubagne instructing him to forbid him most expressly to celebrate Mass on Ascension Day.

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<sup>44</sup> Bishop de Mazenod underlines this word.

<sup>45</sup> In the manuscript, these words are scratched out and almost illegible.

**May 22:** Station in St-Martin for the second Rogation Day. A painful council session caused by the discovery of the shameful actions of the nephew of the parish priest of M.

Letter from Mr. Vidal, a doctor in Paris, asking me that his brother be appointed to the parish of La Ciotat. The other brother, Mayor of Cassis, had made the same request and had returned to the attack through the intermediary of the Mr. Maurandy. That is sad.

Letter to Emmanuel Gaultier, recommending Mr. Albert Maurin to him.

**May 23:** Station in St-Victor. Nothing touches me so deeply as to see the bishop surrounded by all his clergy for such public and solemn supplications as those of Rogation Day. How could one not be sensitive to such an event? I am moved to the very depths of my soul. There is something supernatural here and of a higher order.

Letter from Dupuy. He accepts unwillingly the position I offer him. He would have preferred something else; I do not know what. Whatever we do in this world, it is difficult to please people.

Letter to the Abbesses of the Capuchin Sisters and the Poor Clares to ask for their prayers.

Letter to the assistant in the Refuge<sup>46</sup> in reply to hers.

Letter to the Superior of the second monastery of the Visitation Sisters to let her know that I give permission for the brother of the crazy Sister to meet with his sister in the parlour without anybody present.

Letter from Antoine Antommarchi<sup>47</sup>, cousin of the doctor who had attended Napoleon in St. Helena. He assures me of his affection and recognition for all that I did for him during his youth. He had been very successful in Santiago in Cuba. He would be most grateful if I would write

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<sup>46</sup> The assistant in the Refuge was Mother Saint-Dosithée. She was soon to be appointed Superior. See May 26.

<sup>47</sup> Antoine Antommarchi had received spiritual direction from Eugene de Mazenod when he was a law student. See Rome Diary, *Oblate Writings* 17, p. 92. His cousin, who was a doctor, then lived in Santiago in Cuba.

to the Minister for Foreign Affairs to recommend him for the position of consul of France in Santiago. [p. 17]

**May 24:** Ascension Day. I was supposed to say Mass in the chapel of St-Raphael to give Confirmation to the children in that institute<sup>48</sup>, to baptize a person from Alsace, give him First Communion, Confirmation and marry him. I was in too much pain to avail myself of this pleasure. It was only with difficulty that I was able to celebrate the sacred mysteries at home. Feverishness, after violent stomach pains, obliged me, in spite of myself, to abstain from performing a ministry which I had hoped would be of great consolation to me. I hope to be able to go to the chapel this evening in order not to deprive these poor children of the sacrament of Confirmation. They are working class children who can only assemble on Sunday and so I would have otherwise to postpone this appointment for too long because of other commitments I have undertaken for the following feast days.

I have received the letter which I am about to copy, as much to preserve the memory of the friendly attitude of the royal Court of Aix in the affair of the infamous Vèze as to recall the delicate sentiments of the lawyer Tavernier who tells me of the judgement that has been passed. There are certain flattering expressions which must be pardoned. They are due to filial affection and recognition on the part of the narrator:

*Excellency, it is with deep joy and a feeling of satisfaction which it is difficult to express, that I announce to you the confirmation of the sentence pronounced on the infamous Vèze. The imprisonment, inspired by the indignation of the Court, but passed in perfect awareness of the perversity of the accused who appeared before it, had a stupefying effect on this being who is so profoundly criminal. All the circumstances connected with the imprisonment are such as to make me believe that the Court saw the full extent of its duty in this event and also the extent of the virtues which it was called upon to vindicate. The hearing was held behind closed doors. Nobody, not even a lawyer was present. That tells you that the accused did not find a defence advocate and that the Aix tribunal did not function any less efficiently than that of Marseilles. Fabry himself gave the report on the case. There was nothing in the procedures which could cause*

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<sup>48</sup> An institute for young workers founded by Abbé Caire.

*displeasure or embarrassment. Everything was reported so discreetly and in such good taste that the magistrates said to one another that the public could have been admitted to the debate without hesitation. [p. 18] The public prosecutor fulfilled his duties nobly. He also spoke nobly of the Bishop of Marseilles, of his well known virtues and of the perverse foolishness of the accused who was being punished.*

*As to the latter, he did not say much. The president ensured that he remained respectful. I do not know if the atmosphere of the Court affected him, but he did nothing to aggravate his crime.*

*I have been given all these details by the one who gave the report. I did not wish to be present as advocate at the case, lest my example should induce some other lawyer with intentions less pure than mine, to wish to be at the debate. The source from which I have this information is known to you. There was only one reason which prevented Fabry from taking his pen to write to you the history of the trial and that was that it would not be becoming for him to do so on coming from the chair where he had judged the case. He was thus obliged to postpone to another day the pleasure of writing to you.*

*I repeat once again, Your Excellency: may heaven console your spirit. Your suffering has only served to make you greater in the esteem of those who know you, to fulfill the words of the Master and to distinguish you as the prelate who is terrible to the wicked and pleasing to God. Our hearts have suffered with yours. Our souls have been blended in the same prayers before God, and here as always, we acknowledge ourselves to be children of the apostolic man who taught us to taste virtue. Sincerely etc.*

It is easy to see that sentiments such as these, shared by all those to whom I dedicated the first years of my ministry, compensate, and even more than that, for all the persecution which hell has aroused against me.

Yesterday also, I received this letter from Antonio Antommarchi, who after all these years, expresses the same sentiments from a grateful heart, wishing to reward me for my care by telling me that he has remained faithful to God and to virtue.

Turcas<sup>49</sup> came, the other day, to spend an hour with me. He was unable to drag himself away from me. He recalled tearfully the memories of those years spent under my direction. He was effusive in his recognition that he still finds the advice which I gave him useful in the present circumstances of his marriage. For me there is nothing which a good father like you can say that will be lost, he told me in tones of tenderness, and be assured that I shall benefit from it. I had tender feelings myself. This was a little happiness which the good God had reserved for me in the midst of the affliction which was inevitably caused by the iniquitous business of Vèze. [p. 19]

I believed I was acting as a good pastor this evening by going to confirm the young people whom I could not visit this morning. I still had a little fever, but it seemed to me that I had to force myself in order not to delay procuring the grace of the sacrament for these children who had prepared themselves so well for the event and, since they can assemble only on Sundays, would otherwise have had to wait until well after the feast of Pentecost. The consequences of what might be called my imprudence were not as bad as they might have been. I was able to address a few edifying and encouraging words to them before confirming them but I had to retire to the sacristy during the Benediction because I did not have the strength to remain kneeling. I received the blessing from there.

**May 25:** Visit of Archbishop d'Astros of Toulon. Letter to Fr. Guibert urging him to return to Ajaccio where Fr. Moreau needs him very much. This Father has written to me saying that he could not be more dissatisfied with Fr. Reinaud<sup>50</sup>. What he tells me is really distressing. He would like to be able to give me more consoling news "*with regard to him, but that would require a miracle and God will not perform one because the man's pride is too great. He still has the same pride, the same spirit of insubordination. He is very calculating. He wants to make the most of the situation. He is always trying to make allies in the seminary and friends in town so that if he is recalled to the mainland his departure will be made very sensational. This hypocrite wishes at all costs to establish himself in Corsica in spite of everybody and he would probably glory in triumph if he could crush those whom he has used as stepping stones to arrive where*

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<sup>49</sup> Félix Chrysostome Turcas, member of the youth congregation in Aix 1814-1815.

<sup>50</sup> The name is scratched out in the manuscript.

*he is. Perhaps he is still somewhat afraid of Fr. Guibert, but the others he despises. He goes out whenever he pleases without letting anybody know. He went to visit the prefect and Moreau only found out by chance from a person outside. He bought himself a fishing tackle through one of the employees in the seminary without saying a word to the bursar and he went fishing in the sea, again without permission. He does not see himself to be dependent on anybody... Excellency, I do not wish to be a prophet but I am afraid that this brother is going to cause us trouble unless you hasten to relieve us as skilfully as possible of his presence as soon as the school year finishes. If you wait too long his departure will cause scandal, if indeed he does not try to remain on the island in spite of us. He is quite capable of having the links which hold him broken, or even of breaking them himself and then setting up one altar against another. Who knows if he would not be able to obtain a place for himself in the diocese. That is something for which we must be prepared. I feel, Excellency, that I am causing you suffering by giving you all these details but I believe it is necessary to do so. The Spirit of God will make you appreciate what I have to say and I am not afraid to speak to you *ex abundantia cordis*, because I know that you will see things in their proper light etc.*

What can we expect from someone who has continued to walk this path from the moment he wrenched Holy Orders from us. From that moment he has no longer been [p. 20] a man of the Congregation. It is a precocious perversity which has borne its fruit. May God deliver us from its final effects.

Canon Chervaz was so kind as to give me a relic of St. Maurice. This relic has been authenticated by the Archbishop of Paris, but it was brought from the abbey of St-Maurice<sup>51</sup> and since the reliquary was opened to make a further division of the relic, it had to be authenticated again. It was taken from the body on the day of the translation (transfer) of this important relic. Canon Chervaz was present on that occasion.

**May 26:** I went to the Refuge to confirm the election of the new Superior of Notre Dame de Charité who has arrived from Tours.

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<sup>51</sup> The abbey of St. Maurice is in Valais, Switzerland.



**May 27:** Pontifical Mass in la Trinité on the occasion of the feast the Blessed Virgin which is celebrated each year during the month of May. I presided in the evening also and Fr. Desmazure preached.

Letter from the Archbishop of Bordeaux. He replies to my letter of the 11th and gives me information concerning Mr. E. Mathieu. This young man has 200,000 Francs at present. According to the Archbishop, the Magallon family will be making a good deal. He will write again to let me know the father's reply.

**May 28:** Letter to the parish priest of Brignoles to ask him to obtain from the father of the named Arbi Julien that he receive her again in the father's house from which she had fled.

**May 29:** Letter from Fr. Guibert; his arrival in Ajaccio. Letter from Fr. Moreau. He tells me that, from his journey in the diocese, Fr. Guibert has earned 15 to 20,000 Francs. He informs me that the prefect appreciates him so much that he has given assurance that if the Bishop of Fréjus should die he was sure to be appointed bishop of the diocese. In telling me this he wished to let me know how much Fr. Guibert is appreciated in Ajaccio.

Letter from Mr. Guesneou, parish priest of Carbon<sup>52</sup> near Bordeaux. He offers me his country house valued at 30,000 Francs to establish the Capuchins. Before giving him my answer, I shall present the suggestion to Fr. Athanase who is absent at present.

**May 30:** Letter from Reynier<sup>53</sup>. He wants to come back to the Congregation. That request will be submitted to the council who will examine it. This is what the letter says: *Excellency, desiring to satisfy my conscience as well as my heart, I have the honor of requesting that you kindly readmit me to the way in which Providence and your paternal goodness [p. 21] had called me and from which I should never have strayed, by counting me once more among your children. While awaiting your reply, I beg you to believe my sincerity and my respect, my dedica-*

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<sup>52</sup> The word is difficult to read in the manuscript. There is a municipality of Carbon-Blanc near Bordeaux.

<sup>53</sup> There were two Oblates named Reynier: Gustave Léon who left in 1831 and Jacques Symphorien who left in 1829. Neither of them came back to the Congregation.

*tion and my recognition. I have the honor etc. your servant and son, Reynier.*

Fr. Honorat has come to make his retreat. He has confirmed my opinion which I would prefer not to have, that the Archbishop of Avignon is like so many other prelates, insisting more on a certain apparent organization than on the real good of the souls entrusted to his care.

**May 31:** *Te Deum* in la Trinité to conclude the month of Mary. This devotion has had a great attendance this year. During the month there were 6,000 Communions. I had to offer public congratulations before the usual reception for the association of the Holy Rosary. The members of this association are the people who bear the expense of the devotion which has been admired throughout the month.

## June 1838

**June 1:** Confirmation during my Mass in my chapel. The parish priest of Carmes came afterwards to bring me to confirm a sick person. As we passed by the parish church we could hear the singing of the children who made their First Communion yesterday. I went in to give them a little instruction which seemed to give them great pleasure. From there I went to visit the sick person and, as usual, there were quite a few people gathered there. The poor man seemed deeply touched and very pleased to have become reconciled with God. Among those present there was a dear old lady who is ten years older than my uncle, that is, she is only one year short of one hundred. On my return to bishop's house, the Superior General of the Ladies of the Good Shepherd<sup>1</sup> was waiting for me. She is going to Rome to found a house of her Order. The Pope has placed them in St-Michel<sup>2</sup>. They are being called to much good in this house. Cardinal Odescalchi<sup>3</sup> is the protector of this Congregation and the Pope is very protective of it. He had written to me asking that I set up in Marseilles an establishment of these Ladies but we had already made a commitment to the Tours community; the Sisters from that Congregation were already on their way when those of the Good Shepherd appeared on the scene so I had to thank them for not compromising the establishment already undertaken and which was supported only by the ladies of the society who had

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<sup>1</sup> Mother Euphrasie Pelletier (1796-1868), canonized on May 2, 1940.

<sup>2</sup> Hospice of St-Michel, alongside the river Tiber on the Southern side of Rome: "a superb establishment where there are a number of societies who work together and which is perfectly governed by an administration of Cardinals..." See *Diary of Rome*, January 24, 1826; *Oblate Writings* Vol 17, pp. 82-83.

<sup>3</sup> Carlo Odescalchi (1786-1841) had ordained bishop Father de Mazenod on October 14, 1832.

invited the others. At that time I had not been given the letter from Cardinal Odescalchi. He had written to these ladies saying that [p. 22] he would not have written to any other bishop but to me on the matter because I was his friend. From his letter it is evident that he was afraid he could be thought to be interfering in something which belongs exclusively to the bishop of the diocese. He goes to the trouble of explaining that the fact that he is Cardinal protector has nothing to do with his request. His letter is most friendly and today I replied in tones that are equally friendly. The Superior General of the Good Shepherd will deliver my letter to him and will offer him my apologies that circumstances do not permit me to honor his recommendation. The Superior General is very satisfied with my reception and with the advice I have given her with regard to what she should do in Rome<sup>4</sup>.

Letter to Fr. Damico. He is determined to explain his rather strange conduct in the matter of his appointment.

**June 2:** Sicard has reappeared. He apologises for everything. He is going out of his mind. He does not know what will become of him. I am rewarded for not believing all the protestations which can be made.

Dupuy came; he will be installed the day after tomorrow.

I gave permission to Canon Chervaz to make a collection for the church of Lausanne.

**June 3<sup>5</sup>:** Pontifical service in the cathedral. The whole day in the church.

Letter from Fr. Boucarut, Superior of the Major Seminary of Nîmes, asking for information about Sicard, who has requested that he be allowed into the diocese to see to the education of a child.

**June 4:** Gave the habit to two aspirants of the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament. Confirmation for some of their students.

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<sup>4</sup> See above, January 12.

<sup>5</sup> Solemnity of Pentecost.

Visit by the consul of Naples. He introduced to me Mr. D. Camillo de Monteforte, tutor to Their Excellencies, los Serenísmos Infantes<sup>6</sup> son of Don Francisco de Paula<sup>7</sup>. This tutor presented me with a letter of recommendation from my former fellow student, Fr. Cassou, chaplain to the court in Madrid. Don Camillo is well aware of the happenings in Spain.. He realizes that his prince is merely a good man who lets himself be led without knowing where he is going. It is the majordomo<sup>8</sup> who rules in his house, and since he is impious and a conspirator, it is easy to see the direction he is taking. He has compromised his prince through his intrigues and he has accompanied him to Toulouse where the three children of Don Francisco, the first two aged 15 and 17, have nonchalantly been placed in school. These children are not without intelligence and their judgement on the situation is sound. The third is a regular imbecile. It would have taken more than the time of a short visit to learn a whole multitude of interesting details. [p. 23]

**June 5:** Mass at the Providence institute for poor girls to administer the Sacrament of Confirmation to about twenty of these children. It was also the day on which the ladies had an assembly and I met 32 of them. Of course bishops must always do what they are obliged to do, that is instruct and preach and they have to begin all over again every day. May God be praised if anyone benefits from it. I shall not be the one to spare myself in this duty. That is my reply to the atrocious reports which are published against me because attacking the writers and the printer is beyond the sphere of my duty. A pastor must be ready to suffer even more than that. Perhaps if I were less exact in the performance of what I see as the duties of my office, the demon and the wicked people whom he inspires would trouble me less with their deeds of darkness. They could not be more damnable; never mind! I shall overcome evil with good as the Apostle recommends that I do.

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<sup>6</sup> Camillo de Monteforte, tutor of the Spanish royal family.

<sup>7</sup> In 1833, at the death of Ferdinand VII, king of Spain, his wife, Marie-Christine de Bourbon-Sicily, became regent of the kingdom until her daughter, the future Queen Isabella, came of age. This did not please Don Carlos, brother of the king, who considered himself to be heir to the throne. This was also the cause of the civil war of 1833-1839 and of a policy of opposition to the Church because the clerical party joined Don Carlos and the Queen-Mother depended on the liberals. In 1846, Isabella married François d'Assise de Bourbon, son of the prince François de Paule, another brother of Ferdinand VII.

<sup>8</sup> Governor of the household.

Tuesday council: annoying because of the difficulty in appointing replacements to vacancies in choosing parish priests for St-Martin, St-Vincent-de-Paul and Roquevaire and the assistant priests who must be changed.

**June 5:** A despairing letter from Fr. Mille who tells about Brother Morandini<sup>9</sup> whom we had sent to Notre Dame du Laus for a change of air and a rest. When he reached Gap, he started to vomit blood which was coming from his mouth and his nose. I at once ordered prayers for him because the loss of this member would be a great misfortune for the Congregation. What hope is there when someone starts vomiting blood? Also, I at once replied to Fr. Mille telling him to order this child to dedicate himself to the Blessed Virgin and to obtain through her intercession the healing which is not to be hoped for from men<sup>10</sup>.

**June 6:** Another interview with Sicard<sup>11</sup>. He denies all the feelings and incidents of which he is accused. Who must be believed? If his previous conduct had not completely discredited him, there would be reason to feel sorry for him because a man must be seen as downright delinquent to believe he is guilty of such hypocrisy and deviousness. I am careful, however, to avoid my too great a tendency to believe in appearances of a repentance which everything indicates to me to be sincere. In spite of his denials, it is all too certain that he is guilty of his new crime. In conversation he has let slip numerous expressions which betray his horrible thoughts of infidelity and apostasy. When he was called to order he apologized for the trouble he caused and the state of despair in which he is. He is going [p 24] to the Jesuit house in Aix to do a retreat and make a good confession but did he not say to me: "What good will this retreat do if you do not lift the interdict which is upon me?" That is a poor state of mind! I gave him 20 Francs to pay for his stay with the Jesuits.

Sicard has been replaced in my office by Fr. Martin who has come for the hundredth time to make his apologies and to ask me to give him employment.

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<sup>9</sup> Brother Camille Morandini (1816-1838), novice in 1836-1837.

<sup>10</sup> See this letter to Fr. Mille in *Oblate Writings* 9, pp. 92-93.

<sup>11</sup> Once again the name is scratched out.

The Marquis de Janson has come to deliver some errands to me from his brother, the Bishop of Nancy. This has been the reason for his visit because it has been more than one year since<sup>12</sup> I last saw him. I gave him the letters which had been addressed here, because his brother has decidedly taken the road to Paris instead of coming here as he had said several times he would.

The Mayor and his assistant from Roquevaire came to express their regret that they had lost their parish priest whom I have moved to Le Ciotat.

The parish priest of Mazargues also came to speak to me once again about his nephew for whom he tried to make excuses at least in part. I told him he should not flatter himself by thinking he would ever get a job. Because he so ignorant and lacking in ability, he could only vegetate in the shadow of his uncle. If he cannot find a place in Mazargues, there is no hope for him. Adding misconduct to silliness is putting too many qualities together!

Vitagiliano<sup>13</sup> spoke to me once again about the girl whom he and a number of priests believe to be inspired. He urges me to read her writings to judge for myself. The Voice which is her guide tells her to have me do so. I move very slowly in this sort of thing, first because I rarely believe in anything that is not revealed, and also because one should not expose oneself to the possibility of error.

Letter from the Archbishop of Bordeaux on the question of the wedding of Mr. Mathieu. Visit of Emile on this matter. I ended my day by going to give Confirmation to a poor little dying girl in the Orphanage.

**June 7:** Letter from Félix Turcas. He would be happy to have me bless his wedding. His letter is worthy of one of my children. Another Félix<sup>14</sup> would doubtless be very surprised and displeased if I were to give such proof of my concern for Turcas who is allying himself with a fami-

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<sup>12</sup> Bishop de Mazenod has inserted "and two" above the "one year".

<sup>13</sup> Fr. Antoine Vitagliano (1801-1871), a priest from Marseilles in whom Bishop de Mazenod placed great confidence. He appointed him parish priest of St-Victor and, in 1851, archpriest of the cathedral.

<sup>14</sup> It is not easy to ascertain who this other Félix is to whom Bishop de Mazenod refers. Perhaps another member of the youth congregation: Félix Agard, married in 1839.

ly with whom he himself is not friendly. However, I am more determined to favor a man who has kept his filial affection towards me than one who has been unfaithful and who has been guilty of unpardonable wrongs in my regard with which to reproach himself.

Fr. Michel, parish priest of Cuges, talked to me about his parish.  
[p.25]

Fr. Camoin, assistant priest in Allauch, has caused his parish priest to ask me that he give an instruction every Sunday. He wants me to give him the order myself and that it should not be longer than half an hour.

Madame Baumond came to bear witness to all that she had confirmed to Fr. Telmon on the subject of her conversation with Sicard. He really did tell her that what he had done was mere formality and that he would prefer to remain under interdict than to enter the Congregation again. I had reported this word for word to Sicard. Can you imagine that he had the audacity to deny it and that he demanded at the top of his voice to be confronted with his accuser. Even though Madame Baumont has every reason to fear the brutality of her husband she does not refuse to stand her ground and defend the truth of her statements in the face of Sicard.

The Abbé de Cesolles came to see me. He is going to Lyon to take the mortal remains of his sister-in-law, the wife of the Count de Cesolles, first president of the senate in Nice.

**June 8:** Letter from the Bishop of Grenoble. He politely informs me of the appointment of Dupuy to the chaplaincy of Chartreux.

Letter to Fr. Gallician<sup>15</sup> giving my approval to his acceptance of the position of chaplain to Pomègue<sup>16</sup> if he can obtain it. My only recommendation to him was that he ensure it be done canonically.

Mr. de Cesolles, his eldest son and his wife, Félicie de Castellane, came to see us. In Marseilles they had met their uncle, Abbé de Cesolles who had lunch with me today.

<sup>15</sup> Jean Joseph Gallician (1769-1847).

<sup>16</sup> Pomègue: an island off the coast of Marseilles, near the isle of Ratonneau. It was there that ships which were subject to "quarantine" had to dock. That was in case they had on board sailors or passengers who had contracted a contagious disease.



François Roux came to see me. I think he wants me to bless his marriage<sup>17</sup>, but one would have to travel to Toulon, which is a bit difficult.

Letter from Coulin<sup>18</sup> which I shall preserve carefully as an irrefutable proof of the despicable dark thoughts of those about whom this letter speaks. Unfortunately the clergy appear in the front line and, Oh God, in such an infamous role! I believe the letter exaggerates. In fact I have proof that it does so but what remains of the truth is strong enough to disgust forever a sensitive spirit, a human heart, however mean it might be. It would be impossible to give a more distorted interpretation to the purest of intentions, to give a more unworthy impression of the benefits, to calumniate more unashamedly or in a more serious way, in a word, to return evil for good more completely. Can this be a final effort of hell to quench in my soul any thought of zeal, any improvement or salutary reform? I almost believe that it is [p. 26] because of the disgust which overwhelms me and the violence with which I have to work to maintain the will to accomplish to the best of my ability my ministry to men who deserve so little that one should be concerned for their welfare.

**June 9:** Letter to Reynier<sup>19</sup> inviting him to come and speak with me before I present his request to the council.

Letter to Coulin to give him the appointment he requests.

Letter from Sicard from the Jesuit house in Aix where he is making his retreat. He once again proclaims his favor in the following terms: *"My feelings are the same as I expressed them to you a few days ago. Far from having changed, they have only grown stronger in retreat and prayer and with the knowledge of my new needs. I would be discouraged if I did not know that my needs and repentance were the necessary conditions of your indulgence and your charity. Prostrate before you, milord, I beg you once*

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<sup>17</sup> Marriage to Mademoiselle Gérard. See below June 18.

<sup>18</sup> Coulin: the name is scratched out. Fr. Rey (II, 23) writes: "It was above all to the clergy that (Bishop de Mazenod) devoted his care and his interest. Nevertheless, his intentions were frequently little known or badly interpreted.. A letter signed by a highly esteemed priest and dated June 8, revealed what was being said about him in ecclesiastical meetings" It would seem that the discontent, which was very limited (see below, June 10) arose from the condition imposed by the bishop for the appointment of new parish priests and rectors: the obligation of community life.

<sup>19</sup> The name is scratched out in the manuscript.

*again to allow me to take my place once again among your children, a place of which I have all too often made myself unworthy."*

Fr. Richard, Jesuit rector, has also written on the subject, urging me to accept this prodigal child, etc.

That will be sufficient for me to present the matter to the council. In all likelihood, after all that has happened, he will be refused and it will be his own fault. Then I shall let him go wherever he wants.

Letter from Fr. Martin. Never in living memory has there been such a gathering at Notre Dame (du Laus). Fr. Mille is getting better. The limitations which I imposed on him are doing him much good. Morandini is slightly better. He edified everybody by the heroic sentiments he expressed in the midst of terrible suffering.

I have sent a cheque for more than 10,000 Francs to Mr. Ferdinand Paille<sup>20</sup> in payment for the house bought from Mr. Gastinal.

**June 10:** This morning I gave Confirmation to Mr. Papon, a member of the family of the historian of Provence<sup>21</sup>. He is more than fifty years old. His return to the Church is most consoling. This Mr. Papon was Calvinist. He had never shown any inclination to be converted. However, he did allow his wife to practice her religion and he agreed that all his children should be Catholic. Then all of a sudden, at the age of 53, when nobody expected it, he asks to speak with a priest and after three [p. 27] sessions he renounces the errors of Calvin and asks to be baptised conditionally as we always do. The Marquis of Montgrand<sup>22</sup> and his wife were godfather and godmother. Genoud, parish priest of St-Giniez, heard his confession and I had the consolation of giving him Confirmation and Communion in my chapel in the presence of his wife and his two children.

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<sup>20</sup> The name is either Paille or Poulle. Mr Gastinal is mentioned only once in the Founder's writings.

<sup>21</sup> This historian of Provence is the Oratorian Papon (1734-1803), author of *l'Histoire de Provence* in four volumes (1777-1786).

<sup>22</sup> The Marquis de Montgrand (1776-1847) had been Mayor of Marseilles before 1830, in the time of Napoleon and of the Restoration.

A short letter from Louis<sup>23</sup>, to introduce to me two of his priests: Fr. Leblanc and Fr. Portal.

Visit of Turcas. His marriage is planned for the morning of the 21st at the latest.

A long conversation with Coulin on the subject of his letter. My impression is that he was in a dark mood the day he wrote to me and that the pronoun "one" should have been more restricted in meaning than he thought. Nevertheless, I must remind myself that if Fr. Bossier spoke evil stupidly and that Fr. Espanet knew what he was doing when liberated himself<sup>24</sup>.

**June 11:** Confirmation in my chapel as on every Monday. Visit of the ox for the Corpus Christi procession<sup>25</sup>. It was intended to bring the animal up to the great hall. The people had invaded the bishop's residence. I was obliged to do the honors for such a beautiful visit. Everybody showed great interest. They vied with one another to say the most flattering things: *Nostre bel evesque nos fas tant de plaisir de lou voire* etc. Five Francs to little Jean-Baptiste, 10 Francs to the noble butchers, dressed in Henry IV costumes, apart from the cloak. A present to the man leading the victim. Thus everything ends up in money.

Council of the Congregation. Unanimous refusal to the reintegration of Sicard, based on the reasons which shall be recorded in the minutes of the meeting<sup>26</sup>. A decision will be reached on the request of Reynier when I shall have discussed the matter with him.

Letter from Mrs. Gérard in Toulon on behalf of all her family inviting me to bless the marriage which I had the happiness of arranging by a choice which she calls providential. It is a fact that no union has ever been more appreciated than that which unites the two families: Roux and

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<sup>23</sup> Louis de Boisgelin, at that time a Jesuit novice in Avignon.

<sup>24</sup> Bossier does not seem to have been a priest in the diocese of Marseilles. His name does not appear anywhere. Jean Baptiste Espanet was a zealous priest, held in high esteem by Bishop de Mazenod. He was professor in the Minor Seminary, then parish priest in different parishes. He was appointed titular Canon in 1860.

<sup>25</sup> With regard to the ancient custom of having an ox in the Corpus Christi procession, see Rey II, p. 24.

<sup>26</sup> The minutes of the general Councils are preserved only from 1844 onwards.

Gérard. Both families feel the perfect appropriateness of the marriage and I am glad to have inspired it. [p. 28]

Letter from my mother containing a cheque for one thousand Francs, payable today.

**June 12:** Letter to the Bishop of Fréjus informing him that I shall come to bless the marriage of Mr. Roux and Mademoiselle Gérard in Toulon.

Letter to Félix Turcas, enclosing another for Fr. Courtès. I am letting him know my itinerary and the day of my arrival in Gémenos to bless his wedding.

Visit to the boarding school of the demoiselles Reynier. I could not refuse their insistent invitation and I chose today as being the most suitable to please them<sup>27</sup>; since all the clergy of the parish had gathered at the boarding school.

**June 13:** Mass in St-Joseph church where I went to receive the vows of four Sisters of the Sacred Heart. This community is doing well and their boarding school is functioning marvellously. There I found 36 Sisters and 83 boarders.

Interview Reynier to discuss the request he has made to be readmitted into the Congregation. I was right to wish to speak with him before asking the opinion of the council on his request. It was his duty to make this request, but it is clear that he had to overcome a major reluctance which has haunted him because of the faults he has committed and the habits he has assumed since he left. I was, nonetheless very pleased with his openness and the sentiments he expressed. This is what I have decided after seeing things in the depths of his soul. I shall ask the council to take no decision yet on his request. His father and mother will soon die, the father is now more than 80 years of age. Family ties will slacken and grace will help his will to do his duty.

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<sup>27</sup> The Tuesday of Trinity week.

Letter from Fr. Guibert. He has had a temperature again and even though this good priest tells me that feels resigned to go "*or to remain, to die or to live, since he values only one thing, that is that the last act of his life should be an act of obedience*", I am firmly resolved not to impose any test on this heroic will to obey other than to do all that is possible to preserve a life which is so dear and so precious to us.

Letter from the Bishop of Grenoble. This prelate does not over indulge in politeness. It seems to me that my very polite letter merited something more than a strictly honest reply. [p. 29]

Rescript from our Holy Father the Pope, granting the scapular decreed by the General Chapter held in 1837, the same indulgences as the scapular of Mount Carmel<sup>28</sup>.

*"Beatissime Pater, Congregatio Missionariorum Oblatorum Beatae Mariae Virginis Immaculatae, a reverendissimo episcopo Massiliensi instituta et a felici recordatione Leone XII approbata, ad Sanctitatis Vestrae pedes provoluta humiliter exponit decretum esse a capitulo generali eiusdem Congregationis juxta regulas coacto anno 1837, ut in die professionis aut renovationis votorum, singula familiae membra parvum scapulare albi coloris cum impressa imagine sanctissimae Virginis Mariae Immaculatae acciperent, secreto gestandum velut signum speciale ipsisque propriae devotionis erga illud venerabile mysterium, postulatque suppliciter ut gestantibus praedictum scapulare, a superioris prius benedictum et impositum, indulgentias omnes a scapulari Carmelitano adnexas, ac insuper indulgentiam plenariam in die decima septima februarii quae est erectae Congregationis anniversaria, Sanctitas Vestra velit benigne concedere. Mens Missionariorum amplissimam illam gratiam expostulantium ea est ut hunc favorem velut suae Societatis membris personalem obtineant, solisque religiosis professis limitatam, et sic jura confraternitatum quibus huius generis indulgentiae concessae fuerunt, integra serventur. Quod. etc.*

*Ex audientia Sanctissimi*

*Sanctissimus Dominus Noster Gregorius PP XVI omnes et singulas indulgentias pro scapularibus Beatae Mariae Virginis de Monte Carmelo,*

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<sup>28</sup> The two Rescripts which follow were published in the Constitutions and Rules of 1853, pp. 206-208. See the translation below.

*rite benedicendis, impertitas, etiam pro scapularibus Immaculatae Conceptionis, de quibus in precibus ab oratricis Congregationis superioribus pro tempore, ad effectum prout in ipsis precibus benedicendis, benigne in perpetuum concessit. Praesenti valituro, non obstantibus in contrarium facientibus quibuscumque...*

*Datum Romae ex secretariatu Sacrae Congregationis Indulgentiarum, die 30 Aprilis 1838.*

C. card. Castracane, praefectus

L.S.A. canonicus Prinzivalli, substitutus

[p. 30] A further Rescript for the mission cross

*Beatissime Pater, Societas Missionariorum Oblatorum Immaculatae Virginis Mariae a reverendissimo episcopo Massiliensi instituta atque a felici recordatione Leone XII approbata, ad pedes Sanctitatis Vestrae provoluta humiliter exponit praescriptum esse a suis regulis ut finitis publicis exercitiis, Missionari in loco publico crucem erigant, velut missionis monumentum, hortenturque populos ad visitandum frequenter illud venerabile signum Redemptionis nostrae, ut virtute illius firmetur emendationis propositum, amorisque divini fervor augeatur. Hinc eadem societas ad fovendum hanc perutilem devotionem enixe postulat ut Sanctitas Vestra indulgentiam septem annorum velit benigne concedere singulis fidelibus quoties illas cruces devote ac pie visitaverint. Quod etc.*

*Ex audientia Sanctissimi*

*Sanctissimus Dominus Noster Gregorius Papa XVI clementer indulgit ut omnes utriusque sexus Christi fideles quoties ter Pater Ave et Gloria ante quemlibet ex crucibus, ab oratricis congregationis sacerdotibus in sacram missionum et spiritualium exercitiorum fine jam erectis vel infra triennium ab hac die decurrendum erigendis, in trium horarum agoniae Domini Nostri Jesu Christi memoriam, ac juxta mentem Sanctitatis Suae, corde saltem contrito et devote interfuerint, toties quinquaginta dierum indulgentiam, fidelibus quoque defunctis applicabilem consequantur. Praesenti in perpetuum valituro absque ulla brevis expeditione. Datum Romae ex secret. S. Congregationis Indulgentiarum, die 30 Aprilis 1838.*

C. card. Castracane praefectus

Loc. sig. A. can.cus Prinzivalli, substitutus

### Translation of the two Rescripts

#### *Most Holy Father*

*The Congregation of the Missionary Oblates of the blessed Virgin Mary Immaculate, founded by the reverend Bishop of Marseilles and approved by Leo XII of happy memory, prostrate at the feet of your Holiness, humbly submits that the General Chapter of the aforesaid Congregation, held according to the Rules in 1837, decreed that, on the day of profession or renewal of vows, all members of the family will receive the little scapular, colored white and bearing the image of the Holy and Immaculate Virgin Mary, which they will wear secretly as a special sign proper to them of their devotion to this venerable mystery. This Congregation insistently requests that your Holiness benevolently grant to those who wear this scapular, previously blessed and imposed by the Superior, all the indulgences attached to the scapular of Carmel and besides, a plenary indulgence on February 17, the anniversary of the Congregation.*

*It is the intention of the Missionaries who request this great grace that it be granted as a personal favor to the members of the Society, limited to professed religious and that thus the rights of confraternities, to whom similar indulgences have been granted, should be protected etc.*

#### *In the audience of the Holy Father*

*Our Holy Father, Pope Gregory XVI, benevolently grants in perpetuity, all and each of the indulgences attached to the scapular of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Mount Carmel, lawfully blessed, to the scapular of the Immaculate Conception mentioned in the request made by the present superiors of the Congregation requesting*

*This applies to the future, notwithstanding any contrary decisions.*

*Given in Rome, from the secretariat of the Sacred Congregation for Indulgences, April 30, 1838.*

C. Cardinal Castracane, prefect

A Canon Prinzivalli, Undersecretary

[p. 30] A further rescript for indulgences attached to the mission cross.

*Most Holy Father*

*The Society of the Missionary Oblates of the Immaculate Virgin Mary, founded by the most reverend Bishop of Marseilles and approved by Leo XII of happy memory, prostrate at the feet of your Holiness, humbly presents what has been prescribed in the Rules, that at the end of every parish mission the missionaries erect a cross in a public place as a memorial of the mission and they exhort the faithful to visit often this venerable sign of our Redemption, so that by means of this powerful sign their resolve may be strengthened to correct themselves and increase the fervor of their love for God. Consequently, this same Society, in order to promote this useful devotion, insistently requests that your Holiness grant an indulgence of seven years to the faithful each time they visit devoutly this cross.*

*In the audience of the Holy Father:*

*Our Holy Father Gregory XVI grants benignly an indulgence of fifty days, applicable also to the deceased, each time the faithful of either sex, with contrite heart and devotion, visit the cross already erected or to be erected within the next three years starting from this day, at the end of missions and spiritual exercises by the priests of the Congregation making this petition, by the recitation of three Paters, Aves and Glorias in memory of the three hours of agony of Our Lord Jesus Christ and according to the mind of His Holiness.*

*This is granted in perpetuity without the forwarding of a brief.*

*Given in Rome, from the Secretariat of the Sacred Congregation for Indulgences, April 30, 1838.*

L.S.C. Cardinal Castracane, Prefect

A. Canon Prinzivalli, Substitute

**June 14:** Thursday, Feast of the Blessed Sacrament. Letter from the Bishop of Fréjus in answer to mine of the 12th. He will be in Toulon on the same day that I shall be there and he is kind enough to say that there will be two bishops from Fréjus in Toulon on that day<sup>29</sup>.

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<sup>29</sup> Two bishops, means that Bishop de Mazenod will be recognized symbolically as a bishop of Fréjus.



Another visit from Sicard, as murderous as the others. He will write to me asking to go to Nîmes and I shall give him permission to do so.

Letter to Félix Turcas and to Courtès. [p. 31]

Letter from Fr. Guigues; I have not had time to read it.

**June 15:** Letter to Dassy. I have asked him to draw on my account all the expenses he has had.

Letter from Mr. Wuilleret. He has 380 Francs on my account. That is a handsome revenue from Billens! If he does not succeed in selling this property, he will present me with a plan. I do not ask for better, as long as he can relieve me of a castle and of property which is costing me money.

Letter to Sicard giving him permission insofar as that is necessary to accept the position offered to him by Fr. Sibour, Vicar general of Nîmes, and to remind him that the dimissorial letters he has in hand allow him to place himself under the jurisdiction of whomsoever is ready to accept him. The Bishop of Fréjus had written to Fr. Tempier to say that he had good reason to send him away from his diocese<sup>30</sup>. Sicard explains that away as he does everything else.

The Mayor of Marseilles came to see me. I spoke to him about the cathedral. I do not think he will make it his business. However, the prefect who also came to see me, seems better disposed. He has spoken of the plan in Paris, both to the King and to the Keeper of the Seals.

**June 16:** Mademoiselle Rocafort came to tell me that Fr. Montagard is coming to Marseilles and that she is afraid because of his intentions with regard to the Boucherie<sup>31</sup> institute. I already know that Fr. Montagard would be only too glad if this institute would fail because he would then feel more at liberty to dispose of the inheritance left to him by the deceased Mr. Boucherie. I felt very frustrated not being able to speak with Fr. Montagard to make him understand that he is mistaken if he thinks that he is dispensed from following the well known intentions of Mr. Boucherie because the latter told him he was free to do as he wished with

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<sup>30</sup> For a good reason: the reason is already known.

<sup>31</sup> For details on this question, see Diary September 11 1837, *Oblate Writings*, Vol. 18, p. 252.

his property. These were the terms he used because he wished that should there be a dispute with his natural heirs, the heir he chose should be authorized to declare that the property belonged to him. That does not mean that he is dispensed from following his wishes faithfully. Nobody can be mistaken on that score. That is the method used everywhere to ensure that an enterprise begun in one's lifetime is carried on after his death. Can Fr. Montagard be making a mistake on this point?

**June 17:** General procession of the Blessed Sacrament.

**June 18:** Journey to Toulon to bless the marriage of Mr. Roux and Mademoiselle Gérard. After a journey of six hours I arrived in that city<sup>32</sup>. I went directly to the beautiful country house of the Gérard family where I was awaited by the two families Roux and Gérard.

