

François de Paule Henry

TEMPIER

Second Father of the O.M.I. (1788 - 1870)

Biography
by Y. Beaudoin

Testimonies
of his Contemporaries



General Postulation O.M.I.
290 Via Aurelia
Rome
1991

Printed by
MARIAN PRESS LTD.
BATTLEFORD, SASKATCHEWAN, CANADA

Collection OBLATE WRITINGS II, 1

François de Paule Henry
TEMPIER

Second Father of the O.M.I.
(1788 - 1870)

Biography

by Yvon Beaudoin, O.M.I.

Testimonies of his Contemporaries

Translated by Ronald Zimmer, O.M.I.

General Postulation O.M.I.
290 Via Aurelia
Rome
1991

Table of Contents

Presentation, by Father Marcello Zago, Superior General .	7
Introduction, by Father Yvon Beaudoin	11

BIOGRAPHY

I The First Years (1788-1815)	15
II Founding the Missionaries of Provence (1815-1818)	21
III Superior of Notre-Dame du Laus (1819-1823)	33
IV Vicar General of Marseilles (1823-1861)	47
V Assistant and Vicar General of the O.M.I. (1818-1867)	79
VI General Treasurer of the Congregation (1816-1870)	103
VII Professor and Educator (1816-1870)	143
VIII Eugene de Mazenod's Close Friend	169
IX Last Years and Death (1861-1870)	191
X Personality and Spiritual Life	203

TESTIMONIES OF HIS CONTEMPORARIES

1. - 1799: First Holy Communion	229
2. - 1809: First Tonsure	232
3. - 1816: First Oblation	233

4. - 1819-1923: First Superiorship	236
5. - 1833: Inauguration of the Monastery of the Poor Clares	240
6. - 1851: Canonical Visitation of the Oblates in Eastern Canada and the United States	242
7. - 1864: Fifty Years of Priesthood	244
8. - 1864-1868: Anecdotes of the Last Years	246
9. - 1869-1870: Last Weeks of His Life.	249
Biographical notes on Father Tempier	255

ILLUSTRATIONS

Painting of Father Tempier, Superior of the Major Seminary	9
Carmelite Convent of Aix and the Interior of the Church of the Mission	30
Notre-Dame du Laus	31
La Major, the former Cathedral of Marseilles	76
Montolivet	77
Bell-tower of Le Calvaire	100
Notre-Dame de Lumières	101
Bishop de Mazenod and Father Tempier ca. 1860	188
Photograph of Father Tempier in his old Age	189
Grave plot of the Oblates in the Cemetery of Montmartre in Paris	202

(Index of Names and of Subject Matter can be found at the end of the second volume)

PRESENTATION

On October 19, 1976, Father Fernand Jetté presented us with the first volume of ECRITS OBLATS (OBLATE WRITINGS). In ten years, all the letters of Bishop de Mazenod to the Oblates have been published: they constitute a collection of twelve volumes. This series will be continued: it will publish the Founder's Diary and spiritual writings, which Father Y. Beaudoin, who is a proven master in this kind of publication, is planning to prepare at the rate of one volume per year.

In choosing the title of OBLATE WRITINGS for this collection, Father Jetté was planning to have other important sources of our history published, especially selected writings of Fathers and Brothers who in various capacities wielded a noteworthy influence at the Founder's side.

The first two volumes of this second series of OBLATE WRITINGS are appropriately dedicated to Father Tempier. The latter played a most important role at the Founder's side for nearly fifty years, and yet he is unfortunately little known. Because of the importance of this "Second Father", the first volume presents Father Tempier's person whereas the second volume brings us a selection of his writings.

Father Y. Beaudoin has long been working to bring out the image of this invaluable collaborator of Bishop de Mazenod, a collaborator whose name appears everywhere in the writings of the first Oblates. He is thus initiating this new series of OBLATE WRITINGS by setting an example and in the hope that others will imitate him and prepare subsequent volumes in the series. The aim of the series would be to present, at the beginning of each work, a short biography of the person concerned, and then to publish one or two volumes of that person's writings and of testimonies about him from contemporaries. In

this way, Oblates of today can come to know this person well from a variety of sources.

May Blessed C.J. Eugene de Mazenod and our first Fathers help us to know better the spirit which animated them and to live better in today's world the fervor of their religious life and their indefatigable zeal for the salvation of the most neglected souls.

Marcello Zago, O.M.I.
Superior General

December 8, 1986.



Painting of Father Tempier, done by F. Cartier, a cleric in minor orders and student at the major seminary of Marseilles.

Oblate General Archives

INTRODUCTION

The publication of the letters of Bishop de Mazenod to the Oblates has brought out of obscurity the name — mentioned hundreds of times — of him who was his great friend and first collaborator, François de Paule Henry Tempier.

Shortly after the death of the latter on April 8, 1870, Father J.A. Martin, who thereby became the dean in the Congregation, wrote to the Superior General, Father Fabre: "Now may a capable hand gather the precious materials of his long life and give us his interesting life history soon. It will worthily honor the memory of our dear and illustrious confrere and will also bring about increased esteem for the Congregation which has produced such outstanding models right from its beginnings." ¹

For more than a hundred years, "capable hands", although not overabundant, have not been lacking, but "an interesting life history" of Father Tempier has yet to appear. All we have is his death notice, written soon after his death by Father Fabre.² The fact is that the "precious materials of his long life" do not exist. His file in the Oblate General Archives contains only three thin envelopes in which are found two oblation formulas, some business papers and 25 letters written in his own hand.³

How can this void be explained, when, in the case of the Founder, in spite of all that has been lost, we have left to us a full filing cabinet containing thousands of pages? An anecdote

¹ Father Martin to Father Fabre, May 25, 1870

² *Notices nécrologiques* II, 81-118. Father Achille Rey certainly worked on this too, for we recognize his style therein.

³ About thirty other letters written to Oblates or to Bishops were recovered from various Oblate archives and episcopal residences. The records of the administrative letters of the archdiocese of Marseilles also contain several hundred letters signed by Father Tempier.

discovered by chance in a work done at Marseilles may furnish us with a tentative answer.

Among the numerous persons Father Tempier directed in the convents of Marseilles, was the Foundress of the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary, Mother Marie Saint-Augustin de Jésus, whom Bishop de Mazenod used to call the "Teresa of our century". She truly passed through the great states of prayer and had very profound theological insights, and, at the same time, she gave herself to apostolic works. One day she destroyed what her religious sisters had written about her and even the letters she had received from Father Tempier, letters which might have revealed the secrets of her soul. We read in her life history: "That could not have been done so secretly, however, without someone noticing it and informing the superior of the Congregation about it. That was Father Tempier. It was hoped that his fatherliness would bring about a remedy for this unfortunate loss. But the saints identify with one another and are united in sentiment through the hidden designs of God's Spirit which guides them. 'My daughter, what have you done?' he said to Mother Saint-Augustin. And the Mother, humbly kneeling, replied to him in sentiments of profound submission, 'Father, please allow me to ask you one question.' She then said to him very humbly, 'Father, what would you have done in my place?' Father Tempier would have done the same thing, as the good Mother well knew, and by her question she disarmed him so completely that he shared all her views."⁴

This happened in 1855. Some years later Bishop de Mazenod died and Father Tempier, in spite of his numerous duties from 1861 to 1870, took upon himself the task of classifying the papers in the archives. Father Fabre states that this was the elderly gentleman's "favorite pastime".⁵ One can believe, according to the above-mentioned anecdote, that our first archivist, humble and strict with himself, considered as useless and therefore threw away his writings and letters that

⁴ *Vie et Mission de la Mère Marie Saint-Augustin de Jésus*. Ligugé, 1895, pp. XI-XII

⁵ *Notices nécrologiques* II, 110.

he no doubt found in the files of the one hundred or so Fathers and Brothers who had died before he did. Some of his writings were then preserved, however, and others were certainly put into the archives after that, but everything has disappeared, possibly through negligence, but especially by the unfortunate practice that prevailed with us as in other Congregations at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th, namely, of destroying papers that had been published in part as well as those which were considered less edifying.⁶

The author of the present biography acknowledges that he does not have the "capable hand" that one may desire, but he has spent his life in archives and, since his novitiate in 1946-1947, has been making notes on Father Tempier. Since that time, he has seen the latter as an Oblate who played an important role and who has been too much forgotten. With the revival of interest in the history of our religious family's beginnings and of our charism, it seemed to him that the moment had come to classify the thousands of notes and to restore, in a certain way, the image of him whom the Founder often described as "my other self"⁷, and whom the first generations of Oblates called our "second Father".⁸

The sources for this biography are found, first of all, in the Oblate General Archives.⁹ They contain more than 500 letters of the Founder to Father Tempier and to other Fathers, as well as 125 pages of his Diary, documents in which the Founder speaks of Father Tempier. In nearly 1000 letters addressed to Father Tempier or to his Oblate confreres, his con-

⁶ Rey, Rambert, Yenveux, Paguelle de Follenay in his *Vie du card. Guibert*, Ortolan in *L'Histoire de la Congrégation* quote passages from letters of Father Tempier, the original text of which has disappeared. This is also the case for the writings of Bishop de Mazenod. Cf. *Oblate Writings* I, XXIX, note 1.

⁷ Mazenod to Tempier, April 1, 1821; August 15, 1822; October 6, 1829; August 5, 1856; Mazenod to Marguet, July 30, 1847; Mazenod to Bishop Pavy, December 4, 1848.

⁸ Cf. Chapter V, note 5.

⁹ That is why many references are given as simply as possible: author, recipient, date of the letters, without specifying the archives, except when it is a question of those not at the Oblate General House.

temporaries, we find many details about Father Tempier's life. We have drawn so copiously from these Oblate sources that some people may find that there are too many quotations. This biography, which will be followed by important testimonies about Father Tempier from his contemporaries, as well as by a selection of his writings (volume 2), constitutes the first volume of a second series of Oblate Writings in which we wish to present outstanding Oblates, their lives and their writings. It is a matter of publishing our history. It seemed logical to leave the Oblates who knew Father Tempier speak as much as possible, even in this biography of him. They appear here as eye witnesses and thus we become more acquainted with them also as we read the many passages from their letters.

The first chapter on Father Tempier's infancy and youth may appear to be quite meagre. Father Tempier was born of a humble family and grew up during or immediately after the Revolution, a period of turmoil which left very few items in archives. Besides, simple people do not have a history. In spite of an equally scant documentation, consisting of hundreds of little details, the following chapters bring out — so it seems to us — a fairly accurate outline of the image of Father Tempier and his truly astonishing activity in the service of the diocese of Marseilles and of the Congregation of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate. In these pages one will no doubt find lacunae and flaws. Our hope is that more fortunate researchers and writers will one day improve on our limitations and shortcomings.

Yvon Beaudoin, O.M.I.

I

THE FIRST YEARS (1788-1815)

François de Paule Henry Tempier was born on April 2, 1788, at Saint-Cannat, a village located sixteen kilometres north of Aix-en-Provence, of a family of good and true farmers who remained faithful to the traditions of faith and the practice of piety. He was baptized on the same day.¹

His parents, Jean Joseph and Jeanne Bourdon,² had six children: Jean Pierre, Marie Rose, Marie Madeleine, Elisabeth Françoise, François de Paule Henry and Joseph Toussaint.³ Only Elisabeth Françoise and François de Paule Henry were born at Saint-Cannat, in 1787 and 1788 respectively. The others were born at Milles,⁴ a hamlet in the Aix area, located about seven kilometres south of the city. Here his parents owned a farm and here they were married on May 9, 1780; and here, too, they died: Jean Joseph on August 3, 1820, and Jeanne on January 7, 1821.⁵

Childhood

François de Paule Henry spent his childhood in the shelter of the family home.⁶ We do not know whether he had much

¹ *Notices nécrologiques OMI*, II, 82. Father Fabre wrote that Father Tempier was born on April 1st. This same date is given in the Register for the taking of the habit and in Bishop de Mazenod's *Diary* on April 2, 1839. The baptismal record, however, is clear that the child was born and baptized on April 2: cf. Aix, arch. départementales, reg. paroissiaux de Saint-Cannat. The list of seminarians confirms the date of April 2nd: cf. Paris, arch. nationales, F 19 825.

² Sometimes one finds it written Baudon and also Templier: cf. Aix, arch, dép. paroissiaux de St-Cannat et des Milles.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ Les Milles gets its name from the milestone near the bridge over which the Via Aurelia crossed the Arc on its way from Aix to Marseilles: cf. *Encyclopédie des Bouches-du-Rhône*, vol. 14, p. 559.

⁵ Aix, arch. dép., *ibid.*

⁶ *Notices néc.*, II, 82.

to suffer from the Revolution of 1879, especially during the period of the Terror (1793-1794) when the Church was so harshly persecuted. We do know, however, how he reacted to the Directoire (1795-1799). It would seem that in 1860 Father Tempier, always so discreet, did speak about it to the scholastics at Montolivet.

Consequent to the Civil Constitution of the Clergy that had been enacted on July 12, 1790, the different churches in the city of Aix had been either closed or entrusted to priests who accepted this Constitution and had sworn the oath. The clergy of the parishes of Milles and Puyricard, however, had remained faithful and thus the priests who did not comply and had not taken the oath went there to celebrate Mass. In reprisal, the Directoire of Aix in 1799 ordered the closure of these two churches. In the ordinance we read: "It is at Milles especially that royalism and fanaticism are making progress; in the church at Milles insubordinate priests and their followers conspire against the Revolution and its true friends."⁷

François de Paule and two of his friends, Michel Figuière and Jean Joseph Reynaud,⁸ who like François de Paule also became priests, were at that time preparing for first Holy Communion. They could have gone with other children to the cathedral of Saint-Sauveur which was in the hands of priests who had accepted the Constitution.⁹ They refused to do so and made their first Holy Communion ". . . on a fine morning of 1799 . . . in a simple room on one of the beautiful streets of

⁷ M. Constantin, *Les paroisses du diocèse d'Aix . . .*, Aix, 1890, p. 314; J.-M. Palanque, *Le diocèse d'Aix . . .*, Paris, 1975, chap. VIII: *La crise révolutionnaire*, by M. Vovelle, p. 171.

⁸ These two priests are never mentioned in Oblate sources. It is said that they were still living in 1860 (cf. *Missions OMI*, 1938, 86-87) and deceased in 1870 (cf. *Not. nécr.*, II, 83). It seems quite clear that the first is indeed Michel Figuière (1790-1864) who was for a long time the dean of the metropolitan Chapter of Aix; and that the other is Jean Joseph Reynaud (1789-1868), who was professor in the Theology Faculty of Aix. The two attended the celebration on April 7, 1864, of Father Tempier's 50th anniversary of priesthood: cf. *Missions OMI*, 1864, 153.

⁹ *Not. nécr.*, II, 82.

Aix . . .” The chronicler continues: “They were between the ages of ten to twelve. There was no singing, no musical accompaniment, perhaps some flowers and a more spic and span arrangement: that was all that our three friends could offer to God who was coming to visit them. They copiously made up for their poverty, however, by receiving Jesus Christ in hearts that were filled with the greatest generosity. Their prayer of thanksgiving was long and fervent. God alone knows what sentiments of love and gratitude these three young hearts expressed to him; we do know, however, what reply God gave to their humble and ardent prayer. When they arose from prayer, the three friends, without any prior consultation or mutual confiding in each other, went to their director and urgently requested that he teach them Latin: they wanted to become priests.”¹⁰

Ecclesiastical studies, ordination, first ministry

When religious peace was restored by the Concordat of 1801, the diocese of Aix was a shambles and the seminaries closed. The Abbé Jean Pierre Abel (1765-1842), rector of the Saint Jean Baptiste parish on the outskirts, along with several collaborators, then purchased the old monastery of the Doctrinaire Fathers to set up a boarding school. After he had been appointed Archbishop, Champion de Cicé made it a minor seminary.¹¹ Here François de Paule began his studies in 1803.¹²

In 1804 the major seminary was also reopened in the buildings of the previous one on the Rue du Séminaire.¹³ It

¹⁰ *Le Sanctuaire*, periodical published at the scholasticate of Montolivet, April 2, 1860: cf. *Missions OMI*, 1938, 86-87; *Not. nécr.*, II, 82-83.

¹¹ *Aix, ancien et moderne*, Aix 1823, p. 124; Roux Alphéran, *Les rues d'Aix*, 1846, pp. 295-296.

¹² This is all we know about this period: “Time of the beginning of studies: 1803”: cf. Paris, arch. nat., F 19 825: Liste . . . des aspirants a l'état ecclésiastique pendant l'année 1814; *Not. nécr.*, II, 84; “Father Abel . . . was happy to receive among his professors someone who had been his pupil for a long time . . .”

¹³ Levy-Schneider, *Mgr Champion de Cicé*, Paris, 1921, pp. 320-321; Chailan, *La faculté de théologie d'Aix au XIX siècle*, Marseilles, 1939, p. 12.

was entrusted to the Sulpicians, as it had already been prior to the Revolution. François de Paule and his friend Michel Figuière entered it in 1810 under the direction of the Sulpician Barthélemy Dalga, its Superior from 1805 to 1829. Tempier's name appears on two lists that have been discovered. On that of Father Dalga, Tempier is during the academic year of 1810-1811 among a group of 20 students of philosophy and, in 1881-1812, one of 22 students in first year theology.¹⁴ Until 1815, the seminarians attended the Faculty of Theology of Aix which Napoleon had restored in 1810.¹⁵ We know three of its registered professors whose salaries were paid by the State: Jean François Florens (1752-1822), professor of dogmatic theology; Jean Probace Castellan (1759-1837), professor of history and canon law; and Guillaume Martin (1747-1828), professor of moral theology.¹⁶

On the list of aspirants to the clerical state that was annually sent to Paris, Tempier is described as "tonsured" in 1811, as subdeacon and review professor for the third year in the minor seminary in 1813, and as deacon and review professor at the minor seminary in 1814.¹⁷ His practical knowledge and dedication must have won the confidence of Father Abel and the students of this institution, for in 1813-1814 François de Paule taught the humanities there.¹⁸

While thus engaged in his theological studies and as professor, he was ordained priest on March 26, 1814. Father Fabre writes: "We can confidently say that the young ordinand's dispositions were among the most perfect; more than

¹⁴ List of seminarians drawn up by Father Dalga: cf. Chailan, *op. cit.*, pp. 151-152.

¹⁵ Chailan, *op. cit.*, pp. 13-18. The Faculty was restored in 1808, but courses began in November 1810.

¹⁶ Chailan, *op. cit.*, pp. 111-115. G. Martin was in 1823 appointed Canon of Marseilles and First Cantor of the cathedral. In 1813-1814, a Lazarist, Emmanuel Verbert (1752-1819), taught moral theology.

¹⁷ Paris, arch. nat., F 19, 825.

¹⁸ *Not. néc.*, II, 84 and Léon de Chazournes, *Vie du R.P. Joseph Barrele*, S.J. ed. 2a, vol. I, Paris, 1870, p. 29.

fifty years of priesthood have translated into action the admirable quantity of graces received on that fine day; always and everywhere people have been pleased to say and note: Father Tempier was a priest, a priest without reproach.”¹⁹

Archbishop de Cicé died in 1810. Because of the difficulties that had arisen between the Imperial Government and the Sovereign Pontiff, the diocese of Aix was from 1810 to 1819 administered by three Capitular Vicars General. It was this administration that appointed the new priest to the post of assistant priest in the parish of Saint Césaire at Arles,²⁰ an appointment made after the experience of a mission preached together with the Abbé Mie at Saint-Paul-lès-Durance.²¹ From that time onwards, confessions, preaching, works of charity²² and especially the “catechism sessions of each day”²³ from Epiphany to Easter, everything entered into the orbit of his zeal as an aid to Father Muratory, the Rector of the parish, and to Father Rouey, the first assistant.

¹⁹ *Not. nécr.*, II, 84; Father Tempier's letter to Father Le Bihan, January 29, 1864.

²⁰ Several times between October 30, 1814 and December 23, 1815, he signed the baptismal register: cf. Aix, arch. depart., 96 V, 41/1.

²¹ J. Jeancard, *Notice sur le R.P. Mie* in *Missions OMI*, 1866, 440.

²² *Not. nécr.*, II, 84.

²³ Tempier to Mazenod, Oct. 27, 1815; Reg. des baptêmes de St-Césaire d'Arles. The Abbé Veran took Father Tempier's place in 1815: Aix, arch. dép.

II

FOUNDING THE MISSIONARIES
OF PROVENCE (1815-1818)*An unexpected call, a generous response*

The Abbé Tempier had been carrying out his parish ministry at Arles for hardly one year when in the first half of October 1815, he received an urgent letter from Aix, inviting him to join an establishment whose objective it was to provide zealous missionaries for the rural areas of Aix. The author of the letter added: "It is important to lay solid foundations. The greatest regularity must be planned and introduced in the house as soon as we enter it. And it is precisely for that reason that you are necessary to me because I know you to be capable of embracing an exemplary rule of life and of persevering in it."¹

Assistant priest Tempier only replied to this letter of October 9th on the 27th of the same month. Since it lacked a signature, he wanted to verify with the help of a friend² that it did indeed come from Eugene de Mazenod, whom he had known at the major seminary³ and who was much talked about by the clergy. He replied enthusiastically and gratefully to this invitation which he considered a special grace. Even though he felt he did not see in himself "the ability to preach necessary to a missionary", he would be happy to instruct the poor people of the countryside and he especially wanted to be

¹ Mazenod to Tempier, October 9, 1815.

² Abbé Gaudin, cf. Rambert I, 168.

³ The Abbé de Mazenod had made his retreat at the seminary in 1812 and went there twice every month to hear confessions and give direction to the seminarians, cf. Rambert I, 512; Mazenod to Forbin-Janson April 9-22, 1813. From the first letters between Mazenod and Tempier, it is clear that they knew each other, cf. Mazenod to Tempier, October 9, 1815; Tempier to Mazenod October 27 and December 20, 1815: "I esteemed you very highly and I never failed to talk about you whenever I was with my friends."

a holy priest, to work "for the salvation of souls with no other reward here on earth but hardship and fatigue."⁴

As he read this reply, the Abbé de Mazenod hardly knew how to express his joy. He was quite convinced that he had found the collaborator he was looking for: "I count on you more than on myself for the regularity of a house which, in my mind and my hopes, must reproduce the perfection of the first disciples of the apostles . . ."⁵ ". . . As soon as I read your first letter . . . I knew that I had found the man who lays hold of good, latches on thereto and consequently with the help of grace, succeeds perfectly in effecting it . . . The second reason which made me regard it as a present from heaven the resolution to join us at which you have arrived, is the need we have of a priest who thinks as you do about the interior life of our community . . . I am so assured that we will always agree that I would not fear to promise never to think otherwise than you on all that has to do with the interior life and its obligations, more extensive than one ordinarily believes, of the priest who wishes to live as his state requires."⁶

Thus the first exchange of letters is filled with promise and omens that future events will never contradict!

On October 2, 1815, the Abbé de Mazenod had already bought a part of the former Carmelite convent; and the Abbés Deblieu, Mie and Icard had committed themselves to join the community. Even though he had been approached after the others, the Abbé Tempier was the first to arrive, on December 27th.⁷ During the first weeks, he spent the night at his parents' place and, during the day, was busy with the Founder in all things they were planning "to do for the glory of God and the salvation of souls".⁸ He was the first to take up residence at

⁴ Tempier to Mazenod, October 27, 1815.

⁵ Mazenod to Tempier, November 15, 1815.

⁶ Mazenod to Tempier, December 13, 1815.

⁷ Rambert, I, 174; J. Pielorz, *Nouvelles recherches sur la fondation de notre Congrégation*, in *Missions OMI*, 83 (1956), 210-236; 84, (1957), 130-136.

⁸ Father Tempier's Memoirs, in Rambert I, 174.

the house of the Mission; the Abbés de Mazenod and Icard joined him there on January 25, 1816, and thus began their community life.⁹

The Capitular Vicars General canonically established the Society on January 29th. After the election of the Superior and a ten-day retreat, they left to give the mission at Grans during February and March.¹⁰ On their return, the Abbés de Mazenod and Tempier made a vow of obedience to each other in order thus to strengthen their oneness and to identify themselves more closely to Christ: this was done on Holy Thursday, April 11, 1816.¹¹ By this fact Father Tempier became the Founder's confidant and "intimate friend",¹² and this he will remain until the latter's death in 1861.

First responsibilities

The first goal of the Missionaries of Provence was to re-awaken the faith among the poor people of the rural areas. They devoted the greater part of their life to this work. They preached four missions in 1815-1816, two in 1817 and again as many in 1818. The Abbé Tempier took part in those at Fuveau in 1816, at Mouries in 1817 and at Le Puget in 1818.¹³

The daily instructions, the various ceremonies and the many confessions during these four or five weeks long missions took their toll on the health of even the strongest. When

⁹ J. Pielorz, *op. cit.*, *Missions OMI*, 84 (1957), 130-136.

¹⁰ J. Leflon, *Eugene de Mazenod*, II, 42.

¹¹ *Missions OMI*, 72 (1938), 93; Rambert I, 187-188.

¹² Fortuné de Mazenod came to live with the Missionaries at Aix when he returned from exile in 1818. He always refers to Tempier as "the friend", "the intimate friend" of the Founder, cf. Fortuné to the President, April 9, August 26 and September 6, 1818.

¹³ J. Pielorz, *Premières Missions des Miss. de Provence*, in *Missions OMI*, 82 (1955), 549-555. Tempier also preached a retreat at Gréasque in October, 1816, cf. Tempier to Mazenod, October 1816. Besides that, he was named assistant priest at Milles in April 1817, the parish where his parents were living. His collaboration was not that extensive. Possibly the Vicars General made this appointment to gain some support for the Missionaries who were quite poor, cf. Vicars General to the Mayor, April 23, 1817, AAA.

Fortuné de Mazenod, the future Bishop of Marseilles, returned to Italy in 1818, he found his nephew in a very bad state of health. He opposed the mission at Eyguières which was to be preached during Lent. As he wrote: "All the missionaries are played out and it is physically impossible for them to take it on and even more so to finish it."¹⁴

Was François de Paul in better shape than the others? The Founder's father, President de Mazenod, considered him to be at least somewhat wiser and one day suggested to his brother, Fortuné, that the latter follow the system "of the respected Abbé Tempier who wisely puts off to the morrow that which he could not do the day before."¹⁵ It is true that Tempier did not preach as much as the others did. He it was who generally remained at Aix. Even there, however, there was a great amount of work to be done, work which could have kept several missionaries busy. Three undertakings were already in full swing there: the youth congregation, services in the church of the Mission, and the novitiate.

In fact, shortly after his return to Aix in 1812, Eugene de Mazenod noticed that the youth was growing up without receiving a true Christian education in the colleges that were subjected to the university monopoly. The clergy's efforts, officially admitted for catechism and worship, experienced a lot of indifference, even hostility. So he started an association which after 1814 was referred to as the Congregation of Christian Youth. He had the knack of attracting young people. In 1814 there were already sixty in the Congregation and this rose to about four hundred in 1822.¹⁶ The Carmelite convent and the adjoining church served as a meeting and prayer place for the young people, many of whom were often in the house for confession, direction and recreation. The Abbé Tempier immediately gained their confidence and his time was taken

¹⁴ Fortuné to the President de Mazenod, March 7, 1818.

¹⁵ President to Fortuné, June 5, 1818, cf. also Y.B., *Le retour d'exil des Mazenod in 1818*, in *Vie Oblate Life*, 44 (1985), 291-330.

¹⁶ J. Pielorz, *Liste des Congréganistes d'Aix en 1813-1822*, A.P.R.

up with them, especially when the Abbé de Mazenod had to be away, on missions or on matters concerning the Society.¹⁷ Fortuné de Mazenod, who witnessed this activity in 1818, wrote that often Tempier, all alone at the Mission, had an "immense amount of work" and was "overloaded with work".¹⁸

The church of the Mission was restored and opened to the public on April 7, 1816. It soon became a centre of intense religious activity. Besides the young people, there were frequent gatherings there of the Association of the Sacred Heart which the Abbé de Mazenod had established, and also of the many devout people who were drawn there by the beauty of the ceremonies, enhanced even more after 1816 by the presence of the novices and theology students.¹⁹

On May 13, 1816, Madame Gontier, who owned the Carmelite convent, left a large part of the house to the Missionaries. This increased living space made it possible to receive postulants and thus assure recruits for the community. A priest and five young people entered the novitiate in 1816, three in 1817 and five in 1818.²⁰

Because of his many absences, the Abbé de Mazenod had to leave the formation of postulants and novices to the Abbés Tempier and Maunier.²¹ This was a heavy responsibility for it was the Institute's first novitiate. Practices had to be started with no prior experience and the spirit of the house

¹⁷ This comes up in the Mazenod-Tempier Correspondence and in the letters of the Youth Congregation members, cf. for example: A. Chappuis to Mazenod, November 1817, Al. Carpentier to Mazenod, November 13, 1817, Maurin to Mazenod, November 14, 1818, Figurey to Mazenod, November 12, 1818: "Yesterday I had a chance to unburden my conscience to the highly regarded Father Tempier. I spoke to him with as much confidence as I do to you . . .", A.G.R.

¹⁸ Fortuné to the President, November 12 and December 14, 1818.

¹⁹ J. Leflon, *Eugene de Mazenod II*, 42: There are a lot of details about this in the correspondence between Fortuné and the President in 1818, cf. Y.B., *Le retour d'exil des Mazenod en 1818* in *Vie Oblate Life*, 45 (1986), 411-446.

²⁰ *Registre des prises d'habit 1815-1850*, A.G.R. H b 13.

²¹ G. Cosentino, *Un formateur: le p. Maunier*, in *Etudes Oblates*, 17 (1958), 219-269.

had to be formed. From Paris, where he stayed from July to November 1817 in an effort to obtain governmental approval for the Society, the Founder sent a great deal of advice. On August 12th he wrote: "For the love of God never cease to inculcate and preach humility, abnegation, forgetfulness of self, disdain for worldly esteem. May these be ever the foundations of our little Society which, combined with a truly disinterested zeal for the glory of God and the salvation of souls, and the most tender, affectionate and sincere charity amongst ourselves, will make of our house an earthly paradise and will establish it in more solid a manner than all possible orders and laws." "This spirit of being wholly devoted to the glory of God, the service of the Church and the salvation of souls, is the spirit that is proper to our Congregation, a small one, to be sure, but which will always be powerful as long as she is holy."²²

The novice master used to read these letters to the future missionaries and, so it would seem, already composed the beginnings of a directory or guidelines for the novitiate.²³ In November he informed the Superior that the novices were "full of good will and," he added, "I hope they will become saints."²⁴

The Abbé Tempier's role in regard to the Founder

It is obvious that during the course of the Society's first three years Father Tempier appears as the Founder's most faithful companion and, without any special assignment thereto, is playing a role in his regard that will be lifelong: that of being the Founder's admonitor, assistant, collaborator and confidant.

²² Mazenod to Tempier, August 22, 1817, cf. also the letters of July-December, 1817.

²³ G. Cosentino, *Les origines de nos saintes règles*, in *Etudes Oblates*, 7 (1948), 56-58.

²⁴ Tempier to Mazenod, November 11, 1817. In August 1817, Tempier took the novices on pilgrimage to Ste. Baume, cf. President to Fortuné, August 13, 1817.

As early as the summer of 1816 he prescribed for him a complete rest in the countryside.²⁵ At Barjols, in November-December 1818, the Abbé de Mazenod began to cough up blood during the very first days of the mission. The Abbé Tempier heard of this and forbade him to preach and to hear confessions.²⁶ One week later he made some concessions but added: "I leave it to your conscience, but a better formed conscience than the one you seem to have entertained up to now in this matter."²⁷

The Abbé Tempier was involved in everything, shared the Founder's concerns and was personally interested in his projects. In January 1816 he took part in drawing up the Rules and Regulations for the Missionaries of Provence and, in December 1816, the Superior asked him to spend two hours a day on preparing the Society's statutes.²⁸ In 1817, the Minister of the Interior and the Vicars General of Aix requested the Missionaries to preach missions in Corsica. The Abbé de Mazenod did not seem to take this offer seriously.²⁹ His first collaborator, on the contrary, considered this a sign of Providence and wrote on July 30th: "I don't see why we should refuse. It seems to me that this would give us the wider field of action that we want . . . Let us think about it seriously."³⁰ In August, 1817 came the opportunity of buying another part of the Carmelite convent. The Abbé Tempier wrote to the Founder right away and pointed out the advantages of such a purchase and proposed ways and means of meeting the cost."³¹

When he was staying in Paris in 1817, the Abbé de Mazenod experienced a series of setbacks that endangered his works at Aix and in Provence. He even thought of giving

²⁵ Founder's letters, July 1816: J. Leflon, *Eugene de Mazenod*, II, 43.

²⁶ Tempier to Mazenod, November 11, 1818.

²⁷ Tempier to Mazenod, November 17, 1818.

²⁸ Mazenod to Tempier, December 15, 1816 and *Missions OMI* 84 (1957), 153.

²⁹ Capitular Vicars of Aix to the Minister of the Interior, May 16, 1817; Mazenod to Tempier, July 19, 1817.

³⁰ Tempier to Mazenod, July 30, 1817.

³¹ Tempier to Mazenod, August 25, 1817.

them up.³² Possibly Fortuné de Mazenod's judgment expressed about him the following year has some merit: "That's what happens to over-eager characters who get as easily discouraged as they are buoyed up."³³ His faithful friend, however, always calm and serene, knew how to moderate the Superior's excessive impressions. On October 23, 1817, he sent him an encouraging letter which is imbued with a deep spirituality; he wrote: "One must admit that God treats us with great goodness since he shares with us gifts that he has made to his own Son during the latter's stay on earth . . . Whatever we may have done, how have we deserved this grace thus to share in the precious cross of the Son of God? . . . It is a grace of predilection which God gives only to his saints; how could we then complain? Please God that his Providence might always treat us thus and above all that we respond well thereto."³⁴

New horizons

The Abbé de Mazenod had at first envisaged only one community of Missionaries who would preach at Aix and in Provence; events led him to gradually widen his perspective. Fearing the success of the Youth Congregation and that the church of the Mission may take faithful away from their own churches, the parish priests of Aix created difficulties for the Missionaries, thereby rendering the latter's apostolate rather painful.³⁵ We have already seen that as early as 1817 the Missionaries wanted a foothold in another diocese.³⁶

An unexpected offer came in August 1818 when Father Arbaud, the Vicar General of Digne, proposed that they take on the direction of the shrine of Notre-Dame du Laus near Gap. The Abbé de Mazenod consulted his small group of men

³² Cf. The Founder's letters of July-November, 1817, especially those of October.

³³ Fortuné to the President, May 15, 1818.

³⁴ Tempier to Mazenod, October 23, 1817.

³⁵ J. Pielorz, *Les rapports du Fondateur avec les Curés d'Aix* in *Etudes Oblates*, 19 (1960), 147-171, 328-367; 20 (1961) 39-60.

³⁶ Tempier to Mazenod, July 30, 1817.

and gave them to understand that, because they were called to come into another diocese, it was necessary to broaden their community rule and to prepare veritable Constitutions and Rules. With the enthusiastic approval of his confreres and the permission of the Capitular Vicars of Aix, he left for St-Laurent-du-Verdon where from September 2nd to 16th, he composed the essential elements of the Rules of the Missionaries of Provence.³⁷ From there he went with Father Tempier to Digne where, between September 18th and 21st, he came to an agreement with Bishop Miollis that the Missionaries take on the post of Rector of N.-D du Laus, the direction of the shrine and be responsible for preaching missions in the Upper and Lower Alps.³⁸

The two friends returned to Aix and convoked the first General Chapter of the Society for October 24, 1818. The Capitulars confirmed the Abbé de Mazenod in his position of Superior General and approved the acceptance of N.-D. du Laus; they were hesitant, however, about approving the Rules, particularly the section that concerned the vows.³⁹ Four of the seven priests were opposed to them. The Abbé Tempier supported the Founder, but it took the intervention of three scholastics to achieve a majority in favor of the vows. The annual retreat followed the Chapter and closed on November 1st with the profession of the vows of chastity, obedience and perseverance. The Society was clearly taking a turn in favor of the religious life: Father Tempier's influence on his former novices had been the deciding factor.

³⁷ J. Pielorz, *Le séjour du F. à St-Laurent et la rédaction de nos Règles*, in *Missions OMI*, 84 (1957), 297-322.

³⁸ G. Simonin, *Chronique de la maison du Laus* (1818-1841), in *Missions OMI*, 35 (1897), 59-105.

³⁹ J. Leflon, *Eugene de Mazenod*, II, 166-169; J. Pielorz, *Les Chapitres Généraux*, *Archives d'Histoire Oblate*, Ottawa, 1968, I, 1-17.



The Carmelite Convent and the interior of the church of the Mission.



Notre-Dame du Laus

III

SUPERIOR OF N.D. DU LAUS (1819-1823)

The shrine of Laus, located about ten kilometres south-west of Gap, came into being in the 17th century, beginning with the apparitions of the Blessed Virgin to the shepherdess Benedicta Rencurel (1647-1718) in 1860. Benedicta's long exemplary life and after that, from 1712 to 1791, the zeal of the priests of Sainte-Garde attracted a lot of pilgrims.

During the Revolution, the church and monastery were sold as national property, which put an end to pilgrimages. Bishop Miollis, after he had been named to Digne in 1805, bought back the church and rectory with his own money. Abbé Peix, parish priest at Gap, bought back the monastery in 1816. Pilgrims started trickling back to Laus which was served at first by a diocesan priest.

When it was a question of forming a second community, the Founder of the Missionaries of Provence naturally thought of the Abbé Tempier as superior, the man he already considered as his alter ego. The latter left Aix on January 3, 1819, with the novice Bourrelier.¹ They arrived at Laus on January 8. Father Peix installed the new rector and shrine director on the following Sunday, January 11.² The Superior at Laus then began a very busy life, except possibly for the first winter which started with a mission at Remollon, running from January 17 to February 14, and given by the Abbés de Mazenod, Mie, Maunier and Marius Aubert. The outstanding success of

¹ Father G. Simonin says that Ignace Viotot left with Tempier, cf. *Chronique de la maison du Laus*, in *Missions OMI*, 35 (1897), 92 and 94. But, according to the *Cahier des prises d'habit*, Ignace didn't get to Laus until July 20, 1820. On February 22, 1819, Bourrelier wrote to Tempier that he was alone at Laus, but on April 1, 1819, Fortuné de Mazenod wrote to the President that the Abbé Touche went to Laus with a "brother carpenter". Was that Ignace? It is probable, cf. Jeancard, *Mélanges historiques* . . ., 93.

² Simonin, 93. Sunday the 11th and not the 10th, as Simonin writes.

this first mission in the region gained the respect of both clergy and people for the missionaries.³

Upon his return to Laus in the middle of February, the Superior busied himself with the formation of his co-workers, who were still novices. Bourrelier, to whom he also gave Latin lessons, made his vows on September 8; the Abbé Touche, who came in the spring with a "brother carpenter", made his oblation on August 15.⁴ He also started renovations on the house, and after the arrival of Abbé Touche, he went to spend a month at Gap with the Abbé Peix, who died on May 19. Pilgrims started coming in great numbers in May and June.⁵ The Abbé Tempier had to put all his talents to work: bursar, builder, parish priest and missionary, educator and superior.

Builder and Bursar

First of all, the Abbé Tempier began work on fixing up the church with its bare walls, and to redo the floor, which was very rundown. He bought a Way of the Cross, finished the choirloft with woodwork and stalls, put in a marble altar and acquired priestly vestments and chandeliers, etc., all with the help of benefactors.

Father Peix had already started to fix up the monastery which had been in disuse for a long time. The new Superior repaired the roof in 1819, put in new rooms on the second floor, and made attic rooms by opening windows through the slanting roof.⁶ In 1822 he wrote to the Founder that he had rooms for 16 novices.⁷ He also worked at getting enough water for the community, starting by repairing a canal for this purpose.⁸

³ Th. Ortolan, *Les Oblats de Marie Immaculée* . . . , I, 136-137.

⁴ Fortuné to the President, April 1, 1819; *Reg. des prises d'habit*; Voitot; Bourrelier to Mazenod, September 11, 1819; Simonin, 94-95.

⁵ Simonin, 94-95; Bourrelier to Tempier, April 25, 1819; Mazenod to Tempier, May 19, 1819.

⁶ Ortolan I, 131; Simonin 96, 97, 173, 184; Bourrelier to Tempier, April 25, 1819.

⁷ Tempier to Mazenod, 1822; Simonin, 191.

⁸ Simonin, 184-185; Ortolan, I, 131.

Being a careful bursar, he calculated his expenses according to his income: his income as rector, mass stipends, income from the sale of religious music and articles, board and room for the novices between 1820 and 1822, income from a small piece of land, and later, from the land and the Jouvent vineyard which he had bought at Remollon. He brought in provisions from Aix and Marseilles, where they were cheaper than in the mountain region, and obtained a reduced fare for the coach from Gap to Aix.⁹

He no doubt discovered his own self and his talents as a bursar and builder while he was at Laus became evident to others as well. These were soon to become one of his life's main occupations both in the diocese of Marseilles and in the Congregation.

Rector at Laus and pilgrimage director

Laus in itself was only a small parish. Abbé Tempier had already learnt at Arles how to care for souls and now put this into practice. "Regular religious service", Father Simonin writes, "religious instruction for the faithful, adapted to their needs, catechism for the children, administration of the sacraments, visits to the poor, the infirm and the sick, developed a spirit of faith in the parish, increased the reception of the sacraments, and with Christian morals, promoted unity and peace both in homes and among the people."¹⁰

But the main reason why the Missionaries of Provence had been invited to Laus was to revive devotion to Mary in this place of devotion. As early as March 1819 the superior began to talk about pilgrims coming to spend a few hours at the shrine or to stay for a novena, living at a hostel or with people of the area. At certain times during the year, organized groups from parishes used to come to join lone pilgrims or

⁹ Simonin, 104, 184, 191-192; letters of 1824 from Tempier to Touche; about his financial worries, cf. also the letters of 1820-1822 from Bourrelier and de Dupuy to Tempier.

¹⁰ Simonin, 98-99.

those making a novena. Many pilgrims came especially for the Marian feasts of July 2nd, August 15th and September 8th. From 1819 to 1823 a greater number started coming because they could count on getting absolution for their sins. It had been the Jansenist custom up to that time to give absolution only rarely, even after confessions made over several years. Following the teaching of Blessed Ligouri, the Missionaries of Provence showed themselves to be more just and merciful.¹¹

Especially on days when a lot of people came, the need was greater than the Missionaries could handle. "If you want to know what we are doing at Laus," wrote the superior to Abbé de Mazenod, on June 13, 1819, "we hear confessions and always we hear confessions; we hear the confessions of pilgrims who come in greater numbers in the measure that we are more numerous."

Besides hearing confessions and preaching, the Superior made the liturgy his special concern. "Services are carried out at the shrine of Notre-Dame du Laus with all possible dignity," he wrote to the Founder on July 5, 1819. "This is so true that you would look long and far in our mountains to find places where God is served with as much respect and decency. The people are struck by it, and, which says quite a bit, priests who come cannot stop agreeing that, if they performed their services with such respect in their parishes, their people could not resist; there would be more piety." In July 1819, the Abbés Maunier and Mie and Brothers Dupuy and Moreau came to aid the little community during the summer. The ceremonies took on a truly incomparable magnificence when the house was the residence for novices and students from 1820 to 1822.¹²

The Superior promoted devotion to Mary through several other initiatives as well. He started a small store for books and religious articles, struck several medals with the image of the

¹¹ Simonin, 100-102; Bourrelrier to Tempier, April 25, 1819.

¹² Simonin, 104; Ortolan, I, 135-136; Bourrelrier to Mazenod, May and September 11, 1819; Tempier to Mazenod, September 14, 1819.

shrine on one side and the name of the Missionaries de Provence on the other; in 1820 he obtained favors and indulgences¹³ from Rome for the directors and for the pilgrims; lastly, he had the little book *Merveilles de Notre-Dame du Laus* reprinted in a new edition.¹⁴

Missionary and Apostle

Abbé Tempier had written that he did not see in himself "the ability to preach necessary to a missionary".¹⁵ Was that the reason why he did not take part in the first official mission given by the Society at Grans? There was need, on the other hand, for someone to be present at Aix. The Founder deemed it fitting to give him some consolation by telling him on February 24, 1816 that God would "take into account" the sacrifice he had made.

However, someone would sometimes replace him at Aix and allow him to take part in one mission a year between 1816 and 1818. His appointment to Laus threw him into the thick of things. He preached 3 missions or retreats a year in 1819, 1820, and 1821, 4 in 1822 and 2 between January and March 1823.¹⁶

According to the reports of these missions, the work of the missionaries was usually crowned with success, especially when Father de Mazenod was in charge. Rognac, towards the end of 1819, was the only place where the people did not respond to the sacrifices and efforts of Abbés Tempier, Mie and Moreau. They were scarcely able to find a bed, some mattresses and a maid to prepare their simple meals.¹⁷ It seems that the missionaries were somewhat discouraged because the

¹³ *Missions OMI*, 79 (1952), 77-80.

¹⁴ Simonin, 103; *Recueil historique des Merveilles que Dieu a opérées à N.-D. du Laus . . .*, Grenoble, 1736; 2nd ed., Avignon, 1817; 3rd ed., Gap., 1824.

¹⁵ Tempier to Mazenod, October 27, 1815.

¹⁶ J. Pielorz, *Premières missions des Miss. de Provence*, in *Missions OMI*, 82 (1955), 549-561.

¹⁷ Tempier to Mazenod, November 14 & 16, and December 2, 1819.

Founder wrote to bolster their morale: "Oh! how right you seem to me upon your pile of straw and how much your fare, which is more than frugal, excites my appetite! This to my mind is the first time we have had what we should . . ." But "why so discouraged . . . why the complaints? . . . Pray, preach, knock on the door, do not be discouraged . . ." ¹⁸

The missionaries gave about twenty missions and retreats in the Alps during the space of four years. They suffered a lot from the cold but were able to convert many people.¹⁹ The Superior of Laus never spoke of any of his own oratorical successes. He admitted later that since he did not have the time to prepare a complete set of instructions, he got his ideas for preaching from Father Humbert.²⁰ He heard a lot of confessions and preached mainly by example. A fire broke out in June 1819 in the village of Saint-Etienne d'Avançon, near Laus. The missionaries spent the night helping the villagers to put out the fire. The Founder congratulated them on June 29: "Four missionaries engaged in such an exercise of charity, preached better still than in the pulpit, at least they are better understood."

Professor and Educator

The Superior of the house at Laus spent six months outside the house during the winter of 1819-1820. He preached missions at Rognac, Marseilles, and Aix, and spent some time with his father who was seriously ill. He returned to Laus in May with Courtès to give a hand to the Fathers Touche and Bourrelier who were asking for help. A few weeks later, the Founder recalled his first collaborator to Aix for consultation. The house was overflowing with postulants, novices, theology students and young men from good families who were study-

¹⁸ Mazenod to Tempier, November 16, 22, and 27, 1819.

¹⁹ Simonin, 204; Tempier to Mazenod, October 1820, May/June and September/October, 1821; September/October, 1822.

²⁰ Notices nécrologiques II, 88; Pierre H. Humbert, was a pious and learned priest (+1799), who wrote several works of instructions for catechism and preaching.

ing in various faculties. They decided to send the novices to Laus which offered "benefits for both soul and body". Fathers de Mazenod and Tempier along with 4 novices, Honorat, a scholastic, and a layman, left Aix on June 19, 1820 and arrived at Laus on June 21st, the feast of St. Aloysius Gonzaga.²¹

The Founder stayed in the community for nearly two months, waiting for Abbé Tempier who had gone to spend several weeks with his family at the time of his father's death which had occurred on August 3rd. When he got back at the middle of August, he added to his other duties that of master of novices and professor for Honorat and de Bourrelrier, who were studying theology.²²

The community grew rapidly. Two novices were sent away in October²³ but at the beginning of the following year, the postulants Guigues and Martin came. Several others followed during the course of the year, among whom were Richaud, Marcou, Jeancard, and Arnoux; these did make vows.²⁴ There were 24 people in the community at the end of 1821, 18 postulants and novices, and 3 theology students. The older ones taught those who were younger, while the Superior took care of the spiritual formation and taught theology.²⁵

Under his influence, the Laus community was most fervent, especially in 1820 and 1821. Already in 1819 he had started to recite the office with only two or three confreres, "piously and with propriety".²⁶ He set aside a few hours a day for study and meditation,²⁷ and, as we have seen, made sure

²¹ Rey I, 251; Simonin, 173-175; Tempier to Touche, June 13, 1820; *Registre des prises d'habit*.

²² Simonin, 175-176; Fortuné to the President, June 11 and August 3, 10 and 17; Mazenod to Suzanne, July 21 and 23, 1820.

²³ Simonin, 176-177; Certainly Carron and Saurin who did not make vows; perhaps Dalmas, a scholastic, cf. Mazenod to the novices, November 29, 1820.

²⁴ Tempier to Mazenod, February/March 1821; *Reg. des prises d'habit*.

²⁵ Simonin, 179, 183; *Registre des prises d'habit*.

²⁶ Mazenod to Tempier, February 22, 1819, Tempier to Mazenod, June 13, 1819.