On that same day, the Bishop of Fréjus visited Toulon. It was doubtless remorse which caused Riccardi<sup>33</sup> to appear only briefly. It was to show how he felt that he had appointed Sicard to Sagnes on the border with my diocese. In acting in such an unkind way, he did not succeed. Was he afraid that I might reproach him?

At midnight I blessed the marriage in the church of St-Pierre. Everything was done with the greatest decorum and recollection. I spoke of my conviction and congratulated myself on blessing the union of two true Christians.

**June 19:** Wedding feast in the country house of the Gérard family. The Bishop of Fréjus was also present. Nothing could be more canonical or more edifying than this truly Christian union. Jesus Christ was in our midst.

**June 20:** Mass in St-Pierre. Visit to the good Madam de Missiessy<sup>34</sup> and her daughter the "chanoinesse". We spoke of Gaston. I told the very interesting episode of how he entered the navy. I was in the seminary of St-Sulpice when Gaston de Missiesy made his First Communion in the board-

<sup>32</sup> The distance from Marseilles to Toulon is 65 Km.

<sup>33</sup> The name is scratched out. A priest called "Ricardy" was Vicar general of Fréjus from 1835. Could he be the Nicolas Léonard Riccardi who had been an Oblate from 1826 to 1829? We know that Fr. Maunier, an ex-Oblate, was then Superior of the Major Seminary of Fréjus.

<sup>34</sup> Eugène de Mazenod often speaks of the Missiessy family and he spells the name in different ways in his letters: 1808. 1809 and 1812.

ing school to which his parents had sent him. I was sorry to hear that this child had made such an important act in such a bad school. When I questioned him about the preparation he had undergone, I gathered that he had made this act as though it were the least important in his life. I was sorely afflicted because I had discovered a profound excellence in the good Gaston and that he was well disposed to virtue. I told him how sorry I was and that I wanted him to make his First Communion again. That seemed to him a rather odd thing to do and he spoke with his mother of my strange idea. His mother encouraged him to follow my advice, and he decided to do so without much trouble. I hastened to introduce him to my catechism lessons in St-Sulpice. He distinguished himself in the field and soon he was first in class, both by his application to study and the excellence of his understanding not to speak of the profound piety [p. 33] which developed in his soul. He was the perfect model. That was how God prepared him for the trials he was to undergo. Since his uncle was a Vice-Admiral, Gaston was destined to serve in the navy. He was sent to Anvers where the fleet and the ship he was to board were based. He wanted, first of all, to show that he was a Christian by observing abstinence on the prescribed days. When he arrived on board, however, he was in the company of young men who knew no morals and no religion and his quality as the nephew of the Vice-Admiral<sup>35</sup> was no protection against the sarcasm and persecution, the suggestions and the conversation of his comrades. It was at this time that he wrote to me a precious letter which should be among my papers<sup>36</sup>. Having told me of his unhappy position and let me know what means he had adopted to preserve himself from the corruption with which he was surrounded, having said that he spent part of his day in his hammock reading, away from his comrades, he made a heroic request which made me shed tears of consolation. During the time when I was teaching him in Paris, I brought him one day to Issy and there I showed him a picture of Fr. Olier kneeling in front of the Blessed Virgin, holding in his arms a little boy whom he was offering to Mary and asking her to take this boy out of this world if by living he was destined to commit one mortal sin. Here now was Gaston, writing to remind me of this event which I had explained to him so long ago, and he asked me fervently to make the same prayer to the Blessed Virgin for him to obtain that he would die rather than that he would ever offend her.

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<sup>35</sup> Admiral E. Jacques Missiesy (1756-1837)

<sup>36</sup> The original of this letter has not been preserved. It was published in Rey I, 112-113.

What a consolation it is for me, in the midst of my suffering, to encounter everywhere people or memories which prove to me that the care I gave to young people in the first years of my ministry was not fruitless. I thank God for that from the bottom of my heart. [p. 34]

**June 20:** I set off once again in the evening for Gémenos at half past five. I went there to bless the marriage of Turcas, another young man from the youth association in Aix. He had contacted me after twenty years. He had followed my advice by going to Confession to Courtès several days before his wedding.

**June 21:** Nuptial blessing for the wedding which was held in Gémenos. During the day I went to St-Jean and visited the paper mill and saw the new machinery. It really is magical.

I left at 8 o'clock for Marseilles and arrived there at eleven. I was anxious to arrive for tomorrow's ceremony.

**June 22:** Feast of the Sacred Heart. Pontifical service and general procession. I had the happiness of carrying the Blessed Sacrament. That was a preparation for tomorrow's retreat.

**June 24:** Sunday, feast of St. John the Baptist. A beautiful ordination ceremony in the cathedral. I had it announced in the parishes, presuming that a good number of people would want to be present. I tend to judge others in comparison to myself. How could I live for years without having the happiness of seeing how the power given by Jesus Christ to his ministers at the hands of the bishop, is transmitted? There were quite a few people but it seems to me that there could have been more. All of those present were really ecstatic. I ordained 7 priests<sup>37</sup>, 5 deacons and 6 sub-deacons, some minor orders and [p. 35] and tonsures. We were all deeply touched. My preference would be to do nothing but that all my life, or perhaps some other function where I could communicate to others what I have received. God has given me the grace of being aware of the miracle which is being operated. Lord, may I be worthy of this great ministry!

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<sup>37</sup> Four Oblates were ordained priests: Pierre Rouvière, Antoine Marie Gibelli, Jean Joseph De Veronico and Jérôme Pont.

The black penitents took advantage of this occasion to have me bless the statue of their patron saint, John the Baptist, which they have just had made.

**June 25:** Confirmation for two sick people who, either stupidly or carelessly, had been married in the “temple”<sup>38</sup>.

**June 26:** Confirmation in the institute of the Ladies of St-Thomas. There are numerous pupils in this boarding school but they will not learn much unless other teachers are sent there.

**June 27:** Confirmation in St-Joseph, the house of the Ladies of the Sacred Heart. The house is going wonderfully well. The ceremony was very moving.

**June 28:** Confirmation in the Major. There were several parishes who came together. I confirmed almost 600 children. This was the first time since I was confirming in Marseilles that was satisfied with the children. They were astonished to see me sitting on my throne and preaching to them with my mitre on.

**June 29:** Confirmation in the boarding school of the Reynier ladies. This is a favor which I do not intend to do for them every year.

**June 30:** Letters received and written.

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<sup>38</sup> Temple, in this context refers to a protestant church.



## July 1838

**July 1:** Confirmation in the college. Pontifical presence in the Major (cathedral).

**July 2:** Mass and Confirmation in the first monastery of the Visitation. Lunch with the Roux. Family reunion.

**July 3:** Confirmation in St-Martin. I was very pleased with these children. On coming out of the church I went to give Confirmation to a child who was dying. This poor little child was due to make her First Communion after the ceremony. She lost consciousness before she could do so. One more reason why I had to go and bring the Holy Spirit to this beautiful soul who was unable to receive Jesus Christ. Her family was disconsolate and my presence, and especially the sacrament which I had come to administer, filled their souls with a holy joy. I myself felt a special happiness, both because of the good I was doing to this innocent soul and because of the healing I administered to this poor family. On these occasions I feel what it means to be pastor. Do Christians still understand this? [p. 36]. If they are to do so, the priests must instruct them, and they themselves must be penetrated with a true spirit of faith in what it means to be a bishop. How many of them are there who have never said a word on this matter?

**July 4:** Mass at the house of Providence for poor girls. Distribution of prizes to these good little ones for their application to work and their success. They presented some charming work. There was a numerous gathering. Everybody was astonished at the really astounding success of this enterprise.

Letter of Fr. Courtès. Fr. Allies, parish priest of Orgon, is still presenting himself as a candidate to enter the Congregation. When shall he

have overcome his difficulties? Is it courage or is it his lack of ability that is preventing him from doing so?

**July 5:** Confirmation in Notre Dame du Mont. There were almost 600 children to be confirmed. The children were as attentive as they had been at the Major and at St-Martin throughout my instruction. There was an atmosphere of recollection in the audience which was both impressive and pleasant. The attitude of each child as I passed along the lines to confirm them gave evidence of their excellent disposition. The priests were both impressed and moved by the overall atmosphere of this beautiful ceremony. Two of them told me they could not hold back their tears.

**July 6:** Letter from Fr. Vincens<sup>1</sup>, full of good thoughts. He expresses his happiness at having been admitted to the Congregation. He asks permission to go to Chambéry to be present for the retreat given by Fr. Combalot<sup>2</sup>. I have written to him by return of post refusing permission: 1 - on the basis that it was too far away to go looking for a model of eloquence; 2 - I did not think it fitting to imitate this fiery orator, who always exaggerates, is often inaccurate and cannot help taking his inspiration from his own private opinions; 3 - that I think it unbecoming that a member of a Congregation should not find the necessary help within his own religious family, and instead, make a display of himself in a meeting of priests to make a retreat with them. No Congregation would agree to that.

Letter from Fr. Guigues<sup>3</sup>, full of prejudice against the good man<sup>4</sup> whom I am sending to him. I find the basis and the form of his statements to be offensive [p. 37] I wrote to him right away, since that was necessary. If I had been in time, I would have kept F. Pont here, but he had already left for his destination. How is it possible to please a man when one receives him reluctantly and full of unfavorable prejudice. Besides, Fr.

<sup>1</sup> Joseph Ambroise Vincens (1803-1863), was then at Notre Dame de l'Osier. The Founder's reply is published in *Oblate Writings* 9, p. 96.

<sup>2</sup> Fr. Théodore Combalot (1797-1873), writer and especially preacher who was "immensely successful" everywhere. *Dictionnaire de Biographie française*, IX, coll. 353.

Bishop de Mazenod is very severe in his judgement of this preacher; Fr. Tempier, on the contrary, who had invited him to preach in Marseilles in the absence of the Founder, in November 1830, had given him great praise: "Fr. Combalot has very distinguished talents; he is also a very devout man..." See *Oblate Writings* II, Vol 2, pp. 91-92.

<sup>3</sup> Guigues: in the manuscript the name is scratched out.

<sup>4</sup> Jérôme Pont (1807-1869), novice in 1835-1836 and ordained priest on June 24, 1838.



Guigues is gravely mistaken. I would be most thankful to God if he sent us many like Fr. Pont, so good, so virtuous, so precise, so attentive, so humble, so full of good will, and at the same time endowed with more than enough talents, and recognized as one of the best theology students in the seminary. Nevertheless he is the person about whom the following sentences have been so boldly written: "*Fr. Pont has been assigned to this house; I am grateful although I think it is enough to have Fr. (Gignoux)<sup>5</sup> looking after the house and doing no work, but (Fr. Aubert) has made a rather unusual remark to me, namely that of the four who were ordained<sup>6</sup> he is the most capable, (What Fr. Aubert wished to say was that he was the most suited to the house of Notre Dame de l'Osier). If that is true there is reason to be astonished that, of the four, this one is the most skilled, when we hesitated for several days to approve him because we feared, and not without good reason, that he did not have the talents necessary for our work, and, in the space of three years, he has quickly passed through novitiate and his theological studies. It seems more credible that the preference is to strengthen the other houses and leave this one to its weakness, because at least there is the merit of obedience*"

It does not seem worthwhile<sup>7</sup> to continue after letters such as that; that is the attitude of the recipient of this letter<sup>8</sup>.

Letters received and written.

**July 7:** Cardinal Pacca had written me a letter to which I feel embarrassed to reply. He tells me about a kind of commitment which he had the excessive kindness to make to the founders of the iniquitous and miserable journal entitled *L'Echo du Vatican*<sup>9</sup>. He heard later that his name was being used to promote subscriptions to this unknown publication which nobody wants. It seems that he is unable to openly withdraw [p. 38] the promise he carelessly made to them to contribute some short articles from

<sup>5</sup> The name has been scratched. Probably it is Fr. Gignoux who was then at Notre Dame de l'Osier. See *Oblate Writings* 9, p. 94.

<sup>6</sup> See the names above for June 24.

<sup>7</sup> The French phrase is "il faut tirer l'échelle".

<sup>8</sup> The French manuscript is unclear at this point.

<sup>9</sup> Doubtless it was a publication similar to *La correspondance de Rome*, about which Bishop de Mazenod complained some years later. See J. Leflon, *Eugene de Mazenod* III, pp. 330-339.

time to time. Nevertheless he is hurt to see himself deceived<sup>10</sup> in this way. He requests, therefore, that when the occasion arises I should attenuate the indiscretion of these gentlemen by putting into its real context a commitment which really was not such.

**July 8:** I was present at Vespers and the panegyric on St. Aloysius Gonzaga and I gave Benediction in the Christian Youth<sup>11</sup> chapel. I would like to say that I was edified by the behaviour of this multitude of children, It was not so, however. Never dissipation such as this. These children chatted, laughed in my presence during the time of the sermon delivered by Fr. Bérengier, their Director and of which, to tell the truth, they could understand but little. Those who were not talking were sizing me up from head to foot and examining what I was wearing. I was really hurt by the attitude of these children who make up the vast majority of this congregation in which I noticed there was hardly anyone from the ages of 16 to 18 although there are some older ones. The latter were as one would expect them to be. I shall remember to make my observations to the director.

I went to see the Ladies of the Good Shepherd, otherwise known as the Refuge, who had written one letter after another asking me to visit them.

**July 9:** Mass in the cathedral on the occasion of the anniversary of the consecration of this church. I have the impression that I am the only one in the whole diocese who thought of going to pray in the cathedral on this day. That is the degree to which the spirit of the Church has been lost even though it is so clearly manifest.

**July 10:** I am writing from memory so I am leaving out the letters<sup>12</sup>.

Confirmation in St-Cannat. the same observations as for the other Confirmations. I do not know if the children and the people were impressed to see a bishop on his throne, but the attention of this audience

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<sup>10</sup> The Founder uses the word "estampé" in French.

<sup>11</sup> This youth work took its name from Fr. Allemand (1772-1836). The chaplain at that time was Fr. Casimir Bérengier (1810-1878). See Jean Leflon, *Mgr de Mazenod III*, pp. 103, 113, 479-480.

<sup>12</sup> The French says: "je laisse les lettres à côté", I do not mention them.

was truly impressive. Not one child turned his head. All eyes were fixed on me. It was really beautiful.

**June 10:** Confirmation in the Minor Seminary. I gave them a free day. The speaker had asked me quite pleasantly to do so in the course of the poem which he dedicated to me on behalf of the whole gang who were overjoyed. [p. 39]

**June 11:** Letter from Mr. Molé<sup>13</sup>, president of the cabinet. He cannot appoint Antommarchi consul of Santiago of Cuba. The rules of diplomacy will not permit it. Besides, the position of consul is not vacant.

Mr. Jauffret, the librarian, has sent me his new fables. Mr. Barthélemy<sup>14</sup>, procurator of the Museum of natural history, has written to ask me to deal with the marriage of his sister.

**July 12:** Confirmation at la Trinité. Those present were, as in other places, remarkably attentive throughout the whole ceremony. The address from the throne seems to have had the same effect as in other churches. It must be concluded that God blesses and accompanies with his sublime graces this most sublime of ministries, the ministry of the word which is eminently reserved to the first pastors. I am absolutely convinced of this. Therefore, why be surprised that others who are blessed by the same grace, should feel that way also and profit by it. That is so true that this very day one of those persons who had abandoned God, having entered the church by chance while I was preaching, was struck by grace. She had sworn never again to go to confession and the demon to whom she had thus surrendered herself had inspired her to abandon herself to the most licentious way of life as much to follow the evil inclinations of nature as to belittle the religion she had given up. Well, then! She remained kneeling throughout the whole of the time I was speaking and renouncing her terrible resolution which she had only pursued all too well, she surrendered to grace and on my return to the bishop's house, I found her waiting for me to receive my instructions for the new way of life which she is determined to follow. How is it possible not to recognize the hand of God in events such as this? For me that is a very different sort of feeling from being told that people think they are listening to another St. Ambrose

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<sup>13</sup> Count Molé, president of the Council from 1836 to 1839.

<sup>14</sup> Mr. Barthélemy-Lapommeraye, director of the Museum.

when they hear me proclaiming the word of God to my flock. I am not a St. Ambrose; just a poor sinner to whom God has given a taste for my duties and for the sublimity of my great ministry. I shall never be able to thank his mercy for the happiness which [p. 40] he makes me feel in the exercise of my functions. Far from becoming accustomed to the routine of doing them, I always fulfill them with renewed consolation.

**July 13:** Bishop Casanelli surprised me by walking into my office when I thought he was in his diocese. This prelate had nothing to tell me about all the admirable work that is being done in Corsica by the priests of our Congregation whom I sent to him. Others will record that for posterity. It is miraculous. He does not even mention Fr. Guibert, although he is so dependent on him when he himself is absent from Corsica together with his Vicar general. What the bishop did not say, Fr. Sylve<sup>15</sup> did not hide. Words failed him to express all the good being done by this priest in the abandoned island, where no good was being done before our priests undertook their ministry.

The consul of Sardinia<sup>16</sup> came to thank me, on behalf of his government for all that is being done in Marseilles for the subjects of his Sardinian Majesty. He gave a little alms for the two charitable works: one hundred Francs for the Savoyards and the same amount for the Genoese.

**July 14:** Letter to Fr. Honorat disapproving of the procedures adopted by him for the collection and prescribing something different. My letter is highly motivated.

Visit to the prefect, spoke about the cathedral.

**July 15:** Confirmation for the Christian Youth work: I was more pleased with them than last Sunday. Nearly all of them received Communion. Very attentive to my instruction. A striking contrast to the dissipation during the sermon of their Director last Sunday.

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<sup>15</sup> Fr. Sylve, former Superior of the Minor Seminary in Forcalquier, was not Vicar general of Ajaccio but, in the period 1837-1838 he was responsible for the Minor Seminary of which Fr. Guibert was officially Superior.

<sup>16</sup> The consul of Sardinia: that is the Kingdom of Sardinia which at that time included Piedmont, Genoa, the county of Nice, Sardinia, Savoy. The capital was Turin.

Present for Vespers at St-Victor. The preacher was Fr. Telmon and it was to hear him that I went to Vespers. I was due to be present only for the Benediction on the anniversary of the sacrilegious theft which occurred there during the time of Fr. de Clapiers<sup>17</sup>. Telmon preached well.

**July 16:** Confirmation in my chapel. Visit to the Charter House to see the planned site of the general house.

**July 17:** Letter from Mr. Legrand<sup>18</sup>. I regret not having written to him sooner. The minister had already replied refusing permission for the erection of an auxiliary chapel of St-Lazarus. We shall return to the attack. Mr. Legrand spoke to me about my plan for the cathedral, recognizing of course that the problem is a difficult one. He thinks it is possible, nevertheless, and he encourages me not to abandon it. It would be wonderful if we could all agree, but the Mayor is not in favor and for a reason. [p. 41]

**July 18:** I am still moved by the renewed request Fr. Reinaud<sup>19</sup> has just made to me. Thus far he has been deaf to all the gestures of kindness I have made towards him, I am concerned by the thought of losing him but yesterday when he dared asked to be dispensed from his vows my attitude was strict towards him. I replied as I should to this unworthy request. He says that he wishes to be able to help his family. I pointed out to him that from the moment he gets a parish he will have less possibility of helping his family than I would have been willing to provide if, as he should, he had rejected any thought of apostasy and asked me to help him by coming to the aid of his family. There should never be any thought of breaking these sacred ties which have been undertaken *usque ad mortem*<sup>20</sup> and sealed by a solemn oath; such a thought should never enter the mind of a man who is faithful to his duty. No doubt Reinaud will do as he wishes but I made it clear to him that I found such perjury too horrifying and apostasy too horrible for me to be willing to cooperate by agreeing to his request

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<sup>17</sup> A.E. Alexandre de Clapiers (1743-1825). He had been parish priest of St-Victor after the Revolution, then parish priest in St-Martin from 1814 until his death.

<sup>18</sup> Probably Mr. Legrand de Villiers, head of department in the office of the Keeper of the Seals in Paris.

<sup>19</sup> The word is scratched out in the manuscript. Fr. Reinaud had been professor in the Major Seminary in Ajaccio.

<sup>20</sup> "Until death".

even if excuses and mistaken palliatives were even less evident<sup>21</sup> than they are in this case.

I was going along the boulevard, on my way to give Confirmation to a sick person, when I met the Magallon family and Mr. Mathieu. They were on their way to tell me that all the problems had now been solved and that the wedding plans were concluded. May God be praised.

**July 19:** Mass in the house of the Retreat, directed by Canon Guien<sup>22</sup>. A fine gathering of about one hundred people who are following assiduously the exercises I have approved. I encouraged these good Christians. A young girl made her First Communion and received Confirmation.

Discussion with Fr. Tempier about his visit to Corsica. The result of the inspection he has made is that not one of the houses they were speaking about is habitable. The house in Balange<sup>23</sup>, among others, is in such poor condition that it would be impossible taking a risk to strike it with a hammer because there are so many fissures in the walls that it would fall to pieces. Since there are no religious houses available, he thinks it would be possible [p. 42] to find hostels where the missionaries could spend the short intervals between missions while they are evangelizing one or other area of Corsica. I find this plan quite satisfactory if we really have to give up the idea of founding another house there.

I signed the marriage contract of Mr. Mathieu and Mademoiselle Magallon. It was I who, by proxy, represented Mr. Mathieu, the father of the groom who is adjutant in Bordeaux. I gave my consent in writing since I did not wish to be present in the registry office for what is known as the civil marriage<sup>24</sup>.

**July 20:** Fr. Reinaud has come again. My remarks of the other day have obviously made some impression on him. He is in a different state of mind and one in which I am pleased to see him. I rejoiced with him and I

<sup>21</sup> The Founder uses the phrase "plus g  ", meaning "more disguised".

<sup>22</sup> A.M. Emmanuel Guien, appointed titular canon on June 17, 1831.

<sup>23</sup> The mayors, parish priests and people of Balange in Corsica had offered a house to the Oblates, See Diary, end of August 1837.

<sup>24</sup> Civil marriage was established in France in 1792. Bishop de Mazenod did not accept this legislation.

felt greatly consoled. How can we be other than how grace has made us? To do so would be to exchange gold for mud. That being so, Fr. Reinaud, in his present state of mind, proclaims that he is ready to fulfill his duties to the best of his ability.

Letter to Fr. Aubert. He must rest awhile in Laus. There is no urgent reason for his return. We shall do whatever has to be done here. In fact I am going to send away the novice, Ercole<sup>25</sup> who has been showing signs of vicious inclinations and who is not suited to us.

Letter to Fr. Ricard, in Lumières, asking him to forward my letter to Fr. Honorat wherever he may be, if the letter reaches Lumières after his departure.

I entrusted Mr. Mathieu to Fr. Lander, having recommended that he prepare himself well to receive the Sacrament of Matrimony. I was pleased with the good dispositions of this young man who is determined to confess as he should. That is the twentieth example of what can be done for those who are getting married when one knows how to go about it. Priests! Priests! Honor your ministry. What is it not possible to achieve with a little zeal? [p. 43]

**July 21:** What a sad day; a series of declarations, one more shocking than the other! What have I yet to hear about the infamous priest, Garavagni<sup>26</sup>. He has now raped a little eight or nine-year old girl who is still ill as a result. Who knows what he did to those young people whom he seduced with his abominable suggestions! He made himself drunk; drinking from seven in the evening until midnight. It was then that he divulged the most intimate secrets. That is how he happened to admit that it was in confession he learned of the conspiracy against the Duke of Modena<sup>27</sup> and by revealing it he was promised a pension which he receives regularly. Possibly he was given permission to make this revelation, but nevertheless he is the most impious and shameless of men.

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<sup>25</sup> François-Xavier Ercole, entered novitiate on December 7, 1837.

<sup>26</sup> The name is scratched out.

<sup>27</sup> Modena was an independent Duchy. The Duke at that time was Francis IV of Austria-Este. In 1831 there was an insurrection which installed a former priest to lead a provisional government.

An unfortunate mother who told me too late the reason for her suffering. Her son, aged 17, had been to this man's school and he had been so well formed in vice that he could not resist the machinations of a certain doctor Andravi, I think, who seduced him as he did so many other young people. This group had formed a monstrous association which the police believe they have broken up by arresting the doctor and giving him a light penalty. I have been told that certain members of the police were themselves a part of this awful den. Good God! Have I ever reason to celebrate the holy mysteries every day for my diocese, and not only to ask the Lord for the graces necessary in the exercise of my painful ministry, but also in expiation for all the crimes which are ceaselessly being committed in this new Sodom<sup>28</sup>, in all sorts of corrupt practices.

Evil is endemic. Will it not also be necessary that today I should send the novice Ercole away because he dared to hold immodest conversation with another young novice whom I shall probably be obliged to send away later because he listened to him, and because of the consequences of such conversation. Neither one of them hesitated to admit themselves what had happened. They are not cut out for us, especially Ercole who boasts about his previous foolish behaviour. [p. 44]

The prince de Mir has just left. He will recommend Fr. Reinaud's brother for Algiers. This prince still sees the Algerian question as a Turkish matter. He is convinced that Turkey will fall but that previously signed treaties among the European powers will make it a series of independent states. Algeria, Tunis etc. shall have to become independent states under the protection of France. If the European population prospers, they will be governed by a prince of the house of Orleans. If not, then it will be El-Kader. He continues to hope, however, that it will be for the benefit of Christianity and the true religion.

Letter to Fr. Albini. I ask him to let Fr. Guibert know why we have sent Ercole away. I recommend that he take care of our young people in Vico.

**July 22:** Today was doubly joyful. The good Emile Mathieu came to attend my Mass after having received absolution. I had sent him to Fr. Lander for Confession. He accomplished this duty in three sessions with

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<sup>28</sup> The word is scratched out in the manuscript.



a deeply religious spirit. Does anyone wish to understand that? If I had not spoken to this young man about his obligation to prepare himself to receive the Sacrament of Matrimony by making a good confession, he would have done like so many others, he would have gone through the formalities and presented his ticket. Once he was informed of his duty he performed it wonderfully. Why is that not done in the parishes?

The other reason to rejoice is that I have heard that the other young man who has been living for three years now with the woman whom he should have married and from whom he already has children and who is considered to be his legitimate wife, has followed the advice I gave him the other day. He has been to Confession to Fr. Bernard whom I had recommended to him and has done his duty in the most satisfactory way. That is another example. That makes three in two weeks. Is it possible to believe that the priests in the parishes would be less persuasive or less lucky than I am? I put these things on paper so that, if need be, they may serve as an example and record the success of the steps I have taken. These may encourage or arouse zeal in those who lack perseverance, because I cannot believe that they too do not desire to sanctify and save souls. [p. 45]

Letter from my sister in reply to the one I wrote the other day. Armand<sup>29</sup> had written telling Eugene to come by carriage without stopping in Avignon.

Letter from Fr. Courtès. He will take care of De Veronico whom he has already presented to the Archbishop. This young priest will develop with time. It seems that he got on badly in his first assignment. Fr. Magnan is preparing the panegyric for Blessed Ligouri.

Letter to the artist Dassy. Thanksgiving, messages, plan for portrait, resolved never to pose. I ask him to bring one to Gaultier and one to Colonia<sup>30</sup>. He can ask me for payment when he sees me<sup>31</sup>.

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<sup>29</sup> Armand Natal de Boisgelin, the husband of Eugénie de Mazenod. Their son, Eugene, was returning from Paris where he had spent a year in Mr Pioloup's boarding school. See Diary, October 1, 1837.

<sup>30</sup> Probably to his friend doctor Gaultier de Claubry; Colonia: perhaps this refers to a member of the Colonia family who were well known in Italy in 1794. See Rey I, 20 and J. Leflon I, p. 111.

<sup>31</sup> The French is: "qu'il tire sur moi à vue": literally "he can shoot me on sight".

**July 23:** Letter from Fr. Ricard. He is making a collection in Apt for Notre Dame de Lumières. The sub-prefect recommends that he make a petition to the government. He thinks that he could receive one thousand Francs from the fund for the restoration of monuments. Fr. Ricard asks me for my opinion. I think it would be a waste of time. First of all, the church in Lumières is not a monument and secondly it is private property.

Letter from Fr. Mille. He asks for a reply to his request for permission to go to Turin. He should know from the reply I gave to Fr. Aubert that I would not consent. He plans to keep Fr. Chauvet<sup>32</sup> without letting Fr. Bernard go. It is always the same story. Each one for his own house with no concern for the others. Their community is very edifying; for the moment they are ten missionaries. Brother Morandini is holding his own. The Bishop of Gap still has opposition in his chapter.

Tonight I blessed the marriage of Mr. Emile Mathieu and Mademoiselle de Magallon. My little chapel was full. The ceremony was very imposing. My instruction may have provided serious food for thought for some of my audience. As for the couple, they behaved like angels; Mr. Mathieu read his book throughout the whole time of the Mass, he closed it only to follow attentively and in an attitude of recollection the prayers said over the spouses in the course of the sacrifice. The grace of the absolution which he had received in the morning has had its effect. He taught a good lesson to the family friends and relatives who were present. I have felt great consolation in blessing a couple such as this. [p. 46]

**July 24:** Mass at Notre Dame de Mont Carmel.

**July 25:** Letter from Fr. Ricard. He reassures me with regard to the procedures with the municipality of Goult. We have been assured that the church square is ours. Fr. Honorat has received my letter and will observe its contents.

Visit to the prefect to apologise that I will not be present at his lunch on Saturday; I am not afraid to let him know why I will not be there. He understood and could not blame me. Cathedral. Visit to the consul of Sardinia to thank him and, at the same time, to ask for information with

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<sup>32</sup> Cyriaque Antoine Chauvet, born in 1804, entered novitiate in 1836, already a priest; he left in 1841.

regard to priests from his country who are causing me some concern by their conduct.

Letter to prince de Mir to recommend Joseph Reinaud<sup>33</sup> to him.

**July 26:** Mass for the Ladies of St-Charles. Very unfavorable information provided by the consul of Sardinia with regard to two priests from his country: Rocca and Garavagni.

Coulin came to see me with regard to the regulation he wishes to adopt for the club. I told him about the opposition of a large number of well intentioned men which I had heard about.

Today I learned about something more serious. A coalition is being formed in all the dioceses to resist the bishops. Some simple priests are getting together and contributing 25 Francs each to found a newspaper opposing the so-called pretentiousness of the bishops and to uphold the freedom of the lower classes. These men have really gone astray by quoting Canon Laws which they want to re-establish. The stupid fellow who informed our Canon Lander of the matter, certainly does not know what Canon Law<sup>34</sup> is, being more familiar with the "canons" in the wine cellar. It was for his skill with the latter that he was honored by the cathedral chapter of Aix. The name Figuières is associated with the compliant servant of all the archbishops who have been in Aix during his time. It is he who prides himself with being a member of this monstrous and disgusting opposition in the Church which is not a representative government. It would seem that this affair is at quite an advanced stage. I had no suspicion of its existence. I have been told, however, that someone had the audacity to send [p. 47] a prospectus of it to the Archbishop of Aix. This prelate did not even think it worthwhile to let me know. Without doubt, he thought that the same trick had been played on me. The fact of the matter is that I heard about it only today, on the occasion of the visit to Fr. Figuières and his indiscreet whisperings to Fr. de Lander.

Letters to Fr. Gibelli and Rolleri in Vico.

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<sup>33</sup> Joseph was the brother of Fr. J.A. Valentin Reinaud. See above July 21.

<sup>34</sup> Bishop de Mazenod is playing on the meaning of the word "canon" in French. It may refer to the Church's Canon Law or, in popular jargon, to a bottle or glass of wine.

Letter to the knight, Amyot<sup>35</sup>. Letter of recommendation for Joseph Reinaud.

Fr. Dassy has written and sent me the manuscript of his booklet: *La neuvaïne en l'honneur de N.-Dame de l'Osier* (Novena in honor of Notre Dame de l'Osier). I shall try to examine it myself.

**July 28:** Requiem High Mass. I was present pontifically and I gave the Absolution. No problem at all with that. We were praying for Christians who had died in the peace of the Church. As for lunch with the prefect, that was different, I was not afraid to tell him quite frankly that I could not celebrate the anniversary of a revolution<sup>36</sup>. It is one thing to accept its consequences in terms of peace for the Church and the love of good order, it is quite another to rejoice in the commemoration of an era of disturbance, of revolt and the shedding of blood. Let one or other royalist be enraged by the attitude which my conscience as a bishop makes me feel duty bound to adopt. They would like to see me express my opposition in a way that would be as nonsensical as it would be culpable. They probably would not have the courage to be motivated by the principles which guide me in my conduct and in all my transactions. After all, what does it matter? The injustice of men aroused by passion does not disturb my rest any more than it influences my resolve. It is enough for me to walk upright before God and let all my actions be judged in the light of the sanctuary. I ask God never to let me deviate from these principles which have always been my rule of conduct and I thank him for having given me the strength of soul to despise the opinions of men when I feel justified by my conscience.

Letter to my sister. Family matters. [p. 48]

**July 29:** Letter from the Bishop of Digne asking for information on Fr. André<sup>37</sup> and telling me that he is arranging two pastoral retreats. If I did not know how good this prelate is, I would be tempted to say he was getting weak minded. He does not mention retiring which everybody says he

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<sup>35</sup> The Amyot family were relatives of Bishop de Mazenod through his maternal grandmother, Mrs. Bonnet. See J. Leflon, *Mgr de Mazenod* I, pp. 158, 204, 241, 309.

<sup>36</sup> The anniversary in question was that of the Revolution of July 27-29, 1830.

<sup>37</sup> Daniel Valentin André (1802-1848), novice 1825-1826, ordained priest on June 9, 1827.

has done already. It was this rumour which obliged me to write a very strongly-worded letter to the King to prevent him appointing the man whom nobody in the diocese wants and who is said to be the Bishop's candidate<sup>38</sup>.

Letter to Fr. Mille. Among other things I ask him to send Fr. Chauvet to Lumières at once.

A long discussion with Mr. Clapier, city councilor, to convince him of the importance and the success of a cathedral in Marseilles. I think I have succeeded in making him interested to the extent of his becoming a defender of this worthy cause in the city council.

On Friday the 27th, I had made a visit to the Mayor for the express purpose of urging him to communicate the letter I had written to him about this matter to the city council. My arguments were forceful: it would be difficult for this official to avoid being involved in a matter I had made the concern of the city. I think I left him better disposed than I had found him at the beginning of our conversation. He will speak about it the day before to the council: there he will find members who are prepared to refute his arguments if he wishes to produce those which I ground to dust in his presence yesterday. I still have to see some other influential members of the council. Whatever happens it will not be my fault if this project does not succeed. If the Mayor were well disposed we would go full-sail ahead. This is another difficulty to be overcome. Let us hope that God will help us overcome it.

**July 30:** There are still disagreeable matters with regard to foreign priests. There's just no end to it. Will it have to come to the point where we do not accept any more?

Lunch with the parish priest of La Madeleine, together with Tempier, Jeancard, Bicheron Félix, Marc Cailhol and Bodoul.

Fr. Jacquemet, Vicar general of Aix, has come. He politely refused to stay with me. I invited him to lunch tomorrow and the day after. [p. 4]

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<sup>38</sup> Bishop Bienvenu de Miollis, a native of Aix, was born in 1753. He retired on August 31, 1838 and died in Aix in 1843. He wanted to have as his successor Fr. Savornin, his Vicar general. See letter of Bishop de Mazenod to the king, July 26, 1838. Authentic copy: AAM, register of administrative letters, Vol III, No. 547.

**July 31:** Letter to Fr. Courtès. Letter to my mother.

Fr. Mille arrived unexpectedly. He came to bring Brother Marchi<sup>39</sup> to me, this unworthy Corsican who, in spite of his vows, tried to work up a despicable intrigue in Notre Dame du Laus where I had sent him to spend his holidays with Brothers Lagier<sup>40</sup> and Morandini. The minutes of the council meeting which I held on this very day will explain the details of that abominable conspiracy. One would have to be more foolish than perverted to try to cheat in this way. All that remains to him now is the shame which will unfortunately be reflected on the whole family. This malicious clown was expelled by the unanimous vote of the council. I at once approved the sentence and carried it out by giving him the dispensation which his conduct forced me to deliver.

The parish priest of la Trinité gave me the information I had asked with regard to this Marchioness of Sully who had written to me twice asking that I go to visit her. She is German, engaged at the age of 8 to a gentleman from Béthune, then sent to live in a convent until she reached marriageable age. Having married the Marquis of Béthune-Sully, she did not delay in getting separated from him. She is living in Marseilles with a man who, like herself, has no means, but she does not want to leave him. She is Protestant and quite original. She flaunts the label of her nobility, but since parchments are nourished only by pride, she is nevertheless dying of hunger. I now have enough information to do as my position requires in her regard.

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<sup>39</sup> François Marchi, born in 1816, novice 1836-1837, left in 1838.

<sup>40</sup> Lucien Antoine Lagier (1814-1874), novice 1834-1835, ordained priest on May 25, 1839.



**Bishop Pierre Guigou of Angoulême (1767-1842)**

*(After an engraving by Grevedoc)*

Pierre Guigou was Capitular Vicar of Aix when Father Eugene de Mazenod founded the Missionaries of Provence. He encouraged and supported the latter in this foundation. In 1838, ill, he came to Marseilles and met Bishop de Mazenod on August 1 and 17. Cf. Diary on these dates.





## August 1838

**August 1:** My birthday. I have completed 56 years. I am now about to begin my 57th. It always seems to be that I am mistaken when I calculate my years on this earth. If only I could flatter myself by saying that all of them had been spent doing the will of God, I would feel consolation in counting so many of them, but how is it possible to be assured of this point? It is better to be humble, to be overwhelmed and to ask for God's mercy. In any case it is better always asks for his indulgence both with regard to what I have not done and for what I have done badly.

Visit by the Bishop of Angoulême. He spoke on behalf of Fr. Martin,<sup>1</sup> but of course when he heard what I had to say about this man he gave up and was loud in his approval of my conduct in the matter. [p. 50]

A letter from Emmanuel Gaultier, perfectly pious as usual.

A letter from Fr. Honorat. He took advantage of my advice.

A letter from Bishop Menjaud. He tells me he has been appointed coadjutor of Nancy. After some complimentary remarks, the new prelate says: *"I hope that your excellency will now add to all the gestures of good will I have received from you, the kindness of the support of your prayers and, if need be, of your advice. Your excellency has a role to play in this because this appointment is partly your work, and should you not therefore share in some small way the responsibility it involves? I leave it to your conscience and especially to your heart to reply to this question."*

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<sup>1</sup> Bishop Guigou, formerly Vicar General of Aix, no doubt spoke on behalf of Fr. Lazare Martin whose writings in the newspaper had been critical of the diocesan administration of Marseilles. See Diary of April 22, 1837.

Bishop. Menjaud is right, but in presenting him to the Bishop of Nancy and urging this prelate to accept him, in recommending him to the Minister, and in writing to him as I did, I was following the prompting of my conscience. I was convinced that he was a man who would do good in the diocese of Nancy. Since Bishop de Janson was unwilling to resign, I suggested that he be a suffragan. I especially supposed that the appointment would be no more than that and therefore I proposed Mgr. Menjaud since he was accustomed to living with Bishop de Janson and was very much attached to him and would put every effort into the exercise of his episcopal functions in the diocese of Nancy on behalf, if I may say so, of his benefactor. Bishop de Janson had been considering another candidate who would have been the antithesis of what was needed. It would have been another story like that of Bishop Donnet. When I suggested Mgr. Menjaud, there were one hundred reasons why he did not want him, but the answers I gave him were too strong for him not to give in. However, it was too much for him to submit to an opinion which was not his own and so he pretended the idea was his in the first place and therefore he came up with what was truly his and presented him as coadjutor instead of suffragan. Consequently he made Bishop of the diocese the candidate whom he did not wish to have as auxiliary in the first place<sup>2</sup>. It is at least better than the previous occasion when he presented as coadjutor a candidate whom he had met only once in his life. When they got to know each other, they were surprised that they were not made for one another. A means of separating them had to be found. The coadjutor was appointed Archbishop of Bordeaux. The holiest of men are sometimes very strange!

I visited the Carmelites. I am always edified when I see these holy ladies who are always so happy to welcome me [p.51]

I appointed Fr. Telmon first councilor to the superior of Calvary community. I made the announcement myself to the assembled community. What a pleasure it is to have men like Fr. Semeria. It was he who held this position. Gentleness, humility, simplicity, sincere joy, effortless agreement. These are the virtues which this angel practices at all times.

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<sup>2</sup> Suffragan would have meant auxiliary.

Fr. Jacquemet came to lunch. He asked what I thought of a meeting to be held by some bishops in Aix to discuss Church affairs. I think that such a meeting would be good and I approve of it and give it my support<sup>3</sup>.

**August 2:** Mass at the Capuchin Sisters on the occasion of the Portiuncula. I gladly took advantage of this occasion to unite my prayers with those of this fervent and holy community on the anniversary of my Baptism. These good religious have such a great affection for me that their heartfelt prayers petition the Lord for the graces which I need.