²⁷ Tempier to Mazenod, June 19, 1819.

that the services were done with decorum. In September 1819, he praised Maunier and Touche who "only know how to obey".²⁸ He made the vow of poverty at the end of the retreat in early November 1820 on condition that the Founder approved of it. Everyone was so eager to imitate him that they put everything in the house in common.²⁹ The Superior General did not approve this initiative immediately but the idea influenced the General Chapter of 1821 which made the vow of poverty mandatory in the Society.³⁰ On Christmas Eve of 1820, the house was blessed, and the names of saints were inscribed over the doors to the rooms.³¹

The new community at Laus was really a worthy sister to the one at Aix; it had the same regularity, fervor, practices, virtues, and especially, the spirit of charity. Coulin, a novice, spoke enthusiastically about it: "What a paradise we have at Laus! I am completely happy as one would be in heaven, and am experiencing it already. I love my brothers, all of them, as myself; I admire them and the outstanding example they give me urges me on to practice virtue . . ." "Every day we increase in fervor, unity, and detachment from everything . . . You should see how loving, happy and joyful your sons are, and how harmony reigns continually among them; it is charity that makes everything so delightful . . ."³²

It seems that it was because of these letters from Laus that the seminarian H. Guibert decided to join the Society. On May 11, 1822, the novice Marcou, his friend, wrote him a letter indicating that the spirit of fervor was continuing: "Oh! dear friend, if I wasn't afraid of being misunderstood, I would

²⁸ Tempier to Mazenod, September 14, 1819.

²⁹ Tempier to Mazenod, November 23, 1820; Mazenod to the novices, November 29, 1820; Simonin, 77-78.

³⁰ Mazenod to Tempier, March 13, 1821; Acts of the 1821 Chapter.

³¹ The Founder proposed this, but it was first done at Laus, cf. Mazenod to Tempier, January 9, 1821; Simonin, 178.

³² Coulin to Mazenod, November 24, December 8 and 20, 1820; Mazenod to the novices, October 24, and November 29, 1820; Rambert I, 300-303.

tell you about the happiness we experience in our house: I would tell you about the spirit of our institute. It's enough to say that we are all striving for perfection; this perfection we will certainly attain if we follow our holy Rule faithfully; that we strive for the greater glory of God and the salvation of souls; that we try to do all the good that we can; our ambition includes even the most abandoned souls; in short, we have but one heart and one soul . . ."

In this intense religious atmosphere the vocation of the former soldier, Ignace Voitot, the first coadjutor brother of the Society, matured. In December 1820, the Superior wrote, "I am ever more in admiration at the community. They all disturb me because they want to rid themselves of everything they have in their rooms. We had to implement a method of having everything in common. Brother Ignace wants to belong completely to the family and is asking to make his commitment."³³ It was most likely at that time that Abbé Tempier drew up the first draft of a rule or a chapter in the Rules concerning the Brothers.³⁴

The Founder fanned these flames of fervor by his letters and the visits that he made there in July-August of 1821 and April-May of 1822³⁵. His keen eye no doubt perceived some weaknesses and imperfections that Tempier, for his part, had not hidden from him. Coulin, among others, with his difficult and changing character, often sowed discord in what he nevertheless considered as the paradise of Laus. In February-March of 1821, the Superior wrote: "While sympathizing with human weakness, I don't believe we have to tolerate people who try the patience of everyone in a regular community."³⁶ It is prob-

³³ Tempier to Mazenod, December 9 and 10, 1820; Rey I, 259; Rambert I, 336.

³⁴ J.-M. Larose, *Les sources des articles des Règles concernant les frères coadjuteurs*, in *Etudes Oblates*, 14 (1955), 279-283, and *Etudes sur l'origine des frères convers chez les Oblats*, Ibid., 12 (1953), 79-81, 119.

³⁵ Coulin to Tempier, July 10, 1821; Mazenod to the novices, August 15, 1821; Coulin to Mazenod, April 22 and May 30, 1822.

³⁶ Tempier to Mazenod, February/March 1821. We have 82 of Coulin's letters to Mazenod and Tempier; cf. especially that of June 11, 1822.

ably due to this incident that the Founder named him "Father Rigidity".³⁷

In June 1821, the Founder had to encourage the Superior who was complaining about too much work. He sent him help, but reminded him of the importance of his duties as an educator: "Instruct your novices with more care than you have been able to use until now, because of being greatly occupied. Steep yourself in the love of a good master of novices."³⁸

In 1822, several events took place which increased the concerns and burdens of the Superior, who was often away besides. He had to expel a student, send several others back to their families, one of them being Coulin whom his students couldn't stand any more, and to have others take a rest because they were suffering from the cold climate at Laus. His own health suffered from these concerns and overwork. Coulin, who had returned to Aix, wrote to him on March 19, 1822: "I often worry about how tired you are. It seems to me that you are, as they say, in over your head. At least, sleep a little bit more. I am afraid that your health will not improve much during Lent. Ah! If our dear Superior knew about it, you would scarcely fast at all."³⁹

After his spring visit, the Founder named Fathers Suzanne and Moreau as assistants to Father Tempier; but in the fall he decided to bring the novices and scholastics back to himself and placed them under the direction of Father Courtès. Father Moreau came back with the first group which arrived at Aix on October 13th, and the Superior arrived several days later with the others and the baggage.⁴⁰

The spirit of poverty that reigned at Laus was a source of surprise and discontent to Father Dupuy, the bursar at Aix. On

³⁷ Simonin, 180.

³⁸ Tempier to Mazenod, February/March 1821; Mazenod to Tempier, June 18, 1821.

³⁹ Coulin to Tempier, March 19, 1822; Bourrelrier to Tempier, February 10, 1822.

⁴⁰ Simonin, 193-196; Coulin to Tempier, October 18, 1822.

December 6th, he wrote to the Founder: "Father Tempier has had the nerve to send down our Oblates without clothes after having taken away all their money. Father Marcou has no shirts, shoes or socks, etc. Jeancard . . . is in the same state of affairs. . . I am completely beside myself."

After having preached three missions between November of 1822 and March of 1823, the Superior was himself called to the side of Father de Mazenod, where even heavier responsibilities were waiting for him.

The exchange of letters from 1819 to 1823 show that Father Tempier was, right from the beginning, an accomplished superior, a father who was both kind and firm, very zealous, dedicated to a regular life, and careful to keep up good relations with both religious and ecclesiastical superiors.⁴¹ Bourrelrier and Coulin always suffered when he was away. The latter wrote to him on November 1, 1821: "Your absence leaves a sort of emptiness that only you can fill. It's not everyone who has the knack or the tact to animate a community."⁴²

Already in 1819 members would refer to him as "Father". This practice became official with the General Chapter of 1821, even though it had been rejected before that at Aix.⁴³

Father Tempier's four years as superior matured him and prepared him for future tasks. His walks in the mountains, the cold of unheated living quarters, and all kinds of manual work strengthened him physically.⁴⁴ The loss of his father and mother in 1820 and 1821, being separated from the Founder, and being away from his native city, all helped to develop his depth of heart. Twice, moreover, in 1819 and in 1822, the absence of persons he loved and of places that were dear to him

⁴¹ Tempier-Mazenod correspondence and Simonin, 203, 210.

⁴² Coulin to Tempier, May 18 and November 1, 1821; Coulin to Melle Martineng, August 14, 1821; Bourrelrier to Tempier, April 23 and October 8, 1820.

⁴³ Bourrelrier to Tempier, November 2, 1819, January 1821; Acts of the Chapter, October 21, 1821.

⁴⁴ *Le Sanctuaire*, in *Missions OMI*, 72 (1938), 97-98.

took his courage by surprise. He had asked to leave Laus at that time. These weak moments merited in 1822 the highest expression of praise that the Founder had as yet given him: "No one has a greater right than you to my confidence. First companion of mine, you have from the first day we came together grasped the spirit which must animate us and which we must communicate to others: you have not deviated in the slightest from the path we resolved to follow; everyone knows this in the Society and they can count on you as they count on myself. Is it surprising, after that, that having a house somewhat remote . . . you should be in charge of its management?"⁴⁵

⁴⁵ Tempier to Mazenod, July 20, 1819; Mazenod to Tempier, August 15, 1822.

*Missions and Retreats that Father Tempier preached
(1814-1823)*

- 1814, Saint-Paul-lès Durance (Mie and Tempier).
- 1816, September 1-29: Fuveau (Mazenod, Deblieu, Mie, Tempier).
- 1816, October: Gréasque (Mie and Tempier).
- 1817, February 9-March 15: Mouries (Mazenod, Deblieu, Mie and Tempier).
- 1818, January 3-31: Puget (Mazenod, Deblieu, Mie and Tempier).
- 1819, January 17-February 14: Remollon (Mazenod, Mie, Maunier, Aubert and Tempier).
- 1819, April: Remollon (Tempier).
- 1819, November 14-December 5: Rognac (Mie, Tempier and Moreau).
- 1820, January 2-February 27: Marseilles (Deblieu and Tempier at N.-D. du Mont).
- 1820, March 12-April 24: Aix (Tempier and Moreau in the Church of the Mission).
- 1820, October 1-29: Champoléon (Maunier, Mie and Tempier).
- 1821, May 6-June 3: Ancelle (Deblieu, Mie, Tempier and Viguier).
- 1821, September 16-October 14: La Chapelle (Mie, Tempier and Viguier).
- 1821, October: Chabottes (Tempier).
- 1822, July: Ancelle (Mie, Tempier and Touche).
- 1822, August-September: Chabottes (Tempier).
- 1822, September 15-October 20: St-Etienne-en-Devoluy (Mie, Tempier and Touche).
- 1822, November: Le Poët (Tempier).
- 1823, January 5-February 2: Tallard (Mazenod, Tempier, Deblieu, Touche and Suzanne).
- 1823, February 9-March 9: Lauzet (Tempier, Moreau and Suzanne).

Cf.: J. Pielorz, *Premières missions des Missionnaires de Provence*, in *Missions OMI*, 82 (1955), 549-561: 641-653.

IV

VICAR GENERAL OF MARSEILLES (1823-1861)

The signing of the Concordat between Pius VII and Napoleon, on July 16, 1801, brought on the suppression of numerous dioceses; Marseilles being one of them, was attached to the diocese of Aix.

Pius VII and King Louis XVIII signed a new Concordat in June 1817; some former dioceses were re-established, among them Marseilles. Due to some difficulties that came up between the Pope and the Government, its application was held up for a time. Marseilles only recovered its episcopal see in 1823. On January 18, *Le Moniteur* announced the naming of the Bishop: His Excellency Fortuné de Mazenod.

The Missionaries of Provence received the news with great joy since they had been waiting for this to happen for several years; from now on they would have a Bishop to protect their Institute. On the other hand, it turned the lives of Fathers de Mazenod and Tempier upside down. Even though he enjoyed good health, Bishop Fortuné was already 73 years old. He made the condition that he would accept the nomination only if his nephew would be Vicar General. The latter appointment was expected, but not that of Father Tempier. He was therefore very surprised when he received a letter at the end of May 1823, from Paris, where the two de Mazenods were at the time, in which the Superior General told him of the plans that the Bishop had for him.¹

Father Tempier replied on May 31 that he was ready to obey; this didn't stop him from making several respectful observations, namely, that the burden seemed to be beyond his talents and virtues, and what is more, it would go contrary to the good of the Congregation. The Founder replied at the beginning of June, that Bishop Fortuné had taken the decision

¹ Father de Mazenod to Tempier, May 21, 1823.

himself; but he added: It is "as if he had read my thoughts . . . "I do not claim that you have been invited to weddings and feasts; but you will share my solicitude and you will concur with me in the accomplishment of the plans of God on the diocese and on us." It is evident that Father de Mazenod equally shared the idea of Bishop Fortuné that he would work hand in hand with his friend and fellow worker for the good of the diocese as well as that of the Congregation.

Father Tempier accepted this duty which caused him a lot of worries for nearly 40 years. But, in this as in everything else, he was a man of duty and truly the *alter ego* of Father de Mazenod, "his most faithful, active and devoted assistant".²

Fortuné de Mazenod was consecrated Bishop at Issy on July 6, 1823. On the same day he named his nephew Vicar General and Father Tempier two days later.³ The latter started his duties immediately, for it was he who wrote the first letters of the administration: on July 14 he sent the Minister of the Interior the act of taking possession of the episcopal see, by procuration;⁴ on the 20th he informed Father Rodet that only three Missionaries of France had jurisdiction in Marseilles; on the 22nd he thanked the Prefect who had announced a grant of 4000 francs to go towards the primary needs of the cathedral, administration, etc. Before Bishop Fortuné had been appointed, there had been a group of people in Marseilles who were very attached to the Missionaries of France, and had carried out a campaign of detraction against him! They talked about Fortuné as a decrepit old man and wanted Charles de Forbin-Janson as bishop. To show he had lots of energy and to do away with future divisions, Bishop Fortuné started his term as bishop by a show of authority: he placed an interdict on the

² Rambert II, 588.

³ Cfr. *Registre des Insinuations*, I, 2-5, A.A.M.

⁴ The letter has the signatures of Tempier and Bonnefoy. Bishop Fortuné had given this procuration to Father Bonnefoy on July 8th, Cfr. *Insinuations*, I, 2. It seems that Father Fabre was wrong when he said that Father Tempier "came to take possession of the See of Marseilles on behalf of the venerable Prelate on July 15th". (Notices néc. II, 93)

chapel used by the Missionaries of France. Tempier and Bonnefoy notified them of this decision just a few hours before the solemn installation of the Bishop, on August 10th.⁵ The second Vicar General, as soon as he took up his duties, found that he was thrown into certain controversies that he didn't like but which duty imposed on him.

Struggles and sufferings

Bishop Fortuné and his Vicars General got to work immediately in this diocese which had been without a resident Bishop for more than 30 years. On December 16, 1823, Eugène de Mazenod wrote to Father Suzanne: "The time for renewing jurisdictions overworks us unbelievably; we usually work until midnight with Father Tempier; it has happened to us to be kept at it separately until two o'clock in the morning. The budget of the Prefect, the business of the Bishop's house and of the seminary, the town councils that have to be attended, all these things come all at once and crush us."

The Bishop had benefitted from good studies, crowned with a doctorate from the Sorbonne. It seems that he wrote his own pastoral directives, something which Father Tempier admired: "I don't know if I am blind and biased," he wrote to Father Touche on February 24, 1824, "but of all the pastoral letters which come to us from different dioceses, I don't find anything that can be put on the same plane as the productions of this *elderly decrepit gentleman* who should be good for nothing else than spitting into the fireplace."

Most of the other responsibilities fell on the shoulders of the Vicars General. The latter were used to travelling around and preaching, and thus seem to suffer in their new life as desk men, busy with correspondence, finances and administration. Father de Mazenod got away twice in 1824 to help with missions. Father Tempier, in turn, received permission to make a retreat outside the city at the end of May. The Founder told Father Courtès: "Father Tempier is going up to Notre-

⁵ J. Leflon, Eugene de Mazenod, II, 209.

Dame du Laus, both in order to have some respite from his slavery, and to put order in our little affairs . . . This is hardly pleasant for me, for I bear the burden with excessive boredom and disgust.”⁶

As soon as he got back on June 16, Father Tempier thanked Father Mie for his warm welcome and said that he missed the peaceful, fraternal life at Laus; “It’s simply that one is always better off at home with his own than on the galleys. . . We only aspire to the good fortune of being able to busy ourselves with our own family, to live the letter and not only the spirit of our Rules, as we are obliged to do now in this position that God has assigned to us, in which, nevertheless, we are doing our best.” He must have also talked to Father Dupuy, the bursar at Laus, about his troubles, because the latter replied to him in 1825: “Even though you are loaded down with fatigue and work, think about your health also and don’t stay up most of the night . . . worrying about important matters that are always on your mind.”⁷

Among other reasons to refuse the duty of Vicar General Father Tempier had expressed this one: “. . . the fact that you will be continually obliged to be absent. Now, during that time, all the care, all the solicitude of the diocese will fall on me . . .” That is exactly what happened during the time that Fortuné was Bishop and also during the last years of the episcopacy of Bishop Eugene de Mazenod. From 1825 to 1837, Father de Mazenod spent several months outside the diocese every year, sometimes as long as 5 or 6 months, as in 1825-1826 when he went to obtain the Roman Approval for the Rules; in 1829 and in 1830 when Fathers Suzanne and Courtès were ill, during his own illness and the July Revolution; and in 1832, 1833 and 1835, during the time of the Icosia affair.

A first adverse incident worried Father Tempier in 1826 when the Founder was in Rome. A *monitum* in the Ordo made grills in confessionals mandatory. Liberals and anti-clerical

⁶ The Missions at Ventabren and St-Pons; Mazenod to Courtès, May 28, 1824.

⁷ Dupuy to Tempier, May 24, June 5, and November 1, 1825.

people really made fun of that. Father Tempier wrote to the Founder on January 8: "At present, a terrible and ugly mood is unleashed against priests, religion, and all that is good. We have really progressed in evil these last two months. The most impious and abominable books are being written. If this destruction torrent, this unbridled license to speak and write everything that is evil is not halted, then I don't know into what abyss society will be plunged." Even the parish priests opposed this ruling and sent a common letter on the subject to the Bishop. When he learned of this reaction, Father de Mazenod wrote to Father Tempier on March 9: "Good grief! What a clergy we have at Marseilles . . . I see that in lieu of rest from the fatigue of my long journey, instead of tasting the sweetness of or repose a while amongst my friends, I will have to take up arms immediately to defend us from the encroachments of Presbyterianism."

During the time of the Restoration, the Church received official protection, but after the July Revolution of 1830, which was very anti-clerical at first, there were increasing conflicts between the Bishop's office and the local representatives of Louis Philippe's government. They forcefully removed the white flag over the Bishop's house; there were threats because during religious ceremonies, they chanted only "*Domine, salvum fac regem*, without adding the name *Philippe*"; they tried to prohibit processions and tear down mission crosses; what was said in sermons was ridiculed, etc.

Once again Father Tempier had only himself to rely on in trying to resolve these problems. Father de Mazenod who was sick at the time, was away from July 6, 1830 to the beginning of February 1831 and Bishop Fortuné was away from September 21, 1830 to the beginning of March 1831. The Vicar General noted how he faced these troubles: "Our motto is prudence and moderation, but also watchfulness, strength and courage", he wrote.⁸ He also expressed his political and religious principles in a letter to the Commanding Officer of the

⁸ Letter of August 8, 1830, in Rey I, 489.

area: "As for ourselves who have as our only mission on earth to bring the truths of the gospel to people and to preach unity and charity everywhere, we ask and have the right to ask, since everyone is to be granted the same protection, that we be allowed to carry on our ministry in peace. All can be assured that they will not receive any hostility from us, for we are foreign to all political movements; we only want religion, along with its holy laws and its Author, to be honored, recognized and venerated by everyone."⁹

We have on hand several letters of the Vicar General in which he applies his principles, one in particular to the Mayor and another to the Field Marshall, in which he gives a lesson in common sense and how to get along with people, all done with dignity.¹⁰ If at times he seems to fail even a little in terms of courtesy, Father de Mazenod brought it to his attention. For example, he wrote him on December 24: "I would have wished that some expressions be removed from your letters . . . I think one must keep the heaviest words for the last extremity. I admit nevertheless that there is reason to lose patience . . ."

Father de Mazenod also knew when to congratulate and encourage on occasion the person who remained all by himself in the thick of things. He wrote this fine letter to him on September 2, 1830: "Before speaking to you about business, I will encourage you in your trials and all the perplexities into which you are plunged by present events and by all those with whom you have dealings. It is precisely in such circumstances that one ought to make one's soul soar as high as it can go, sustaining its constancy and energy, multiplying all the resources of our intellectual faculties so as never to allow ourselves to be cast down by adversity, or overcome by obstacles or difficulties. I know that our ministry of peace often pre-

⁹ Tempier to the Division General, October 19, 1830. He wrote to the Prefect as well, October 4, 1830: "Is there a law which forbids a priest to preach the gospel? and does preaching the gospel mean rousing peoples' passions?"

¹⁰ Cfr. *Infra*, Fr. Tempier's writings: letter to the Mayor, Dec. 13; to the Field Marshall, December 26, 1830.

sents painful difficulties because it is attached to all the duties of conscience, but God will communicate to us the light of his spirit if we invoke him with confidence. After all, tribulations are envisaged by Providence as a means of sanctification of the elect . . .”

Not only did the Vicar General know how to defend himself but he also knew how to attack when necessary, as when he encouraged the “*Gazette du Midi*”, a catholic newspaper, and when he accepted to preside over the “provençale association for the legal defense of the catholic religion.”¹¹

Father de Mazenod finally got back to Marseilles in February, 1831, and was able to help out his co-worker. He wrote to Father Mille on May 7: “It’s one long endless paper war against the powers of this world, big and small, far and near. It is a correspondence that centres repetitively on the most minute details with all those who must needs consult us . . . ; add to this council meetings that last four hours, etc.” On February 3, 1832, he told Father Courtès: “When one has a string of meetings often going on for three hours at a time and all the subsequent business that arises, when one has to organize, negotiate, reply, carry out, conciliate so many different interests, to say nothing of ordinary administration which is necessarily very complex with our dense population, etc., one really has no time left to breathe . . .”

The civil authorities in Marseilles and in the Department didn’t like the two Vicars General who were a handful to tackle and who were a symbol of the Church in Marseilles. In January 1831, the Prefect, having only Tempier to deal with, denounced him to Paris as “one of the most fanatic and dangerous priests” who was even supposed to have said: “I would agree to anything, even to saying Mass with a red bonnet, to get rid of Louis Philippe.”¹² On the following July 9, the *Mes-*

¹¹ Circular, 1831, in Yenveux V, 100-102; Mazenod to Tempier, January 14, 1831; Min. of Public Instruction to the Vicars General, January 28 and March 2, 1831.

¹² Prefect to the Minister of the Interior, January 1831. A.N.P. F 19 5737.

sager de Marseille announced that the Abbés de Mazenod and Tempier had written "a disgusting pamphlet" against the Mayor during election time and had just left for Switzerland.¹³ As soon as they became aware of this accusation the Vicars General immediately returned to Marseilles to defend themselves. They were easily able to do so because even the Prefect Thomas didn't believe the accusation. However, he wrote to the Minister of Worship on July 16: "I hope they leave soon again for Fribourg; for, even though they did not write any election pamphlets, I nonetheless see them as priests whose absence would be a blessing."

The Prefect Thomas, who was a fanatic anti-clerical, and a mean politician, continued to denounce in high places the religious authorities of Marseilles. On March 30, 1832, he wrote once more to the Minister of Worship: "Father de Mazenod is a man of great intelligence and ability", but he has "complete control" over the Bishop, follows ultramontaine ideas, is hostile to the government and even gets involved in "political intrigue with the Carlist promoters . . . everything I have said of the Father de Mazenod, applies equally to the Abbé Tempier, except for the intelligence and ability."

This is certainly, an affirmation about the latter that is not far from flattering! On the other hand, the Bishop had confidence in him and in the beginning of May 1832, entrusted a special secret mission to him in Rome with Gregory XVI. For some time now, the Prefect Thomas had carried on a campaign to suppress the See of Marseilles at the death of the Bishop. To prevent this, Bishop Fortuné wanted to have his nephew named Bishop in *partibus infidelium*. The latter would then be able to govern the diocese as Capitular Vicar until times improve. Father Tempier handled this business successfully at Rome during his four-month stay there. The Pope, who was not pleased with the first episcopal nominations of Louis-Philippe, took the opportunity to teach the king a lesson and, *proprio motu*, without even the knowledge of the

¹³ Military Commander at Marseilles to Min. of War, July 9, 1831. *Ibid.*

Secretariat of State, promoted Father de Mazenod Bishop of Icosia, on October 2, 1832. It is common knowledge that there arose a conflict between the Government, the Pope and the Bishop of Icosia. The latter was forced to resign as Vicar General and he was even deprived of his civil rights.¹⁴

It was only at the end of 1835 that the accomplished diplomacy of Father H. Guibert, Superior of the Major Seminary in Ajaccio, was able to bring about a reconciliation between the King and the Bishop. Even there, Father Tempier's intervention proved essential and effective. In order to arrive at a peaceful solution, the Bishop of Icosia had to absolutely take the initiative in writing to the King and to the Minister of Worship to excuse himself for having accepted the episcopacy without royal approval. The Bishop of Icosia simply refused to make this gesture which he considered beneath his dignity: "I want to at least preserve my dignity, even if I am the victim of injustice and columny,"¹⁵ is how he put it.

Father Tempier became irate. He sent his superior whose admonitor he was, a firm letter filled with irony,¹⁶ to force him to do what he was asked. Abbé Jeancard, who was a good writer, brought the message to the Bishop and helped him to write out the text that Father Guibert needed at Paris. Father Tempier, at the end of his letter, left us one of the rare glimpses he has given us of his inner state. The Icosia affair had often left him alone as Vicar General to Bishop Fortuné who was over eighty years old. This load was just too much for him. He had already written on September 28, 1833: "As for myself, if you only knew what I suffer interiorly here! . . . Daily I envy the lot of those men who have no other worry than to do what they have been ordered to do!" He added on August 24, 1835: "I think this is the last time that I shall speak to you about all this, for I am sick and tired of it. I can tell you that if a rest is so pleasing to you, I also call and de-

¹⁴ J. Leflon II, 429-516.

¹⁵ Mazenod to Tempier, August 20 and 23, 1835.

¹⁶ Cfr. *Infra*, Letter of August 24, 1835.

sire a rest at least as much as you. Why is it that I have to be here and let my blood run dry for twelve years, forever harnessed to the cart, in most difficult situations! Providence has always arranged things in such a way that, whatever be the crisis we have had to undergo, no matter what its nature, I have ended up all alone to taste its sweetness. All the difficult moments that I have had to experience in diocesan business and for you especially in countless instances, have worn me out, have wearied me to the point that business annoys me to no end; I am fed up with it. Why shouldn't I enjoy a bit of rest? It seems to me that I would be asking for only what is justly due to me."

In actual fact, under the episcopacy of Bishop Eugene de Mazenod, who became Bishop of Marseilles in 1837, the duties of Vicar General became easier. Each year the relations between the civil and religious authorities began to improve and there were no more grave problems of administration for the diocese. Father Tempier seconded the Bishop right up to his death, by his faithful attendance at weekly meetings, his presence at the office when he was on duty;¹⁷ by replacing the Bishop when he was absent, by receiving or visiting important personages who were passing through Marseilles, by presiding over liturgical or other ceremonies, installing new parish priests or rectors, encouraging the staff, and supporting various works, etc. He was a big help to the Bishop whether in small or important matters, such as the Provincial Council of Aix in 1850 or at the Diocesan Synod at Marseilles in 1856.

A minor difficulty of the early years had long-since disappeared. Father de Mazenod, knowing himself very well, understood that Father Tempier risked appearing only as a stand-in for the one in charge. He promised to make him a Grand Vicar "not only in name but in fact".¹⁸ In spite of that, he sometimes complained that he didn't know exactly what he

¹⁷ Mazenod to Tempier, February 9, 1827 and March 10, 1859. Fabre to Mazenod, July 10, 1852, July 18, 1857: "Tempier is a model of correctness and fidelity whenever he is on duty . . ."

¹⁸ Tempier to Mazenod, May 31, 1823.

was supposed to be doing. That is possibly the reason why in 1825-26 he accepted to be named president of the capitular administration, a title that was always reserved to the first Vicar General and the one who presided the Chapter. The Founder, in Rome at that time, reproached him without mercy. He wrote: "... In this circumstance you have paid too much attention to your prestige and not enough to other proprieties. I will tell you with all the frankness I owe you: in the name of God, dear friend, be less susceptible on this little point of honor of appearing to be subordinate, of being regarded, as you have said sometimes, as a simple secretary ..."¹⁹

As a matter of fact, Father Tempier little by little found his ample place in the bishopric and in the diocese and was able to fulfill important duties, especially in three areas: that of material and financial interests, that of the formation of the clergy, and that of being the superior of several communities of women religious.

His responsibility for diocesan property and finances

Between 1823 and 1861, the diocese of Marseilles was always like a large construction camp. Most of the pastoral establishment dated from about 1803 when it served about 100,000 people. When Algeria was taken over in 1830, the port rapidly increased in use, and soon there were more than 300,000 people in the diocese. According to a list that Father Tempier himself drew up in 1861, the de Mazenods formed 21 new parishes or districts for which they had also to build churches and rectories; besides that, they had either repaired, enlarged, or even rebuilt 22 other churches or chapels, not to mention the Cathedral and the Basilica of N.-D. de la Garde.²⁰

The Bishops could hardly look after these matters themselves. Fortuné, already quite up in years, never bothered about money, except for giving alms; Eugene, who did have a

¹⁹ Mazenod to Tempier, December 18, 1825.

²⁰ Rambert II, 589; L. Giraud, *M. Vitagliano* ... Marseilles, 1949, 71.

good business head, didn't have any taste for administration, being first and foremost a missionary and apostle. Practically speaking, it was Father Tempier who, as if by instinct, kept a close watch on the work in progress, with a tight fist and careful eye. Perhaps he was never officially appointed to be the diocesan treasurer, but, in fact, all material matters had to go through him.²¹

From an economic point of view, they depended on the central Government and the local civil administrations for everything; it was these authorities that passed on regulations to the Bishop and clergy, granted some seminarians financial assistance for studies, a pension to priests and even to elderly and poor religious, allowed new parishes to be erected, financed construction and repair work etc. Hundreds of letters, usually signed by the Bishop, had to be written to obtain this "assistance". Half of the three hundred administrative letters signed by Father Tempier deal with material matters. He not only wrote the letters but he also signed them when it was a matter of giving precise technical details.²²

Long formalities had to be gone through before the main work could begin: getting an architect's advice, notifying the general public, obtaining the Prefect's approval, the Minister's authorization, etc. Even on the worksite, Father Tempier usually was the one to see that everything went according to the needs and plans foreseen by the architects. He even had to plan and build several buildings that did not depend on the government, or which, especially between 1830 and 1840, it kept putting off. Here is a list: improvements to the Major Seminary, a series of changes in the minor seminary, the building of its auxiliary chapel, called the minor Sacred Heart,

²¹ This is apparent in the administrative letters, cfr. especially June 1, 1834, November 16, 1834, May 4, 1836 etc. Father Carbonnel helped Father Tempier with the temporal administration of the diocese during the last years of Bishop de Mazenod's episcopacy, cfr. Mazenod to Tempier, October 25, 1856, September 23, 1857, February 11, 1858, etc.

²² The Mazenods also speak of Father Tempier in about fifty letters, as an administrator and builder.

monasteries for contemplatives, as well as the churches of Saint Lazare, Saint-Joseph, Saint Michel, and Saint-Jean-Baptiste.²³

Each parish had an administrative council made up of lay people who managed material goods and sent reports to the Bishop's office. Reading these reports and making the appropriate observations was the task of the Vicar General. It was up to him to be aware of the laws and customs to be followed, to point out irregularities if necessary, and to note the positive and negative aspects of their administration, etc.

Judging by the correspondence, Father Tempier also administered the Bishop's temporal goods, saw to the upkeep of the Bishop's house and took charge of the servants. Concerning this latter point, the fact that he was firm was often a great help to the Bishop whose good heart easily led him to tolerate intractable servants. It seems that it was Tempier who finally got rid of the notorious Vèze who had often threatened to beat the daylights out of him.²⁴ In the fall of 1838, he took the opportunity of Bishop de Mazenod's absence to get rid of a certain Pascal to whom the Bishop was attached. The latter, "blinded by his heart", at first was displeased with this dismissal, but later on he admitted the good results: "We are rid of Pascal," he wrote to his mother a few months later. "It's so quiet in the house now that you'd think there was no one here. No one grumbles, murmurs or complains and yet all the work gets done . . . We are all glad that we are now free of this grumbler, this insolent fellow, liar, sower of weeds, a fellow without compassion . . ." ²⁵

After he was named superior of Montolivet in 1854, Father Tempier could not follow so closely affairs at the Bishop's house; nevertheless, Bishop de Mazenod called on him each

²³ *Notices néc.* II, 93-94; The construction of Saint-Lazare alone with its other property, cost 453,833 francs 81, and required that money be borrowed and for this the Bishop of Icosia had to personally give his guarantee, cfr. J. Leflon, II, 576.

²⁴ Mazenod's diary, April 1, 1838.

²⁵ Mazenod to his mother, November 14, 1838 and January 24, 1839.

year when he had to spend some months in Paris as Senator. He asked him to "keep an eye on things at the Bishop's house to see that everything is going well and everyone is doing his job . . ." ²⁶

Even the Prefecture itself recognized the Vicar General's competence and merit, when, in 1850, it named him to the departmental commission to study the major works that were to be undertaken in the city of Marseilles; those included the construction of the cathedral. ²⁷

Superior of the Major Seminary

Even before they had been named Vicars General in 1823, Fathers de Mazenod and Tempier had already thought about founding a Minor and Major seminary. ²⁸ The former was confided to the Priests of the Sacred Heart and the latter to some secular priests from 1823 to 1826. In 1827, when work on the houses on Rouge Street were completed, and after the Sulpicians had refused, Bishop Fortuné confided the Major Seminary to his diocesan missionaries, that is, the Missionaries of Provence, who had become the Oblates of Mary Immaculate in 1826. ²⁹ Father Tempier was named Superior ³⁰

²⁶ Mazenod to Tempier, February 16, 1859.

²⁷ Mazenod to the Prefect, February 14, 1850.

²⁸ Mazenod to Tempier, March 4, 1823; Dupuy to Tempier, October 16, 1823.

²⁹ Y. Beaudoin, *Le grand séminaire de Marseille*, in *Archives d'histoire oblate*, n. 21, Ottawa, 1966, 8-10. The Major Seminary played a key role in the formation and renewal of the Marseilles clergy after the Revolution. The Bishop had only 171 priests in 1823 and half of them were over 60; he had 378 in 1860, of whom only 8% were over 60. If you put together this 200 with the 300 others who replaced those who had died during this time, it means there were over 500 new recruits in 37 years. The seminary was not able to answer to so many needs. The Mazenods were able to ordain only 300 from their own diocese. The 200 others came from elsewhere, *Ibid.* 57-58.

³⁰ Father Tempier had been in charge of the seminaries' good progress already in 1823, cfr. Tempier to Mazenod, September 25-27, 1823, Mazenod to Tempier, March 9, 1826.

and remained so for nearly 30 years. We can say that from 1827 to 1854 he watched over this work as the apple of his eye.³¹

According to the Founder's writings and the Oblate Rule of 1853, both the spiritual and temporal matters of a house were taken care of by a Superior with the help of both a twofold council, one for administration and one for direction. Besides having in regard to the directors the usual authority of a superior over his subjects, he also had some special obligations: it was up to him to monitor the choice of textbooks and sane doctrine. In regard to the pupils, he had to make decisions on matters that were referred to the council of directors and, at the beginning of each school year, assigned each seminarian some task, as infirmarian, sacristan, etc. Every day he had to give a spiritual lecture and twice a week he spoke to the seminarians on the clerical state according to the saints, the necessary virtues it required, the heavy burdens that went with it, the means of fulfilling one's duties properly and how to persevere in priestly holiness right to the end.³²

Four or five professors or directors lent a strong hand to the Superior from 1827 to 1839, and five or six from 1839 to 1854. These priests, who were mostly young and without special preparation, added to Father Tempier's responsibilities: he had to form, encourage and help them. He knew how to create an atmosphere of cooperation and fraternal charity among them. Thus, the seminarian Dassy, when he informed Father Tempier that he wanted to enter the Congregation, was able to say that what attracted him to religious life in spite of its difficulties, was "this unity and charity which animates all members of a religious community, and especially yours

³¹ He continued his interest in the seminary after 1854, cf. Laurent Roux to Fabre, August 19, 1859.

³² When the Superior was absent, the first assistant fulfilled this task; this often happened at Marseilles where Father Tempier was the Vicar General. Because of this, Fathers Albini, Lagier, Magnan, Bellon, Fabre and Rey often had to give the spiritual conference and to speak to the seminarians of their duties, cf. Y.B., *Le grand séminaire . . . op. cit.*, 44.

where everyone strives to put others ahead of himself; I am also struck by this peace of soul and pure joy which is the lot of those who have only God for Father and Mary for mother.”³³

Naturally, there were some tensions, as one can find anywhere, such as the incident told by Father B.J. Paris in 1832. He was a brilliant young teacher with a fiery southern temperament. He got angry because his superior wanted him to prepare for a philosophy exam on top of his teaching load of Scripture, moral theology and dogma, because the superior thought he was not “categorical” enough. He wrote about this to Father de Mazenod: “I am with greater confidence letting you know my problem, because when someone has to deal with Father Tempier, he takes off like a shot and holds on tightly to what he has said without giving you a chance to make the observations which you would like to . . . He, who loves giving reasons, could at least listen when I reason; to see him go, it seems as though he is afraid that I might convince him . . .”³⁴

In spite of everything, Father Tempier could generally congratulate himself on his co-workers. Moreover, as the Oblate Assistant General, he always knew to intervene at the right moment to get his professors from among his best men, sometimes at the expense of other superiors who then complained. Bishop de Mazenod remarked to Father Bellon in 1852 when he withdrew the latter to send him to England as visitor. He wrote: “Father Tempier acts like the Vicars General who are chosen from among parish priests. It has been noticed that they grab everything for their parish without considering the needs of the whole diocese. Father Tempier sees the seminary before all else and anything that might disrupt its peace he cannot accept, whatever other major need there may be.”³⁵

The Superior also seemed satisfied with his students. His reports to the General Chapters are evidence of this. Persever-

³³ Dassy to Tempier, May 27, 1829. The same charity was present in 1853-1854, cf. Rey to Fabre in 1852-1854, especially September 26, 1853.

³⁴ Paris to Mazenod, about 1832, 12.

³⁵ Mazenod to Bellon, August 22, 1852.

ance was very high: on the average, six out of seven seminarians became priests.³⁶ There were some problems in 1830-1831 when some students, who wanted to be in line with the current political movements, began to bring newspapers into the house. The regulations were rightly against it because at that time there were only four newspapers in Marseilles and all of them were revolutionary. We can point out in passing that in 1830 and in 1833, accusations were made in high places which claimed that "some powder barrels and I don't know how many guns have been found at the Bishop's house and at the seminary", and that "they held political rallies there".³⁷ Bishop de Mazenod and Father Tempier didn't get very excited about these accusations for the authorities could easily see that they were false.

The Superior had to face other much more serious problems. Rouge Street, which seemed to present such advantages in 1823-1827, soon revealed disadvantages as well. It felt all the humidity from the sea near which Rouge Street lay, as well as the oft violent winds; to this must be added that, on the north side of the house, there was no sun in winter and a nauseating stench in summer because of the sewage pipes that emptied into the sea there, plus the fact that the rooms on the south side were too hot in summer and they constantly received the smoke from the soap factories located on neighboring lots. Between 1827 and 1861, 13 seminarians, 8 scholastics and three directors died.³⁸

For the time being, we will not add anything about Father Tempier's role as teacher and educator at Marseilles and in the Oblate Congregation. It is so important that we dedicate a whole chapter to it later on (v. *infra* Chap. VII). Here we will mention only that the seminarians and many former students held the Oblates who directed the seminary in high re-

³⁶ Y.B. *Le gr. séminaire*, 59.

³⁷ Fortune de Mazenod to General Delort, September 6, 1830; Prefect to the Minister of Public Education, June 8, 1833.

³⁸ Y.B. *Le grand séminaire*, 78-80.

gard and themselves remained deeply attached to the Congregation. Abbé Antoine Ricard, for example, took every opportunity in his many works to thank those who had prepared him for the priesthood. He wrote in 1892: "For almost a half-century, the good Missionaries, with their experience of dealing with souls, formed in a wise and gently fatherly way, the clergy of Marseilles which was soon considered to be a model clergy in the Church of France. I trust that the reader will pardon the spirit of gratitude and filial affection expressed by the author of this book!"³⁹

Let us return to Father Tempier and his complementary role as Vicar General and Superior of the Seminary. In fact, it appears that the Bishops entrusted to Father Tempier the supervision of Christian education in the diocese, and, to a certain degree, the discipline of the clergy. He often intervened in the minor seminary's financial problems and the naming of teachers.⁴⁰ In 1854, Bishop Eugene de Mazenod wrote to the Minister of Public Education that Tempier and Cailhol were appointed to inspect the teaching of religious communities in the diocese.⁴¹

Besides all this, we noted above that over two hundred foreign priests came to work at Marseilles, often attracted to this big city for political or moral reasons or for personal gain. Thus there were many priests who needed correction or an interdiction, even after the purge of the first years. In the correspondence of those years, there are a hundred cases, some of whom had been formed by the Oblates.

While Bishop Fortuné was in charge, Father de Mazenod, as Vicar General, was often accused of being a very demanding person who dealt mercilessly in his house-cleaning; he was consequently disliked by a part of the clergy. However, it is surprising to note that even at that time it was Father Tem-

³⁹ Id., 83-84; Ant. Ricard, *Mgr de Mazenod*, Paris, 1892, 171.

⁴⁰ Mazenod diary, July 26-29, 1837; Tempier to X, May 31, 1842; Mazenod to Tempier, Oct. 6, 1850, September 23, 1857, etc.

⁴¹ Mazenod to the Minister of Public Education, October 7 and 17, 1854, Rey II, 540.

pier who signed half of these letters; Eugene de Mazenod's name appears only rarely. There are several reasons for that: Father Tempier knew some of the older priests who had studied with him at the seminary at Aix and especially all the young priests whom he had trained: furthermore he had a less emotional character which helped him to keep control of his pen when he had to deal with some scandalous situations. He knew how to use both goodness and firmness according to the need or seriousness of the case.

For example, in 1824, the elder Abbé Maurel was unable to continue as superior of the Major Seminary and refused to become pastor at Aubagne. The seminarians were aware of this refusal and it was causing a scandal. Father Tempier let him know on September 18 that the Bishop would not change his mind about a decision he had wisely made, and added: "You have reminded me . . . of our old bonds of friendship that we have had together and which I still greatly value; so please allow me, after giving you the reply of the Bishop, to let you hear the words of an old friend. I really don't understand why you put such unreasonable resistance to your Bishop's orders. It seems to me that it is a matter of the A.B.C.s in regard to Church duties. In God's Church, a Bishop who has received authority to govern his diocese must provide for the needs of all his flock. It is up to him to judge whether this or that priest is capable or not to administer this or that parish . . ."

On February 9, 1826, he wrote to the Father Feraudi, the pastor at Allauch, who was complaining that his assistants did not obey him but who, at the same time, was not obeying some of the Bishop's directives: "If you want people to respect you and your subordinates to be more attentive to you, so much the more must you respect the will and commands of your superiors who also deserve some consideration . . . I can't understand how Machiavelli's principle appeared in your letter. I can't believe that you meant it to apply to the Bishop or to the Grand Vicars, an application that in one way would be senseless and in another quite criminal . . ."

On June 12, 1826, he wrote to the Father J.R. Jonquier, the pastor at Aygalades, who had been carrying on a running battle with the Bishop's office for several years:⁴² "Please modify your tone, Father, when writing to the Bishop and reduce those puffs of pride which make you so susceptible and demanding towards your inferiors or equals but don't allow you to accept the suggestions and wise remonstrations that your superiors feel obliged to give you."

Even though the Vicar General had sometimes to use strong language, this was not his usual manner of dealing with the clergy; the latter seldom complained about him and were well aware of his devotedness.

Ecclesiastical Superior to several communities of religious women

Abbé Timon-David writes in his biography of Father Jean du Sacré-Coeur: "There is an aspect of Bishop de Mazenod's life that his first historian did not bring out clearly. It was through his impulse and his way of facilitating works, by his wise counsel and direction that good works multiplied greatly during the time he was Bishop."⁴³

Timon-David, an observant man who kept himself abreast of what was happening in the religious life of Marseilles during the time Bishop Eugene de Mazenod, also underlined as no other biographer of the Founder did, the indispensable role that Father Tempier played as: "Capitular Provost, Vicar General, one of the main founders of the Congregation of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate. He was a venerable man who hid under some abrupt mannerisms one of the kindest hearts that one could hope to meet. As Vicar General from the time that the diocese of Marseilles was re-established, he had taken part in all the works that have immortalized Bishop de Mazenod's long and fruitful ministry. He was

⁴² J. Leflon, II, 552, 669.

⁴³ Timon-David, *La vie du S. de D.L. Maulbon d'Arbaumont*, Marseille, 1887, 132.

an able administrator, a man completely faithful to the bishop, and also an outstanding director for religious women. It would be hard to estimate how many communities in Marseilles owe to him their foundation or establishment. He was a father to all, with a remarkable ease adapting himself to each of them, seeing the various aspects of each vocation, approving all of them if he detected the mark of God, admiring their diversity; he was too big-hearted to give preference to anyone, too open in spirit to be frightened at the multiplicity of religious orders, a reality which would have overcome a lesser man of no account.

“If the devil can multiply localities of corruption, why shouldn’t saints multiply places of God’s blessings? It was with such principles, which were one with the Bishop both in spirit and in fact, that they surrounded the huge city of Marseilles with a ring of convents which do more to guard the city night and day with prayers than do bayonets or political skill. It was easy to cooperate with a man like that.”⁴⁴

Histories of Marseilles and of Bishop de Mazenod have tried, as Father Tempier did, to make a list, as complete as possible, of the works that were started between 1823 and 1861 and the congregations of both men and women religious which were established or founded.

In 1823 there were only 3 men’s congregations and 9 women’s congregations in the diocese; in 1861, there were 10 for men and at least 25 for women, distributed over numerous institutions: 562 religious women and 236 Fathers and Brothers were dedicated to teaching. There were at least twenty traditional works of charity, assistance and support which were either created or maintained, and there were about a dozen new, more specialized works that sprang up.⁴⁵

⁴⁴ Timon-David, *op. cit.*, 113-114; Norbert de Chauffailles, *Vie du S. de D.L. Maulbon d’Arbaumont*, Lyon-Paris, (1910), 151-152.

⁴⁵ Father Tempier’s list in Rambert, II, 589-591; L. Giraud, M. Vitagliano, 70-71; J. Leflon II, 219-222; III, 85-121; J. Leflon, in *Le diocèse de Marseille . . .*, Paris, 1967, 249-250; J. Pietsch, *Notre Fondateur et les communautés religieuses de Marseille*, in *Etudes Oblates*, 6 (1947), 157-182 (1948), 211-228; 263-286; M. Nogaret, *Mgr de Mazenod, l’évêque*, in *Etudes Oblates*, 41 (1982), 69-85.

Father Tempier's name only rarely comes up in regard to these works. In this as in other matters, he must have been a second-self for the Founder, but, always discreet, he has succeeded to elude even the probing eyes of historians. He is noted, however, in regard to the works of the Abbé Julien, who, in 1846, planned beyond reason, a vast work at Loubière which was intended to be a place to house workers and their families. With a fertile imagination and an especially good speaker, he was able to arouse a great enthusiasm for his works. He was able to win over the Vice-Bursar who, in spite of financial straits, lent him support and helped him with large loans. The 1848 Revolution and the unexpected death of Abbé Julien ended this work and the properties, which had not been paid for, became the prey of the highest public bidders. For once Father Tempier lost some money thereby and had to give up some of the lustre of his reputation as a very prudent administrator!

The Vicar General also had to help Timon-David both with guidance and finances when the latter began his work for young working people. In the *Annales de l'oeuvre*, the latter wrote on October 31, 1847, that the blessing of the chapel and the building was carried out by "Father Tempier . . . whose name can be found in the beginnings of all the works started at Marseilles over a forty year period . . ." ⁴⁶

Father Tempier also intervened in the foundation of two monasteries, that of the Minimés ⁴⁷ and that of the Religious Victims of the Sacred Heart. This latter congregation, which had been founded by Father Jean du Sacré-Coeur (Louis Maulbon d'Arbaumont), required such a strict way of life that there was no hope for its survival. However, Father John knew how to convince the Vicar General who, according to the bi-

⁴⁶ Timon-David, *Annales de l'oeuvre de la jeunesse pour la classe ouvrière*, Marseilles, I, 1878, 64. In the same book, 20, Timon-David wrote of Father Julien's works and said the latter was able to get support from the Bishop for them because he was "strongly promoted by the Chapter Provost".

⁴⁷ Tempier to Father Casals, a minime, September 29, 1857.

ography of Father Jean, "had an open mind; he objected as his wisdom counselled, to what went against, but willingly gave in to someone else's plans when he thought they came from God . . ." The Bishop approved the Religious Victims of the Sacred Heart because, as Father Norbert de Chauffailles delicately puts it, "Whoever had Father Tempier on his side for them, had in a way won over Bishop de Mazenod."⁴⁸

But, it was mainly with women religious that Father Tempier played the most important role. Timon-David states that the Provost was superior of 12 or more communities of religious women, "without fanfare or fuss or emotion of any kind; by giving each thing its time, he was able to keep everything in order."⁴⁹

If only half of the women's communities had him for superior, most of them called on him to help them get established, buy land, to build and to assist them get out of material difficulties. The administrative letters of the diocese, the *Annales* of various convents, and the biographies of priests and of both men and women religious in Marseilles, testify that Father Tempier was actively involved in everything and greatly appreciated. In this short life-history, it isn't possible to go into much detail as to what he did for each community; let us briefly examine, nevertheless, what he did for those whom he followed most closely: the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary and the contemplative orders: Capuchin Nuns, Poor Clares, Carmelites, Minimés and Victims of the Sacred Heart.

The Bishop named him superior of the Capuchin Nuns from 1823 onward. These religious women noted in their *Annales*: "He was still young, but had all the prudence and experience of an elderly man, and a true fatherly heart for every soul that God placed in his care."⁵⁰ He made the plans for the monastery on Lys Street, which was opened in 1827. The one

⁴⁸ Norbert de Chauffailles, *Vie du S. de D. Maulbon* . . ., 164, 168.

⁴⁹ Timon-David, *Maulbon d'Arbaumont*, op. cit., 164.

⁵⁰ *Livres des Archives des Pauvres Capucines de Marseille*, 153.

who wrote up the Codex remarked that, since he was not an architect, he "had gone somewhat beyond reasonable limits". The convent was built in the form of a large square with windows facing only the interior courtyards, so that no one could see into the convent, except, as Bishop de Mazenod noted when he visited the house, "people on the moon, if there were any there."⁵¹

Father de Mazenod was superior of the Poor Clares at first, but was soon replaced by Father Tempier. The convent *Annales* say: "God gave him as companion, someone who was a blessing to us as to the whole diocese, a man destined to carry out solid and lasting good for all the institutions with which he was involved . . . We could never say as much as we ought about this man either in regard to his temporal or spiritual influence. Only God who knows him can be his merited reward. It was from that time that there began for us on the part of this venerable Father, a long series of blessings, pains and cares, always balanced, or rather increasing day by day for the good of our poor community."⁵²

Father Tempier had a new convent built for them which was solemnly opened in 1833. On that occasion, he wrote a stern letter on September 5, 1833, to the superior asking her to correct abuses against poverty and regularity. Thus, the superior was concerned about both the spiritual and material welfare of these religious women.⁵³

The Carmelites established themselves in Marseilles in 1835. Father Tempier, who became their superior, had a convent built for them near the Longchamp boulevard, which was opened in 1837.⁵⁴ A second convent was begun at Aubagne in 1844. He was in the process of building them another house

⁵¹ *Ibid.* Tempier to Mazenod, September 24, 1827.

⁵² *Annales du pauvre monastère de Ste Claire*, Marseilles, 66.

⁵³ We have published this letter in Father Tempier's writings as well as an excerpt from the *Annales*, (v. *infra*: *documents*, n. 51).

⁵⁴ Don Berengier O.S.B., *Vie de la R.M.S.-Hilarion, fondatrice des deux Carmels de Marseille* (1791-1874), ms. 100, 103, 107, 131; Mazenod diary, September 16, 1837.

when he left Marseilles in 1862. On Thursday, April 4, 1861, he went with several religious women to the property bought for this purpose and on the way home "he had the carriage go by way of the Bishop's house so that the Venerable Sisters would have the consolation, one they had not at all expected, of seeing Bishop de Mazenod a last time," for the latter was dying at that time.⁵⁵ The Vicar General had the good inspiration to obtain the same consolation for the Ladies of the Sacred Heart on February 18, 1861. He had found a house for them in 1825 and he was likewise their superior.⁵⁶

Father Tempier was also the instrument that God used to establish the Minimés Sisters at Marseilles in 1842. They wrote to him in 1868: "Yes, my Most Reverend Father, after God, we recognize that it is you who are the main reason that we are the Daughters of St. Francis de Paul: our community will always remember you from generation to generation and our grateful hearts will bless your kindness for all eternity."⁵⁷

The Vicar General was superior of the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary for more than 40 years. Someone even wrote that he had founded the Congregation.⁵⁸ However, never is he given this title in the biography of the foundress, Mlle C. Ruel (1796-1874), or in that of Canon Chauvier who had been the chaplain to these Sisters for a long time. Yet, Father Tempier did play a very important part in the Congregation and influenced the foundress since he was her spiritual director. He helped with the composing of the first Constitutions in 1823, in buying the convent on Paradise Street in 1833, and in supporting their religious life by frequent visits, even after leaving Marseilles in 1862.⁵⁹

⁵⁵ *Annales du second monastère des Carmélites de Marseille*, 1861.

⁵⁶ *Annales de la maison du Sacré-Coeur à Marseille* and *Missions OMI*, 1935, 139, 406, 410, 644, 649.

⁵⁷ *Chroniques du Monastère des Soeurs Minimés*. Father Tempier's name as well as extracts of letters either to or from him often appear.

⁵⁸ *Missions OMI*, 1895, 393.

⁵⁹ Ricard, *Vie de M. le chanoine Chauvier* . . . Marseille, 1888, 35-39, 46-48, 78, 93, etc.; *Vie de la Mère Marie St-Augustin de Jesus* . . . Ruel, Ligugé, 1895, XI, 87-88, 133, 166, 173-175, 186, 194, 197, 199, 203, 212-239, 329, 347, 486, 492.

The Victims of the Sacred Heart, religious women, were started by Mlle Adèle de Gérin-Ricard (1793-1864). From her youth she had handed over to charitable works in Marseilles all the income from her fortune and all her activity. Step by step, the idea of founding a congregation to do penance grew in her. Father Tempier was named their ecclesiastical superior at the time of the building of a new convent at Maguelonne in 1839. Payan d'Augery, who wrote the life of the foundress, said: "This priest, chosen by the Prelate, was no small gift. Short in stature, a lively glance, somewhat abrupt in speech, Father Tempier added the experience and wisdom of an accomplished administrator to the virtues of a religious. Our works in Marseilles, especially the seminaries and the administration of our parishes owe a great deal to his services. Being a prudent and truly supernatural man he had acquired a legitimate influence over the heart and spirit of his truly perfect Bishop; his temperament was much more calm and this happily tempered, if we can dare say so, Bishop de Mazenod's outbursts and sudden responses; the latter's Provençal character had survived his holiness. Father Tempier was above all a spiritual man, and thus more able to understand the beauty of religious life, to correct the minor biases of women and, with his knowledge of people and life, to offer them the wisest counsel. Many communities were happy to benefit from his direction, but few in our view as much use as the Victims of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, for whom he was from the very beginning the most devoted father and, as he loved to say himself, *the first, the best and the most faithful friend*. He studied the matter of acquiring the Maguelonne establishment, something that was definitively accomplished on July 11, 1840. He looked after the minutest details in furnishing the local, determined the height of the cloister's walls, suggesting to the masons how to make them solid yet inexpensive; he was still more concerned about the spiritual edifice, of which he was the assigned architect, he challenged Adèle to clarify her thoughts about the purpose of her Institute, took the time to come and discuss it with her, a pious work to which he consecrated two long conferences, and thereafter he gave it his most categoric approval . . ."⁶⁰

Father Tempier slowly faded into the background after 1848 and gave his place to the chaplain, Father Jean du Sacré-Coeur who wanted to form a parallel institute; Victims of the Sacred Heart,⁶¹ a group of religious men.

This apostolic activity of the Vicar General, even though the least known, was probably his preferred work. In his necrological sketch, Father Fabre wrote: "Only God knows the great amount of good that Father Tempier did in directing the Major Seminary, hearing the confessions of priests who confided in him and the care that he gave to religious communities that had been placed under his jurisdiction. We have often heard chosen souls speak highly about the graces that each visit of Father Tempier brought to the heart of their community; their gratitude has survived the vagaries of time; even after he was no longer their superior, these communities still held a real cult of gratitude and devotedness to him. He gained consolation from this amidst the pains and sorrows which were like a crown of thorns on his head . . ." ⁶²

A report of the Le Calvaire house, dated June 24, 1895, states that the Oblates are accomplishing much successful work at Marseilles: "Many of these convents," it says, "which were founded, re-established or protected from in their infancy, by our venerable Founder, Father Tempier or Father J. Fabre who was then Vicar General of the diocese, have showered on us the filial gratitude that they destined for their first benefactors . . ." ⁶³

In our opinion, Father Tempier, as Vicar General of Marseilles, was well above the task that Father de Mazenod im-

⁶⁰ Payan d'Augery, *Vie de J.A. de Gérin-Ricard* . . . Marseilles, 1892, 118-120; In Father Tempier's writings, we have printed out a letter written to the Superior on December 8, 1842 about the choice of novices; Cfr. also: Timon-David, *Le p. Jean du Sacré-Coeur*, *op. cit.*, 154.

⁶¹ Timon-David, *La vie du S. de D. L. Maulbon d'Arbaumont* . . . *op. cit.* 113-115, 164-184, etc.; Norbert de Chauffailles, *Vie du S. de D.L.M. Maulbon* . . . *op. cit.*, 151-153, 164, 177, etc.

⁶² *Notices nécrologiques* II, 95.

⁶³ *Missions OMI*, 1895, 486.

posed on him in 1823. Timon-David wrote that "there will be a perpetual remembrance of him in this diocese which owes so much to him."⁶⁴ Father Fabre, his closest collaborator both at the seminary and in the administration of the diocese from 1846 to 1861, ends his brief reference in his sketch that speaks of Father Tempier as Grand Vicar with these thoughts: "In Bishops' councils, in solving business affairs, he was always recognized as having a practical, balanced and moderate insight. No one ever questioned his sincerity or good intentions. He was inflexible in duty but always flexible according to circumstances. And when he had to make a tough decision, one always recognized that beyond his authority was that of his conscience to which he was obedient. Diverse opinions have been made in his regard; but when one tries to base negative assessments on something solid, all one ever finds are the recriminations of someone who had been justly punished or from someone who was jealous.

"And yet, because of his high position, Father Tempier had to treat the most delicate matters with people from all classes of society. The history of the two bishops' terms of office which are our concern, has not yet been made and the limits of this sketch do not allow us to narrate many contemporary events in which our Founder and Father Tempier followed the same rule of conduct. It will suffice to mention that in 1828, at the proclamations of Charles X, in 1831 during the general disturbances in the Midi, in 1835 during the cholera epidemic, in 1848 when the Republic was established, Father Tempier always kept calm as a gentleman, retained intact his Christian conscience, and maintained the heroic devotion that a priest who is a man of God derives from the light of faith and the inspiration of piety. He was not afraid to face unjust criticism nor to confront popular passions. As a friend both of order and religion, he courageously upheld their God-given rights."⁶⁵

⁶⁴ Timon-David, *Annales de l'oeuvre . . .*, *op. cit.*, I, 21.

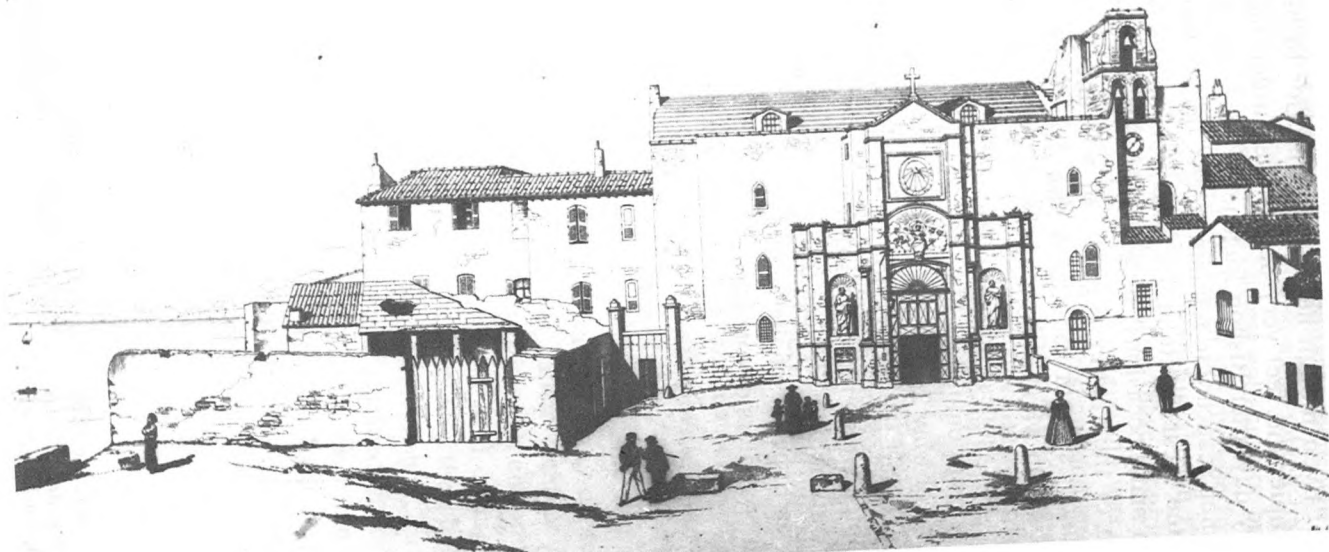
⁶⁵ *Not. néc.* II, 95-96.

Even though he was not inferior to his duties, Father Tempier did feel very deeply the burden they imposed. The very day after Bishop Eugene de Mazenod died, he wrote to Bishop Jeancard to tell him clearly that he would not accept to be the Vicar Capitular. He based this on two personal reasons: "on many occasions" he had approached the Bishop to relieve him of the "heavy dignity" of a Grand Vicar: besides, the Founder's death had struck him deeply: "I feel crushed and like a man who has nothing left on this earth of miseries."⁶⁶

His sadness and desolation was understood, and so they no longer counted on him. They simply wrote in their deliberations of May 24, 1861: "This letter . . . after it had been read, occasioned the expression of the unanimous regrets of the Chapter, which recognizes that Father Tempier did indeed render outstanding services to the diocese, both as Vicar General and as Superior of the seminary, duties which he carried out with boundless devotedness."⁶⁷

⁶⁶ Tempier to Bishop Jeancard, May 22, 1861.

⁶⁷ *Reg. des délibérations du vén. Chapitre de la cathédrale de Marseille*, May 24, 1861. A.A.M.



La Major, the former cathedral of Marseilles



Montolivet (Marseilles)

V

ASSISTANT AND VICAR GENERAL OF THE OBLATES OF MARY IMMACULATE (1818-1867)

Father Tempier's zeal and devotedness in the service of the diocese of Marseille did not detract at all from his love for his religious family which had taken the name of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate when it received pontifical approbation in 1826.¹

Even though as Vicar General in the administration of the Marseilles diocese he sometimes complained about being considered a "mere secretary",² in his religious family he was considered of great importance, next to the Founder. To be sure, the latter always played by far the principal role; and even though the historians of Marseilles sometimes refer to Father Tempier as one of the founders of the Oblates,³ in the Congregation he was never referred to as such.

From a personal point of view, Father Tempier had only one ambition, namely, to serve the Founder of the family to the best of his ability and, by that very fact, to serve the Congregation itself. He succeeded in responding to this challenge. He was always inseparably united to the Superior General, supported and complemented him with total self-effacement. Father Fabre wrote that the life of Father Tempier can certainly be summed up in one word, "devotedness, without limit. To constantly efface and forget himself in order to place the Father of all in the first place, in the spotlight; the whole life of Father Tempier consisted in devoting himself to the happiness, glory and defense of the Founder, and together with him to devote himself to the family he had established."⁴

¹ The brief *Si tempus unquam* is dated March 6, 1826.

² Mazenod to Tempier, December 18, 1825.

³ Pouan, *La . . . Mère Marie de Ste Victoire Houette*, 469; Timon-David . . . *L. Maulbon d'Arbaumont*, 113; L. de Chazournes, *Vie du R.P. Joseph Barrelle*, s.j., t. 1, Paris, 1870, 29.

⁴ *Not. Néc.* II, 96-97.

Bishop de Mazenod referred to himself on many occasions as a most loving father toward his numerous sons; he even wrote to Father Dorey on January 23, 1854, that he was "the one and only true father of the whole family". However, he worked so closely with Father Tempier and gave him so many important duties and responsibilities that gradually, as a normal reaction, he was referred to as the "second father" in the Congregation.⁵

Father Tempier had gained this confidence of the Founder and of the Oblates very early. Already in 1822, Father de Mazenod wrote: "First companion of mine, you have from the first day we came together grasped the spirit which must animate us and which we must communicate to others; you have not deviated in the slightest from the path we resolved to follow; everyone knows this in the Society and they count on you as they count on myself."⁶ Even if this affirmation may seem to us a little exaggerated in 1822, it became an incontestable fact later on. The Oblates "counted" on Father Tempier as they did on Bishop de Mazenod, but each in regard to his own sphere. The Founder was always the one to inspire, to urge on, to have great dreams, to make important decisions, to intervene at key moments; his assistant was more practical and painstaking, the one to carry out plans with patience and tenacity through the daily grind, the details of business, the one who worried about small repair jobs or great building projects, and the slowness of forming members, etc.

Father Tempier was always a member of the General Administration of the Congregation. All the General Chapters elected him as an Assistant General: the third in 1818-1821, second in 1843-1850 after Bishop Guibert of Viviers, and first in all the others right up to 1867, which unanimously named

⁵ *Ibid.*, 98 and 101; Al. Auguer to Tempier, September 24, 1846. Roux M. to Tempier, February 16, 1857; Acts of the Gen. Chap. of 1873, 254; *Missions OMI*, 72 (1938), 84. Bishop de Mazenod states in two letters to Father Charles Barret, August 9 and September 28, 1853, that the Congregation has only one father.

⁶ Mazenod to Tempier, August 15, 1822.

him honorary assistant General.⁷ He took part in the first eleven General Chapters of the Congregation. The minutes of these Acts of the Chapters are rather brief and do not allow us to evaluate exactly the role that he played in each one. We do know, however, that he in 1826 presided the commission whose task it was to revise the original French text of the Rules according to the approved Latin text. In 1837, he headed the commission to study reserved cases, and in 1850, the commission which prepared the changes to be made in the Rules.

The Founder soon established the practice of meeting with his council every month, according to tenor of article 23 of the paragraph of the Rules on the Superior General. The minutes of the meetings from 1844 to 1859, made up by Father Casimir Aubert, and the only ones which have been preserved, and show that Father Tempier was rarely absent. In fact, he was very often the only Assistant General present; the others who were superiors in distant houses, were often unable to attend and were replaced by the Superior of Le Calvaire or by the seminary directors. The secretary did not give details of the discussions in council nor did he give names. However, the letters of the Founder and his diary make it clear that Father Tempier was capable of giving his opinion, even at times of holding views opposed to those of the Superior General, as in the case of the establishment at N.-D. de Bon Secours in 1845.⁸ He was listened to especially in financial matters and in the calls to vows or orders.

In his role as Assistant General and first collaborator of the Founder, almost always near him in Marseilles, he was always a part of all the events, happy or unhappy, of the first fifty years of the Congregation: the elaboration and approval of the Rules; the recruitment and formation of members; the painful beginnings, then the rapid expansion of the Congrega-

⁷ Father Tempier had asked to be relieved of his duties on the General Administration because of his great age, cfr. *Missions OMI*, 1867, 445, 447.

⁸ Mazenod to Courtès, January 4, 1845.

tion in France and throughout the world. He was always there as the “untiring assistant”⁹ of the Founder, at times his support as in the crises of 1823 and from 1827 to 1837, often his replacement, whether as Vicar General, Canonical Visitor, or on trips that he made in his name. We will now take a more detailed look at these diverse activities.

Constitutions and Rules

Father Tempier contributed to the elaboration and revision of the Constitutions and Rules. On December 15, 1816, the Founder had asked him to spend two hours a day in this task.

In 1820-1821, he who proposed some changes and additions, among them the vow of poverty.¹⁰ He is given credit for writing the special paragraph on the brothers in 1821.¹¹ In view of his trip to Rome to seek approval, the Founder had asked several Fathers to work on the translation but he afterwards accepted Father Tempier’s advice to entrust the work to Father Albini alone in order to avoid “the muddle of a translation made by several individuals who each have their own style”.¹²

The First Assistant encouraged Father de Mazenod to make the trip to Rome in 1825. Soon after his departure, he wrote to him: “I noticed in your letter to the Bishop (Fortuné) that you were in agony at the time of leaving and I deeply feel what you are going through; but take heart and tell yourself that this sacrifice is what the good of the Congregation asks of you.”¹³ During his trip, the Founder wrote 37 letters to him to keep him informed of every detail concerning the steps taken to have the Rules approved. Even though he always kept him-

⁹ Rey II, 257.

¹⁰ Mazenod to Courtès, February 21, 1821, to Tempier on March 13, 1821, and Tempier to Mazenod on November 23, 1821.

¹¹ J.-M. Larose, *Etudes sur l’origine des frères convers chez les Oblats*, in *Etudes Oblates*, 12 (1953), 78-83.

¹² Mazenod to Courtès, February 21, 1825.

¹³ Tempier to Mazenod, October 28, 1825 (Rey I, 353-354) and to Mie, November 1825.

self under control and was miserly in manifesting external signs of either joy or sadness, Father Tempier did show his enthusiasm at least twice during this event. On January 8, 1826, in reply to the Founder's letter of the previous December 22nd, in which the Founder spoke of his audience with the Pope, he exclaimed: "One hour after midnight I was again re-reading your precious letter and I was weeping with joy and gratitude as I became aware and admired God's Providence . . ." And again on March 9th, when he had learned that the Rules had been approved: "We have reasons to marvel . . . Eternal gratitude to the great holy Pontiff Leo XII . . . You should have seen us . . . We embraced each other with inexpressible joy; we felt something I don't quite know what inside of us that told us that we were now different men. Tears of joy and thanksgiving streamed in our eyes . . ."

We have already noted that at the Chapter of 1850 Father Tempier had been in charge of the commission to consider changes in the Rules; the year after, he accompanied Bishop de Mazenod to Rome to have these changes approved.

Oblate Personnel

Father Tempier always took as much interest — and often in greater detail — as the Founder in the personnel of the Congregation: recruitment, formation and assigning obediences, etc.

He had, first of all, a true predilection for N.-D. de Lumières, not only because he had taken a lot of care to restore the monastery and improve the property, but because it was there that the youngest members of the family were being prepared for the apostolate. He went there often, especially from 1841 to 1847, to supervise the work and to meet the juniorists.¹⁴ He was "deeply pained" when the Juniorate was closed

¹⁴ General Council, February 10, 1845, and June 5, 1846.

in 1847, as Father Fabre wrote. "He often spoke to the Superior General about reopening it and, to support his arguments, made a list of all the Fathers who had been formed in the shadow of Mary's shrine and who had rendered great service to the Congregation. He was most pleased when a new group of juniorists were gathered at N.-D. de Lumières"¹⁵ in 1859.

Even before that, Father Tempier had formed the first generation of novices, first at Aix from 1816 to 1818, and then, at Laus from 1820 to 1822. From the Founder's letters and those of many other Oblates one can ascertain that the first Assistant had still an important voice in all that concerned recruitment and novitiate training.¹⁶ After its transfer of the novitiate to Osier in 1841, he always wanted to see the house full of novices even if it meant heavy financial worries, as was the case between 1846 and 1848. As evidence of this, we have the words of Father Burfin, Superior of the house, written on September 5, 1846: "If we have to reduce our spending, which I think is necessary, it shouldn't be in the area of repairs, which are urgent, but we rather in regard to the door which is too readily opened to people who come to us from all over.

"... When I complain about this, the ready reply is this: Father Tempier said we should open wide our door, that we should not be worried about expenses, that money should not be a problem! That is what they say to you, Reverend Father; if that is not your way of thinking, please deny it, and, if it is your attitude, pay up..."

He clearly stated his views about recruitment, his major lifelong concern,¹⁷ to Bishop Arbaud of Gap, on November

¹⁵ *Notices nécrologiques* II, 98.

¹⁶ Dupuy to Suzanne, October 26, 1823, to Mazenod on October 11, 1825; Mazenod to Tempier, Nov. 26, Dec. 6, 1825, Jan. 10, Feb. 27, March 16 and 30, 1826, June 18, 1828; Honorat to Tempier, October 23, 1840; Martin to Tempier, Dec. 30, 1840, July 12 and 27, 1845, to Mazenod on Jan. 3, 1845; Saby to Tempier on Sept. 10, 1850, etc.

¹⁷ Many letters from Oblates to Tempier speak of vocations and recruitment, cfr. notes 16 and 20.

16, 1825: "I am convinced that, generally speaking, when a religious Congregation, whichever it may be, makes a foundation, it has to pay out in terms of its own men what is referred to as the costs of the first foundation. There can be no doubt about that. Now it is in the nature and order of things that this Congregation, if it does not want to be condemned to disappear, should recruit for itself in the very territory where it is thus establishing itself. The ways of Providence itself in regard to the establishment of groups of religious seem to require that a Congregation obtain from the places where it is established more men than it uses there. This is necessary to make up for the ravages of age, the infirmities of life, and so many other accidents which render persons incapable of fulfilling their duties even while still in the very middle of their career. This is even more necessary to avoid having a Congregation chained to its cradle, so to speak, without ever being able to grow up and branch out . . ."

He exercised his role as formator especially with the philosophy and theology students. Two hundred and twenty-five scholastics studied at the seminary of Marseilles from 1827 to 1854, and 170 others at Montolivet from 1854 to 1862.¹⁸ Even if they did not all become Oblates, most of the 414 Oblates who were living at the time of the Founder's death,¹⁹ had Father Tempier for Superior during the time of their preparation for the priesthood. This role is so important that it merits a closer look. (v. *infra*, chap. VII).

The scholasticate superior's knowledge of all the Fathers who had been formed by him, made his opinion all that more valuable when it was a matter of admitting to vows, giving obediences or dismissing someone from the Congregation. These were the major items discussed in Council.²⁰ Still the

¹⁸ Y.B., *Le grand séminaire de Marseille*, *op cit.*, 1966, 179-184; *Le scolasticat de Montolivet*, *op. cit.*, 144.

¹⁹ J. Pielorz, *Les Chapitres généraux au temps du Fondateur*, in *Archives d'histoire oblate*, 1968, II, 140-141.

²⁰ The General Council Register and Mazenod to Courtès on October 1, 1836, to Tempier on July 11 and December 11, 1846, and July 26, 1853.

Fathers and Brothers freely went to him, before or after council meetings to ask for permissions, propose changes, or to ask him to speak in their favor to the General or to the Council.²¹

Since he was also the General Bursar, he played an important part in the obediences of the lay brothers. From 1856 to 1861 especially, most of them made their novitiate at Montolivet,²² the Superior exercised a sort of monopoly on them. Other superiors complained about it quite often; they accused him of collecting "all the important men of the Order".²³

If, on the other hand, he felt that the Superior General was being guided too much by his heart and was not applying enough firmness to his decisions, Father Tempier intervened quite vigorously. For example, during the winter of 1840, he obliged Father Courtès to help out with the mission at Cotignac as Superior, even though he had refused to go, using the excuse that he was sick. Father Martin wrote to the Founder to say that Father Courtès was "deeply hurt" by this letter from the first assistant; Father Telmon also commented the letter as follows: "The idea that Father Tempier proposes, namely, that he (Courtès) should go to the battle field, and, as a skilled captain, but also as one out of the war because of his wounds, should still direct the operations from his tent, does not do him honour . . ." A similar case happened in 1854. At that time, the Founder allowed Father Bellon, Superior at Romans, to come to Marseilles by way of la Salette and

²¹ Dupuy to Tempier, Sept. 4-7 and November 11, 1825; Jeancard to Tempier, June 18, 1829; Gibelli to J. Lagier, July 8, 1839; Telmon to Mazenod, June 30, 1840; Dassy to Tempier, July 28, 1845; Lancenay to Bellon, July 12, 1849; Chavard to Mazenod, October 5, 1849; Sigaud to Mazenod, April 25-28, 1850; Pasqualini to Tempier, June 15, 1850; Crousel to Tempier, 1859, August 21, 1859, July 23, 1860; Nicolas to Tempier, Feb. 27 and June 16, 1860; Mazenod to Mouchette, August 5, 1860; Audric to Tempier, August 25, 1861. For the most part, it is Fathers in charge of formation that write to Tempier with questions or permissions.

²² 22 had taken the habit at Montolivet, cfr. Reg. of the taking of the Habit at Montolivet from 1854 to 1864.

²³ Martin to Mazenod, December 22, 1860; Martin to Tempier and Mazenod between 1850 and 1852, to Vincens, June 23, 1860; Burfin to Fabre, November 20, 1861, etc.

Manosque. He must have spoken to Tempier about it, while writing because he ended with the comment "Even though someone else who is stricter than I finds the detour rather long and costly, it doesn't matter: *quod scripsi, scripsi*." ²⁴

The Congregation's Expansion

Just as Father Tempier played an active role to increase and form Oblate personnel, he worked with equal zeal for the Congregation's expansion.

Twenty-five houses were founded in France and Switzerland between 1816 and 1861, six of which were closed during the same period.²⁵ Almost all of these foundations were prepared and organized, in the material domain, through his efforts. We will see this in more detail in chapter VI which deals with Father Tempier's temporal administration.

The increase in personnel and the expansion of the family were slow in the beginning. The Founder wanted to advance only on firm ground, for he was aware of the fragile nature of his little group. One has the impression that the First Assistant would have taken more risks during the first two decades. As we have seen, he was the first superior of the Institute's second house, and during these first four years (1819-1823), he was at the centre of the foundations at Digne, Nîmes (N.-D. de Rochefort) and on the Island of Lerins;²⁶ he had wanted the Oblates to go and preach in Corsica already in 1817.²⁷ Right after Alger was taken during the summer of

²⁴ Mazenod to Bellon, July 9, 1854; Martin to the Founder, March 12, 1840; Telmon to the same, March 11, 1840.

²⁵ Nîmes, Billens, N.-D. du Laus, N.-D. de Parménie, the seminaries at Romans and Quimper.

²⁶ Correspondence, Mazenod-Tempier from 1819 to 1823; Coulin to Tempier, June 11, 1822; Dupuy to Mazenod, Sept. 9, 1822 and February 11, 1823; Simonin, *N.-D. du Laus, op. cit.*, 203, 205-206; Ortolan I, 178; Rey I, 284. The Founder, however, took the first steps in 1825-1826 for the foundation at St-Pons near Nice and at Nîmes, as well as for those at Sardinia and Valais in 1831, Rome and Algeria in 1832-1833, cfr. *Oblate Writings*, v. VI, VII, VIII.

²⁷ Tempier to Mazenod, July 30, 1817.

1830, several Fathers proposed that they to go to Algeria.²⁸ Father Tempier took an interest in their "idle dreams",²⁹ for which the Founder reproached him: "How insane to want to give birth to children even before one is nubile! Start making the initial preparations . . ." According to Father Rey, Father Tempier, during his trip to Rome in 1832, in agreement with the Founder, would have liked to obtain permission from the Congregation of the "Propaganda Fide" to send Oblates to Algeria and, from the Holy Father, to set up a house in Rome.³⁰

Once a beginning had been made with the foundations at N.-D. de l'Osier and Ajaccio in 1834, it was Bishops who invited the Oblates to come and get established their diocese. For Nancy, however, it seems that it was still Father Tempier who took the initiative. He spoke to the General Council on March 12, 1845 about the need for a foundation in northern France or in Belgium to broaden the Institute's field of action and to have a relay station between the houses of southern France and those of England.

In fact, in ten years, from 1841 to 1851, the Congregation established itself in England (1841) and on three continents: in Canada in 1841, Ceylon in 1847, in northern Africa in 1849, and in South Africa in 1851-1852.

Father Tempier was always interested in the Province of England. He kept correspondence with Ambrose Philips of Lisle in regard to the foundation of Grâce-Dieu and, above all, with Fathers Casimir Aubert, Charles Bellon and Joseph Arnoux. There was disappointment they learned that he did not accompany the Founder in 1850 to visit them. On August 5th, Father Tortel wrote to him: "If the Bishop experienced his conversion in England, let's hope that yours will not be far behind, since we didn't have the joy of seeing you with him this time, as we had expected. I hope that sometime next year we will be able to greet you as the English do with a warm hand-

²⁸ *Oblate Writings*, VII, 200, 206.

²⁹ Mazenod to Mille, Sept. 25, 1831, to Courtès, Nov. 29, 1831.

³⁰ Mazenod to Tempier, November 27, 1833; Rey I, 541.

shake and a touch on the arm, and then to give you a French-style embrace to let you know our well-founded affection for you."

He did stop there during his trip to Canada, at the end of May 1851. Bishop de Mazenod reproached him for not staying 15 days longer to straighten out some things, especially Father Daly's debts.³¹ When the Founder died, Father Tempier was dealing with Father Arnoux about founding a central house at Inchicore which was to become as important and beautiful as the one at Montolivet.³²

Among the Oblates, it was Father Tempier who first met Bishop Bourget of Montreal. The latter had come to Marseilles in the spring of 1841, and stopped at the seminary on a Sunday morning to say Mass. The Superior received him "with great respect and cordiality", had two clerics serve his Mass, and then accompanied him to the refectory for breakfast. They began to talk of the needs of the Church in Canada, of the Oblate Congregation and the work that the Oblates could do in Montreal, etc. "This apostolic man who only desired to promote his Order", we read in Bishop Bourget's diary of the trip, "seemed to be surprised at this opening and smilingly replied that the matter could perhaps be arranged in due time . . ." Father Tempier accompanied him to the Bishop's house.³³ Everyone knows what happened after that.

Father Tempier wrote to Bishop Bourget from time to time and on September 27, 1841, offered him his services in the following terms: "I don't have to tell you, my Lord, that I am your natural commissioner for all business that you may have in our city. So try me out sometimes." On November 23, 1842, Father Honorat requested several of "Father Tempier's

³¹ Mazenod to Tempier, May 27, 1851.

³² Arnoux to Tempier, August-Sept., 1860, June 19, 1861.

³³ The Bishop of Montreal's account of his trip to Europe from Montreal, Reg. of letters, vol. 9, 399-400; A.A. Montreal; G. Carriere, *Histoire documentaire de la Cong. des Miss. O.M.I. dans l'Est du Canada*, Ottawa, 1957, I, 75-104.

Sisters”³⁴ for Canada, and added: “I have every reason to believe he will be pleased with this request and will most zealously fulfill also in this the view of the Bishop of Montreal, who has a high esteem and veneration for this good Father . . .”

The First Assistant kept up a continual correspondence with Bishop Guigues, Father Honorat and Father Telmon. The latter often took mischievous delight in belittling him, and, through him, the general administration. Still, Father Telmon loved and venerated Father Tempier: he wrote to the Founder on February 19, 1847: “He holds a very high position, the first after yourself”; and, on December 3rd: “Allow me to offer my New Year’s wishes to the very reverend and thrice-dear Father Tempier whom I deeply love and whom I would see with great joy. I am ashamed at not having written to him yet, since he has always been so good to me. I hope he will forgive me, he knows I talk a lot but don’t write much. To write a letter is harder for me than to give three sermons, especially since I don’t preach any more.”

Father Tempier followed, encouraged, and helped the Missionaries of the West and the North; this is evident from the letters he received from Fathers Arnaud, Fouquet, Tortel, Ricard, d’Herbomez, Durieu and Jayol.³⁵ Because he lacked the time in 1851 he much regretted that he could not complete his canonical visit to the missions in the Northwest. He excused himself to Father Faraud in June, 1852: “. . . It is clear that I couldn’t follow the dictates of my heart and go across woods and deserts for enormous distances looking for you and the other Fathers of your mission.”

Bishop Odin of Texas passed through Marseilles in 1852. There he met Father Tempier and later on thanked him for all the “kindness” he had shown him and he continued to write to

³⁴ The Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary, cfr. Honorat to Mazenod, Nov. 23, 1842.

³⁵ The dossiers of these Fathers to the Gen. Arch. OMI, especially from Telmon to Mazenod, March 11, 1843.

Father Tempier for a long time afterwards.³⁶ We have copies of these letters as well as those from Fathers Verdet, Gaudet, and Sivy from Texas and Mexico.

Father Tempier certainly knew Bishop H. Bettachini from Ceylon who stayed at Marseilles several days when he passed through there in 1847.³⁷ He was certainly interested in Ceylon even though we do have only a few letters exchanged with the Fathers of the missions there.³⁸ Bishop Bettachini who only knew Italian and English always wrote to the Founder, and to Father Semeria, the Superior of the mission, who was very devoted to him.

Father Tempier devoted a great deal of energy to Africa. In 1848 and 1849, he worked hard to establish the Oblates in Algeria, and then helped them leave in 1850, after Father Bel-langer had made enormous debts, and the Oblates were unable to see eye to eye with Bishop Pavy.³⁹ Father Martin wrote to him on July 7, 1850: "This forceful determination that you have just shown was exactly what was needed: our villages which are already small, are losing more people every day." His interest in South Africa is evident in the regular correspondence with Bishop Allard. This first Apostolic Vicar of Natal held him in high esteem, and wrote to Father Fabre on June 22, 1856: "We are deeply saddened to hear that Father Tempier is in poor health. The Congregation sees him as one of its main and most devoted members." Father Tempier often encouraged the missionaries in Natal; his last three letters that we have were written to Fathers Gérard, Le Bihan and Barret.⁴⁰

³⁶ Odin to Tempier, Jan. 3, 1852, and others in 1852 and 1862. A.G. OMI.

³⁷ N.M. Saverimuttu, *The life and time of O. Bettachini* . . . Rome, 1980, 45.

³⁸ Crousel to Tempier, Sept. 13, 1859 and August 7, 1860; Vivier to Tempier, July 20, 1850.

³⁹ Martin to Mazenod, Feb. 8, 1850; *Oblate Writings* IV, 163-173.

⁴⁰ Cfr. *infra*, *Writings of p. Tempier*, especially Tempier to Gérard, Jan. 29, 1964, to Le Bihan, Jan. 29, 1864, to J. Barrett, May 30, 1868; Allard to Fabre, July 3, 1852, to Tempier, June 22, 1856, Oct. 26 and 29, 1861, etc. Sabon to Tempier, between 1850 and 1854.

Vicar General of the Congregation

The Founder was often away from Marseilles, sometimes for several months. Father Tempier replaced him then as Vicar General, as the Rule provided.⁴¹ This happened first from the end of November 1825 to June of 1826. The Vicar General was then at the centre of things and was deeply involved with the continuation of the missions and the jubilee.⁴² He was so demanding that Father Dupuy held him responsible for Father Suzanne's illness as well as for the fact that several others were played out. He wrote to the Founder on September 14, 1826: "You can see by that, dear Father, that Father Suzanne is only a martyr to obedience . . . If you had been here, we would not all be in such a bad state. If your Vicar General had continued in charge much longer, you would have found only our last wills and testament when you returned . . ."

When the Founder was gravely ill during the summer of 1829,⁴³ and from July 8, 1830 to the beginning of February 1831,⁴⁴ he again named Father Tempier Vicar General. But, the Superior General left him an explicit directive: Don't be condescending in the direction of communities. But the July Revolution brought the Vicar General unforeseen and otherwise grave problems: the house at Nîmes was forcibly closed, the danger that the house at Aix would also be closed after the death of Bishop de Richery, Father Capmas' death, and the impossibility of preaching missions, which was the main purpose of the Institute, etc.⁴⁵ He was also Vicar General when the Founder travelled to Rome in 1833, 1845 and 1854, and to

⁴¹ Father Courtès was named Vicar when both Bishop de Mazenod and Father Tempier left at the same time. There are only three or four times when a Vicar General was appointed, according to our sources, cfr. Mazenod to Courtès, Oct. 21, 1842; Rey I, 470; Mazenod to Tempier, July 6, 1845; *Not. Néc.* II, 103.

⁴² Mazenod and Dupuy to Tempier between 1825 and 1826; Guibert to Tempier, Feb. 2, 1826, etc.

⁴³ Rey I, 470.

⁴⁴ *Oblate Writings* VII, p. XXXVII.

⁴⁵ Mazenod to Tempier, July 11, Dec. 4, 1830, Jan. 11, 1831; Tempier to Mazenod, Sept. 3, 1830.

England in 1850 and 1857.⁴⁶ On these occasions, Bishop de Mazenod showed complete confidence in his first Assistant. For example, he wrote to him on August 5, 1850: "I give you a free hand to do whatever you judge best for our family"; and, on July 3, 1857: "Keep in mind that I am away to serve the Congregation. That is an added reason for you not to allow things to suffer, for whatever reason."

When Bishop de Mazenod died on May 21, 1861, the Assistants chose Father Tempier as Vicar General at their Council meeting of May 24th. He carried out these duties with his customary courage and devotion, wrote Father Fabre.⁴⁷ He saw to routine matters, took the necessary steps to convoke the General Chapter, named two Vicar Provincials for France, fulfilled the required formalities to function as Director General of the Sisters of the Holy Family of Bordeaux, visited several Oblate houses, and made a quick trip to Rome to consult and find protectors to help out in the difficulties which arose with Bishop Cruice, etc.⁴⁸

Canonical Visitations

Article 22 of the paragraph of the Rules on the Superior General required that he or his representative make a canonical visitation of the houses each year. Before the provinces were set up in 1850-1851, it was either he or Father Tempier who carried out this duty during the summer holidays.⁴⁹

⁴⁶ *Oblate Writings*, the Founder's letters during these trips.

⁴⁷ *Not. nécr.* II, 103; Circular No. 7.

⁴⁸ Magnan to T., May 27, 1861; Gondrand to T., June 20, 1861 "I know that you are worthy to have the spirit of our Elias pass on to you . . ."; Arnoux to Vincens, Sept. 19, 1861; Fabre to Rey, August 4 and Sept. 17, 1861; Lancenay to T., Nov. 9, 1861; Gondrand to T., Nov. 26, 1861; etc.

⁴⁹ The Founder named other Visitors, but for the houses outside of France: Guibert for Billens in 1832, Allard and Guigues to Canada in 1843 and 1844, C. Aubert and Ch. Bellon to England in 1849, 1852 and 1855, d'Herbomez and Bermond to Oregon in 1856 and 1857, Cfr. *Oblate Writings* I, 59-60, 83, 87-93; II, 165-166; 129-130, 156; III, 35-36, 109-112; VIII, 73, *Rég. des conseils généraux* Nov. 5, 1852, etc. Father Bellon made the visits in France in the summer of 1851, cf. Maz. to Bellon, August 29, Sept. 4, 17, 18, 28, 1851.

It isn't always easy to distinguish among these many trips whether he was making a business trip or a canonical visitation. According to the Founder's letters or those of other Oblates, he is referred to as a Canonical Visitor at least 15 times between 1823 and 1861. He began with the visit to Le Calvaire at Mar-seilles in 1823;⁵⁰ then to N.-D. du Laus in 1824, 1825, 1829 and 1838;⁵¹ to L'Osier in 1834, 1838, 1844 and 1849,⁵² to Lumières in 1840, 1846, and 1852,⁵³ to Bon Secours in 1846 and 1848,⁵⁴ to Corsica in 1838 and 1846,⁵⁵ and to all the houses of Southern France in 1829, 1838, and 1847.⁵⁶

We have only the Acts of the Canonical Visits made in 1838 to N.-D. du Laus and to N.-D. de l'Osier. In the one to Laus, the Visitor began by saying that "to point out abuses is to have corrected them." He only made a few remarks about religious exercises during a mission and ended with the admonition not to keep 'wayward' priests in the house except for a retreat.⁵⁷ At Osier, he thanked the Lord for all his blessings on the missions that had been given by the Fathers of that house; he called to mind the abuses that the Founder had noted in 1835 and 1836, and invited them to reform in several other areas: rushed recitation of the psalms during Divine Office, disorder in the Sacristy, slowness in designating missionaries which led to ill-prepared missions, some irregularities in blessing the community and in the minor chapter of faults, etc. ⁵⁸

⁵⁰ Mazenod to Tempier, April 3, 1823.

⁵¹ Mazenod to Courtès, May 28, 1824, to Tempier, Oct. 12, 1825, cfr. also note 56.

⁵² Dassy to Mazenod, March 18, 1834; Mazenod to Tempier, Sept. 26, 1838, August 14, 1844; Mazenod to Vincens, May 30, 1849.

⁵³ Honorat to Tempier, June 17, 1840; Mazenod to Ricard, May 15, 1846; Rey II, 450.

⁵⁴ Mazenod to Dassy, May 14, 1846; Mille to Tempier, April 14, 1848.

⁵⁵ Mazenod to Tempier, June 26, 1838, March 12 and 18, 1846.

⁵⁶ Mazenod to Tempier, July 16, and August 6, 1829, June 26 and Sept. 26, 1838, August 17, 1847.

⁵⁷ Act of Visitation at Laus, Oct. 14, 1838, cfr. Yenveux I, 58-59, 114, 157, 175, 195; V, 200-201; VII, 40; *Missions OMI*, 1902, 94-95.

⁵⁸ Act of Visitation at l'Osier, Oct. 7, 1838, Archives in the house at Osier; We also have a short excerpt from the canonical visitation to Corsica of March 21, 1846, in the Archives of the house at Vico.

Father Albini was grateful to the Founder for having sent Father Tempier to Corsica in 1838. On July 7th, he wrote that the Visitor had restored order and regularity in the house at Vico, and he concluded with the words: "We hope that we will have such a life-giving visit every year."

Father Tempier's most famous canonical visit was to the Oblates in Canada in 1851. It had been talked about in the Congregation for a long time beforehand. Father Allard had already written to Father Tempier on January 21, 1845: "Our Fathers hope that you will come to visit them and thus fill your sons in America with joy: here too you will be surrounded with good will just as you are at Marseilles." Father Telmon mentioned the same thing: "Father Tempier promised to come and see us; he is a person who will not be afraid of the long trip and he is too honest to go back on his word."⁵⁹ The Founder had wanted to go himself. He wrote to Father Honorat on July 12, 1849: "You would need that I be able to extend my visitation as far as Canada. It is there and not in France that they have lost the very notion of the religious spirit." On September 4, 1850, the General Council considered this matter. Besides the need to reform the religious spirit, there was the need to straighten out financial matters between the diocese of Bytown and the Congregation, a rather complicated matter because Bishop Guigues was both Bishop and Provincial. They considered sending Father Vincens but he was not able to go in 1849. At last, they chose Father Tempier at the beginning of 1851.⁶⁰ Bishop de Mazenod counseled him to be kind and considerate, but without timidity: "You have not been sent to approve but to reform. Act with authority, yield to nobody when it is a matter of re-establishing regularity, obedience, poverty, subordination."⁶¹

⁵⁹ Cf. Guigues to Mazenod, July 1845; Telmon to Mazenod, March 26, 1846.

⁶⁰ *Oblate Writings*, I, 224, 229; II, 7-8.

⁶¹ *Ibid.* II, 14-18; letters to Tempier, June 15, 19 and 24 June 1851.

The Visitor did a great deal in a short time. He visited all the Oblate houses in Eastern Canada and in the United States, decided to accept an establishment in Buffalo and in St. Catharine's (Toronto diocese), named Father Santoni, till then master of novices at l'Osier, as Provincial in Canada.⁶² The latter had scarcely arrived at Montreal when he criticized rather severely the decision to found a house at Buffalo. He wrote to Father Casimir Aubert on August 14, 1851: "Tempier, without consulting anyone, made a decision which angered all the Fathers: he sent 4 Fathers to Buffalo without knowing whether they would have enough to live on . . . he undermined his good reputation by doing this . . ."

Since there is no Act of Visitation,⁶³ we don't know exactly what he did to improve the religious discipline. Father Honorat found Father Tempier's stay a real blessing. He was profuse in his gratitude to the Founder and wrote on September 15, 1851: "All our Fathers I believe equally derived all the good that they had expected from this visit, for he did everything he possibly could both for the general good and for particular cases." On the following October 14th, he wrote to Father Bellon: "Father Tempier left us in a very good state, and things continue to improve."

Other trips

Besides canonical visitations, Father Tempier made numerous other trips: three to Rome, the same to North Africa and to Switzerland and many to different points in France, right up to 1869.

He went to Rome in 1832 to promote the Founder's appointment to bishop, in 1851 to seek approval for the changes

⁶² Ortolan, II, 123-125; G. Carriere, *op. cit.* I, 197-198; IV, 118-119, 160-166, 224-225; V, 17, 34; *Missions OMI*, 1907, 301-303; 1929, 336; 1953, 685; 1956, 417.

⁶³ We have on hand: *Mémoire sur la gestion du p. Honorat au Saguenay* and a short note, *d'acte de visite de la maison de Montreal; Notes sur l'établissement de Bytown*, etc. OMI Gen. Arch.

made to the Rules, and, in 1861 because of the difficulties with Bishop Cruice;⁶⁴ he went to North Africa with the Founder in 1842 for the translation of a relic of Saint Augustine,⁶⁵ in 1848 for the foundation in Algeria, and in 1849-1850, to install a new superior and to settle the case of Father Bellanger.⁶⁶ He found "an alarming disorder in the accounts" of this bursar and realized the duplicity of this Father who had gained the confidence of Bishop Pavy. He was soon after expelled from the Congregation. The Council secretary wrote: Father Tempier "suffered more pain and anguish than ever before in his life, according to his own statements and testimony."⁶⁷ He went to Switzerland in 1837 to close and sell the house at Billens; in 1839 on the return trip from Verceil where he had gone with the Founder to rest and pray; and, in 1858, to consider a foundation.⁶⁸ His trips to France were always in view of preparing to set up houses, to repair them or to build. We have on hand a great number of letters from Superiors who invited him to come for these reasons; he was then as much in demand as the Founder.⁶⁹

It is good to point out that Father Tempier was always a good traveller. He was able to rest anywhere, even in a carriage. On June 21, 1824, he wrote to Father Touche: "You know carriages have a sleep-inducing effect on me. This time it was extraordinary that my travelling companions greatly marvelled. May God be praised for everything." Father Fabre also wrote that "travelling was a relaxation for this iron temperament. Several times he sailed on the Mediterranean Sea . . . he never felt this fatigue . . ." ⁷⁰

Accidents and incidents happened now and then to add a little variety to an otherwise monotonous trip. Going from

⁶⁴ *Missions OMI* 1949, 356; 1962, 166; 1968, 473; Rey II, 370-371.

⁶⁵ Mazenod diary, in *Missions OMI* 1874, 417-457.

⁶⁶ Rey II, 294, 321; *Ecrits Oblats* IV, 172-185.

⁶⁷ General Council, February 4, 1850.

⁶⁸ *Missions OMI* 1874, 181-211; 1934, 340; Rey II, 71, 73-74.

⁶⁹ Martin to Tempier, Dec. 20, 1852, to Cas. Aubert, Jan. 20, 1853.

⁷⁰ *Not. néc.* II, 99.

Aix to N.-D. du Laus, after the General Chapter of 1821, the carriage tipped over and he was thrown to the edge of a precipice. With the sanguine comment of a parachutist, he finished his account of the event: "I was careful in tumbling down to compose myself, to gather my arms and legs so as to avoid any fracture . . ." ⁷¹

In December 1837, he was to accompany Bishop de Mazenod who had just given his oath of loyalty to the King and was on his way to confer ordinations at Nancy for Bishop Forbin-Janson; but there was only one place left for him in the mail carriage, from Paris to Metz: That was no problem! The Bishop's companion sat beside the driver, in front of the carriage, facing the cutting cold. He suffered no ill effects from the trip which lasted about twenty hours. ⁷²

When he was returning from Algeria in 1842, the wind drove their ship into the Bay of Palma at Majorca. The travellers landed and Bishop de Mazenod said Mass. When he learned that several sailors were in quarantine on the Vantour and seriously ill, the Founder decided to send them Father Tempier, who "dropped the razor he was about to use" and went to visit and hear the confessions of those who were sick: three of the latter died shortly after; and, without any ado at all, Father Tempier came back "very happy". ⁷³

This short resume of the first Assistant General's activities gives us an insight to all the sacrifices that he had to accept throughout these long years in order to second the Superior General in everything. With good reason Father Albini could already on February 3, 1837, write of him: "Oh! We truly see that you are dedicated heart and soul to our Congregation and its faithful members."