A deputation of the wax merchants came to complain about the introduction of the new candles called stars in our churches. This invention is completely destroying their business. Already the halls, offices and all family residences have adopted this clean and economical form of lighting. If the churches choose it also, they will lose everything. They base their argument on the supposed obligation to use wax on the altar and for burials; the answer is that, in greater or smaller quantities, there is wax in the stars too and that there are large quantities of grease in their supposedly wax candles. As far as they are concerned, one sort has the advantage of being more economical, prettier and cleaner. They do not drip, and they leave no stains while the others are awful, disgusting; they soil the altar cloths and everything they touch, the grease flows from them more than from a candle. Woe betide the garment on which they fall. These gentlemen would have liked me to give a decision in their favor. I refused to do so. If what they say is true, namely that makers of the stars have written to Rome and sent a sample of their produce, there is nothing to prevent them doing likewise. I cannot allow myself to give a decision which might not be in keeping with the one that is awaited. These gentlemen [p.52] were not taken aback by my polite refusal. On the contrary they thanked me for having received them and for my advice.

Miss Chauvet gave me some rather sad news with regard to the state of the work of the Boucherie.

Mr. Autran, whom I visited yesterday, came today in answer to my invitation. We spoke at length about the important question of the cathe-

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<sup>3</sup> Meetings of bishops were very rare then. See J. Leflon, *Eugene de Mazenod*, Vol. III pp. 315-319.

dral. I had to speak quite a lot to encourage him. He is not lacking in goodwill.

Letter to Mgr. Menjaud in reply to his received yesterday. I recognize the Bishop of Nancy in the plan to go to Rome to consecrate his coadjutor. I point out to him, however, that in Rome there are only cardinals who consecrate bishops and who are delegated specially by the Pope.

**August 3:** Letter from councillor Chambaux requesting that I write a recommendation to the Archbishop for his son who is to be a receiver in the diocese of Cardinal d'Isoard<sup>4</sup>.

Letter from Courtès on the Costa affair<sup>5</sup>.

Letter from my brother-in-law asking my advice concerning the proposed marriage of C[ésarie]. He apologises for not having dealt with the matter sooner.

I had charitably contributed to the book entitled *La Pologne pittoresque*. The Pole who presented me with the plan assured me that the work did not contain anything which could hurt my feelings or compromise my dignity. Here I come upon a passage which is injurious to the Holy See. I read the whole article at once. What was my surprise to find that it is written in a detestable spirit and full of bad principles concerning the power of the Church, the exercise of its rights etc. It is blasphemous concerning the holiness of St. Stanislaus. The whole article bears the imprint of heresy and hatred for the Roman Church. The title is: *Religious worship. The influence of the Roman Church and the holy inquisition in Poland* (page 401 of the book). Angered at having been deceived, I am going to write to the editors asking them to remove my name from the list of subscribers and I reserve the right to administer to the one who recommended the work the reproach which he deserves. [p. 53].

**August 4:** Confirmation for the children of Menpenti<sup>6</sup> during Mass in my chapel. There were 28 children and I was very pleased. They were

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<sup>4</sup> Cardinal Archbishop J.J. Xavier d'Isoard of Auch (1829-1939).

<sup>5</sup> The word is not clearly written. It looks like Castès. It is probably Costa. See below, August 18.

<sup>6</sup> For information on the Menpenti boarding school, see Diary, February 9-11, 1837.

wonderfully attentive during the instruction which preceded confirmation. They also came forward very devoutly for communion. I am as pleased with this change of attitude as I was displeased with the poor spirit which was previously prevalent in this boarding school.

Letter to Mr. Chambaux to accompany the letter of recommendation which he had requested for his son, and which I addressed to the Cardinal Archbishop of Auch.

**August 5:** Mass at Calvary house on the occasion of the feast of Blessed Ligouri. Large number of communions. Assisted at Vespers and the panegyric of the holy man. Fr. Courtés came purposely from Aix to deliver it. It was worthy of his talents. The audience listened with much attention although it was above the heads of many of those present. I gave the blessing of the Blessed Sacrament.

Letter from Mr. Persil<sup>7</sup>, very honest, recommending to me the sister of his friend, a crazy religious in the house of the Petites Maries<sup>8</sup>.

**August 6:** Customary Confirmation ceremony in my chapel. On this Monday, Mr. Emile Mathieu and his wife were present at my Mass. Since the candidates for Confirmation were all from the working class, I gave my homily in Provencal. Emile Mathieu, although a complete outsider, was enchanted, which only goes to show how useful my method is and the insincere sensitivity of certain people will not make me change because it is dictated by my conscience.

A little later I went to administer the sacrament of Confirmation to a Protestant lady and her son who had just been conditionally baptised and I gave them their first Communion in the chapel of the St. Joseph hospice. The assembly was composed of very devout persons and the ceremony was really impressive from a religious point of view. The good neophyte wept during my instruction, no doubt deeply touched by all the Lord had done for her on this beautiful day.

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<sup>7</sup> Jean Charles Persil, Minister for Justice and Worship from 1834 to 1836., director general of the mint in 1838. Bishop de Mazenod answered him on August 11. See authentic copy: AAM, Registry of administrative letters, Vol. III, n. 447. The person mentioned is the sister of Mr. Moulard.

<sup>8</sup> "Aux Petites Maries" refers to the second convent of the Visitation Sisters.

A lengthy meeting with the members of the council of the Congregation. It was recognized that it is not up to us to change or [p. 54] correct the statutes issued by the cathedral chapters of the dioceses where the Congregation is in charge of the Major Seminaries and that therefore, if we do not wish to give up this type of ministry, to agree that the Superior should wear the garb laid down in the statutes for Superiors of seminaries and occupy the place assigned to them in the cathedral choir, except that the Superior General should suggest or even prescribe that these Superiors of seminaries should not wear the camail in houses other than those of which they are superior, and in meetings of the Congregation.

There was also discussion of the case of the unworthy Kotterer. Since he has taken it upon himself to abandon the houses of the Congregation and withdraw completely from obedience, he is merely presuming the dispensation which he has requested and will be no less guilty once that dispensation has been granted to him than he is now that he is living according to his own whim. This miserable man has no other way to escape from the sinful state in which he has now placed himself through his pride and his loathsome heart than to humbly and sincerely request re-entry to one of our communities. His conscience can be at ease only if he takes this step, whatever the Congregation's response to him may be.

**August 7:** Letter to my nephew Eugene, as friendly as the previous one had been severe. I had been pleased with the explanations he had given me. I am so insistent that nothing should happen to make anyone fear even remotely that my feelings were not sufficiently grateful, that I prefer to exceed in cautiousness rather than sin by default [p. 55].

Letter to the Archbishop of Toulouse<sup>9</sup> to thank him for the relic of St. Thomas Aquinas which he had donated to our church of St. Cannat where the saint is venerated. I also thanked him for sending his statutes and it is the worthy Schmit who will deliver my letter. I have promised the parish priest of St. Cannat that I will preside the ceremony of the translation of this relic to make the festival more solemn.

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<sup>9</sup> Archbishop Paul T. David d'Astros, Archbishop of Toulouse from 1830 to 1851. He had succeeded Cardinal A.A. Jules de Clarmont-Tonnerre, Archbishop of that diocese from 1820 to 1830.

This holy relic could not be more authentic. I have ensured that there be a transcript in my secretariat of the request made to the Pope by the Archbishop of Toulouse as a witness to the verity of these events. The piece of bone from the holy body of the saint was taken by a seminarian when the coffin was opened by Cardinal de Clermont-Tonnerre. The young man later learned that the Pope had issued an excommunication to anyone who would remove even the tiniest part of the holy doctor's mortal remains, and he could have no peace of mind until he had placed his pious larceny in the hands of the superior of the Major Seminary. This is the same relic, duly authenticated by the Archbishop d'Astros who is the present archbishop of Toulouse, and which he has been kind enough to donate to our church of St. Cannat which was previously served by the Dominicans.

**August 8:** Letter from Fr. Dassy. He has taken pity on Kotterer and, seeing him so unhappy, he has offered to mediate in an effort to have him return to his duties. This caring is worthy of his zeal. The other man's pride is still getting in the way of his making a generous offer; he lacks trust and courage. Nevertheless he does not reject his charitable mediator. My only response would be to show mercy. That would be my attitude however repugnant the conduct of this unfortunate man has been.

A meeting in my residence of the commission of the Brothers of the Christian Schools. The fund raising was no better than mediocre; it barely went above the miserable sum of 5,000 Francs. We shall ask the city to complete the help we need by adding 7,000 Francs to its grant of 12,000 Francs. [56]

**August 9:** Confirmation in my chapel of a recently converted Protestant lady. It is good to note the return of a great number to the Church. It is a consolation which the Lord bestows in the presence of so many scandals given by the real children of the Church whose conduct is a real break away, a sort of apostasy.

I willingly assisted at the canons' office and the High Mass in the cathedral in honor of our holy patron and predecessor, St. Serenus<sup>10</sup>. Alas! It was a very sad little celebration. Who is there today in Marseilles who

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<sup>10</sup> Saint Serenus, ninth bishop of Marseilles, died about 602 in Biandrate, near Vercelli, while on his way to Rome to meet with Gregory the Great.

knows that this is the feast of one of our holy bishops? Do people realize what a bishop is? A pastor! There are, perhaps, a few devout souls who think he is nothing compared with the assistant priest to whom they confess their sins.

A very long letter from Fr. Dassy on the question of Kotterer. I do not have time to transcribe it<sup>11</sup>. May God grant that this may be a sincere conversion! I will facilitate the return in the same way as I had put off the sentence of death. Will deeply rooted pride not reject the life saver that I am casting to this poor misguided soul?

**August 10:** Examination of a postulant and a novice in the community of Notre Dame de la Charité. The novice, although from Tours, will make her profession in my diocese. That will be the first stone in the holy edifice which is being built for the benefit of Marseilles. It must not be forgotten, however, that apart from the present Superior, all the other Sisters, while they have made their profession in Tours, cannot be taken away from me without my consent and I am too pleased with these good Sisters to allow that to happen easily.

Letter to Fr. L. forbidding him to celebrate the sacred mysteries and ordering him to come and see me. Great God! Another a bad priest! At least I can reach this one and perhaps the Lord will grant that I touch his heart. The obstinacy in their delinquency of many others put me in the desperate position of not being able to provide any remedy for the evil they are perpetrating on themselves and, worse still, on the souls of others in my flock whom they are ravaging. [57]

**August 11:** On the occasion of the feast of St. Serenus, I read what Bishop Belsunce wrote about him is his history. That reminded me that I had planned to write to the Bishop of Vercelli<sup>12</sup> asking for some details of the traditions which exist in that area with regard to this holy bishop, who died in his place. If the archbishop's reply is positive, I plan to make a pilgrimage to the tomb of my holy predecessor in order to obtain a relic<sup>13</sup>. On

<sup>11</sup> The letter was copied by Yenveux and published in *Oblate Writings*, 9, pp. 98-100.

<sup>12</sup> Bishop A. d'Angennes, Bishop of Vercelli from 1832 to 1869.

<sup>13</sup> In June-July 1839, Bishop de Mazenod made a pilgrimage to Vercelli and Biandrate to venerate the remains of St. Serenus.



that occasion I shall set up an altar in place of the one which was taken from the cathedral and replaced by that indecent picture of Magdalen which I had removed. This chapel has been restored in honor of St. Lazarus. I admit that I consented to this being done but, at the time, I did not know that it had once been dedicated to St. Serenus.

Fr. L.<sup>14</sup> has responded to my summons of yesterday. He did not hesitate to admit that he was guilty, but moved to tears by the kindness of my reproach which was doubtless what stirred his remorse, he threw himself at my feet and asked me what he must do, since he is ready to do anything. I praised God for this good disposition and told him to go and make a good retreat in the Jesuit house in Aix. I gave him, on the spot, a letter of recommendation to Fr. Richard, rector of these priests, in which I authorized him to lift the interdict at the end of the more or less lengthy retreat which he will have him do. This poor priest promised that I would not regret having dealt with him in such a fatherly way. He kept repeating that this kindness only made him more aware of the wrong he had done. In spite of his emotional condition, he returned three times to ask my blessing and the help of my prayers. The scene caused me to shed tears and I can scarcely hold them back as I write these lines which I intend to strengthen the resolve which I have never abandoned, always to receive with the inner feelings of a father those unfortunate ones whom the devil has seduced, whatever may be their faults or the enormity of their crimes. [p. 58]

Letter to the Bishop of Digne, in reply to the one he had written. At the same time I asked him for information with regard to Mr. Chauvet<sup>15</sup>.

**August 12:** Pontifical Mass in St. Lawrence on the occasion of the patronal feast of this parish. I wanted to emphasize the importance of the day by being present. After the Gospel I addressed the large assembly to point out to them how we must honor the holy patrons whom the Church assigns to the faithful in each parish. This instruction was given in the form of a homily in Provençal which is eminently the language of the Saint John district. The attention with which the audience listened to me

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<sup>14</sup> The word has been scratched out and is illegible.

<sup>15</sup> J.J. Casimir Chauvet, born in Digne on February 6, 1912, entered the novitiate in 1839, ordained priest on July 3, 1842, died in Romans on January 9, 1855.

proved to me that I had been rightly inspired in deciding to perform this really pastoral function.

I also presided pontifically at Vespers and heard the sermon delivered by Fr. Denans<sup>16</sup> and, having given the pontifical blessing I came away without waiting for the procession.

From there I went to the Minor Seminary to be present at the launching of a balloon. I had been invited by the physics students. An unlucky cord caused disaster. At the moment when the balloon was rising wonderfully, it held it back and brought it down and landed it on a spike which pierced and deflated it. The children got some consolation by setting fire to it and dancing joyfully around the flames.

**August 13:** Letter to Mr. Gauthier, chaplain of the college, to thank him for having sent the dissertation on the apostolate of St. Lazarus written by Fr. Faillon<sup>17</sup>. I asked him to let the author know of my personal appreciation of his work which correctly corroborates our precious tradition.

**August 14:** Tired all day [59]

**August 15:** Pontifical Mass. Papal blessing in the cathedral, procession after Vespers, prayers of the vow made by Louis XIII<sup>18</sup> with the exception of the *exaudiat*. It was remarked that the church was full at the morning ceremony and that there were people from all over the city.

**August 16:** Distribution of prizes in the Minor Seminary. The compositions were not very wonderful. Perhaps my present state of malaise made me less open to the charms of poetry. The young people launched a balloon which went up quite high and disappeared about three miles out to sea. The *Sémaphore* will have no reason to make a joke as it did the other day.

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<sup>16</sup> Abbé Antoine A. Denans (1761-1841).

<sup>17</sup> Etienne Michel Faillon (1800-1870), Sulpician and then director of the "Solitude" at Issy near Paris.

<sup>18</sup> Louis XIII was king from 1610 to 1643. In 1638 he dedicated his kingdom to Our Lady of the Assumption, after the threat of a Spanish invasion had been averted. He ordered that a commemorative procession be held each year on August 15.

Letter from Guibert. He had the fever again although the waters did him good. He wishes to set up the Minor Seminary at Corte<sup>19</sup> and there the missionaries could have a residence between one mission and the next. The plan to have different isolated residences presents major difficulties, if no more that setting up house in a number of places for a very short time.

**August 17:** Sister Geray<sup>20</sup> has reappeared. She pestered me with a request to recommend her once again in my diocese. The Bishop of Fréjus will lease the house in Seyne for the priests whom the Bishop of Nancy wishes to be sent there. I hope he is successful.

Mr. Gauthier from the college brought me a supply of the brochures written by Fr. Faillon. I would like very much that every priest in my diocese to have a copy of that booklet in his library. Council. Visit by the Bishop of Angoulême. I was not afraid to tell him that he should resign from his See; I have not forgotten that it was I who procured it for him; at that time I acted according to what I believed in conscience. The diocese of Angoulême at that time needed a capable man because of the terrible state in which it had been left by Bishop Lacombe<sup>21</sup>. I recommended Fr. Giugou of the Grand Chaplaincy, as well as Fr. Besson<sup>22</sup> who is today Bishop of Metz and also Fr. Perrot<sup>23</sup>. [p. 60] I had to refute vigorously the objections raised by the attitude of Fr. Guigou to Bishop Jauffret of Metz, who had been appointed Archbishop of Aix and had exercised there the

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<sup>19</sup> Corte, a town in the middle of Corsica.

<sup>20</sup> Bishop de Forbin-Janson wanted to establish a house for aged and sick priests; he had given Sister Madeleine Geray the job of raising funds for this purpose in the diocese of Marseilles. Madeleine Geray, who was known as Sister Geray, was not a religious, but she devoted her life to good works.

<sup>21</sup> Bishop Dominique Lacombe, bishop of Angoulême from 1802 to 1823. Formerly belonged to the Doctrinaire priests and a convinced gallican, he was one of the twelve constitutional bishops supported by the Concordat.

<sup>22</sup> Jacques François Besson, Bishop of Metz from 1824 to 1842.

<sup>23</sup> The name is poorly written and difficult to read. According to the context this man must have been working at the Grand Chaplaincy as was Fr. Besson but the name or even a similar name is not to be found in the lists of the clergy of France in 1823.

function of Vicar general<sup>24</sup>. I discussed the matter for two hours and apparently I was very persuasive because the result of our discussion was the appointment of Fr. Guigou as Bishop of Angoulême. Others may claim the credit, but the fact remains that it was I who obtained this heavy burden for him. In doing so I was not acting so much out of friendship for a man whom I greatly esteem but because I was convinced that he was eminently suited to do good in this very difficult diocese. Archbishop Bausset of Aix must be informed of these details because at the time of the consecration of the new prelate he had rejected the gratitude expressed to him by the latter for having promoted his candidacy by saying: you owe it to Fr. de Mazenod. I believed I was serving the Church by facilitating access to the highest dignity by Bishop Guigou. I acted with the same purpose today when I advised him, that since he is completely unable and unsuited to doing that good, he should resign from his See.

**August 18:** Mass at Notre Dame de la Garde. The church was full in spite of the wind.

Impossible to reunite Costa and his wife.

Protest by the ladies of the work for Orphan girls to the effect that the women of the work for Cholera victims should not be allowed to receive young ladies into their ranks. I had already noted that the matter did present certain disadvantages. I shall act accordingly.

Letter from Morandini. Letter from Fr. Mille. Letter from Marchi. This last gentleman asks my advice in his sad condition.

Doctor d'Astros sends me his booklet on the pernicious fever with the most friendly of letters. He knows how much I like and esteem him.[p. 61].

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<sup>24</sup> As a result of difficulties which had arisen between the imperial government and Pius VII, Bishop J.A.J. Jauffret of Metz was appointed by Napoleon Archbishop of Aix in 1811. He spent two years there and then returned to Metz in 1814. Fr. Eugene de Mazenod, like Fr. Guigou, was opposed to the jurisdiction of Bishop of Jauffret in Aix since his appointment had not been approved by the Pope. See Leflon, *Eugene de Mazenod*, I. pp. 401-405.

Visit to the convent of the Grandes Maries<sup>25</sup>. The Superior is willing to receive the little Polish girl with no payment; I must write accordingly to the prince de Mir.

**August 19:** Letter from my brother-in-law informing me of the death of the excellent Mrs. Esparron. There goes another friend of my family taken out of this world. Oh! How painful it is to lose such good people who can never be replaced, because we must acknowledge that the friendship of the generation which has gone before us had a characteristic which I do not recognize in the generation which has succeeded it. I am demanding because I am generous. Up till now I always gave more than I received. For a long time I have put up with that but sometimes I would wish to see the proportion somewhat less unequal.

Letter from Marchi asking my advice on what he must do. I reply charitably to him but perhaps my letter will not be sent.

Letter from my niece. I send her a reply at once.

**August 20:** Mass for our ever beloved Fr. Marcou who died in St-Just on this same day<sup>26</sup>. I wish I had time to remember the virtues of this excellent priest, but I must hurry. He was one of the first seven who made up the youth congregation which the Lord inspired me to found in Aix in 1813. His ardent zeal which was evident at the time of his first communion made me choose him as the leader of that first special group. He never let me down and he constantly gave the example of scrupulous fidelity to the regulations which I had given to the congregation in which he was responsible to see that they were observed by the other members. As the membership of the movement increased he continued in his watchfulness as leader and his spiritual zeal spread among his companions a great love for the congregation in which they learned to be virtuous. An incident which recalls the lives of the saints occurred one day when, as was customary for the members [p. 62], he came to see me. He was beside himself, carried away by a holy anger. He quickly explained to me the reason for his ire. He had just met some depraved creatures who used language to him which he rightly judged to be scandalous. He was more than angry.

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<sup>25</sup> The first convent founded in Marseilles by the Visitation Sisters.

<sup>26</sup> Jacques Joseph Marcou, born in Aix on June 16, 1799, novice 1821-1822, ordained priest on September 20, 1823, died August 20, 1826.

Not content with having responded by striking them vigorously with his umbrella, he regretted not having struck hard enough. In order to discourage them from returning to the attack, he wanted to return to the place where he had met these miserable wretches and promised to give them a lesson they would not forget. The only way in which I could persuade him not to do so was by pointing out that it would be sinful to give these unfortunate villains occasion to offer further insult to God. At that time Fr. Marcou was about fifteen years old.

After several years in the movement and the practice of virtue, he entered the seminary. His piety became well known. He brought to that community the spirit which he had learned in the congregation, a holy zeal for spreading good. He succeeded in gathering around him a little group of fervent seminarians. Beginning in 1812, I had introduced to this house where I made my annual retreat, the zealous association which I had known in the seminary in Paris. The association was continued in the house in Aix. Marcou was too fervent not become a member. He performed intelligently and successfully the task which is imposed on each member of the association. He achieved greater results than all the others put together. Several seminarians told me that it was due to his ingenious charity that they did well in the seminary. The Lord rewarded his zeal by strengthening the resolve which he already had when entering the seminary to be associated with the work of the missionaries whom I had united in the society while he was still only a member of the youth congregation. He had always kept his intention to do so hidden from me. I got to know about it only on the day when he came to ask me insistently to accept him as a member of our society. Convinced of the excellence of this vocation, he had persuaded one of his fellow students whose good qualities he admired, to follow the same road to perfection<sup>27</sup>. It was after having made this conquest that he came to see me and he was ever so pleased to see my surprise and the happiness which I experienced. He did his novitiate in the spirit which one would expect from a soul such as his.

He had scarcely been raised to the priesthood when he launched out on the missions where his love for God and for his neighbour caused him to work wonders. Alas! It must be said that it also caused him to do impru-

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<sup>27</sup> This was Jacques Jeancard, born in Cannes, but a seminarian in Aix from 1818 to 1821. The two friends began their novitiate on December 21, 1821.

dent things. He soon wore himself out by forcing himself to undertake tasks in the diocese of Nîmes where my supervision could not moderate his zeal. In fact that zeal was encouraged rather than moderated by the example of the Superior I had assigned to him, and whose wisdom nevertheless equals his piety and his talents<sup>28</sup>. But the sight the deplorable condition of these poor Catholics in the midst of the seductions of Protestantism, and the blessings which the Lord was pleased to pour on their ministry, caused them to overstep the bounds of moderation. The task was too great and Fr. Marcou's health suffered as a result. Besides, the lack of attention on the part of the nursing staff in Nîmes seminary where he went for treatment, was his undoing. They poisoned his system by giving him milk to drink. This accident of fate worsened his illness and made it incurable. Fr. Marcou still had the strength to come back to Marseilles where I found him on my return from Rome. His condition was desperate; his chest was so affected that there was no hope of recovery. He was convinced, however, that he could still work for the salvation of souls and he was certainly not the one who was least pleased about the success of my journey to Rome where I had just obtained approval for the Congregation of the Missionary Oblates of Mary to be recognized in the Church on an equal footing with other Congregations. Fr. Marcou, although quite weak, wanted to be present at the general assembly which I had called to give an account of my mission and of all the good God had done for us. This good priest could scarcely contain his joy because he always expressed the feelings of his beautiful soul [p.64] in a lively way. He even came down to the church to renew his vows with all the other members of the new Congregation which had been canonically established. His name is inscribed in the register where we all signed the minutes of this memorable meeting. That was the last important act of this life in which he sealed his consecration to God and the offering of his whole being which he had made throughout many years.

Fr. Marcou lived only for a few more months, gradually fading away and resigned to being the victim who made his sacrifice to God. My sorrow was so great at losing such a precious man and was shared by all our confreres, that I suggested trying to tempt the good Lord to work some sort of miracle to save him and at the same time contribute to the cause of

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<sup>28</sup> Fr. Nolasque Mie (1768-1841) was Superior in Nîmes (1825-1826). In 1838 he was confessor in the Major Seminary in Marseilles.

canonization of the holy person whom we would invoke. I brought the community together and having recommended our intention to the intercession of Blessed Alphonsus de Ligouri we went from the chapel to the sick room to arouse his faith. I then took a tiny piece of the relic of the Blessed which I had brought back from Rome and had the sick man swallow it in a spoonful of water. But the Lord had other plans. He wished to reward his servant prematurely. The moment approached when he was to take possession of the glory of heaven. I had the sick man brought to our country house at St-Just where we thought he would be better. On the day when we were celebrating the Assumption of the Virgin Mary, I was assisting my uncle at the pontifical ceremony when I was told that the frequent lapses into the unconscious were a sign that the end was near. I left the altar to go in haste to St-Just and found the good priest weak enough to administer the holy Viaticum to him without delay and he received it with his usual fervor. I also gave him Extreme Unction. The patient revived somewhat but I was all too aware that the end was near. I went to visit him every day during that last week of his holy life. On the 20th of the month, feast of St. Bernard [p. 65] I did not leave his bedside. I remained there to inspire good thoughts and to suggest feelings appropriate to his condition. A few words were sufficient to set his heart aflame and he had to be made to keep silence when he wanted to express the consolation and happiness he felt, in a loud voice. "Oh how happy I am to die in the Congregation!" he would say, remembering the blessings that God had given him. His only suffering was to witness my sorrow which I could disguise only with difficulty. He was too well aware of the tender affection I had for him since his childhood not to understand the torture I felt and so he frequently spoke tenderly to me which increased my suffering and tore at my heart. His father was present but all his thoughts focussed on supernatural things. When his father came near to speak some words of hope in his own way, the good priest responded only by smiling at him and showing him the crucifix. While I was speaking to him and while his sweet smile and his invocations let me know how my words were penetrating his heart, suddenly he fixed his eyes on high and raised his arms as if to let me know where he was about to go. He cried out with an exclamation of joy which I am unable to describe but which I still clearly remember. He cried: "beautiful heaven" and breathed his last, leaving me convinced that God had come to reveal to him the place he was to occupy. That was the way in which this perfect model of Christian charity and apostolic zeal ceased to live here below and his memory must live with us alongside that of Suzanne, Arnoux, etc.



**August 21:** Letter from The Archbishop of Avignon asking my opinion with regard to the exemption which the Sisters of Saint Charles claim to have. It is no longer the same as the matter of Mr. Girolet's vocation. At that time the good prelate laughed at my decisions which were nevertheless in perfect conformity with the sacred canons. In this instance it is quite different. "*Your sentiments and your conduct*", writes the Archbishop, *will lend greater weight in my view. The clarifications which I will receive from the Bishop of Marseilles, [p. 66], from such an experienced prelate, will be very precious for me. I therefore request them with confidence and I shall wait for them before replying.*" Very well then! My reply shall be in keeping with my conscience and shall adhere to the principle that the rights and privileges of all the Congregations approved in my diocese, must be respected, because it was only on that condition that, tacitly at least, that they have accepted to devote themselves to the service of my diocese and my flock. This forthright expression of my feelings will perhaps awaken some memories in the mind of the prelate who has so strangely misconceived not only the rights of our Congregation, but the promise he made himself and signed with his own hand to establish us in his diocese. Our men have admirably fulfilled their mandate and have filled his diocese with the wonders of their ministry. The Archbishop, however, has pitilessly refused to fulfill his promise and has forbidden Mr. Girolet to go to the novitiate where God has so evidently called him.

Mass in the second convent of the Visitation. Confirmation for the children in the house and for a Sister who had been baptized and confirmed in America by a man who was not even a priest.

Mr. Merindol, the investigating magistrate, came to tell me about the wedding of his daughter with Mr. Hughes, who is the nephew of a lawyer of that name, a friend of long ago whose confession I had the happiness of hearing near the end of his life but when he himself thought he still had many years to live.

A gentleman named Bourgoïn, a priest from Nîmes, claimed to have been sent by the Bishop of Nîmes to obtain a celebret for the period he is about to spend at the seaside spa of St. Henry. I found his attitude and his general conceited behaviour most displeasing. I gathered from him that Bishop Cart<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Bishop Jean Francois M. Cart, Bishop of Nîmes from 1838 to 1845, successor of Bishop Claude F.M. Petit-Benoit de Chaffoy, who was bishop of Nîmes from 1821 to 1837.

wants it to be known that he wishes to do everything himself and, at least according to this priest, he did not wish to have Vicars general who were too young. Therefore he had chosen Fr. d'Ayrolles who is scarcely capable of putting his name to a dispensation and [67] and Fr. Boucarut who is too busy with his seminary to have time to engage in the affairs of the diocese. It is also most admirable to be held in veneration by the Protestants who are high in his praises without offending the Catholics whose susceptibilities are no longer as they were during the time of Bishop Chaffoy whom they wearied with their complaints. All of that seems to me to quite despicable.

Letter from Eugene. He tells me he is due to arrive for the 29th. Letter from Leblanc. He is coming here. I do not know why he thinks he has displeased me. I am still fond of him because he is a good priest but is it true that he has not followed his vocation. One of the first members of the youth congregation, he was blessed by God's grace from childhood. The first grace with which the Lord blessed him was the principle from which all the others came. It was the care which he inspired me take to remove him from the dangers of perversion which he encountered among other difficulties in the college where he went to school as a day scholar. I kept in touch with him in spite of his unpleasant shyness until I had drawn him into the youth congregation where he experienced goodness right from the beginning. He at once became a true model of virtue for his age, and he was one of the small number who were not content with ordinary piety, but who made promise<sup>30</sup> of the most sublime Christian virtues from one feast to the next. From then onwards he felt called to the ecclesiastical state and more particularly to the Missionaries whose work he could see at close quarters. Family interests caused him to turn away from these holy plans. Weakness or unfaithfulness, he was cast onto another path and his career was in parishes with money to satisfy the hunger and sometimes the vanity of families. Now that mother, sister and brother have built their well-being on him, one needs a plague to break these chains. That is how it happens that, if one does not follow one's vocation at the proper time, it becomes impossible to do so later on.

Letter from Mr. de Sinety to inform me of the death of Mrs. Esparron. He had reason to believe that I would be touched by this misfortune. [68]

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<sup>30</sup> "Promise". This is somewhat difficult to interpret. Did they take a vow to seek the greatest perfection in all things?

**August 22:** Return of the Fathers whom I had sent to Notre Dame de Lumières to help the Father of this community there on the very busy day. They told me of the wonders of devotion among those people. The presence of our Fathers gave a completely new outlook to this pilgrimage. There were almost one thousand communions during the night vigil for the feast of the Assumption. A miracle happened during the procession which Fr. Honorat had improvised to provide a holy occupation for the immense crowd which filled the shrine. A girl who had been paralysed on one side and who for years had been unable to walk without the aid of a crutch was cured instantly on the return of the procession and hung her crutch beside the altar of the Virgin Mary. It was the third year that she had come to invoke the Blessed Virgin on this day and her trust was undaunted by the delay in receiving the grace she requested. She made a vow to return every year. If she comes back again it will be to thank the Mother of God for the kindness she has shown her.

Letter from Fr. Honorat thanking me for the help I had sent him. There were seven of our men and they all did their duty as was required of them. They were completely consoled and pleased on their return.

Fr. Alliès, parish priest from Orgon, came to see me. He spoke to of his vocation and the obstacles being placed in its way by the Archbishop of Aix. This is another example of the consequences of not being faithful to the first call. He is still willing but he does not have the energy to put his desire into practice. He is unable to overcome the difficulties. The light is lacking because he did not follow its glow when it was shining.

Letter to Fr. Guigues<sup>31</sup>. Somewhat severe because of the unbecoming nature of his previous letter when he showed his resentment to the good man whom I had sent him. Prejudice, rash judgement, injustice, lack of respect, etc., all of that was not necessary to motivate a lesson. I let him know that if he is unable to use the good Fr. Pont, I shall use him elsewhere to good purpose.

**August 23:** Letter to Mr. Antommarchi. I copied for him the letter which I had received from Mr. Molé, president of the cabinet of ministers, to prove to him that if he received what he had asked, it did not depend on my intervention. [p. 69]

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<sup>31</sup> The word is scratched out.

Letter to my nephew Louis to let him know that it would be my pleasure to initiate him in holy orders as I had brought him into the Church. I pray that, if the Lord keeps me alive I shall have the happiness of raising him to the priesthood. On this matter I shall explain to him my way of seeing the transmission of this supernatural power so that his superiors may understand the value I attach to the imposition of hands on someone of whom I am as fond as I am of my virtuous nephew.

The prince of de Mir came to see me. I informed him that the Ladies of the Visitation, in their charity, will accept in their boarding school free of charge the little Polish girl whom he had recommended.

Fr. Richard, rector of the Jesuits in Aix, wrote to express his hopes that the priest whom I had sent to him to do a retreat in his house would give me as much consolation as the previous one I had sent to him.

**August 24:** Letter to my mother. Arrival of my sister and niece to welcome Eugene and to visit Louis.

Fr. Bonnafoux came to inform me that he would no longer care for the viscount de Castellana, whom he had prepared to receive the sacraments some months ago. This old sinner proclaims that he was then in good faith but that fresh doubts have arisen and cast him back into disbelief. There is no way to convince him that he is mistaken. Nevertheless, to please Fr. Bonnafoux and reward him for his trouble, he has promised to do as the latter had requested. Fr. Bonnafoux rightly refused to agree to such hypocrisy. He is discouraged and he came to return this poor soul to my care. What hope can there be of success when a man to whom for many reasons he should have listened, has failed? If he had the faith there would be no reason to fear, but what hope can there be for an obstinate old man who is unwilling to accept the evidence placed before him? [p. 70] Letter from the Archbishop of Toulouse. He sends me some articles which could provide the object of discussion in a provincial council. They are too long to be copied. The fourth one is quite remarkable for a congregation of missionaries. It says: *"Incredulity is at work to uproot the faith of the masses of the people: the great means of preventing this evil is parish missions. It would be most useful to establish societies of auxiliary priests in the dioceses or to send young ecclesiastics for formation in mission ministry in houses which are already established."*

Experience has already proved the uselessness of this means. It seems much more reasonable and in keeping with the faith to promote vocations

for those Congregations which are already canonically established in the Church and who have the mission and therefore the grace for this difficult ministry which can only be worthily exercised by men specially consecrated to God and who practice the evangelical counsels in imitation of the Apostles. To what purpose should new experiments be made when it is possible to experience at first hand the immense success of missions given by these dedicated men and, on the other hand, the futility of efforts made in different places to bring together elements which do not belong together. But no! Opposition to vocations will continue. Those whom the Lord inspires to embrace the work in all its dimensions will continue to be regarded as rejects<sup>32</sup>, and then there will be lamentations at the shortage of evangelical workers. The Archbishops of Aix and Avignon, and the deceased Bishops of Gap and Nîmes have followed that line of thought. I am satisfied that today the Archbishop of Toulouse should be the one to teach them this lesson which they would probably find unacceptable if it came from me.

Letter from Fr. Desmazure. He reports to me of an errand which I had entrusted to him for Fr. Lonjon<sup>33</sup>. He tried hard to convince this priest to leave to the Major Seminary the country property willed to him by his brother. This is the only way in which he can preserve this trust which is so dear to him and to be at peace in the future if he wishes to unite his bones with those of his brother and his sister-in-law who is the benefactress of them both. Otherwise, can he flatter himself by thinking that future proprietors into whose hands the chapel, built at great cost, may fall [p. 71] will not consign those dead bodies to the cemetery since they will not attach any value to them. By leaving this property to the seminary, on conditions which he can decide, he can be sure that the chapel will never be profaned and that his family remains will be religiously respected with gratitude. Fr. Lonjon seemed to savour the idea but he is a rather unique man and one never knows what he will do. However, I shall keep in mind to follow up this first approach. In truth, Fr. Lonjon could not do better in his own interest because since he did not receive this property from his own family, he says that he has resolved not to leave it to them. Yes indeed,

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<sup>32</sup> The phrase used in French is "On fatiguera de rebuts".

<sup>33</sup> The word is scratched out. Gabriel Ambrose Lonjon, from the Montpellier diocese, died in 1849.

but he could die suddenly and his heirs are there, law in hand, little worried about intentions, however well they might be known.

A great volley of cannon fire at 8 o'clock, no doubt to announce the birth of a prince in the reigning family<sup>34</sup>.

**August 25:** Letter from Mrs. Eugène Aude. She writes to me on behalf of the general to say that her intention is not to set up a new establishment in Switzerland. I shall have to give up the idea of selling the Billens property to her.

Letter from Fr. Courtès. Tavernier has convinced the parish priest of the Magdalene to invite him to preach in his church. Courtès is no more than duly flattered. One inspired invitation does not seem to him to make up for the obstinate neglect by the parish priests of Aix. The Ladies of the Sacred Heart did not even let him know about the perpetual profession of Elisa de Fonsbelle. It would have been fitting to have invited him to give the sermon, if only to recognize the care given to their house and the facility afforded to Madam de Fonsbelle to enter their Order when she was being directed by Fr. Courtès. [p. 72]

**August 26:** Pastoral visit to Allauch. Great reception. The Mayor paid his compliments at the entrance to the village where the whole population was gathered to greet me. He was dressed in full uniform. I made my reply to him. The ceremony in the church was very edifying. I preached only after the Mass. Experience has taught me that my chest becomes terribly tired if I preach without wetting my throat, but when I have taken something to drink, I have no trouble preaching for a long time. The children for Confirmation seemed to be quite awkward and very shy. I visited the mens' association and the women's association, the confraternity of penitents and to all of them I spoke as a father because I was most impressed with their numbers and their eagerness. At the end I blessed the new chapel for girls which is a very beautiful building. No praise is too great for the zeal of the priests in this parish which makes up perfectly for the parish priest who does almost nothing. The girls' association is composed of all the girls in the parish. There are almost 500. Thus dissipation has not

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<sup>34</sup> Birth of the Count of Paris, son of the Duke of Orleans and grandson of Louis-Philippe. The king was to write a letter to the bishops asking them to sing a solemn *Te Deum* on the occasion. See below August 28.

infected this town. A glimpse of the town is most consoling for the bishop. It is truly Christian. On this day the thoughts of everyone were on religion and pious practices. In the morning I gave communion to an enormous number of people. Unfortunately, the men have difficulty in approaching the holy table outside of Paschal time.

**August 27:** I slept in Allauch in order to complete my pastoral visit, and also to give the girls' association the consolation of having the first Mass said in their newly-consecrated chapel which I had blessed. Today was for them also a feast day. I gave communion to a large number of them. On leaving the chapel I met with the parish priest and his assistants to discuss the business of the parish. I went [p. 73] to give Confirmation to a very sick child in the country and then left this good town which I would like to see in a better financial state because there is much poverty there. I plan to put an item in my will to help the poor people of this municipality.

On returning to Marseilles I found my nephew with two of his companions.

**August 28:** During my Mass I gave tonsure and minor orders to my nephew, Louis de Boisgelin; his mother, his father, his sister, his brother and our uncle were present for the ceremony. That was really a family sacrifice, a beautiful victory of grace over nature. The child whom I consecrated to God was the hope and the happiness of all those who had come together to make this offering with a feeling of deep sorrow which was no more than feebly sweetened by resignation. The thought that the gift which it cost so much to make was not so much a first offering to the Church but an abandonment in favor of a society which is without doubt esteemed, but which one does not feel obliged to enrich at the cost of what one holds most dear, tended to suppress in the hearts of those present the religious feeling which would have been prevalent over all other weaknesses of flesh and blood if the chosen one had dedicated himself to the Church for her service. That was independent of his attraction for a particular society whose influence he felt he could not withstand and that, in turn was the result of the deep impression made on him by the seeds of piety received in his early education. Not so, however! It was decided that, of two students who were equally pious and having the same qualities as one another, but one bearing the name Boisgelin, the other with an obscure and unknown name, the former bursting with talent, the other having very little, Boisgelin being virtuous and providing ground for the highest hopes was certainly called by God to be a Jesuit, but Crespin being

only virtuous, in spite of his being attracted, was not called to be a Jesuit, but that he will do quite well in the Church which must be [p. 74] content with those turned down by the Society. Nevertheless it is Boisgelin, in spite of his preference, who should have been given to the Church in the extreme need in which she now is, in the deprivation to which she has been reduced by the evils of these times. It is generals who must be formed for the combat which hell is declaring. There will always be enough auxiliary fighters and everyone knows what we are lacking and there is no need for me to remind them.