⁷¹ Tempier to Mazenod, Dec. 14, 1821.

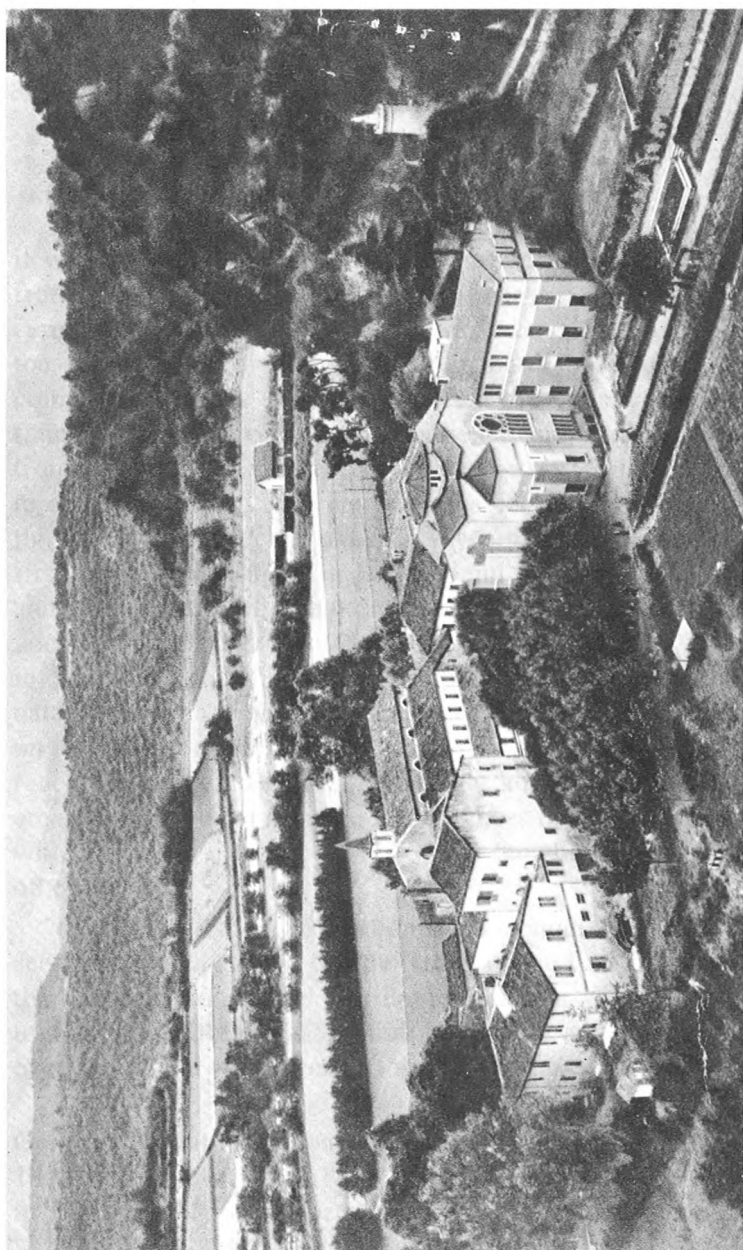
⁷² Rey I, 743. Unfortunately, the Founder's diary for this period has been burned; Rey and Rambert quote passages from it.

⁷³ Mazenod diary, November 8, 1842.

But Father Tempier did much more for his religious family than has been mentioned here. We must now describe in more detail two most important duties he carried out with devotedness and competence and in which he proved to be a master: that of General Bursar and that of Oblate Formator. These will be dealt with in the following chapters.



The bell tower at Le Calvaire



Notre-Dame de Lumières

VI

GENERAL TREASURER OF THE CONGREGATION
(1816-1870)

When Father Tempier died in 1870, Father Fabre wrote: it was on his shoulders "that the Founder seemed to place, from the very first moments of our existence, all material concerns . . . it was to him that he entrusted the administration of the goods that Providence placed at the disposal of our little community. Father Tempier exercised throughout his life the function of bursar of Divine Providence and procurator of the Congregation. What cares, anxieties and sufferings they were to cause at times! . . . When we consider the vicissitudes that the family encountered over fifty years: uncertainties of the first foundations, exile in Switzerland, revolutionary crises, and the injustices of recent times, we wonder how it has maintained its life, good reputation and prosperity. Father Tempier in the silence and shade of devotedness was Providence incarnated; and even if people perhaps criticized his administration on this point or other, we can honestly say that it is only ignorance that can explain that. We might add that such criticism arises from an unpardonable forgetfulness of human weakness, which is more likely in dealing with temporal goods than in other matters."¹

This assessment by Bishop de Mazenod's first successor seems accurate. All the Oblate letters of the first fifty years of the Congregation testify that Father Tempier was always seen by his fellow Oblates as the family's bursar and administrator, even though he was never officially appointed to this post.

In point of fact, the General Chapters regularly elected a General Procurator: Courtès in 1818, Moreau in 1821 and 1824, Honorat in 1826, 1831 and 1837, Mille in 1843, Fabre in 1850 and 1856, Soulerin in 1861, etc. But, these were, for

¹ *Notices Nécrologiques* II, 97.

the most part, Procurators only on paper.² Only Fathers Fabre and Soulerin, who lived at the heart of the Congregation, kept the books for revenue and expenses or the key to the general coffers.

The Founder, in replying to superiors' letters, always referred them to his first assistant for "financial matters".³ Several times he states that Father Tempier "has control of the general funds",⁴ or "acts as Procurator General."⁵

Eugene de Mazenod had inherited a business sense from his mother. He was certainly the one who always took the initiative and responsibility for the most important decisions in buying property, borrowing money, investing money, etc., but he always asked his first assistant for advice and left the concrete application of these measures to him. There are many indications that allow us to conclude that Father Tempier looked after the administration of Bishop Fortuné's⁶ personal goods, as well as those of the Founder,⁷ his mother,⁸ and even some of his sister's, Mme de Boisgelin,⁹ in the same way that he did for the diocese and the Congregation.

The bursar's first duty is to look after the books, but especially to find money and goods and to make them produce so as to meet the needs of the family members. Like many other religious families, the Oblate Congregation began in the greatest poverty.

² Rey (I, 189) writes that Tempier had started in 1815 "to carry out the duties of procurator and that he did so for a long time."

³ Mazenod to Mille, May 23, 1841, to Moreau April 2, 1842, to Guigues February 18, 1843, to Dassy November 6, 1846, to Fabre January 20, 1855 etc.

⁴ Mazenod diary March 9, 1837 and February 24, 1838; idem in Oblate correspondence, v.g. Dupuy to Mazenod June 2, and July 6, 1823, to Tempier August 25 and November 17, 1823; Mazenod to Tempier January 20, April 5, 1826, etc.

⁵ Mazenod to Guigues May 9, 1839.

⁶ Mazenod to Tempier, December 18, 1825, February 12, 1826.

⁷ Mazenod to Tempier, August 1, 1833.

⁸ Tempier to Mme. de Mazenod, February 22, 1843.

⁹ Mazenod to Eugene de Boisgelin, April 12, 1852, August 9, 1855.

Father de Mazenod's first letters to Forbin-Janson in 1815 and 1816 as well as Fortuné's correspondence with the President de Mazenod from 1818 to 1821, show that the missionary Institute did not receive anything as such from the Archbishop's office, but lived from its members' personal incomes, from the revenues of the position of vicar or of one in charge of a given work that some retained,¹⁰ or from the help of benefactors.¹¹

Born in poverty, the Congregation for a long time had to live from day to day¹² and it was even necessary for Fathers de Mazenod and Tempier, and especially Bishop Fortuné, to use a good part of their salaries as Vicars General and Bishop after 1823 for this purpose. These resources declined notably after the July Revolution of 1830. On May 7, 1830, Father de Mazenod wrote to Father Mille that the Bishop's salary had decreased by 12,000 francs "that he used to devote wholly to charities. He had always considered our work as well-deserving a place amongst these. What is more, Tempier and myself are also losing the income we have always used for the family."¹³

Income for the general funds

For a long time, the general treasury was officially replenished only by the surplus funds from various houses. The members of the general council, however, made the unhappy

¹⁰ Mazenod to Forbin-Janson, October 28, 1814, October 23 and December 19, 1815. Fortuné to President de Mazenod August 26, 1818; President to Fortuné August 27, 1818; Mazenod to Honorat January 15, 1825.

¹¹ Mrs. de Bausset, Mrs. de Servan, Mrs. Roux de Bonnecorse, etc. cf. Fortuné to President, July 20, August 22, December 8, 1818, to Mrs. de Servan (Yenveux VI, 177-178); Mazenod to Courtès, October 10, 1826 (Mrs. Grimaldi) February 8, 1838; Mazenod to Mrs. Roux de Bonnecorse from 1817 to 1822, A.A.M. etc.

¹² Mazenod to Tempier, February 12 and April 5, 1826.

¹³ Bishop Fortuné received 31,000 francs per year from 1823 to 1830, cf. Mazenod to Tempier December 18, 1825, to Mille, May 7, 1831. In 1838, Bishop. E. de Mazenod received a salary of 10,000 francs and Father Tempier, as Vicar General, received 2,000 francs, cf. Mazenod to Prefect de La Coste, July 14, 1838.

observation as late as January 14, 1845, that this source gave next to nothing: nothing came from Vico, from England or from Canada; it was rather the latter who needed to be helped. Only the houses at Aix and Marseilles regularly contributed something, as did the seminaries where the professors' salaries were fixed and rather good.¹⁴

The Congregation's first directive on this matter is dated December 8, 1853. It stipulated that every Father had to offer 10 Masses a month for the intentions of the Superior General; as for the missionaries, the Bursar General kept back 100 francs for each from the money that was granted to mission vicariates by the Council of the Propagation of the Faith.

A second directive of February 2, 1857, extended this so that 100 francs was retained for each Father. This brought in 20,000 francs from the first year onward.¹⁵

Another source of income gave Father Tempier more headaches than money, namely, the inheritance of some fifteen Oblates. For example, Father Magnan received a house from his aunt Currat in 1841. Contestations of the will forced the Procurator to deal with lawyers for two years to assure this property. It was sold later on, and Father Magnan demanded to be reimbursed when he left the Congregation in 1867.¹⁶

In 1842, Father Viala also inherited a house which was then sold in 1846 for practically nothing. The Congregation thereby lost more than it gained since it had to give 135 francs a year to a "mandatory" as well as pay an annual pension to Mrs. Viala.¹⁷

¹⁴ The Marseilles seminary community gave a surplus of 9,000 francs in 1853, cf. General Council, April 21, 1854; Mazenod to Vincens, February 22, 1854: reasons for accepting the Valence seminary.

¹⁵ General Council January 7, 1858. Before the regulations dealing with finances made in 1853 and 1857, the Rules obliged a superior to give a regular account, both spiritual and temporal, of the state of their community, and to send surplus money to the general fund, cf. General Council January 3, 1845.

¹⁶ Fabre to Magnan, March 1, 1867. Dossier: Magnan, A.G.R.

¹⁷ Letters of 1842-1846. Doss. Viala, *ibid.*

Fathers Chauvet and Nicolas, as well as Brother Jouvent all received an inheritance in 1843. Father Tempier experienced problems with every one of them: disputes with the families, lawyers' fees, travelling expenses, debts to pay, and very little money or goods, at least on the short term.¹⁸

Father Joseph Arnoux's inheritance especially tried the patience of the Bursar General for a long time. This Father received a house which was to bring in 10,000 francs in 1862; but, in 1843, the widow Arnoux, overloaded with debts, asked Father Tempier to help her. He did so generously and loaned her 1000 francs per year from 1843 till she remarried in 1848. Father Rossignol, the parish priest at Embrun, acted as a go-between and was most grateful to the Vicar General: "God will certainly reward you for the great service you have done for the Arnoux family who can't possibly thank you enough," he wrote on October 13, 1844. "Since your goodness is limitless," he added on March 4, 1845, "please lend them another 400 francs. Mrs. Arnoux is grateful to God daily for showing his providential goodness to her and her son through you." This parish priest found the Vicar General of Marseilles so generous that he also asked for several personal favors: to get a free trip to Algeria for a woman religious, to recommend his nephew to the dean of the Faculty of Medicine at Marseille, to ask Bishop de Mazenod, as Senator, to get a grant for the church at Embrun, etc. Father Rossignol with reason considered Father Tempier as a friend and wrote to him on September 14, 1848: "Take care of your health which is so necessary to your diocese and your powerful work, and, have the charity to remember in your prayers the one who loves you always from the bottom of his heart . . ."¹⁹

Nevertheless, thanks to benefactors' gifts and to various forms of economizing, Father Tempier over the years was able to create a reserve fund, as the Founder had asked of him as

¹⁸ The files of these Fathers, *ibid.*

¹⁹ File of Joseph Arnoux, *ibid.* It seems that in 1856 Mrs. Arnoux began to pay back her debts. Father Tempier still had to deal with the inheritances of Fathers Lagrue, St-Geney, J.A. Martin, Marc de L'Hermite, etc.

early as January 20, 1826 when he wrote to him from Rome: "I would wish you not to overlook a matter which preoccupies me constantly and that is that no one of our company has a penny and that on the day when certain resources will dry up, it will be quite perplexing to know how to feed and clothe so many people . . . My purpose has always been to set aside a fund which could furnish the most pressing necessities of life, not of course with a thought of hoarding, but in order to supplement the endowments . . . Think well on this, for those who give themselves to God in our company have a right to have their needs looked after."

One could assess the value of these investments and properties²⁰ by the income that they brought in; but in reality this did not amount to much in the long run, since the General Chapter of 1856 requested that the whole Congregation to contribute to put it on a sound basis.²¹ On January 14, 1845, Father Tempier had explained to the General Council "that the fixed assets of the Congregation such as our community residences were for the most part unproductive; the income from sources which do produce is used up mainly in paying for the interest on our passive debts."

The Work of the Propagation of the Faith was the most abundant source of revenue after 1841. It gave the Congregation 12,500 francs in 1843. This amount increased by about 10,000 francs a year to as high as 95,000 francs in 1852. Then, in 1853, it jumped to 150,000 francs, and to 190,000 in 1859.²² It is true that this money was exclusively meant for the missions which, therefore, did not depend directly on the general fund. But the latter did not profit therefrom because it

²⁰ Trinquier debt, cashed by the Congregation, cf. Mazenod Diary, February 24, 1838; shares in the Valais mines, cf. General Council January 22 and May 13, 1857; mill at Montpellier, sold for 20,000 francs, cf. General Council July 29, 1856; Father Tempier's property near the Marseilles seminary, sold to the state in 1852, cf. Y.B. *Le grand séminaire de Marseille*, 19, etc.

²¹ Bookkeeping legislation, February 2, 1857.

²² *Oblate Writings*, V. p. XXXII-XXXIII.

withdrew from this amount the contribution that each Father was assessed. Thus, it can be said that the foreign missions had significantly improved the economic stability of the Congregation as well as fostered vocations and its expansion. (cf. Finance sheet on p. 141)

Expenditures and debts of the General Treasury

The Founder often complained that the Oblates were not very interested in or generous toward the Congregation's overall needs. In 1843, the debt was as high as 200,000 francs.²³

The situation got even worse in 1847 when Father Léonard's recruiting campaign was a great success, and soon after, with the serious economic crisis that followed the 1848 revolution. As early as 1847, Bishop de Mazenod spoke of Father Tempier's "nightmare" and "despair" since he didn't have the funds to care for the novices and scholastics.²⁴ On August 17, 1848, he wrote to Father Semeria: "We are so in debt that we have no more securities to offer in order to be able to take out new loans. Also, Father Tempier is totally discouraged, repeating from morning till night that we have nothing left, that we must send the novices away . . . We have plenty of stones for building great houses, but no revenue . . ."

There was a short respite in 1851 when Bishop de Mazenod received 200,000 francs from his mother's will. This he gave to the Congregation. But scarcely two years later, he notes: "After paying our bills, we are so exhausted that we will never get back in shape. The enormous sum of nearly 200,000 francs that I put in the Congregation's general treasury has been gobbled up thereby."²⁵

The construction at Montolivet from 1853 onwards made matters even worse. The Superior General told Father Courtès

²³ Mazenod to Semeria, February 18, 1843, to Guigues, April 12, 1843.

²⁴ Mazenod to Léonard, June 10, December 25, 1847.

²⁵ Act of February 27, 1852; cfr. also Prefect Suleau to the Minister of the Interior, Fortoul, January 6, 1853; Mazenod to Father Luigi, March 17, 1853.

on January 28, 1855, that the general treasury was "not only dried up, but loaded down with enormous debts." Father Fabre, in a report to the General Council on January 7, 1858, stated that they were 300,000 francs in debt, mainly due to the building project at Montolivet. The debt continued to climb till Montolivet was sold in 1864-1865 for 625,000 francs.²⁶

It is evident that the finances of the Congregation caused Father Tempier a great deal of concern. However, even though he himself and the Founder often asked the Superiors to economize a little more, even though they complained of their poverty more than once, we have the impression that they never really felt any grave anxiety. To their credit, especially the Founder, in his capacity as Bishop, Superior General, and the heir to the de Mazenods and the Joannis, they had a good deal of property and goods which allowed them to borrow without great difficulty and so to cover both their ordinary and extraordinary expenses.²⁷

What were these expenses? The help that was given to some relatives, maintaining Oblate students, and especially the purchase and upkeep of the Institute's property.

There was no such thing as pensions from society. A great number of Oblates' relatives lived in misery. There was an obligation to help them. In 1853, this cost as much as 2,092 francs. This seems to be little enough when you consider that there were about 15 Fathers and Brothers whose relatives re-

²⁶ Father Tempier estimated that the Montolivet property had cost 450,000 francs, cf. Y.B., *Montolivet*, in *Etudes Oblats*, 27, (1968), 265-269.

²⁷ Bishop Bourget wrote in his Diary in 1841: "I hope to make a good deal there with Bishop de Mazenod the Bishop of this city, who received me with such kindness and friendliness that he won me over completely. He comes from a noble family with a large fortune that befits his rank." The Minister of Worship has always considered Bishop de Mazenod to be one of the richest bishops in France and refused to increase his salary for a long time in spite of the added expenses in Marseilles caused by visiting bishops, cf. Mazenod to the Prefect, July 14, 1838; Prefect to the Minister of Worship, January 6, 1853; Minister of Worship to the Prefect, December 29, 1952; cf. also S. Rituum Congregatio, *Inquisitio historica*, C.J.E. de Mazenod, Romae, 1968, 866.

ceived help, as we know from letters of that period. Bishop de Mazenod, however, thought it was a lot! On December 19, 1847, he wrote to Father Vincens: "It is no small matter to provide for the needs of the families of those among our Brothers who are already totally dependent on the finances of the Congregation, especially when those among us who could help are puzzling out ways and means to spend those small incomes that could be ceded to us." On January 28, 1855, he again notes that the Congregation is helping out "a great number of relatives."²⁸

There was very little problem to take care of the Oblate students during the first couple of decades. There were not then that many novices and scholastics: they lived in great poverty as well, especially at Aix where Father Courtès didn't feed them very well at all.²⁹ The cost did not change much between 1845 and 1861: it came to about 25,000 francs annually, except between 1847 and 1850 when the great number of novices temporarily increased it.³⁰

The extraordinary expenses of buying, constructing or repairing houses were the heaviest burden for the budget. It was to this area that Father Tempier applied his administrative talents to the fullest, as well as those of architect and foreman, all the while keeping in mind his responsibility in regard to gospel poverty. He was an educator in these matters as well, by instructing superiors and bursars and giving needed remonstrations. Nothing escaped his notice, whether major financial transactions or the minutest detail in regard to provisions or bookkeeping.

²⁸ Letter to Father Courtès, January 28, 1855. The Congregation helped out relatives of the Fathers and Brothers: Baret, Berthuel, Bourrelrier, Dédebant, Frain, Honorat, Kotterer, Léonard, Martin, Moreau, Naghten, Paris, Pinet, Rieux, Telmon, etc. This generally amounted to about 300 or 400 francs every year; this is approximately what it cost to keep a novice or scholastic every year.

²⁹ Letters of Father Dupuy in 1823-1825; Mazenod to Courtès, July 17, 1831.

³⁰ General Council, January 14, 1845, April 21, 1854 and January 7, 1858.

Between 1815 and 1861, the Congregation set up 25 houses in France, which meant about one every two years.

The Marian Shrines seemed to fit in best with the purpose of the Institute: nine were accepted; but they were costly to operate. Property had to be bought, abandoned buildings repaired, and often houses built. The Founder always wanted them to be roomy, in accord with his vision of the future which corresponded to the measure of his desires. In other places, in a lesser degree, it was necessary to buy, build, or make significant changes, especially in the houses at Aix, Le Calvaire at Marseilles, Billens, Vico, Nancy, Montolivet, Paris and Autun.

We can only admire the Founder's daring in all this, but we must also see the generosity and savoir faire of Father Tempier who was always kept busy with new concerns and with overseeing new projects.

Our readers will forgive us if we now go into some minor details, often seen as unimportant and so left aside by our historians. It is, however, interesting to know about them, as part of the minor history of the beginnings of our family, and especially of Father Tempier who wrote it with his own sweat. We are fortunate in this regard, because, as it often happens, our archives have the most records on business and money matters.

The Bursar General and the Oblate Houses from 1815 to 1850

Aix (from 1815 onwards)

Father Eugene de Mazenod had bought a part of the Carmelite convent at Aix in October, 1815. Father Tempier joined him there on the following January 25th. As soon as possible they had to repair the church, unused since the Revolution, cracked and lamentably dilapidated. Father Ortolon gives all the credit for its restoration to the Founder. He writes: "The young priest who, later as Bishop of Marseilles, would erect in this densely populated city, the most sumptuous cathedral of the 19th century, and, on the hill of Notre-

Dame de la Garde, the magnificent basilica that dominates the vast sea; he, who through his Oblates spread across the whole world, was to restore in all climes so many ruined shrines and build new ones to the glory of God and his Immaculate Mother, precluded his destiny of being the untiring builder of churches by restoring that of the Carmelites in his own native city.”³¹

Without any fear of being mistaken, Father Tempier can be closely linked with this praise. His interest in material issues began to appear from that time forth. The repair work was done expeditiously and the church was open to the public on Palm Sunday, April 7, 1816. They continued to embellish it afterwards: marble altars, paintings, objects needed for cult;³² and they continued to enlarge the interior space for the next half-century: other parts of the convent were improved, and outside lots were joined together to give access to nearby streets.

Already in 1817, Father Tempier suggested that the Founder buy the section of the convent which faced the courtyard; he even explained how he would obtain the 15,000 francs³³ necessary to buy it. When Fathers de Mazenod and Tempier were appointed Grand Vicars in Marseilles in 1823, Fathers Courtès and Dupuy became the Superior and Bursar respectively at Aix. They found it difficult to provide for the community's needs and often made urgent appeals to Father Tempier for help. For example, Father Dupuy wrote to him on September 7, 1823: “Father Superior (the Superior General) left our bursar somewhat bankrupt, left me only 60% of what he owed, and then left without remorse; you seem to have been trained in the same school! Don't the cries of the poor reach your ears?”

Father Tempier intervened again in 1825 to do some repair work to the house, and in 1836 when they bought the

³¹ Ortolan, *Les Oblats de Marie Immaculée* . . . I, Paris, 1914, 79-80.

³² Ortolan, I, 111-112.

³³ Tempier to Mazenod, August 25, 1817.

Couteron property which faced the courtyard.³⁴ He was less involved with this property after that out of respect for Father Courtès who, as former Youth Congregationist of Abbé de Mazenod's and one of his first novices, always had a closer relationship with the Founder.

Notre-Dame Du Laus (1819-1841)

Father Tempier's heart was always with the house at N.-D. du Laus since he had been the first Superior there in 1819. He had restored both the monastery and the church. In 1823, Father Mie replaced him as Superior and Father Touche became bursar although woefully ignorant of what this required. The Bursar General had to write several letters to him, asking him to keep "his affairs in order", or to "reproach him strongly". He explained why provisions had to be made, how to preserve sausages, how to take possession of an inheritance, who to hire to look after the farm, etc.³⁵

In the spring of 1825, Father Honorat was named superior and Father Dupuy bursar. Within six months, the latter wrote at least twenty letters to the Founder and especially to Father Tempier about temporal matters that Father Touche had neglected. On June 5th, he wrote: "Don't take it badly if I bother you with all these little details when you have a lot more serious problems on your hands all the time. When you need a little rest, come here where we live happily, peacefully, without any concerns, under the shade of the trees that you planted, let us say it better and speak more christianly, with the Good Mother to help us."

Father Dupuy asked him especially to come to Laus to straighten out a lot of practical details. "Is Father Tempier coming or not? That is the question that a lot of lazy people are asking themselves," he exclaimed on August 17th. At the

³⁴ Dupuy to Tempier, December 16, 1825; Mazenod to Courtès, May 23, October 1, 1836.

³⁵ Tempier to Touche, February 24, May 3 and 26, June 21, and August 23, 1824.

beginning of September, he continued: "We are impatiently waiting for our distinguished visitor; all around, people are asking about his arrival as they recently did for that of the Minister of War." The Visitor spent about two weeks with them at the beginning of October, and after that he went to Gap and to Digne to request a letter of approval for the Institute and its Rule from the Bishops.

During his term, Father Guibert, who was Superior of Laus from 1829 to 1834, did not ask that much help from Father Tempier because he was well versed in temporal matters. He did ask for help, however, in an exquisite manner, when they set up the Noviciate at Laus in 1832-1833, and when they built a bell tower. He wrote: "I think you should try to solve this problem of political economy, namely, how we can feed and lodge fifteen people with the amount that is usually enough for only five or six. I would certainly go up in your esteem, and you would even consider me somewhat of a miracle-worker, undoubtedly . . . but I don't want to advance too far in perfection all at once, because there would certainly be some doubters; you would be led to think that there was something of the supernatural and that I multiply loaves. So, I come to see if you will add a little to our purse . . ." ³⁶

Since the Church at Laus did not belong to the Oblates, Father Tempier did not want to give any money to build the bell tower. Father Guibert complained about it with his usual finesse: "I realize that you are poor, in need, penniless . . . However, I regret that you will be left out of our project. It will be an outstanding work. You'll be jealous when you see it and realize that here is a title that lacks in your glory!" ³⁷ Father Mille, who was an independent character, was able to complete the tower without asking the Bursar General for any help. He was the one who dealt with the succeeding Bishops over the departure of the Oblates between 1839-1842. ³⁸

³⁶ Cfr. Paguella de Follenay, *Mgr. Guibert . . .*, I, 289-290.

³⁷ Undated letter, *ibid.*, 311

³⁸ Father Tempier had bought the land for the Oblates that the Bishop wanted to buy in 1845, cfr. Martin to Tempier, July 12, 1845.

Le Calvaire at Marseilles (1821-1979)

Following the great mission at Marseilles in January/February, 1820, Bishop de Bausset asked Father de Mazenod to establish some of his missionaries near Le Calvaire to continue and keep the fruits of the mission alive. Father Tempier, who was at Laus at that time, did not play any part in getting established there on May 6, 1821, nor in buying the Accoules cloister the following May.³⁹ But the building was dilapidated. He had scarcely been named Vicar General of Marseilles in 1823, when he, along with Father Dupuy and Maunier, the superior, tore it down and started building a house big enough for a large community.⁴⁰ When Father Maunier left in 1823, Father Suzanne, the new superior, built the church of N.-D. de Bon Secours⁴¹ facing Le Calvaire. Fathers de Mazenod and Tempier certainly helped him out with good advice since they were living regularly at Le Calvaire from 1825 to 1827, according to Fathers Rambert and Rey.⁴²

Even though the main work was finished on the house in 1825, nevertheless other work continued after that for several years.⁴³ The Founder wrote to Father Tempier from Rome on February 11, 1826: "I think you are likely to be busy finishing the house so that we can have the novitiate there . . .; but I cannot overdo it in reminding you to keep to simplicity and strict necessity."⁴⁴ Thereafter, the house was never a financial burden to the Bursar General.

³⁹ Mazenod to Tempier, February 4 and April 26, 1821; agreement on the buying of the monastery, A.G.R.

⁴⁰ Dupuy to Mazenod and Tempier, February to November 1823; Rambert, I, 331; Cost: about 15,000 francs.

⁴¹ Rey, I, 414-415; Ortolan I, 218-220.

⁴² Rambert I, 390; Rey I, 341.

⁴³ We have many papers on the finances and property titles of this house as well as of other Oblate properties, with frequent notes by Father Tempier, cfr. A.G.R., house files.

⁴⁴ Cfr. also Mazenod to Tempier, February 11 and 27, March 5, 1826.

Nîmes (1825-1830)

Fathers de Mazenod and Tempier went to Nîmes in 1822 in response to a request from Bishop Chaffoy that they set up a house for the Missionaries of Provence at the Shrine of N.-D. de Grâces, near Rochefort. The latter didn't come till March of 1825 and installed themselves, not at the shrine, which was too far from the city, but in a house on the grounds of the Major seminary.⁴⁵ Bishop Chaffoy thanked Father Tempier on December 13, 1825: "Having your excellent religious in our midst is an exceptional grace of God to my diocese and to me."⁴⁶ Father Tempier kept up a correspondence with Fathers Honorat, Hermitte and especially Guibert, who wanted to build a church close to the Oblate residence.

"He thought that our times are so touched with indifference, that beautiful religious buildings would force people to think, and that a work is truly established only when it lives within its own walls,"⁴⁷ commented Paguelle de Follenay.

The Fathers and Brothers left the city in haste at the time of the Revolution in July, 1830. Father Tempier, who was Vicar General, had simply to take note of the fact.⁴⁸

The Major Seminary at Marseilles (1827-1862)

We have seen that the seminary on Rouge Street had been built between 1824 and 1827 under Father Tempier's supervision and that he continued to build on to it and make its surroundings more healthy for the next 30 years. He was superior from 1827 to 1854. The scholastics started taking classes there in 1827 and also lived there from 1835 to 1854. For all practical purposes it was the General House of the

⁴⁵ Rey I, 284, 341-342.

⁴⁶ Ortolan I, 185.

⁴⁷ Guibert to Tempier, December 26, 1825 and 1828 in: Paguelle de Follenay I, 161-162; Honorat to Tempier, April 7, 1829; Hermitte to Tempier, October 9, 1829.

⁴⁸ Mazenod to Tempier, August 13, 1830; Tempier to Mazenod, September 3, 1830 (Rey I, 497); Ortolan I, 238-240.

Congregation. Bishop de Mazenod lived nearby and often went there to preside at the major feasts and to write free from interruption his many talks and letters. The Superior was pleased to welcome there the Capitulants for the General Chapters of 1831, 1837, 1843, and 1850.

Billens (1830-1837)

Father de Mazenod bought the chateau at Billens when he was in Switzerland for a rest during the Revolution of July 1830. Both novices and scholastics stayed there from 1830 to 1832, and a few Missionaries from then on to 1837. Father Tempier stayed in close contact with them: they had been under him at Marseilles, and so he knew well both the scholastics and their superior, Father Mille. On December 28, 1830, Father Mille remarked that they devoured his letters with avid pleasure and in writing asked Father Tempier: "On behalf of this part of the family which is so attached to you, please take off a couple of minutes from your important and many duties to drop us a note which will be most precious and heart warming."⁴⁹

The Bursar General had to pay for buying the house and for the students' upkeep, but we know very little of his concerns in this regard. However, the Founder wrote to him in 1831 that the farm was being badly handled and in 1833 complained of Father Mille's spending: "They throw a party . . . without regard for the family's difficult situation . . ."⁵⁰

Father Tempier accompanied the Founder in 1837 to close the house in Switzerland; it was sold in 1839 to the Ladies of the Sacred Heart.⁵¹

⁴⁹ Mille to Tempier, December 28, 1833; Dassy to Tempier, September 13 and 15, 1830; Mille to Tempier, September 16 and 21, and December 1, 1830.

⁵⁰ Mazenod to Tempier, August 22, 1831; September 1, 1833.

⁵¹ Mazenod Diary, May/June 1837; Rey I, 729-730; II, 74.

N.-D. de l'Osier (since 1834)

Bishop de Mazenod had visited Bishop Philibert de Bruillard of Grenoble in 1828 and 1830 with the intention of setting up a missionary house in his diocese. Father Dupuy also, who had left the Congregation after the events of 1830, had joined the Grenoble diocese and bought the dilapidated chapel and ruined monastery at N.-D. de L'Osier, near Vinay. At the beginning of 1834, he asked the Oblates to send him Father Dassy as a companion and he convinced the Bishop to entrust the shrine to the Congregation. In April, Father Tempier went to look over the situation and see if repairs were required. At that time, the Bishop said he was happy to find "apostolic men" who would "evangelize the people in his diocese."⁵² Fathers Vincens and Guigues came to join Father Dassy during the summer and thus constituted the community. In 1837, the Oblates bought the property.⁵³ They then began major works, following Father Tempier's plans.⁵⁴ They repaired and raised a floor of the old Augustinian monastery, completely renewed the church, enlarged the garden, etc.⁵⁵ The novitiate was transferred there in 1841, and there it remained until 1902. In 1845 they bought a hostel and the property around the monastery.⁵⁶ Father Burfin was superior from 1846 to 1848, when there was a large number of novices. Besides completing the renovations to the house, they had to buy beds, bedding, furniture, etc. for the needs of 60 people, and even as many as a hundred at the end of 1847. The Superior was always asking the Bursar General for help. On August 16, 1846, he wrote: "The cheque for 1400 francs came in good form: I gave it a warm welcome in order to encourage others to follow . . . I hope that you continue because I am a person

⁵² Dupuy to Mazenod, April 19, 1834; Dassy to Mazenod, March 18, 1834.

⁵³ Mazenod Diary, April 24 and May 5, 1837.

⁵⁴ Dassy to Mazenod, September 10, 1839.

⁵⁵ Ortolan, I, 304-305 and Mazenod Diary, July 20, 1837.

⁵⁶ Dassy to Tempier, October 25, 1845.

who yells as long as his mouth isn't full . . . Parménie devours me and the brethren come in as a flood, so we have a real calamity; shut off the tap please, and don't let everyone in the Society send us without warning people who have mouths like wandering Jews and heads as empty as our pocket book". On October 1, 1846, he insisted: "We are flooding you with our best eloquence, so you would be quite ungrateful not to flood us with gold coins."⁵⁷

When he was renamed Superior at Osier in 1852, he immediately asked Father Tempier to build a chapel, to pay the debts etc.: "I come for a favor," he wrote on May 4, 1852, "It is a minor trip to Osier, as short as suits you. I simply must see and consult with you, since they always send me to you for a definitive reply when it's a matter of building, repair work or upkeep, etc." To tell the truth, the Fathers at Osier wanted to build a real basilica, not just a chapel. Father Dassy had already dreamed about this before 1846 and Father Lavigne started it quietly without permission except for the consent of his superior.⁵⁸ Father Tempier heard about it through the grapevine and protested vehemently on July 13, 1852: "The stones are being brought in, the stone masons will soon be there . . . Things are so far advanced that the Superior General will be compelled to give his consent to all that. Well! I must tell you. No! When someone acts in such a dirty and unacceptable way that is against every principle and subversive of all order, he puts the superior in a position wherein he cannot possibly give his authorization . . ."

After the provinces were formed in 1850, N.D. de l'Osier was under the jurisdiction of Father Vincens, the Provincial of the North. He lived there, for the most part, for several years,

⁵⁷ Burfin to Tempier, August 7, 10, 16, October 1 and November 4, 1846. One Oblate spent every summer at N.-D. de Parménie, about 20 kilometres from Osier, from 1842 to 1848. cfr. Ortolan I, 384-388.

⁵⁸ Dassy to Mazenod, February 18, 1846; Burfin to Tempier, May 4 and June 6, 1852; Vandenberghé to Tempier, August 7, 1853. The present basilica was built from 1868 to 1873.

consequently they did not have recourse as often to the General Bursar.

The Major Seminary of Ajaccio (1834-1952)

Bishop Casanelli of Istria put the Oblates in charge of the major seminary at Ajaccio in 1834. Father Tempier had to busy himself with this institution in various ways, and wrote frequently to the three first Superiors, Father Guibert from 1835 to 1841, Father Moreau from 1841 to 1846 and Father Magnan from 1846 to 1855.

Father Guibert began by asking for things that he needed: a cape, a surplice, books, and to have Father Albini of the seminary in Marseilles sent to him as soon as possible.⁵⁹ He took possession of the premises of the former seminary in January 1836; but he had to add three stories to it. This was completed between 1837 and 1839. In order to give the superior some guidelines, Father Tempier, who was an "expert builder"⁶⁰ spent several weeks in Corsica during the summer of 1838. Father Guibert thanked him for this when he was leaving but couldn't resist asking him: "... What do you think of the fresh air here? If you aren't going home as black as an Ethiopian, you will at least be as tanned as a Mexican when you get to Marseilles."⁶¹

Father Tempier supplied most of the Mass intentions for the student-priests at the seminary.⁶²

Father Moreau also asked Father Tempier for advice quite often whether in his role of Seminary Superior or of General Bursar. He wrote to him on January 29, 1842: "You are aware that I dearly need good advice such as your own . . . I have seen for myself that you are overloaded with all kinds

⁵⁹ Guibert to Tempier, 1835, cf. Paguelle de Follenay, *op. cit.*, I, 340 and 349.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.* I, 500.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, I, 501.

⁶² Moreau to Mazenod in 1841 and 1842, especially November 4 and 17; Magnan to Cas. Aubert, January 30, 1855.

of business and other tasks, but set aside a couple of minutes for me; you know how much pleasure your letters give me, even if they are short." Their letters deal more with questions of regularity and teaching rather than with business of a material nature.

Father Moreau died on February 2, 1846, after only a short illness. The Bishop of Istria would not accept the replacements proposed as superior, Fathers Lagier or Semeria. The Founder didn't dare to name Father Burfin who "has a sieve between his fingers" and didn't "take small sums into account",⁶³ nor Father Courtès who would have immediately asked to go back to Aix. So Father Tempier made another trip to Corsica in the spring and made arrangements that Father Magnan be named superior. The latter bought a summer house for the seminarians in 1848. He then wrote several letters to Father Tempier asking him to pay back a rather large amount of money loaned to the Congregation by the seminary. This was a time of serious economic crisis.⁶⁴ He came back on it in 1849. On January 8th, he wrote: "I believe that your generosity has only been delayed so that it can later enjoy the pleasure of magnanimity" and on January 29th: "How generous you are! Everyone should know about it. What! Four thousand francs when you realize that we have been waiting for it for a year, four thousand francs when you are quite aware that we have to pay out more than nine thousand . . . They say that Corsica has fallen out of favor: that's a rash judgment, I think. The least we can ask you to wash yourself clean of this prejudicial partiality is to use your credit at least once to get us out of our present embarrassing situation . . . How is it that poor Corsica doesn't enjoy the bursar's good grace as much as do the bedoins of Blida! . . ." Father Tempier helped him out again, and Father Magnan, while thanking him, added on February 19th, "Come on, good Father: my reconciliation with you is priced at 1500 francs . . ."

⁶³ Mazenod to Tempier, March 18, 1846.

⁶⁴ Magnan to Tempier and Mazenod in 1848.

When he had received the repaid money, Father Magnan asked Father Tempier for more men, especially as a replacement for Father Carthier who wanted to get out of Corsica as much as the Bursar General wanted to "make a good investment. . . " " . . . I am," he continued on March 8, 1849, "far from comparing my concerns with yours, no more than I envy your heavy administrative responsibilities. What do you want, not everyone is called to be a martyr for the cause of administration, at least, not in such dire circumstances."⁶⁵

Father Santoni, the Superior after Father Magnan, did his business mainly with Father Casimir Aubert, Provincial of Midi.

Vico (since 1836)

Father Guibert, the superior at Ajaccio, took charge of the restoration work at Vico, an abandoned monastery which had been bought by Bishop Casanelli of Istria and presented to the Oblates in 1836 as a missionary house. The general treasury helped to cover the expenses⁶⁶ and Father Tempier visited there in 1838 and 1846.

More than the Bursar General, the Founder often complained about the high expenses of this house. He wrote to Father Semeria on February 18, 1843 that the cost of repairing N.-D. de L'Osier and N.-D. de Lumières was higher than expected and the general treasury was empty. The house at l'Osier had cost 70,000 francs and "your house is costing us something too . . . I was mistaken in giving too much leeway. Father Tempier, who himself feels that he went too far, even though always with a view of doing good."⁶⁷

⁶⁵ Magnan to Tempier, February 19 and March 8, 1849; to Mazenod, February 12 and 26, March 11 and September 10, 1849.

⁶⁶ Albini to Tempier, Oct. 18, 1837: the monastery and the church "rose up from the ruins by the monumental repair work that we have just completed."

⁶⁷ Cf. also: Mazenod to Guigues, April 12, 1843; to Luigi, March 17, 1853.

Once the repairs were completed, it seems that the community was able to sustain itself without too much difficulty, for it had little recourse to the Bursar General. Several of the missionaries kept on writing to him but more about their obediences.

Notre-Dame de Lumières (since 1837)

N.-D. de Lumières, near Goult, owes more to Father Tempier than any other Oblate house, except Montolivet. The Trappists wanted to sell this house which they had bought after the Revolution. Archbishop Dupont of Avignon suggested that they offer it to the Bishop of Icosia. Father Tempier went there in December 1836 and committed himself to buying the church and monastery.⁶⁸

Bishop de Mazenod, along with Fathers Tempier and Honorat, took possession of it on the following May 31st. They surveyed the property "to see what improvements had to be made." Father Honorat started these immediately. Is it possible that it was here that he acquired the "mania for building?"⁶⁹ He did however "take note of Father Tempier's suggestions."⁷⁰ The latter was interested right up to his death, leaving nothing escape his attention, the church, monastery, gardens, and the mountain. He went there at least once every year, and kept up a rich correspondence with the succeeding superiors: Honorat (1837-1841), Ricard (1841-1847), Martin (1847-1849), Bise (1850-1854), Telmon (1854-1857), Ricard (1857-1861) etc.

A Juniorate was started there in 1839; when the work was almost finished in 1841, some new students arrived so that Father Honorat asked him to send no more youngsters but

⁶⁸ Brother Gilles to Mazenod, Dec. 5, 1836; Mazenod to Guigues, December 16, 1836.

⁶⁹ Mazenod to Honorat, November 26, 1843; Mazenod Diary, end of May/beginning of June 1837: *Missions OMI* 1874, 153-174.

⁷⁰ Honorat to Tempier, May 7, 1841; Bishop de Mazenod says the opposite, January 10, 1843.

beds instead, because some were having to sleep on the floor⁷¹ and he asked for nothing less than 1,000 francs every two weeks.⁷²

The scholastics also spent the summers there after 1841; it remained their country house till 1862.⁷³ In October 1842, Father Martin, who was resting there, wrote to the Founder: "This is a perfect place governed by regularity and holy brotherhood . . . I say nothing about the outside attractions; they are extravagantly available. Father Tempier and his worthy imitators in architecture have left out nothing to be desired in this regard . . . I am not surprised that our Fathers are so happy in this attractive place and that the little family soon forgets all about their relatives and home towns."⁷⁴

Father Martin, who had been named superior in 1847, added an "Italian" railing to the gallery, following the plans of Father Tempier.⁷⁵ The latter also gave precise and detailed plans to Fathers Martin and Bise in 1849 and 1850 concerning the planting of trees on the mountain.

In the meantime, during the 1848 crisis, the superior had to sell cattle, horses and wagon in order to feed the community and complete some extraordinary works. He continually asked for help from the Bursar General⁷⁶ who turned a deaf ear due to lack of funds. On February 14, Father Martin wrote to Father Casimir Aubert: "I don't know if Reverend Father Tempier is not well or if the purse is empty because I have asked him several times during the past months for money and have heard nothing from him; if perchance our dear finance minister has forgotten about our poor house, I would be grateful if you would plead our cause with him; our sad situation is

⁷¹ Honorat to Tempier, May 15 and June 2, 1841.

⁷² Honorat to Tempier, June 18, 1841.

⁷³ Honorat to Tempier, July 18, 1841; Tempier to Bise, July 29, 1850; Mazenod to Martinet and Mouchette from 1854 to 1860.

⁷⁴ Martin to Mazenod, October 20, 1842.

⁷⁵ Martin to Mazenod, July 15, August 21, 1847; to Tempier in 1847-48, A.G.R. DM XIII, 4.

⁷⁶ Martin to Tempier, February 3, 1848; to Cas. Aubert, Feb. 14, 1848.

getting worse every day, we haven't paid the baker for five months and if he doesn't continue to support us, we will be forced to die of hunger or put out the flag for independence; but this latter attitude is too much in vogue these days and since we want to be different than the ways of the world, we will not ask for a constitution that abolishes the monarchy or decentralizes finances . . ."⁷⁷

Father Tempier sent nothing in 1848. Since the boys had been sent back to their families, should not the community be able to look after itself? He didn't even make his annual visit, it seems. The Superior complained to him about it on October 2nd: "Tear yourself away for a moment from your abyss of work into which you have dived." Instead of getting money or a visit, Father Martin received a letter from him which announced his return from Algeria and asked for complete co-operation from every house to support the general coffers. He replied on January 5th that his house had really never had anything to give, but this time he sent 500 francs and some wine for the scholastics. He couldn't resist adding: "Don't forget that you have the 'care of all the churches' and that you have to look after the poorest and most isolated ones, such as we are here."

Father Telmon, who had returned from Canada in 1851 on a permanent basis, was superior of N.-D. de Lumières from 1854 to 1857. When he got there, he found Father Tempier's notes on repair work and planting trees which were to be done immediately. We have about thirty of his letters to Father Tempier; They deal especially with long drawn out lawsuits with the commune of Goult and Mr. Vaison, a neighbor who was acquisitive and quarrelsome. The new Superior wrote on January 9, 1855: "The bits of advice which you gave me when we last met about the upkeep of the garden and the planting to be done convince me that you still keep a place for the house at Lumières in your heart where it once held the place of honor and that Montolivet does not completely absorb your affection."

⁷⁷ Martin to Mazenod, August 8, 1848.

Father Telmon, who had always been haughty became even more grumpy with age and poor health. He soon complained about Father Tempier that he never answered all his letters, that he didn't come to Lumières and that he kept the best Brothers for himself and even took furniture from there to provide for Montolivet. He scolded and ranted about him to both the Founder and Father Aubert: "Father Tempier hoards everything without thinking of anyone else"⁷⁸ he wrote, "he has just now raided this place: beds, sheets, blankets, etc."⁷⁹ On April 24, 1855, he wrote again to Bishop de Mazenod: "Who should we go to now for temporal matters? It used to be Father Tempier. At times I still happen to see letters filled with concern for this house and for it's superior of old. But now, his whole life, thoughts, and affections are all centred on a small area of one kilometre wide and three kilometres long, namely, from the Archbishop's house in Marseilles to Montolivet."

Father Telmon, who was a good writer, after he found that his method of using tough language did not work, tried to appeal to Father Tempier's heart. He wrote to him on April 13, 1856, to thank him for a letter which was too short, but continued: "Aren't you interested at all anymore in the house at Lumières which once held such an important place in your heart? You have always been to me a model of wholehearted devotion and sincere attachment to the Congregation: what has become of your care and tenderness which you used to entertain for this house as your letters, which I guard carefully, so eloquently testify. Doesn't this holy sanctuary and our Lady of miracles mean anything to you anymore . . ." This approach was more successful than the former. Father Tempier wrote to him and visited him in 1857. Father Telmon, who, when all is said and done, had always had a great esteem for his older brother, thanked him warmly on February 18th: "The eight days that you spent here were for me the happiest I've lived since I am here. I at least had someone to talk to, a man

⁷⁸ Telmon to Cas. Aubert, March 11, 1855.

⁷⁹ Telmon to Mazenod, March 23, 1855.

who is wise, reasonable and fair. I feel like being in the Sahara again since you left . . .”⁸⁰

Father Tempier showed more interest in Lumières in 1859 when the Juniorate was reopened there. He wrote regularly to the superiors to the end of his life and every year visited Provence and the juniorists. A report of the house in 1862 speaks of the visits of Father Tempier and Bishop de Mazenod which “touched the hearts” of the juniorists.⁸¹

Notre-Dame de Bon Secours (since 1846)

Bishop H. Guibert O.M.I. took possession of the episcopal see of Viviers in 1842. Before long, he considered confiding N.-D. de Bon Secours, in Ardèche, to the Oblates to restore the Church and revitalize pilgrimages. This matter came before the General Council at the beginning of 1845. Father Tempier opposed “the project strongly” due to lack of both money and men.⁸² In spite of this opposition, he was the one assigned to visit the place and make arrangements for a foundation. Bishop Guibert was generous. He kept the Church for the diocese, but ceded the property for a fictional fee of 11,000 francs.⁸³

Father Dassy arrived at Bon Secours as Superior on February 11, 1846. He stayed only two years but in that time was able to build a large monastery and to improve the Church considerably.⁸⁴ He did this with the active support of Father Tempier to whom he wrote no less than 25 letters mainly to talk about the construction and to ask for money. In spite of all the correspondence, he did not dare to “touch a single stone” without having seen the Bursar General.⁸⁵ The latter

⁸⁰ Father Tempier wanted to put an end to the Vaison affair and Telmon thought it would be better to let it go as Vaison was getting old: “An avaricious hoarder is followed by an inconsiderate and profligate heir,” Telmon wrote to Tempier on June 12, 1857.

⁸¹ *Missions OMI*, 1863, 490-506.