There were many such thoughts which were shared by our family and our friends (these latter were inspired only by reason and by faith as I believe myself to have been). You can imagine how tasteless and misplaced the contributions of Louis' companion must have seemed to us. He was a novice like himself but most enthusiastic. However, it is better that I keep silence on the matter as though I believed that all that happens is for the best.

Visit of Mr. Dunoyer, general secretary of the prefecture. He came to know what I had decided as a result of the private letter from the king which he thought I had already received. Our conversation went on to include some most interesting topics. It was with pleasure that I heard the secretary general recognize the need for religion and the influence of its ministers to bring the people back to moral ways of thinking.

Visit of Mr. Merindol and Mr. Hugues to ask me to bless the latter's marriage to Miss Merindol. It was Mr. Maurandi, a friend of both of these two gentlemen and of the bishop's house, who had insisted that I should agree to the request of the two families. I consented, but thinking to myself that Mr. Merindol should acknowledge that bishops agree to do so even for those who are not always tagged as their friends.

Visit of Mr. president Régius and Mr. Samatan to make the same request but with a better right to do so. All these weddings weary me, either because they must be done at midnight, or because of the upset they cause in the house, but I must submit to doing them just the same so as not to be disobliging to the people: *nos autem servos vestros per Jesum*<sup>35</sup> The

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<sup>35</sup> Because we are your servants for the sake of Jesus Christ. 2Cor 4,5.



private letter from the King arrived this evening. I [p. 75] shall take advantage of the occasion to have quite a few people who normally do not have time to do so, come to Mass on Sunday. I shall invite the authorities to be present not only for the *Te Deum* but for the whole of the morning office, that is, for the pontifical High Mass and the blessing.

**August 29:** Distribution of prizes to the pupils of the Brothers of the Christian Schools whom we have so far supported. I am unhappy that I gave them a talk which was somewhat stilted. I would have preferred to speak more at the level of the 1,700 children who were present; there were only four parish priests and some other clergy present which is not good enough.

Tonight, the wedding of Miss Merindol and Mr. Hugues. I blessed it in my chapel. Certain persons were obliged to listen to the truths of which I felt free to remind them in my talk; they do not often have a chance to hear these things. I spoke purposely of the economy of Providence with regard to those chosen persons on whom it lavishes graces through the sacraments which are adapted to all the needs of life.

**August 30:** Mr. Des Michels<sup>36</sup>, rector of the university came to make a ceremonial visit. How can we have such men to head our education! He made strenuous efforts to distinguish the man of the Church in the bad priest, whose actions he was not called upon to judge, from the moral man in the guise of his exterior actions. It is as though it were of little importance that the man responsible for overseeing the teachers of young people should see to it that they will be grounded in solid principles. If a man is a bad priest how can he be a good teacher?

How one must, in a certain sense, grovel<sup>37</sup> to obtain what is for the honor of a city like Marseilles and which everyone knows to be absolutely necessary. The cathedral. That, nevertheless, is to what I must stoop to ensure that the city council heed my request. Today I went to see Mr. Clapier to inform him of the needs of the situation. It was a question of forestalling the obstacles placed mainly by short sighted men and the underhand methods of others who are more concerned about their own

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<sup>36</sup> Mr. Ovide Des Michels.

<sup>37</sup> The French word is "valetier": to be servile towards someone in order to obtain a favor.

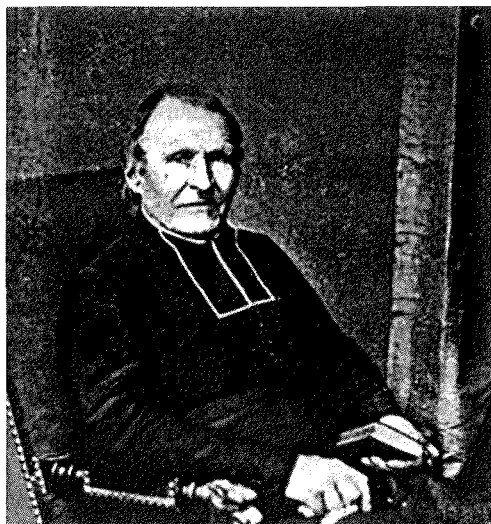
interests than about the honor of the city and the needs of the faithful. That is the intention of those who place me in a difficult position<sup>38</sup> by their request for a grant to Saint Vincent de Paul. [p. 76]

**August 31:** At six thirty this morning, the consecration of the church of St. Lazarus. The ceremony was as beautiful as was possible. I called upon all the parish priests of the city to be present wearing their stoles because this is a votive church and all the faithful are supposed to have contributed to its building. After the ceremony of consecration which lasted about four hours because of the size of the church and the length of the procession with the relics, the parish priest sang the High Mass with great solemnity and I assisted in pontificals surrounded by my parish priests. A great number of the faithful were present and they were in admiration at such great majesty and beauty in all of these admirable ceremonies.

In the evening the chapter came to the newly-consecrated church where I was also present to sing pontifical Vespers. Jeancard gave the sermon for the occasion and I gave the benediction.

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<sup>38</sup> The French phrase is "mettre à traverse".

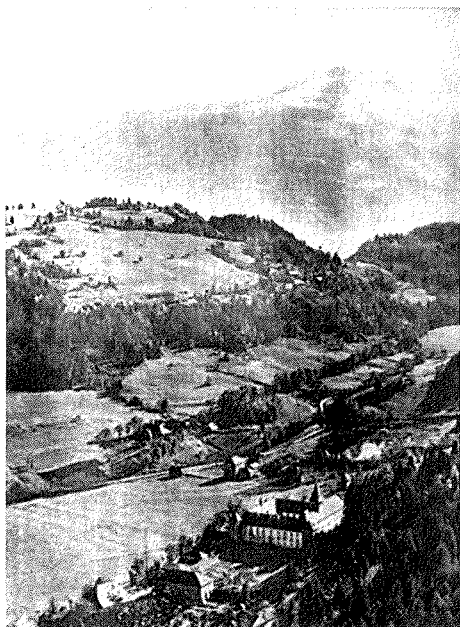


## **Canon Loewenbruck (1796 - 1876)**

J.B. Lowenbruck, priest of the diocese of Metz, at first belonged to the Missionaries of France, then to the institute of Charity of Antonio Rosmini. In this capacity he was superior of the community of the Abbey of Tamié from 1835 to 1838. Bishop de Mazenod knew him from the mission at Marseille in 1820. He often invited him to preach. He mentions him on September 6, 8, 21, 22 and on October 16.

## **The Abbey of Tamié in Savoy.**

The Cistercian abbey of Tamié, founded in 1132, became the property of the Chambéry diocese at the beginning of the 19th century. At first, the Bishop placed the missionaries of J.M. Favre (1791-1838) there, then those of Rosmini until 1838. When he left this institute, Loewenbruck would have liked to see it entrusted to the Oblates. Father Tempier went there in October, but Archbishop Martinet of Chambéry refused to have French missionaries. Cf. Diary, September 6, 8, 21, 22 and October 16.





## September 1838

**September 1:** I went to visit the area beneath the side aisles of St-Martin's church where Dupuy saw that it would be possible to construct a presbytery. Nothing could be easier and more appropriate. Would the city be willing to go along with the idea? I shall try to have it do so. Fr. Landmann<sup>1</sup> has returned from Rome; I have advised him to write to the Bishop of Algiers<sup>2</sup> to make known his availability to this prelate and stating what he can do. He can certainly do much for this infant church. I am interested in anything that can be useful to it; I had the happiness of being involved in establishing the See and it is therefore right that I should seize every occasion to ensure that it has the spiritual help it needs.

Visit of the consul for Sardinia. It seems that Rome is not too pleased with their choice of Mr. Escalon to ensure the continuation of the pontifical consulate in Marseille. He asks for some news with regard to the son of old Mr. Persil. The consul for Sardinia comes to me for that. I know nothing whatever of this matter but I feel hurt that I have been provided with enough to have Mr Escalon request that I write a letter recommending him on the word of Mr. Burel who insisted that my Vicar General Cailhol ask me to do so. [p. 77]

**September 2:** Pontifical service in the cathedral for the feast of St. Lazarus. All the authorities who were invited for the *Te Deum* which was to follow, were also present for the Mass, but they were as ill at ease in the church as usual. In the evening I again presided at pontifical Vespers but I

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<sup>1</sup> J.M. Landmann worked together with the the Prince de Mir on the plan for associating and colonizing Algeria; later he became parish priest of Constantine.

<sup>2</sup> Bishop Antoine Adolphe Dupuch, bishop of Algiers from 1838 to 1845.

did not remain for the procession. I joined it when it came as far as the door of the bishop's residence and stayed with it until it reached the church where I gave the blessing.

**September 3:** The first thing in the morning was the unexpected visit of Mgr. de Retz, auditor of the Rota and regent of the Penitentiary in Rome. This prelate is the same as he always was. Since he is well informed on the matter of foreign politics, I asked him what had taken place on the occasion of the death of Charles X. He assured me that he knew for certain that the Dauphin assembled the royal family after the king's funeral and declared that to honour the principles and for the real good of his nephew, he felt obliged to take the title of king with the name of Louis XIX; but that if providence were favorable to his wishes, when the time would come, which meant on his return to France, he would abdicate in favor of his nephew who would then take the title of king and exercise full authority. Thus, he said, addressing young Henry [Duke of] Bordeaux: "nothing has changed for you". Those are the exact words of Mgr. de Retz and he states them to be certain<sup>3</sup>.

What a tiring day! What a constant flow of unfortunate people, really unfortunate, and I greatly regretted and found it heart rending that I was unable to alleviate their misfortune even by giving as much as I did!

**September 4:** Pastoral visit to the parish of St. Mary Magdalene; those of St-Just and St-Barnabé were united with it. There was quite a large crowd of people even though it was a working day. In fact I spoke at some length on the duties of grown ups in my instruction before speaking to the children. Those who were with me were astonished, as I always am myself, at the sustained attention of the audience, even of the children. In fact, the attentiveness of the children is a sure proof that my method is the only good one. I speak to them in their own language, without spinning tall tales or giving a textual translation of some discourse in French which is quite useless, but something that is well thought out. In this way it is

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<sup>3</sup> On July 3, 1830 King Charles X together with his eldest son, the Duke of Angoulême who had no descendants, abdicated in favor of the Duke's nephew, Henry of Bordeaux (born in 1820, posthumus son of the Duke of Berry). Charles X died in exile in Austria, on November 6 1836. The Dauphin (heir to the throne) was the Duke of Angoulême who took the name Louis XIX. Bishop de Mazenod continued to take a keen interest in the royal family. Did he consider it to be still the only legitimate authority?

possible to instruct people with regard to the most sublime truths and to do so in a way that is most profitable to their souls. Believe me, that is my experience.

Count Jules de Castellane came to see me. I would have found his conversation surprising if the assistant priest of Aygalades had not told me beforehand of his disposition. This twisted and dissipated young man has begun to turn his thoughts again to religion. He speaks of being converted; without doubt his ideas on this important matter are not very accurate, but he seems to be truly willing to return to God. If he goes about it in the right way, his director will be able to rectify the inaccuracies in his outlook. I gathered, for example, that he sees nothing wrong with these evenings of entertainment in Paris, which were described in the newspapers during the Winter. He told me that he had never been irreligious and that he had taken the resolution to be converted because he thought he was ill, that he wished to keep to this resolution which has been strengthened by the sudden death of Mr. de St-Pons, who from being perfectly healthy had died in his arms within a few minutes. I encouraged this wandering sheep to take advantage of the grace received, and I pray God that it will flourish in his soul.

A sad ceremonial dinner with Mr. Sebastiani, local division general. I think that in future I will refuse this sort of invitation. It bears the stamp of something which is not in keeping with episcopal dignity. At the beginning it was necessary not to give the impression of a distancing which would harm the interests [p. 79] of religion, and that was only motivation for my doing as I did. However, now that I believe that my absence from these ceremonial meals would no longer be frowned upon I shall be happy to avoid the annoyance with a specious pretext, or rather by stressing the duties of my position as first pastor which the men of our day may choose to misunderstand but which I am obliged to see that they are not despised.

I was not all embarrassed at having to approach the president of the departmental general council Alexis Roustan and Mr. Desfougères, secretary, and besides, deputy and also rector of the university, in order to point out in their presence and addressing my words to them, the inconvenience caused by the fact that the general council had never paid the slightest attention to my recommendations. These gentlemen had no answer to give me when I reproached them for having refused the least supplement to my parish priests and the canons of my cathedral who do not have enough to live on with the miserable 1,900 Francs which is their salary. While

reminding them that I had asked for nothing for myself, I made them admit that, with 9,500 Francs, and with a combined population of 180,000 souls, the Bishop of Marseilles had scarcely enough for one-third of the year etc.

**September 5:** If mornings such as this one has been, and indeed many others too, were to occur too often, I feel that I would not be able to continue. It is not merely a question of giving money, but to be faced with unfortunate people and to realize that, even doing the impossible, I am not able to meet their needs, is more than I can cope with. A widow whose husband has died in Cayenne and who hasn't a penny either to live or to return to her country. A young man, of Belgian nationality, coming out of hospital where he spent all his money and who is now [p. 80] worn out by his illness and by frustration, has only the 10 Francs given him by his consul to get him back to Belgium. An old lady, the sister of a priest of the diocese who died a long time ago, who has all her belongings in the pawn shop (Mont de Piété) and who has not the wherewith to go to her son who would at least give her a bowl of soup to prevent her dying of hunger.

So many other cases of misery as well! I just cannot keep going. Apart from what I was able to give, I wrote a letter of recommendation for the widow to a lawyer asking him to give her a sort of petition which she can present to any doctor. That was the profession of her husband who died in Cayenne from sunstroke. I wrote a letter on behalf of the young Belgian to a member of the administration of charity. After all that, try to sit down to table and eat if you can!

The day was not yet over for my heart already so mangled. I learned that Dherbes, parish priest of St-Julien, one of my best priests, has been vomiting blood for three days. In spite of the rain, I hastened to him. My visit, which he did not expect, pleased him immensely. This was my duty, I, the father of my diocesan people, who love the priests like the elders of my spiritual family. I pray God to preserve this one who is virtuous and capable.

Letter to Fr. Guigues. I answer 13 questions: my replies will serve as a rule, I do not have time to copy them.



Letter from Bishop Flaget. He informs me that he will arrive in Marseilles on the 18th or 20th of this month<sup>4</sup>.

**September 6:** Reply to Bishop Flaget. He will always be welcome in my house.

I am not to sure why the princess Gagarin, of Russian nationality, got the idea of coming to see me. Yesterday she sent a written request, addressing me as though she were speaking to a Greek pope, to my Holiness; my Holiness replied that I would receive her visit this morning at ten o'clock and she was right on time! I do not know [book VII, p. 1] anything further about what she wanted now that I have seen her. All I learned was that they were exiled from Russia because her husband, contrary to the laws of her country, fought in a duel.

Letter from Fr. Loewenbruck<sup>5</sup> offering me the royal abbey of Tamié in Savoy<sup>6</sup>: ancient magnificent, in good repair, suitably furnished and provided with sufficient revenue, for a community of missionaries. These are the terms mentioned in the letter of Fr. Loewenbruck. If I am interested in this plan, he will come to Marseilles to discuss the matter with me.

Visit to the Count of Castellane aux Aygalades. I wanted to keep him in the good disposition in which I saw him the other day. I did not find him at home, but it seems that he still persevering<sup>7</sup> since the acting parish priest writes to tell me that he has come to him for confession. It is a bit too-much for this priest and I have given him some advice.

**September 7:** Visit to the prefect, the general, the president, to the princess Gagarin, to the Hugues-Merindol wedding.

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<sup>4</sup> Bishop Benoit Joseph Flaget (1763-1850), a French Sulpician, then Bishop of Bardstown (USA). From Autumn 1837 to Spring 1839, he journeyed through 46 dioceses of France promoting the work of the Propagation of the Faith.

<sup>5</sup> In 1860, this Canon gave his house in Angers to the Oblates.

<sup>6</sup> A Cistercian abbey, founded in 1132. Confiscated by the state in 1791, the buildings were bought, in 1828, by Charles-Felix, King of Sardinia from 1821 to 1831, and given to the Bishop of Chambéry.

<sup>7</sup> The French is "suit sa pointe" which means "sticking to his guns".

Visit of Fr. Beaussier<sup>8</sup>. Being a royalist, which means that he is one of those who finds fault with my wise and independent attitude which is nevertheless supernatural and what is to be expected from a bishop, he was not afraid to inform me of his planned visit to Germany and Paris. He had seen the royal family in Goritz and what he told me was an exact confirmation of what Mgr. de Retz had said. The Duke of Bordeaux is not recognized as king by the family. It is Louis XIX who is king and Marie-Thérèse is queen but both the king and the queen live only for this child and the king repeated again and again to Fr. Beaussier what he has always said, that he acts as king only for the good of his nephew and only until such time as he can hand on the crown to him. And then, he assured Fr. Beaussier, I shall retire to Rome, refuge of all failed kings, to end my days there.

**September 8:** I locked myself into my office to clear my desk. These audiences every day take all of my time. Nevertheless, they are necessary. It is the duty of a bishop to make himself available to all his flock. I have the satisfaction of seeing everybody satisfied with the way they have been received when they leave. I must give advice and help, each one has the right [book VII, p. 2] to be listened to by their pastor. D. Barthélemy des Martyrs<sup>9</sup> devoted more time to audiences than I do and it does not seem to have been time wasted. It would be possible to spend it more pleasantly, but that does not matter as long as I am doing my duty. We must not lose sight of that beautiful text from St. Paul: *Nos autem servos vestros per Jesum*<sup>10</sup>. With that in mind it is possible to put up with every nuisance and every pain.

Among others, a letter to Fr. Loewenbruck. I accept his suggestion to meet me in Marseilles to discuss the question of Tamié abbey.

Letter to president Régis suggesting that I bless the marriage of his daughter on the night of 26th to 27th since the 25th is booked for my pastoral visit.

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<sup>8</sup> Canon Paul Emile Beaussier (1800-1866), then almsgiver for the Providence charity.

<sup>9</sup> The Venerable D. Barthélemy Fernandez (1514-1590), O.P., Archbishop of Braga (Portugal), was one of the outstanding episcopal figures of the 16th century.

<sup>10</sup> 2 Cor. 4, 5. See above, August 28, footnote 35.

Letter to the Viscountess d'Orcel in Clermont-Ferrand. I was unable to find out anything about the Mr. Roux of whom she wanted to know if he had been paid the sum of 600 Francs in due time.

Letter to Bishop Menjaud, coadjutor-elect of Nancy. I reply to what he had told me in confidence. I encourage him to follow the career which Providence seems to have outlined for him. As far as I can see, the important point is that, seeing the unwillingness of Bishop Janson to resign his See, Bishop Menjaud is the most suited of all the men I know to guarantee peace and unity with the titular Bishop and the most likely to recall wandering spirits to a reasonable way of thinking. Consequently, Bishop Menjaud should not be put off by the unworthy conduct of the enemies of Bishop Janson who are fighting their war only because of him. I praise him for having offered to resign at the beginning of these debates in order to give more freedom to divine Providence, but once this resignation had been rejected, he must no longer avoid the path of determination which is inspired by duty. Kindness will convert the hearts of his adversaries to him when they see him at work. It will be sufficient for him to walk in the presence of God with simplicity because his grace is always powerfully at work to help us. Those are my principles<sup>11</sup>. [p. 3]

**September 9:** Bessing of the chapel of St. Eugene at Endoume. This area is developing and is completely deprived of every religious facility. Nevertheless, on Sundays there are about fifteen or sixteen hundred who come together from among these rocks and the numerous country houses which people have been crazy enough to build here. There are about 300 fixed residences on this spot. It is to be feared that the vast majority of these wandering country people do not attend Mass on Sunday. The parish priest of St-Victor has made some provision by using the monies left in the will of Mrs. Samatan and the alms of the tenants. The chapel is very beautiful and may be added to as the need arises. Before celebrating Mass in this newly blessed edifice, I told the numerous people gathered there about the advantages which the people of Endoume would have from this chapel and I exhorted them not to dishonour by any excess a place which is henceforth consecrated to God to be the house of prayer for Christians who will gather here on these rocky dry slopes on Sundays.

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<sup>11</sup> Bishop Janson refused to resign from the See of Nancy, although he had not been able to go back there for more than eight years. Bishop de Mazenod, who had initiated the process of appointing Bishop Menjaud as coadjutor, is encouraging the latter.

Mr. Bensa did the honors and we accepted the dinner which he had prepared for us.

I returned to the city quite early so as to be present for the opening of the ecclesiastical retreat which begins today in the Minor Seminary. I have not as yet met Fr. Dufêtre<sup>12</sup> who is giving it.

**September 10, 11, 12, 13, and 14:** Retreat exercises. One hundred and forty priests were gathered together with me in the Minor Seminary. I think everything went off very well. I was present for all the exercises. It was I who said the Mass where all the priests were present and gave the responses. During all the time left free, I either heard confessions or received the priests who felt quite free to speak with me.

I did not think it would be proper for me to speak at any of the exercises. I was too concerned by the reproaches deserved by a large number of grumblers whom I knew to be present. In that state of mind it would have been impossible for me to be cordially open: so it was better that I should remain silent. Perhaps I was wrong, because all were not at fault but that was the impression I had. That is so true that [p. 4] that Fr. Dufêtre passed on to me an anonymous letter which he had received from an honest person insisting that he speak out against the bad habit of priests who greatly scandalize the faithful with whom they brazenly share their views. I shall keep that letter to be used at an opportune moment. On the last day of the retreat, on which I presided at evening prayer as I had also done at morning prayer, I decided not to let the retreat finish without telling all my clergy how satisfied I was at seeing them take advantage of the graces which the Lord had prepared for them. However, I told them of the letter I had received and which I would share with them as it confirmed what I already knew of the wrong being done by a large number of those there present with me and which had, as it were cast an icy covering on my spirit in spite of me but did not, without doubt, destroy my feelings of affection for my clergy which is so deeply ingrained in my heart but which I had to admit, made its expression impossible. I added only a few words to the reading of the letter and then I gave the pontifical blessing, as usual. I had scarcely returned to my room when the whole body of parish priests of the city, followed by a crowd of the other priests and chaplains, fol-

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<sup>12</sup> Fr. Dominique Augustin Dufêtre, Vicar general of Tours. He was to be appointed Bishop of Nevers in 1842.

lowed me there to let me know how extremely angered they were by the news which I had felt I had to tell them. They said that the small number of those guilty repented of their fault, but the majority of my clergy proclaimed their obedience and their attachment to my person. They vied with one another in the effusive expression of their feelings which I appreciated very much and I thanked them and assured them of what every one of them already knew, that I was deeply attached to them and appreciated them. There was a loud acclamation on this point. They remained closely gathered around me for some time and would not leave without having received my blessing. The scene was very touching and I have pleasure in retaining the memory of it, however imperfectly. I forgot to say that they thanked me for having taken the letter from the hands of Fr. Dufêtre and not having allowed him to read it to them himself. They were deeply touched by this caring approach and by the fatherly kindness of my words which did not even seem to be a reproach. [p. 5]

**September 15:** Mass at St-Martin. I went there in procession with all the clergy who had been present for the retreat. At the offertory, Fr. Dufêtre spoke. Then I renewed my priestly promises kneeling before the altar. Then all the priests renewed theirs in my presence. I did not want any other formula to be used except these words: *Dominus pars* etc. I would have been reluctant to have the words of ordination repeated<sup>13</sup>. *Reverentia et obedientia* are the consequences of another principle which is different from the promise made by the priest on the day of his ordination. He would be bound thereby even if he had not made solemn promise of it on that great day. As I see it, this great duty should not be made to seem to depend on a promise which is no more than the expression of an eternal law which constitutes the Church and is from God.

Bishop Flaget arrived yesterday. He came with the intention of recommending the precious work of the propagation of the faith to the assembled clergy. Before going to the chapel for the singing of the *Te Deum*, we gathered to listen to the prelate. His very appearance motivated respect. We listened to what he had to say, but he did not need eloquence to persuade us.

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<sup>13</sup> He had the promises to God renewed and not the promise of obedience to the bishop.

After the solemn singing of the *Te Deum* in the chapel the clergy came to say farewell and I was careful to explain the intentions of the prelate to them. I hope the zeal of our priests will respond to his invitation. I myself had issued an invitation to them and lent weight to that by quoting the words of the circular issued by the council for the propagation of the faith.

**September 16:** Mass in the Calvary church for the solemn reception and establishment of the Association of Our Lady of Seven Sorrows. I gave a little explanation of the purpose of the meeting to the gathering which was as large as the confines of this little church would allow. I then gave the example by becoming a member myself. I remained seated at the moment of my reception as a mark of respect for my episcopal dignity. I then proceeded to receive all the clergy and all the men present. The missionaries then went along the pews to receive [p. 6] the women. Everybody received communion. There were about 800 people present.

Although this was a very touching ceremony, I did not forget that today is the anniversary of the death of our much loved Fr. Pons<sup>14</sup>. I applied to him wholeheartedly, all the indulgences of this day and not without a feeling of sorrow and sadness at his loss which had deprived the Congregation of a precious man and one who would have rendered great service. Fr. Mille was assigned to write the account of his short but holy life. I shall not say anything about that here.

The days of the Bishop of Marseilles must be full. It was eleven o'clock when this morning's ceremony finished. Shortly afterwards I had to begin again. After Vespers in the cathedral I blessed the new figure of Christ which will be placed on the cross at Calvary church. The ceremony was very impressive. The church was full. Having blessed the Christ I was the first to venerate it. Then the canons and all the clergy venerated it after me. Then the procession set out. I went to wait for its arrival at Calvary where I gave the blessing of the Blessed Sacrament from the stone altar which is at the foot of the Cross. I leave others to describe this beautiful procession and the impression made on the whole population at seeing our divine Saviour carried in triumph, even though the image was that of immolation and victim.

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<sup>14</sup> Alexandre Marie Pons, born in Marseille in 1808, novice in 1828-1830, ordained priest in 1831, died on September 16, 1836 while professor in the seminary of Marseilles.

**September 17.** This is not yet a day of rest. Mass at the Refuge. I received the first vows made in the new community of Notre Dame de la Charité. Fr. Dufêtre preached the sermon. There was a great gathering of the members. I also gave the white veil to the first novice. Fr. Defêtre, before leaving, gave me some unfavorable information with regard to the preacher, Fr. Clerc<sup>15</sup>.

The Mademoiselles Dubosc and Rocofort came to inform me of the intentions of Fr. Montagard which he had revealed to them. He intends, no less than to destroy the good work which the deceased Fr. Boucherie had left him with all his goods. This plan of Fr. Montagard is a serious business. This priest is mistaken with regard to the entitlement of his property. As all of us do if we wish to forestall any difficulties which might arise with regard to natural heirs, Mr. Boucherie must have told him that the goods which he left him were really his, and that he could do with them as he wished<sup>16</sup>. That is all well and good so that it could be declared, even under oath, that the goods belong to the person to whom they have been left. But does that justify not fulfilling the known wishes of the person who made the will? What was the only intention he had in mind when he chose you as his heir in preference to his relatives? Mademoiselle Dubosc is right when she says that Mr Boucherie had made his will in favor of Mrs. Dubosc, her mother, before he chose Fr. Montagard as the executor of his wishes, but it was with the same idea in mind that caused him later to think of Fr. Montagard. If that is the case, I must protest with all my energy against this pretence of Fr. Montagard.

Mr. Berryer<sup>17</sup> junior wrote me a very amiable letter recommending to me an architect whom he knows so that I can employ him for the cathedral which Mr. Berryer believes I am about to build, as though it were up to me to build cathedrals. The most I can do is to try and persuade the municipal council of Marseilles to consider the matter.

**September 18:** Our novice, Fr. Allard, has at last arrived, with the same fervent disposition.

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<sup>15</sup> Fr. Clerc preached the Lenten sermons at St-Cannat in 1837; at that time Bishop de Mazenod's judgement on him was rather severe. See Diary, February 3, 1837.

<sup>16</sup> The manuscript has "faudrait" which means "as was necessary".

<sup>17</sup> Antoine Berryer, senior, was a well known lawyer and a parliamentary deputy for the Bouches-du-Rhône.

Letter from Fr. Mille. I am writing to him at once to let him know that neither he nor any of our Fathers may do the retreat with the clergy of Gap. If he has been chosen as confessor to those on retreat, I agree on condition that he can say Mass every day. I remind him of our principles and our customs and I insist that there be no deviation from them<sup>18</sup>.

Today I heard that the Jesuits in Aix are forming a youth congregation similar to the one I formed in Aix. There are already about forty young people who gather [p. 8] in their house under the direction of one of their priests whose name is Aubert. What a shame<sup>19</sup> that our men in Aix could not carry on my work and have allowed it to be snatched from under their noses!

**September 19:** Letter to my nephew Eugene on the question of his reluctance to return to Mr. Poiloup in Paris.

Letter from Mr. de Colonia to thank me for my lithograph.

Letter from the Vicar general of St-Claude with regard to Fr. Clerc.

I brought Bishop Flaget to the house of the Poor Clares; the prelate was charmed as he might well be.

**September 20:** Major discussion with regard to the work of Francis Regis. The gentlemen of Providence wanted to exploit it for their benefit; I insisted that it remain independent of these gentlemen who have a great liking for philanthropy.

Letter from Fr. Mille on the subject of Fr. Chabrier, Superior of the minor seminary of Embrun.

**September 21:** I went to the Major Seminary to prepare for the little ordination ceremony tomorrow.

Fr. Loewenbruck arrived to begin discussions with me on the great plan to invite our Congregation into Savoy and to take possession of the Tamié abbey.

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<sup>18</sup> Letter published in *Oblate Writings* 9, p. 101-102.

<sup>19</sup> A number of words have been scratched out at this point and they can only be deciphered with difficulty.



**September 22:** Ordination in Calvary church. I ordained two priests: our own Fr. Bise<sup>20</sup> and Fr. Spitalier<sup>21</sup>. Fr. Bise is the 38th priest at present in the Congregation. His mild manner, his attachment to the family and his great respect for me whom he loves as I love him, makes me hope that this newly-ordained priest will edify the Congregation and do much good in it with God's grace.

In my meeting with Fr. Loewenbruck, we talked at length of the usefulness of our plan and the means to make it succeed. He will leave again tomorrow to continue promoting the project and he was enchanted with everything he saw here.

**September 23:** Grand feast in Calvary church. I went to close their holy exercises by giving Benediction which was held after the procession of Our Lady of Seven Sorrows, which I did not join.

I dined with the community to celebrate the occasion of the first Mass of Fr. Bise. While Vespers were being sung, I wrote to my niece, to Fr. Milanta to ask him to do the Lenten station at St-Bonaventure in Lyon at the request of Fr. Jordan<sup>22</sup>, to Fr. Gallicet<sup>23</sup> recommending Mr. Nicolas junior to him as he is being sent to Fribourg, to the Bishop of Nancy, to the Vicar general of Belley thanking him for the ritual which he thought he had given me as a gift but which I paid for, to Fr. Magnan to offer him consolation in his sufferings because of his difficulties with Fr. Courtès, to Brother Morandini in reply to a number of his letters, and finally to Mr. Wuilleret suggesting that Billens be put on the market. I suggest that he present it as my property, I say as my property because it does not belong to the Congregation and it really belongs to my uncle who provided all the money. I suggest that he offer it to the Bishop of Lausanne. I also ask him to give the little sum of money which he has in reserve to the Jesuits so that they may transmit it to me.

<sup>20</sup> J.C. Nicolas Bise, born November 21, 1814 in the diocese of Fribourg in Switzerland, novice in 1833-1834, ordained priest on September 22 1838. He left the Congregation in 1862.

<sup>21</sup> Martin Spitalier (1813-1854) was assistant priest in St-Cannat and later professor in the Minor Seminary.

<sup>22</sup> Fr. Jordan, parish priest of St-Bonaventure in Lyon, had been a companion of Eugene de Mazenod when they were students in St-Sulpice.

<sup>23</sup> Jean Népomucène Gallicet, S.J., Superior of the Jesuit boarding school in Fribourg: Bishop de Mazed knew him well, See Diary June 22, 1837.

**September 24:** Among the many matters of today, I shall mention the question of Fr. Caire<sup>24</sup>. This priest whom I had favoured so much, whose foolish conduct on the occasion of his ordination, and again when he was assistant at Grand Carmes we had chosen to overlook, has been obliged to admit that he, as well as many others, was guilty of opposition to the administration of my predecessor. What is most disgusting is that he also admitted that priests who shared his opinion apparently told him that I only allowed him to undertake the works he did so that he would fall from a greater height. In that way, these pious souls carried their rash judgement to the level of despicable calumny. In the person of Fr. Caire, I congratulated these gentlemen for having such a flexible conscience because this is a case of nothing less than huge mortal sins which could not be forgiven because the calumny continued flagrantly and nobody had done anything to remedy the situation. Fr. Caire did not put up a good defence, because considering the gravity<sup>25</sup> of the crime, he took refuge in the miserable subterfuge of stating that while listening to his false friends, he took no account of what they had said. Nevertheless his condition is still one of uncertainty which does not exempt him from serious fault, since it was his duty [p.10] to refute this infamous chatter with the vehemence which Christian charity should have inspired him. These are the sort of men who rashly judge and condemn every superior.

**September 25:** Fr. Flayol's<sup>26</sup> servant came in while I was giving audience to ask me to come to the help of his master who was very confused and very ill indeed, according to him. I ran and, in fact, I found this good priest in what seemed to be a state of apoplexy. A little doctor came along to draw off some blood, but not enough, I thought. I put the patient lying down. The doctor withdrew, having ordered that some mustard poultices and a laxative be administered. The patient's condition worsened visibly, his tongue became paralysed, his eyes became fixed. Tempier, Honorat and I remained alongside him; I hastened to give him the medicine which his nephew administered with my help, he being an expert in this profession. Tempier and I put the mustard poultices in place, because we saw

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<sup>24</sup> Eugene Caire, founder of the youth movement of St. Raphael. His brother, Fr. André, who left the diocese of Marseilles, had caused problems for Bishop Fortuné de Mazenod.

<sup>25</sup> The manuscript has "griéveté" which means "weightiness".

<sup>26</sup> J.P. Barthélemy Flayol (1768-1839) was Vicar general and archdeacon of St-Martin. He died on May 2, 1839.

that the patient was getting worse. We sent Jeancard to call Cailhol and ask him to bring Extreme Unction and I sent his nephew Honorat to call the doctor as quickly as possible. His trembling increased and became convulsive, his eyes began to turn and his face shrunk, froth mixed with blood came out of his mouth, his breathing became intermittent and difficult as though he were choking. We thought that the good priest was about to pass away. I give him absolution and I sent someone to hasten the arrival of the holy oils; Cailhol brought them and was accompanied by some of the canons. I did not wait for the others and wearing the stole over my surplice, I administered the sacrament. At each anointing I thought I would not have time to do the others. I was tempted to remove the bandage and let the blood flow again because the patient was smothering. I was prevented from doing so as much by fear that it would not be the correct thing to do as by the impropriety of my so doing. The doctor arrived and at once did what I had been tempted to do. The patient seemed relieved as a result to the extent that he did not faint. Some hours later his tongue loosened, but his ideas remained confused and he was unable to say anything [p. 11]. The only thing he could say were a few words in Latin. Later and well into the night, he used those same words to express ideas which were difficult to hear. There is a gradual improvement.

**September 26:** This morning, his mind is clearer. The patient said a few words to those who were attending him. It was possible to understand him. I visited him and decided to give him Holy Viaticum. I wanted to bring it myself to this holy priest who deserves my entire respect and my love. He is deeply touched in recognition of what he sees me do for him. We left in procession from the Major (cathedral). The patient was quite conscious. On entering the room I wanted to say a few words to him. He interrupted me to tell me how he feels: I was so deeply moved that I did not try to continue. I gave him Viaticum and I was overcome by the thought that here before my eyes was a predestined soul, a holy priest, a worthy confessor of the faith, whose spirit is deserving of the recompense which is being bestowed upon him at this moment by the Good Master whom he has served throughout his life. Nevertheless, I expressed the hope that the Lord in visiting him would give him the health for which we have prayed so that we may continue to benefit from the example of his virtues.

Letters from Fr. Courtès and Fr. de Veronico.

Today I signed a private contract by which the Abbess of the Capuchin Sisters sells the convent and its dependent properties to me for

the sum of two hundred and fifty thousand Francs. I undertake to build another convent for them on the property bought from Mr. Abel. Any benefit will be for the Congregation. I do not think there could be anything more in keeping with justice. Because, according to their Rule, the Capuchins cannot possess anything other than their convent, their church and their garden. To whom must they give the surplus if anything remains? Is it not to the Congregation in the persons of Fr. Tempier and myself who have the most preferential rights? Besides, could they make a better use of what our foresight had provided for them than to donate it [p. 12] to a Congregation which serves the Church and the diocese without recompense. If Providence obtains some advantage for it (the Congregation) to make up for what it shall lose at my death, would it be wise, would it be just to deprive it of that? I do not think so, and from now on I shall place myself above all the cackling which I am accustomed to despise, because I know what are my rights and what serves the cause of justice, and I am working for the public welfare.

President Régius begged me to be witness to the engagement of his daughter with Mr. Samatan but I refused. This proposition did not seem to me to be very fitting and I was not afraid to politely inform the president even though he could tell me that the Prefect would be happy to do him this honor. To make up for my refusal I promised him that I would sign the contract and that, in this case, because of the dignity of my office, my presence would be mentioned in the contract. That has been done. I left after the reading of the contract and the large assembly of family and friends was transported without me to the City Hall and to the home of Mr. Samatan where a beautiful meal was served at which I did not wish to be present. Towards midnight, they came to the Bishop's residence where I blessed the marriage before the Mass which I celebrated in the big gallery where we had set up an altar at the foot of the statue of the Blessed Virgin. At the religious ceremony, I did not see all those who had been present at the signing of the contract. The Prefect and the Mayor did not come. For them, it seems that going to a wedding means being present at the civil contract. The Procurator general did not follow their example: Nonetheless, he is not known to be more pious than they are. Perhaps he feels more obliged by circumstances.

**September 27:** Tempier has left for Notre Dame de Lumières. He will remain there until Monday. On Tuesday, the 2nd, he will reach Notre Dame de l'Osier. He will leave there on Saturday for Grenoble and

Chambéry if necessary. On the 10th or 11th, he will be in Notre Dame du Laus from where he will promptly return to Marseilles.

Letter from De Veronico.

Doctor d'Astros came to spend a few hours in Marseilles and he did not forget me; it is always a pleasure to see this good friend. He gave me [p. 13] some bad news about Brother Morandini. He thinks he is near the end. Fr. Courtès had written in quite a different vein, but why should I flatter myself. However bitter the truth may be, I always prefer to know it. Dear Morandini. The Lord will have given you to us only so that we may mourn your loss all the more. What hopes are being extinguished! Wisdom, intelligence, goodness, fervor, all the virtues together and so beautifully portrayed on his angelic countenance. That will not be for this world because he is on his way to heaven. May God's will be done!

Letter from Fr. Magnan<sup>27</sup>; distressing, because he tells me of the suffering he has to endure in Aix. His complaining is not altogether unmotivated. I shall try to put an end to his chagrin.

Letter from Fr. André. He asks me if he may prolong his stay with his relatives in Trets in order to restore his health.

**September 28:** Replied to Fr. André giving him the permission he requested.

Letter from Fr. Guibert, who is very uneasy that he is no longer being given Fr. Allard. This priest has only now arrived in the novitiate. I must keep him there even for a while after his profession, otherwise he would all his life have only a very imperfect idea of the Congregation. It is necessary for his good and for the good of the family that he spend some months in the novitiate although strictly speaking he has completed his trial period because of the dispensation which I granted to him last year.

**September 29:** Letter to the parish priest of St-Bonaventure in Lyon in reply to his letter to me requesting a preacher for Lent.

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<sup>27</sup> The words are scratched out; Magnan, Aix.

Fissiaux came<sup>28</sup>, since he is about to leave for Paris on Tuesday with two Sisters whom we are sending there to learn how to teach the deaf and dumb. I gave him a letter of recommendation for the Archbishop of Paris. I asked the Archbishop to protest against the perfidious decision of the University council which excludes clergy from teaching positions<sup>29</sup>. I ask him for information with regard to Fr. de Lanuville to whom I must ensure the restitution of 400 Francs; I recommend Fr. Blanc<sup>30</sup> to him and sing the praises of which is deserving. [p. 14]

**September 30:** Pastoral visit to Aubagne. I did not want a ceremonial reception. I alighted from my carriage at the door of the church. The parish priest greeted me at the entrance and I said to him: the rest will be as in the pontifical ritual. During the Mass, when I turned around to give communion to the newly confirmed, I became aware of the lack of attention on the part of most of the children. They had not even been prepared and taught the acts<sup>31</sup>. I would have considered it a neglect of my duty not to have prepared them myself. That is what I did when giving them the Holy Eucharist. Good inspirations always come on these occasions. An atmosphere of recollection was created. The children understood this language. After the Mass I got up into the pulpit to speak to the people who filled the church. It was my first visit as pastor and it was necessary to point out certain principles unknown to many of those present. When I came down from the pulpit I wanted to question the children on the catechism, but I continued speaking to them for some time since they were listening very carefully and I left it at that.

During the day I visited the hospice, the penitents' observance etc. In the evening there was a pleasant scene. I had been told beforehand that

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<sup>28</sup> Fr. Charles J.M. Fissiaux (1806-1867), founder in 1838 of the charitable work for poor girls and orphans from the cholera epidemic. Then, in 1839, he founded the charity, St-Pierre-ès-liens for the education of young prisoners.

<sup>29</sup> This letter could not be traced but we do have a letter addressed to the Minister for Worship on the subject. It is dated November 21, 1838. Authentic copy: AAM, reg. administrative letters, Vol IV, No. 6. In his *Eugene de Mazenod* Leflon devotes some pages to the meeting of the bishops in Aix in 1838 and the question of the schools which was discussed during that meeting. Vol. III, pp. 172-192.

<sup>30</sup> No doubt the person mentioned is Fr. Leblanc, formerly a member of the youth congregation in Aix.

<sup>31</sup> Prayer formulae then in use, e.g.: acts of faith, hope and charity etc.

some residents of Solans<sup>32</sup> preferred to leave the children without Baptism rather than have them baptized in St-Pierre or in Baudinard. I was expecting some protests. On the square, I noticed a man who came forward and addressed me modestly, asking to be excused because he had missed me. - I have already excused you, I said, but what is the matter? - I have a son born two weeks ago and I have not yet had him baptized. - That is too bad. - You see, there is no road from where I live to St-Pierre<sup>33</sup> or to Baudinard. - Ah, if there were money to be earned you would be able to get there. Milord, would you be kind enough to baptize my child? - Of course, I am the principal parish priest and it is always a consolation for me to fulfill this ministry. But, let me warn you that I shall only baptize him in Baudinard. In Baudinard, but the child could die in the meantime. - Rest assured, you have kept him for two weeks and nothing has happened to him, he will not suffer as a result. The man was taken aback by this kindness, so he put on a brave face to take advantage of it and in a mischievous tone of voice he said to me: - some say there are children who are only baptized at the time of their First Communion, mine can wait until then. At hearing this I felt outraged by his insolence and his lack of piety, so I raised my voice as though to a clown and told him to go away, telling him that all that remained for him was to become a pagan. He ran off, muttering to himself "become a pagan". That is the extent to which these stupid people are prepared to go to counteract the measures taken for the greater benefit of the rural population of these areas. What was my astonishment on learning the following day that after leaving me, this wretch, who apparently had come merely to test me, had gone to St-Pierre to beg the rector to baptize his child.

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<sup>32</sup> Solans: a part of the Aubagne area.

<sup>33</sup> According to Fr. Rey (I, 35) this man and the residents of Solans refused to have their children baptized by the new parish priest of St-Pierre.





## October 1838

**October 1:** [p. 15] Whether from the fatigue of yesterday or from the scene with that man, I felt the consequences this morning when I spat some blood. That did not prevent me from going to celebrate Mass for the white penitents in honor of the holy martyr presented to the confraternity by the Pope. Afterwards I attended the procession honoring the sacred relics. I continued my visit. In the evening I received a beautiful serenade of voices expressing great sentiments of devotion.

**October 2:** Left Aubagne at five thirty to get to La Ciotat where I alighted at the door of the church and was received ceremoniously. The civil authorities did not come. Suffering somewhat from the effects of yesterday and not wishing to risk being unable to complete the ceremony of the consecration of the altar, I asked Jeancard to give opening discourse. I then proceeded to consecrate the altar. This is the third time that this altar has been consecrated. The first time was in 16.., by the Bishop of Caesaropolis<sup>1</sup> who, at the same time, consecrated the church; the second occasion was in 17\_\_ , by Bishop de Belsunce, and now it is myself. The parchment enclosed in the leaden box containing the relics on the occasion of the consecration by Bishop de Belsunce is intact; the writing, the signature [p. 16] of the prelate and his seal look as though they had been done yesterday. The ink with which I was provided will not last so long. The same box has been preserved and is smaller than the ones we use nowadays, also smaller than the much older one found in an altar of the Minims in Marseilles and which has been brought to me here, filled with

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<sup>1</sup> There was only one Frenchman, it seems, during the XVII century who was titular bishop of Caesaropolis. Bishop François Picquet was apostolic visitor in Syria, and then Bishop of Babilonia (Baghdad). He was ordained bishop in 1675.

relics and covered with dark red damask outside and in. I shall take example from that and insist that all these boxes be lined with cloth. It is more becoming.

The new parish priest has undertaken to do himself something that I could never get his predecessor to do. He has placed the altar in front of the archway. He has walled up the doorway leading from the road to the shrine and by which all the women of the area used to enter. He has opened a door to the sacristy in the side aisle. What is exceptional about this is that we have discovered an instruction by Bishop de Belsunce ordering all these repairs. The prelate had even forbidden the setting up of a main altar until all these changes had taken place.

I made an observation on this subject: that Bishop de Belsunce gave orders which were much more severe than any of mine and there were no complaints, or at least the complaints have not been recorded for us and the orders still remain. He ordered the penitents under pain of interdict on their chapel to have 200 and more Masses from past foundations<sup>2</sup> celebrated each year. I was wrong in saying that the complaints have not been handed down to us. I remember having heard from an old priest, named Fr. Coulomb, and whose age brought him back to an era when he could observe the episcopacy of Bishop de Belsunce at close range, that the people of Marseilles rebelled against him on two occasions. Apparently there was not as much affection for him then as there has been since as a result of what he did during the plague! After so many years only the outstanding events of his episcopate are remembered. Everybody loves him, and rightly so, because of the beautiful things he did as bishop, but if the lesser events of his episcopate were remembered, how many sufferings, how many contradictions were occasioned to him by those who should have been his helpers [p. 17] Nearly everybody is unaware how many times and in how many circumstances he was blamed, even in matters which the distance in time has caused to be counted to his credit. For instance, I have read two letters by the prelate, addressed to the magistrates on the occasion of the famous procession to which the cessation of the plague has

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<sup>2</sup> Money or temporal goods given to the Church with the obligation - either in perpetuity or of long duration - to devote these revenues to the celebration of Masses.

since been attributed, and in which it is clear<sup>3</sup> that the magistrates opposed with all their might the holding of the procession and that they themselves did not take part. Is it possible that, because they had been overruled in such an important matter, these magistrates and their partisans, would have been embarrassed to find fault with the imprudence and rashness of the prelate because they considered the procession to be too harmful on the population? No. It can be seen from the tone of the letters that the situation was somewhat envenomed, because Bishop de Belsunce, having invited them to no avail, wrote to them on his return from the procession quite a lively letter informing them that the procession had taken place no matter what they said, that it could not have been more successful, and that there was only one thing missing, the presence of the magistrates. These letters bearing his signature are in the hands of Mr. Jauffret, city librarian.

I have also heard it said that the reason why Bishop de Belloy was appointed as his successor was because of his gentle character, and he was indeed very gentle but it is not up to me as his successor to judge that. He was to appease all those whom the severity of his predecessor had angered. This may very well have been so. It seems that the character of Bishop de Belloy was indeed as expected. It was once again his gentleness which caused him to be chosen as Archbishop of Paris. Mr. Portalis knew him well and it was he who presented him to the first consul assuring him that the prelate would not be too demanding or embarrassing for the civil authority which had no desire to have problems created for itself as it began the process of religious restoration.

I have wandered far from my pastoral visit to Le Ciotat. In doing so, I wanted to recall these little known facts which it will be good to remember. There is another anecdote which only goes to show that even the most patient of men can be driven to the limits just like all others. It is Bishop de Belloy, whose excessive kindness I have mentioned, who told me about it. During [p.18] the assemblies for the elections to the national assembly which were held at the beginning of the Revolution, Fr. Nicolas, who died in our own time as parish priest of St-Cannat, spoke up with such insolence that Bishop de Belloy, most uncharacteristically, took a chair by the leg and threatened to break it over his head. Anyone who was familiar

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<sup>3</sup> The French has "const", used for evidence in court.

with the nasty character of Fr. Nicolas would understand that he was excited by the first illusions of the Revolution which aggressively aroused inferiors against their superiors, and this violent priest would have gone beyond the bounds of respect to the extent of arousing the anger of his bishop. The fate he was later to suffer provided him with the means of making reparation for his wrongdoing. He even had to make expiation in a prison cell, and there he had occasion to realize where the cause to which he was so devoted was leading the underdogs.

In Le Ciotat, I visited the new convent which has been founded in the house which was formerly that of the Oratorians. These pious ladies, united in community and having made their religious profession, are already useful to the country. I had authorized this association which prides itself with the title of a religious order<sup>4</sup>.

**October 3:** I said Mass in the chapel of the convent and gave Confirmation to some of the pupils. I solemnly blessed the town cemetery which had not yet been blessed. The Congregations and the few penitents who could be assembled in the town accompanied me in procession. This ceremony was impressive.

**October 4:** I left Le Ciotat at five thirty and arrived in Cassis at 9 o'clock. I was received with solemnity at the entrance to the village by the clergy and civil authority. The mayor, wearing his bandolier, harangued me. I feared that my uncle would be worried if I did not get back to Marseilles this evening. That was the reason I spent only a few hours in Cassis. I left there at 4 o'clock. It took scarcely three hours for me to get back to Marseilles, passing through Gineste.

I found a good letter from Bishop Flaget giving me an account of his mission in the diocese of Fréjus. There was another letter from the Minister for Education, addressed to all the bishops, inviting them to extend their care even to the colleges of the university. What could a bishop do in these places? This is what I have done so far: given Confirmation to candidates presented to me by the chaplain. Trying to do any more than that would be to compromise my responsibility. [p. 19] It would mean taking on what is bad and cannot be good. For instance, if the teachings of the philosophy professor are impious. What authority does the bishop

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<sup>4</sup> An association founded by Fr. Vidal.

have to correct his errors? Supervision is so poor that there are fearful disorders. Would I be listened to if I complained, etc. Therefore, I regard this letter as a lure<sup>5</sup>.

**October 5:** Letter from the Archbishop of Aix inviting me to his residence where some other bishops will be meeting. Letter from Fr. Dumolard, rector in the diocese of Grenoble. He asks to be admitted to the Congregation<sup>6</sup>. He wishes to do his novitiate in Notre Dame de l'Osier. He tells me that the bishop of Grenoble invited him to join the group of missionaries he wishes to found, and Fr. Dumolard refused.

Mr. Autran came to tell me about the breakup of the marriage plans of his son with Miss Montezan. This disagreement will not lessen my esteem for Mr. Autran who will be calumniated by public opinion in these circumstances.

**October 6:** Mr. Lombardon came to give me his side of the story and to tell me what I already knew, that he had succeeded Mr. Autran in seeking the hand of Miss Montezan. He came to ask me for a declaration of his good behaviour to reassure the Montezan family with regard to his conduct. I let Mr. Lombardon know that I had been too deeply involved in the confidence of Mr. Autran to give him what he was asking for and which he did not need in any case. If the family asks me for oral information I can say what is good, but seeming to take an active part in this matter, would not be correct. Mr. Lombardon felt that way too. He is ecstatically happy.

Letter from Fr. Albini on the mission in Letia. Letter from Fr. Guibert. He is loud in his demand for Fr. Allard. He is still feverish and has not left the house.

I asked the Superior of the Ladies of St. Charles to come and see me. I want to ask her to request more favorable terms for Fr. Reinaud's mother from her Superior General; I would like her to be kept and fed for 600 Francs in their house in Lyon where her son [p. 20] wishes to send her. What an enormous burden for the Congregation! That is the sort of sacri-

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<sup>5</sup> The reply of Bishop de Mazenod is published as an Appendix to this volume. Letter No. 2, November 4, 1838.

<sup>6</sup> This priest never entered the novitiate.

fice it makes for its members who are not always thankful and often little discreet.

Fr. Aubert presented to me a young man who has been sent by Fr. Courtès. His name is d'Huy<sup>7</sup> and he comes from Le Mans. If he is sincere in the sentiments he expresses and if he perseveres in the good dispositions which he manifests, he could become an excellent man. We shall see when he is put to the test.

**October 7:** Pontifical service in the church of St. Cannat on the occasion of the feast of the Holy Rosary. I was present there for Vespers also. Since the parish priest and his assistants expressed the desire that I take part in the procession, I readily accepted and I did not regret doing so because it was a beautiful event in the eyes of faith to see the principal pastor wearing his mitre and walking the streets of the town with a large number of the faithful of both sexes and surrounded by his priests, and with the clergy and people alternating the recitation of the Holy Rosary, without concern for gibes rosary beads in hand. I felt I was the father of this multitude and that this was where I should be.

My nephew Eugene arrived this morning to give me an explanation which is too lengthy to enter here. Fr. Poiloup will be forever inexcusable because of his attitude to him and to me.

Letter from Fr. Mille. He asks me to contribute part of the cost of the work necessary to make a chapel behind the niche of the Blessed Virgin in Notre Dame du Laus. He considers the plan to be possible, easy and indispensable. How could it be otherwise?

**October 8:** Mass at La Charité to confirm almost one hundred little girls. The instruction was pleasing to the administrators, whose zeal I believe it was my duty to acknowledge; even though it was early morning, they felt obliged to be present at the hospice to receive me. They have not always been so amiable; but those were other times and perhaps other people.

Letter from Fr. Montagard to Miss Bosc. This priest writes like a tyrant; he no longer makes any secret of his intention to destroy the work

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<sup>7</sup> Jules Marie d'Huy, entered novitiate on October 31, 1838. He left during novitiate.

of Boucherie in Marseilles [p. 21]. I have undertaken to reply to this insolent man. See my letter in the register<sup>8</sup>.

Letter to my sister on the return of her son.

**October 9:** Visit to Canet. The children were very attentive. In general, they answered well. As usual I emphasized the presence of Jesus Christ in the Eucharist and what we owe to him.

Letter from the Archbishop of Aix in reply to mine of a few days ago, asking me if could postpone my journey until the following day.

Fr. Curnier, rector of Aubenas, came to see me with a letter of recommendation from Fr. Fonsbelle requesting that he enter the Congregation<sup>9</sup>. This priest seems to have had a good formation. Will he be sufficiently amenable to our spirit and our customs? We shall soon know. In the meantime we shall have to gather some information on his background.

**October 10:** Mass for my poor father. Today is the anniversary of his death<sup>10</sup>. What a beautiful death! Such sentiments of penance, of trust, of humility! Such patience, such resignation, such devotion to the Blessed Virgin, such piety! How I wish I had the time to recall all the circumstances of his beautiful death. It was I who gave him the sacrament of Extreme Unction. With what faith he replied to all the prayers! For me it was a very painful duty humanly speaking but a great consolation in the spiritual order and I continued to speak words of exhortation until he breathed his last. How he savoured all that the Good God inspired me to say to him: "Take care of my poor soul, my good son, he would say. I want to preserve my awareness to the end. I do not wish to offend God by my sighs. They are involuntary". When I could no longer bear the strain, I went out to the hallway for a moment to give vent to my sobbing. I returned later, sustained by the grace of my holy ministry, to continue my short but constant exhortations. I have never spoken to a dying person

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<sup>8</sup> This letter, dated October 8, was indeed copied into the register of administrative letters. See AAM, reg. l. adm., vol. III, No. 464. It is being published at the end of this volume. See Appendix, letter No. 1.

<sup>9</sup> This Fr. Curnier did not enter the novitiate.

<sup>10</sup> Charles-Antoine de Mazenod died on October 10, 1820.

with such feeling. It seemed to me that, with every word, I was raising my father one degree further in eternal glory. He was extremely appreciative of my words, or rather, of the thoughts which God inspired me to express. He remained conscious and thus continued to gain merit until he breathed his last. One day [p. 22] I shall be able to enter into greater detail. Let me say further, for the edification of those who wish to pass it on, that he confided to me that there had never been a single day when he did not invoke the Blessed Virgin and that he had never read a book contrary to religion, and nevertheless his youth had been quite a stormy one<sup>11</sup> Oh holy faith! What a treasure you are for the soul that cherishes you!

Letter from Fr. Polge, professor of dogma in the University of Aix. He is presenting me with his work on the destiny of Christianity. His letter reminds me in kind words of the marks of friendship which I showed him in the seminary of St-Sulpice. I wrote an answer at once, thanking him.

Letter to Fr. Dumolard accepting his application; I advise him to come to Marseilles or preferably to l'Osier where there will soon be nobody present<sup>12</sup>.

Letter from Emile Mathieu, worthy of his friendship for me.

Letter to Tempier at Notre Dame du Laus. I give him my instructions.

Letter from Bishop Flaget: renewed expression of his acknowledgement and friendship.

**October 11:** Visit to St-Henri. Great reception with music, etc. General festivity! Everybody dressed in their Sunday best! Carried away by the circumstances, I was a little too long in my instruction. The session lasted from 8 o'clock until half past midday. Generally speaking, the children responded badly. That was partly due to shyness.

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<sup>11</sup> Mr de Mazenod did not reveal very much to his son on this topic: However, on October 31, 1805, after Eugene had returned from Paris, his father wrote: "I do not need to have before my eyes the account of your spending to know that you are as spendthrift as you are orderly and moderate in your desires. Your wisdom and your restraint are also well known to me and make me somewhat ashamed when I look back on my own behaviour, but what a great joy it is to see you so different in these matters from what I was myself".

<sup>12</sup> The Fathers in l'Osier would soon have left to preach missions which they did from Autumn until Springtime.



After lunch I visited the Estaque area where, sooner or later, a chapel will have to be built. It was decided to give me the pleasure of going fishing. Our boat was joined by four or five others filled with the children whom I had confirmed that morning. How happy they were to row their boats alongside mine!"Si regalan"<sup>13</sup> they shouted. These are fundamentally good people; they hold on to their good traditions. In the evening, on passing by the church of St-Louis, I alighted from my carriage to adore the Blessed Sacrament.

**October 12:** Letter from Jeancard to Fr. Poiloup. I prefer that he write that letter. My outspokenness would have made me write in an unbecoming manner. We are claiming reparation. That measure of justice is our due and must be given priority over not admitting that a mistake was made and imprudent action taken. [p. 23]

**October 13:** Henri Hains brought me a letter from Fr. Poiloup's secretary for Eugene. I am very displeased with it. What sort of satrap is this fellow anyway that he should lay down his law from his armchair, without rhyme or reason? They may well be gallican, but even though they contest the infallibility of the Pope, they appropriate it for themselves, or rather, they are mistaken but it would cost them too dearly to admit it.

Letter from good Fr. Dherbes, parish priest of St-Julien: He tells me something about his health. He flatters himself that he is getting better although he admits he is still coughing. Alas! This is a sign which does not deceive.

I at once wrote him a long letter which will please him. He deserves it because of the kind sentiments he expresses in his letter to me.

Letter to my brother-in-law in reply to his which I received today; I tell him the reasons for my indignation with Fr. Poiloup; instead of acting as a father to Eugene as he had promised he would, he was unbecomingly unfair towards him. This child, who is altogether unsullied and completely innocent, merited a mild reprimand at most for his frivolity.

Letter to Mr. Berryer in reply to his. I go into some detail with regard to the question of the cathedral because he recommends an architect to me

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<sup>13</sup> "We are enjoying ourselves" in Provençal.

for this building. My letter is polite, as his was. The men of his party<sup>14</sup> do not know how to behave in that way. They find it difficult to observe moderation and their actions are inspired only by passion. Mr. Berryer understands what a bishop must be and behaves in consequence.

**October 14:** Anniversary of my episcopal consecration. Private Mass in my chapel at which my family were present. I certainly thanked God for the august character with which I was honored and enriched for all eternity on this day six years ago. Although quite unworthy, it meant that I then was associated with the college<sup>15</sup> of the successors of the Apostles, receiving the fulness of the priesthood to serve the Church more effectively than before in this exalted position. There was no question then of responsibility for a diocese. I would certainly have been reluctant to make such a commitment, which it was impossible for me to decline five years later. That is the source of all my troubles: to have been led by force of circumstances to the position which I had always feared and avoided. [p. 24] This is the thought which always comes back to me when I reflect on my position. I received the episcopacy with the same trust, with the same sense of abandon which I experienced when I had the happiness of becoming a priest. Just as, on the occasion of my ordination, I thought of the priesthood in itself without for an instant considering pastoral duties which are the consequence for the vast majority of priests, my positive desire being never to become a parish priest, so in receiving the episcopacy I believed I would be able to think only of the plenitude of the lesser priesthood to which it was given me to aspire when it was thought fitting to ordain me priest, unworthy as I was and as I still am. I considered that there was a greater distance between the secular state and the priesthood than between the priesthood and the episcopacy and it seemed to me, under the illusion which caused me to consent to become bishop, that all I had to do was ask God for the grace and apply myself to obtain the virtues and greater holiness which would make me less unworthy of a grace which could be the source of greater merit in the condition in which I believed myself to be to serve the Church with greater zeal now that I

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<sup>14</sup> Mr. Berryer was the son of the lawyer Antoine Pierre Berryer, who was then royalist parliamentary deputy for the Bouches-du-Rhône area. This Marseilles family remained attached to the Bourbons and never forgave Bishop de Mazenod for his relations with the government of Louis Philippe, king of France since 1830.

<sup>15</sup> Bishop de Mazenod speaks here of the "college of the successors of the Apostles". In Vatican Council II this term aroused strong opposition.

had greater means of doing so. Today, I still see the episcopacy in the same light and not be put off by what the Fathers and those who write about this sublime order have put together, it seems to me, with the intention of discouraging and causing despair to human weakness. If it is permitted to a simple creature, to a mortal man and a sinner, for all are sinners since Adam, to aspire to the priesthood, I do not see any principle by which this same man may not consent in all humility to have the hands of the pontifical order laid upon him without incurring all the threats which seem to have inspired the holiest of men. With all my characteristic forthrightness, I propound a thesis which more timid souls would not, perhaps, dare to admit. But here I state a feeling which has been well thought out and reflected upon. Of course I do not hold that the episcopacy is merely the completion of the priesthood, a sacrament which confers a grace [p. 25] and not as the daunting load which weighs upon the shoulders of a bishop who has been made responsible for a diocese.

This is the limit to which I have been driven. Indeed, now I feel the weight of the episcopacy, now that from being a bishop *in partibus* I have become bishop of a diocese! If I could have foreseen that, in spite of all appearances, this misfortune could befall me, I would never have agreed to let hands be imposed on me. But what man, however skilful and foresighted he might be, could have foreseen what was in store for this individual who, having been raised to the episcopacy by the will of the head of the Church in 1832, which means in the midst of persecution levelled at him, for this man who delivered himself to the government's censure by accepting his promotion without their consent, or even more, in spite of this government which insisted on seeing him as their worst enemy, for this man who foresaw great tribulation in the exercise of his new ministry which he had accepted only for the sake of defending when necessary the Church's rights against a setup which made no secret of its hostility. While this hatred and ill will were still building up, placing him in inextricable difficulties and compromising his rest and his very existence, and when he had already delivered himself to a tyrannical opponent, suddenly he saw things change their course. The most violent prohibitions fell flat, when faced with a good man<sup>16</sup> who showed the absurdity of the situation and the powers which heretofore had mercilessly pursued him now approached him with civility and with honorable propositions. At that moment my

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<sup>16</sup> "A good man", Fr. Guibert. See J. Leflon, *Eugene de Mazenod* II, pp. 430-507.

repugnance reawakened with even greater vehemence and I had the courage to reply to the head of State who offered me a diocese, if he had Toledo<sup>17</sup> available, I would refuse. Nevertheless, Providence worked things out in such a way that I had, as it were, to fall into the chasm and I became Bishop of the diocese of Marseilles, when I was hoping to remain throughout my life as Bishop of my beloved Icosia. [p. 26]

**October 14:** Same day. Pontifical assistance at the pontifical High Mass, sung with music on the occasion of the anniversary of my consecration.

In the evening I went to the closing ceremony of the Holy Rosary octave in the church of St-Cannat and gave the Benediction. That gave great pleasure to the clergy and people of this parish who filled the church. I always feel great consolation when I am leading my flock in prayer meetings or on the great solemnities.

**October 15:** Letter to Mr. Lombardon. Very polite but refusing to bless his marriage with Miss Montezan. I hope he will understand that having promised Mr. Autran on his invitation that I would bless the marriage of his son with this lady, it would not be very polite for me to rush into blessing the same marriage with the one who had replaced him, or at least was on the spot to take his place.

Fr. Courtès writes to tell me that Fr. Boué has suggested that he preach the retreat in the Major Seminary of Montpellier. He feels that he can do the job. In fact he would be quite willing to do so. I answer at once to give my consent because he must leave tomorrow with Fr. Boué.

Letter from Fissiaux. He gives me an account of his journey and of the welcome given to him and to the Sisters by Mr. Ordinaire, director of the deaf-mute institute. It was a source of great happiness for him to see the two Sisters and a priest come from so far away with the intention of making themselves useful to that unfortunate class of people who are so dear to Mr. Ordinaire. Fissiaux is sure that he can learn the method. He has delivered my letter to the Archbishop of Paris who received him graciously.

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<sup>17</sup> Toledo was supposed to be a very wealthy diocese.

The famous Mr. Drach has arrived here. He has come from Angers where he was present for the taking of the habit by one of his daughters and the profession of another one in the Good Shepherd Congregation. Mr. Drach still plans to become a priest and his son, a student at Propaganda, still wants to devote himself to the missions in China. There is good reason to praise God, admirable *in sanctis suis*. [p. 27]

**October 16:** Visit to Caillols<sup>18</sup>. The children from St-Julien, from Paume and from Olives had all gathered there. For me it is a real consolation to instruct and catechize these good souls from the countryside. The church was full. I have only words of encouragement to address to those who have gathered there around their chief pastor. However, as is my custom, I also commissioned them to deliver some truths to those who were absent. I always have occasion to be satisfied with the attention of my audience and to congratulate myself on the unmistakable method I have adopted for myself of always speaking to the people in their own language. I was told today that when the people of the village heard my instruction, they said among themselves: it is a pleasure to see that our bishop speaks our language. And because they considered it to be done with great effort, they expressed their admiration with much emphasis: "par d'hommes ansia parla prouvençau fau ave de genie"<sup>19</sup> How happy I would be to be able to reach their hearts and make them love the divine Master whom I am preaching to them as simply as I can!

After lunch I visited the hamlet of Comtes. All the inhabitants had gathered in the chapel where I spoke some words to them to recommend that they be united with the people of Caillols of whom they are somewhat jealous, but without bitterness. It must be remembered with regard to this hamlet, that the local chapel depended on the cathedral when Caillols was still merely a dependency of St-Julien.

When I got back to Marseilles I found Tempier there, having returned from his visit to our houses. The account he gave me was most satisfying. Everywhere he went, he had found regularity and zeal. There is much for which to be thankful to God. The negotiations of Fr. Loewenbruck with the Archbishop of Chambéry for Tamié have not been successful. Tempier

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<sup>18</sup> The manuscript has "Cayols".

<sup>19</sup> "For men like that, to speak Provençal requires genius".

had extended his journey to visit this ancient abbey and was enchanted by what he saw. Apparently the time has not yet come for the Congregation to spread beyond the confines [p. 28] of the kingdom. This is the second time that Archbishop Martinet of Chambéry<sup>20</sup> has refused it in Savoy where its ministry could be so useful. What must we do? As far as we are concerned, we are always ready to go where God's will calls us. When men no longer place obstacles in our way, we will still be ready to set out.

**October 17:** Among the other duties of today, Confirmation to a young child in danger of death. I had to climb to the fifth floor; but how a bishop feels compensated in his spiritual paternity when he is surrounded by a crowd of these good people who belong to the poorer classes and who are edified to see their pastor come close to them to console the most abandoned of his flock in their suffering. The residents of each floor put a light on their doorstep for these occasions and they kneel to receive my blessing. The room of the sick child was adorned like an Altar of Repose on Holy Thursday and was filled with charitable neighbours who had come to be present at the ceremony. On this occasion the child was very well disposed. He sighed a moment after my arrival and his joy at seeing me was very moving. He received the sacrament of Confirmation with admirable sentiments.

**October 18:** Although I had promised the Archbishop of Aix to be in his city today, I felt I could not be dispensed this morning from going to Mazargues where my pastoral visit had been arranged. The children from the parishes of Bonneviene, St-Marguerite, St-Giniez, Rouet and la Capellette as well as St-Loup were assembled there. All went off very well.

I left Marseilles in spite of the strong wind which had arisen during the day, having given my horses a one-hour rest on my return from Mazargues. After a four-hour journey I arrived in Aix.

**October 19, 20, 21, 22:** I remained in that city throughout Friday, Saturday and Sunday and on Monday I left in the company of the Bishop

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<sup>20</sup> Archbishop Martinet of Chambéry: 1828 to 1839.

of Belley<sup>21</sup>, and Fr. Ruivet, his Vicar General to return to Marseilles where business awaited me. [p. 29]

I asked Jeancard who accompanied me to Aix, to take note of all the proceedings in our meeting; I would be somewhat embarrassed to write them down myself. It is better if a third person, present for all the sessions be responsible for recording what really happened<sup>22</sup>. We were six bishops of whom only five were from the ecclesiastical province of Aix. The Bishop of Digne and the Bishop of Algiers were absent and the sixth was the Bishop of Belley.

**October 23:** I asked the Bishop of Belley to excuse me so that I could go to St-Marcel where my pastoral visit had been announced. He replied as a good bishop that he would not have acted otherwise in my place. Consequently, I went where duty called and I performed my duty conscientiously.

I left St-Marcel somewhat late and arrived at Gémenos at night. This mishap upset the people of the village who had intended to receive me with great ceremony. It was one o'clock at night when, on approaching the township, we met along the road the lookouts who had been commissioned to announce my arrival by shooting with their guns. I understood then that I had seriously miscalculated by arriving so late. The whole village was waiting for me in the square in front of the castle. The parish priest, the mayor, the adjutant etc. all in full dress, the associations, the penitents, a large crowd of people. This gathering, the emotion aroused by the festivity, the joyfulness of the day, the fireworks, a great number of lighted candles, everything contributed to the manifestation of feelings which must have touched me deeply. The mayor, wearing his bandolier, paid me his compliments. I felt from the beginning of his speech that I

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<sup>21</sup> Bishop A.R. Devie of Belley: 1823 to 1852.

<sup>22</sup> Jeancard does not seem to have written on this matter; the content of the discussions have been recorded by Fr. Rey (II, pp. 37-38) who seems to have taken his material from what was written by the Founder himself in a letter dated November 15 and addressed to the Bishop of Belley and from an article in the *Gazette du Midi* on October 29. "The bishops still see any lending of money as being contaminated by usury. The Roman Congregations, however, had handed down decisions which were more favorable to freedom of commerce and financial transactions [...] Bishop de Mazenod brought up the topic and defended the replies of the Roman Congregations with such energy that, in spite of other influences, he brought about a unanimous vote in favor". The meeting dealt with questions of theology, ecclesiastic discipline, diocesan administration, worship and liturgy etc.

would be doing him a service by interrupting him, and that is what I hastened to do, taking for granted in my speech everything he would doubtless have wanted to say. In that way I relieved him of a great burden, because he would have been unable to assume responsibility for the complimentary speech which had been carefully prepared for him. He later assured the parish priest of his gratitude to me for what I had done. We went in procession to the church where I began my visit according to the pontifical ritual. In giving my sermon, I did not forget [p. 30] to tell the people the reason for my late arrival. As a result I could not very well take advantage of the occasion to remind each one of their duties. I slept in the presbytery.

**October 24:** An abundant rainfall which was very necessary for the countryside and which caused the inhabitants to say that not only did their bishop bring them abundant spiritual blessings as he had said, but temporal ones as well, and it also ensured that today there were more people in church than if the weather had been fine.

I remarked that the young ladies in the congregation sang very well, and that confirmed me in my resolve to be more demanding on the matter of singing in the churches. The words of some hymns are unworthy of God's majesty and the holiness of the place. They are more expressive of human passion than of the pure love we owe to our Saviour. They are a distraction and they are boring; they compromise sexual modesty and piety even more so. We should sing canticles with a refrain which all the people can repeat, that would be good; these solos, these party pieces etc., they make me sick.

**October 25:** In the evening I went to Roquevaire. I arrived quite late so that my arrival in the town would not be noticed. The children from Peypin, from la Destrousse, from Gréasque and St-Savournin joined those of Roquevaire to receive Confirmation. I did my ministry as usual. It was almost midday when we left the church.

The people of the hamlet of Lascours had sent a delegation to me on the evening before expressing the desire to have a resident priest. They even declare that in their concern on this matter, they feel, or have even decided, that they will no longer pay what they have been giving to the assistant priest of Roquevaire to come and say Mass in their little church on Sunday. I decided that I had to calm troubled waters and so I went to the place. The whole population had been notified and the men came to meet me while the women waited for me in the church. I spoke to these



good people who really deserve [p. 31] to be respected. They had all come dressed as for a feast day. Indeed it was a feast day for them because a bishop had never been seen on their hilltop before since Bishop de Belsunce had himself carried up there by chair almost a century ago. The fatherly care I had taken to come made them disposed to trust me. They were at peace as they waited to see what my goodwill would do for them. I sincerely intend to find a way to give them a vicarial chapel. It is really too difficult for these good people to be obliged to go to Roquevaire, which is a three quarters of an hour journey, for all their spiritual needs.

It was already night when I left Roquevaire to return to Marseilles and I arrived there towards eleven o'clock.

**October 27:** Current affairs. Letter from Fr. Guibert. Letter from Fr. Albini.

**October 27:** Letter to Fr. Guibert. I explain my opinion to him. I intend that Fr. Albini should not be completely withdrawn from the mission. However, since Fr. Guibert considers it necessary to employ him in Vico to teach Sacred Scripture and to help in the direction of the seminarians<sup>23</sup> I do not want Fr. Gibelli to remain in Ajaccio. This priest will go to Vico where he will work while waiting for Fr. Albini to take him with him on some missions. As for Fr. Roller, since he does not have any use for him in Corsica, let him send him here where I will find him useful employment.

Letter to the Bishop of Algiers in reply to his letter and as friendly as it could be. I place my house at his disposal, etc.

**October 28:** Pastoral visit to Château-Gombert. Reception and grand ceremony. The people came to meet me at the same place at which we had been received 18 years ago when we went to preach a mission in that town<sup>24</sup>. I made use of these memories in giving my instruction. Once again today I was made aware of the advantages of speaking to the people in their own language. In approaching Holy Communion the children did so not exactly in a dissipated manner but with a carelessness and lack of

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<sup>23</sup> During the work of extending the Major Seminary in Ajaccio in 1838-1839, the 80 seminarians were lodged in the house in Vico.

<sup>24</sup> Mission preached from November 12 to December 17, 1820.

attention and piety which showed [p. 32] only too clearly that they had little awareness of what they were doing. I made a kindly reference to that fact in my instruction prior to the Confirmation. I myself, and all those around me were struck by the respectful attitude, the modesty and recollection with which these children came forward for Confirmation. We all concluded that they understood perfectly what the Good God inspired me to say to them and that they had listened with notable attention, all the more since we had seen how indifferently and stupidly they had approached the holy table. Oh, holy Council of Carthage! The Holy Spirit inspired you the day you laid it down that hands would be laid to raise to the episcopacy only on those who knew the Punic language, the local dialect of the provinces provided for in your decree.

I visited the penitents and association of the girls and I took advantage of the occasion to encourage them to continue their good works. I was present at Vespers. The choir boys came from Marseilles to prepare for a little pilgrimage which we will make together tomorrow to the shrine of Notre Dame des Anges<sup>25</sup>. They sang the litany before Benediction, to the admiration of all present. The people of Château-Gombert are not accustomed to such beautiful things.

**October 29:** I awoke the whole house well before dawn. I had said my Mass before the sun came over the horizon. What a disappointment! The sky is covered in cloud and there is even a light drizzle. What can we do? It would be just too much to go back to Marseille in our embarrassment<sup>26</sup> after having promised ourselves such a pleasant outing. Children, must we go to the mountain which the clouds are hiding from our sight? Yes, yes, is the cry which comes from all sides, although in measured tones as you would expect from the best school in France. We will go since you want to do so but beware of the rain. We must set out nevertheless. Here we go with the children climbing onto the carriage which was to carry them and their [p. 33] provisions. I could see clearly that it was going to rain but what is a little drop of rain compared to the happiness of the good little children? It would take all the water of the deluge to quench their enthusiasm. The group was numerous and happy. We were about

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<sup>25</sup> Notre Dame des Anges is near Mimet in the diocese of Aix. Before the French Revolution the domain of the shrine had belonged to the Oratorians.

<sup>26</sup> The French phrase is "tout capots" which means "with bowed heads".

thirty, between children and grownups. Our young people will give a description of our journey. I shall limit my statements to saying that the house is in ruins, and the grotto which serves as a chapel, although quite large, does not inspire devotion. It is more suited to storing barrels rather than an altar. If it were in my diocese, I would either close it altogether or have it suitably decorated. At present there are three large blocks of masonry which are shaped like altars but without any decoration. By way of religious symbolism, there is an enormous mass of plaster which supposedly represents the Blessed Virgin, destroyed from the knees downwards. It might well be a porch decoration<sup>27</sup> from some building. It looks awful! After lunch the choir boys came and sang the *Ave Maria* in polyphony so that it could not be said that we had not made a pilgrimage to Notre Dame des Anges.

**October 30:** There were many business matters awaiting me when I returned late yesterday evening to Marseilles.

**October 31:** Bishop de Retz came to invite me to lunch. He is going back to Rome where he expects to be made cardinal<sup>28</sup>. There are already four auditors in the Rota ahead of him. That could mean he will wait for ten years. Since Leo XII did not, as he had planned, do away with the custom of cardinal posts which he considered a bad practice, the dean of the Rota whatever his merits might be, has the right to be made a cardinal, in the same way as the majordomo, the head of the papal household, the general treasurer and some others.

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<sup>27</sup> The French word is "poulaine" which refers to the prow of a ship.

<sup>28</sup> Bishop de Retz was not made cardinal.



## November 1838

**November 1:** This is an important day for us. At six o'clock this morning I went to the Calvary church to be present at the Mass celebrated by the first assistant. The two communities were present. At communion Frs. Allard and Baudrand took their vows as did also Brothers Bouquet and Basile<sup>1</sup>. These latter are Brothers who were taking their first vows. After the Mass and a sermon for the occasion, all the other Oblate, priests and others, renewed their vows in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament. Everything else was as usual.

Pontifical service in the Major. Beautiful as usual. Bishop de Retz was present but was not seen. He was hidden behind a confessional in the chapel of St. Joseph. That was why he could not be found when I sent someone to look for him to give him a suitable place. Yesterday I had offered to give him one of my soutanes together with surplice and cape so that we could do the honors side by side in the choir. He came to lunch with me as did also the canons as they do on days like this. He wished to meet the theologian<sup>2</sup> whom I had invited on his account.

Pontifical Vespers. I was present for the Vespers of the dead<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> The Mass was celebrated by Fr. Tempier in the presence of the Oblates from Calvary and the Major Seminary. Those who took vows were Jean François Allard and Jean Fleury Marie Baudrand (1811-1853), together with Brothers Pierre Bouquet (1808-1880) and Basile Pierre Fastray (1809-1874). Fr. Baudrand and Brother Basile Fastray were among the first group of missionaries sent to Canada in 1841.

<sup>2</sup> The theologian was canon Martin Guillaume Sardou (1764-1853).

<sup>3</sup> The Vespers for the dead followed immediately the Vespers of All Saints.

**November 2:** Pontifical presence at the office and High Mass. Bishop de Retz was to come to lunch with me. I waited for three-quarters of an hour for him. Finally, tired of waiting any longer, I sent to the theologian to see if he had stopped there to talk. He was dining there. I think the prelate was so ashamed of his behaviour that he did not dare put in another appearance. He left for Rome without coming to see me again. What about that for politeness!

The good Bishop of Annecy<sup>4</sup> wrote me such a friendly letter that it would have made me forget the dishonesty of Bishop de Retz if I had chosen to be upset by it.

**November 3:** I wanted to go to the cathedral to assist at the *Requiem* Mass for bishops and canons. I was prevented from doing so by the strong wind. That would not have been sufficient reason to prevent my going, however. I remained at home to receive the visit of all the clergy for whom it is the custom to come and pay their compliments to the bishop this morning. In fact, the visits began about 10 o'clock. [p. 35]

**November 4:** Mass in my chapel. Confirmation of adults. Pontifical ceremony in the cathedral.

I went to St- Charles *intra muros* to be present at Vespers *cum cappa*, and the sermon likewise. I gave the full ceremonial Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament.

**November 5:** Confirmation in my chapel. Letter from Fr. Montagard such as one might well expect from a man of his calibre; I shall reply as required by keeping to my principle which he will be unable to decline.