⁸² Mazenod to Courtès, January 4, 1845.

⁸³ General Council, February 10, 1845.

⁸⁴ Ortolan I, 392-393.

⁸⁵ Dassy to Mazenod, May 12, 1846.

made a canonical visitation there in May. On June 5th, Father Dassy wrote that his stay had "very good results. We hastened to put everything in order according to his wisdom."⁸⁶ Father Tempier immediately drew up plans for the house and the choir in the church. Bishop Guibert and Father Dassy received them at the end of August and were very pleased with them.⁸⁷ Already by the 20th of September, there were 20 men at work and 30 by the end of October.⁸⁸ The Bursar General came to see the construction in October and again in April, 1847.⁸⁹ The superior brought in another 600 loads of sand and materials during the winter⁹⁰ and everything was finished by autumn 1847. The Congregation had furnished 50,000 francs for the house and the Diocese undertook the expenses for renovating the Church.⁹¹

Besides the construction and the work with pilgrims, preaching missions and retreats, Father Dassy and his four confreres started a juniorate with about ten students for the 1846-1847 school year. They were sent home in fall, as were those at Lumières, because financial crises and the unexpected success of Father Léonard's recruiting tour.⁹²

Father Mille followed Father Dassy in 1848. He wanted to finish the work and furnish the house, it seems without getting permission and without waiting for Father Tempier to send him the money that he demanded so urgently. It was at this time that he had a falling out with the Founder and left the Congregation; he was given a parish in Marseilles.⁹³

⁸⁶ Dassy to Mazenod, June 5, 1846.

⁸⁷ Dassy to Tempier, August 29, 1846.

⁸⁸ Dassy to Tempier, Sept. 11 and October 26, 1846.

⁸⁹ Dassy to Tempier, October 19 and November 11, 1846; April 17 and May 8, 1847.

⁹⁰ Dassy to Tempier, January 25, 1847.

⁹¹ Dassy to Tempier, August 4, 1847.

⁹² Dassy to Tempier, December 11, 1846, January 5, 11, 25, February 4, March 18 and 19, May 21, July 12, August 9 and October 15, 1847.

⁹³ Mille to Tempier, April 14, 1848, to Mazenod, Oct. 26, 1848; Mazenod Diary, July 17 and 19, 1848.

Father Martin, who had returned from Algeria, was named superior and stayed there for nearly twelve years. He also decided to make some changes especially in the choir of the Church and in the sacristy. He promised Father Tempier to ask as little as possible from the general funds, but, he specified on April 19, 1851: "We call urgently on another treasure, equally precious to us, that is, on your wisdom and good instructions to help us in these matters. We would be especially grateful if you were able to send us a few Brothers who would be capable of supervising the work."

In spite of his promises, Father Martin was not able to settle matters on his own. He asked the Bursar General again in the summer of 1852 to come for a visit with the hope that some benefactors would give gifts on the occasion of his presence. Finally, he wrote on July 15: "If all of these reasons put together don't impel you to come to our area as soon as possible, we will conclude that your financial laurels are wilting and that your reputation is daily waning instead of growing; I stop there, because a simple suspicion frightens a hero."⁹⁴

Father Martin asked the General Administration for a gift or a loan in 1862 because he wanted to build a bell tower, and was unable to obtain a loan himself because Father Tempier had already mortgaged the house. He wrote to Father Fabre on January 20th: "I wish he would straighten out his accounts with us. You know all the raids he made on our territory during his reign."

Limoges (1847-1902)

Bishop Buissas of Limoges asked the Founder in 1847 to send him a Missionary team; they would live in a recently-completed spacious house. Father Courtès made this foundation.⁹⁵ Father Burfin took his place from June of 1848 to the

⁹⁴ Martin to Aubert, April 16, 1853, May 7, 1855 and Jan. 2, 1856; to Mazenod, April 27, 1853 and September 1855; cf. Y.B. *Chroniques de N.-D. de Bon Secours*, in *Etudes Oblats*, 24, (1965), 174-184.

⁹⁵ *Oblate Writings*, X, 177-178, 182-183, 200-201.

end of 1850. Upon his repeated requests, Father Tempier, at the height of the economic crisis, had to give him several thousand francs to repair part of the roof and to set up a chapel. The superior wrote to him on August 21, 1948: "It's better to send two novices away than to put four priests in a bad mood . . . I just do not have the gift of telling others that fervor means saying Mass on a window sill or freezing in winter. When we get to the Red River, we will do whatever they do there . . . if we take Limousin for Oregon, we would lose our map."⁹⁶

In 1849, the community still found it difficult to provide for its own needs. The Superior explained why in his letter of March 28: "There is a lack of faith . . . you realize that in places like this, the missionary, far from gathering money, has to leave his buttons behind."

The Bursar General finally sent some Mass intentions and money to respond to his many requests. The Superior thanked him on June 9th and asked pardon for the rather strong words he had used in his letters: "Don't get discouraged by my conversion and remember that I have not lost my respect, esteem or love I owe you."

Nancy (1847-1882)

Father Léonard's recruiting drive of 1847-1848 brought in 73 novices for 1847 alone. It was decided in July/August to open a second novitiate, this time in northern France; Bishop Menjaud, who was a friend of Bishop de Mazenod, asked for an Oblate community at Nancy. Father Tempier, who had wanted this foundation, bought a large house on Montet street, but paid too high a price for it, according to the Founder's viewpoint.⁹⁷ They had to fix up the place as soon as possible in order to take the overflow of novices from Osier. They

⁹⁶ Burfin to Tempier, 1848-1850.

⁹⁷ General Council, July 7, 1847; Mazenod to Tempier, August 17, 1847. They paid between 45,000 and 65,000 francs for the house, it seems; cf. Dassy to Tempier, January 1, 1848; to Mazenod, March 2, 1849.

quickly found a capable and resourceful superior: Father Dassy; he was to spend three years there.⁹⁸ He never lacked frankness. In his very first letter to Father Tempier, of October 27th, he asked for 15,000 francs and added: "I hope you have a lot of patience. You'll need a lot of it, I assure you, if you keep on receiving letters like the one I have to send you today."

He wrote about fifty letters to Father Tempier and the Founder, mainly to talk about the work and to ask for money. He often complained about the evasive answers he received from the Bursar General and he insisted that he receive some that are "precise, to the point and that answer everything."⁹⁹

In June, 1848, it was decided to take no more novices at Nancy. Father Dassy tried to win Father Tempier to his view point since he knew that it was the latter's poverty that had been mainly responsible for the decision: We have a beautiful house and a green garden, the surroundings are peaceful and the community is both fervent and joyful. Oh!" he exclaimed, "do your best to assure that we will be able to continue our peaceful existence in this area."¹⁰⁰ He succeeded for a time: the novitiate was kept open till the end of 1849 and Father Tempier continued to send money to feed the community and pay for work that never seemed to end.

When he received a cheque for 5,000 francs on September 15, 1848, the superior thanked him and added: "You wouldn't believe how often we are heard to say: Father Tempier has been good to us! You deserve to hear that even though you don't need such praise in order to keep up your work which is so trying in these times. Even though I have sometimes written to you in a rather cut and dried manner, I'm sure you will pardon me; a person would have to be heart-

⁹⁸ Mazonod to Dassy, October 11, 1847.

⁹⁹ Dassy to Tempier, February 12, 1848.

¹⁰⁰ Dassy to Tempier, June 7, 1848.

less to cause you the least pain, seeing your solicitude that weighs on you for the good of our dear Congregation . . . I have and will always have deep esteem, gratitude and love in my heart for the fine and excellent Father Tempier . . .”

Father Dassy was on good terms with the Bursar General to the end of his stay at Nancy; Father Merlin, his successor, must have received a few appropriate suggestions because, on November 12, 1851, he promised that he would “put the over-all picture before his own, not as Father Dassy had done.”

Notre-Dame de Sion (since 1850)

Bishop Menjaud asked the Oblates in 1850 to take charge of the religious services at N.-D. de Sion, a shrine which is about thirty kilometres from Nancy. Fathers Soullier and Conrard took turns on a monthly basis until a community was set up there in 1853.¹⁰¹ Already in 1849 the general council had refused to buy the property which Father Dassy thought could be bought for 20,000 francs, though he thought it was worth 60,000.¹⁰² They decided to buy a much smaller house for the priests to live in. After 1854, these built a fifty-metre-high tower to honor the Immaculate Conception, and this without using any money from the general funds.¹⁰³

Foundations after 1850

After the Congregation was divided into provinces in 1850-1851, various responsibilities were passed on to the provinces. This lightened the burden of the general administration which had, up to that time, been in close contact with every Oblate and each community.

Father Tempier, it seems, was much less involved with the new foundations: the Oblate house near the shrine of N.-D. de la Garde at Marseilles, the major seminary at Fréjus in

¹⁰¹ Ortolan I, 430-436.

¹⁰² Dassy to Tempier, January 11 and 27, February 1, 7, and 10, 1849; Mazenod to Dassy, March 10, 1849.

¹⁰³ Ortolan I, 437-438.

1851, the parish/shrine of N.-D. de Talence at Bordeaux in 1851-1853, the major seminary of Romans near Valence in 1853, the parish/shrine of N.-D. de Cléry at Orleans in 1854, the major seminary at Quimper in 1856, the parish and missionary house at Autun in 1858, and the missionary house at Angers donated by Mr. Loewenbruck in 1860.

Father Dassy, named superior at Bordeaux in 1851 even though a past master at foundations, kept up his former attitude: he often asked advice from Father Tempier and wrote to him several times to invite him to visit, because the rectory had to be fixed up in order to be suitable for a community.¹⁰⁴ On March 4, 1853, he promised to do nothing before his arrival, as he had done at N.-D. de Bon Secours, and he added: "I have written out your wise reflections on my new position so that I have them close at hand and can read them often." No doubt, time and experience had made him more able and capable of waiting, as Father Tempier had often done, because his letters became more rare and less demanding.

Elsewhere, and in spite of the existence of provincials, Father Tempier did play a key role in three foundations: at Montolivet in 1854, at Paris in 1859 and at Autun in 1862.

Montolivet (1854-1864)

There exists one work which highlights the Founder's magnanimity.¹⁰⁵ He wanted to leave his successors a decent home, even though he was loaded down with heavy financial burdens both in the diocese and the Congregation. For the Bishop of Marseilles he had the bishop's palace enlarged and renovated after 1858 at the cost of 400,000 francs; for the Superiors General of the Oblates, he built a General House and a scholasticate at Montolivet which cost even more.¹⁰⁶

Father Tempier was the main artisan behind this last work; he gave ten years of his time, talents, and heart to it. He

¹⁰⁴ Dassy to Vincens, April 20, 1852, March 4 and 7, 1853.

¹⁰⁵ L.-N. Boutin, *La spiritualité de Mgr de Mazenod*, Montreal, 1970, 171-182.

¹⁰⁶ Y.B., *Montolivet*, in *Etudes Oblats*, 27, (1968), 142.

chose the site on an elevated piece of level ground southeast of Marseilles, bought the land, proposed plans for Bérengier, the architect, followed the actual construction from 1852 to 1856, and, after that, laid out the beautiful gardens until he left for Paris in 1862.¹⁰⁷ He was so involved in this work that the Founder complained in 1856 that his first assistant had become a stranger to the general needs of the Congregation, "never considering anything but Montolivet which to him is the whole world."¹⁰⁸

They kept to the planned time-table however. The two first wings were ready for the scholastics in the fall of 1854, and the whole square was completely finished in 1856 in time for the arrival of the capitulants for the General Chapter.

Brother Bartet thus describes the gardens as they were in 1860: "Our Superior . . . continually delights in improving our happy residence. Every day there is something new. During the last few days especially, we have been invaded by about twenty of Mr. Fissiaux's little slave gang, and everything seems to be turned upside down to come out beautiful. Rocks thunder as they break and bounce at the command of Father Tempier; mountains are made low, docile dirt is moved; everything is levelled; the roadway bordered with trees is taking shape, the newly planted soil gives new life and growth, there are freshly dug trenches crossing the terrain to bring enriching streams to every corner. Before such a beautiful countryside whose architect found its plans in some poem, what is there left for the scholastics to do except to prepare to celebrate their Father's upcoming feast day with rejoicing? If I am well informed, here is the bouquet they want to offer him. The narrator will take us down the pathways, through the groves, the open country, and the flower beds; we will then listen to the leaves rustle, to each blade of grass; in the chalice of each flower, we are told that as its perfume comes forth and is spread by the breeze we will hear the words: Love and Thanks."¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 135-141.

¹⁰⁸ Mazenod to Fabre, August 25, 1856.

¹⁰⁹ Bartet to Mazenod, March 17, 1860.

Paris, rue St.-Petersbourg (1860-1902)

Bishop de Mazenod spent the winter months at Paris every year after he was named Senator in 1856. It was a deep pain for him to be alone, especially for the feast of February 17th. After the Sisters of the Holy Family of Bordeaux were affiliated to the Oblates in 1859, several chaplaincies had to be provided for their several works in the capital city. The Fathers found a temporary place to stay for the first while in a house on Batignolles street. During the winter of 1860, Father Magnan, who was superior, Father Charles Baret and the Founder himself knew it was necessary to buy some land and build a house. People were so used to having Father Tempier take responsibilities of this kind in the Congregation that the Oblates in Paris didn't make any decisions without consulting him even for minor matters. We have about thirty letters that Father Magnan wrote to him during the months of January to April alone: he begged Father Tempier to come to Paris, since he was decided "to build or to die."¹¹⁰ "Even though the Bishop of Tours has told you to build nothing more after the monument at Montolivet, for my part, I say that it would be very fitting to conclude your architectural era with a monument in the capital."¹¹¹ Father Baret used the same language in June 1860: "I hope that the excellent Father Tempier comes quickly, we are waiting for him with open arms . . . But let his catarrh take up its summer quarters on the banks of the Huveaume. Here you don't have to cough or take pills, and we would suffer too much to see him suffering, this truly venerable Nestor of our family."¹¹²

Father Tempier directed everything by correspondence, he also moved around a lot. He had already made a first trip in November 1859; he made another the following April to sign the contract for the purchase of land on St-Petersbourg

¹¹⁰ Magnan to Vincens, December 3, 1859.

¹¹¹ Magnan to Tempier, March 21, 1860.

¹¹² Ch. Baret to Vincens, June 18, 1860.

street.¹¹³ The Founder himself had made the final choice.¹¹⁴ He came again at the beginning of summer in 1860 before work began and again in 1861 to see the house when it was almost completed.¹¹⁵

The Autun Scholasticate (1862-1880)

Soon after the death of Bishop de Mazenod, there was a strong reaction at Marseilles against his administration and the Oblates. Father Fabre, recently named Superior General, decided to move to Paris in the spring of 1862 and thus to close the scholasticate at Montolivet. They learnt that the boarding school of the Ladies of the Sacre Coeur at Autun had just closed and the house was up for sale. Negotiations were soon under way. Father Tempier bought it on July 15th,¹¹⁶ and immediately began to make repairs.¹¹⁷ This activity was a salutary diversion from his pain. He was crushed by the adversaries at Marseilles, the leaving of Montolivet and his attacks of catarrh.¹¹⁸ He soon regained his energy and strength. "It was providential for Father Tempier," wrote Father Vandenberghe, "the compass and tape measure are the two poles of his shining existence."¹¹⁹ The moving was over by the end of September and the scholastics were ready to start classes.¹²⁰

¹¹³ Baret Charles to Victor, Nov. 22, 1859 and May 6, 1860: Delpeuch to Rey, April 29, 1860.

¹¹⁴ Magnan to Tempier, March 31, 1860; to Vincens, March 31, 1860; Delpeuch to Rey, April 29, 1860.

¹¹⁵ Magnan to Tempier, July 9, 1860; Fabre to X, June 18, 1861. They took possession of the house on August 17, 1861 and the chapel was completed by the time that the General Chapter of December 1861 was held there, cf. Tempier to Jeancard, Dec. 1, 1861; Ortolan I, 498.

¹¹⁶ *Missions OMI*, 1923, 731. They paid 60,000 francs for the house, cf. Burfin to Fabre, May 9 and 12, 1862; Fabre to Rey, July 27, 1862: "Poor Father (Tempier), this must be very hard for him!"

¹¹⁷ Vandenberghe to Soullier, August 4, 1862.

¹¹⁸ Pierre Aubert to Bishop Taché, July 19, 1862.

¹¹⁹ Vandenberghe to Soullier, undated, 1862.

¹²⁰ Y.B., *Montolivet*, in *Etudes Oblats*, 27 (1968), 264-265; *Missions OMI*, 1864, 255-258.

Procurator of Missions

The General Council on October 6, 1847, named Father Casimir Aubert as Procurator of Missions. He did actually write often to the missionaries in the Founder's name, and kept in contact with the Councils of the Work of the Propagation of the Faith at Lyons and Paris.¹²¹

However, it seems that he was mainly concerned with the bookkeeping and that Father Tempier took care of purchasing and disbursing money. The Fathers of Canada went to him to get a portable altar, books, and other necessities to work on the house at Longueuil and they also proposed setting up a procure at Montreal to regulate the controversy between the diocese of Ottawa and the Oblate province regarding property title,¹²² and especially to pay Father Chevalier's debts and thus make sure that the Oblates kept the property at Buffalo;¹²³ he also took care of the commissions for various missions and sent the money received from the Work of the Propagation of the Faith to the Fathers in England,¹²⁴ Ceylon,¹²⁵ Red River,¹²⁶ and Natal.¹²⁷

The Bursar General was especially interested in the Oregon missions. The Founder couldn't resist having a little fun

¹²¹ Father Tempier kept up correspondence with the Work of the Propagation of the Faith from 1850-1851, and made several visits to the offices in Lyons and Paris, cf. Mazenod to Mr. Jesse, March 20, 1850, to Mr. Choiseilat, May 21, 1851.

¹²² Telmon to Mazenod, March 11, 1843, February 1845, March 25, 1846; Honorat to Tempier, May 15, 1843; to Mazenod May 23, 1844, Sept. 13 and December 23, 1855; Allard to Tempier, June 8, 1844; Father Rouge to Tempier, February 8, 1855, Nov. 15, 1859.

¹²³ Tempier to Chevalier, March 19, 1855, March 24, 1856; to Guigues, January 2, 1858; Mazenod to Tempier, February 10, 1858; Chevalier to Mazenod, June 24, 1860, to Tempier, July 27, 1860.

¹²⁴ Tortel to Tempier Nov. 6, 1853: "How are you doing with your infinite and unending occupations, especially when you get barbarian letters of exchange from pitiless John Bull English people."; Ortolan I, 404, 531; *Missions OMI*, 1967, 519.

¹²⁵ Mazenod to Semeria, June 3, 1851.

¹²⁶ Rey to Fabre, July 31, 1859; Pierre Aubert to Ricard, July 25, 1848.

¹²⁷ Allard to Fabre, July 3, 1852, to Tempier, June 22, 1856.

at his expense when Father d'Herbomez was leaving in 1849; he wrote: "One has no idea of the trouble Tempier had to go through for the departure to Oregon of Father d'Herbomez and the two Brothers, Surel and Janin. It is unbelievable! And laughable too for that matter, to see a Vicar General hunting through the shops for a miscellany of all sorts of things, from a needle to a plow and an anvil. Toys, trumpets, whistles, glass beads of every colour, seed of every kind, striped shirts, caps and bonnets. Nothing could be funnier than to see people coming to ask seriously where the general store of Mr. Tempier was to be found . . ." ¹²⁸

In order to get to Oregon, the first group of missionaries had to go around South America, and the second had to go through Panama. Each trip was so long and expensive that Father Tempier had not given the travellers enough money. In 1850, Father d'Herbomez had to borrow money from the Bishop of Valparaiso ¹²⁹ and, in 1854, Father Durieu had to borrow from the Jesuits at New York. ¹³⁰ Father d'Herbomez wrote to the Founder before leaving Valparaiso on May 15, 1850: "I would like to ask you, Monseigneur, to pass on to Reverend Father Tempier our sentiments of heartfelt gratitude for the maternal care that he had for us. Even if I have to complain a little about the lack of money, in no way do I want to hurt the feelings of this good and kind Father who always gives his children much more than they ask for."

Conclusion

Father Tempier, as Bursar General, had thus been involved in all the temporal affairs of all the Oblate houses. In 1848, Father Martin called him "the finance minister", responsible for making or losing money, "the minister of commerce

¹²⁸ Mazenod to Cas. Aubert, November 24, 1849; Tempier to Mazenod, January 23, 1847.

¹²⁹ D'Herbomez to Mazenod, May 15, 1850; *Missions OMI*, 1912, 166, 169.

¹³⁰ Durieu to Tempier, October 3, 1854.

and public works", in charge of dealing with carpenters, cabinet-makers, stone masons etc.¹³¹

In times of great need, the Oblates occasionally complained about his slowness in responding, but they never doubted his honesty and competence.

On one occasion, the Founder said that Father Tempier was not one to "bargain"¹³² but both he and the Fathers made use of his spirit of economy, prudence and know-how. In 1826, Father de Mazenod was very happy to let him know that he had saved "50 piasters" by getting an exemption from the tax on the Bull for the Approval of the Rules: he wrote on April 5th: "I thought it would be wiser, more in keeping with that prudence of which you give me every day such a fine example" to save this money. He added: "This stratagem pleases you? Is it worthy of you? I mean in moments when you are of a mind not to be wasteful."

Bishop de Mazenod often affirmed that Father Tempier had a very good "business sense" and Father Telmon recognized him as a "wise, balanced and fair man", even though he often criticized him. Father Martin testified that he "was seldom wrong in financial matters" and Father Magnan was surprised that, already in 1849, the Oblates were "more fortunate than a hundred bankers" and had survived the economic crisis "thanks to the star of our finance Caesar."¹³³

If the Congregation was able to spread rapidly and to acquire at least forty important pieces of property in its first fifty years, that is certainly due to Bishop de Mazenod's property and income, but also to the wise and firm administration of Father Tempier, the Bursar General.

¹³¹ Martin to Mazenod, August 8, 1848.

¹³² Mazenod Diary, May 26, 1837.

¹³³ Mazenod Diary, May 26, 1837; Mazenod to Tempier, July 13, 1851; to Fabre, March 7, 1859; Telmon to Tempier, February 18, 1857; Martin to Tempier, February 22, 1849; Magnan to Cas. Aubert, May 14, 1849.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT OF THE CONGREGATION IN 1853
(cf. General Council, April 21, 1854)

THE GENERAL FUND

	<i>Credits</i> francs		<i>Debits</i> francs
Sale and rent of buildings	64,122	Purchase of buildings	59,489
Capital and interest of the Fathers and Brothers	4,334	Oblate student expenses	24,969
Income on capital, interest, rent	58,273	Life annuities; paying loans; interest	30,649
Contributions from provincial and local funds	8,106	Assistance and loans to Provincial funds	11,160
Gifts and salaries	3,975	Assistance to (families) relatives	2,092
Propagation of the Faith	137,996	Foreign missions	114,489
Bank balance from previous year	28,384	Travel, correspondence	12,972
		Construction, upkeep on property	42,625
Total:	305,192	Total:	298,449

PROVINCES

	<i>Credits</i> francs		<i>Debits</i> francs
Southern France: 10 houses	78,981	64,367
Northern France: 4 houses	41,700	47,685
Eastern Canada and United States: 8 houses	234,841	222,282
England/Ireland: 4 houses	104,541	104,265

VII

PROFESSOR AND EDUCATOR (1816-1861)

Who can tell how far obedience will lead a person! The Bursar General, who was responsible for the material concerns of the Congregation, was also for a half century the principal formator of the first generations of Oblates: novice master and director of students at Aix from 1816 to 1818 and at Laus from 1820 to 1822, superior of the seminary and scholasticate at Marseilles from 1827 to 1854, and superior of the General House and the scholasticate at Montolivet from 1854 to 1861.¹

The Founder was certainly always interested in the intellectual and especially the spiritual formation of his sons. He wrote hundreds of letters on this topic. As in other areas, he was always the one to give inspiration and animation in this as well; but, on the spot, it was Father Tempier who was his master-builder, the one in close contact with the young, bearing the burden of the daily heat and grind.

During his visit to Canada in July 1851, Father Tempier received a letter signed by the scholastics in which they referred to him as "the one whom God has chosen to develop our vocation by helping us to acquire sacred knowledge and virtue."² That expresses his role as professor and formator!

Sacred Knowledge

Textbooks and Subject Matters

In virtue of his responsibility for the young, Father Tem-

¹ Detailed documentation on this chapter is available in the following work and articles summarized here so to bring out the character of Fr. Tempier even more: Y.B., *Le grand séminaire de Marseille et scholasticat oblat, sous la direction des Oblats de Marie Immaculée*, 1827-1862. Ottawa, Ed. des Etudes Oblates 1966 (archives d'histoire oblate, n. 21), 282 pp.; and *Le scholasticat de Montolivet*, 1854-1862, in *Etudes Oblates*, 27 (1968), 133-175, 238-270. After this, we will simply refer to this as: *Le séminaire de Marseille* or *Montolivet*.

² Marc de l'Hermite and the scholastics to Father Tempier, July 4, 1851.

pier first of all had to be concerned about their studies and intellectual life. According to the Founder's letters and the Rule of 1853, which put the established custom in writing, the superior of the seminary/scholasticate had to oversee the choice of class textbooks and the sound doctrine of the professors.³ This was a difficult task at the time since it was during this first half of the 19th century that the bitter fruits of the deviations of gallicanism, jansenism, and especially the rationalism of Voltaire and the 18th century philosophers were being reaped. For simple missionaries, who were thrown into teaching without any preparation, overloaded with courses and often with ministry besides, it wasn't easy to steer a middle course between gallicanism and ultra-montanism, traditionalism and semi-rationalism, jansenist moral teachings and those of St. Alphonsus which many people still considered to be laxist.

As though by instinct, the Founder and Father Tempier, strongly supported by Father Albini, were very careful in choosing French textbooks; gladly they were inspired by Italian and German authors, such as St. Alphonsus, Rosmini, Liebermann, Rothenflue, etc.⁴

Actually, one couldn't expect from these new professors a truly personal teaching. They had to use textbooks, and to follow them quite closely in their explanations. Father Tempier had clear principles about this approach; he spelt them out once to a young Father who didn't like Bouvier's philosophy: "Don't develop a distaste for Bouvier and don't run him down before your students. That is a big mistake that I have seen quite a few professors make in regard to the author that they were using, just as though they thought that by this tactic they were underlining their own personal worth by acting as disdainful and foolish censors of a work that they would not be able to compose one tenth as well . . ."⁵

³ *Le séminaire de Marseille*, 44.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 88-90.

⁵ Tempier to Charles Baret, October 16, 1847; on the material covered and the textbooks, cf. *Le séminaire de Marseilles*, 90-109.

Father Tempier had taught philosophy at N.-D. du Laus only for a short while,⁶ but was always interested in it and seemed to know fairly well the value of various textbooks. It is through him that we know what they taught at Marseilles and Montolivet. According to a list of works that he had had bound in 1841, they were then following the *Institutiones philosophicae* of J. Valla, the oratorian. We also know through a letter of his dated in 1847 that people were familiar with Noget-Lacoudre's textbook and J.-B. Bouvier's *Institutiones philosophicae*. François Rothenflue who had published *Institutiones philosophicae theoreticae* in 1842-1843 at Fribourg seemed to be the preferred author, at least after 1845. In a letter of October 16, 1847 to Father Charles Baret, Father Tempier gave his assessment of several works: "Rothenflue is an author who is too far above the students that you have . . . and Lacoudre isn't much better . . . Bouvier can be used with success. Many seminaries do in fact use him . . . Stick to that and have them copy very little that is from elsewhere than this author."

Nevertheless, in the Congregation Rothenflue was used until 1865. After that they used the *Breviarium philosophicae scholasticae* of Grand-Claude de Saint-Dié. The fact that the Fathers at Marseilles seminary read Saint Thomas gladly led to this choice of an exclusive thomistic philosophy. Vital Grandin was greatly disappointed during his noviciate in 1852 when Father A. Rey, who was visiting N.-D. de l'Osier, told him that "a person must have studied the philosophy of Saint Thomas before he will be able to understand his theology (taught at Marseilles)" which meant that Vital would have to do his over again.

Philosophy, which was taught for one year with ten class hours a week, sought to give the basic notions as a help to understanding of theology later on. This study seems to have aroused little enthusiasm among the students. It may be that it was seen as a kind of grammar of disjointed ideas so that

⁶ *Missions OMI*, 1897, 179.

without the time to introduce it well, no effort was made to deepen it or to give a synthesis which would have been an enrichment of the mind. The teachers were not all that interested either. It seems that the Superior had the hardest time to find someone to teach this subject matter. There were 15 who taught at the seminary from 1827 to 1854 and 4 at Montolivet from 1854 to 1861, so that they succeeded each other every year or two, with one exception only, Father Mas who taught from 1842 to 1850.

When Father Tempier asked Father Paris in 1832 to undergo an exam in this matter, probably in the view of teaching it, the latter complained to the Founder in terms very unflattering for philosophy. He described it as consisting of "grotesque ideas which stifled all genius, put the imagination to sleep, atrophied the heart and gave no ideas to anyone except those who didn't have any by nature . . . I beg you, Father, let me be freed from that . . . from all this boring mess of ancient quibblers."⁷

As for theology, according to the plan of studies that Father Tempier drew up for the scholasticate at Maryvale in 1850 and following the established custom at Ajaccio and Marseilles, equal importance was given to dogma and moral theology, that is, five classes a week for each, for a three-year period.

Father Tempier had taught some dogma and moral theology at N.-D. du Laus from 1820 to 1822. He followed Bailly and the theology that they taught at Le Mans.⁸ The professors at Marseilles used several dogma manuals but mostly Bouvier which the students followed to prepare examinations. This was especially true for those scholastics studying treatises that they had not studied in the seminary before joining the Oblates.

Father Rey informs us that St. Thomas was the main source for teaching both philosophy and theology and that the professors read the major scholastic treatises.

⁷ P. Paris to Mazenod, s.d. (1832), 13 and 14.

⁸ *Missions OMI*, 1897, 179-183.

A great deal of importance was given to the treatises on the true religion and the Church. Here again, the professors followed Bouvier and Liebermann but also consulted more recent apologetical works such as Châteaubriand, Lamennais, de Maistre, de Bonald, etc. Father Fabre, who taught dogma from 1847 to 1852, published two works on the Church and on revealed religion which seem to owe a great deal to the works of the Jesuit, Father Rothenflue. They made revisions in these writings according to the Roman teaching as the need arose. For example, they taught explicitly already at that time the doctrines of the Immaculate Conception and Papal Infallibility.⁹

After 1827, they followed the doctrines of Saint Alphonsus de Ligouri in moral theology. Father de Mazenod insisted on this rule; and the most influential Oblates, Fathers Albini, Guibert, and especially Tempier, followed the Superior General wholeheartedly. Even though they followed the moral theology of Saint Alphonsus, they also made available to the students, the manual of Bailly which was more methodical and shorter. Later on, they used Bouvier and the first texts which were inspired by Saint Alphonsus, like those of Gury, Gousset, etc.

Shortly before his death, Father Tempier testified that he had neglected nothing to assure that "sound doctrine, based on the teachings of our Mother the Holy Roman Church", was taught to the seminarians and scholastics.¹⁰ In this regard, Father Fabre wrote: "Father Tempier's theology was sound and moderate, always based on the teachings of Rome which he strongly defended. Saint (Alphonsus) di Liguori was his favorite author and he liked to recall that we owe it to our venerable Founder for having introduced this teaching into France to balance the depressing severity of Jansenism and rigorism. He delighted in the great theologians and recommended them to his students even though he himself did not have the time

⁹ Rey I, 428.

¹⁰ *Memoires*, cfr. Rey I, 427.

to read them due to his never-ending duties. He rejected innovations either in doctrine or language, condemned neologism, and continually encouraged preachers to study Bossuet and the other great orators of the time of Louis XIV.”¹¹

In regard to the last century, historians usually say that Scripture was not given as much importance in seminaries, especially in the first half of the XIXth century. However, it seems that it was given more importance at Marseilles. Father Tempier’s rule, which first recalled that “Holy Scripture is absolutely necessary and indispensable for clerical students”, obliged every student to attend conferences which were given once a week, every Thursday morning. (Art. 19) Over a period of four or five years, they covered a good introduction to each of the books of the two testaments as well as an exegesis of main passages. Even though this instruction was elementary and geared to preaching it was nevertheless considerable.

They spent time also on Hebrew and Greek which both Fathers C. Baret and B. Bellon knew. The Abbé Bargès, who was to become one of the great French orientalists of the last century, spent a lot of time in this study along with a fellow student who had the same taste. Father Tempier, who saw the great good that could come of it for the Church, allowed him to take courses in Arabic and Hebrew at the royal academy and acquired for the seminary the library of the learned Abbé Boyer.¹²

Church, History and Canon Law were not taught as a distinct course neither before nor after the Revolution. A few notions concerning them were given in other courses and some history books were read in the refectory. A history course as such was begun only in 1844; it was almost always taught by the Canon Jeancard, a cultivated man and a good writer, a former Oblate, who had remained on very good terms with Father Tempier and Bishop de Mazenod. A course in

¹¹ *Notices nécrologiques OMI* II, 94.

¹² Thomas, *Une illustration provençale au XIXe siècle: J.J.L. Bargès, docteur en théologie, ancien professeur d'hebreu à la Sorbonne . . .* Bourgade-Péage, 1906, 37, 43 and following, 51.

Canon Law was added to the program in 1853, as prescribed by the Council of Aix. It was just at that time that several texts approved by Rome had come out and were used, such as those of Bouvier, Bouix, Roquette and Gousset.

Scholastics always had to study languages: Italian in Father Albini's time, and English after foreign missions had been accepted, all in British-held territories. Both English and Irish scholastics acted as teachers. In 1851 Father Semeria complained, however, that the Fathers who came to Ceylon didn't know English very well when they got there. The Founder replied to him on June 3: "Father Tempier has himself to blame for not following my advice in this matter. He overloaded his men with theological studies and there was no time for an English class."

Oblates, who by their very vocation are called to preach missions to the people, have always seen preaching as of prime importance. However, from 1835 to 1854, the scholastics as well as the seminarians had practical courses in it during summer holidays only. This training was done especially in the novitiate and the year of philosophy or during the "great course" after ordination. After 1853, however, there was a course of sacred eloquence on the official program. Father Rambert was in charge of it up to 1861. We have ten of his note-books; his material covered one hour a week over a five-year period. We can add that Father Tempier made it his special concern to encourage every young Father to prepare sermons during their period of rest or while waiting for an obedience.¹³

Finally, the Superior, following the example of Saint Sulpice, regularly gave a pastoral course to those in their fourth or fifth year. At the first this meant the "diaconales" which Father Tempier gave in 1847, probably using the notes of the Sulpician Carrière. This course also aimed at presenting

¹³ Rambert, *Notes d'éloquence*, A.G.R.: Y.B., *Les réponses des Oblats de France à la vision et à la pratique de l'évangélisation du Fondateur*, in *Vie Oblate Life*, 42, (1983), 145.

as an ensemble, the duties of the priest in carrying out the ministry and the rules he had to follow in administering the sacraments. The Superior had left his notebook on this material which has since disappeared; but we have a page from Father Thomas on his teaching which seems to be based on reflections of the Abbé Bargès. He had followed the course in 1833-1834 and had kept a lasting and grateful memory of it: he wrote: "After retreat exercises had ended, Father Tempier got together all those who were preparing for the priesthood in their fourth and fifth years. He told them that he was offering a course in pastoral theology, that is, to teach them the rules of moral law and the principles of Christian wisdom that a Church minister ought to follow when directing souls, administering the sacraments and governing parishes. This course, very delicate by nature, was very important; it required of its teacher light and wisdom, tact, prudence and experience. Father Tempier had all these qualities: to a great deal of speculative knowledge he added a deep and practical knowledge of the sacred ministry. He had exercised ministry of the missions as an Oblate in several different dioceses before he was named Superior of the seminary. Thousands of people had given him their confidence. The clergy had a very high regard for him and from his daily contacts with parish priests he had been able to gather a practical knowledge of the needs of both pastors and faithful. He was one of those very wise priests who knew what a delicate situation and the needs of the times require. Thus, the venerable Superior was qualified beyond all others to give the young deacons solid instruction and to give them good counsel on how to manage their duties of handling their parishes wisely . . ." ¹⁴

Teaching Method and Study Supervision

The teaching methods and practice that were used at Saint Sulpice and most of the French seminaries were closely followed. This method is characterized first of all by giving a

¹⁴ *Le sém. de Marseille*, 140.

great deal of importance to personal study and a small number of classes: two per day, one hour each, one in the morning and the afternoon. At the outset of the 1843-1844 school year Bishop de Mazenod strongly recommended that Father Tempier rigorously enforce this article.

Besides this, study competition and guidance included daily repetition and recitations, as well as written compositions, a weekly exam and general examination periods three times a year. Father Tempier, according to Father Fabre, felt obliged to be present for these exams in order to judge the aptitudes and progress of each student.¹⁵ In February of 1864, while making a visit to Autun, he still made a point of it to be present for the scholastics' exams.¹⁶

The method and means of competition perhaps varied slightly between 1827 and 1861. It seems that not everyone agreed with them, at least after 1850; for that reason in 1854, Bishop de Mazenod called together those who represented the Oblate seminaries. He confided to Father Bellon: "I have reason to suspect that good Father Tempier, excessively attached as he is to the method he has landed up adopting, is a little upset by the discussion that I am promoting . . . I think we should not get passionately involved, but that we ought to love what is truly good for our students . . ."

We do not know if these discussions made any difference in the method followed at Marseilles but some of the General Council members still complained in 1859 that some of the Oblates at the Montolivet scholasticate "come out with very little theological learning in spite of all the exams and recitations . . . and that this is not known all that very well."

As for the students, some of them found that the method of continual testing, although not overpowering, did lack in some variation. Father Charles Baret wrote to his brother Victor in 1861: "Theology should not at all frighten you. Such as I experienced it during the three years of scholasticate, I as-

¹⁵ *Notices néc.* OMI II, 94; Tempier to Bise, October 20, 1850.

¹⁶ *Missions OMI*, 1864, 141-142.

sure you that nothing is . . . less difficult than this study. To be sure, I admit that it is monotonous: class in the morning, class in the evening, always lessons to be learned, texts to be recited. This unchangeable uniformity astonishes and shocks the imagination. But, my dear man, life, whatever it may be, does not withstand a test that is presided over or inspired by the imagination. What frightens and revolts the fool in the gallery is precisely that which brings pleasure to calm and enlightened reason. Great lives have always been monotonous existences. Genius like holiness is forever found in paths that are much trod and dry . . . Somewhere I have seen, in Buffon I think, that genius is only a great capacity for patience.”¹⁷

An Assessment of the Studies at the Seminary and at Montolivet

The teaching given to the seminarians and scholastics was aimed at forming sufficiently instructed pastors, not doctors. Thus, Father Casimir Aubert, in a report to the Founder, in 1834, exposed an ideal for the scholasticate which stressed the apostolic spirit more than acquiring learning. He wrote: “In studies, it seems to me that what we should be nearly exclusively aiming for in regard to our scholastics is to form them to theology and preaching, to make them into men capable of fruitfully fulfilling the ministry of confession and able to announce with dignity the Word of God.”¹⁸

We have always praised the level of studies at the Marseilles seminary. Both the Superior and the Provincial of southern France, in their reports to the General Chapters of 1843, 1850, and 1856, praised each time “the above-average success” of the students, their “good study habits and the accompanying success”, etc.¹⁹

When the scholastics left in 1854, the Major Seminary, directed by Fathers Fabre, Martinet, Rey, Rambert, etc., had a

¹⁷ *Le sém. de Marseille*, 113.

¹⁸ Report of April 20, 1843, A.G.R.

¹⁹ *Le sém. de Marseille*, 114.

more stable and intellectual professorial staff than ever before, while Montolivet under its new team, seemed to have a less profound and ardent study life. Father Casimir Aubert, the Provincial in southern France, made a remark about this to Father Tempier when he was making his canonical visitation in 1856. He stressed, first of all, that "the professors were not getting any guidance for their classes. This explains why there was not a true system of teaching, no unity or overall view of the courses, nor any uniformity in method."²⁰ This remark was especially addressed to the Superior himself. At the seminary he had always assured this direction; but, at Montolivet, he had to neglect it, due to his occupation with finishing the construction.

In 1862, Father Tatin again painted a rather sombre picture of the studies situation. This time, he blamed the professors who were "too busy" and who "didn't like" their kind of life.²¹ They were, in fact, very often changed. The fact was that both the Founder and Father Tempier had a hard time to find competent and stable formators from among the Oblates. They all preferred pastoral and missionary work.²²

We cannot conclude from this that the intellectual formation at Montolivet was a real failure. From documents that have survived, it is clear that the library available to the students was well-furnished, and that the material taught, the textbooks, teaching methods, and exams were the same as at the Marseilles seminary; they must have borne fruit here as well as elsewhere.

Father Tempier and the Congregation's intellectual life

In his double capacity of Bursar General and Scholasticate Superior, Father Tempier was always interested in setting up libraries in the Congregation. In 1823, he wanted to move the books from the house at Aix to that at Le Calvaire.²³ Later

²⁰ Cas. Aubert to Tempier, July 16, 1856, A.G.R.: *Montolivet*.

²¹ Tatin to Fabre, May 6, July 5, 1862.

²² Y.B. *Les réponses des Oblats de France*, op. cit., 155-158.

²³ Mazenod to Courtès, April 2, 1823.

on, he established the library at the seminary from its first origins and continued to develop it all the while that he was Superior; he assigned the best room for it, so much so that several General Chapters held their sessions there.²⁴

Father Mouchette also speaks of the “magnificent library at Montolivet.” Father Tempier had thought about it even before the opening of the house; he had amassed a large number of books from here and there and put them together for that purpose and he put all these in the seminary in Brother Perrin’s tailor shop. He didn’t neglect it thereafter: the budget reports often contain sums of money set aside for buying books.²⁵

Concerning other houses: his letters to the Superiors at Laus, Bon Secours, Ajaccio, the houses in Canada and England, often speak about books that the Oblates asked for and that had been sent by the Bursar General.²⁶

Books have value only if someone uses them well. Father Tempier, who was Superior of most of the Oblates during their formation period, always felt the need to encourage them afterwards in their study habits; the Oblates, for their part, often went to him for advice in this matter. Father Honorat, for example, before he set up a program of studies for the juniorists at N.-D. de Lumières, asked Father Tempier’s opinion, and most of the seminary professors at Ajaccio, Fréjus, and Romans, wrote to their former superior in matters of study and formation as well as in money matters or obediences. He was the one who proposed the study program when the Maryvale scholasticate was opened in England.²⁷

He especially made sure that no young Father left before his studies were completed; Father Magnan said: “before he

²⁴ *Le séminaire de Marseille*, 111-112.

²⁵ *Montolivet*, 174-175.

²⁶ Albini to Tempier, May 5, 1838; Allard to Tempier, June 8, 1844; Honorat to Mazenod, May 23, 1844; Dassy to Tempier, May 12, June 4 and July 7, 1846; Telmon to Tempier, May 26, 1840, February 1845; to Mazenod, March 25, 1846; Sardou to Cas. Aubert, August 24, 1855, etc.

²⁷ Honorat to Tempier, May 27, 1841; Santoni to Mazenod, September 6, 1846; Tortel to Tempier, August 5, 1850, Nov. 6, 1853, etc.

has settled his accounts with Father Tempier.”²⁸ He continued to send them his recommendations even after they were launched in their ministry. Already in 1825, Father Dupuy excused himself for not studying as much as Father Tempier had asked him to.²⁹ When he found out in 1841 that Father Dassy and the Fathers at Osier were spending a lot of time on archeology, he encouraged them at length to spend more time on studies more related to their ministry. At least, that is what Father Dassy seems to indicate when he excused himself to the Founder: “I have never had it in mind that we ought to dedicate too much time (to archeology), lest this be to the detriment of the study of Sacred Scripture, the Fathers of the Church, theology and our great Catholic writers, as we have been very appropriately reminded by Reverend Father Tempier in a letter I received from him some 5 or 6 months ago. That is why the community spends only one hour per week in the study of archeology, as well as of geology, history and geography.”³⁰

When Father Tempier heard that Father Lavigne was getting everything ready for a basilica at Osier in 1852, without permission, he immediately alerted the Superior: “Before putting himself so much in the limelight, Father Lavigne should have been thinking of answering the canonical complaints concerning his teaching that two Bishops have lodged against him . . . That is his first duty; after that, we can think of other things. The essential point is to show that we teach and preach the holy Gospel without changing or deforming it.”³¹

On the first of June that same year, he sent Father Faraud, a young missionary leaving for the Canadian Northwest, “a book which gives a succinct and clear presentation of the correct principles of all of moral theology” and he added the following wise pedagogical advice: “Once your compan-

²⁸ Magnan to Mazenod, Oct. 18, 1846; to Honorat, March 1, 1844.

²⁹ Dupuy to Tempier, Nov. 1, 1825.

³⁰ Dassy to Mazenod, August 28, 1841.

³¹ Tempier to Burfin, July 13, 1852.

ion will have joined you, I very much encourage you to benefit from the time when you are not busy with your native people to study theology and Sacred Scripture. Especially theology, for you have almost never had the chance to study it with someone else. When there are several, communicating ones thoughts and reflections, and even discussion, is a great help to understanding."

Finally, on October 14, 1863, he sent a photo of himself as a gift to Father Besson at N.-D. de la Garde, and wrote on it: "What good things do I wish for you? I will tell you that I hope you will grow in virtue and in knowledge, but in knowledge that is proper and necessary for apostolic workers, knowledge derived from the sacred books, from ecclesiastical authors who are distinguished for their erudition and holiness."

Spiritual Formation of Seminarians and Scholastics

It took a lot of courage for the Founder and Father Tempier to accept the direction of the Major Seminary at Marseilles in 1827, then those of Ajaccio in 1834, Fréjus in 1851, Romans in 1853, and Quimper in 1856. Oblates were not hardly intellectually prepared for such responsibilities.

The main aim of seminaries, however, was to prepare young men spiritually to take up their future duties in a worthy manner, rather than to acquire outstanding learning. In fact, Bourdoise regarded the newborn seminaries as the novitiate for the clergy. Father Olier described them as places "to seed and foster the ecclesiastical spirit." St. Vincent de Paul encouraged directors to form their seminarians "in the true spirit of their state in life, namely, in a true interior life and in the practice of prayer and virtues."³²

We know how the Founder always judged the secular clergy rather severely and that he had to suffer when he tried to make some reforms at Marseilles. Even before the Oblates had accepted any seminaries, he had written to Father Tempier

³² *Le sém. de Marseille*, 117.

on March 9, 1826, to complain about the clergy, and added: "Watch at least over the seminary and let different attitudes be inspired in the students." Father de Mazenod, who had always wanted only holy priests in the Congregation and who so often purged it through dispensations from vows and expulsions, felt that his sons were able to form a spiritually fervent clergy. That is one of the reasons why he accepted the direction of the Marseilles seminary in 1827 and which he entrusted to Father Tempier whom he had always considered from 1815 onward as "capable of embracing an exemplary rule of life and of persevering in it."³³

There were more problems with the intellectual formation than with the spiritual formation. Whereas the intellectual disciplines had developed immensely in the French seminaries during the previous century, there were but few changes in the spirit and methods of spiritual formation; the very books on piety and priestly spirituality were those of the XVII and XVIII centuries, especially before 1850.

Father Tempier established a program for the seminary of Marseilles in 1829. With only a few changes, he followed that of the Sulpicians which was common in many French seminaries. Being faithful to this program, "the regularity" which the Founder impressed on his members so often, was seen as a sure guarantee that one was on the road to perfection. The conclusion of this program read as follows: "One has to become quite convinced that progress in the ecclesiastical sciences and virtues depends on promptness in observing these rules. Though they are somewhat of a multiple quantity, they should not be considered as a burden that is hard to bear. Those who have enough good will and courage to do a little violence to themselves at the outset, will soon get into the habit of keeping them and will find in their fidelity to conform themselves thereto an abundant source of peace and sat-

³³ Mazenod to Tempier, Oct. 9, 1815; The Bishop of Valence asked for Oblates for the same reason in 1853. Father Tortel wrote to Father Tempier on September 24, 1853, that the elder clergy would not change and let's hope "that the younger clergy that we train will be more docile."

isfaction. Happy therefore are those who are quite prompt in adopting them and who take it to heart to observe them out of love for God and in view of pleasing him: they will acquire the knowledge that results in saints, they will ornate their soul with the ensemble of virtues that adorn worthy ministers of Jesus Christ, they will especially conceive an ardent love for the divine Saviour who resides on our altars and a tender devotion towards his most holy Mother. In a word, they will perpetually wax strong in horror for sin, the doing of good, and the fear and love of God and, having thus begun to instruct and sanctify themselves, they will become fit to instruct and sanctify others."

While we have only one letter of Bishop de Mazenod in which he demands the strict observance of this program, we do know that Father Tempier, somewhat more strict, didn't need any such advice; yet, he was able to temper firmness with gentleness, according to the Sulpician method. Father Fabre will write of him: "His external austerity, necessary to maintain discipline, did not hinder the loving communications of fatherliness both towards the professors and to the students. Inexorable in regard to infractions of the rules, voluntary negligences and calculated laziness, he became compassionate and tender in regard to the young men's infirmities and weaknesses, sufferings and illnesses, and the trials that beset their vocation." In 1829, Father Albini who was more than anyone striving for perfection, thought that the Superior did not demand enough from the directors. In May/June, he wrote to the Founder: "Obedience is now nothing more than a mere word in our seminary. The local Superior is not obeyed. We are always coasting. Is his government perhaps too gentle? I protest against this abuse. Our Fathers of the seminary house are not obedient. Please apply a remedy thereto."³⁴

The Superior, who was personally involved with the material needs of the house and closely oversaw the work of both

³⁴ *Le sém. de Marseille*, 66-68; *Not. néc.* OMI II, 94; Albini to Mazenod, May/June (1829).

professors and students, in fact trusted the first director to take charge of the spiritual formation as his first duty. Besides, the best religious was appointed to this post, and the general council chose him carefully for this duty: Fathers Albini (1827-1835), J. Lagier (1835-1841, 1846-1851), Mille (1842-1845), Bellon (1851-1852) and Fabre (1852-1854). When the scholastics became more numerous in 1848, special directors were assigned to them: Fathers Mounier (1848-1849), Marchal (1849-1854) and Mouchette (1854-1861).³⁵

Spiritual Exercises

The seminary day was punctuated by many exercises of worship or piety. Their purpose was to instill in the students a spirit of prayer and were considered as indispensable means to gain and solidify Christian and priestly virtues. The daily schedule included: morning prayer and meditation, Mass, breviary in common for the seminarians in holy orders and for the scholastics, particular examen, spiritual reading, a visit to the Blessed Sacrament, examinations of conscience, evening prayer, meditation preparation, weekly confession, spiritual direction every month, etc.³⁶

Father Fabre states that Father Tempier assiduously presided morning prayers, celebrated the community mass and set the hours for classes and recreation."³⁷ A half hour of spiritual reading preceded the visit to the Blessed Sacrament and supper. First was read a passage from some spiritual author and then, the Superior, or the first director when he was absent, commented on it for about ten minutes. Father Tempier had both the needed experience and zeal for this kind of exercise, for he had done it already with the novices and scholastics at Aix in 1817.³⁸

³⁵ *Le sém. de Marseille*, 44; *Montolivet*, 158-159; 241-244.

³⁶ *Le sém. de Marseille*, 119-125.

³⁷ *Not. nécrologiques OMI* II, 94.

³⁸ Mazenod to Tempier, July 25, August 12 and 22, Nov. 4, 1817; Tempier to Mazenod, Sept. 5, 1817.

The Rule of 1853 specified that these times of spiritual reading were meant to set out "the teaching of the saints on the dignity of the clerical state, the required virtues, the heavy burdens it imposes, the ways in which to carry them out without danger, and how to keep oneself in priestly holiness right to the end." In this regard, it should be pointed out that the Oblates who, as the Founder and Father Tempier, had to lead a life of mortification and often heroic sufferings in many places across the world, generally didn't show much sympathy about mystical experiences. That was probably a part of their first formation; there is some indication of this in the project of Father Vincens for the Rule on seminaries in 1850. He wrote: "One will not neglect . . . whether in the lessons . . . or in the conferences to inspire the taste for and to regulate the practice of true and solid theological asceticism, so necessary to priests for their personal sanctification and for being fit to do the good that their vocation demands; but with no less zeal they will be warned against certain abuses of an absurd mysticism, not to say more, of which the least bad effect is the loss of time and a falsification of the direction pointed out by the saints . . ., the models and competent masters in this domain . . ." ³⁹

The Superior was available for confessions and spiritual direction in as much as his work and other duties allowed. Throughout his whole life he was the confessor of Bishop de Mazenod, of his sister Madame de Boisgelin,⁴⁰ of religious women and of several seminary professors, such as Fathers Pons, Paris and Lagier.⁴¹ He was very well acquainted with the young seminarians and scholastics and knew how to understand and help them. As early as 1823, Father Bourrelrier thanked him for the "admirable prudence" Father Tempier had shown in helping him to persevere in his vocation.⁴² In 1831, the Founder encouraged the scholastic Saluzzo and told him

³⁹ *Le sém. de Marseille*, 122.

⁴⁰ *Not. nécr. OMI*, II, 106.

⁴¹ Mazenod to Mille, Sept. 17, 1836; Paris to Mazenod, June 2, 1837; Mazenod to Moreau, February 15, 1843.

⁴² Bourrelrier to Tempier, November 29, 1823.

that he could take confidence regarding his vocation, relying on the decisions of the seminary Superior who had been his director.⁴³ Father Fabre wrote that Father Tempier had the gift of discerning souls.⁴⁴ He showed this when he made a short visit to the novitiate at l'Osier in 1852. Both the Founder and the novice master considered a Belgian novice to be an outstanding vocation, a privileged person. Father Tempier spoke to him during this trip and came to a completely different conclusion. The Founder wrote to Father Richard, the novice master: "Father Tempier has told me some very disturbing things regarding the novice whom you praised so highly!" In fact, Brother de Beer did not even make his vows. Father Marius Roux, a seminarian at Marseilles, said in 1856 that he had gone to confession to Father Tempier. After his general confession before the sub-diaconate, Father Tempier said to him that he had concluded that he had a religious vocation. The seminarian told him he would think about it later. Father Tempier replied: "Once people have spat into the corner of their hearth, they seldom consider a religious vocation thereafter."⁴⁵

Father Tempier had formed such an ingrained habit of giving pious advice that he continued to do so in his letters, even in business letters, to former pupils. We have found only a few of his letters but he received many that we still have in which the writers thank him for his recommendations and ask him for further advice.

Let us point out, for example, what Father Albini, who was already endowed with the title of missionary and miracle worker, wrote to him on March 7, 1838: "You will certainly accept it that the person who is writing to you is that strange character who is always in need of some advice, especially from you, who know how to handle those who love you." Father Fortuné Chavard told the Founder on September 18, 1850: "As to the difficulties that I had to swallow at times, I

⁴³ Mazenod to Saluzzo, December 8, 1831.

⁴⁴ *Not. Néc.* OMI II, 94.

⁴⁵ Mazenod to Richard, September 4, 1852; Roux M. to Tempier, September 20, 1850.

want to follow henceforth the wise advice that the excellent Father Tempier gives me, namely, that I am to support them in a spirit of penance." Father Sabon, who had been assigned to Natal in 1850, was afraid to leave and confided in Father Tempier: "You know that I speak to you with an open heart, like a child to its father. Also, I have always been most satisfied with the good advice you have given to me on so many occasions! Now I am once again coming to you with an important matter . . ." ⁴⁶ Father Chirouse wrote to Father Tempier on February 12, 1863, from his distant missions on the Canadian Pacific coast: "When I received your fatherly letter of August 12, 1862, my heart was moved as though by a kind of pride and, at the same, of confusion, happiness and gratitude. *Quid est homo?* I exclaimed, that the good Reverend Father Tempier still deigns to remember him! Thank you, Reverend Father, for so many kindnesses from your part to a child who merits only to be forgotten. I received all your charitable advice with joy and gratitude and it was a great benefit for my soul . . . As you say, Reverend Father, I am already an old soldier, and as every old soldier who has done battle, I have many wounds and infirmities, as much spiritual as material. That is why, Reverend Father, your charitable advice has been and will always be for me a remedy that is all the more effective because it comes from a doctor of long experience who wants only my salvation."

Devotions and Piety

Father Olier had founded his work of seminaries on two main devotions: devotion to Jesus Christ, the high priest, considered in his infancy and in his passion, and always living in the sacrament of the Eucharist, and devotion to the Blessed Virgin.⁴⁷ These were apt to be well understood and accepted by Oblates, true followers of Bishop de Mazenod whose ten-

⁴⁶ Sabon to Tempier, September 20, 1850.

⁴⁷ J.-H. Icard, *Traditions de la Compagnie des Prêtres de Saint Sulpice pour la direction des grands séminaires*, Paris, 1886, 257 and following.

der devotion to the Eucharist and the Immaculate Virgin are well known. Father Rey, long-time professor at the seminary and also at Montolivet, wrote that "we would teach and practice on a regular basis whatever pertained to the devotion to the Blessed Eucharist, the Sacred Heart and the Blessed Virgin."⁴⁸

The years of formation were meant to lead a young man to perfect himself, to become virtuous. Certain words come back again and again in the documents on the seminary and at Montolivet, and clearly express the effort needed to gain the clerical spirit and virtues, with the help of divine grace: they are piety, fervor, regularity. Father Tempier had his criteria of discernment and the principles that he followed in this regard. He had already written to the Founder in 1819 that "great literary persons are seldom pious."⁴⁹ He liked to say to the seminarians: "I have seen good seminarians become lukewarm and even evil later on; never have I seen a lukewarm seminarian become more fervent."⁵⁰

On this point as on the spiritual life the reports of the Superior seem to be always rather laudatory: "excellent spirit", "union and cordiality", "strict observance of discipline", "a tender, solid and enlightened piety", etc. The Founder on his frequent visits to Montolivet marvelled at the fervor and good spirit that existed there. Even though Father Mouchette, who was in daily contact with the scholastics, complained about "little enlightened" piety that was overly devotional, "sentimental" or "excessive" in some Brothers, he seemed more satisfied with their spiritual and religious life and especially with their regularity.⁵¹ Even those who were less generous were spurred on, if not by the fervor of the more advanced, at least by their love for the Founder who held 'regularity', his key word, as something essential, or by a filial fear of Father Tempier who was known for firmly correcting even minor infrac-

⁴⁸ Rey I, 428.

⁴⁹ Tempier to Mazenod, July 25, 1819.

⁵⁰ Boisramé, *Méditations pour tous les jours de l'année*. Tours, 1887, I, 349.

⁵¹ *Le sém. de Marseille*, 134; *Montolivet*, 238-239.

tions. We have a striking example of this from 1856. Brother Perrin had gone to listen at the door where the General Chapter was in progress, and the Superior came to know of it. At evening prayer, in front of the Superior General, he informed the community of this indiscretion and announced that the brother would eat his meals on his knees the following day. Father Mouchette commented, "We can say *felix culpa* of this incident, since it gives us one of those priceless examples of which the Congregation's history is so rich. At Montolivet, there were a lot of other examples like this; no one paid much attention to them there because the religious virtues were practiced quite naturally."⁵²

Assessments

History has judged quite favorably the part played by the Oblates at the Marseilles seminary. Many testimonies have been collected. For example, when Bishop Cruice removed them as directors, some members of the Chapter hastened to protest: "The Fathers of this Congregation have . . . raised, with the exception of very few, all the members of your clergy. They have always done so with a wisdom, piety and devotedness that has no equal, unless it be their profound modesty . . ." Bishop Cruice himself, moreover, did not take long to notice that his predecessor had "formed a well-disciplined clergy" and had revived in the diocese the spirit of ancient Christianity by placing at the head of parishes "priests animated with zeal for souls."⁵³

It is difficult to express adequately what Montolivet meant for many Oblates. Father Fabre wrote in this regard: ". . . With time and devotedness, Montolivet achieved for a number of years the ideal Father Tempier had dreamed of. It was the scholasticate of the Congregation, that lived its life, that rejoiced in the cherished communications of the Father of the family and its earliest members, that was often trans-

⁵² *Montolivet*, 239-241; 250-251.

⁵³ *Le sém. de Marseille*, 146-149.

formed into the cenacle where the new apostles either gathered or went forth from, called as they were to conquer the farthest away people who were the most abandoned. The old man was all smiles in the midst of those he referred to with tenderness as his sons . . .”⁵⁴

Both Oblate scholastics and visitors who lived there overnight or longer remained very attached to this house and its Superior. While some appreciated his hospitality, all were affected by his goodness and helpfulness. Former pupils, even before Montolivet, testify in their letters to Father Tempier’s fatherly goodness. They called him: “Father”,⁵⁵ whose “goodness is limitless since it has charity as its source, continues to show itself”;⁵⁶ “always the most tender and best of fathers . . . good, wise as well as enlightened . . . one placed on the throne of charity so as to be able to render even greater services to humanity”;⁵⁷ “well-known goodness” which would like to add new good deeds “to numerous ones . . . already done;”⁵⁸ “a good father (who) will always be exactly what he has shown himself to be.”⁵⁹

Father T. Ryan wrote from Leeds on August 16, 1856: “As you love all those who had the happiness of living for some time under your fatherly care, you may perhaps still remember a young student that bears my name. So I want, Father, to assure you that I recall and will always remember your goodness and your very fatherly care in my regard.”

On August 29, 1857, Father H. d’Halluin asked Father Tempier what he should do with his uncle’s library which he had just received as an inheritance, asked for an immediate reply and added: “That would be a great pleasure on account of the happiness that a small letter from you would bring me . . . My wholly devoted and beloved father, please pardon me, I

⁵⁴ *Not. nécr. OMI* II, 99-100.

⁵⁵ T. Ryan to Tempier, August 16, 1856.

⁵⁶ Ailhaud to Tempier, Sept. 2 and 15, 1835.

⁵⁷ Alex. Augier to Tempier, Sept. 24, 1846, December 11, 1849.

⁵⁸ Michael Naughten to Tempier, June 2, 1853.

⁵⁹ Fabre to Father Luigi, February 23, 1854.

beg you, the freedom and openness of these few lines. In allowing myself to write them to you, I have removed from my mind the many titles which are yours and which you have so well merited, to retain only that of any indulgent father whose every moment is dedicated to the greater glory of God and the growth of this dear Congregation, of this dear and cherished family of which I am so happy to be the least member."

The scholastic Pierre Avignon, who was at his home resting during the summers of 1857 and 1858, wrote to his Superior and filled his letters with gratitude: "Allow me, Reverend Father, that I offer you my thanks for all the care you lavished on me from the day I had the happiness to enter Montolivet. I shall be grateful to you and will never forget all that you have done for me, and this thought, I hope, will always be for me a powerful stimulus to live faithfully my holy Rules and to compensate you a little for so much care." And, after he had requested a service, he added: "You will please do me this favor; it will be a new link to the long chain of good deeds of which I will never forget the price; I am happy to express to you my lively gratitude once again, together with my parents who are very happy to recommend themselves to your fervent prayer."⁶⁰

The most beautiful letters received by Father Tempier came from Father Grandidier, who studied in England and then worked as a missionary in the Canadian northwest. For example, he wrote several times during 1858 and 1859 to speak of his nostalgia: "I am speaking of Montolivet; my letter will be going to Montolivet and I am writing to that good father who has done so much good to me and whom I love and venerate as my true father. Oh! Leave my letter, leave and go and tell him that every day at the holy Sacrifice his son remembers his father and with all his heart prays for him. Leave and go to ask my father that he bless his son who will never forget his good deeds and his love. Go and tell my brothers, his other children who are with him, to love him and surround

⁶⁰ Pierre Avignon to Tempier, July 19, 1857, August 12, 1858.

him with all the veneration of which they are capable and to supplement by their efforts all that we would like to do ourselves . . . ”⁶¹

When the Founder sent the scholastics to stay at the seminary in 1835 where they had already been taking their courses, he received a note from Father Tempier: “I shall not lack neither charity nor goodness in their regard, but I shall be demanding in regard to the fulfillment of their duties:”⁶² From the testimonies we have on record, it would seem that the scholastics appreciated his devotedness and remembered his charity and goodness more than the demands he made on them; this in regard to the person who, little by little began to be rightly called in the Congregation “the second father”.

⁶¹ Grandidier to Tempier, Sept. 3, 1858, March 29, 1859. Cf. also: Depetro to Tempier, Sept. 23, 1848; J.J. Marchal to Tempier, Sept. 9, 1852; Lancenay to Mouchette, December 27, 1854; Marius Roux to Tempier, February 16, 1857; J.M. Richard to Fabre, Oct. 9, 1862; André to Mazenod, from 1838 to 1843, etc.

⁶² Tempier to Mazenod, October 4, 1835.

VIII

EUGENE DE MAZENOD'S CLOSE FRIEND

The Abbé Eugene de Mazenod did not find a friend among the young clergy during his first years of ministry at Aix. He suffered therefrom. On September 12, 1814, he wrote to Charles de Forbin-Janson: "In the midst of this turmoil, I am alone. You are my sole friend — I mean that forcefully — as for good and virtuous friends lacking in so many ways, I am not short of those. What use are they? Can they lessen my cares? Can I converse with them about the good one would wish to bring about? To what avail? All I would get would be compliments or discouragement . . ." The future founder clearly states here what he is searching for: someone in whom to confide, a close co-worker animated with the same zeal. He received this extra grace along with that of founding the Missionaries of Provence, a grace important both for himself and for the young Institute: he finally found a friend, in the "forceful" meaning of the word, in François de Paule Henry Tempier.

Father de Mazenod often had good intuitions on the very first meeting with someone of that person's worth and even his future role. This was the case with Father Tempier and, later, with the young Hippolyte Guibert.¹ Already in his first letters to Father Tempier, the Founder described of the latter's exact role in the Congregation; and, thereafter, the friendship that would bind them together forever. In his second letter to him, the Founder said: "I count on you more than on myself for the regularity of a house which, in my mind and my hopes, must reproduce the perfection of the first disciples of the Apostles." And, in the next letter: "My heart felt a presentiment, my dear good brother, that you were the man the good God had set aside to be my consolation."²

¹ Mazenod to Guibert, March 19 and June 26, 1823.

² Mazenod to Tempier, November 15 and December 13, 1815.

The Founder's affection and esteem for Father Tempier

Prophetic words. Eugene de Mazenod had moments of enthusiasm, as well as grey times of doubt, uncertainty, and despondency. Events touched him deeply and he reacted with keen joy or sadness. He could not smother whatever was boiling within him; he had to talk, to share, to let his sentiments explode. How lucky he was to have Father Tempier at his side, a man who was calm, pondered, able to listen and then to suggest the best thing to do.

Father Tempier was precious to him; he told him that often and thanked God for it. Let us reread a few excerpts from his letters. From Paris, he wrote on July 25, 1817: "I am sad indeed to find myself two hundred leagues from my dear, my very dear friends, from my family, my children, my brothers and especially from you who are unique to me." And when Father Tempier left Aix under obedience to go to N.-D. du Laus, he often received letters in which the Founder expressed his affection and confidence: "As for you, I have nothing to add to what you know of my sentiments in your regard; I love you as much as myself and my confidence in you is such that it would be impossible for me to hide the least of my thoughts from you. I would think I was committing a theft, a crime of *lèse-amitié* for which I could not forgive myself . . . What I wished in beginning this letter was to tell you, my dear friend, how touched I was by the sentiments you expressed to me in such an edifying manner in your last letter. I recognized from the first page the true religious, the honest man, the good heart, my dear Tempier through and through. I thank the good God unceasingly for having brought us together and I pray him to fill you more and more with his Spirit for our greater common good . . ." ³

When Father Suzanne was sick in 1828, the Founder again ended a letter to Father Tempier with words which powerfully express the deep bonds which bound him to his first

³ Mazenod to Tempier, April 1, 1821, August 15, 1822.

collaborator: "Adieu, my faithful and dear companion, my son, brother and cherished father."⁴ On May 10, 1829, when he was at the bedside of Father Courtès who was gravely sick at Aix, Father de Mazenod wrote a letter in which he expressed his great desolation at the very thought that he would lose another "apple of his eye" so soon after Father Suzanne, but to avoid giving his confidant too much pain, he delicately tore up that first letter in which he had "expressed too vividly the state of anguish" as well as how his "heart is rent asunder."

During the Icosia affair, from 1832 to 1835, Bishop de Mazenod was often forced to be away from Marseilles. Overburdened by the civil authorities' false accusation, he deeply felt the pain of being alone. He said so in all of his letters: "I stood in need of your consolation in my distress"; "my dreadful isolation"; "Whenever I had to take my leave of you, it has always been with a heavy heart . . . Leaving you, my dear friend, in such an unsatisfactory state of health and burdening you with all the details I would normally handle myself each day . . . I am unable to live without you. When I am — I won't say separated from you, this often happens when we are under the same roof — estranged from you, I am missing something that is essential to my existence. I am only half-alive and very gloomy." Thus the thought of seeing Father Tempier again gives the Founder courage: "The pleasure I will feel on seeing you again will put my heart at ease once more."⁵

As the years went on, the expressions are less affectionate but the esteem seemed rather to increase. The Superior General repeats more often that his first assistant was "another self", whom he entrusted completely with all the Congregation's business.⁶ When Father Tempier was leaving for Canada in 1851, the Founder wrote: "Oh! How the moment of separation was painful to my heart! To console myself, I must

⁴ Mazenod to Tempier, October 21, 1828.

⁵ Mazenod to Tempier, December 31, 1830, June 25 and September 21, 1832, August 8, 1833, August 1, 1835.

⁶ Mazenod to Tempier, October 6, 1829 and August 5, 1856; to Marguet, July 30, 1847; to Bishop Pavy, Dec. 4, 1848.

turn to that divine Master who inspired and sustained our half-century old relationship." He had announced the visit to the Fathers in Canada as follows: "You will be happy with this Visitor, my first companion in the family to which we all belong. You can speak to him with the same confidence as to myself; we have but one heart and one soul, and this is how I wish it to be with each one of you. That was always our vision, like that of the first Christians; it is because they have forgotten this that many have abandoned the spirit that I wished to establish in our Congregation."⁷

In 1858, Father Tempier was sent to Switzerland in view of setting up a house there. The Founder wrote to him: "You know . . . that I always worry when I know that you are away on a trip all alone . . . I am not at all surprised at the fine welcome you received from the worthy Bishop of Sion. I charge you to present my respects and thanks to him, for I consider done to me the things that people do to you."⁸

Whenever one of them was absent, they wrote each other every week and even every two or three days, as happened during the cholera epidemics. So we still have 235 letters of the Founder to Father Tempier and some of the latter's replies, although, according to his Superior, he wrote less frequently.⁹ If we judge by his letters and diary, Bishop de Mazenod thought very often of his friend: he mentions him in 225 of his letters to Oblates and 125 times in the several hundred pages that survive of his diary.

*Father Tempier's attachment and devotedness
to Bishop de Mazenod*

The Founder's affection for Father Tempier and his confidence in him brought out similar feelings in the latter; he was always deeply attached to his Superior and friend and was

⁷ Mazenod to Tempier, May 1, 1851, to Durocher, January 17, 1851.

⁸ Mazenod to Tempier, October 15, 1858.

⁹ Mazenod to Tempier, January 28, 1826, August 7 and October 9, 1835, May 29, 1842, August 17, 1847.

entirely devoted to him. Much less emotional, his friendship was more practical than affectionate, and this led to some misunderstandings and suffering for Bishop de Mazenod.

Father Tempier started his first letter on October 27, 1815, with "My dear sir and confrere"; but in the second he was truly cordial: "Holy friend and true brother, I do not know how to thank you for all you have done for my salvation. You are truly the one who is the most dear to my heart."¹⁰ Thereafter, however, he expresses himself more discreetly and his natural reserve kept him from expressing his deepest sentiments except on special occasions. In 1817, he wrote to Father de Mazenod at Paris to thank him for his letters which gave great "delight" to the community and that they "kept them as treasures."¹¹ When he was experiencing difficulty at N.-D. du Laus in 1819, he admitted that he was "always suffering" and that he felt "an excessive sorrow . . . from being separated" from Father de Mazenod; the latter's letters "gave him life", and his words are "a balm which soothes" his heart.¹² After that, it is only when he was leaving for Canada in 1851 that he dare to admit: "I was in such an emotional state at the time when I was going to separate myself from you and from everything that is most dear to me on earth . . . that I couldn't keep my mind on business matters."¹³

Father Tempier expressed by his daily acts of devotedness what he was not able to put into words. We recognize in him the wise counselor and the untiring collaborator;¹⁴ let us now give some details of his more delicate role as admonitor and confessor.

¹⁰ There was the same rapid development regarding the Congregation. In his first letter of October 27, 1815, Tempier said: "... I would have been the first to ask you to be received into *your* society"; in the second of December 20, he already wrote: "the fruits of holiness that await us in *our* dear congregation . . ."

¹¹ Tempier to Mazenod, August 22 and November 11, 1817.

¹² Tempier to Mazenod, June 13 and July 20, 1819.

¹³ Tempier to Mazenod, May 3, 1851.

¹⁴ Fabre to Rey, August 5, 1854; *Missions OMI*, 1873, 254.

Behind the altar where the Blessed Sacrament was exposed, Fathers de Mazenod and Tempier had made a mutual vow of obedience on Holy Thursday, April 11, 1816. "That was no empty ceremony," Father Fabre wrote. "On the part of one and the other, it was a great gesture, one of those acts which wields an influence on one's destiny. Only the day of eternity will be able to reveal to us the many merits of which this act was the principle for the two religious men. He who all his life remained the first Superior also knew how to remain the first to be obedient, and we do not know to whom to attribute the first part: to the Superior who so often obeyed his inferior, or to the inferior who had the fortitude to command the one whom he respected and loved as the living image of God's authority. This is perhaps a unique occurrence in the history of religious congregations; we record it with the humble gratitude that God's gifts arouse."¹⁵

Father Tempier obeyed the Founder everywhere and always in serving both the diocese and the Congregation; on the other hand, he had to exercise over him the authority that their vow had imposed on him, and even more, to fulfill his official duty as admonitor. Thus, he obliged him to take a rest in the summer of 1816¹⁶ and to do less during the Barjols mission. On that occasion he forbade him to preach. "As for hearing confessions . . . I leave that to your conscience, but to a more correct conscience than that you have formed to the present."¹⁷ In 1823, he thought it wise to warn him against the dangers for the Congregation if both of them accepted the post of Vicar General.¹⁸ On June 6, 1830, he wrote a strongly worded reproach: "I could not be more put out . . . I did everything, both in my role as admonitor and as your director and confessor to get you to stop fasting, and God knows that I am right. And yet, all my remarks and prayers have been in vain . . . I

¹⁵ *Notices nécrologiques*, II, 87.

¹⁶ Mazenod to Tempier and Missionaries, July 1816.

¹⁷ Tempier to Mazenod, November 11 and 17, 1818; Mazenod to Tempier, December 1818.

¹⁸ Tempier to Mazenod, May 31, 1823.

feel obliged to let you know in writing how put out I am. If I do not succeed with this, I shall let the Assistants of the Society know . . .” He commanded him to take a long rest in Switzerland. He also ordered him to take a rest in 1837 and again in 1858.¹⁹ Bishop de Mazenod started to keep his personal diary after 1837 due to the authoritative intervention of his admonitor.²⁰

The most pathetic case occurs at the time of the Icosia affair in 1835, when Father Tempier had to resort to one of his calculated displays of anger, seasoned with irony, the salt he used on major occasions, to determine the Founder to write to the King and to the Minister of Worship, an essential condition to regain his good standing: “Do you or do you not want to extract yourself from the dire situation in which you are placed? If not, well and good! But in that case you really shouldn’t let us incur all the expense of the proceedings, you ought to forbid Guibert categorically to speak a word about you; you will have to put up with all the injuries they heap on you; you must say *amen* to all the harassment, past, present and future, whether coming from ill-disposed members of the Society or from the government. If that is what you want, I have nothing to say. But if, on the contrary, you do wish to extract yourself from this situation, that I am justified in describing as wretched, you will have to submit to some extent and yield to the opinion of your friends, who also have some concern for your honour . . .”²¹

Father Tempier was also his Superior’s confessor and spiritual director.²² In this capacity, the latter shared important confidential matters with him: the certitude that he felt about

¹⁹ Mazenod-Tempier correspondence in 1830 and Ortolan I, 228-231; Mazenod to Tempier, May 10, 12, 1837, July 21, 1858 (Rey II, 691).

²⁰ Rey I, 702. We still have 10 of the 30 notebooks that he wrote between 1837 and 1860.

²¹ Tempier to Mazenod, August 18, 20, 22, 23, September 11, 1835.

²² Rambert I, 550-551; II, 682; *Missions OMI*, 1951, 251. It seems very likely that Tempier made his confession to the Founder, cf. Mazenod to Tempier, October 6, 1829.

the future of the congregation and the joy he experienced when he blessed the statue of the Immaculate Conception in the church of the Mission on August 15, 1822; the admission he expressed in Rome on January 5 and 10 that, in seeking to have the Rule approved, he was not "sinning" or at least was "sinning less", and of the consolation that he experienced during Mass celebrated in the Gesù on March 4; later, at Fribourg, on August 1, 1830, the bitter thoughts he expressed regarding the state of the Congregation, his "opening up" to Tempier alone from whom "nothing was kept hidden"; then, his inner dispositions on the eve of his episcopal consecration in 1832, and the resolution that he then took, for the rest of his life, "to try, by assiduous application, so to conform (himself) to God's will so that not a single fibre of (his) being will knowingly swerve from it", and the prayer he addressed to God "to have (him) die beneath the hands of the consecrating Bishops . . . if (he) were to cause the Holy Spirit offence by any deliberate fault;"²³ finally, the consolations that he experienced during a Mass he celebrated at Amiens, when he was returning from his trip to England in 1850, or during the course of his visits to the churches in Marseilles where the Blessed Sacrament was exposed in 1860.²⁴

It was in this capacity also that Father Tempier administered the sacrament of the sick to the Founder on June 13, 1829²⁵ and that he stayed at his side with loving care during his long illness of the spring of 1861. It is hard to describe how much patience and love he showed at the sick man's bedside. There is some indication, however, from the letters that he wrote to Oblates at that time; Father Fabre especially, who was a witness of this event, reveals it to us in all its beauty: "For five months he did not leave this bed of suffering where such a beautiful existence was slowly being consumed. Faithful to the mandate of Christian friendship, he rendered to our

²³ Mazenod to Tempier, October 1, 10, 20, 1832; Diary, March 4, 1826 and November 27, 1854.

²⁴ Mazenod to Tempier, August 12, 1850; Rey II, 762-763.

²⁵ Tempier to Guigues, June 14, 1829.

Father the supreme duty and courageously informed him that the moment of the final sacrifice had arrived. We shall never forget the grief filled scenes of the last separation. They acquired I don't know what majestic quality from the august character of the dying Father and the deep resignation of his desolate disciple. We do not insist on the details, for they are known to you; but since sorrow is measured by the intensity of affection, only those who knew Father Tempier's devotedness for our Founder can comprehend his immense affliction. He received the last breath, he heard the last prayer. He it was who pronounced the last farewell: *proficiscere* . . . He closed the eyes of the Father and friend whom he had loved and served for over forty-six years. He knew how to dominate the keenest and deepest emotion in order to carry out all the duties that this separation laid upon him. We witnessed it and are in admiration of it."²⁶

Special characteristics and consequences of this friendship

A variety of features characterize the friendship between the Founder and Father Tempier. We especially note the two that they wished to instill in their sons as a part of the Oblate life: joyful charity in community life and manly honesty between religious brothers who are called to the most demanding apostolic tasks.

They liked to laugh together. The Founder's writings narrate several anecdotes in which appear their spontaneous reactions, the joy of being together and teasing each other. When Father Albini was gravely ill in 1833, Bishop de Mazenod received a letter from Father Guibert which he didn't dare to open for fear it contained the bad news that they expected. "In God's name," he said to Tempier, Jeancard and Cailhol, "give me a few moments . . ." "I turned around," he wrote in his diary on December 1st, "and Tempier grabbed the letter. He had already opened it when I noticed his theft. I involuntarily cried out — Why this indiscretion? What would

²⁶ *Not. nécr.*, II, 102; Rey II, 830-865.

you have gained in learning the bad news an hour sooner, it's not good of you! — Cheer up, Father," Tempier replied, "he's still alive."

When they made a trip together to Biandrate and the northern part of Italy in June-July 1839, the Founder wrote to his uncle Fortuné from Milan: "I want to prove my good will to you, in spite of Father Tempier who is here with his hat on his head and all geared up to run. He has to see everything, and, since we are definitely leaving tomorrow, he cannot rest until he has contemplated the arch of triumph and the arenas. For myself, I dread taking up the pen upon our return; I resist his ardor, but now he has taken away my writing pad and forcibly obliges me to finish . . ."

In the beginning of 1840, Mr. Chappuis who had been a member of the Youth Congregation at Aix, told the Founder that he had proposed him to higher authorities for the see of Paris. The latter refused: he did not agree with the custom of promoting someone from one see to another. Tempier found the letter so good that he obliged its author to recopy it in the register of important letters.²⁷

On the following Saturday, October 31st, at the end of the annual retreat and the eve of the renewal of vows, Father Tempier forgot to go to hear the Founder's confession. The latter sent him a note late in the evening which ends with the following: "All these combined complaints force me to compel you mercilessly to make the pilgrimage to the Bishop's house this very evening. And so I pray to God that he have you in his holy and worthy keeping and especially that he grant you a little more memory."

When he left for Nancy in July 1847, Father Tempier forgot the letter of recommendation that the Founder had prepared for him. The Founder noticed it and sent it promptly to him, adding: "It is true that an open face like yours has only to show itself and hearts will open in confidence when seeing your qualities written there."²⁸

²⁷ Mazenod diary, January 4, 1840.

²⁸ Mazenod to Tempier, July 28, 1847.

In 1853, the Congregation accepted the Major Seminary at Romans and Father Bellon was recalled from England to take charge of it. The Founder wrote a letter to him at Lumières to greet him and offer him a little rest for a few days "at the feet of our good mother Mary." He added: "Father Tempier is coming in to see me. He is not to be managed. He doesn't want to hear about the days I am granting you. He claims you will be able to rest here just as well as at Lumières . . . I am obliged to give in to the reasonings of this Cerberus . . . , so come right away. We will let you sleep as you please. Tempier will overlook condemnation for twelve, fifteen and even 18 hours . . ." ²⁹

During the cholera epidemic in the summer of 1854, the Founder was concerned about the scholastics who were on holidays at N.-D. de Lumières; he wrote to Father Mouchette on August 2: "I know that Father Tempier is to write you at length, he has the time to do so. I even believe that as a man converted to homeopathy, he ought to be sending you all the poisons of this branch of the Faculty as a preventive against cholera. I am not opposed thereto because, in fact, these honest doctors do not use doses that can kill people, since, to the contrary, they pretend to save them. Nevertheless, I insist that we do not rely on this preventive to the point that we neglect the precautions indicated against exposing oneself to the disease . . ."

Such is the fraternal and relaxed climate of the relationship between Mazenod and Tempier. But we also mentioned frankness and virility. The Founder never lacked these things. He even made it a matter of conscience to give fraternal correction to his sons. He was honest and direct with everyone, with no weakness for his dearest friends. In the case of Father Tempier it was reciprocal, according to their agreement. Because we lack sources, however, we don't have details about the interventions of the latter, but the Founder's words often appear to us, we must admit, rather harsh, even exaggerated; this is because he writes under the thrust of his emotions.

²⁹ Mazenod to Bellon, September 14, 1853.

On December 18, 1825, Father de Mazenod wrote from Rome and first complained about the bad quality of the olive oil, and then immediately accused Father Tempier of two faults: he was not faithful to his duty in writing so little, and he thought too much of himself in allowing himself to be named the president of the capitular administration: "Do you find it amusing, Monsignor the Grand Vicar, to spin such nonsensical yarns for me? Upon my word, can you believe that at the distance we are from each other, I can put up with the banal pretexts you are too often accused of making in your letters, blaming sleep or lack of time for cutting short what you have to say. Tell others that, dear friend. I do not doubt that you have many things to do but writing to me is also one of them; so I warn you that when your letters are cut short, like that which I have just received from you the seventh of this month, I will throw them in the fire without reading them . . . (As for the presidency of the capitular council), "in your place I would have found it less unsuitable to put myself in a secondary position rather than to eliminate totally the first Grand Vicar. I will tell you with all the frankness that I owe you that in this circumstance you have paid too much attention to your prestige and not enough to other proprieties. In the name of God, dear friend, be less susceptible on this little point of honor of appearing to be subordinate, of being regarded, as you have said sometimes, as a simple secretary. What does it matter? Were you to be regarded as the most insignificant of men, what would you have to complain about? Do all the good that is incumbent upon you, but do it only for God and, far from desiring that men know that you are the one who is posing the acts, ask nothing better than to be ignored. Otherwise, there is no recompense to hope for . . ."

Father Tempier profited from this lesson on humble and hidden service; he was not as successful in correcting the other trait of his character which always caused the Founder to suffer: his coldness, his lack of emotion. It was in times of solitude or great preoccupations that Bishop de Mazenod expressed himself most strongly on this point. When he was sick and resting at his sister's place at St. Martin-des-Paillières, he

was upset that Father Tempier had advanced the date of the annual retreat without telling him, and he wrote to him on October 6, 1829: "I confine myself to uniting my feeble prayers to yours in order to draw down upon you all the blessings that I could wish for myself, and that is not remarkable because I have never considered you other than as one who is identical to myself; that is why I not only love you very much, but share with you willingly all my thoughts, while being surprised nevertheless that independently of our inter-related positions, you have so much trouble sharing yours with me. Make a resolution once and for all to be less tight-lipped with me. I learn about things after they have been done. This manner of acting is diametrically opposed to the idea that one ought to have of deference and subordination, understood even in the mildest sense." He writes to him again in the same vein on August 1, 1835: "Although you are quite often moody, and one can't ever share with you the pleasure of throwing reserve to the winds, of those uninhibited exchanges that are true joy for two souls as united as we are, and although without it being really your fault, I know, but due to your personality, you are always deferring to me, even so I am unable to live without you."

During the Icosia affair in 1833, the Founder accused Father Tempier of not coming to his defense energetically enough. He wrote to him from Rome on November 5, 1833: "You have no doubt got a lot on hand but I must insist that nothing exceeds my own affair in importance. It is inconceivable that you should have handled it as you have. You have dragged your feet in the matter and I am faced with an inexplicable lack of energy. One would think you were struck dumb or blind . . . Faced with your letter today my arms fell to my sides. I see that you have not reflected on this matter, that you are still groping in the dark . . . Moreover, all my observations are made without bitterness, I have made them because I owe you the truth; . . . I do not love you any the less for what is more mistake³⁰ than neglect of my affairs. You

³⁰ The Founder also accused his uncle and the other co-workers at the Bishop's house.

wouldn't be capable of that." On November 14th, he asks Father Tempier not to take advice from Jeancard or Courtès but rather from Canon Cailhol, who, however, was mistaken in this whole matter. "I counted on him as a moderating influence on what you know is the gloomy view that you take on broaching matters involving difficulties; but it seems that he has let himself be influenced by the gloom you are all suffering from, and on this occasion he hasn't come up to my expectations. Patience, let's not go back over that, just make up for the time that has been lost."

Twice, near the end of their lives, the long friendship between the Founder and Father Tempier had to withstand the shock of some very sharp epistolary clashes. Each time, it was Father Tempier who intervened first. What did he have to reproach Bishop de Mazenod for during the heat of the summer of 1856? Since the summer of 1854, he was resident at Montolivet and only came to the Bishop's house once or twice a week for a council meeting or to spend his allotted time at the office. The Founder consulted him less frequently, mostly because he had with him two valuable men whom he trusted completely: Father Casimir Aubert, the Secretary General, and Superior at Le Calvaire, and Father Joseph Fabre, the General Treasurer and the Superior of the seminary. Besides, Father Tempier was taken up with finishing the construction at Montolivet and thus he distanced himself from his other duties. Whatever the case, he felt obliged to send a "very painful letter" to the Founder. The latter thought it had been inspired by "bad humor", and filled with "unjust and outrageous complaints". He therefore prepared immediately a reply which was probably very harsh, because he decided not to send it before having it read by Father Fabre. Unfortunately, we do not have these letters: thus, we cannot really get to the heart of this matter.³¹

Once again, three years later, in March of 1859, Father Tempier, who always suffered from Catarrh in winter, wrote a

³¹ Mazenod to Tempier, August 26, 1856. Probably the letter was not sent as happened in other similar circumstances.

letter to Bishop de Mazenod that the latter found quite painful. What was it about? We still do not know. But, if we judge by the reply, (susceptibility, resentment, prejudice) it may possibly be about differences in appreciating certain people that the Founder had listened to and favored against his advice. Deeply stung the Founder retorted on March 15 with a list of reproaches which only his great emotivity joined to a certitude of a lasting friendship can explain: "I come to the last point in your letter. I would have much wished that you had refrained from the reflection you were so wrong as to add thereto. You cannot doubt how painful I find your recriminations on this matter and how much they offend me. I am aware that one of your defects is your excessive sensitivity and the depth of your grudges. You do not give up your prejudices once you have contracted them. I have often made this observation and you prove it once more today.

"These prejudices, however unjust they may be, are so rooted in your soul that, far from repelling and rejecting them as I have several times begged you to do, you nourish them, you maintain them within you in such a way that you cannot restrain yourself and are not afraid to manifest them on every occasion. Well, that is very bad, and I would be obliged to blame you even though I myself would not have personal grounds to complain about such injustices in my own regard.³²

"In taking me to task the way you do, you say that you wanted to get things off your chest. You have not succeeded therein. I find that, to the contrary, you have soiled your good heart in so crudely expressing such vile sentiments. It seems to me that I give in often enough to your opinion that you can allow me, without taking offence, the freedom to take at times

³² Father Tempier likely said things against others as well, especially Father Fabre who kept the books and the key to the general funds. The former bursar suffered after 1850 in not having as much freedom as before in financial matters. For example, the Founder wrote to Father Fabre, on August 20, 1854: "I understand (Father Tempier's) impatience. He is not up to date in these matters and people are after him from all sides."

another viewpoint, especially in matters which essentially pertain to my competence.³³

"I drop the subject here because, were I to reply to the silly fourth page of your letter — which you imagined to be of overwhelming logic at my expense — I would prove you mistaken from beginning to end, independently of the supreme injustice of the approach you direct to me to get things off your chest, as you say."

Were these accusations really warranted? We can entertain some doubts about it. Bishop de Mazenod easily went beyond the bounds of his true thinking when he was swayed by emotion. If Father Tempier would have had the same strong reaction on the spur of the moment, there would have often been lightening and fire. We must recognize that his calmness and self control well served the Founder as well as the diocese and the Congregation. What would have happened to the latter without Father Tempier's support and encouragement when, in 1817, Eugene was so disappointed and discouraged by the attitude that Bishop de Bausset showed him at Paris; then, at the controverted decision on making vows in 1818; and the crisis of 1823 when some of the first missionaries left the Institute.³⁴ Especially, what general direction would have been taken for the Congregation — and also the diocese — during the Founder's long physical, psychological and spiritual crisis between 1827 and 1837 that followed the death of Father Suzanne, the Institute's lack of dynamism, the resistance of the Marseille clergy, and the opposition of Louis-Philippe's

³³ The disagreements arose, it seems, from opposing points of view on some decisions that had to be made. There were numerous serious issues to be dealt with, especially in financial matters, because of the Congregation's debt after the building at Montolivet and the founding of the Paris house; also due to the financial needs of the diocese, for the large construction work at the cathedral, at N.-D. de la Garde, the monument to the Immaculate Conception, and the addition to the Bishop's house. We know as well that Father Tempier preferred to put money in buying land or buildings whereas the Founder preferred to borrow from the State and to invest in banks or burses.

³⁴ Mazenod to Tempier, October 19, and 22, 1817. The events of 1818 and 1823 are mentioned by all the Founder's biographers.

government? The Founder was so affected by these events that he was actually sick for several months in 1829-1830, and in 1837.³⁵ In 1818, his uncle Fortuné had correctly assessed him when he said: "It is the lot of excessively ardent characters that they are as easily deflated as they had been elated."³⁶ But, Father Tempier supported him so well then and replaced him when necessary, calmly, steadfastly, in the midst of the most difficult moments, so that the frequent and sometimes long absences of Bishop de Mazenod were not that much noticed and left nothing in a bad situation.

It was a happy, open friendship, a manly and strong friendship, that can be considered more rational and supernatural than exuberant and spontaneous, at least on Father Tempier's part. The Founder who had an extremely sensitive heart and loved all of his sons in a special way,³⁷ particularly those in whom he placed the greatest hope and who responded most openly to him, as Suzanne, Casimir Aubert, Fabre, Ch. Baret, Mouchette, etc., always suffered from the lack of a warm response from Father Tempier, and often said so. Thus, if it can be put this way, we could say that Bishop de Mazenod had a friendship or bond of love and esteem with many of his sons, while with Father Tempier it was a friendship or bond of mind and esteem.

This friendship, which stood all the tests of time, was admired by all those who saw them live and work together. From the moment of his arrival in Aix in 1818, Fortuné spoke of the qualities and weaknesses of the first Oblates, but of Tempier he always spoke in the same words: as Eugene's "intimate friend".³⁸ And from the Marseilles writings of that time, when Father Tempier was always with Bishop de Mazenod, they often refer to him as "a second self"³⁹ "his

³⁵ *Oblate Writings*, introduction to Vol. VI and VII; Rey I, 468-473, 483-485, 702.

³⁶ Fortuné to President de Mazenod, April 9, 1818.

³⁷ *Oblate Writings*, the end of the introduction, Vol. XI.

³⁸ Fortuné to the President, April 9, August 26, September 6, 1818.

³⁹ *Annales du monastère des Clarisses à Marseille*, 66.

soul's life and we can say his heart and right arm."⁴⁰ The narrator speaks of how beautiful it was during the ceremony of February 17, 1853, at the Marseilles seminary, with 60 Oblates present: "The moment of the consecration was beautiful, when every head was bowed and when, for an instant, our well-beloved Father and Reverend Father Tempier, his first assistant, were alone, standing, as two men who were inseparable and offering sacrifice in the presence of the Word that had again descended upon us."⁴¹

We will bring this chapter to a close with a page from the necrological sketch of Father Tempier that sums up very well these 50 years of friendship and close collaboration: "Sacred Scripture divinely speaks of friendship, of devotedness which increases a hundredfold the forces of nature and raises them to the full and complete power of life and immortality: *Amicus fidelis, firmamentum vitae et immortalitatis*. These promises became reality for our two Fathers and they gave us a fascinating illustration of it for nearly fifty years. Who can describe the generosity, the abnegation with which Father Tempier carried out the mission of friendship towards his Superior and Bishop? Who can list the ineffable consolations he poured forth from his heart? Our Founder's heart, so great, so noble, so full of affection, and which had always been so well understood by him whom the Lord placed at his side as the well-beloved disciple. Founders and saints have difficult and painful days to live. Like their divine Model, they are longer on Calvary than on Thabor. Indescribable sorrows beset these lives: that is their giving birth with its indescribable anguish. To the foot of the cross Jesus admitted his well-beloved disciple and this presence was a consolation to him. At the Founder's side he placed a faithful friend who in a number of features resembled the well-beloved Apostle. On the day that Father Tempier's fiftieth anniversary of priesthood was celebrated, an authoritative voice was inspired by this comparison

⁴⁰ *Vie de Mère Marie St-Augustin Ruel, op. cit.*, 175.

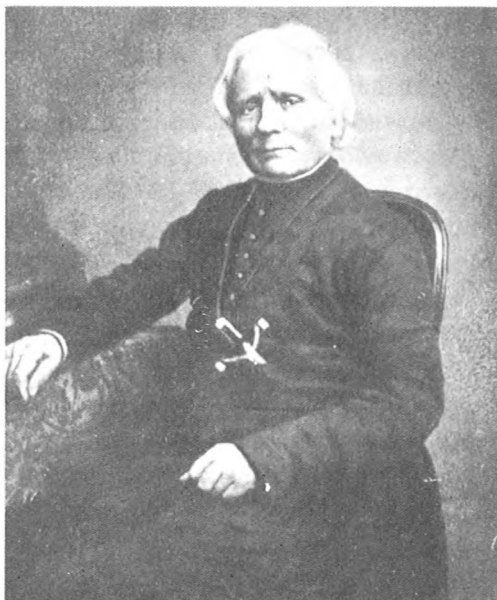
⁴¹ *Missions OMI*, 1872, 111.

and all admired this appropriate application. We are only extending the framework of this comparison by adding the trait of intimate and deep affection that friendship brings; a strong friendship, without weakness, without affectation, a friendship such as ought to exist between two souls who are destined to create a great enterprise.

“What moving tableaux we would have to reproduce were we to narrate the scenes that it was our privilege to contemplate! Joy and tears were a common lot: joys augmented through communication and tears were softened through mutual sharing. Shocks did occur between two natures so very different: the Founder’s vivacity exploded at times, but the humble deference, the modest and tranquil attitude of the disciple halted its thrusts, and soon, after the clouds had dispersed, the serenity of both hearts reappeared. Never did doubt darken these two spirits: their friendship was for a lifetime until death, with a gift of self inspired by virtue, faith and holiness in generous characters who entertain the most noble and glorious ends: the glory of God and the salvation of souls . . .

“The Founder’s call deserved to be heard by Father Tempier and Father Tempier deserved to be called by our Founder. These two men were made to understand each other, to be united, to complete each other, to collaborate in the measure of their respective vocation in the accomplishment of God’s work. This work is a reality, and the dimensions one sees highlights the merit of its architects.”⁴²

⁴² *Not. nécr.* II, 85, 101, 102.



Photos of Bishop de Mazenod and Father Tempier (ca. 1860)



Photo of Father Tempier in old age

IX

LAST YEARS AND DEATH (1861-1870)

The suffering and the joys of the years 1861-1864

The years 1861-1864 can be considered as Father Tempier's most painful. He spent the first five months of them at the bedside of the suffering Bishop de Mazenod. He announced his death on May 21 by a short letter in which he wrote: "Broken hearted as we are with the deepest sorrow, we cannot tell you more at this time."¹ On the 22nd, he did not want to be named Capitular Vicar: since he had just lost "that which he held most dear in this world", and that he felt "crushed, like a man who has nothing left on this earth of miseries."² Besides, he added, he had already on several occasions asked to be relieved of this duty of Vicar General of the diocese.³

On May 24th, he was named Vicar General of the Congregation by the Assistants. He immediately wrote to the Oblates asking them for prayers over and above those prescribed by the Rule. He opens this letter by stating his sorrow: "This voice, so fatherly and so loved, is silent," he wrote. "No more will we hear our beloved Father address us in words that were so good and filled with affection and that did us so much good. Your own sorrow is very great; you must perceive what mine must be." He ended this letter by repeating the Founder's last words and by assuring his brothers of his own entire devotedness: "If we really want to bring joy to our beloved Father's heart and show ourselves to be his worthy sons, let us strengthen the loving bonds of holy charity between us, double our zeal for the salvation of souls and be ever more devoted to our dear and beloved Congregation. During the interim duration of my duties, I shall more than ever belong

¹ Tempier to the Oblates, May 21, 11:00 p.m.