Letter from Gibelli in French, well written and well thought out.

Letter from Rolleri. He would like to come back to me, at least while waiting for his employment. When Fr. Guibert receives my letter, Rolleri and Gibelli will be satisfied.

**November 6:** Letter from Fr. Gallicet, rector of the boarding school in Fribourg, in answer to my recommendation of Mr. Nicolas.

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<sup>4</sup> Bishop Pierre Joseph Rey of Annecy in Savoy from 1832 to 1842.

Letter from the Bishop of Nancy. He tells me he will come at the end of the month. He will always be welcome in my house.

**November 7:** Letter to Fr. Montagard; see it in the collection of letters for today's date<sup>5</sup>.

Letter from Fissiaux. Still filial and filled with good feelings.

Letter from Fr. Garnier, Superior General of St-Sulpice. He tells me that Richaud has been sent to Issy to do his philosophy. What is more significant, he says Gaduel<sup>6</sup> feels he is called to become a Sulpician. Fr. Garnier makes the request in the friendliest way, but sufficiently urgently for me to be unable to refuse. I had expected it.

The Mademoiselles Dubosc and Rocofort came to tell how upset they are and also angry at the disloyalty of Fr. Montagard with regard to their little charges. What can I say to them?

**November 8:** Letter to Fr. Pierre Aubert. I give him, and also to Fr. De Veronico, the faculties to hear the confessions of all the members of the community during the absences of the Superior and director.

Letter to Fissiaux<sup>7</sup>, friendly as he deserves it to be. I ask him to bring me a soutane, to see Dupuget, to ask Mr. Henrion for the books of Navaes which I lent him a long time ago<sup>8</sup>.

<sup>5</sup> Letter of November 7 to Mr Montagard, rector of St-Julien in Arles. Authentic copy: AAM register of administrative letters, Vol III, n. 568. Among other statements, Bishop de Mazenod writes: "In order to destroy, you use the power you have received to preserve [...]. You are most odiously mistaken in your interpretation of what your bishop has said. You insult him who has at least the right to intervene in order see that the good desired by him who made you his legal heir is accomplished [...]. I continue therefore to consider you as an offender by your breach of the most sacred obligations placed upon you in trust, and whatever may be the illusions of your conscience at this time, I protest against your intentions in the presence of God..."

<sup>6</sup> Frs. Richaud and Gaduel were priests of the diocese of Marseilles.

<sup>7</sup> Fr. Fissiaux was in Paris at that time. Dupuget was a former member of the youth association in Aix (See J.M. December 27, 1938).

<sup>8</sup> It is not easy to identify these persons. Bishop de Mazenod writes "Henrion". The person in question seems to be baron Mathieu Henrion (1805-1862), lawyer and writer. Among other things, he wrote: *a history of religious orders* (1831), *a history of the papacy* (1832). In December he gave back the books he had borrowed (Volumes of Navaes). See Diary, December 19, 1838. These are, without doubt, the works which Fr. de Mazenod had bought in Rome in April 1826: Navaes, *Vita de Pontif.* (Lives of the popes); see *Ecrits oblats*, 17, p. 165.

**November 9:** Letter to the Bishop of Nancy. Letter to Dassy asking him to serve notice on me for what I still owe him.

Letter to Fr. Mille asking him for a novena on behalf of the Payen family and informing him that it was hoped Fr. Martin would join the Fathers from Osier to give a mission in the diocese of Valence. I am sending him a novice priest so that he can see him at work in a mission which they will do together<sup>9</sup>.

Another letter to Fissieux asking him to do some errands.

**November 10:** A good church member from Aubagne arrived, naïve in the extreme, to tell me what it was planned to do tomorrow in his town. Just as the mayor had recently given a ball in honor of marquis Barthélemy<sup>10</sup> the good black brother penitents imagined that they had to give a sung High Mass. And since, in their way of seeing things, it was not sufficient to honor the French peer, the penitent came to see me by the post coach<sup>11</sup> to ask for authorization to give solemn Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament to the sovereign prince on whom Aubagne felt they could not heap enough honor. I laughed loudly at this strange suggestion and followed up with a simple observation. Before coming to me, could they not have consulted the parish priest who would have dissuaded them from such a ridiculous and unbecoming thought? What was my disappointment, I do not say my astonishment, because nothing ever surprises me in the stupid things which the parish priest of Aubagne is capable of doing, on hearing the knight of the bullring declare that the parish priest had himself offered to sing the High Mass. After that, there was nothing more to say. My quarrel was now with this aging child. And I wrote him a letter and sent to it Aubagne, care of the new assistant priest Jauvat. That letter is recorded in the register for today's date<sup>12</sup> [p. 37]

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<sup>9</sup> This letter of November 9 is published in *Oblate writings*, 9, pp. 105-106. The novice priest was Fr. F. Bollard. He was sent to Notre Dame du Laus.

<sup>10</sup> Marquis Antoine Sauvaire-Barthélemy (1800-1875), was a member of parliament, that is a member of the legislative High Assembly known as the "chambre des pairs" (house of peers).

<sup>11</sup> The French "arrivait en poste", means the fastest transport of the time.

<sup>12</sup> Letter dated November 10 1838 to the parish priest of Aubagne [Louis Chavet, 1765-1844]. Authentic copy: AAM Register of administrative letters, Vol. IV, No. 2. The new assistant priest was Fr. Jean E. F. Anselme Jauvat (1806-1870).



Mademoiselle Bosc has returned from Aix where she had gone to complain to the Archbishop about Fr. Montagard. Since she did not find the Archbishop, she explained the situation to Fr. Bony<sup>13</sup>. His summing up of the situation was that if things were as she had explained them, Fr. Montagard could not have done what he is supposed to have done. The same may be said of all the learned men of good faith whom Fr. Montagard claims to have on his side.

Fr. Rolleri has arrived from Corsica. I hope that he will turn out to be the same as the other Fathers who have been unable to function in Corsica, but of whom I have made good use here in Marseilles. He brought me letters from Fr. Guibert, from Fr. Albini and from Fr. Gibelli. Fr. Albini's letter also contained a letter from the parish priest, Fr. Marchi, who reports a miraculous event, one of many, which occurred at the mission cross in Moïta. It is as though it were sanctioning the great ministry we are carrying on in this island which has become the inheritance of our Congregation. I hope that all these miracles will be recorded since they have made this first of our mission crosses a veritable shrine where the faithful come in crowds. This is the event recorded in the parish priest's letter. I shall copy the letter in full since it is a record of the good which the mission preached by our Fathers has done.

*"I take advantage of the visit of Fr. Mannoni to let you know that, by God's grace, peace and health now reign in our family and in the village... In Linguizzetta, after the holy mission, hearts which were so hard, proud and obstinate that they seemed like lions, have now become like lambs and friendship and perfect brotherhood reigns among them.*

*Devotion is continuing and increases the flow of people from near and far who come to visit our mission cross. During these recent days, a traveller fell from his horse a few feet away from the cross; the ladies rushed to his help. He cried out: Oh Lord, I am dying without having made my confession! He took the watch he was holding and gave it to one of the women with instructions to give it to his son. With that he lost consciousness and it seemed that death was approaching. [p. 38] These poor ladies cried out: recommend your soul to God here at this holy cross which has done so many miracles. The man turned towards the cross, he*

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<sup>13</sup> Superior of the Major Seminary in Aix.

*vomited copiously and got up as though nothing had happened. He returned to the holy cross and placed five Francs in the collection box<sup>14</sup>*. The letter concludes and is signed : Marchi, parish priest.

Letter to Fr. Albini to explain what my intentions are and to relieve him of the qualms of conscience with regard to occupations which take him away from the missions.

Letter to Fr. Mille.

**November 11:** Visit of the choir boys who made their First Communion this morning. There can be none better than these boys. Pontifical presence on the occasion of the anniversary of the consecration of temples<sup>15</sup>.

The Duke de Sabran came to ask me for information with the regard to the plan of the prince de Mir who had come to see him to suggest that he preside the council of the association he wishes to form for the Christian colonization of Algeria. All I could tell him was what the prince had told him in writing and which Mr. de Sabran claims he does not understand. As for me, I understood that the noble duke had come to find out from me what were the guarantees of the plan; I explained to him that my only role was to give my blessing to whatever plans were made to benefit a colony which it was deemed desirable to protect from corrupt practices by providing it with the help of the Catholic religion.

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<sup>14</sup> Bishop de Mazenod copied the Italian text of which the above is a translation: *"Profitto dell'occasione del signor abbate Mannoni per darvi conoscenza, che grazie a Dio, che tanto nella famiglia che nel paese regna la pace e la salute... A Linguizetta, dopo la santa missione, quei cuori si duri, fieri e ostinati che sembravano leoni, ora sono divenuti agnelli, e vi regna fra loro una perfetta amicizia e fratellanza.*

*La divozione ed il concorso delle genti lontano e vicine continua e si aumenta a far visita alla nostra santa croce della missione. Li giorni scorsi un passeggero, pochi passi lontano dalla santa croce, cade dal cavallo, accorsero degli donne per dargli aiuto, ed egli gridava: ah! Signore, muoio senza confessione! Si leva la mostra che teneva, la consegna ad una con obbligo di rimetterla al figlio; così dicendo, perde la loquela e dava segni prossimi di morte. Quelle povere donne gridavano: raccomandatovi al Signore, alla santa croce, che ha fatto tanti miracoli. Questi si rivolge verso la santa croce, subito diede molto bile, e poi si alza come se nulla fosse avvenuto, ritorno alla santa croce e lasciò nel tronco o cassetta cinque franchi"*

<sup>15</sup> French: "des temples" which refers to churches.

Letter from Fr. Courtès<sup>16</sup> from the mission in Rognes<sup>17</sup>. This good priest is not in the habit of giving missions. He is astounded at the people's lack of religion, and he does not have sufficient trust in the help of the grace with which those sent by God are strengthened. [p. 39]

The parish priest of Istres agrees to have the mission in his parish in January. St-Mitre will be immediately afterwards. The mission for Le Rove has also been arranged, in spite of the reluctance of the parish priest. The Archbishop has written to him telling him to arrange with the missionaries to have it done.

My mother has written and sent me the proxy which I had requested for Cailhol.

**November 12:** The Holy Father has made a present of the body of a holy martyr to the Society for the propagation of the faith<sup>18</sup>. It was to pass through Marseilles on the way to the principal city (Lyon). I considered that it would be fitting to give religious honors to these precious remains. The casket in which the holy martyr is enclosed and richly clothed, was placed, on my orders, in the church of St-Charles. At seven o'clock this morning, I went to say Mass in front of this important relic and I was surrounded by a multitude of the faithful who came there because it had been announced beforehand. Quite a large number of people received communion during my Mass. I attended a second Mass, kneeling at the foot of the altar because I confess that the presence this martyr had penetrated my spirit with a deep devotion and I was glad that I had invited my people to gather near the precious remains of this saint (named Exupère) who, during the first centuries of the Church had shed his blood for the love of Jesus Christ. These were the thoughts which sweetly filled my mind at the moment of the consecration when I saw, as it were in the same perspective, the divine Saviour and the faithful soldier who had sacrificed his life for him in the torments of martyrdom. I could have spent the rest of the

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<sup>16</sup> The name is always scratched out in the following pages.

<sup>17</sup> In the manuscript it is always written Rogne. It is Rognes in the Bouches-du-Rhône area, in the diocese of Aix, as are also the other villages mentioned in the following paragraph.

<sup>18</sup> The Pope had presented the body of the martyr Exupery to the Society for the propagation of the faith in Lyon. The body had recently been discovered in the catacombs. See *Annals de la propagation de la foi*, No. LXI (November 1838) p. 3.

day in contemplation of these great objectives, but I had to come away to attend to my other duties. With God's help, may all those whom devotion or curiosity has brought there, learn from their principal pastor how the saints should be honored. That would be a great consolation for me.

After Mass I sent someone to tell the parish priest<sup>19</sup> that if he had a cup of coffee prepared for me I would take it in the sacristy. He obliged me to tell him why, although he knew well. I shall never set foot in the house he had built in spite of me and in disregard for our observations on what was required by honor and good manners. I shall never approve of enriching one's family by taking advantage of one's position in the Church. If he had not been parish priest of St-Charles, he would never have been able to acquire that piece of land enclosed in the building to build a superb house for himself, knowing as he did that we were reserving it to build a presbytery. I fear that the duplicity, the bad faith and the falsehood accumulated by this man during the time of my uncle as bishop of the diocese, blinded as he is by cupidity, will be forgotten. The indignation which his conduct inspires in all of us, made my uncle decide to make a public gesture of his discontent, by leaving the church after Confirmation in St-Charles without going into the presbytery or even accepting a drop of water from this man. He has nonetheless persisted in his way, and I have had to disillusion him if he imagined that his actions could be forgotten. I am so far from having forgotten them that, when I make the visitation of the parishes of the diocese, I intend to sort out definitively who is the proprietor of this house. I shall once again make him the offer he has always avoided, to put an administration in place and of restoring to it the monies he has used for this scandalous construction. Otherwise I shall expel him from his parish without further process.

**November 12:** Letter from Fissiaux. In Paris he has promoted the cause of young prisoners. He asks for my approval to conclude an agreement with the Minister similar to the one made with Mr. Dupuch in Bordeaux.

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<sup>19</sup> Fr. Antoine Delestrade (1789-1849), parish priest of St-Charles *intra muros*. As to the construction of this house, see letters to Fr. Delestrade, November 7, 8, 16, 1834. Authentic copies: AAM administrative letters register, Vol II, pp. 543-544 and J. Leflon, *Mgr de Mazenod* III, pp. 73-74.

Letter from Honorat. He gives me an account of the beginning of the mission in Aubignan<sup>20</sup>. These are real missionaries! This letter is in singular contrast to the one written by Fr. Courtès about Rognes where he is giving a mission at the same time. Fr. Honorat's letter is consoling, joyful; the marvels of grace can be seen in it. It is all the things we ourselves saw being brought about by our ministry when we had the happiness of giving missions ourselves. Fr. Courtès' letter is icy. He is a preacher with an audience of indifferent people, and he does not have the confidence to foresee their conversion. Honorat has no doubt that the population of Aubignan, which number about 1,800, will, without exception, profit by the mission. Honorat is pleased with all his fellow workers. Courtès complains about all of his. The secret of this difference is that Honorat places his full trust in God's help because he is accustomed to witnessing the miracles that are worked through it, and Courtès, who does not have the same experience, thinks only of the human means available to him. Nevertheless, who has more talent [p. 41] than he has? and is Fr. Bernard not a good worker? and is Fr. Magnan not as good as Fr. Rouvière who is only just beginning?

**November 13:** Day for council. Mr. de Montgrand came to ask me for the same information as did Mr. de Sabran. I had to give him the same reply. I fear it will be the same story for all the members whom prince de Mir has chosen for his commission.

**November 14:** A painful anniversary! The angelic Nathalie<sup>21</sup>. If I was thinking of you during the holy sacrifice, it was only to thank God for the all the virtues with which he adorned your beautiful soul, and the glory which he has called you to share. I contemplated you in heaven where you reign since your creator called you there to take you away from the malice and corruption of this world where you appeared only briefly to make your passing regretted by all those who knew you. But we who loved you so tenderly, we who looked forward to years of happiness in the sweet flowering of our common affection, how can we be consoled at your loss? This feeling is just as alive and as bitter as it was on that heart-rending day when you were taken from us. Faith, faith alone, and the hope of meeting

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<sup>20</sup> Aubignan is in the Vaucluse.

<sup>21</sup> Nathalie de Boisgelin, Bishop de Mazenod's niece who died of pneumonia ("de la poitrine") on November 19, 1829 at the age of 19. See *Oblate Writings* 7, pp 192-193.

you once again in the bosom of God can sweeten our sorrow. Oh my God, how weak I am! Why is my heart still so worldly? Should it feel anything other than the purest joy when it thinks of the triumph of a soul which is so dear to it? Not so! Nature is there to make us feel the full weight of its oppressive might, piercing sensitive hearts so deeply with its sharp sword. Indeed there would be good reason to reprimand myself for being like this, or at least to regret it, if our loving Saviour Jesus had not previously sanctified our tears and approved of our sorrow when he wept at the death of Lazarus whom he was nevertheless to raise from the dead.

**November 15:** Letter from the Bishop of Belley. He informs me that he is sending me some of his books. The holy bishop says he is disappointed that the *Gazette du Midi*, while reporting many of the things which were discussed in the meeting of the bishops of the province, makes no mention of the final discussion with regard to Rome's decision on loans and the rashness of Mr. Pagès<sup>22</sup> etc. The Bishop of Belley appeals to me, inviting me to write a short supplement to this truncated article since it was I who brought up the matter in the meeting and defended it forcefully. In fact, in spite of certain influential people, I convinced the assembly to vote unanimously in favor of the decisions of Rome and severely reprimand the insolent conduct of Mr. Pagès, who personally insulted one of [p. 42] of the bishops present, the Bishop of Belley.

Letter from Fr. Mille. He gives me an account of the successful retreat he gave in Laus and the graces received in their own retreat<sup>23</sup>.

Letter from Fr. Ancel<sup>24</sup>, former secretary general of Bishop Arbaud and rector of St-André, letting me know of his entry to novitiate on the vigil of the Feast of All Saints.

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<sup>22</sup> Fr. Etienne Pagès (c.1844) was professor of moral theology and dean of the faculty of theology in Lyons. In 1819, he published *Dissertation sur le prêt à intérêt* in which he explained and defended the bull *Vix pervenit* by Benedict XIV which condemned the false interpretations and useless attacks on interest loans by some modern apologists. He later published further and more developed editions. The fifth edition was in 1838. In 1839 he published *Observations sur les circulaires de mgr les évêques du Puy et de Belley, relatives à la matière de l'usure*. See Quérard, *La France littéraire, La littérature française contemporaine*.

<sup>23</sup> On the retreat given at Notre Dame du Laus, see *Oblate Writings* 9, pp. 106-108.

<sup>24</sup> Ms: Ancelle, Joseph Ancel, novice October 31, 1838, vows November 1, 1839, left January 8, 1841.

Letter from the good Brother Morandini, worthy of his devotion. He still flatters himself concerning his condition.

Mr. Payan, municipal councilor, came to let me know the outcome of the meeting of the committee for the cathedral question. Mr. Massot, the assistant secretary, while agreeing that the matter is useful and fitting, concluded nevertheless that it should be left to the bishop to pursue the matter and expressed the wish that he would be successful in doing so. It is understood that if the municipal council were to make this request to the Minister, it could only be to the detriment of other more useful plans for which it is hoped he will provide 16 million. Mr. Payan made the observation that he considered such a vote to be the equivalent of New Year's greetings. Mr. Frassiniet proposed that a request be made for the government to build a cathedral which is considered necessary in Marseilles and that the city council, for its part, would do all it could to facilitate the project. Mr. Payan, judging that such a suggestion would not be accepted, agreed that the council should declare that it considered the building of a cathedral would not only be in keeping with the wishes of the whole population, but that it was eminently useful and necessary and that the bishop, religious head of the diocese and representative of all religious interests, be invited to pursue the matter with the government. This is the direction of the opinion to be prepared by the committee. Isn't it a pleasure to discuss religious matters with men who have such good intentions, and who are accustomed to giving preference to material matters such as docks, railways, the collection of refuse? It is enough to make one discouraged, or even to despair that one is reduced to having such little power when struggling against opposition which is systematically impious and which uses its power to neutralize every effort one wishes to make to bring people back to a knowledge of their duties to God.

**November 16:** Letter from the Bishop of Fréjus to put me on my guard against a young man who goes around dressed in white and blue. I know him and I will not be taken in by him.

Letter to Fissiaux returning his papers with a few observations. [p. 43]

Letter from Fr. Guigues. He asks permission to establish a Brothers' novitiate in every house. He asks my opinion as to whether he should

receive Mr. Cuynat<sup>25</sup> in his house and associate him with the work of the missions. The Bishop of Grenoble who is making every effort to establish a house for missionaries suggests that he be a member of this association. Mr. Cuynat prefers to work with our men. The Bishop must really be at his wits end to invite a man of whose foolishness he has been advised.

Letter from the Bishop of Lausanne. He make another request to send him Fr. Espanet<sup>26</sup> to preach in Geneva during Lent. The parish priest in Geneva places such great hopes in this preacher that he is not content merely to write to me himself, but he has requested the intercession of this prelate whom I respect. The good bishop not only writes to me, but he sends me a copy of the letter he has sent to the parish priest in Geneva. This precaution seems to be somewhat superfluous. Perhaps it was through oversight that he put the two letters in the same envelope, although that is improbable. It makes me feel good to copy the following sentence from the bishop's letter: "*The departure of your zealous missionaries from Billens was a loss to my diocese.*"

**November 17:** Letter from Fr. Guibert dated the 13th. A lightning bolt which knocked me flat. Fr. Albin is so ill that he has received the sacraments, on the very day Fr. Guibert's letter is dated; Holy Viaticum and Extreme Unction. Prostrate on the ground, I ask God to take me out of this world rather than take this apostle on whose existence the salvation of thousands of souls depends. I have done my work here below. All that is left for me is to increase the debt I owe to God because of all the unfaithfulness and the sins of which I am guilty each day. The little good which is still being achieved by my ministry could doubtless be done much better by another. Nobody, however, could take the place of Fr. Albin in Corsica where he has already done more than was achieved in all the centuries that have gone before, than all the powerful men who have worked there, even than the saints who have worked for the sanctification of these island dwellers. Oh my God! Can it be that these people be deprived of this holy confrere in their extreme need? Not so! He will not lose his heaven and he will possess it for [p. 44] all eternity, and these souls which he would save will be lost for lack of help if he does not

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<sup>25</sup> Ms: Quinat; Fr. Jacques Quinat had been in the novitiate for some months from the end of 1836 to the beginning of 1837.

<sup>26</sup> Fr. J.B. Espanet; see above note 24 for the month of June.



remain on earth. These thoughts are causing me so much concern that I have just written to all our monastic communities asking that the holy ladies who devote themselves to prayer there, begin to address humble petitions to God as from today, so as to withdraw from death this holy soul whom he seems to be calling to himself. I have no fear in recommending this holy struggle to them, in the hope that the Lord will allow himself to be persuaded by these angels whom he has placed on earth to invoke him unceasingly and to call down his mercy on men who are not aware of their real needs. These poor Corsicans are among them. Fr. Albini is the apostle whom God has sent among them for their salvation. May Fr. Albini not be taken from them! I have sent instructions to all the houses of our Congregation that prayers be offered everywhere for the preservation of our dear sick confrere. For nine days the prayer *pro infirmo* will be said at the collect, secret and postcommunion of the Mass. The community will pray for him at evening prayer and in our shrines the Blessed Virgin our Mother, will be invoked so that she may come to our aid in our present need. I have left nothing undone, as can be seen, to prevent for Corsica, for our Congregation and for the Church the irremediable loss which I fear. Although my spirit is keenly sensitive to the blows which fall upon me, it does not accept defeat and continues to struggle with all its energy in the face of adversity and to use all the means inspired by wisdom to blunt the edge of the ills which threaten our family. I do not say that by way of boasting. I am not so silly as to take credit for what I have received. I am merely explaining how I react when it pleases God to send us trials and I say it for the consolation of all those who should expect advice and consolation from me in the calamities which are common to all of us. Apart from that, my predominant thought and the one which gives me strength is my great trust in the goodness and mercy of our God.

Letter to Fr. Guibert in reply to his letter of this morning and while dwelling on the thoughts which are in my mind. I advise him to take care of himself in case he too fall ill.[p. 45]

Letter to Mr. Drach recommending to him Mr. Schmit<sup>27</sup> who is due to pass through Rome in the course of the journey he has undertaken.

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<sup>27</sup> Ms.: Schmitz. Probably the person in question is Mr. Schmit, head of department in the ministry of Justice and Worship in Paris whom Bishop de Mazenod got to know well during the Icosia affair.

**November 18:** Fr. Jonjon has heard from my own lips the reason that prevents me to grant him to say Holy Mass in his boarding school. I showed him the infamous statements which were made in the presence of many people by Fr. Vidal who is the avowed head of the house. I had the proof in my hand. Fr. Jonjon professed his regret that he had taken the way he did. I took advantage of this admission to remind him of the wrong he had done and comparing it with the good deeds I had done for him. In the end he told me that he would resign if he could and that he was available for any assignment that I wished to give him. The unfortunate man is making cruel reparation for the great sin of the scandalous revolt and all the insults which he heaped upon my uncle, upon me and upon his ecclesiastical superiors<sup>28</sup>.

The Bishop of Belley has sent me some of his writings. The good prelate will be pleased: I am having published in the *Gazette du Midi* an article explaining what they had already published with regard to the meeting of the bishops of the province. This article refutes the insults delivered by Fr. Pagès and explains why we had recourse to Rome to have the word *immaculata* added to the Preface of the Immaculate Conception. See this article in the newspaper<sup>29</sup>.

**November 19:** Mr. de St-Priest has written just as though I had not already agreed to the arrangements he suggested. That does not show hopeful signs for the great expectations we had with regard to our *Encyclopédie du XIXe siècle*.

Letter from Fr. Courtès on the mission in Rognes. I have reason to believe that what is missing in this mission is a missionary with experience in this type of ministry.

**November 20:** Letter from Fr. Aubert. He goes into rather distressing detail on the condition of our house in Aix. Like all who have passed

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<sup>28</sup> For the question of Frs. Jonjon, Vidal, Blanc and the Menpenti boarding school, see J. Leflon, *Eugene de Mazenod*, II, pp. 549-571.

<sup>29</sup> In the appendix to this volume (No. 3) we publish the letter written by Bishop de Mazenod on this occasion and dated November 18, to Fr. Jacquemet, Vicar general of Aix.

through this community, Fr. Aubert greatly exaggerates what is bad, but it is nevertheless true that this house is suffering. Whose fault is it?<sup>30</sup>

**November 21:** Mass in the Major Seminary at six thirty. At the offertory, I received the renewal of clerical promises, having given a suitable exhortation beforehand.

Mr. Chaubet came to discuss plans for a weekly Catholic newspaper. I did not hide from him the problems which he will have to deal with in the process but I did not discourage him.

**November 22:** Mgr. Menjaud, coadjutor-elect of Nancy, wrote me a long letter, to be read in my files for the date of...<sup>31</sup> He will go to Nancy before his consecration. That is the advise of the Minister, of the prefect and of the bishop. The bishop<sup>32</sup> will come to Marseilles and from here he will go to Rome. Mgr. Menjaud asks me not to discourage [p. 46] him from making this journey. He gives good reasons. He apologises for the fact that the newspapers have said he will be consecrated in Marseilles. Both he and the bishop had said so quite clearly, but no arrangements would have been made on the matter without having written to me. It seems the consecration will take place in Avignon.

Baron St-Marc came for the second time. We have finally met after many years during which we had not seen one another. We recalled the games of our childhood<sup>33</sup>.

**November 23:** Letter from Fr. Bise which makes be very happy.

For the third time this week I have gone to give Confirmation in one of the worst areas of the city. I always come away edified by the intense charity which reigns in these poor miserable dwellings. It is most

<sup>30</sup> The person mentioned here is Fr. Pierre Aubert. The Founder and the Fathers from Aix often complained about Fr. Courtès, the Superior. He was too demanding for his men and did not know how to encourage them.

<sup>31</sup> This letter has not been preserved.

<sup>32</sup> Bishop de Forbin-Janson.

<sup>33</sup> The St. Marc was a Provençal family. A member had been president of the parliament. In his writings before 1838, Bishop de Mazenod mentions him only once, in a letter to his father dated January 18, 1805. He says that Auguste de St-Marc sends greetings to the knight Charles Louis Eugene de Mazenod.

admirable to see so many good people come from the area to lavish their care on the sick.

**November 24:** Letter to the Bishop of Gap. I am sending him a copy of my letter to the minister of Education which he has requested<sup>34</sup>.

Letter from Fr. Mille. This excellent priest writes in a most touching way about the sad news I had given him about the illness of our good Fr. Albini. In our common sorrow it is good to see the feelings for one another which animate the members of our Congregation. All that would be needed to compose the most beautiful funerary oration would be to go through the letters of our Fathers and see what they know and put into words about the virtues which they admire. I have mentioned a funerary oration. That is because I have very little hope after the letter of the 13th from Fr. Guibert. Nevertheless, we shall not cease to pray. Speaking of letters, it is not without good reason that I keep them all carefully. I beseech whoever may find so many of them among my papers after my death not to consign them to the flames frivolously. There are few of those which I keep that do not contain some interesting detail about our Congregation. Perhaps some day, a member of the family, a man of good will, may be convinced that his time will be well spent in extracting from these documents and from others which he may be able to find, a very detailed history and, as it were, the annals of our Congregation. During the times I stayed in Rome, I saw in St-Sylvestre many handwritten volumes of the annals of the Lazarist (Vincentian) Fathers which were read in the novitiate. In spite of that, one of their priests was also working on a history of their Congregation. That was the only work this priest had to do, and he did not consider it a waste of time. In our case [p. 47] traditions are being lost. Soon nothing will be left except the letters. Let us look after them therefore as I have done, as we wait for someone to get down to the work.

**November 25:** Mass at Calvary on the occasion of the feast in this church. The customary devotion. The church was full and everyone received Communion.

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<sup>34</sup> Letter of November 4, 1838 in reply to that of the Minister inviting the bishops to make more frequent visits to the royal and communal schools. Authentic copy: AAM register of administrative letters, Vol. III, No. 467. This letter is published in the Appendix, No. 2.

The postman brought a letter from Fr. Guibert. I was reluctant to read it. How could I spend the day with the community, celebrate ceremoniously the feast for which I had come to Calvary if the sad news I expected were known to me? Therefore I preferred to remain in the realm between fear and hope but God himself knows how disturbed I was in spirit until after the Benediction in the evening. During the Benediction I had asked the Lord to give me the strength to bear the blow which I expected. On coming home I went up to the chapel within the house, and there, together with those who were with me, we recited a *Pater*. Imagine my anxiety as I opened Fr. Guibert's letter! The charitable attention of Fr. Guibert had prompted him to arrange the first words of the letter so as not to keep me in suspense. "*Fr. Albini is still alive*". That gave me time to breathe again and to get the strength to continue, "*but for some days now he has been in a state of agony, and the agony itself leaves no human hope of keeping him alive*" which means that the inflammatory condition of the illness has caused cerebral congestion which is the same as death. What can be done, or what can be said? We must prostrate ourselves humbly before God and, with face to the ground, sigh and be resigned without uttering a single word. Nobody has the right to fathom the depths of God's judgement. He is the all holy, the all powerful, the all wise. We who are here below are merely worms, blind, ignorant; all our thoughts are vain, our plans futile, our hopes deceiving. Let us wipe ourselves out, let us disappear before the Lord! Fr. Albini is in heaven. Corsica no longer has an apostle. The Congregation no longer has a voice to awaken the dead who have been cowering in their tombs for centuries. There was a man, strong in deed and word, who was greater than anything seen or heard in that island. We had the happiness to give him to it. His great mission had already produced results; the whole of Corsica was shaken by it. [p. 48] The harvest had suddenly, as if by miracle, ripened. With this man, all has now fallen by the right hand of God. Another blow for our humility! We must empty ourselves. Let us await the time of the Lord in our nothingness and our helplessness.

Letter from Fr. Honorat. Fresh details on the mission in Aubignan which would have made my heart overflow with joy if bitterness had not previously taken over.

Letter from Fissiaux. He is most grateful for the interest I have shown in him. His business, or as I should say our business, since it is a question of works of charity, has been completed to his satisfaction and to mine.

**November 26:** Quite a long letter to the Bishop of Belley. I told him that I have done what he wished me to do with regard to the insulting behaviour of Fr. Pagès towards him. He will have received the article published in the *Gazette du Midi*. I chastised him in writing as I had face to face on account of the expression in his ritual which would give metropolitans the right to visit the dioceses of their province. I uphold that the custom which has existed for centuries and which does not permit such visits has the force of law, any other practice would be a source of dissension and would sow cockle seeds among the bishops. Let it be sufficient for the good government of the Church that the metropolitans have the right to judge cases in the first appeal, and that is all that the experience of centuries has been pleased to assign to them; that already since the time of Fénelon, this prelate had recognized that metropolitans had lost all their authority which is the expression he himself uses in his arguments with the Bishop of St-Omer<sup>35</sup>. He undertook to defend the right of appeal, the only one, he claimed, which remained to metropolitans. Would this be becoming in a century when there is no idea of the unity of the episcopacy, when bishops are seen as marshals in the field, while archbishops are treated as lieutenant generals; when in the Tuileries<sup>36</sup> bishops were relegated to a separate chamber from that reserved for archbishops, (something the latter would not put up with); in a century when it is considered promotion for a bishop to be appointed archbishop, which is why it is considered to be bypassing the law to make a simple priest an archbishop without his having first been a bishop; in a century when the minister for worship could believe that by transferring a bishop [p. 49] to being an archbishop he had to be consecrated once again, apparently to confer a new character on him or more power since his salary had to be increased. Would it be a good thing if, in this century, archbishops were to be raised above bishops in the eyes of governments? I do not think so and I believe that many other bishops do not think so either. Therefore, if the Bishop of Belley were to become Archbishop of Lyons as I wish he would for the good of this vast diocese, he would do well to suppress article 147 of his section on metropolitans in a new edition of his ritual<sup>37</sup>.

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<sup>35</sup> François de Salignac de la Mothe-Fénelon was archbishop of Cambrai from 1695 to 1715 and therefore metropolitan of the former diocese of St-Omer.

<sup>36</sup> The royal palace in Paris.

<sup>37</sup> Bishop de Mazenod would not support the idea of archbishops having authority over bishops, as though being a bishop was inferior to being an archbishop.

I am writing again to the Bishop de Belley saying that I have sent a memo to the Keeper of the Seals to protest against the decision of the University council, and that I ask him to invite all the bishops with whom he communicates to protest on their part so as to obtain what I have no hesitation in asking, that a royal order be given to suppress article 5 of the Feutrier regulation<sup>38</sup>.

Letter to Fr. Jacquemet, Vicar general of Aix. A reply to the minutes which he sent. I praise the archbishop for the letter he had written to the Keeper of the Seals in reply to the letter which this minister had written to him to ask him for information on the meeting which was held in his house. I explained to Fr. Jacquemet that it was necessary for me to make an adjustment to the announcement he had made in the newspaper concerning the word *immaculata*. His phrasing of the subject would have been open to being made a joke. My explanation stated the question more becomingly by motivating the request and presenting it as a question which, since it touched upon dogma, must first of all be presented to the Supreme Pontiff<sup>39</sup>.

Letter from the Bishop of Nancy to inform me of his arrival in the near future and saying that he agrees with me in what I have to say about the child of Martier whom I had recommended to him. Letters from the Martier child and from his father to thank me for the interest I have taken in him. They have taken the ball on the hop and thought that I would willingly undertake the education of this child whom I know only through the recommendation of the Bishop of Nancy who is in a much better position than I am to ensure that he gets a good education cheaply.

Letter from Fr. Courtès on the mission in Rognes. Things are going better.

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<sup>38</sup> A regulation which excluded minor seminarians from the baccalaureate examination. Bishop de Mazenod had written to the Minister for education on November 21, 1838, to protest against this measure. Authentic copy: AAM, administrative letters registry, Vol IV, No. 6. See also J. Leflon, *Mgr de Mazenod* III, pp. 190-191. This letter is published as Appendix No. 4 at the end of this volume.

<sup>39</sup> This letter, shorter than that of November 18 but dealing again with the same ideas, has not been copied in the register of administrative letters; nevertheless, the original was discovered in the archiepiscopal archives in Aix.

Letter from the farmer in Billens. He presents me with a new arrangement [p. 50] with conditions which are even less advantageous. This property is daily becoming a greater burden. I ruined myself<sup>40</sup> in order to purchase it because of the circumstances. Now I cannot get rid of it. This farmer Criblet, or perhaps the person who acts as secretary to him, asks me at what price I wish to sell the property.

Letter from Fr. Pierre Aubert. It is really distressing. Our dear brother Morandini is getting worse. The community in Aix is at this time of mission composed of our three youngest subjects. I feel their embarrassment. Since I cannot go to their help myself, I am going to send Fr. Aubert<sup>41</sup> who will bring them my instructions which I have already put in writing, in case the good Lord should take this child away from us.

The Bishop of Algiers has arrived. His carriage broke down on the way. He walked for eight hours with the good priests who accompanied him. I tried to alleviate his fatigue by my fraternal welcome to him and to his companions.

**November 29:** I invited the Bishop of Algiers to come with me for the blessing of the organ which I had promised to do in the church of La Trinité. Coulin preached a sermon suited to the occasion. The church was full: beautiful people; I was pleased because the parish priest was counting on that for his collection. Afterwards I solemnly blessed the organ. After the collection which was announced by the sound of the instrument, the Bishop of Algiers gave the Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament.

The city council, in their debate, were in favor of my suggestion to build the cathedral. The excellent Mr. Payan took the trouble to come and let me know during lunch to which I had invited the prefect on the occasion of the visit of the Bishop of Algiers whom he knew particularly well. This magistrate assured me that he agreed with my point of view which was in the interests of the city.

**November 30:** I blessed my new chapel even though it is not quite finished, but I was forced to do so because the inscription on the altar

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<sup>40</sup> In his Diary for September 23, Bishop de Mazenod had written that Billens had been bought with the money of his uncle, Bishop Fortuné de Mazenod.

<sup>41</sup> Casimir Aubert, Superior of the Calvary community and Master of novices.



which I consecrated today said that it had been consecrated on the 30th. The ceremony went off very well. After the consecration of the altar I said Mass there. The altar has been consecrated under the title of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, of the Blessed Virgin, of St. Joseph, of St. Andrew, of St. Lazarus, of St. Charles and St. Cannat. I had placed the relics of these last two saints with those of other holy martyrs in a leaden box which is enclosed in the altar. During the Revolution, this box [p. 51] had been removed from the ruins of the altar of the Minims. I feel drawn to whatever goes back into the history of the Church and so I preferred to use this box; if it is in good shape, rather than have a new one made. On the parchment which is enclosed with the relics, besides the holy martyrs whose bones are in the box, there is mention only of the Sacred Heart of our Lord Jesus Christ and Our Lady, Saint Joseph, Saint Lazarus and Saint Charles under whose patronage the altar has been consecrated, but the circumstance of today's feast induced me to add the names of St. Andrew and St. Cannat of whose relics a small portion has also been placed in the box. I did not intend to mention St. Cannat but his name had been added to the paper which was placed before me and I did not wish to be dishonest by omitting him. Therefore my chapel will not be short of protectors. I have very good reason to be discontent with the quality of the marble in the altar as it does not fit in with the rest of the chapel. Mr. Bastiani, a so-called marble expert in Aix, to whom I gave preference because I was convinced that he would wish to distinguish himself, having been chosen to build an altar in Marseilles where there are numerous skilful marble workers, has disappointed me by choosing a grey marble instead of the white marble which I had requested. This lesson will not prevent me from being taken in again on many other occasions. I tend not to judge men above their merits and when I have to deal with them I find it hard to believe that they will be lacking in refinement or honor.



**Canon Charles Fissiaux (1806 - 1867)**

Bishop de Mazenod was very fond of this zealous priest. In 1835, together with the Bishop, he founded the Work of Providence for poor girls and orphans of the cholera.

In 1839 he founded the Society of St. Peter in Chains, the purpose of which was to look after children condemned by the courts. Bishop de Mazenod often mentions him in the Diary of 1838 and 1839.

Cf. here September 29, November 8, 12, 25, etc.

## December 1838

**December 1:** The postman brought a very short letter from Fr. Guibert. I did not have the strength to open it. What was I to expect to find after the agony of last week. Tempier, Jeancard, the two Cailhols came together into my office. All has been said, no doubt they read the fatal announcement by the paper. In God's name, give me a little time! I am not ready for such a heavy blow. However, they know no more than I do, but perhaps they were more hopeful or they were less able to overcome their curiosity, quite justified as it is. I turned around and Tempier grabbed the letter. He had already opened it by the time I noticed the theft. Involuntarily, I cried out. What was the reason for this indiscretion? What was to be gained by having me know our misfortune one hour earlier? That is unkind of you. - Be at ease, Father, he is still alive. - What, you mean he is still living! Yes. in the first line [p. 52] but carry on and you will see: *"Fr. Albini is still alive. He has regained consciousness somewhat, there must be some improvement in his condition. The doctors who had given up hope have taken a little courage again. If this good priest recovers, he will have come back, not from the gates of death but from beyond those gates. All of Corsica is upset by the news of his illness. Prayers are being offered here spontaneously in all the parishes. Perhaps we shall do holy violence to God. Should it happen, his return to life would be such a miracle that the doctor told me today he himself would write the account and have it printed."* That is where we stand. We shall continue to pray and to have prayers said. Our only hope is in God.

**December 2:** Letter to the Bishop of Nancy, addressed to Lyons, and letting him know that he has only to come. I am expecting him here.