² Tempier to Bishop Jeancard, May 22, 1861.

³ *Ibid.*

exclusively to you, heart and soul, happy that I am able to give you, more than in the past, all the strength and life that the good Lord will give me. This I owe you, this I owe to my beloved Father.”⁴

On May 25, he convoked the General Chapter for December 5, “with God’s help” at Marseilles, in our house at N.-D. de Montolivet. The expression “with God’s help” is very significant and shows us some of the well-founded fears and possibly one of the reasons for the misunderstanding between him and Bishop de Mazenod in 1856 and in 1859. He possibly felt, even more than the Bishop, the ever-growing discontent among some of the clergy regarding the Bishop’s administration. After the first problems in 1823, there were murmurings here and there, especially when Father Fabre was chosen Vicar General of Marseilles in 1854 and the rumor that Bishop Jeancard, a former Oblate and friend of Bishop de Mazenod, would be named auxiliary Bishop in 1855.⁵

The opposition, which had been muted for a long time because people both feared and venerated the old Bishop, came out in the open immediately after his death. Bishop Cruice became involved in this reaction movement against the Oblates. In fact, he had scarcely been named when he wrote on June 18 to ask for the financial records of the bishopric. It was a strange⁶ request which surprised the friends of the deceased and revealed that he had been biased in advance. Shortly after his arrival in Marseilles on September 5th, he made a complete change in the diocesan administration and contrary to custom, did not rename Father Fabre as Vicar General. Father Tempier drew his first conclusion: he withdrew him from the seminary and suggested that Father J. Lagier replace him. What is more, Bishop Cruice withdrew the Oblates from the direction of N.-D. de la Garde before the end of the month, leaving Father Bernard, their Superior, only as chap-

⁴ Tempier to the Oblates, May 24, 1861.

⁵ *Le séminaire de Marseille*, *op. cit.*, 151-155; The Mayor to the Prefect, October 30, 1855.

⁶ Guibert to Jeancard, August 18, 1861.

lain. During the month following, he attacked what he considered to be the heart of the matter, namely, Bishop de Mazenod's last will. He stated that he did not accept it, that his predecessor had bequeathed possessions to the Oblates which belonged not to him but to the diocese.⁷ He tried to regain certain goods for the bishop's account by means of private transactions with the heirs. For the sake of peace and reconciliation, Fathers Tempier and Fabre signed a first agreement with him on November 30th to the effect that they surrendered goods not mentioned in the will of a net value of at least 616,000 francs. To achieve his ends, the Bishop, who was well known in government circles in Paris, threatened to have the Congregation dissolved in France and to demand that Rome withdraw the Papal approval.⁸ Was it to prevent this from happening, Father Tempier made a mysterious, quick trip to Rome in October 1861?⁹ In any case, it was during the heated discussions in November that it was decided to hold the General Chapter in Paris.

Things began to happen quickly after the Chapter and when Father Fabre returned as Superior General to Marseilles. On January 9, 1862, the Bishop's representative came to Montolivet with a new agreement for Fathers Fabre and Tempier to sign. By it, they were to cede three Oblate properties to the Bishop's account that were registered under the names of Bishop de Mazenod and Father Tempier. They were to sign immediately, or Bishop Cruice would leave the following day for Paris and there would ask that all Oblate houses in France be closed, something, he said, he had envisioned already during the summer of 1861. Father Tempier's immediate reaction was at first a categorical refusal. To sign would mean that they accepted the accusation of injustice and diversion; it would also be a denial of and a wrong against Bishop de Mazenod and

⁷ There was some indication of this attitude already in August, cf. Jeancard to Fabre, August 10, 1861.

⁸ *Le séminaire de Marseille*, 155-159; Ortolan III, 23.

⁹ This trip was so secret and fast that we know of it only through brief references in a few letters, cf. Fabre to Jeancard, Nov. 9, 1861; Rey II, 870.

the Congregation. Father Fabre, however, decided that it was best to sign in order to avoid a greater evil, and he requested the Founder's faithful companion to accept this bitter sacrifice as well.

The Oblates had signed under very grave moral fear and thus strove to bring the Bishop to a better frame of mind, and thereafter refused to grant him the procuration that he needed to sell these three properties.¹⁰ In March, the Bishop authoritatively removed Father Bernard as head chaplain at N.-D. de la Garde, a very unpopular decision which he had to rescind. Faced with an untenable situation, the General Council made several decisions on April 28: they would leave the Major Seminary and N.-D. de la Garde; Fathers Fabre and Tempier would go to live in Paris and would only communicate further with the Bishop in writing; for financial matters, they would propose to the Bishop that he request the Archbishop of Aix to act as arbitrator.

Bishop Cruice immediately refused this proposed arbitration and created the impression that he had placed the matter in the hands of the civil authorities, and, at the end of the school year, thanked the Oblates for their service at the Major Seminary. Father Fabre decided to take a further step and to close the Montolivet scholasticate also.¹¹

Having already been stripped of everything that linked him to Marseilles, Father Tempier was struck with two more sorrowful deaths: In 1863, he witnessed the disappearance of two elder members of the Congregation who had been his close collaborators as Assistants General: Father Vincens, who died in an accident, and Father Courtès on whom "he had showered maternal care."¹²

Just as a rose bush has flowers among the thorns, in the same way, Father Tempier had some moments of joy in the

¹⁰ *Le séminaire de Marseille*, 159.

¹¹ Ortolan III, 23; *Missions OMI* 1864, 244; *Le séminaire de Marseille*, 159-161, 163; *Montolivet, op.cit.*, in *Etudes Oblats*, 27 (1968) 262-265.

¹² Balain to Fabre, March 17, 1863; *Missions OMI* 1865, 117.

midst of these sufferings. The most consoling were undoubtedly the General Chapter over whose opening he presided on December 5, 1861, and the election of Reverend Father Fabre as the new Superior General. On the morning of the first day, he urgently requested the capitulars that, in view of his advanced age and infirmities, they should not think of him for the post of Superior General. Understandably, his wish was favorably heard. Nevertheless, it was a real relief to him. Bishop Guibert had in fact already written: "It seems that Father Tempier will not be appointed because of his age and so as not to oblige the Congregation to convoke again in a short time another Chapter for the same reason."¹³ On the other hand, Father Gondrand had congratulated him already on June 21, when he was named Vicar General; would this not go further? He had written: "I know that you were worthy that the spirit of our Elijah should pass into you . . . I gladly pray each day for you, who are so naturally his successor, because your will was the first to unite itself to his and thus conceive the great work that is the Congregation." In short, even though all the Oblates admired and respected Father Tempier just as much as Father Gondrand did, nevertheless there was the desire for a major change, as is often the case at the end of a long term of administration.

The civil authorities and several Oblates had thought that Bishop de Mazenod's successor as head of the Congregation would be Bishop Guibert, the Archbishop of Tours. Everyone esteemed him and often recourse was had to his wise advice. But he spoke immediately after Father Tempier to withdraw his name and to set forward the reasons why it was not appropriate to appoint a Bishop. After that, everyone turned to Father Joseph Fabre, who was the unanimous choice. Now 37 years old, he had been a favorite son of Bishop de Mazenod right from his very entry into the Congregation as well as a friend and collaborator with Father Tempier. Thus, the latter was very pleased with this choice.

¹³ Bishop Guibert to Bishop Jeancard, October 11, 1861.

As soon as the election was over, Father Fabre immediately took his place "in the midst of the Chapter, in the chair the Reverend by Father Tempier had hastened to offer him." The Acts of the Chapter continue: "This venerable Father, who just a moment before had been his Superior, knelt down like a child at the feet of the one who was formerly his son and who will henceforth succeed to our illustrious Founder. He kissed his hand with an admirable humility and the two embraced each other with an emotion that is more easily understood than expressed."

Father Tempier was chosen as first Assistant and the Superior General's admonitor. Thus, he stayed on as his main collaborator; in fact, he was present at most of the Council meetings. But his main duty was to assist the Bursar General, Fathers Soulerin and then Sardou after 1863, and Father François Bellon who had been placed in charge of the Congregation's interests at Marseilles.¹⁴ He was especially busy in finding a place for the scholastics who had to leave Montolivet.

Some Superiors continued to write to him to ask him to visit them and help straighten out some complicated financial matters. For that reason, he went to Bordeaux and to N.-D. de Bon Secours in 1864. He went to Marseilles once or twice a year on business and always stopped at the Juniorate at Lumières, and at Aix where they received him with joy, as they did at Autun.

The year 1864 brought him a very special and deep joy. He celebrated his golden jubilee of priesthood, the first one to do so in the Congregation. This took place at Aix on Thursday, April 7, in the presence of Archbishop Chalandon, Bishop Jeancard, Father Fabre, and many Oblates, as well as his two brothers. In July, the jubilarian attended the first Superiors' retreat at Autun, and, at the end of October, he attended the annual retreat for the Oblates of southern France, at Le Calvaire.¹⁵

¹⁴ See the letters of Tempier to Sardou, Bellon and Soulerin from 1862 to 1869. A.G. Rome.

¹⁵ *Missions OMI*, 1864, 145-160.

Superior of the General House at Paris (1865-1867)

Father Tempier was the local Superior at the General House from 1865 to 1867, and his jurisdiction included the residence at Royaumont which was bought in 1865. This royal abbey, located 30 km north of Paris, could accommodate over 300 people. By the sale of Montolivet in 1864, the General Administration was able to buy it with the intention of putting the scholastics there. Father Tempier gladly set to work to make some arrangements to house a small number of mission preachers and then to work in the gardens. This again became one of his favorite pastimes.¹⁶

He had hardly any worries during his three years as Superior. People complained that he did too much. From 1861 to 1865, Father Magnan, as Superior of the house, found that Father Tempier sometimes took on himself some of the Superior's rights; next, the Assistants found him "a monopolizer", and accused him of leaving them with little to do.¹⁷

However, the Superior always gave the community an "example of regularity, being present at religious exercises, and the most scrupulous observance."¹⁸

He presided at the 50th anniversary ceremony of the founding of the Congregation which was held at the General House on January 25, 1866. The chronicler wrote in the *Missions*: "We can comprehend all that the presence of the venerated companion of our well-beloved Founder inspired in terms of memories and what an indefinable charm it lent to the celebration: he was the only one standing, the only survivor of those who had seen the beginning of the year 1816."¹⁹

¹⁶ Ortolan III, 58-64; This property was sold to the Sisters of the Holy Family of Bordeaux in 1868-1869.

¹⁷ Magnan to Fabre, May 8 & 18, 1863; Vandenberghe to Soullier, January 7 and June 2, 1867.

¹⁸ *Not néc.* II, 105.

¹⁹ *Missions OMI*, 1866, 619.

The Last Years (1868-1870)

No more than the 50th anniversary of his priesthood, was the 50th anniversary of religious profession of the venerable dean by age forgotten. The solemn celebration was held at Autun, at the end of June 1868, on the occasion of the Superiors' annual retreat. The Superior General, in a warm improvised speech, extolled this long career "of virtue and toil." After the last meal, Father de L'Hermite who had preached the retreat after a last greeting to the retreatants, addressed the jubilant: "Yes, the years increase their mark on your face and press upon your head not as a burden but as a diadem. We ask from God that we can still for a long time admire in you the smiles of the grace of this old age which has only had its springtime and which until now has not known any winter."²⁰

Was this the swan song? Soon afterwards, Father Tempier assisted at his last General Chapter, also held at Autun, from August 5th to 18th. On August 17th, before the election of the Assistants, Father Fabre announced that Father Tempier had asked not to be re-elected and suggested that they name him honorary Assistant General. Bishop Guigues seconded the motion and it was "passed unanimously" with the warmest wishes "for long life and health for the one who had worked and suffered so much for the Congregation."²¹

Soon after that, the old gentleman had to take some weeks of rest at Royaumont due to his catarrh.²² He had suffered from this illness for a long time. Already in 1860, Bishop de Mazenod had written to Father Faraud, on April 17: "Father Tempier has aged, perhaps more than I, although I am eight years older than he." On August 6th, he wrote to Archbishop Guibert: "Father Tempier is usually at his perch at Montolivet, but this time he has almost come down from it for good. We were quite anxious about him for several days."

²⁰ *Missions OMI*, 1868, 199, 302.

²¹ Acts of the Chapter, August 17, evening session, 91.

²² Sardou to X, August 24, 1868; Guibert to Fabre, August 28, 1868.

"In the rigid climate of Paris," Father Fabre wrote, "each winter brought for Father Tempier the infirmities inherent in his advanced age. He had always suffered from his throat; there lay the main source of his maladies."²³

He suffered especially during the winter of 1868-1869. He was sent to spend the summer in Provence. Already in 1864 Father Sardou had said that Father Tempier regained his "life and vigor"²⁴ by his trips in the south. After visiting Bishop Guibert at Tours, he went to Bordeaux, Marseilles, Aix, N.-D. de Lumières, and he received a warm welcome wherever he went: a truly triumphal march. "The Lord has blessed his last days," Father Fabre continued to write, "and crowned his forehead with a halo of a happy old age blessed by everyone. In this way the sun disappears from the horizon and spreads over the atmosphere radiant hues that are a veritable mantle of glory."²⁵

He went back to work in the archives when he returned to Paris. It had been his favorite occupation after the Founder's death.²⁶ In 1866, he had prepared some materials for Bishop Jeancard who was working on his book "*Mélanges historiques sur la Congrégation . . .*" On October 25 of that year, Bishop Jeancard wrote to Father Fabre: "Affectionately greet our dear Father Tempier for me. I look forward to obtaining his approval as to the truth of the facts. I have countless temptations to dramatize in my narrative, but a greater place is reserved to him in the life of Our Lord the Bishop and it is especially there that he ought to appear at the Founder's side in reference to the Congregation's history."²⁷

On November 29, 1869, Father Tempier was doing research on Fathers Albini and Luigi so as to complete a dossier

²³ *Not. nécr.* II, 106; Soulerin to Fabre, October 19, 1863, January 13, 1864; Jeancard to Fabre, March 13, 1865.

²⁴ Sardou to Fabre, May 2, 1864.

²⁵ *Not. nécr.* II, 106.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 103, 108, 110, 112.

²⁷ Jeancard to Fabre, June 6, October 25, 1866.

he was making for these two fathers, all this in the archives which was one of the coldest rooms of the house. He then went for his customary walk with Brother Nigro, who had been taking special care of him for several years. They were caught in a cold rain on their way back. That evening, he had an attack of serious bronchial-catarrh fever. His doctor, Mr. Beauvoisin, was called quickly and said that the old man would not live through the night. Father Tempier then had Father Lagier, his confessor called: then, Father Soullier, the first Assistant, brought him Viaticum, administered the last rites, after which the sick man humbly asked "pardon for the scandal he had given to his brothers, and he renewed his vows."²⁸

He was up the next morning at ten o'clock. In spite of several crises, he spent the rest of the winter quietly and in prayer. Several times he was not able to say Mass, however, which was his main support. How many times, had he not, like Bishop de Mazenod, put up with fatigue and fasting for a long time in order not to miss offering the Holy Sacrifice!

Father Fabre, who had spent part of the winter in Rome, returned at the beginning of March and was able to give his best wishes to the sick man, who began his 83rd year on April 2nd. But he got weaker and times of crisis became more frequent. On the 7th, a high fever added complications. On the 8th, he was well enough to talk with Father Fabre for a long time. Together, they decided that he would be buried in the Montmartre cemetery. "He discussed all that as calmly and serenely as if it were someone else." A Sister of l'Espérance and Brother Nigro stayed with him for the night. Just before midnight, they called Father Fabre who came just in time to give him a final absolution. Father Tempier died in the first moments of April 9, 1870, just as the midnight chimes had ended to close the feast of Our Lady of Seven Sorrows. The

²⁸ *Not. nécr.* II, 108-109; Sardou to Rey, December 20, 1869.

funeral was held on April 11, Monday of Holy Week, in the chapel at the General House.²⁹

The news of his death came to the Oblates in distant places all during that year. Many letters expressing sympathy and sadness came back to Father Fabre.

During the General Chapter of 1873, a final solemn service was held with filial reverence for "the first companion of our Founder, his untiring friend, the one that we can refer to as our Second Father."³⁰

²⁹ *Not. nécr.* II, 114-116; *Information OMI*, November 1985: The bodies of Father J. Fabre, L. Soullier and Th. Labouré, Superiors General, also rest in the Montmartre cemetery.

³⁰ Acts of the Chapter of 1873, 254.



Tomb of the Oblates in the cemetery of Montmartre in Paris.
 Father Tempier's name is the first in the centre.

X

PERSONALITY AND SPIRITUAL LIFE

So far we have followed Father Tempier as from the exterior, in the different fields of his many and varied works; we must now try to go a little deeper into his inner being, to take a closer look at his personality and interior life.

This is a difficult undertaking, if there ever is one. Father Tempier left very little in writing, and, as we shall see, he was extremely reserved. Fortunately, some of his contemporaries made spontaneous remarks about him or offered occasional judgments which give us some insight into his being, over and beyond the work he did.

Character and Personality

Everything that has been said above allows us to affirm without further evidence that Father Tempier was a man of action, an "active person".¹ Two other traits of his personality often emerge: he had a certain emotivity, and, on the other hand, he always kept in every circumstance, a serene calm and showed an untouchable aloofness; he kept an exceptional control over his impressions and reactions. At least, that is what those say who knew him best: Fathers Albini, Fabre, A. Rey, and some priests of Marseilles. There are also quite a few indications of this in his correspondence with the Founder.

Father Albini lived at the seminary of Marseilles with Father Tempier from 1827 to 1835. On February 3, 1837, he thanked him for a letter which had given him "tangible pleasure . . . so much is it cordial and affectionate." In three other written items, he talks about the "customary calmness" of the seminary Superior and of his "extreme reserve."²

¹ We follow here the terminology of René Le Senne, *Traité de caractéologie*, Paris 1952.

² Albini to Tempier, October 10, 1828, December 13, 1830, October 18, 1837.

Father Fabre, who had known Father Tempier since 1845, wrote in his necrological sketch: "He consoled his heart little by communicating his trials. His joy he shared in common, his sorrow he reserved to himself." "His heart . . . contained waves of immense affection." At the Founder's death, "he knew how to dominate the most keen and deep emotion in order to carry out the duties this separation laid upon him." "Under an austere, cold, almost insensitive exterior, the southern nature of Father Tempier hid a heart of gold, one capable of all the heroics of charity."³

Father Rey lived with him almost continually from 1845 onwards. He writes that Father Tempier "hid under austere and stern externals a deep sensitivity which he always strove to master. He was a man of duty before all else, and never surrendered himself fully to the testimonies of affection: he looked upon the latter as useless."

The Abbé Timon-David often had business at the bishopric or the seminary. He expresses himself pretty well in the same terms. Father Tempier hid "under forms that were somewhat abrupt one of the best hearts one can find . . . Though of an exterior that did not stand out as brilliant . . . he was the model of a good administrator by the precision and sureness of his judgment, to which he joined a goodness, condescendence and solicitude for religious communities . . ."⁴

The Abbé Payan d'Augery often met Father Tempier at the home of the religious Victim sisters. He described him as follows: "Happily, this rather calm temperament softened, if we may dare to say so, the outbursts and off-the-cuff statements of Bishop de Mazenod in whom holiness left the provençal character survive."⁵

Let us illustrate these testimonies with several others which refer to precise situations. Let us recall his reflections

³ *Notices nécrologiques OMI* II, 97, 100, 102, 106.

⁴ Rey II, 384; Timon-David, *Le P. Jean du Sacré-Coeur*, 113 and 154.

⁵ Payan d'Augery, *Vie de J.A. de Gérin Ricard*, *op. cit.*, 119; this text is quoted by L. Giraud, *M. Vitagiano*, *op. cit.*, 53.

about the accident in 1821, already narrated above. After having invoked the Blessed Virgin, "I was careful in tumbling down to compose myself, to gather in my legs and arms in such a way as to avoid any fracture."⁶ In the autumn of 1835, the scholastics move in to reside at the seminary. The Founder met them in April 1836 and then wrote to their former Superior, Father Casimir Aubert: "They claim that they receive little encouragement where they are. I give credence to this because of the superior's many engagements and perhaps a little due to his character that they are not perhaps in a position to appreciate."⁷

On July 30, 1847, Bishop de Mazenod presents him to Father Marguet, the Vicar General of Nancy, in the following terms: "Through his excellent qualities he makes up for certain external good traits that he lacks, if he is judged by his coldness. But capable men appreciate the worth of his true calibre." When the cholera epidemic was raging and Bishop de Mazenod was absent, Father Mille wrote to Father Tempier in 1849: "I now wish you strength and courage to face up to everything. You need this in the present circumstance; I know from experience, however, that you do not lack sang-froid any more than God's help in these calamities . . ."⁸

We have the same impression when we read what happened at Father Mouchette's ordination in 1853. The latter writes: "When I had the happiness to receive the priesthood in the chapel of the Sisters of Nazareth at Marseilles, a most moving scene occurred. This ordination was special for the Oblates: Father Lacombe, Barrett and I received the priesthood, Brother Gérard the diaconate. All except myself were destined for the foreign missions. At the moment of the prostration, when the Bishop turned to the ordinands to pronounce the words: *ut hos electos*, he was halted by a torrent of tears. All present wept; the ordinands wetted with their tears the vestments on which their head rested. Only good Father Tem-

⁶ Tempier to Mazenod, December 14, 1821.

⁷ Mazenod to Cas. Aubert, April 21, 1836.

⁸ Mille to Tempier, Sept. 7, 1849.

pier, who assisted the Bishop, remain impassive and, when the venerable Prelate had calmed himself somewhat and resumed the prayer formula, Father Tempier pointed out to him the precise word where he had stopped. After the ceremony, the Bishop was radiant with joy: Ah, he said, the Holy Spirit came down quickly today!"⁹

This calm and this self-mastery was not always without merit. One smiles at what he confides to the Founder on May 3, 1851, after he had left for Canada: "I was in such an emotional state at the time when I was going to separate myself from you . . . that I couldn't keep my mind on business matters. This emotion, the greatest I have experienced in my life, was perceived, in spite of my effort to hide it from the eyes of those around me. I then wanted ever so much to be alone and out of sight of witnesses so that I could give free rein to the sensitivity that had taken hold of me . . . And good Father Fabre's presence — he accompanied me to the stage coach — which would have been such a source of pleasure on other occasions, embarrassed me this time."¹⁰

From these quotes and anecdotes above we can say that Father Tempier's 'active' temperament did not suppress all emotion. The latter, however, was so guarded and kept under control that it would seem, we must place him as a non-emotive secondary, a phlegmatic type,¹¹ with both its negative and positive qualities.

A phlegmatic person is said to be apparently cold, not demonstrative, and showing affection but rarely. That is exactly what the Founder often complained about in his friend. His contemporaries at times accuse him of being distracted, independent, in a gloomy or bad mood, even of being angry or holding a grudge.

⁹ Rambert II, 634.

¹⁰ Tempier to Mazenod, May 3, 1851.

¹¹ Bishop de Mazenod was a passionate character, cf. Jos. Pielorz: *La vie spirituelle de Mgr de Mazenod, 1782-1812. Etude critique*. Ottawa, arch. l'histoire oblate, n. 14, 1956, 167-194.

His distraction, mentioned by the Founder and also Father Martin who speaks of him having "a reputation for being distracted",¹² should, in our opinion, probably be attributed more to his many duties than to his character.

Several times the Founder accused his collaborator of being too independent. In October 1829, when Father de Mazenod was away, Father Tempier moved the annual retreat at Aix ahead without letting him know about it. The latter wrote to him: "I cannot be annoyed with you about anything, even when you fail in some duty, because you do it rather by distraction or by some sort of habitual independence that your position has given you ever since you joined the Society."¹³ In 1847, he again called him to account for, as Bursar General, some serious decisions he had made at Nancy without consulting anyone. In 1856, he complained about not being informed about matters at Montolivet and he admitted that he had always allowed Father Tempier to do what he wanted.¹⁴ This is a serious accusation that the Founder probably made when he was deeply upset. He so often referred to Father Tempier as his *alter ego*, however, and so many times allowed him total freedom in making decisions that he probably felt that he was always authorized to do so.

Let us now talk about his humor. Several Oblates say that the Bursar General was often gloomy, and at times they even speak of anger. The Founder had his leaps of high dudgeon that everyone knew well enough without being too concerned, realizing as they did that everything would soon cool down. In Father Tempier's case, one has the impression that his anger was more calculated, based on a sort of instinctual pedagogy whose aim is to gain attention, or to underline some wrong or injustice; but they caused more harm and often lasted for a long time so that some spoke of him as sometimes

¹² Mazenod to Tempier, Oct. 6, 1829, to Cas. Aubert, December 7, 1837; Martin to Tempier, August 8, 1848, February 22, 1849.

¹³ Mazenod to Tempier, October 6, 1829.

¹⁴ Mazenod to Tempier, August 17, 1847; to Mouchette, April 23, 1856; to Fabre, August 26, 1856.

entertaining unjust and tenacious bias¹⁵ of deep resentments,¹⁶ of partiality and being obstinate in some of his negative judgments about some of his confreres.¹⁷

The Founder, little serene because he was exiled at N.-D. du Laus in the summer of 1835, complained that Father Tempier was "often very moody" and, because of his character, was "very reserved" toward him.¹⁸ The General Bursar received a bill, during the summer of 1840, for a piano that had been bought at N.-D. de Lumières without him being told about it. He wrote a first letter to the Superior, Father Honorat, but received no reply. He wrote a second, much more vigorous one, which struck a nerve. On August 20, Father Honorat replied: "You were certainly not in good humor when you wrote me your last letter. If you are loaded down with business affairs, what can I do about it? With all my heart I would like to relieve you of half of your burden, but we also have our own and we must of necessity bear it because that is God's will . . . I would like you to know me well. I am not disobedient, I am not obstinate, I do not act deviously, I don't even think I can reproach myself for being negligent in business matters; but one does need time for everything."

On April 7, 1842, Father Moreau, the Superior of the Major Seminary at Ajaccio, wrote to him on business and added: "They tell me that you are glorying in being at odds with everyone. Don't ever be angry with me who must so often have recourse to your charity . . ." In September 1846, Father Dassy started building the monastery at N.-D. de Bon Secours even though Father Tempier had written to ask him to wait a while. The Bursar found out through the grapevine that everything was going ahead. He wrote again without mincing any words. On September 22, Father Dassy replied: "I am not surprised at the severe tone of your letter . . ., but I hope that

¹⁵ Mazenod to Tempier, August 1, 1835.

¹⁶ Telmon to Mazenod, March 11, 1843.

¹⁷ Gondrand to Tempier, June 20, 1861; Alex. Audruget to Fabre, June 16, 1862.

¹⁸ Mazenod to Tempier, August 1, 1835.

my reply will show you: 1) that I acted in good faith; 2) that I even acted wisely in my haste; 3) that, when all this is said and done, I did not act as quickly as you think . . . I ask you as a favor, and on both knees, excellent Father, once you have read my explanations, please write me at least two lines, by return mail, either to tell me that you forgive me and are not angry at me, or to authorize me to continue the work without my failing in obedience. You are so good, you will not leave me a whole week in my anxiety because, alas, your letter is terrible and I am in real difficulty to stir up my courage . . .”¹⁹ And in 1847-1848, when the property at Nancy was bought and improved, both the Founder and Father Dassy mention in their letters to Father Tempier that his replies had been “ab irato”.²⁰

Finally, there is his rather strong intervention addressed to Bishop Buissas. They had agreed to send a missionary team to Limoges to preach missions. The Bishop began to use them mainly to replace parish priests. Father Burfin, named Superior in 1848, complained to the Founder who spoke to the Bishop about it but to no avail. Father Tempier then took it upon himself to remind Bishop Buissas, without beating around the bush, about the terms of the agreement. Father Burfin thanked him on July 25, 1848, saying: “Your letter to the Bishop angered him. But beware lest you repent therefrom. To my mind, that is one of the best deeds of your life. Loyal anger is worth more than artificial moderation . . . The end result will not be bad, to the contrary, agreements are now commented upon according to the text: the Bishop is now speaking only about missions and retreats!”

Let us note again that it is to Father Tempier himself that the accusing texts were addressed, and this brings them close to fraternal correction or friendly teasing in view of explaining or excusing oneself. Besides, even though, as bursar he

¹⁹ Dassy wrote to the Founder on September 26, 1846: “Father Tempier dealt me a terrible blow in his letter last week . . .”

²⁰ Mazenod to Tempier, August 17, 1847; Dassy to Tempier, January 1, 1848; Telmon to Cas. Aubert, Oct. 26, 1857.

was angry at times, as a formator he knew how to measure his so-called angers according to the gravity of the faults or excesses that he wished to correct. To the scholastics he simply said: "Well! Well! What a plague! That's not good."²¹

Phlegmatic people like to be right. People don't often complain of this defect in Father Tempier, but this tendency did show up on some occasions. Then he used irony as a weapon. One can give several examples. In November 1818, they learnt at Aix that Father de Mazenod has started the Barjols mission with a penitential procession, in his bare feet, with a rope around his neck, that he slept without a mattress, etc. The Founder then wrote that he was sick but did not mention the procession, which in fact, had not taken place. Father Tempier not yet knowing what to believe, astutely replied on November 17: "You told us nothing about all the marvellous deeds that they published here . . . Don't let your modesty deprive us of these edifying details!"

As we have seen, Father Tempier wrote a very strong letter full of irony, on August 24, 1835 to the Bishop of Icosia, even a bit biting, in which he obliged him to write to the king so as to gain the good graces of Louis Philippe's government. When on October 16, 1847, he wrote to Father Charles Baret, the philosophy professor at Lumières, who was speaking ill of the text books in front of his students, Father Tempier defended these derided authors and added in reference to the "disdainful and foolish censors" of works "that they would not be able to compose one tenth as well. I would gladly have said to them: give us your admirably conceived ideas which will most likely appeal to everyone's taste and send the literary world into ecstasy. While we are waiting for these masterpieces to appear, allow us to use that which exists." The strongest letter in this vein was the one that he wrote to the Founder in August 1852, in which he opposed the naming of Father Gondrand as the eloquence professor for the young fa-

²¹ Bermond to Faraud, May 10, 1850.

thers in their pastoral year. The Founder, who liked Father Gondrand's speaking ability and wanted to help him to become a better religious, insisted on adding him to the staff of those teaching the "major courses." Father Tempier, on the other hand, thought that this Father was not a good religious and that his style of preaching was completely opposed to that of the Congregation. His letter, which will be published with his writings, is a masterpiece of irony and can only make its point by showing that the Founder's position is directly opposed to all his own principles.

We will now consider the positive attributes of a phlegmatic person, who is seen as the most simple and best endowed of men; calm and silent, with self-control, prudence, ease to follow a rule of life, sober, economical, with good work habits, constant and faithful in friendship and commitments, discreet and reserved, loveable and loving family life, open to the ideas of others, with a logical and methodical mind, etc.

These qualities and virtues can be found clearly in Father Tempier: unfailing friendship, constant fidelity in serving the de Mazenods, application and perseverance in carrying out his duties as bursar and formator, prudence in giving advice etc. We will illustrate a few of that are often underlined by his contemporaries, especially his discretion and reserve.

He was a self-possessed person, who reflected before he acted. Timon-David describes his way of acting when he had to make important decisions. Father Jean du Sacré-Coeur, went to seek his advice on May 11, 1850, as to whether he should join the Capuchins or found a congregation. "Father Tempier," Timon-David wrote, "pushed his glasses up his forehead, as he always did in serious moments, and looking at him with his keen eye, said: 'So let's see, what did the Bishop tell you?' The Father narrated what transpired in his two audiences. Father Tempier coughed a few times, that was his manner when he needed time to reflect . . ." ²²

²² Timon-David, *Le p. Jean du Sacré-Coeur, op. cit.*, 166.

The Fathers knew him capable of listening and of easing in without saying a word. They often preferred to write to him rather than to the Founder, when they were dissatisfied with some policies of the General Administration. Thus, in October 1836, Father Telmon, professor in Corsica, complained to Father Tempier about Father Pachiaudi's leaving and about some points of the Rule. Bishop de Mazenod happened to get ahold of the letter and proceeded to wash the young professor's head. "What was your intention, my dear fellow, in addressing . . . this collection of impertinences that you are writing to Father Tempier? . . . You want to inflict wounds, you are like a ravening beast, you pass rash judgments on your brothers, it seems as if you delight in blackening your Mother's name . . ." Likewise, on October 10, 1837, the Founder noted in his Diary that Father Guigues has written "with unbelievable insolence" to Father Tempier. In neither of these two cases do we know how the latter reacted. In the necrological sketch, Father Fabre could write: "Never has anyone gone so far in respecting a secret and practising discretion in the exercise of the responsibilities that were his."²³

Father Tempier truly used discretion to the extreme. People often complained about it. The anonymous author of *la Vie et mission de la Mère Marie St-Augustin de Jésus Ruel* recounts a typical case. In 1828 or 1829, Father de Mazenod went to interview this woman to judge if he should allow her to start the Congregation of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary and to make vows. He was all the more demanding when she did not hide the mystical favors she had received. She explained herself to Father Tempier, who knew her well, and asked him to say whatever he thought best. "Out of prudence, he answered with only a few words that were without significance . . . I again gave Father Tempier the permission I had already given him in confession to communicate to my Superiors all of my views . . . Father Tempier," the author continues, "was forced to murmur a few things to justify Mother St-

²³ *Not. nécrologiques* II, 98; Mazenod to Telmon, October 14, 1826.

Augustin, but how concise his replies were and how much he reserved to himself!"²⁴

In December 1830, Father Albin and the Fathers at the seminary complained that Father Tempier kept to himself all the news of the Founder, who had been away for six months. On August 16, 1848, Father Martin didn't know why his nephew left the seminary, because the Superior, "according to his longstanding custom, hadn't said two words to me about it." In 1857, Father Telmon, the Superior at Lumières, began to think that Father Tempier did not trust him any more. He wrote to tell him that he found it strange that "such a reserved person" would let people know what he was really thinking.²⁵

Especially Father Soulerin, who lived with Father Tempier in Paris after 1861, complained that he never told the Assistants General anything. Out of respect, Father Fabre, when absent, sent his news to Father Tempier, but the latter never communicated the same to the others.²⁶ He was sent to sell Montolivet at Marseilles in the fall of 1864 but contacted no one. Father Soulerin wrote to Father Fabre, on October 10: "I regret that I have no news to give you about Father Tempier . . . I am not at all surprised at his silence. When he will have examined, brushed and re-brushed everything at Montolivet and elsewhere, he will rub his hands and that will be all that we will know. Forgive me this little comment, it is made without malice . . ." The same remark in 1865. Royaumont had just been purchased and Father Tempier often went there. "He was there yesterday, he is there today," Father Soulerin wrote to Father Fabre on May 30th. "It is said that he will go there tomorrow and, who knows, perhaps another day more. That will depend on the space to be measured out. . . In the meantime, the good Father fills his leisure time with geometry and architecture. Can we be in doubt that he is hatching some excellent

²⁴ *Vie et mission de la Mère Marie St-Augustin*, op. cit. 173-174.

²⁵ Albin to Mazenod, December 13, 1830; Martin to Mazenod, August 16, 1848; Telmon to Tempier, May 5, 1857.

²⁶ Soulerin to Fabre, May 10, 1863, January 14, 1864.

project? But what I am skeptical about is that he will reveal his secret. He will return as he left. You alone will be informed, and even there, perhaps . . . a little later.”

On Christmas night of 1865, a chambermaid accidentally started a fire in one of the rooms of the General House. She succeeded more or less to repair the damage. She would perhaps have been able to keep it quiet, Father Soulerin wrote again on December 29th, “if Father Tempier who gets to the bottom of everything without ever letting anyone else know what he is about had not called in a whole fire brigade to check out the chapel and the whole house from top to bottom.”

Even though he kept professional secrets to himself, Father Tempier always liked community life. When he was not loaded down with work and problems, he liked to laugh and he was considered as someone a person could easily relate to. Again, let us give a few factual examples. He learned by a letter from Eugene in 1817 that Fortuné would be appointed Bishop of Marseilles; Father Tempier and Maunier, young Carpentier wrote, “thought up a ruse to catch his confreres and the members of the Youth Congregation, namely, to say, without specifying the person, that Mr. de Mazenod had been named a Bishop. Several were caught, among them Mrs. Guigou who nearly fainted!”²⁷

During a mission in February 1823, Father Tempier warned Father Dupuy, who had stayed at Marseilles, that he would skin him alive if he did not write. The later replied immediately in the same language: “O cruel mountain people, your heart is as icy as the climate of your surroundings.”²⁸

When Father Magnan was Superior of the Major Seminary in Ajaccio, he always wrote long letters to his Superiors at Marseilles. The Founder praised him for it once and Father Magnan thanked him for approving his “excessively long letters” and he added: You are quite “different in this than Father Tempier who showed me the other side of the coin and who,

²⁷ Alex. Carpentier to Mazenod, November 13, 1817.

²⁸ Dupuy to Tempier, February 28, 1823.

apparently afraid lest your compliment make me proud, found nothing more polite to say to me than that my last letter made him yawn so much that he feared his jaw would be dislocated. These men of finance, buried in their positivism, choke and think they have lost their foothold when one doesn't speak to them of money, masonry, etc.; but I am waiting for his blood to warm up to give him wit for wit and confer upon him in good and due form the title of the great yawner."²⁹

Father Rey, who spent summer holidays with Father Tempier in 1854 and 1855, wrote regularly to Father Fabre: he often told him they were "happy and content", that the Superior was laughing "heartily" and even "to tears" and that from time to time, "he supports his arguments in a discussion, by opening bottles of excellent wine."³⁰

Father Tempier was especially in good spirits during the semi-rest period of the holidays. There is another example of this in his letter to Father Vincens dated July 13, 1860. He asks him to have shirts made for the scholastics, in two sizes, and concluded: "You will easily understand what I am saying: shirts are a kind of sack which will always adjust themselves to a man's body, even though there are differences between the individuals who wear them; and then, no one knows what is underneath when we are fully dressed." To this joking, he joins moral and historical considerations as well as personal ones. "Those of more medium height are the majority among us. For the rest, we must not humiliate our category of people, nor do we want to have those who are taller becoming proud at our expense. History tells us that, generally speaking, all great men, with rare exceptions, did not surpass medium height and even were below that."

Finally, the honorable Georges-Etienne Cartier, the Prime Minister of Canada, stopped in Paris in January of 1867, on his way to London to finalize plans for Confederation. He came to the General House to give his respects to the Superior

²⁹ Magnan to Mazenod, December 14, 1846.

³⁰ Rey to Fabre, August 9, 1854, August 15, 1855.

of the Oblates. Since Father Fabre was away, Father Tempier, then 78 years old, received him and then returned his visit at the grand-hotel on a morning that was snowy and icy. Father Soulerin, who went with him, wrote to Father Fabre: "Skating is not one of Father Tempier's passions: he pushed prudence to the extreme the other day when we were going to the grand-hotel by giving me his arm. You should have seen us laugh; it was enough to delight everyone passing by."³¹

As he was able to laugh on occasion, he was also someone to whom a person could easily relate. Father Albini, who wanted to save Brother Ricciardi's vocation in 1826, entrusted him to Father Tempier, whom he considered able, on one hand, to "use a bit of *compelle intrare* with him", and on the other hand, through his "persuasive style" to convince him to stay.³² When the Founder presented Father Tempier to the Vicar General of Nancy on July 30, 1847, he said: "You will settle everything with him, my Grand Vicar and the first as well as the eldest of my companions in the holy undertaking that you are proposing to adopt in your diocese. In advance I approve everything that he will do. You will have no difficulty in getting along with him; he is a man of zeal and devotedness . . ."

In the biography of Father Jean du Sacre-Coeur, Timon-David speaks several times of Father Tempier's "finesse" and states that "it was easy to get along with such a person . . . He did not insist on his ideas; he had too broad a spirit for that. He made the objections that his wisdom suggested to him, but he bowed immediately to the ideas of others when he believed that they came from God."³³

Timon-David spoke of objections and wisdom. That also seems to be trait of Father Tempier's character. We find this often in the few letters of his that we still have. The one that he wrote to Bishop Arbaud on November 25, 1825, is the most typical. Bishop Arbaud had made an agreement with the

³¹ Soulerin to Fabre, January 1867.

³² Albini to Tempier, May 12, 1826; cf. also Tempier to Chevalier, March 24, 1856.

³³ Timon-David, *Le p. Jean du Sacré-Coeur, op. cit.*, 114, 169-170, 176.

Congregation about the property at N.-D. du Laus. Father Tempier wished to make some minor changes in it. He did not pass over any of the Bishop's objections and replied to them with sure logic and peremptory arguments. We can recall also what Father Paris said in 1832: "He who loves reasons so much, he should at least listen to me when I reason with him."³⁴ In 1854, the Founder begged pardon for not writing letters "as orderly as Father Tempier's" and, in 1859, he said that he had understood, "all the reasons" of the Bursar General "which were clear and well-founded."³⁵ During the summer of 1859, the scholastics wanted to walk to Ste-Baume. But Father Audric's "persuasive eloquence" and Father Fouquet's "good words" did not carry any weight with the Superior's "overpowering objections."³⁶

At times, his rigid arguments were replaced by reflections of wisdom and experience, seasoned however with some lightheartedness and humor: "You see, my friend," he said one day to Father Jean du Sacré-Coeur, "women are more shrewd than we are."³⁷ In order to encourage Father Léonard to accept immediately any seminarian who wanted to join the Oblates, he wrote to him on January 23, 1847: "Presence moves power." In order to excuse himself for not having written sooner to Father Chevalier at Buffalo, he said on March 24, 1856: "I see that by your silence you are as late as I am, and so we are two guilty people who will not find it difficult mutually to pardon each other."

Spiritual Life

These pages, interspersed with anecdotes, showed some of Father Tempier's character traits.³⁸ Now, let us try to pene-

³⁴ Paris to Mazenod, (1832), 12.

³⁵ Mazenod to Fabre, August 8, 1854, March 7, 1859; Tempier to Chevalier, March 19, 1855.

³⁶ Sivy to Mouchette, (summer 1859), 4.

³⁷ Timon-David, *Le p. Jean du S.-C.*, 175.

³⁸ Father Fabre wrote: "It is the mark of a great man to keep, amidst the most varied changes, a steady spirit as well as a middle course in virtue and temperament which seem to resist the vagaries of time, struggles of passion and human weakness", cfr. *Not. nécr.* II, 91.

trate a little deeper into his interior and spiritual life. The task is not any easier. This man who kept his professional secrets to himself so carefully, is even more parsimonious in letting details regarding his intimate life with God filter through. Fortunately, here as well, some of his fellow Oblates can supplement a little, and thus, help us to catch a glimpse, at least from the exterior, of the virtues that a person cannot completely hide: humility and the desire for perfection, a life of prayer, a spirit of sacrifice, fraternal charity, etc.

Father Tempier fulfilled the condition that God demands of someone whom he calls for a great work: a profound mistrust of one's own power, true humility, and a strong desire for holiness. This is what strikes us the most in his first letters to the Founder in 1815. "I am in complete agreement with your views, my dear confrere, and far from waiting for further insistence to enter into this holy work which is so in line with my desires, I assure you, to the contrary, that if I had known of your plan, I would have been the first to ask to be received into your Society . . ." His second letter, that of December 20th, expresses the same sentiments: "Ever since you cast your eyes on me in order to associate me with your apostolic works and to make me share in the fruits of holiness that await us in our dear Congregation, I cannot but think of you with the deepest sentiments of gratitude and thank God continually for having inspired in you this design of mercy for me. I would only like you to temper in your mind the exaggerated opinion that you have of my so-called necessity, as you call it, so that you will not be misled when you will have the chance to judge it. You will soon recognize that although there is a certain amount of good will in me, there is not much else . . ." In 1817 he profusely thanks him for his edifying letters: "Write such letters to us often . . . How come my poor heart doesn't change more quickly and become better?" And when in Paris the Founder is let down because of Bishop Bausset's new attitude, Father Tempier hastened to encourage him and to congratulate him, even rejoicing in this cross: "We have to admit that God is treating us with a lot of goodness,

since he lets us share in the same gifts that he gave to his own Son when the latter was on earth. You allow us not to separate ourselves from you, even though it seems that these humiliations are for you personally. With the few things that we have done, how did we ever merit this grace to share in this way in the precious cross of God's Son? Truly, looking into myself personally, I am all confused and feel that I am far from meriting this favour . . . Our poor family, deeply humiliated and greatly despised, would soon become completely holy, and then what fruit we would bear!"

In 1819, Father Tempier, who was Superior at Laus was edified by the generosity of Fathers Maunier and Touche and he cried out: "When will I have even the shadow of their virtues! Pray the good Lord a little for me so that I their example will help me improve."³⁹ In 1823, when he learned that Bishop Fortuné wanted to name him Vicar General, his first reaction was to thank him for the trust, but especially to protest humbly that he did not feel he had the talent or virtue needed for "this terrifying duty on account of the responsibility it entails."⁴⁰

In spite of some desire to be recognized he may perhaps have had in the beginning, Father Tempier thereafter learned how to efface himself completely in the service of the Mazenods, the diocese and the Congregation, to persevere in this, his whole life long, and to conduct himself with total dedication without ever taking anything back. He was delighted with the feast days held in the Congregation to honor the Founder, the honors he received as Bishop and Senator, while he himself was forgotten. Father Fabre seems to refer to this when he wrote to Bishop Jeancard on November 9, 1861: "He is really on the cross, this devoted Father who has done so much, for whom we did and are doing so little."

A simple reflection he made in a business letter written to Father Chevalier on March 24, 1856, gives the impression

³⁹ Tempier to Mazenod, August 22, 1817, Oct. 23, 1817, Sept. 14, 1819.

⁴⁰ Tempier to Mazenod, May 31, 1823.

that he was constantly living with the thought of death and thus awaiting a reward that this life does not give: "Make your last will . . . We are all mortal beings, and whoever entertains the idea that he still has before him a long series of years to live on this changing earth may be closer to death than he thinks. Let us take care . . ."

Father Tempier's piety and spirit of prayer is the most evident of his virtues. Father Fabre wrote: "Yes, he was pious, with a solid and deep piety that captivates the soul and puts it into immediate contact with God. He had a taste for holy things. The hours of prayer did not at all seem long to him."⁴¹ When the Founder in 1823 informed him that Fortuné wanted to name him Vicar General, Father Tempier listed among his reasons for refusing also the following: "What is more, one has to have time to pray . . . You would not want me to expose myself to perdition, you love your sons too much for that."⁴²

Just like Bishop de Mazenod, he loved the liturgy and Church ceremonies. Soon after he arrived at Laus in 1819, he was happy to announce that "we are reciting the breviary piously and properly" and that we are carrying out services at the altar "with every possible dignity." If parish priests would do the same, "their people could not resist, they would be more pious."⁴³ When he became Vicar General of Marseilles, he wrote in 1824, that "it is impossible to celebrate Holy Week and Easter with more solemnity and pomp" than is done at the cathedral.⁴⁴ He was always at the side of the Bishop for the major ceremonies;⁴⁵ only on Holy Saturday did he insist on his right to say Mass: Father Fabre wrote: "And yet, it was the day after Good Friday, which had been spent according to all the austerities of our holy Rule. The Prevost forgot all fatigue in order to sing with new ardor the Alleluia of the resurrection."⁴⁶ It was Father Tempier who in December 1854

⁴¹ *Not. nécr.* II, 96.

⁴² Tempier to Mazenod, May 31, 1823.

⁴³ Tempier to Mazenod, June 13, July 5, 1819.

⁴⁴ Tempier to Touche, April 20, 1824.

⁴⁵ Mazenod diary, Jan. 6, 1826, Oct. 8, 1837.

⁴⁶ *Not. nécr.* II, 96.

was in the city "the one who established the official portion" of the religious ceremonies in honour of the Immaculate Conception.⁴⁷

The seminary Superior inculcated a love for the liturgy and well carried out religious ceremonies in the seminarians and scholastics. The Founder noted in his diary "the beautiful, pious singing"⁴⁸ at the anniversary service for Father Paris, which had been presided over by Father Tempier. Passing through Montreal in 1841, Bishop Bourget of Montreal, also noted in his diary that two seminarians had served his Mass "with grace and modesty", and that the students at the seminary seemed "angelic and sing God's praises admirably."⁴⁹ Finally, just like the Founder, Father Tempier saw in prayer the "bond" which united the Oblates dispersed all over the world in "one mind and heart."⁵⁰

Father Tempier's piety was nourished on sacrifice and was "full of discernment", Father Fabre wrote.⁵¹ Father Tempier had already written in 1817 that "To share in the precious cross of God's Son . . . is a grace of predilection that God gives only to his saints."⁵² Such grace abounded in his own life. Besides the difficulties and obstacles at the Institute's beginning, and the solitude that experienced at N.-D. du Laus, he strove valiantly to fulfill to the best of his ability during his whole life all the duties that were laid on him. Vicar General of Marseilles, Bursar and Assistant General of the Oblates, superior of the Major Seminary and the scholasticate, such were the crosses, often very heavy, that he carried lovingly for nearly half a century. We have seen all the work, the annoyances at certain times, and the concerns that these duties imposed on him. Vital Grandin, who was a scholastic at Marseilles in 1854, entered the Superior's room one day and

⁴⁷ Jeancard to Fabre, Dec. 18, 1854.

⁴⁸ Mazenod diary, Sept. 18, 1837.

⁴⁹ Bishop Bourget, *Relations de voyage* . . . , 339. A.A.M.

⁵⁰ Louis d'Herbomez to Tempier, February 17, 1863.

⁵¹ *Not. nécr.* II, 96.