Letter to my mother, to be sent with Fr. Lagier who is going to spend a few hours in Aix to see Brother Morandini. After he had left I received

a letter from Fr. Pierre Aubert that, after a moment of crisis, the patient was much better.

Fr. Certes, canon theologian of Montauban, has been presented to me by the parish priest of St-Martin as a preacher for Advent. He gives me a very flattering letter from his bishop who has no doubt about the success his ministry will achieve.

**December 3:** Letter dated November 29 from Fr. Vincens. He has received his manuscript with my notes. He wishes to prepare a booklet against Protestantism which he entitles: *My doubts expressed to a pastor of the holy Gospel (Mes doutes à un pasteur du saint Evangile)*<sup>1</sup>. He wishes me to prescribe for him what he should do to make up for the exercise of the discipline during the winter and during missions. He suggests the use of the hair shirt. I do not tend to share his ideas. First of all, it is possible, if one wishes to do so, to take the discipline during missions. As for the hair shirt, if it is a small one it is nothing at all; if it covers all the upper part of the body it is too much for an active man. In times of greater fervor I sometimes used it. For instance, when hearing confessions in the Minor Seminary in Aix, I felt myself being smothered and I had to go out and loosen it. Thus, I know from experience that these hair shirts are harmful and I cannot permit them.

Fr. Pitron<sup>2</sup>, a Jesuit, has been presented to me as the Advent preacher in St-Theodore.

Letter to the Keeper of the Seals asking him to grant the bishops of the big cities a stipend [p. 53] which would be sufficient to meet the expenses incurred by their position.

Mass in the house of the Mission in France on the occasion of the meeting of the Society for the propagation of the faith. The church was too

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<sup>1</sup> Joseph Ambroise Vincens (1803-1863) was then a missionary in Notre Dame de l'Osier. The "manuscript with my notes" mentioned here is without doubt the book published in Grenoble in 1840: *Le missionnaire aux populations qu'il a évangélisées*, 162 pages (see Diary April 18, 1839). The booklet "against Protestantism" was to be published only in 1848: *Faith, impossible if one wishes to believe only in the Bible. A reply by a Catholic priest to a Protestant minister*. Lyons and Paris. Périsse, 102 pages.

<sup>2</sup> Fr. Leopold Pitron was later to work in Marseilles when the Jesuits were established in that city in 1839.

small. The whole assembly received communion. I expressed my satisfaction.

**December 4:** Letter to prince de Mir to explain my comments on the editing of the statutes of the association he plans for the colonization of Algeria. He had read them in a meeting held in my house the day that the prefect and the Bishop of Algiers had lunch here. That assembly was composed of the Bishop of Algiers, the prefect, my Vicars general, Jeancard, the prince de Mir and Fr. Landmann, all of whom had also lunch in my house, Messieurs Barel, Bruno Rostan, Gros, F. Fournier, governor of the Bank of Marseilles, Charles Salles and the Vicar general of Algiers, Fr. Pelletan<sup>3</sup>. Some observations were made and Mr. Barel was asked to take care of the minutes. Yesterday there was another assembly in my office to read the corrected minutes drawn up by the lawyer Barel. Since the prefect was ill, his secretary general came in his place. Messieurs Salles and Rostan were absent. The work of Mr. Barel was applauded and only a few financial questions were discussed. I could not help being concerned at the veneer of philanthropy which is obvious in this document. Whenever I had discussed the matter with prince de Mir, we had agreed that it would be entirely Catholic. Since the articles had been submitted to the scrutiny of certain men, I was not a little astonished to see that anything mentioning the intention of working only in the interests of Truth, had been removed. The good prince de Mir, whose only ambition is the success of a plan which is very dear to his heart, has allowed himself to be persuaded that the feelings of others must not be hurt and that the work would be compromised if the help of the Protestants were excluded. So here we have our association of Catholics become a Christian association. Indeed the Bishops of Marseilles and Algiers have been invited to be honorary presidents etc. but in spite of their nominal presence there will be nothing Catholic in the statutes. On the contrary, the terminology is such that, according to the articles, colonies of Protestants may be formed as legally as those of Catholics. The matter so worried me that this morning I

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<sup>3</sup> Pierre Guiral, in his book *Marseille et l'Algérie 1830-141*, Aix-en-Provence 1956, p. 180, gives the list of all the members of the committee for the association, who, as he says, were: "the elite of Marseilles in wealth and commerce with a legitimist tendency". We follow the spelling given by Guiral for the proper names. Bishop de Mazenod writes some names differently: Landemman and Landamann, Burrel, Sale, Peletan.

wrote the following letter to the prince de Mir. It is on the reverse of this page<sup>4</sup>

[p. 55] Marseilles, December 4, 1838

*Dear prince,*

*Although I do not lose as many hours of sleep as you do, I do lie awake when I have important things on my mind. Therefore, this morning already I wish to let you know of the hurt I feel with regard to the composition of the following prospectus and articles that follow. Nothing very exciting, but the heart of a bishop cannot be satisfied with it. The arrangement is good but it is not permitted to trifle with Truth. Now, there is only one Truth, it is known and proclaimed only by the Catholic, apostolic, Roman Church. Not to admit that, is to betray it in some way. The Bishop of Algiers thinks as I do that we have been dragged into an evangelical Christian association if you will, but one which strives to hide its Catholic faith. There is mention of morality, of philanthropy but not a word about that which is dearest to our hearts. With these statutes it would be possible to establish Protestant villages under the aegis of the bishops. These articles contain everything that is necessary to force our hand in a meeting so that neither prince de Mir, nor Fr. Landmann, nor the Bishop of Algiers, nor I could do anything about it. All things having been considered, I think it would be a betrayal of my ministry if I took an active part in a work which has been put entirely beyond the conditions of Catholicism. There are so many people waiting in my office<sup>5</sup> now that I am unable to give a better explanation but you will be able to grasp what I mean sufficiently not to have the material printed before I have read it again in calmer circumstances to see if some words cannot be introduced which will put my conscience at ease and fulfill my responsibility in the eyes of the Catholic Church. I bid you farewell, prince. Send the priest to bring the manuscript to me. I shall keep it only 24 hours. I shall return it to you with my notes if it is possible to incorporate them. If not, I shall undertake to wish success to a work which may do good but which a bishop cannot share in unless it is purely Catholic. Sincerely etc.*

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<sup>4</sup> Bishop de Mazenod kept the whole of page 55 for his copy of this letter.

<sup>5</sup> There are too many people awaiting an audience, I do not have time to give a better explanation.

Fr. Landmann came [p. 54] immediately to bring me a change to one of the articles of the draft. I did not find that change sufficient to protect my honor, my responsibility and my faith. Therefore I reread the preamble and the articles of the draft attentively. I stopped at the first word. All the problems could have been solved: What should have been written was Catholic association instead of Christian association. Fr. Landmann's reply to this was that we would be opening the way for a Protestant association which would be formed before we would have time to get moving. The proselytising instinct of these sectarians would be aroused by our announcement and they would put their opposition into action by using the immense resources which their biblical society has shown it can use at will. This observation seemed to me to be justified. From that point onwards, I confined myself to excluding from the articles anything that could make available to the sects what we were preparing only for the Truth and for the propagation of our holy faith and, on the contrary, to expressing explicitly everything that could show that the Catholic religion was what we had in mind for the religious instruction we wished to give the people of the colony. By means of these corrections, the veneer of philanthropy and indifferentism was made to disappear. Not a trace was left. The honor of the episcopacy has been vindicated, and also the interests of the true faith. The only vulnerable point remaining is the title of Christian association which is too general and which we must allow to pass in order to avoid greater evil. Besides, we can defend our position by saying that we adopted this title in opposition to the infidels whom we are trying to bring to a knowledge of the Truth, and also in order to avoid making our work, which is entirely Catholic as may be judged from the context of the statutes, susceptible of hurting the feelings of our errant brethren.

These are, therefore, the corrections which were enough to wipe out the veneer of indifferentism which was hurtful to our faith in the adopted text<sup>6</sup>. I do not know if my corrections will be accepted. For me they are an

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<sup>6</sup> Bishop de Mazenod suggested 13 corrections [end of p. 54 and p. 55]. Here are some of the most important ones: No 4: "but it will nonetheless help to make the ancient Catholic faith flourish once again in that land where it once shone so brightly. In this way their purpose will have been achieved"; No. 5: "instead of evangelical, write: of the true faith"; No. 6: delete philanthropy and write: this is a national work, a work of divine charity which must necessarily be blessed by Providence"; No. 9: "after moral perfection add: based on religious principles"; No. 11: "correct: the company will establish relations only with good Christian farmers who will have a certificate of good conduct and mores from the parish priest of their parish, approved by their bishop and stamped by the civil authority of their country"; No. 13: "qualify education by adding religious and agricultural".

irrevocable condition. They are the price I demand for consenting to have my name included in the patronage of this work.

**December 5:** Visit of a delegation from the statistics society to invite me to a public meeting next Sunday. While thanking these gentlemen, I could not promise them to be present because of the Sunday service. [p.57]

**December 5:** Fr. Landmann brought the first proofs of the prospectus. Prince de Mir has agreed to my corrections. He had made a change in No. 12 but I have given the priest to understand it would be necessary to retain what I had written and that by adding "but always with the consent of the bishop"<sup>7</sup> he would be able to avoid the inconvenience as he saw it of admitting the natives with only the certificate from the civil authorities, and that this would be more fitting than requiring that the bishop certify directly the good conduct and habits of Moslems who would almost certainly be unknown to him.

**December 6:** Letter to my mother. Letter to the Superior General of St-Sulpice<sup>8</sup>. I agree to his request that Mr. Gaduel enter St-Sulpice on condition that he remain a member of my diocese, but I give him to understand that I shall never waver from my resolution never to grant dimissorial letters for the priesthood. How could a bishop agree not to bring to birth himself in the Church his collaborators in the great mission! I believe that, if one were to reflect upon the sublime effects of the imposition of hands, the wonderful operation of communicating the Holy Spirit, the intimate relationship, an incomprehensible but deeply felt relationship, which is established between the soul of the bishop and that of the priest by virtue of the ordination, the supernatural union which is the result of this fruitful emanation of grace, and all the spiritual and related duties which result therefrom, one would never leave to another the consolation and the happiness of such a great and wonderful work. As for myself,

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Having mentioned these corrections, Rey (I, 43) writes: The manuscript which was sent was corrected by the bishop and shows the preciseness of the teaching of the Bishop of Marseilles and his profound knowledge of the social relations which religion should regulate and dictate".

<sup>7</sup> The correction in No. 12 was as follows: ... "good conduct", correct "given by the bishop if they are Christians, and by the civil authority if they are not yet Christians, but always with the consent of the bishop".

<sup>8</sup> This letter is published in Appendix No. 5 of this volume.



every time I perform an ordination, it seems to me that I can say with the Lord that a power has gone out from me. Sinner and unworthy as I am, I feel in my spirit something which I will never be able to express. If God permitted the priest on whom I lay my hands to experience, if not the same feelings at least something of the same order and proportionate to the operation of grace as I do, I believe that he would remain inseparably united with me, that nothing could prevent him from being even more affectionately attached to me than a child to his father, that he would wish somehow to live my life as I wish to live the life of Jesus Christ [p. 58] who is the principle of the spiritual generation by which the bishop produces the priest.

I do not know how to speak; and so perhaps someone may have trouble to understand me. Nevertheless, my uniqueness can be excused out of respect for my behaviour which is the result of an intimate conviction which penetrates and governs my spirit, and one to which I adhere from the very bottom of my heart as to the sweetest and most consoling duty of my painful and daunting ministry.

Besides, in answer to those who do not understand such language, my abrupt reply is to quote these words from the holy council of Trent, without caring to add anything else: *Episcopi per semetipsos ordines conferant...* there you have the rule, and here is the exception: *quod si aegritudine fuerint impediti... ad alium episcopum subditos suos ...ordinandos dimittant*<sup>9</sup>. Therefore I shall be doing my duty by ordaining my subjects as long as I am not ill. Who can find fault if I adhere to the rule and do not permit an exception as long as my good health provides no need to take advantage of it.

*Unusquisque a proprio episcopo ordinetur*<sup>10</sup>, the holy Council continues so as to let the priest himself know the rule he is to follow. He would do well to abide by that rule and, if he gives the matter serious consideration he will not ask to be dispensed from this rule which is the expression of the Church's thinking, even though it is not absolutely opposed to his formulating a desire to the contrary, leaving it up to the bishop, however, to judge.

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<sup>9</sup> Bishops themselves will ordain their priests. If they are prevented by illness from doing so, they shall send their subjects to another bishop.

<sup>10</sup> Let each one be ordained by his own bishop.

Letter from Fr. Pierre Aubert. Morandini has had another crisis which was thought to be the last. He himself thought it was the and he did not betray his accustomed virtue even in the midst of the most cruel suffering. His spoke only words of affection: "Oh God of my soul, may you be blessed!". This dear child, according to Fr. Aubert, was beginning to write a letter to me asking permission to make his will and [p.59] to let me know what his intentions are. Why did nobody tell him that he does not need permission to make his will? Oh indeed! That is not what worries me. The loss of this child who held such great promise for the Congregation, that is what weighs upon my heart.

**December 7:** The arrival of the Bishop of Nancy. He has come to stay with me while he is in Marseilles.

Letter to Fr. Pierre Aubert in reply to the one he sent me yesterday concerning our good Brother Morandini. I commission him to give this angel my messages for the other world. They consist of obtaining from God the abundant grace which I need so badly to fulfill worthily the twofold burden which weighs upon me.

**December 8:** Mass in the Major Seminary on the occasion of the feast of the Immaculate Conception. I was then present for the High Mass which followed mine immediately. I shall conclude the feast in this community by going to lunch there and being present at the evening office.

The announcement of the Christian company for the agricultural colonization and civilization of North Africa has been published with the corrections which I had made to the draft, almost all of them, except what was not essential. I at once wrote the following letter to prince de Mir:

*It is fitting, my dear prince, that I should be the first to give the good example, since I wish to move forward the great work which you have achieved together with Fr. Landmann. In reply to your advertisement I am sending you the price of ten shares in our Company! I say "our" willingly now that our seal of Catholicism has dissipated the clouds which dimmed the purity of its light, a light which must not be obscured. Your thinking and mine as well as that of Fr. Landmann and of all who adore the Truth which is unique, is clearly expressed and there is no longer any [p. 60] ambiguity. Even the title which is a little vague, is sufficiently explained by the whole context, both in the foreword and in the articles..*

*Henceforth a bishop who, like me, is devoted from the bottom of his heart and with all his soul to the Roman, apostolic, Catholic faith for which he would shed the last drop of his blood, can take his place in its foremost ranks. Not only is his responsibility preserved in the sight of the Church, but he can, he must promote this work of salvation for so many souls who would be lost without help.*

*It is indeed fitting, my dear prince, that I hasten to offer you my consolation by opening to you my heart which reciprocates all your hopes, and to make up for the moments of anxiety which my conscientious remarks must have caused you. You are too reasonable a man, too good a Catholic and too well informed not be aware that I was performing a binding duty. I knew to whom I was speaking. One trifles only with the weak.*

*My greetings, dear prince, etc.*

Letter from the Bishop of Belley. It proves that we can always be right in the eyes of certain men when we think as they do and agree with what they like, but they persuade themselves that we are wrong when we contradict them, even with the best of arguments against them. The prelate, being stubborn in his own knowledge, persists in his opinion which he flippantly included in his ritual with regard to the right of an archbishop to visit (the bishops of his province), without refuting even one of the reasons I had given him. He even adopts a less worthy attitude which I shall not fail to point out in my reply to him, and I shall even note some further risky statements in his ritual. Although he sulks because I do not accept his views blindly, he finds that I am fully in agreement with him in the little supplement I wrote on the meeting of the bishops in Aix and he devours Fr. Jacquemet whom he refers to as a young man [p. 61] who does not understand his position. The whole reason for that is because Fr. Jacquemet did not stand up for him in his dispute with Fr. Pagès. Human misery, which we are nevertheless not obliged to let pass without responding to it.

Letter from Gaduel asking for permission to enter St-Sulpice.

**December 9:** Mass in the chapel of the gentlemen of Etoile<sup>11</sup>. A most edifying gathering but one which reveals our misery, because here are assembled all the practising Catholic men among the upper class of Marseilles and the number is certainly not large if we are to judge by those who were present this morning. Most of them are elderly men; there are few if any younger ones. After all, what is one hundred men who have come from all over the city? These were my thoughts while others were in ecstasy over the beautiful gathering. I had forgotten to say that there are 400 members of the society on the list. If all of them were Christians we would have had more than one hundred at the gathering this morning on this the only feast day of the association. I went to Vespers and assisted in *cappella magna*, standing at the pontifical throne because our divine Saviour was present in exposition. I must say my example was followed by a large number of those present. That gladdened my heart because it was really imposing to behold this attitude of respect, a striking profession of faith and due homage given to the divine Master, to the adorable Jesus present under the Eucharistic species. I admit that every time I have the occasion to do this duty towards our Lord, it gives me great satisfaction and real joy. It was fitting that this act of reparation be made to God's grandeur which remains unknown, neglected and unperceived by most, even of those who profess to know and adore him. My sincere wish is that all bishops pay him the same tribute everywhere in the world. After the sermon I gave the Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. [p. 62]

**December 9:** Praised be God! The letter which I have just received from Corsica gives me some respite. After two weeks in a state of unconsciousness and unable to speak, our dear Fr. Albini has recovered sufficiently to give some hope of recovery. He is not yet out of danger, not yet, but we can console ourselves that he has been restored to the Church and to the Congregation. Prayers are continuing. If he recovers it can truly be said that it was due to them<sup>12</sup>.

**December 10:** The misguided instructions given by Fr. Jacquemet, in collaboration with Fr. Carentène<sup>13</sup>, to the Sisters mistakenly known as of

<sup>11</sup> Les messieurs de l'Etoile: benefactors of the work of Providence, an association called Etoile. They took care of orphans and the poor. See note 8 for January 14, 1838.

<sup>12</sup> The French could be interpreted as "to whom it was due" (à qui on le devra).

<sup>13</sup> Fr. Carentène (1807-1864), was then parish priest of Plan-de-Cuques, and Fr. Jacquemet was Vicar General of Aix.

St. Thomas<sup>14</sup>, have borne fruit. They had been recommended, even ordered in the name of holy obedience, what an abuse of power! not to let the bishop of the diocese or his Vicar general know of any of the difficulties or little contrasts taking place in the community: this is the result. The Superior has been recalled without my knowing about it and has said goodbye to the company. Besides, she has taken advantage of her influence with the most useful Sister in the house and persuaded her to join in her apostasy. Both have now departed. Three of the boarders took off to follow them and it was only with difficulty that these children were brought back. I can only imagine the lack of discipline in this house. The new Superior has come to see me today and I gave her a very poor reception explaining to her the reason for my being so severe. As for the two apostates, I saw them this morning. I reprimanded them as they deserved and gave them to understand the wrong they had done, pointing out that the only way to make reparation was to enter a community where they could serve God, or else petition the Pope to be released from their vows, which was something I did not advise them to do. They bravely decided to go to Rome and I left them to do as they wished which is certainly not the most reasonable course of action.

**December 11:** Fr. Carentène came to excuse himself rather poorly for his devious and less than sincere conduct. He is a priest who is not lacking in some virtue, but whose character is dishonest. He had promised me [p. 63] to mend his ways but I have found fault with him everywhere I have placed him.

**December 12:** Charity meeting at La Trinité to discuss the work *in fieri* of a retirement house for priests in La Seyne. The Bishop of Nancy preached. The audience was not numerous. The total collection from both the collection and the seats<sup>15</sup> amounted to about one hundred ecus for the work. I shall be surprised if this project is ever realized. It did not arouse any sympathy in my diocese.

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<sup>14</sup> The Sisters of St-Thomas de Villeneuve were founded in 1660 in Lambelle (Brittany) by Fr. Ange Proust, an Augustinian. After the Revolution, Madame de Pinczon, a member of this Institute and a relative of Bishop de Cicé, founded a house in Aix which became an independent Congregation with the name of Augustinian Sisters of Notre Dame de la Grâce, known as of St-Thomas. In 1823 they took charge of the Aubagne hospital in the diocese of Marseilles.

<sup>15</sup> "Paid seats": there was a second collection to have a seat during the assembly.

**December 13:** Letter from the Abbot of Aiguebelle<sup>16</sup> asking me to unite my prayers with those of his community during the forty days between Christmas and the Feast of the Purification.

The Bishop of Nancy has left for Fréjus via Toulon where he will visit the La Seyne house which it is hoped to establish for priests. He will return on Wednesday.

**December 14:** I went through my papers. I have burned almost two hundred letters. I kept those which could be useful for the history of the Congregation. There are some interesting things to be found in this correspondence. They are a record of things which would otherwise be lost. There are also some precious details for the lives of our Fathers, These reveal not only deeds but also sentiments which are often admirable and which will edify and be an example to those who come after us. What is needed is a devoted, patient, zealous and capable man to coordinate all these things. Let him be assured that his time will have been well used if his work produces an interesting history of the beginnings and development of our Congregation, the story of the different missions and establishments, a glimpse of the edifying, exemplary and apostolic life of the members of the Congregation who have devoted their existence, who have even sacrificed their lives for the glory of God and the salvation of souls. If I could find such a man of goodwill, I would not hesitate to have him give up all other work, every ministry, in order to give him even two full years to devote himself to this occupation. I say that here so that nobody will have any scruple in putting this plan into action when at a later date it will be possible to do what I regret has not been done so far. [p. 64] Letter to the consul of Sardinia, politely refusing the favor he had asked me for the priest Ragazzoni, who has been ignominiously chased out of Padua by the bishop.

I went to St-Martin to listen to the sermon given by Canon Certes. I was very pleased with his instruction on charity to those who do us harm. It was well written and well delivered.

Going through my papers, I found a note which I shall copy here to preserve its contents. I had written it after leaving the audience with the Pope:

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<sup>16</sup> The Trappist monastery of Aiguebelle (Drôme).

*Our Holy Father the Pope granted me a farewell audience on October 24, 1832, by special favor because there should not have been any audiences on that today. His Holiness received me, as on other occasions, with very special kindness and he readily granted to all the favors I requested, except the dispensation from fasting if there should be a cholera epidemic. He told me to see about that matter with Cardinal Lambruschini as the Archbishop of Paris and other bishops from France had done; 2 - He expressly dispensed me from any obligation of residence, since my diocese (Icosia) is in the hands of the infidel; 3 - to my mission cross<sup>17</sup> he applied the indulgences of the Way of the Cross for myself; 4 - He kindly signed with his own hand, the petition which I presented to him to obtain the communication of offices with the Redemptorists; 5 - he told me of his intention to reply to my uncle the Bishop of Marseilles of whom he spoke very kindly.*

**December 15:** I paid my minimal subscription of ten Francs to the General Society for shipwrecked of which I was made a member in Paris and presented with a beautiful diploma as honorary president.

Mr. de la Boulie has let me know, through the intermediary of the parish priest of St-Jean about the death of his wife. We shall pray to God for her.

Letter from the parish priest of Rognes to thank me for the good done by our missionaries in his parish: *"The task, he says, was not as easy as one might be allowed to think and it took nothing less that a man of the excellent Fr. Courtès' calibre to make the job a success. This true apostle of Jesus Christ, abounding in virtue and knowledge, left memories in this parish which will not be wiped out... His two collaborators rivalled him in zeal and made a powerful contribution to the success of the enterprise. A better outcome could not have been expected. Half the population of Rognes came to the mission. What a disappointment! For us that has always been seen as a mission that failed. Great God! Half the population did not take advantage of a mission which lasted five weeks. We have never seen such a miserable result; the parish priest may well add that a considerable number of those who did not take advantage of it expressed their regret at not having done so. We take no consolation from the fact that even five or six people had resisted the impulse of grace. It was rare*

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<sup>17</sup> Missionary's cross.

for this to happen once or twice, or sometimes not at all, in a very numerous population. Fr. Dassy, who wrote to me today to give an account of the retreat he has just given in the Minor Seminary of St-André<sup>18</sup> tells me about the last mission they gave in St-Christophe du Pin<sup>19</sup> where only one man did not come to the Sacrament of Penance. That is a real mission! I am afraid that missions are not being given in the customary way in the diocese of Aix. Why is it that they succeed everywhere else as they always have done while in Aix they obtain only mediocre results?

Letter from Fr. Magnan: *I shall finish it, he says, while keeping vigil with our young brother Morandini. He is still quite ill. Haemorrhaging continues every day. Yesterday evening we thought he was in his agony. The doctor keeps changing his prognosis. Once again yesterday evening, the Superior in the presence of the whole community, gave him Holy Viaticum at his request. Yesterday Mr. d'Astros told us he would not last until this evening but it seems the good God continues to purify this angel and wants us to be witnesses for longer of a sight which astounds everyone who comes in here: not the least sign of impatience, he even tries to hide his intolerable suffering from us. As for myself, it would take much to make me give up my place at this deathbed. I fear that he might die in our absence. I would not want to miss contemplating the beauty of his soul which is evident in the serenity of his countenance or even the smile which appears in response to even the slightest word of consolation spoken to him. The lay persons whom we have invited to be witnesses to his last will could not get over their surprise at seeing such perfect calm in circumstances which are otherwise so sad. We have only one regret which is to see him buried in the common cemetery until such time as there is a community burial place. Whatever happens, his holy death will be one more proof of the protection given by the Blessed Virgin to our confreres in their last moments and I am not sure if the death of Fr. Arnoux was more edifying than this. The charity shown by our Fathers has been admirable as usual.*

I have no hesitation in taking the trouble to copy these lines to the glory of our dear predestined confreres. I pray, I meditate, I rejoice, I offer to God a painful sacrifice and, at the same time I feel consoled that mate-

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<sup>18</sup> Minor Seminary of Côte-Saint-André, diocese of Grenoble.

<sup>19</sup> Department of Isère.



rial is being prepared for his praise and for the future edification of our family as I watch those who die such holy deaths and whom God calls to himself from the bosom of our little Congregation. If this child, this angel, were to die as a Jesuit, he would be made a Berchmans or a Stanislaus<sup>20</sup>, an Aloysius Gonzaga. Why, therefore, should we not give praise to the Lord for his great mercy towards us by granting our confreres the grace of the death of the predestined. Pons, Suzanne, Marcou, Arnoux, Dumolard<sup>21</sup> and all our other brothers, answer me from the highest heaven! Was not your vocation to the Congregation of the Oblates of Mary a sign of predestination for you? May it be likewise, oh my God, for all of those who will soldier to the end under the same banner; may he who has rallied them in your name die in his turn, when the hour comes, as they have died and may he rejoin them in glory to love them in God for all eternity even more perfectly than he has loved them on earth, where he loves them so much. [p. 67]

**December 16:** Mass in St-Henri. I went there to conclude a two-week retreat which the parish priest had given to the men of the parish outside the time of mission. I have never seen anything more edifying. The church was filled with men to the exclusion of women. Their attention to the words which I addressed to them was quite remarkable, and these good people grasped what I said to them so well that many were moved to tears of tenderness, which was edifying for certain gentlemen from the city whom the parish priest had invited. When I saw these signs of emotion and goodwill I was encouraged to administer Confirmation immediately to about thirty of these men who had neglected to receive this Sacrament until now. As I said to the assembly, it seemed to me that, in coming upon the souls of the *confirmandi*, the Holy Spirit produced a renewal of fervor in all the faithful who were present, that his grace was communicated to all, that those who had received the grace of conversion in the retreat shared in the gifts which they had lost and that these gifts would be poured abundantly on those whom I was about to confirm. These were the thoughts which impressed me as I very solemnly gave Confirmation to these thirty men aged 25, 30, 40, 60 or 70 years and who received the Holy Spirit with unequivocal signs of amendment. More than 400 men went to

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<sup>20</sup> John Berchmans (1599-1621) and Stanislaus Kostka (1550-1568).

<sup>21</sup> A.M. Pons (1808-1836), M.J.A. Suzanne (1799-1829), J.J. Marcou (1799-1826), V.A. Arnou (1804-1828), P.P. Dumolard (1808-1828).

Communion. I was too much inspired by the divine Spirit whom we had just adored in his act of love, not to take advantage of the occasion to address them once again at the moment of giving them the body of Jesus Christ. It seemed an opportune moment to inflame the hearts of these men, so little accustomed to the workings of grace, and to provide them with the means of fulfilling to the utmost their duty of acknowledging God's love on this beautiful day. I have reason to believe that my purpose was fulfilled. I completed the day by assisting at Vespers and at the sermon on heaven improvised by Jeancard. Then I gave the Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament as I had done in the morning.

On my return home, I found a letter from Fr. Guibert, giving some news about Fr. Albini, who is continuing to improve though very slowly. It seems that Guibert is as much afraid of the convalescence as he was of the illness although he acknowledges it was only by a miracle that he held on. [p. 68]

Fr. Courtès has also written to say that Morandini is still in agony, vomiting a dish of blood every morning, but continuing to be supremely edifying to all those around him. I wanted to go from St-Henri to Aix to bless this dear child but one of the mares was sick and I had to deny myself this consolation.

**December 17:** Letter to Fr. Bise. An exhausting<sup>22</sup> day!

**December 18:** Mass for the Dames de Nazareth<sup>23</sup> where I gave Confirmation to some of the girls under their care. Madam de Sainval was at the head of her community. This institution is having some difficulty surviving in Marseilles; however, it has succeeded better than could have been hoped. It is still, however, far from perfect. What can be expected with a community who take vows for only one year?<sup>24</sup> The document they have and which they claim has come from Rome is of little importance. It

<sup>22</sup> The French word "assommante" has been scratched out.

<sup>23</sup> The community which ran the refuge called Nazareth where slave girls rescued by Fr. Olivieri in the market of Alexandria in Egypt were cared for (Rey, III, p. 310). Cf. Abbé J.B. Nicola Olivieri was born in the diocese of Genoa on February 21, 1792 and died in Marseilles on October 24, 1864. His cause for beautification is on the agenda of the Congregation for the Causes of Saints.

<sup>24</sup> Bishop de Mazenod, however, could not have been unaware that this is also the case with the Daughters of Charity founded by St. Vincent de Paul and St. Louise de Marillac.

mentions some indulgences granted without recognition or approval. These ladies could have obtained more from their Ordinaries. Meantime, they are doing the type of good work which they have set out to do. I consider it my duty to help them as I would always help those who wish to work for the glory of God, for their own salvation and for that of souls.

The Bishop of Nancy has returned from his visit to Fréjus. He has said nothing to me about the arrangements he has made with Bishop Michel<sup>25</sup>. Sister Geray will have no hesitation in telling more than I would wish to hear. That is one way to be compensated. The fact of the matter is that I let them get on with it. My diocese is completely disinterested in this charitable work of which the Bishop of Nancy would be unable to make a success without the help of Sister Geray who gets everything moving, even though she is sometimes discouraged by the distractions of the bishop. He does not move unless she pushes him and even then he does not keep going for long.

**December 19:** Council meeting which admitted the novices Viala and Boissieu<sup>26</sup> to vows. The former is from Montpellier diocese, the latter from Grenoble.

Sermon by Canon Certes in the church of la Trinité for the charitable society of the orphans. The preacher was consistently clear and good.

Arrival of the excellent Fissiaux. There were too many people waiting to see me so that I could not discuss all our business matters with him. I put that off for another day when we will be more free. He brought me two letters: one from the good doctor Gaultier, the other from Mr. Henrion. The latter [p. 69] apologises for holding on to my books by Novaes on the pretext that they are so useful to him for his history that if he dared he would ask me for the others. He presupposes that, there are no other copies of this work in France except mine. I forgive him this carelessness, because he could at least have asked me if he could keep these volumes for years. I thought they were lost.

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<sup>25</sup> Bishop J.-B. Michel, Bishop of Fréjus from 1829 to 1845.

<sup>26</sup> Jean Viala (1808-1869), vows on January 1, 1839, ordained priest November 3, 1939. Adolphe Boissieu, born 1806, oblation January 1, 1839, left the Congregation on October 3, 1839.

**December 20:** Visit to St-Joseph with the Bishop of Nancy. This boarding school is in a most prosperous condition. Is it known in Marseilles that it is due to my care, and does anyone know what it has cost me in suffering and tribulation? For a moment today I thought that these Sisters had forgotten. Nevertheless, if the Sacred Heart Sisters are in possession of this magnificent establishment today, it is to me that they owe it. If I had attended only to my own interests and comfort, instead of first trying to install the Dames de St-Pierre there and then calling on the Sacred Heart Sisters, I would have acquired this beautiful property myself. It was quite a good business deal to invest one's money at 4% in a castle and domain such as this.

**December 21:** Mass in the interior choir of the Capuchin Sisters. This appointment has become a tradition<sup>27</sup>. This is the feast of St. Thomas, the anniversary of my priestly ordination. On such devotional days, it is good to find one's self surrounded by fervent souls who supplement the weakness of our own efforts. I had to take advantage of a few hours spent in this holy house because I foresaw that, contrary to my custom, I could not go on retreat during the remainder of the day to prepare for the ordination tomorrow. The presence of the Bishop of Nancy keeps me at home unwillingly, but one has to sacrifice one's preferences to the demands of good manners.

**December 22:** Ordination in the cathedral. Edifying as usual. Two priests for the diocese, two deacons for the Congregation and a third for the Capuchins, a sub-deacon for the diocese, one acolyte and one tonsure for the diocese. That is the sum total. A large number of priests came to lay hands on the two priests. Most went away immediately afterwards. That shows a lack of understanding. I am going to issue a decree to let them know what to do in future. Only those priests who will be present for the whole ordination ceremony will in future impose hands with me. If they wish to be identified with the ordaining bishop they must be part of the presbytery present for the whole sublime ceremony. Their imposition of hands can be dispensed with, if they come only for that.

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<sup>27</sup> The French: "est de fondation" means it is one of his annual visits.

Letter from Ajaccio and Vico from Fr. Guibert, from Fr. Moreau, from Fr. Gibelli and from Fr. Bellon<sup>28</sup>. After another dangerous turn in the illness of Fr. Albin, he has recovered somewhat and there is still some hope. He scarcely had the strength [p. 70] to whisper to Fr. Gibelli, asking for my blessing, because his poor body is in great pain. I had taken care to renew my request to my holy Sisters that they should continue their prayers. I always offer the prayer *pro re gravi* for him at Mass. Is it not indeed important to obtain the cure of a man on whose life the salvation of so many souls depends!

**December 23:** Confirmation in my chapel for some who would not be part of Monday's ceremony<sup>29</sup>. I was present for the sermon in St-Martin in honor of Fr. Certes. Therefore I had the pleasure of listening to him once again and was not disappointed in my expectations. The sermon was excellent.

**December 24:** Letter to the Bishop of Nice to recommend Mr. Dherbes. Confirmation of an officer in my chapel. Nothing could be more edifying than his devout attitude. He is to marry Mademoiselle Stafford in a few days time. I also confirmed a young man to whom I gave his First Communion on the same occasion. He was part of Mr. Castelli's little group<sup>30</sup>. He has promised not to go on stage again and he prepared himself so well for today's ceremony that we can flatter ourselves that he will keep his word. This poor child had all the more need to do this important duty because he is now going to live in England.

Letter to the parish priest of La Ciotat informing him of his new assistant priest and the priest sacristan whom he had requested, I am sending the latter on condition that he will have him in his house as a boarder so that he can supervise him. That is the sacristan who is an unfortunate gentleman, already under interdict *etiam a sacris* and without any faculties other than to say Mass as humbly as possible.

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<sup>28</sup> Charles P. Bellon (1814-1861), ordained priest on March 25, 1837, was appointed professor in the Ajaccio Major Seminary (then in Vico) in the Autumn of 1838 to take the place of Fr. Reinard.

<sup>29</sup> December 23 was Sunday.

<sup>30</sup> It seems they were a group of theatre actors.

The holy night of Christmas! I insist that it must be solemnised as it should. It will be celebrated in all the parishes and, so that the devotion of the faithful give an example of piety to others; it is forbidden for the faithful to gather in the chapels of religious houses or elsewhere. Let everyone be present in the fold, let the churches be filled with worshippers. Thus dissipation and frivolity will be left outside the door. The impious and the bad Christians will not enter into the holy place and we shall have rendered to the Saviour of the world a shining worship, worthy of his greatness, and the expression of our gratitude. It is possible that some timid souls, some narrow-minded people, may murmur, but it is up to me to appreciate the great religious thoughts [p. 71] and to conform to the mind of the Church which it is my duty to know better than simply devout souls or anyone else who may not be able to understand my thoughts. I was truly rewarded in the cathedral by the silent gathering which filled the church quite some time before the High Mass began. The service was superb. I was in transports of joy to witness, in the middle of the night, such a numerous assembly of Christians gathered around their bishop and singing the praises of God for several hours. The church was quite well lighted. Everyone could read where they were. The stewarding was irreproachable and carried out intelligently. The pontifical Mass which I celebrated with delight was most solemn and imposing. I said my second Mass during the recitation of Lauds for the convenience of those who plan to attend the High Mass during the day. We arrived home about three o'clock, praising God for all that he had done during this beautiful night.

**December 25:** Pontifical Mass with music. The feast continued as beautifully, if not as touching as that of the night. All that happened was well done. The parish priest of St-Martin was delighted that things were so quiet in his church when he expected that there would be a lot of noise. He thanked me for insisting that he hold the ceremonies. Our Vespers were quite good but the preacher made martyrs of us by his deficiency. He ended up without a word to say<sup>31</sup> just at the moment when he had recommended that his audience pay attention. Indeed he badly needed to draw the attention of his sleepy audience, the chapter being no exception, nor even the bishop. But just at the moment when everybody had woken up to hear what remarkable things he had to say, he stopped speaking. There

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<sup>31</sup> The Founder uses the phrase "rester sur ses dents" which is not a recognizable French phrase but must be interpreted from the context.

was something solemn about this silence in the midst of the darkness. In vain did the preacher open his notebook. He was unable to read the unlucky word he wanted. Bring me a candle, he shouted. At that moment, men of good will took off on all sides. My candle bearer, needled by zeal like all the others, brought him my candle which was extinguished. The sacristan arrived with a stump of paschal candle which he had discovered. The church warden came out of the parish sacristy with a lamp. The altar server came along from his place with the long rod he used to light the candles on the altar. I could feel the moment when we were about to pass from darkness to a sudden blaze of light which would illumine the pulpit and show us the preacher, not in the least upset by his misadventure. If one has the courage to drum up old sermons which everyone knows by heart and in spite of the fact that one fully realizes that nobody wants to hear them, one runs the risk of arousing comment. Meanwhile, while everybody was in such confusion to find him a candle he found his [p. 72] word and he followed it painfully with another one and then another, each one following the other like the click of a scissors and pricking the ears of his very bored audience. When someone is obviously<sup>32</sup> preaching only for the sake of earning nine Francs, what sentiments can they arouse in a sleepy audience by speaking for forty-five minutes and delivering an insipid discourse in the most stupid manner possible? That is what is required to proclaim one's self the ordinary, and very ordinary, preacher to the king. He remains nonetheless a very poor speaker.

**December 26:** Present at the sermon by Fr. Certes in St-Martin. A collection was made for the church in Lausanne.

**December 27:** Sermon given by Fr. Deplace<sup>33</sup> in the church of la Trinité to raise funds for the church in Lausanne. He preached on the priesthood with his usual vigor. I cannot feel at ease with a theatrical way of speaking which leaves an impression of pretense and does violence to the subject and to the status of the speaker.

Visit to the prefect to withdraw my name from the meeting which is to be held in his office with regard to the society for colonization. The prince de Mir has not given sufficient consideration to prior consultation.

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<sup>32</sup> The Founder uses the word "constant".

<sup>33</sup> Fr. Charles Deplace, Jesuit.

I am beginning to distrust his principles somewhat. They are much too broad minded in my opinion. This meeting had been called without consulting me. I did not know what was to be dealt with there and yet I was to preside. What sort of impression would I have been likely to give? I just sent my Vicar general to find out what was going to happen and I held my ground whatever might be the insistence of Fr. Landmann or of the prince who wrote to me twice and sent his secretary Montjoie to press his point. I shall see how things turn out before doing anything further.

Letter from Dupuget. So as not to forget his address, I shall note it here: rue faubourg St-Honoré 26. He reminds me that I substituted a relic of the true cross for the filthy remains of the deacon of Paris<sup>34</sup> which he had brought me in a silver heart when he was under my care as a young man in the youth movement in Aix. He has lost the heart which he had kept carefully until now. The only thing that consoles him for this loss is the hope that I may be able to replace it. The letter is very touching. I do not have time to copy the most noteworthy passages.