⁵² Tempier to Mazenod, Oct. 23, 1817.

found him overloaded and saying to himself: "They must have pity on me, otherwise, I don't know what will become of me!"⁵³

What can we say of the example of a life of regularity that he gave for a lifetime in the houses of formation?⁵⁴ What personal discipline such daily fidelity to the seminary and scholastic timetable must have required! And this fidelity Father Tempier did not want to see as "just routine".⁵⁵ Father Magnan, Superior of the seminary at Ajaccio, described its monotony thus: My life at the seminary "can be compared to a piece of music, where all the measures are counted, as well as the rests, the quarter rests, and even the silences; a note that had not been foreseen and which one would try to introduce would destroy the harmony: such is a day at the seminary. It is a web that is so closely knit that when one seeks to have a thread pass through, something that doesn't fit into the day's program and for which the bell gives no signal, is a big issue, and once the machine has been set in motion on October 18th, it is wound up until June 24th. It all functions with a despairing uniformity . . ." ⁵⁶

Toward the end of his life, this habit of regularity had become a light burden for Father Tempier. Witness to this is the chronicler for the Superiors' retreat at Autun in 1864, who writes: "At our head was Reverend Father Tempier, a solid cedar, destined to cross all the phases of history, precise as a novice, happy to rediscover the finest days of his religious life, not exempting himself from a single practice, making his coulpe on Friday like the least amongst us and serving in the refectory from the very first day with a satisfaction that was visible on his face."⁵⁷

⁵³ Grandin to Sebaux, April 16, 1854.

⁵⁴ At Laus, cf. *Missions OMI*, 1938, 97; at the seminary, cf. *Le séminaire de Marseille*, op. cit. 45, 68; Tortel to Tempier, Nov. 6, 1853; to Montolivet, cf. *Montolivet*, op. cit. in *Etudes Oblates*, 27 (1968), 250-251.

⁵⁵ Tempier to Mazenod, Oct. 27, 1815.

⁵⁶ Magnan to Mazenod, March 20, 1855.

⁵⁷ *Missions OMI*, 1964, 294-295.

Father Tempier's heaviest cross was the Founder's illness and the difficulties that arose in Marseilles in 1861-1862.⁵⁸ Father Fabre writes: "The hour of the great test had struck, the gold was being purified in the furnace, the soul was being made more beautiful under the blows of tribulation. The venerable old man was not spared bitterness: that which was personal to him was less painful than those which insulted an illustrious memory . . . It is known how, under the thrust of unheard of threats, we ceded some of the rights and goods of our dear family. The momentary ruin of our establishments appeared to us as the immediate results of a prolonged refusal. Faced with the storm, we had to bow our heads, but bow it when we could walk with our heads held high and bare, submitting ourselves while appearing to accept the accusation of injustice and the suspicion of having diverted funds. That was accepting to drink the chalice and drink it to the dregs . . . For Father Tempier, this was even more so, it seemed to him that this was a mistake . . . Was he denying his friend and his Lord? We will always remember the act of obedience he made when, upon our order which was based on the most serious considerations, he consented to accept all the imposed conditions. On that day more than ever we recognized in him the perfect religious.

"Trials succeeded trials, sacrifices succeeded sacrifices. We thought we had avoided the storm and it only grew and burst forth. It was time to look for a more hospitable land than that in which God had placed our cradle. To leave one's native soil, the lovely sky of Provence, to abandon the tomb of the most beloved of Fathers, and that at an age when changes are so difficult, acclimatation so hard, to go far away from Montolivet, was not all that an exile, privation, suffering? Yes, Father Tempier accepted everything . . ." ⁵⁹

What we have said so far about Father Tempier's childhood and beginnings in the priesthood and religious life, his

⁵⁸ *Le séminaire de Marseille, op. cit.*, 151-168; *Montolivet, op. cit.*, 262-269.

⁵⁹ *Not. nécr.* II, 102, 104-105.

manner of fulfilling the most heavy responsibilities and demanding duties, dispenses us from insisting further on his spirit of poverty, obedience and his other virtues. It will be enough to recall briefly some of the things already mentioned, adding only some new significant details.

We remember that he was the first Oblate to take the vow of poverty in 1820.⁶⁰ He spent five winters at Laus without making a fire in his room.⁶¹ His poverty became contagious with the novices and scholastics and almost caused a scandal when he came to Marseilles as Vicar General in 1823: he had to have a soutane made for him as soon as possible and he had to buy a hat.⁶² For his trip to Canada in 1851, he was advised to buy a coat; he found a used one for which he paid 19 francs and didn't hesitate to wear it in the middle of London.⁶³ It is thus evident that he cheerfully accepted the responsibility of giving an example of poverty which he preached to the scholastics.

To poverty and detachment, we can certainly add the spirit of justice to the highest degree. In 1837, after the death of the seminary doorkeeper, he could not remember whether he had paid him the small sum of 32 francs which he owed him. He sent the sum to two nephews of the deceased man, and said to Father Mille who was to deliver it: "Be sure not to forget, because my conscience would really bother me if this sum was not paid."⁶⁴

Father Tempier was also an obedient man. His entire life was an act of obedience. It was in the name of this virtue that he was sent and remained as Superior at Laus,⁶⁵ that he was

⁶⁰ Tempier to Mazenod, November 23, 1820.

⁶¹ *Missions OMI*, 1938, 97; *Not. nécr.* II, 90.

⁶² Dupuy to Tempier, August 15, Oct. 19 & 24, 1823, to Suzanne, August 1823.

⁶³ *Missions OMI*, 1872, 117.

⁶⁴ *Montolivet, op. cit.*, 244-245; Tortel to Tempier, Nov. 2, 1858: "The lessons in poverty that you have impressed on us so many times . . ."; Tempier to Mille, November 13, 1837.

⁶⁵ Tempier to Mazenod, July 20, 1819.

named and remained Vicar General of Marseilles,⁶⁶ that he accepted and fulfilled the important roles in the Congregation that we already know. Besides, Fortuné de Mazenod in 1818, found him more docile and obedient than his nephew,⁶⁷ and, after 1861, Father Fabre, who was his Superior testified that he had no man more obedient than he.⁶⁸

The quality of Father Tempier's interior life was evident especially in his fraternal charity, consisting of a continual devotedness and patient kindness. His former students remembered him as a father of inexhaustible goodness. Let us add several witnesses to the examples that have already been given. As the young superior at N.-D. du Laus, he knew already then how to give stern lessons with a "very paternal authority."⁶⁹ Father B. Paris, who had been sick for a considerable time at the Marseilles seminary, wrote to the Founder on September 4, 1838 to tell him that his family had been very edified by the superior's "kindness, understanding and true fatherly concern." Young Alexander Augier continued to write to Father Tempier even after he had left the Congregation in 1846. He thanked him for answering his letters. In them he always found "the true language of justice, charity and paternal good which characterized him"; he also asked him for advice: "Your charity," he said, "is too patient, too trusting and too generous to cease . . . being active in my regard."⁷⁰

Father Depetro, a musician and poet, found it hard to find a Superior to put up with him because of his exaggerated sensibility. Father Tempier was able to gain his confidence and helped him immensely at the seminary. He then put him in the care of Father Dassy at Nancy and at Bordeaux. The young Father was very grateful. For example, he wrote to him on October 7, 1847: "Sheltered from the dangers of the world and its miseries, I am happy, Reverend Father, in the holy and

⁶⁶ Tempier to Mazenod, May 31, 1823; to Jeancard, May 22, 1861.

⁶⁷ Fortuné to President de Mazenod, November 12, 1818.

⁶⁸ *Not. nécr.* II, 103-104.

⁶⁹ *Missions OMI*, 1938, 97.

⁷⁰ Alex. Augier to Tempier, Nov. 20 and December 29, 1846.

pious society that your goodness has placed me in. Also, my most ardent wishes and fervent prayers constantly implore the blessings of heaven for you. May heaven measure your happiness in proportion to the good things that I owe you, to all the Christian virtues that you have practiced in my regard, to the gratitude that I will constantly nourish in my heart."

Except for some rather forceful and severe letters about which we have spoken at length, most of the others express a very clear message of the greatest goodness. When he received one of his letters in 1854, Father Rambert wrote that his charity "overwhelmed" him; and Father Burfin, who was usually very critical, recognized a "brotherly hand and a friendly heart in each line."⁷¹

The Superior's goodness and welcome strongly edified all the Fathers and Brothers who stopped at Montolivet. Before he left England for America, Father Tortel expressed "what was in his heart" when he said to Father Tempier on November 2, 1858: "The constant goodness of every kind that you have linked to each of our relationships oblige me to thank you, and the remembrance of all your cordial attention will be a great help to me so that I can keep walking in the good path."

Father E. Chevalier from Buffalo recalled in 1860 the "special interest and goodness" that the Superior had shown him "at the Montolivet royal residence". Father Joseph Arnoux made similar reflections in his letter from Inchicore in 1861: "I thought it would be better to keep my distance a little in order to do penance for the moments I stole from you during my stay with you. I will never forget those happy days, nor your fatherly goodness."⁷² As soon as he had arrived in Texas, Father Clos wrote on March 25, 1861: "Allow me to thank you especially for all the good things you did for me during the few days that I had the happiness of spending at Montolivet;

⁷¹ Rambert to Fabre, June 2, 1854; Burfin to Tempier, September 28, (1854).

⁷² Ed. Chevalier to Tempier, July 27, 1860; Jos. Arnoux to Tempier, Aug.-Sept. 1860.

that brief time sufficed to have me learn how good your heart is as well as affectionately to consider you as a loving father.” Let us close this chapter and biographical sketch with an excerpt from a letter of one of the Congregation’s veterans, Father J.A. Martin, who wrote to the Superior General on May 25, 1870. It sums up well the life and virtues of Father Tempier: “The death of our most regretted and venerable dean has passed the right of old age to me . . . ⁷³ I am also taking the liberty of joining mine to all the many condolences which resound all around you from the moment that you have lost your patriarchal assistant and, in this regard, I not only associate myself to the common grief, but I am also ceding to a particular need of my heart. For Father Tempier it was who directed my first steps in the religious career and from that time forth I have vowed him a wholly filial friendship. The sentiments of esteem and affection have only increased with each year in the good relationship that I continued to have with him. At the same time I saw a devotedness so sincere in his zeal for the Congregation that he merited in my eyes a true family cult . . . I will not go into detail here, you know them better than I do, and I limit myself to proclaim him as a true model of a good priest and a holy religious. He merits this beautiful title all the more because he acquired it by walking throughout his whole life in the most delicate and difficult ways of the priestly life and of a life of regularity. May a capable hand now bring together all the fine materials of his long life and give us soon an interesting biography of him. It will worthily glorify the memory of this dear and illustrious confrere and will also attract an increased esteem for the Congregation which, from its very birth, has produced such excellent models.”

⁷³ The following were deans in the Congregation: Father Mie from 1816 to 1841, the Founder from 1841 to 1861, Fathers Tempier and then Martin.

TESTIMONIES OF HIS CONTEMPORARIES

Document 1 — 1799: *First Holy Communion*.¹

The Directoire was in power in France. The ignominious persecution of the Terror was no longer raging against the Church, but governmental restrictions still impeded all the manifestations of Catholic worship. Only the schism enjoyed full freedom. It amply used the same in order to increase the number of its partisans. The priests who had taken the oath sought to preserve the traditions of the true spouse of Jesus Christ, but this appearance, however specious, did not capture all hearts. The evil was great, increased each day and, if the time of trial had been prolonged, it would have attained huge proportions. God nevertheless kept some faithful hearts and the priests who had resisted the seductive charms deployed an untiring zeal which was ever being crowned with good success. God has written in his book of life the names of these new apostles who dared everything to save some souls and to hinder seduction and schism to spread their ravages.

At Aix, the schism had made many victims. The churches which had not been converted into storage barns for hay were all in the hands of priests who had taken the oath. There services were celebrated regularly and with pomp; all means

¹ An extract from *Sanctuaire*, April 2, 1860, a weekly newsletter published by the Montolivet scholastics, pp. 47-48. This text is reproduced in *Missions OMI*, t. 72 (1938), pp. 85-87. Father Achille Rey, who was a professor at the Marseilles seminary, helped with this newsletter and seems to have been the author of these "daily notes" on Father Tempier. Besides, he had been named annalist of the Congregation at the General Council of January 27, 1859.

were used to hide the truth from the people and to have it accept the state of things, such as the imperious will of the Government had decreed. But generous priests knew how to escape these snares and, with a holy prudence but without any compromise, they maintained the deposit of the holy faith and of tradition.

One fine morning (of the year 1799),² one could have seen gathered together in a modest room on one of the nicest streets of Aix, three young men who had barely grown out of their childhood. They were from ten to twelve years of age. Their lively, animated features revealed that they were born under this beautiful sky of Provence which is illumined by an ever shining sun. The youngest,³ the most modest and pious of the three was called François de Paule Henry Tempier: he had attracted to himself, on the part of the other two, a limitless devotedness and a friendship which the years and old age have not lessened in life and warmth.

For them it was one of those lovely days in life which seem to come from heaven in order to give us a foretaste of the day of eternity: it was the day of their first Communion. They were together in this room apart, because they did not want to communicate with those who were only wolves that had been let into the sheep shelter and not at all true shepherds of the bark of Jesus Christ. A priest, worthy of every veneration, served them as a father and it is he who was to offer to them for the first time the Bread of Angels. Who does not remember this so solemn and moving moment in which the heart of a young man opens to the emotions of divine love, where the heavenly pulse-beats are merged with those of a pure and generous blood? First Communion has indescribable charms, when it is made amid hymns and music, when flowers

² There is no date given in the article of *Sanctuaire*.

³ Details given at the end of the extract made it easy enough to recognize François de Paule's two friends: Michel Figuière and Jean Joseph Reynaud. However, it seems that Tempier was the oldest, not the youngest, of the three. Reynaud was born on September 20, 1789 and Figuière in 1790, according to the *Almanach du Clergé de France*.

decorate the floors of churches and ornate in bands and wreaths the sacred walls; when moved relatives share the indescribable joys that flood the soul of a young man as it nourishes itself with the flesh of God who loves his children so tenderly. Yet it seems to me that this first Communion made in a room, far from tumult and excitement, also clandestinely as in the days of the catacombs, must have even greater delights. It was truly being in communion of the God of the Eucharist when one shared with him the perils of persecution and the jealous inquisitions of the schismatics. There were no hymns, no music, perhaps some flowers, a more decent arrangement, that is all that our three friends could offer to God who was coming to visit them; but they abundantly made up for their poverty by receiving Jesus Christ in hearts that were filled with the most generous sentiments. The thanksgiving prayer was long and fervent: only God knows all that these three young hearts confided to him in terms of love and gratitude; but what we do know is the reward that he granted to their humble and burning supplication. When they arose, the three friends, without having consulted each other beforehand, went to their director and insistently asked him to teach them Latin: they wanted to become priests . . . God heard their wish; you know what François de Paule Tempier has become; one of his friends is dean of the Chapter in the metropolis of Aix, and the third is serving as professor at the Faculty of Theology in the same city. They chose the priesthood when nothing as yet announced the future peace of the Church; when storms were still brewing on the horizon; when the Papacy, in chains and captivity in the person of Pius VI, seemed to be threatened with immediate and total ruin. God knows how to bless and reward heroic sacrifices.

Document 2 — 1809: *First Tonsure*.⁴

It was in 1809.⁵ The times had changed. It was eight years since the Catholic Church had reopened her temples to eager populations; again people were assembling in the shadow of the sacred walls and under the legitimate Pastors. The Bishops were busy to re-establish the holy tribe which the sword of persecution, the privations of exile, the dispersal of seminaries had cruelly decimated. Innumerable were the empty posts and hope for the future did not offer on all points the guarantees that hearts truly animated by the priestly spirit desired. Our three friends⁶ had faithfully followed the lessons of their excellent director, they were strengthened in their Latin and French studies; all three manifested the best of dispositions. They were therefore admitted to the Major Seminary and, during the course of the year 1809, received the first tonsure. We will not say with what sentiments of true piety and holy happiness. In the same way as after a storm the atmosphere is pervaded by sharp scents, strong emanations that the sun's rays penetrate more deeply, so that it seems that the air has become more limpid and pure, so also after the storms of persecution more abundant rivers of grace and holiness flow through the Church. It is as though the youth of souls was being renewed: piety is more generous, appreciates better the value of sacrifice. Divine communications were all the more necessary at the time of which we are speaking because persecution again seemed as though decided and wanted by the very person who had given back to the Church a portion of her freedom. Again the Papacy would be in captivity; the Roman States were going to be incorporated into the French Em-

⁴ An extract from *Sanctuaire*, *op. cit.* pp. 48-49; *Missions OMI* t. 72 (1938), p. 88.

⁵ According to more exact sources, François de Paule and his friend Michel entered the Major Seminary in 1810, cf. *supra*, Chapter One in the biography.

⁶ Reynaud entered the seminary several years later because he was ordained to the priesthood only on April 15, 1817, cf.: Chailan, *La Faculté de théologie d'Aix au XIX siècle*, Marseilles, 1939, p. 118.

pire and the rule of iron that throttled Europe was beginning to attack the power of the Vicar of Jesus Christ that the centuries, the genii and the great of the earth will never manage to destroy.

Document 3 — 1816: *First Oblation*⁷

God was preparing his workers — in secret he was laying the foundations for his great works. Fathers de Mazenod and Tempier as yet did not know each other; it even seemed as though they were never meant to meet on the same journey. One day however, and God wanted it thus, a close union would be formed between these two men, for the great good of souls and for the glorification of the Church. After first tonsure, the young François de Paule continued with assiduous application to give himself to the study of theology. The qualities he manifested attracted the attention of his Superiors who decided to employ him as soon as possible in the Church's service. Mr. Tempier was assigned to the minor seminary to fulfill professorial duties there and to act as a kind of supervisor. That institution soon reflected the spirit of order, regularity and devotedness that guided the whole of Mr. Tempier's conduct. While he was thus involved in these holy tasks, the priesthood was conferred upon him during the course of the year 1814.⁸ Some day we will perhaps narrate the admirable dispositions that were present when he received such a high dignity, one that even the angels find awesome, as the holy Fathers say.

Archbishop de Cicé of Aix had died. Consequent to the persecution levied against the Pope Pius VII by Napoleon I, this see remained vacant and the diocesan administration was carried on by three Capitular Vicars General. This administration assigned the new priest to a post of assistant priest at

⁷ Extract from *Sanctuaire*, *op. cit.* pp. 49-52; *Missions OMI*, t. 72 (1938), pp. 89-94.

⁸ March 26, 1814.

Arles. Father Tempier went there without delay and began fulfilling his duties in the sacred ministry with a fervor God inspires and blesses in the workers that he summons into his vineyard. Confessions, preaching, catechisms, works of charity, nothing remains alien to his zeal. The harvest was abundant but laborers were lacking. It was hardly one year that the young assistant priest had been edifying Arles when the mysterious voice of Providence began to sound in his heart: a mysterious voice, if ever there was one. Let us re-tell this story, for it shows very well that nothing is left to chance in the succession of events: the wisdom of man is vanquished when the wisdom of God triumphs.

One day the postman brought a letter addressed to Father Tempier. The postage stamp indicated the city of Aix as the place from which it had left. The young assistant priest opened the missive and rapidly read it . . . , there was no signature, no indication, no name that would betray who had written those lines and yet, it was very important to know this: for the letter was a serious one and contained strange proposals, plans inspired by a zeal that was too comprehensive to come from a mere man only. The unknown author of the letter invited Father Tempier to go to Aix in order to agree to a way of life whose main features were outlined. A life in common and of regularity, missions to preach to the poor and to the people of the countryside, love for poverty, silence, mortification, etc. . . It was almost like a project for a new religious Order.

Father Tempier did not have to re-read the letter to guess who the mysterious author might be. The style of fire, these generous ideas, the proposals of zeal and devotedness, the audacity to face all obstacles, to consider as feasible, easily feasible a project that was beset with so many difficulties — all that could come from only one man . . . Yes, Father Tempier said to himself, this letter could only come from the Abbé de Mazenod.

That was that. The action of Providence, which likes to use weak instruments to achieve great results, had just come

away with a new triumph. The young assistant priest obtained permission to leave his post. He came and took his stance with the one who had called him, like an aide de camp comes and takes his place with the general who summoned him. The two friends consult together: their union is completed in the one and only thought that animates them, God's glory and the salvation of the most abandoned souls. A part of the Carmelite convent is purchased: a chapel is adjacent; that is where the missionaries will come together. But, dear God, in what a state this holy place was, a place that was formerly inhabited by the Holy of holies. It was a kennel, nay, a pig-sty wherein were kept animals which on certain days of the year were used to provide shows for the curious and unemployed. These were deplorable ruins that were threatened with even greater ruin. This house destined for God was repaired, the openings that rain had caused in the roofs were closed, nor were expenses spared to give this place some of its former splendor. Finally, on a given day the adorable sacrifice was offered to the Lord in the shadow of these walls where sacrilege and desecration had abided for a long time. Daily services brought a concourse of people: it was an open arena for the apostolic zeal of our Fathers, miracles of conversion occurred there.

One year passed in this initiation to the religious life. Hearts were at one, but that was not enough: a divine bond was needed which would forever bind their good will to the service of the adorable Master whom they had chosen. Fathers de Mazenod and Tempier decided to make a vow of obedience which would mutually make them superior and inferior to each other: they vowed reciprocal obedience. On April 11, 1816, the chapel of the house presented a moving spectacle: it was Holy Thursday, a memorable day in the Catholic Church. All the house's resources had been used to arrange and decorate the chapel, to set up the repository where the divine Eucharist was kept in the midst of flowers and incense. Many faithful had come. There was an air of piety which went to one's heart and disposed it wonderfully for prayer. During the morning, after the solemn service, one might have seen two

priests cautiously disappearing under the steps of the repository, kneel down in the shadow of the adorable Victim who was obedient unto death, if I may thus express myself, and pronounce, each in his turn, a formula which contained a vow of obedience made to each other. Heaven must have been attentive to this, for this was worthy of it. The day, the place, the time, everything added circumstances that the heart can appreciate but that the tongue and the pen cannot express. A special blessing must have flowed from the adorable Heart of Jesus Christ, from this heart which seems to have made of obedience the loveliest fleuron of its crown, and flowed over these two men who had just so well understood this Heart's desires and had begun to put this understanding so generously to complete execution . . .

Document 4 — 1819-1823: *First Superiorship*⁹

Nolite timere pusillus grex! It would seem that this divine word resounded over the cradle of our little Congregation; the mustard seed was beginning to grow and already a few branches had spread its salutary shade over the areas where the abandoned souls resided. In the Alps, the abandoned were more numerous than elsewhere. A wild nature, mountains covered with eternal snows, deep valleys through which raging torrents wound, few and ever the same produce, everything indicated a country where man could hardly find what he needs to exist, even at the price of daily toil. There are still, however, in these lost gorges, in the midst of plains bordered by frowning mountains, inhabitants, men redeemed by the blood of a God. Mary, Mother of Mercy, remembered and wanted to appear in these mountains, like a rainbow of peace and happiness; she wanted to establish a shrine where the poor pilgrims of the Alps would experience a favorable welcome in the presence of her adorable Son. For Mary, too, those in misery have a special right to her tenderness and favors.

⁹ Extract from *Sanctuaire*, *op. cit.* pp. 52-54; *Missions OMI*, t. 72 (1938), pp. 94-98.

At 10 kilometres from Gap, on one of the heights, we find a slope from which one can see, in a deep valley bordered on three sides by green hills, a church surmounted by a high bell-tower. This is the shrine of Our Lady of Laus . . .

In 1819, Notre-Dame du Laus had scarcely emerged from the ruin that the Revolution had caused around its walls. The people were beginning to journey on the ways of pilgrimage and the roads wept no more over their solitude. Bishop Miollis of Digne, in whose episcopal jurisdiction the diocese of Gap was included, wanted to restore the shrine to its original glory and to entrust it to a religious community. He asked Reverend Father de Mazenod for some of his missionaries. His request was granted and Father Tempier was appointed superior of Notre-Dame du Laus. This first period as a Superior extended from 1819 to 1823, five years in all. That seems to be little in the life span of a man, it appears even less in the history of a Congregation. And yet, this period wielded great influence on the destinies of our Congregation. I will leave aside the details which would delay farther my progress and which, moreover, would have their place in a more complete work. I shall enclose myself at Laus, stop there and gather some outstanding elements which will help me to sketch the tableau of a first stint as Superior.

At first the ruins drew the attention of the new Superior. With an expert eye which takes in proportions and what is fitting, Father Tempier had quickly decided what reparations were to be done and what building to be undertaken. Everything was done according to the spirit of holy poverty, which does not rule out rich decorations for the Lord's house. Later, the concern was to build quite a bell-tower: it now dominates the whole valley and the bell peals harmoniously afar, re-echoed back by the mountains, which seem to rejoice every-time that great voice of bronze reawakens the noise that sleeps in its woods and the beds of its torrents. It is a souvenir of the stay of our Fathers in this much loved shrine; it is a monument of prayer that translates to generations the maxim applied to the Saviour and which our Fathers, we can say this

without fear, have earned: *Transiit benefaciendo*. The material ruins were great, the moral ruins were not less. A whole new creation had to be undertaken. Faith and piety no longer radiated light and warmth in the midst of these peoples so unfortunately neglected. Father Tempier was able to organize the work of the missions and to draw forth a wonderful contribution from the men under his charge. He did not abandon the shrine where so often conversions were perfected, but he directed everything through his letters and exhortations. The presence of Reverend Father de Mazenod, who came from time to time to visit the little colony, gave new spirit to the courage of all and caused new flames of zeal and ardor to penetrate hearts that were already being consumed by love for souls. We will not list all the fruits of salvation gathered by the missionaries: they are without number; many souls owe it to them that a crown shines on their forehead in eternity.

New tasks, however, took up all of Father Tempier's time. At Laus was established the first *juniorate* of the Congregation and its first *scholasticate*.¹⁰ What a fine thought to locate at a shrine of Mary the cradle for our family's hope! Into what hands more pure, powerful and generous could we entrust our future! Father Tempier had to fulfill the task of professor of theology and the oldest Fathers of the Congregation were his students. We have at times heard them speak of these austere lectures which were received with a youthful avidity and given with an authority that was entirely paternal. Often, with a stick in their hands, the small group of students led by Father Tempier tramped over the nearby mountains, went down into the valleys, climbed the heights and played with difficult paths: it was an initiation to apostolic journeys which at that time were undertaken with all the rigors of the divine precept.

In the house, the Superior was an example of all the virtues. He was always the first at oraison, the last to take a

¹⁰ This is not correct. There were students (juniorists), novices and scholastics at Aix in 1816-1817.

rest. Night overtook him at times, when he returned to the shrine after the tours that his demanding duties obliged him to make. It was in winter: the cold, more intense than ever, had covered the earth with a thick layer of snow; the north wind was blowing with biting gusts. The moon was reflected on the ice that crackled under the traveller's foot. Savage beasts howled: the cold chased them from their lairs and they roamed about to find pasture, to satisfy their hunger. Father Tempier was following the path of the little valley, he could only return to the shrine after night had fallen. Coming around a small height of land, he suddenly found himself almost face to face with a wolf which seemed to be waiting for its prey. Fortunately, the wolf was not on the path. Father Tempier did not worry about it, but continued on his way as though he had seen nothing. From time to time he looked back and perceived a black shadow following him at a distance. The wolf did not give up its pursuit until the first habitations were in sight. Father Tempier had escaped from danger but he did not forget this innocent travel companion.

Our first Fathers were great walkers. Fathers de Mazenod and Tempier, unable to find a place in the coach from Gap to Aix, did not want to delay their departure and so set out on foot. They went as far as Sisteron, that is, a distance of more than ten leagues. But strength was not up to the will! Father de Mazenod had such swollen legs and feet that he had to give up his intent and wait for passage on a coach. Let us not grow less: our Fathers learned how to confront fatigue.

The cold is cruel in the Alps, winters are long, the snow abundant: fire is nearly a major need. Well, for five winters, the first Superior of Laus, never had a single stick of wood burned to warm himself . . .

Document 5 — 1833: *Inauguration of the
Monastery of the Poor Clares*¹¹

[p. 72] . . . [Also] when the eve of the much desired day had come, when we were to be led into our new dwelling,¹² we were in a situation of absolute privation: it was a delightful journey for our hearts as Poor Clares, for everything around us reminded us of the extreme poverty of our first Mothers at St-Damiano. We had no more beds, tables, chairs; so much so that when it was time to eat supper, we had to take it on the floor, seated on our heels, as we do on the vigils of our main feasts . . . A little after the Office of the night, the vigilant charity [of our venerated Father Tempier] was present to his poor daughters, helping them with his advice, reassuring their timidity, dissipating their fears. [73] In order to avoid too great a concourse of faithful or curious people, our worthy Fathers had fixed 4 o'clock in the morning for our departure from the Mission of France. This moment that was both so desired and feared finally came. We will not describe the emotion in every heart as we crossed the threshold of this holy cloister and thus found ourselves in the world for a moment. This day, so memorable for us, was September 7, 1833 . . . Our venerated Father Tempier — no expression can describe his devotedness on this occasion — as always, stayed very close to us; his goodness surrounded us with a solicitude that was more than motherly, watched over everything and foresaw all our needs. He promised that he would not leave us for an instant until he had led us to the dear nest that he had prepared for us with so much zeal and so fatherly a love . . .

[74] It was about six o'clock that we reached the point of our dear destination. Our venerated Father Tempier had given his care and attention to the least details. He thought that, to

¹¹ The annals of the poor monastery of Saint Claire in Marseilles, n. 17. rue W. Puget, September 7, 1833. Father Tempier was the Superior of this community.

¹² They were living in the former location of the Mission of France and came into the monastery on Ferrari street. Father de Mazenod had been their Superior in 1823.

relieve us from the painful walk that we had just made, it would be good if our feet were washed. In fact, we found pious persons who were all ready to render us this service of charity and they insisted in every possible way that we provide them with that which their faith showed them as a holy consolation. We therefore tried in vain to hinder them from doing it; our resistance was useless; we were led into [75] one of the largest halls of the new Monastery and there charity had to triumph over our reluctance. After this moving ceremony, we went into the outer chapel which was soon filled by persons who had accompanied us; and while the Bishop was getting ready to offer the holy sacrifice of the Mass on this humble and new Calvary, our venerated Father Tempier told us to recite Prime and Tierce. Now in such circumstances some little mishap inevitably happens: we had entrusted our books to one of our good brothers who misplaced them in transporting them. We were therefore quite embarrassed in reciting the psalms in the midst of such a large crowd. Since our venerated Father continued to insist, one of our good Mothers, all atremble, thinking we were to recite Matins instead of Prime, began with the words: *Domine, labia mea*, which simply increased our troubles. Fortunately, they brought us our breviaries shortly after and so we could recite the psalms with more confidence.

[77] . . . As soon as he had finished his elocution, the Lord Bishop, accompanied by his clergy, led us in procession inside the Monastery to proceed to the blessing of the sacred walls which were to serve for our salvation and perfection. This ceremony touched our hearts very much; during all that time we recited psalms which we alternated with the clergy. Our venerated Father Tempier, whose care was constant, indicated for each part of the monastery the appropriate psalm to be recited . . . How our hearts were filled with gratitude, especially towards the venerated Father Tempier, to whom we cost so much care and solicitude! At the end of this imposing ceremony at which assisted, together with many pious people, most of our good relatives, the Bishop ordered us to raise our veils which up to that time we had kept lowered. Our holy Bishop thus wanted to satisfy the devotion and need for con-

solation of the persons who wanted to see us; but it was a painful trial to find ourselves with faces uncovered in the midst of so many persons who lavished upon us so much attention, respect and veneration . . .

It was not easy to ask all these people to leave: in their lively faith, they were never satisfied with seeing and speaking to us. [78] Our venerated Father Tempier vainly employed all the resources of his eloquence . . . Everyone turned a deaf ear. Then, seeing that his efforts had no effect, he found a trick which succeeded much better than words. He had us enter into a nearby room which he then locked up . . . Our Lord, the venerable Prelate, also left us after having eaten a modest breakfast . . . We could not at all express to him the deep gratitude we felt for all the goodness we received from him. From the bottom of his heart he wished us a multitude of heavenly graces . . . Our ven. Father Tempier . . . remained with us until towards evening . . .

Document 6 — 1851: *Canonical Visitation
of the Oblates in Eastern Canada and the United States*

A) Codex Historicus of the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary, Longueuil, August 8, 1851.

Today we had the great joy of receiving the visit of Reverend Father Tempier, O.M.I., who came from France last June. This venerated Father is the close friend of Bishop de Mazenod, his most intimate confidant and was his devoted collaborator when the Congregation of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate was founded. The reason why we have especially appreciated his visit is because he is the author of our Rules¹³ and he therefore more than anyone else possesses both their letter and their spirit. Not only is his word unctuous and keen, but even his exterior is a veritable sermon. In his face he bears the seal of interior and supernatural men.

¹³ Father Tempier had only assisted the Foundress, Mother Marie Saint-Augustin of Jesus (Marie Catherine Ruel).

He is to leave for France on September 10th. Before his departure, he is planning to come and say Mass in our chapel . . .

B) Father Honorat's letter from Montreal, September 15, 1851, addressed to Bishop de Mazenod.

My Lord and most beloved Father,

I have been through a time when I couldn't even take up the pen to witness my personal gratitude to you for the good that has just been done in our Province of Canada. This good Father kept us so busy these latter days, and me in particular, that, in adding his work to so many other tasks we have at Saint-Pierre, there was no way of having any time for oneself.

You cannot possibly understand, dearly beloved Father, the happiness I experienced when I greeted this dear Father Tempier at his arrival in Montreal. Oh! I found him to be still the same. I could open my heart to him, communicate my ideas to him, and he did me a great amount of good. All of our Fathers, I believe, have also derived all the good they expected therefrom; for he neglected nothing either in general or for individuals in regard to the good it was in his power to accomplish. Now that he has completed his assignment, we would have liked to keep him for some time so that he could taste a bit of satisfaction in seeing the new Provincial at work¹⁴ or each of the Fathers in the place where he has posted them. No matter, even if we find it hard to separate ourselves from him, we have the consolation that his work will bear its fruit, since he has responded to, we can say this, the just expectations of the Fathers who have so much desired a visitation which after many circumstances had become so necessary. I think that Reverend Father Tempier took sufficient cognizance of the places, persons and things so that he can continue his work even though he is far away from us. Accept this well, my beloved Father, it is with all my heart and a keen

¹⁴ Father J.P. Santoni.

sense of gratitude that I assent to the arrangements which have just been made and I am convinced that matters have taken the best course that could be expected . . .

Document 7 — *1864: Fifty Years of Priesthood.*¹⁵

My Lord, Fathers, Sirs,

It is a moving memory that we read of the Apostle Saint John, who was still alive after Our Lord, Mary and all the other Apostles, and who in his great old age was surrounded by the respect and love of the Christians formed by his care. Everyone wanted to see him, hear him, be blessed by him . . .

Do not sentiments similar to that of those crowds rise in you, my Fathers, at this time when you are celebrating the 50th anniversary of the beloved disciple of your first Father? Much less than the years, the cares and fatigues of his ministry have etched on the features of Father Tempier the glorious stigmata of apostolic labour, and remind us of his being an assistant priest at Arles, his generous response to the call of your Founder, the succeeding generations whose youth he formed in letters and to virtue, the Gospel missions he presided across the extent of Provence, the unceasing work by which he contributed so powerfully to the resurrection of the diocese of St. Lazarus, the direction of your novitiate and of your entire Congregation. When you hear him giving advice, one thinks of hearing still the advice of that other son of the Church in Aix, the venerable Pontiff to whom God entrusted the noble task of founding an Order that can provide for the needs of our time, and countless times you have observed that the spirit of the Prophet now rests upon his disciple. The man in whom Bishop de Mazenod had so much trust was also the man of his heart, and you still find in him this fatherly tenderness to which you were accustomed and which make all the sacrifices of your holy vocation that much easier.

¹⁵ Homily delivered in the church of the mission by Archbishop Chalandon of Aix, on April 7, 1864, on the occasion of Father Tempier's 50th year of priesthood.

Happy are you, Reverend Father General, to have kept until now and hopefully you will keep still for a long time this faithful councillor who was the confidant of all the thoughts of the great Bishop who, under the auspices of Mary, founded your Congregation, who was the witness of all the Bishop's works, the consoler in all his difficulties, the companion of his work and the friend of his whole life. The Lord, in giving you the talents and virtues that distinguish you, prepared you for the important post to which he destined you; but I bless him for having given you, as he did to Moses, a Jethro to enrich you with his experience, as he did to David, a Samuel to sustain you with his advice.

O dear Congregation of the Oblates, I love to see you honouring, as you are doing today, the person who, with so many titles to your gratitude, veneration and love, adds the merit of being the living tradition of the Holy Rule to which your sons have chosen to submit their life, and of being the second link of the chain which they are to continue over the centuries. Let them inscribe in their memory, or rather in their heart, each of his words, each of his examples; let them bequeath the memory to those who will come after them, or, even better, let them conform themselves to this model, fashioned by the very hand of Bishop de Mazenod to his image and likeness.

. . . That is why, Fathers, your respectable and beloved Father General wanted to bring you together in a large number to assist at a fiftieth anniversary that is not only that of your First Assistant, but also in a way that of your entire Society. As long as this Society will be directed by the spirit of faith, devotedness and zeal that animated your first Father and still animates in his lively old age the one whom we can call his son no less than his brother, his assistant and his friend; as long as, walking in the footsteps of the de Mazenods and Tempiers you can say: *Societas nostra cum Patre et Filio ejus*, the Church on earth and the Church in heaven will be able to rejoice and the diocese of Aix will be honored for having been your cradle.

Finish now, my Reverend Father, the august sacrifice that you have just begun in a church that is so dear to you for many reasons. In the fifty years of your priesthood, you went up to the holy altar nearly twenty-five thousand times, and, as a priest according to the heart of God, you each time acquired new merit as well as new graces. We are happy to pray today with you and for you, and even happier in the hope that you will also pray for us; and if on this blessed day we do not have the consolation of hearing your word, as we see you surrounded by your confreres and your friends of Aix whom you have edified, we sense what is in your heart and we understand that your wish is the wish of Saint John: *Filii, diligite invicem!* May we always remember that and always respond to it! In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Document 8 — 1864-1868: *Anecdotes of the Last Years*

A) 1864: in Paris.

My Most Reverend and Beloved Father (Fabre),¹⁶

With pleasure we have received your fatherly greeting, but that is all that the Rev. Father Tempier felt he ought to communicate to us on your behalf; this good Father stores up everything in his room, even that which is the property of everybody. Do you not belong to us? And do we not have the right to receive ample and detailed news about yourself? He considers us happy and satisfied, I suppose, when he thinks that we know he is informed of your news and that we have been able to see your letters from a great distance. Please ask him to be less miserly in regard to our good and a bit more prodigal with his own.

His health remains sound except for a cold that is quite persistent: it obliges him to stay in his room and sometimes in bed. It will be a matter of some days yet, that is to say, until

¹⁶ Letter of Father Soulerin, Assistant General, to Father J. Fabre, Superior General, January 14, 1864.

the first temperature rises. He thought he could avail himself of an old ordinance because he had read the word future. — Doctor Beauvoisin said: "How could you read the word future, when it is *intus*. You are truly a man of the future, unfortunately you lack the terrain," he added with a smile. The good Father is not completely at fault, the doctor's handwriting is at times strangely odd.

Before his present indisposition, he was taking a short walk with Rev. Father Lagier. Now, one day when they were making their way together on the boulevard des Battignolles, they were accosted by a poor beggar who asked them for an alms. Good Father Tempier consulted his purse and found a single twenty sou piece. That is too much, he said, one has to keep a little for those whom Providence may have us meet on our way, and he went into a shop to change this coin. By chance it was the shop where he had had himself photographed on cloth. Father Lagier waited at the door, looking over the cloth portraits which covered the outside right up to the roof. I say right up to the roof without exaggerating, you know the place. It is an original house which goes all the way back to the old Lutetia and whose height from the ground to the roof is around five meters. The artist and some table guests were eating. Oysters in the shell and not on cloth were being taken. "Gentlemen," Father Tempier said, "can you give me change for this coin." "By the Devil, Monsieur le Curé," said the artist, who recognized his client, politely rose and added: "We would really be badly off if a mongst all of us we didn't have twenty sous. Here you are, Sir." Immediately the good Father gave the poor man one fifth of what he had and then continued his walk. This mark of his good heart reminds me that on a Sunday when the centigrade thermometer stood at eleven degrees below zero, he had the maternal tenderness to carry his hot water bottle to a poor woman who came for alms to the door of our chapel and, as he feared that the carpet may lead people who came to the services to think that a person did not need alms if she had a water bottle so richly ornate, he took off the carpet. This good Father is dear to us, but these things make us love him even more . . .

B) 1868: at Autun: 50 Years of Oblation.¹⁷

... [29 June] renewal of vows, which is part of the customary ceremonial, this year offered the following special element, namely, for Father Tempier it was, except for a few months, the fiftieth anniversary of his religious profession. In a warm improvisation, the Superior General celebrated in moving terms this long career of virtue and work, the privilege of being involved in everything right from the beginning, of being the witness in our midst of our ancient traditions and of dedicating to the Society's progress such precious experience ...

Reverend Father Tempier had been presented to us as the hero of the *feast*. We certainly expressed our sentiments to him. After the noon meal, which had its usual austerity tempered by a *Deo gratias*, Reverend Father de l'Hermite rose and pronounced the following speech:

My Reverend Father Tempier,

... In the name of my brothers, on the eve of the fiftieth anniversary of your oblation, let me apply to you, my Reverend Father, what was said of the well-beloved disciple: *Discipulus ille non moritur*. Yes, the years are adding up on your forehead, not as a burden but as a diadem. We ask of God that we will be able to admire for a long time yet in you both the smiles and the graces of this old age which has had only a springtime and up to now has not known winter.

A good eye makes for a good footing, the proverb says. All the good things that perfidious years so promptly tear away from others, you have kept; and, still better, you keep for us a good and devoted heart. We sense this heart which rested on that of the Father; and so we say a second time in the midst of this feast: *Discipulus ille non moritur*.

Like the well-beloved disciple to whom you have been compared, you have passed through the sword and fire of

¹⁷ Retreat for provincial and local Superiors at Autun, at the end of June, 1868, in *Missions OMI*, Vol. 7 (1868), pp. 299-303.

tribulation after the Master's death; the recent trials of the Congregation were yours. But, again like the disciple, you came forth stronger from this testing place where society and individuals find new life. *Purior ac vegetior exierit quam intraverit.* (Breviar. rom, die 6 maii, in festo S. Joannis).

Be our dean for long years yet, Reverend Father! May you be at our head, joyful and strong, and keep in our midst the integrity and charms of history! That is the wish we make: may God hear us! And you will be in the future as you have been in the past the example and joy of the young: *Ad multos annos!*

It was amusing to see the surprise and signs of protest of the lovable old man. He responded very well but defended himself very badly. The fifty years were so considerable, the disposition of the assembly so joyfully hostile that the veil of modesty, whatever its large size, was always too short in one way or another. Besides, there would have been no use to have kept it rigorously extended; we have all benefitted from the good Father's devotedness and, thus we were all under the same veil as witnesses and receivers of what he wanted to deny. And so his denials were covered by a new, great and joyful acclamation.

Document 9 — 1869-1870: *Last Weeks of His Life*¹⁸

. . . Among these happy days, we must list that of Christmas (1869). On that day, Father Tempier took part in the community meal and conversed with the Fathers. Christmas more than any other feast reminded him of Provence, Marseilles, where this feast has traits that are so popular and pious. On the day of Epiphany he gave his brothers the same consolation. He himself received a great consolation, he had celebrated holy Mass. It was for the last time. His strength failed during the celebration of the adorable sacrifice and he himself

¹⁸ Jos. Fabre, *Notice du p. Tempier*, in *Notices nécrologiques*, II, pp. 110-116.

had to admit that it would be imprudent to try again to do this deed which alone fully satisfies his piety. He resigned himself to hear Mass and did it with a recollection such that it edified all those who witnessed it.

The intemperate nature of the season had made the old man's last weeks more painful. He could not look for any distraction outside the monotony of his cell. The shorter days, longer evenings succeeded each other without changing any of his habits which became more and more sedentary. There were some sorties in a carriage, that is all that prudence allowed. Our Fathers strove to fill his solitude a bit; he always enjoyed their visits and at times he complained when it seemed he was abandoned and left too long a time without anyone seeing him. His resignation was great; nevertheless, at times he did express his pain at being condemned to inaction, to being deprived of community life which he always loved so much; but this expression passed swiftly and the religious spirit gained the upper hand, so that the complaint ended with a smile in God's peace and surrender to the divine will.

He revealed himself full of gratitude for the care that was lavished upon him and the attention given to him. With affection he thanked those who came near him, and when someone wrote to him he himself replied, in the degree that he could; or, if his fatigue hindered him from doing so, he asked a Father to do him this service. One day he received from a relative a letter in which he was offered hospitality and rest under the beautiful sky of Provence. You have worked enough, it said, come and take a rest in your family. The holy religious, remembering the teachings of our venerated Founder and the maxims which ruled his whole life, sent the reply that, whereas he was moved by the generous offer made to him, he did not think it good for him to accept, surrounded as he was with affectionate care; that he looked upon all the Oblates as his children, that, since they had houses in every clime, he had only to choose and he was sure that everywhere he would be received and cared for with filial affection. These are beautiful words which we ought to consider as the testa-

ment of his heart. Yes, Father Tempier could count on the Congregation, as the Congregation had always counted on him . . .

He was thus preoccupied about gratitude until the last day of his life. He had received a letter from the Procurator General, then at Le Havre, in which Reverend Father Sardou offered his wishes for a good feast and expressed the desire that his state of health would allow him to reply: "You see what condition I am in," he said to a Father on the very day of his death. "Be as good as to tell that to Reverend Father Sardou and to thank him for his letter." This item reveals the quality of his soul; they show that he was sensitive, and especially sensitive to family affection.

As long as Father Tempier could be busy in this task — and his energetic will allowed him to be that for a long time — the work he loved most was to identify and classify papers of our venerated Founder. He lived again in the midst of these precious remembrances and continued in his mission of devotedness. This posthumous cult befitted this noble old man, and his fidelity that was above every test renewed its spirit in the contact of these past things.

. . . On January 25th the community of Paris came together before the venerable old man to express ardent good wishes to him and to have the consolation of spending a few moments with the last witness who had greeted the first day of the Congregation's existence . . .

On April 1st he began his eighty-third year and the day after was his feast day. At six o'clock in the evening, the community came together in his presence and I assured him, in everyone's name, of the good wishes we made on his behalf. I expressed the hope that the nice days to come would perhaps restore to him a portion of his strength and that on Easter he could go up the altar to say the *Alleluia*. These words touched him deeply and he displayed his gratitude. I then asked him to bless the entire community; this I begged for the blessing of the Patriarch and Father. He defended himself as best he could, but he had to give in to our repeated insistence, and all

foreheads bowed under the beloved hand of the companion of our Founder. We will never forget this instant when Father Tempier showed himself again to be so humble and so good.

The next day we brought him Holy Communion. His thanksgiving was followed by a violent crisis which made us fear for his life. We came running in haste, but the end was not yet. God wanted him to remain with us as a model of patience and generosity. The crisis passed, he could come down to the refectory with us; it was the last time . . .

Since April 2nd, Father Tempier was growing weaker. New crises that were always more intense indicated rapid progress towards death. We thought it well to multiply our care and caution. Brother Nigro succumbed to fatigue. We called our Sisters of Hope and they devoted themselves with admirable zeal to watching over our sick man.

On Thursday, April 7th, his illness was complicated by a burning fever. The night was the worst to date. The next day, feast of Our Lady of the Seven Dolors, the fever had not abated: again there were the most alarming symptoms. We came often to see our sick man and with anxiety we followed whatever happened at every instant . . .

The good Father was laid low with the fire of the fever. Still, he had a word of love for those who came to visit him . . .

A Sister of Providence watched at his bedside: Brother Nigro was also there at his filial post. The sick man from time to time wiped his forehead which fever covered with sweat. He was fully conscious and showed by nodding his head that he understood the brief prayers suggested to his piety. Towards half past eleven, the Sister perceived that he no longer responded to her questions and she began to suspect that death was imminent. At ten minutes to midnight, they came to call me. I had Father Anger wakened at the same time. He came into our sick man's presence before I did and found him like a man who had fallen asleep: no contraction on his face, his breath was rapid but not noisy or laboured; he was still sweating, a sign of the struggle in the last agony. Father Anger

spoke, but received no reply: the glassy eyes allowed for no more doubt, Father Tempier was doing to die . . . Father Anger had already raised his hand to give him a final absolution. I came in just then and when I pronounced the sacred formula, Father Anger rushed to get the Holy Oils. He did not come back in time. I received the last sigh of our second Father at his death. He fell asleep in the Lord without a struggle, without any crises, without the slightest movement . . .

Biographical Notes on Father Tempier

- 1 - [A. Rey, O.M.I.], *Fragments de chronique*, in *Le Sanctuaire*, April 2, 1860, a weekly published by the scholastics of Montolivet, 46-55. This text is published in *Missions OMI*, 72 (1938), 84-99.
- 2 - [A. Rey, O.M.I.], *Cinquante ans de prêtrise. Souvenirs de famille*, 7 April, 1864, in *Missions OMI*, 3 (1864), 145-160.
- 3 - J. Fabre, O.M.I., [*Le père Tempier*], Circular no. 49 of May 2, 1870, in *Notices nécrologiques II*, 81-118.
- 4 - Paul Guérin, *Le R.P. Henry François de Paule Tempier, prêtre de la Congrégation des Missionnaires Oblats de Marie Immaculée*, in *Les Petits Bollandistes, vies des saints*, vol. 15: *Vénérables, et personnes mortes en odeur de sainteté*, Paris, 1882, 277-284.
- 5 - G. Simonin, O.M.I., [*Le père Tempier, supérieur de N.-D. du Laus*], 1819-1823, in *Chronique de la maison du Laus, 1818-1841*, in *Missions OMI*, 35 (1897), 59-105, 173-230, 324-337.