**December 28:** It was in inspiration by my guardian angel which prevented me from attending yesterday's meeting. Fr. Landmann has just left, having told me that the prince de Mir had given a very philosophical discourse, attacking dogma and leaving opinion to the judgement of God. [p. 73] The priest wanted to comment when he returned with the prince but the latter took it badly and they quarrelled. The priest gave him to understand that he did not see things in that way and that he was breaking away from him. The prince did nothing to prevent him. The priest wishes, therefore, to leave tomorrow for Algiers. I observed that this is not the time to leave the battlefield because things might even take a turn for the worse if the prince has nobody to restrain him. The priest therefore promised me that he will return soon. I shall await his return before giving my verdict. In the meantime, if the prince comes to see me I shall know how to react because the priest admitted to me that on the day when I corrected his articles the prince got into a fit of anger with me in his presence.

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<sup>34</sup> François de Paris, nicknamed the deacon Paris (1690-1727), was a Jansenist who refused to submit to the Bull *Unigenitus* (1713). He was buried in the cemetery of St-Médard in Paris. At his tomb there was series of miraculous cures and "convulsions". Because of this popular movement and the scandal involved the cemetery was closed by royal decree in 1732.



Confirmation for a poor woman who was in great pain as she lay on her mattress on the fourth floor. How it pains my heart to see people suffer in that way, but also, what a consolation to be able to bring them relief by my words and by the graces of my holy ministry!

Letter from Fr. Courtès telling me of the holy death of Brother Morandini. He passed on to a better life yesterday afternoon at four o'clock. The loss will be felt by the Congregation which expected such great service from this excellent man. In him were combined shining virtue, much talent, a likeable character and a name which, because of the respect it would inspire<sup>35</sup>, the exercise of his ministry in Corsica would have filled this country. The good God has thought otherwise. May his holy will be done, but may we be permitted, while submitting to his severe judgements, to mourn the passing of such a holy and loveable child. There he is now in the bosom of God together with the eight others who have preceded him in glory<sup>36</sup>. They know our needs, I call upon them to obtain from our sovereign Master the strength to supplement all the good that they had been called upon to do on earth and all the virtues which they practised constantly, so that we too may have a death as holy and a recompense as beautiful as theirs. However confident I may be that this holy child is in heaven, all the duties imposed by the Rule shall be fulfilled in the houses of the Congregation. I have given instructions that a circular letter to this effect be issued. [p. 74]

**December 29:** Letter to the Bishop of Algiers, recommending Fr. Landmann to him and telling him of the merits of this good priest whom he should not have left here in such an embarrassing position<sup>37</sup>.

Letter to Fr. Courtès in reply to his letter of yesterday. He may give 200 Francs to the doctor who cared for the patient, but letting him know that it is because of the little inheritance which our beloved deceased left to the Congregation and also out of kindness. It is to be hoped that the

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<sup>35</sup> Louis Camille Morandini was born in Moïta, Corsica on February 24, 1816. His father was a colonel in the army. In recognition of his zeal and fidelity he had received from Napoleon I the title of Baron. See *Missions OMI* 1938, pp. 464-478, 595.

<sup>36</sup> Besides the five Oblates listed by the Founder on December 15 (See note 2 above) three others had died: J.A. Jourdan 1798-1823), J.T.M. Capmas (1791-1831), and J.L. Richaud (1804-1837).

<sup>37</sup> The Founder uses the phrase "bec dans l'eau".

doctor does not get out of the habit of visiting our sick for the love of God, since these men have left everything for God and live only for his glory and for the salvation of souls. I hope that the remains of our holy child can be buried in the Enclos<sup>38</sup> until I have a chapel built in the cemetery.

Letter to the Bishop of Belley. He asks me for the insolent letter written by the deceased Bishop of Séez to the Pope. He will send it back to me.

A priest from the St-Esprit<sup>39</sup> seminary called on his way to Guadeloupe. I allowed him to say Mass on this way through Marseilles but I thought it my duty to give him some advice concerning the dangers which young men like him will encounter in this colony. Nothing could be less regular than the procedures adopted by this seminary of St-Esprit. This is an institution which needs a major reform! There is no link attaching the students who go to the missions from this house, either to the centre or to the Superior who sends them out. They leave without any planning, without any notion beforehand of the place or the people. They are not held dependent on anyone, do not have to send a report to the home country from which they are scattered to the different colonies<sup>40</sup>. Is it any wonder then, that there is so much regrettable discord? Fr. Fourdinier<sup>41</sup>, Superior of the seminary of St-Esprit, according to what he told me in Paris, wanted to have closer links with those priests who went to work in the colonies. He wished to bring them together in a Congregation and he suggested that they take vows etc. This was the only way to reform this institution. It appears that he did not succeed in his plans. The priests who continue to go to these disastrous islands also continue to earn much money. They do not take the trouble to edify the people. They live in comfort and in complete independence and when they have made a fortune, they return to France to benefit from their sordid savings. [p. 75]

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<sup>38</sup> Former country house of the de Mazenod family on the road to Avignon, near the shrine of Notre Dame de la Seds.

<sup>39</sup> The St-Esprit Seminary was founded in Paris in 1703 by Claude Poullart des Places (1679-1709). His successors, the Priests of the Holy Spirit, in 1848, joined forces with the Society of the Sacred Heart of Mary, founded by François (Jacob) Libermann (1802-1852).

<sup>40</sup> An excessively severe judgement, it would seem!

<sup>41</sup> Amable Jacques Fourdinier (1788-1845), superior of the Congregation of the Holy Spirit from 1832 to 1845.

Letter from Mr. Eugene Mathieu. The same sentiments as usual. This time I must write to him.

Letter from Courtès. Our angel Morandini has been buried in the Enclos. During his last days, Fr. De Veronico was like a mother to him. There were always two priests at his bedside for the last ten days. Courtès asks me for permission to have Brother Jean<sup>42</sup> make his second oblation. It would, he says, put his mind at ease. He has been suffering now for a while. On the basis of that information, rather than have him make his oblation I shall authorize Courtès to send this brother to Marseilles so that he can be tested, examined and a decision taken with regard to his future on the basis of that knowledge. Courtès adds a long paragraph on M<sup>43</sup> based on the most exalted prejudice. I know what to expect from this excellent priest and I did not need him to tell me the grave wrongs of which Courtès should feel guilty with regard to him. He whispers all sorts of guesswork and revolting statements against the good and innocent M. Here I shall express my thoughts on this matter because, in his anger, he has burst out with these accusations in the presence of the younger members of the Aix community and I would consider myself to be an accomplice in injustice if I did not make an authentic statement here on behalf of an estimable man of our Congregation.

**December 30:** Assembly of the chapter in my apartments to announce to the members the appointment of the parish priest of St-Martin and the rector of la Trinité<sup>44</sup>. I also made known to the chapter that I will include among the honorary canons the directors of the Major Seminary while they are in that capacity, with the right to dress and a place in the cathedral choir and on any occasion when they will be with the chapter in processions or on other occasions.

Letter from Ajaccio. What a painful moment! I recognize Fr. Guibert's writing. That may very well be, but what do I see at the same time? A letter from Fr. Gibelli also postmarked Ajaccio. Now, Fr. Gibelli

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<sup>42</sup> Jean Nicolas Laverlochère (1812-1884), entered the novitiate as a Brother on November 26, 1836. He repeated his novitiate as a scholastic starting on October 30, 1840 and was sent to Canada in 1843 where he was ordained priest on May 5, 1844.

<sup>43</sup> Probably Fr. Magnan.

<sup>44</sup> Pierre Noël Maurel, parish priest of St-Martin and Claude F.M. Blanc, rector of la Trinité: see AAM, Register of Insinuations, vol III, Nos 94-96.

has not left the bedside of Fr. Albini since he has been in danger of death. What other explanation is there for the presence of Fr. Gibelli in Ajaccio but that [p. 76] Fr. Albini is dead and that Fr. Gibelli has come to Ajaccio to give this sad news to Fr. Guibert. Oh my God, what anguish! Shall I open Fr. Guibert's letter first or shall it be that of Fr. Gibelli? The addresses seem to be written with a trembling hand. There can no longer be any doubt, why try to deceive myself? That is all there is to say. *Oh Good God what a surprise! The patient is out of danger, this is a real miracle of God's goodness. I long to go to Vico to see the one risen from the dead and to nurse his convalescence.* Go then, Fr. Guibert, go and embrace him on my behalf. *Fr. Albini is quite well* (these are the words of Fr. Moreau) *and out of danger; he is eating and drinking and suffers only from hunger.* *Non è senza grande mia consolazione*, Fr. Gibelli writes, *che intraprendo a darle più felici notizie della convalescenza del nostro reverendo padre Albini. Il medico istesso al di cui credito grandemente gioverebbe l'attribuire una guarigione sì difficile e scabrosa per non dire impossibile, intimamente convinto del contrario francamente asserisce doversi riconoscere una mano di se ben più potente*<sup>45</sup>. Yes indeed, there is a more powerful hand! There it has not been in vain that so many holy souls have prayed, that the Congregation was moved, that the whole of Corsica cried out to God. What a great triumph of prayer which even has an effect on God through the efficacy he has deigned to give it. Let us be mindful of this so that we may be resigned more easily when the Lord, in his plans which nobody may fathom, does not give in to our wishes. May it help us to be more at peace with our recent loss. Brother Morandini was a holy person. He was great in spirit and in capability. His kind and lovable character would have made him win the hearts of all in the exercise of the ministry which lay before him and he would have had such a hope of success. His family name seemed destined to help us to stabilize our work in Corsica. But then, in spite of our prayers, he was taken from us and so many wonderful hopes were extinguished with his passing. Let us praise God who has precociously granted him happiness and let us conform our wills to his, however painful may be our separation. God knows why he

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<sup>45</sup> "It is not without great consolation that I undertake to give the good news of the convalescence of our Reverend Father Albini. The doctor himself, who would have reason to attribute to his own intervention a cure as difficult and dangerous, not to say impossible, is intimately convinced of the contrary and states frankly that he must recognize the intervention of more powerful hand than his"

should have imposed this sacrifice on us; he is our Master, he is our Father. We adore him! [p. 77]

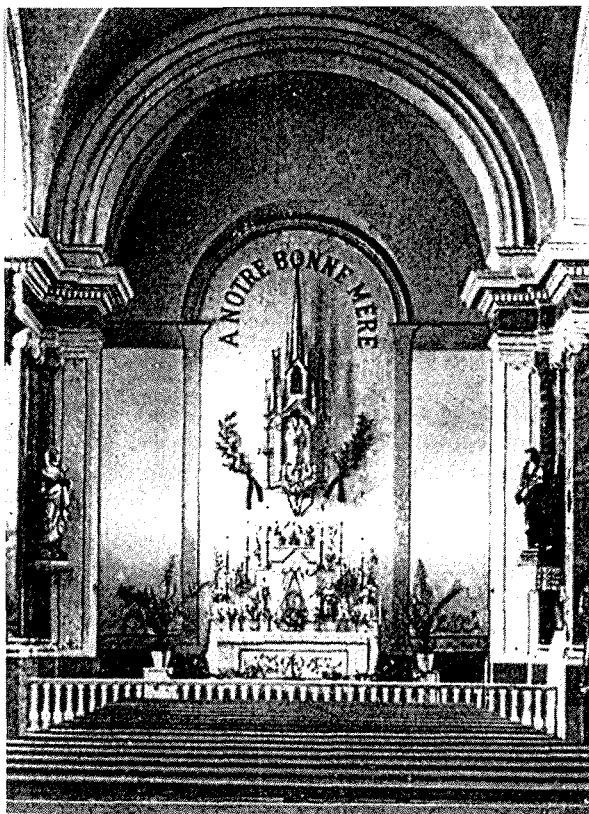
**December 31:** Letter from Fr. André wishing me a Happy New Year. His feelings are in keeping with his duty. I shall reply to him when I have a spare moment.

Visits upon visits. Among others, Fr. Certes came to see me. I felt I should thank him for the beautiful instructions he gave to my people. The sermon which I heard yesterday in St-Martin deserves that I give him such praise. I entered the church wearing my red cape. This pleasant surprise pleased all the parishioners. I could not help smiling at the movement of curiosity and interest aroused by this unexpected apparition.

Fr. Gerbet<sup>46</sup> arrived while we were having lunch. It was only after he had left that someone gave me his card. As a result I was displeased not to have seen this churchman with whom I wished very much to speak.

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<sup>46</sup> Philippe Olympe Gerbet (1798-1864), a writer and “one of the best Catholic thinkers in the world in the XIX century”. He was a disciple of Lammenais. He submitted to the Encyclical of August 15, 1832 condemning the Lammenais experience. From 1836 to 1839 he was professor in the college of Juilly and in 1839, for reasons of health, he came to live in the South. He lived in Rome for ten years and was appointed Bishop of Perpignan in 1853. *Dictionnaire de biographie française*, vol. XV.



### **Choir of the Chapel of the Capuchin Sisters' Convent in Marseilles**

Here Bishop de Mazenod liked to celebrate the anniversaries of his baptism and priestly ordination. To thank the Lord, he insisted, as he said, to be helped by the earthly angels who lived in this monastery. Once he took Father Mouchette with him. Upon leaving, the Bishop said to him, movingly: "Ah! What I owe to this house!"

In 1838 he went there on August 2 and December 21. Cf. Diary for these dates.

## APPENDIX

### Extracts from the administrative letters of the Bishop of Marseilles

#### 1 - To Fr. Montagard, rector of St-Julien in Arles

Authentic copy: AAM. Register of administrative letters, Vol. III, No. 564, pages 256-258.

*Fr. B. A. Boucherie (1795-1834) on his death, had left a sum of money for the establishment of an orphanage (L'Oeuvre des Petits Enfants) which he had founded in Marseilles and placed under the direction of Mademoiselles Rocafort and Dubosc. He had appointed Fr. Montagard as his heir and administrator of the institute. In 1837-1838, the latter wanted to close this house in Marseilles and set up another similar one in the diocese of Nîmes. On October 8, 1838 Bishop de Mazenod wrote a letter of protest.*

Marseilles, October 8, 1838

I have just learned, Father, that you have announced your intention to transfer the children of the institute founded by the deceased Fr. Boucherie to Nîmes and by so doing to administer more effectively, in your view, the inheritance of which you are the beneficiary.

Your determination to do so, of which I have been informed by others, implies not only a lack of respect in my regard and to a degree which is astonishing in a priest who should not be oblivious to this point, but also a violation of your most sacred obligations.

Whatever may be the role you have been called upon to play in the administration of the property entrusted to you in your religious and discretionary capacity, you certainly do not have the right to destroy a foundation of which you have been constituted the temporal father. The step you plan to take, however, amounts to the destruction of what exists: few or none of the relatives will agree to have their children transferred so far away from them and therefore the fruit of so much labour over so many years will have been lost. You shall have destroyed the work of Mr. Boucherie in order to found another elsewhere on new premises and with new constituents, but with those same funds which have been left to you

to continue what had been the constant object of solicitude on the part of the devout benefactor. Is that fulfilling what he intended? Whatever liberty he may have accorded you, do you consider that it would include going beyond the improvement and conservation of the institute of which he has made you his heir? Do you believe that he intended to found an establishment which could be made or unmade according to your ideas and mood of the moment, which could be abandoned here in order to be transferred elsewhere, or rather re-founded according to the assignments to which you are yourself subject on the orders of your bishop? No! Father, I have myself been privy to the wishes of which you are the executor and I know the dispositions and even the precautions with which they have been surrounded to avoid the possible interference of the authorities which might succeed those which I then represented and which might find the arrangement distasteful and therefore would wish to destroy an idea which was somewhat out of the ordinary. Those wishes, which you more than any other are obliged to respect, had as their objective to ensure the foundation of an institute in Marseilles and not another analogous foundation to be made in another diocese, as long as the opposition of the ecclesiastical authorities did not oblige impossible terms for the trustee of the funds to realize the foundation elsewhere rather than in Marseilles. That is why I protest against the abuse of the powers entrusted to you. You wish to deprive my diocese of this benefit. As clearly laid down in the last will and testament, you have been entrusted with the care of what is truly the inheritance of Fr. Boucherie's patrimony but this does not release me from all concern for a pious institute established in the my episcopal city by a priest who had placed it under my care and who had only undertaken this enterprise with my authorisation. I acquit myself of this duty by forbidding you, insofar as I can, to destroy the work which you have the mission to defend and I declare that by so doing you will have betrayed the trust of the friend who, on his deathbed, left you a sacred benefice which you will have diverted from its special destination and you will have done so to the detriment of my diocese.

You say that the institute was not doing well, but could you not have consulted with me with a view to reforming it? Have I refused to listen to your suggestions? You have always avoided seeing me or speaking to me of that which you intend to destroy and not reform or improve. You were afraid I would not agree with your opinion, but it would at least have been worthwhile at least explaining those opinions. The truth is that I would have been most willing to discuss with you the necessary steps to be taken



to achieve the purpose set by Fr. Boucherie. You may say that it would have been impossible to achieve it. I am not of that opinion. It is possible to achieve at least part of the good which this holy priest had in mind. But even if that were impossible, it would not have been too much to ask that the bishop of the diocese be consulted on the use to be made of the funds for which the destined purpose had to be changed, and that, only after a number of experiments had been tried and the charitable purpose proven to be illusory.

You have chosen to take action yourself, without consulting or even informing a bishop who has always been benevolent. Your determination deprives his flock of resources which were destined for them and you dispose of those resources as would a proprietor who is not concerned with acting against justice but who chooses to place himself above considerations of kindness or good behaviour. Well, Father, your legal right not only does not dispense you from certain duties towards me imposed upon you by your mission, but it does not in any way authorize you to look upon the inheritance of Fr. Boucherie as your property in the forum of your conscience. Whatever the testator may have said to you on this matter cannot belie the intention he had in appointing you as his heir. This intention is all too evident and you cannot suppress it in such a way that your conscience does not rebel. The only purpose of all the words which seem to establish your propriety right is to leave you free, if needed, to take the oath which might have been required by a lay judge. This is a practice which is continually being used on such occasions. I could quote examples from my own experience, but neither you nor I are bound by "fideicommissum"<sup>1</sup>, we would be guilty before God if we took advantage of the precautions dictated by prudence to ensure respect of the testator's intentions, in order to frustrate the accomplishment of those very intentions. Honor, good faith, religion and even justice would be outraged by such an abuse of trust. I ask you therefore, since the purpose of even the smallest sum destined for pious works of charity may not be modified without ecclesiastical authorization, is it possible to circumvent this authority when the matter in question is the withdrawal from the diocese of even part of the inheritance of which one is only the trustee.

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<sup>1</sup> "Fideicommiss": a legacy entrusted by will, either secretly or expressly, in the name of a person who is entrusted with passing it on to another..

I send you my greetings.

+ C. J. Eugene  
Bishop of Marseilles

**2. To the Minister of Public Education**, November 4, 1838.  
Authentic copy: AAM, Registre des lettres adm., vol. III, no. 567, pp/ 260-261.

*In his Diary for October 4, Bishop de Mazenod writes that he received a letter from the Minister, dated October 1, letter sent to all the Bishops to invite them to extend their care even to the colleges of the University. The Bishop closes with these words: "I consider...this letter as a snare." In his reply of November 4, the Bishop judges severely the teaching of philosophy, which, according to him, "has an anti-Catholic character...(and) suffers from a void that nothing can hide."*

Marseilles, November 4, 1838.

Sir Minister,

The invitation that Your Excellency has determined to send to me by your circular letter of last October 1 to multiply the visits of the royal and communal colleges in my diocese and thereafter to communicate to you my observations, has decided me to reply to you in a way that bears witness to my pastoral care for the royal college of Marseilles and that is a first act in conformity with your request in regard to this establishment.

Every year I am pleased to go there to administer confirmation to the students. They would like to see me more often there and I would like to show our people how much I would like to favour this house if, from the religious and moral perspective, the good intentions of the "provisieur" and of the "censeur" were not neutralized by other influence.

I cannot refrain from pointing out to Your Excellency that the philosophy which is taught is opposed to Catholicism by its principles which are those of scepticism, at least in the area of religion, and by the more or less formal application of these principles to a number of truths of the faith. The general thought of this teaching in regard to religion is grasped in all its implications by the young students who frequent the chair of philosophy. Some accept all the consequences and land up by throwing off systematically the entire yoke of religion, others adopt difficulties against the Church's dogmas, and, in practice, do not any more than the others

know the salutary restraint that ought to moderate their nascent passions. Thus, for a great number of these young people, impiety and immorality are soon nearly the only fruit of the deadly lessons they have received. Your Excellency will not require that I tell you what effect this has on the younger students when they see what has happened to their fellow-students whose example they are naturally prone to imitate and too often to receive inspiration therefrom. This cause, and it is not the only one, would nevertheless suffice to explain what alarms and afflicts so much Christian families when they note after a few months the antireligious dispositions and precocious vices of their children whom they have sent to the royal college.

That is for me and undoubtedly for families a great cause of suffering, and therein lies the main reason, or, better said, the only reason, that lead so many parents, some of whom are very much attached to the present Government, to send their children from Marseilles outside the Kingdom in order to receive a more sure education<sup>2</sup>. The minor seminary is not to have any other students except those who are preparing themselves for the ecclesiastical state and has to restrict itself to the legal number of students.

I would be happy, Sir Minister, if I could give you a testimony that the royal college offers in the area of religion and morals the same guarantees as that for the instruction given there in the purely literary domain. I would then have the satisfaction of being to Your Excellency the interpreter of the full confidence of fathers of families who, in what pertains to studies, complain only about the teaching of philosophy (which, besides its anti-Catholic character, is of an emptiness that nothing can hide), and would like to count on a moral education which would assure them that their affection and religious care for their children are fully met by the care of the University for the royal college.

Please accept, etc....

+ C.J. Eugene  
Bishop of Marseilles

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<sup>2</sup> Many Christian families of Marseilles sent their children to the Jesuit colleges of Estavayer and Fribourg in Switzerland. Bishop de Mazenod will meet some 50 of them during his trip to Switzerland in 1837. Cf. Diary, June 23 and 25, 1837.

**3. To Mister Jacquemet, vicar general of Aix.** November 18, 1838. Authentic copy: AAM, Registre des lettres adm., vol. IV, no. 5, pp. 3 and 4.

*In their meetings of October 19-21 1883<sup>3</sup>, the Bishops of the ecclesiastical province of Aix requested the Holy See to add the word "Immaculata" to the Preface for the feast of "the Conception of the Virgin". Some ecclesiastics criticized that. Bishop de Mazenod makes some comments here on two points. Some ecclesiastics are surprised - and Bishop de Mazenod seems to share their opinion - at the fact that the Bishops ask the Holy See for a permission which in principle they do not need to ask for, for in France the Bishops are already "in peaceful possession to give particular breviaries, to prescribe Masses, to multiply Prefaces, etc." The second comment concerns the core of the question. Why did the Bishops of the ecclesiastical province treat of the question of the Immaculate Conception when in Provence this truth has been accepted for a long time. Bishop de Mazenod adds that if the Bishops wanted to write to the Pope, they ought to have manifested to him their thoughts the include "the desire for a dogmatic definition".*

Marseilles, November 18, 1838.

Sir Vicar General,

If the Archbishop of Aix has not as yet sent to Rome the request of the Bishops of the province in regard to the title of *Immaculata* to be added to the Preface of the Conception of the holy Virgin, it is perhaps useful that I send you some comments on this matter.

When the *Gazette du Midi* gave information on the work of our assembly, the public, I am speaking of the ecclesiastical public, not understanding the reason for prudence that had led the author of the article to underline carefully the resolution to be addressed to Rome for the introduction of the word in question, was not able to become aware of what seemed a *non sequitur* to it. You are certainly aware of the proposals on this topic made in one diocese or another. I have received from here and from Aix expressed views that are apt to diminish the favorable idea that had been conceived about the Bishops' meeting. The view is that if this

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<sup>3</sup> Cf. above, Diary for October 19-22 and corresponding notes.

assembly could not treat but for a moment on such a topic, it was not sufficiently important for anyone to conclude that our deliberations were of great seriousness and promised positive results for the future. But that in which a striking *non sequitur* was perceived is in the obligation to which the Bishops believed themselves to be subject to have recourse to the Holy See for inserting a word into the Preface, for, in France, they are in peaceful possession to introduce, if they judge it appropriate, a few words into the liturgy in their dioceses, but even to sanction particular breviaries, to multiply Prefaces and even to make changes to the rites and ceremonies of their Churches. The astonishment resulting in this regard appears to be all the more founded on the fact that the Council of Basle which levied an excommunication against those who preach or publicly call into question that Immaculate Conception had been accepted in a council at Avignon at which the Archbishop of Aix and the Bishop of Marseilles assisted as well as nearly all the Bishops of the former provinces of Avignon, Arles, Aix and Embrun and had been published in all the parishes of these four provinces. It is true that the doctrine against which it is forbidden to speak in public was not thereby decided in its core in the council but that gave it prominence to the point that it has become that of the Churches in these provinces.

The missal of Arles formally expresses this doctrine to the point of pronouncing the exemption from original sin; the breviary of Marseilles, which is prior to the Council of Trent, also shows explicitly that that was the tradition of this Church from a very ancient period onwards. Today also, as I pointed out, in the missal of Fréjus there is an oration which professes the same belief in very express terms. I will say nothing of the apostolic letters which approve the Congregation of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate (the Missionaries of Provence) and which even contain the expression of Mary conceived without sin. There is more: the doctrine in question is common to the whole of France, if not to the entire Christianity. You know the oath taken at the Sorbonne before being accepted as Doctor: to maintain it to the point of suffering martyrdom on account of it.

I admit to you that I regret not having insisted more that we did not go, in manifesting our sentiments to the Holy Father, to the point of requesting a dogmatic definition. We had sufficient motives thereto which I did not want to sustain overly out of deference to my colleagues. Nevertheless, I feel that, to weaken the unfavorable impression that has resulted from the publication of the Bishops' resolution, I

would do well to justify indirectly this resolution by inserting into the journal: 1 - that it was a question of expressing to the Holy Father a pious sentiment which can be translated as a desire to see the question defined; 2 - that the introduction of the word *immaculata* into the Preface is a matter quite grave for it is a matter of professing in the liturgy a point of doctrine not as yet decided; 3 - that the reply of the Pope, requested by ourselves, was in our minds an additional testimony in favour of a doctrine that is dear to us. This, it seems to me, would compensate a little for the weak element of our resolution.

You will see for yourself, if you have not as yet written, how, given the state of the doctrine on the Immaculate Conception in our provinces where it is fully accepted, the request to the Holy Father should be properly phrased, on the supposition that it is you who are to send it.

Please offer my greetings to the Archbishop and please accept, Mr. l'Abbé, etc.

+ C.J. Eugene  
Bishop of Marseilles

**4 - To the Minister of Worship**, November 21, 1838<sup>4</sup>. Authentic copie: AAM, Reg. des lettres administratives, vol. IV, no. 6, pp. 5-9.

*The Restoration had kept the university monopoly established by Napoleon, but had submitted teaching to the vigilance of the clergy. In 1828, to appease the liberals, Minister Martignac backtracked on the advantages granted to the Church. The ordinance of April 21, 1828 took away from the Bishops the vigilance and the direction of the primary schools. The two ordinances of June 16, 1828 banned the congregationists (religious men and women) from teaching, limited the number of seminarians and subjected minor seminaries to regulations incompatible with Bishops' rights<sup>5</sup>. The Bishops of France opposed the Government but, generally speaking, accepted Rome's viewpoint which advised them to submit to the ordinances and to invite the Government to apply the same broadly and with good will.*

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<sup>4</sup> The Minister replied to this letter only at the end of January 1839. Cf. Diary, January 30, 1839.

<sup>5</sup> Jean Leflon, in his *Eugene de Mzenod...*, II, 285-314.

*In 1838, when relationships between Church and State were rather good, the royal council for public education, in a decision of August 17, declared that the students of minor seminaries were not eligible to receive the ordinary diploma for bachelor ès-lettres. The following October 1, the Minister for public education invited the Bishops to visit the colleges of the University and to send him reports. These questions were examined at the meeting of the Bishops of the Aix ecclesiastical province, held October 19-21, but no common decision was taken. The Bishops were simply invited to write personally to the Minister about these problems.*

*Above (cf. Appendix 2) is published Bishop de Maznod's letter concerning the colleges. Here is what he wrote on November 21 on the Minister's decision which declared the students of minor seminaries ineligible to receive the ordinary diploma of bachelor es-lettres<sup>6</sup>.*

Marseilles, November 21, 1838.

Sir Keeper of the Seals,

I consider it my indispensable duty to forward to Your Excellency the most urgent protests on the occasion of a decision that the royal council for public education has just taken. Students who come out of minor seminaries are declared ineligible to receive, after their examinations, the ordinary diploma of bachelor ès-lettres, a degree of education that would recognize them. I am aware that in doing this they are applying a provision of the second ordinance of June 16, 1828. But this provision is so odious, attacks gravely public establishments which ought to be as dear to the State as they are to the Church, it manifests a most unfortunate distrust and such a complete absence of a generous approach that even till this day, in most difficult moments, the university authority has never urged its rigorous observance. It was tolerated that the above mentioned article of the ordinance be bypassed for a precious interest, against which one seemed reluctant to adopt an inquisitorial measure, the purpose of which is to enter officially into the secret of the home and the private life of the young.

Why do we now move away from this wise moderation? We are we executing the decision of the royal council with inflexible vigor, which is all the more extreme because those who are thus attacked presently, having

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<sup>6</sup> In *Eugene de Maznod...*, Jean Leflon dedicates chapter V of volume III to *Freedom of Education*, pp. 178 ff.

counted on a customary indulgence, are placed under a retroactive coup? This is quite a severe and unjust punishment for their over-confidence in the University's fidelity to follow its errings when they are a little generous.

If one were to know the impression that has resulted generally among the fathers of families as among ecclesiastics, the hurdles one places to students of minor seminaries following another career than that of the Church, one would regret having, by unreflected measures, compromised more than one thinks the opinion that was setting in of the Government's good will in favour of religion. What does it matter that by these measures one has recourse to legality? The legality in this matter is so deplorable in the eyes of the great majority of Catholics that today it appears as nothing else than it was judged to be at the time, namely, a means of persecution acquired in a moment of power weakness.

In fact, Sir Keeper of the Seals, I do not understand how one agrees to destroy with one hand that which the other is building up, and to accredit, to revive even, all the distrust that religious people entertained against the Government at its origin. I am told that petitions to the Chambers on the subject about which I have the honour to address to you are circulating among the public. If they exist, they are necessarily the expression more or less strong of a return to the first mistrust. And while Marseilles is not the whole of France, this city is nevertheless not without some importance; moreover, the opinion of Catholics must be quite similar pretty well everywhere. Certainly one could do better after eight years than to return nearly to the starting point. [p.6]

How does one expect this opinion to be calm and trusting when one makes the Church endure the most fatal consequences of a legislation which prompts cries of horror from the whole episcopacy and which affected so deeply clergy and faithful from the time of its promulgation?

I beg Your Excellency to consider that through the execution of article five<sup>7</sup> we are dealing with here, our ecclesiastical secondary schools are

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<sup>7</sup> The text of article 5 of the second ordinance of June 16, 1828 is: "The students who present themselves for the degree of bachelor ès-lettres, can only receive, prior to their entry to sacred orders, a special diploma which will apply only to acquire degrees in theology; but it is susceptible to be exchanged for an ordinary diploma of bachelor ès-lettres after such students are engaged in sacred orders."



treated as hostile establishments against which protection is sought instead of protecting them. Students who leave in order to take their place in the world are thus gravely punished: all the liberal professions of civil society are forbidden to them, they are excluded from becoming magistrates, lawyers, notaries, doctors and even simple professors in public schools. As much as possible, they are being condemned to being nothing or else, something insulting to the Church! to being priests.

It is true that, thanks to restrictions which were not inspired by good will, minor seminaries are legally obligated to receive only young people who wish to enter the ecclesiastical state. However, it does not happen that this wish to enter the ecclesiastical state is, in order to be sincere, irrevocable from the beginning. A young person cannot be held to his first choice, neither by the choice of his parents, and, when entering the minor seminary, he does this on the condition of a preliminary testing and with the idea to go, as the case may be, to test his vocation later in the major seminary before receiving sacred orders. The institution of seminaries has the testing of vocations as their main objective. But if this testing is made so dangerous that a young student cannot undertake it without running the risk of seeing his career close before him in the case wherein he would become aware he is not fit for the Church's ministry, then the very heart of the institution is being attacked. No father of a family would want to expose his son to such a chance and minor seminaries will be abandoned especially by the rich and middle classes whom, nevertheless, it would be so important for the general good of society to attract to the clergy.

This would result in a great scarcity of men in the Church, who so greatly needs them and who cannot hope to find effective vocations for the ecclesiastical state in lay houses of education where there exists another spirit than hers and where another, a different orientation is given, not to say one that is quite the opposite. Thus, the approach to the sanctuary will be, if not closed, at least rendered almost inaccessible because of the danger encountered there of the whole existence of the one who has to leave after having made the first step; and the Church of France, deprived of her only means to recruit ministers, will with time be reduced to a state of near complete destruction.

It could happen that certain young people once launched in the way, frightened by the lot that awaits them if they leave, nevertheless persevere therein after they have become aware that they are called to a different state. But what a misfortune these forced vocations are, for they bring into

the sanctuary so many men who are unworthy and incompetent! What a wound and too often what shame for the Church and for Society! What tyranny also to constrain these unfortunate people to overcome all their reluctance, all their fears, to stifle their conscience in order to devote themselves against their nature to a life of bitter sorrows and incalculable regrets! [p.7] What a law that thus captures a man at the exit of childhood to understate such a desperate choice!

The University is well aware of the indescribable odious quality of such a consequence that it does not dare to be involved except in establishments where the student has made his rhetoric and philosophy without making him responsible for the choice of his teachers for the classes that preceded; and yet, in order not to incur the misfortune of an incapacity which is a sort of virile failure, this student is forced to decide definitively his ecclesiastical vocation before beginning his rhetoric, that is to say at age 16 or 17. And yet, the law of the State, in agreement on this point with the Church, forbids him to commit himself irrevocably in sacred orders before he has completed 25 years of age and even allows him to wait as long as he likes after this age. The law of recruitment, if he is a conscript, does not call him to the colours until after his twenty-fifth year, leaving him to choose until that time to serve either in the ranks of the Church or that of the military camps. But the ordinance of 1826, more severe than the military laws themselves, even when the Fatherland calls for defenders in the presence of its enemies, fixes the fatal term at 16 or 17 years, and the University, liberally substituted to fathers of families, cannot in its maternal tenderness grant a longer delay to the youngsters whom she is eager generously to adopt. She must by all means force them onto the Church before their rhetoric, the Church who has the rights of a mother at least for those who aspire to be priesthood.

Moreover, what does the ordinance of June 16, 1828 achieve by punishing every young man guilty of having tried, during his rhetoric or his philosophy to enter into the ecclesiastical state, by distancing him from all the most honoured professions, just as though he would from now on contaminate certain worldly classes? It does, Sir Keeper of the Seals, something which is done only in the times of the worst persecutions, it creates a new kind of crime, a great crime, if one is to judge by the punishment for it, the crime of having had over their young contemporaries a sufficiently notable moral superiority by showing an interest in the most holy and respectable state, the crime of having spent one's first years in innocence, piety, practice of the purest and most moving virtue, far from the

contagion of bad example and dissipation of turbulent fellow students. It declares the Church incapable of forming citizens; indeed, I err, it declares the Church unworthy, because those of her students who have passed with honour the examination for bachelor ès-lettres, though recognized as fit from the literary point of view, are not recognized as such legally, and can only receive a special diploma or the ecclesiastical state, instead of the ordinary diploma which would open careers to them to which they may be called.

One has to admit that this legislation is rather strange in a country where, according to the constitution, the Catholic religion is that of the majority of its population. If in regard to principles it was even worse when it was promulgated under the Empire of another constitution, at that time at least, in order to have it pass, one came with monetary aid since then withdrawn and the impression was given that one regretted things, alleging an unfortunate necessity of circumstances.

It was a legislation based on circumstances and according to principles of law such legislation should disappear with the circumstances that produced it. Today nothing makes it necessary, nothing justifies it.

One says in vain that the existence of minor seminaries is based on a privilege and that one has the right to restrict this privilege as much as one wants. What is called privilege here is a social necessity of the first order because, without minor seminaries there would soon be in France the extinction of the priesthood and, consequently, the extinction of religion; and since nothing in our country could ever replace the Catholic religion, its extinction would be that of the Society. What is called privilege here, the general good absolutely requires its maintenance and one does not have the right to restrict it to the point of making it dangerous and harmful, to the point of making it a trap where those who are apparently favoured are led to run the risk of losing the very hope of their future. What is called privilege here, one does not have the right to make of it something ignominious by attaching thereto a humiliating condition for the Church, no more than one has the right to attach thereto a condition incompatible with the interests of religion, that are the interests of all Frenchmen. But would one reproach the Church with privilege an indispensable exception of the immense privilege of the university monopoly?

If one is afraid that, because of the confidence of fathers of families, the clergy is responsible for the education of children living in the world, then one has provided to hinder such a great evil, namely this invasion of

generations being born which would arise to the benefit of the faith and virtue, the ordinance we are talking about has given sufficient means. The number of students in minor seminaries is fixed at twenty thousand, and this number is far from excessive for a kingdom such as France. In several dioceses many vocations are liable to be lost while waiting that they can be included in this inexorable number. And so that bishops are to abandon aspirants to the ecclesiastical state and give preference to those who are destined to the lay life. Such a guarantee is certainly worth another.

Beyond such a guarantee, there is more than a refinement of vexation imposed by article 5 of the ordinance of June 16, 1828. At the base of this article seems to be the parliamentary maxime several times invoked since 1830: "The Church must be supported and contained." Well! Such a maxime, little reassuring because it reminds us of the constant war that parlements blinded by their esprit de corps have waged against the Church to its extinction, cannot authorise the legal provision against which I am protesting, for its effect would be not to contain while supporting but to destroy by containing. The minor seminaries would soon be suffering, as I have said, great harm to their existence and religion would too.

If Your Excellency finds in this letter an unusual tone in my correspondence, it is because the matter is in my eyes of the highest interest. If we were not so far apart in distance, I would not hesitate to come and debate viva voce with you, trusting in your wisdom and your zeal for good. I hope, however, that you will rightly appreciate the episcopal frankness with which, without wanting to say voluntarily anything hurtful for anyone, I have attacked an unqualified legislation which belongs to another time. I would also like to persuade myself that, struck by the reasoning that I submit to your enlightened sense of justice, you would take in hand a cause of which your competence makes you the natural defender in the councils of power.

Your support, which the episcopacy needs on this occasion, will make a religious and social interest of extreme importance prevail. In the name of my diocese, I request that if the second ordinance of June 16, 1828 cannot be totally repealed, that at least it be modified in such a way that article 5 disappears. There would then be this happy result in the difficulties against which I raise my voice and call upon your most active intervention, that a most deplorable provision has been abolished and a clear proof given of the protection that the King's Government gives to the Church.

Receive...etc.

+ C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles

**5. To Father Antoine Garnier, Superior General of Saint-Sulpice,** December 6, 1838. Authentic copy: AAM, Reg.lettres adm., vol. IV, pp. 10 and 11, no. 8.

*In spite of the docese of Marseilles' few vocations, Bishop de Mazenod allows the Abbé Laurent Gaduel to enter Saint-Sulpice. However, he poses some conditions: if the Abbe leaves Saint-Sulpice, by law he is to re-enter the diocese of Marseilles; moreover, he is to be ordained priest by the Bishop of Marseilles who reserves the right to lay hands on all of his seminarians.*

Marseilles. December 6, 1838.

My dear venerable friend,

You do not have to quote me neither the example nor the words of the Archbishop of Paris when it is a matter of doing something that is agreeable to you and useful to your precious Society. My needs are even greater in terms of quality and number, but I am too attached to you, to you personally, and I too much love Saint-Sulpice, our good mother, not to impose a sacrifice on myself for your advantage. So I consent wholeheartedly that Mr. Gaduel enter into your Company to perform there the ministry to which it is devoted. Only you will grant me not to cede him to the diocese of Paris. He will belong to you as long as he wants and as long as you want, but I shall remain his Bishop, and in the case that he leaves you, by law he will re-enter my diocese. I am at the same time sending you the dimissorial for the deaconate but I must inform him as well as all of my diocesans who are to be promoted to sacred orders, that I reserve to myself the imposition of hands for the priesthood. It will be useless to make any observation to me in this regard. This is a principle of conduct which I shall never give up. I recall this in advance so that one takes one's precautions, whatever arrangements one would like. I do not fix a precise period. I am always disposed to be available on the days fixed by the Church, but also to use the occasions *extra tempora* granted to me, if the greater convenience of the candidate, who may not be able to benefit from the ordinary times, requires it. But I repeat: I insist imprescriptably, both out of sentiment and out of duty, to this rule of the holy Council of Trent, of which I intimately sense the value and deliciously taste all its sweetness: *Episcopi per semetipsos ordines conferant*.

I presume you would also gladly have the dimissorials for Mr. (Paul) Richaud. I herein enclose those for the tonsure and for the minor orders.

Receive...etc.

+ **C. J. Eugene**  
Bishop of Marseilles

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